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Reviews

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Abstract

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North Wind: A Journal of George MacDonald Studies. #29 (2010). Edited by Fernando Soto and John Pennington. Reviewed by Janet Brennan Croft.

VII: An Anglo-American Literary Review. #28 (2011). Edited by Marjorie Lamp Mead et al. Reviewed by Janet Brennan Croft.

Tolkien Studies: An Annual Scholarly Review. #8 (2011). Edited by Douglas A. Anderson, Michael D.C. Drout, and Verlyn Flieger. Reviewed by Janet Brennan Croft.

Authors

Emily E. Auger, Sara Brown, Janet Brennan Croft, Scott McLaren, David D. Oberhelman, Holly Ordway, Amy S. Rodgers, and Harley Sims



THE CHRISTIAN GODDESS: ARCHETYPE AND THEOLOGY IN THE FANTASIES OF GEORGE MACDONALD. Bonnie Gaarden. Fairleigh Dickinson UP, 2011. 9781611470086 \$65.00

WHEN ROBERT GRAVES WAS LOOKING FOR A PUBLISHER for his landmark book *The White Goddess* in the early 1940s, he entertained high hopes that its imaginative arguments and dense erudition would appeal to Charles Williams of Oxford University Press. He was right. Williams thought the book was extraordinary and attempted to persuade the Press's Director, Sir Humphrey Milford, to publish it. But Milford refused on the grounds that the Press was too hampered by wartime paper shortages for such an undertaking. When Williams died unexpectedly after stomach surgery in May 1945, Graves attributed his death to Oxford's refusal of *The White Goddess*. By failing to persuade Milford, Graves believed that Williams had catastrophically failed in his poetic duty. The judgment was as unfair as it was telling. For Graves, the Goddess was not just a literary trope or a figure of myth. She was real. And she could be dangerous. One comes away with very much the same sense after reading Gaarden's book about goddess figures in the work of George MacDonald. For Gaarden, there seems to be something more at stake here than just a discussion of literary figures shaped by MacDonald's universalist theology, his panentheism, and his mysticism. By exploring these supernatural figures in MacDonald's stories through the lenses of Jungian psychology, Hindu religion, Biblical Sophia literature, and Greek myth, Gaarden does something more than just impart to her readers a deeper understanding of the centrality of these figures in MacDonald's mythopoeia. She also gestures toward something transcendent that has a life of its own beyond these texts. Thus there is something in this book to interest literary critics as well as theologians.

Although the introduction does not make this entirely clear, Gaarden's book seems to be divided into two parts. The first part, comprising the first five chapters, concerns itself with unfolding the four types of goddess figures that

populate MacDonald's fantasies: the Great Mother, the Terrible Mother, the Soulmaker, and the Muse. The Great Mother is typified for Gaarden in MacDonald's figure of The Green Lady in "The Golden Key," and, to a lesser extent, in Mother Nature in *Phantastes* and Mother Eve in *Lilith*. Gaarden relies on Jung and his disciple Erich Neumann to explore the way these figures function as nature goddesses by symbolizing a cycle of life, death, and rebirth. The theme of death sets the stage for the second chapter where Gaarden explores the figure of the Terrible Mother. Gaarden begins with a discussion of the Hindu goddess of death Kali to prepare the ground for her analysis of one of MacDonald's most frightening and certainly most terrible mothers: Lilith. According to Jewish mythology, Eve replaced Lilith as Adam's first wife only after Lilith refused to return to the Garden of Eden following a sexual encounter with a fallen angel. In MacDonald's narrative, Lilith is a beautiful but dangerous supernatural figure whose treachery reaches its climax when she murders her own daughter in a misguided effort to prolong her own life. Despite committing such an unspeakable crime, MacDonald allows Lilith to find redemption at the end of the novel after a salutary confrontation with Adam. But even with its promising ending, the journey itself was so dark that the book did not escape controversy and was particularly disliked by MacDonald's wife. The third chapter, entitled "The Magic Cauldron," concerns, in Keats's phrase, the figure of the "Soulmaker"—that is, the goddess who educates those around her about the redemptive nature of human suffering. Gaarden titles her chapter as she does to indicate that MacDonald's Soulmaking goddesses don't educate through lecturing, but by "cooking" their pupils in much the same way that the earth transforms coal into diamonds through the application of immense pressure. What follows is a perceptive reading of *Lilith's* Mara and the eponymous *Wise Woman* as archetypal figures who bring about redemption in others through the imposition of suffering. Less convincingly, Gaarden also interprets the mother figure in MacDonald's stubbornly enigmatic short story "The Gray Wolf" as Soulmaker. The fourth chapter considers the White Lady in *Phantastes* as a figure of the Muse and the children in *The Wise Woman* and in the "The Golden Key" as images of archetypal Divine Children.

In the fifth and arguably most engrossing chapter, Gaarden brings all this together in a remarkable reading of *At the Back of the North Wind*. Interestingly, she begins the chapter with a somewhat ominous gesture in the direction of Robert Graves when she refers to the story's central supernatural figure, North Wind, as "MacDonald's Great Goddess" (92). Despite the critical attention this figure has attracted, North Wind has remained one of MacDonald's most inscrutable creations. But Gaarden's analysis helps her readers to understand not only how the twists and turns in this difficult book illustrate aspects of his universalist theology, but also how North Wind herself is central to

that theology as a multifaceted spiritual agent possessed of what only seems a contradictory nature. *At the Back of the North Wind* recounts the adventures of a boy named Diamond who accompanies North Wind—personified as a beautiful woman with long flowing hair—on nighttime journeys as she works weal and woe across the countryside. At various points throughout the story, Diamond plies North Wind with questions about her role in the destruction of property and the loss of human life as he attempts to discover whether she is good or evil. Eventually, North Wind allows Diamond to visit the land “at her back”—a land where North Wind herself cannot go but where there is no pain and no death. When Diamond returns from this land, however, he seems sunk in an abnormal state of simplicity and peace. The visit and its psychological results together foreshadow Diamond’s death at the end of the book. North Wind’s presence throughout the story is morally problematic since she seems both loving and sinister as she educates Diamond by causing him and those around him to suffer. In her ministrations to Diamond, Gaarden argues that North Wind functions as Great Mother in her role as an agent of the unconscious (she visits him only at night) and as a force that encourages the emergence of his ego (she never forces anything on him but always asks him what he wants to do or believe). North Wind also functions as Soulmaker as she transforms Diamond into a Christ figure through illness and suffering. As Muse, North Wind inspires Diamond to see things as they truly are both when awake and in his dreams. This inspiration empties Diamond of all his fears, including his fear of death. Most enigmatically, North Wind adopts the guise of Terrible Mother when she blows on Diamond’s frail chest and thereby helps to bring about his death. Reprising her role as Muse, however, North Wind is able to comfort Diamond by inspiring him with a vision of the world to come—the genuine world at her back—that is too wonderful for words. Thus North Wind is Great Mother and Terrible Mother, Soulmaker and Muse—and it is only through these various and varying roles that, Gaarden persuasively argues, we can finally understand all her actions in the context of MacDonald’s own benevolent theology.

Gaarden charts a slightly different course in the second part of her book by partly setting aside these four types of goddess figure to explore resonances between MacDonald’s female characters and some of the goddess figures found in Biblical and Greek myth. Concerned mostly, though not exclusively, with the traditions of divine Wisdom in these literatures, Gaarden offers a deft reassessment of several of MacDonald’s female figures in the *Princess* stories, *Phantastes*, *Lilith*, and other texts. Gaarden also considers how MacDonald’s awareness of these multivalent Sophia traditions allowed him to frame his stories as critiques of what he perceived to be an overreliance on rationalism in Victorian culture—specifically the ascendancy of materialistic rationalism in the sciences on the one hand, and the ongoing dominance of Reformation-era

Calvinistic rationalism on the other. In her concluding chapter, Gaarden provides a fascinating gloss on two evil female figures in MacDonald's stories who, unlike Lilith, seem not to find any redemption: Princess Makemnoit from "The Light Princess" and Watho from "The Day Boy and the Night Girl." Princess Makemnoit and Watho are not merely destroyed, Gaarden argues, but erased in a way that is consistent with the Augustinian view of evil as a privation of good and a privation of being. At the same time, while the human heart may harbour such witches, she writes that "no real person *is* a Makemnoit or Watho" (184). Thus these figures, unlike the goddess figures explored in the earlier parts of the book, are ultimately unreal—another hint that gestures beyond MacDonald's own mythopoeia to something larger and transcendent.

I have only one quibble. In one or two places Gaarden appears to state her argument rather too bluntly when she claims, as she does in the first paragraph of her introductory chapter, that in these figures MacDonald "presented God as a woman" (1). Bald statements of this kind in fact fall far short of capturing the highly nuanced and much more subtle arguments that Gaarden advances about these polysemous female figures throughout her book. Indeed, nowhere in any of his sermons, novels, or critical essays did MacDonald once refer directly to God as a woman, or, for that matter, to any of the many female figures Gaarden considers as goddesses. Although one might counter that MacDonald felt sufficiently free to set forth his true beliefs about the feminine divine only in the more veiled forms afforded by fantasy and children's literature, to do so would be to forget that MacDonald was not one to shrink from controversy. After all, he lost his pulpit and his livelihood for espousing his views about God's inexhaustible love and the eventual salvation of all creatures—good and evil, human and animal. Such a man, it seems to me, would not have been afraid to be more straightforward. And yet, there is no denying that for MacDonald, God did possess attributes that were most commonly associated with the feminine in his own Victorian world. And in this way his work truly does anticipate that more modern quest for the feminine face of God. Thus my quibble is not with Gaarden's book, but merely with those few instances where she seems to overstate her argument with too bold a claim. Notwithstanding this bit of hair-splitting on my part, it seems clear to me that this book—thoroughly researched, elegantly argued, and engagingly written—should be essential reading not only for MacDonald scholars, but also for historians of Victorian religion and those interested in feminine spirituality more generally.

—Scott McLaren



PICTURING TOLKIEN: ESSAYS ON PETER JACKSON'S *THE LORD OF THE RINGS* FILM TRILOGY. Janice M. Bogstad and Philip E. Kaveny, eds. Jefferson, North Carolina, and London: McFarland, 2011. 302 + viii pp. ISBN 978-0-7864-4636-0. \$35.00.

JANICE M. BOGSTAD AND PHILIP E. KAVENY'S *PICTURING TOLKIEN* has a preface, introduction and sixteen papers divided into two sections: "Techniques of Story and Structure" and "Techniques of Character and Culture." The paper most crucial to both the "Story and Structure" and "Character and Culture" sections is John D. Rateliff's "Two Kinds of Absence: Elision and Exclusion in Peter Jackson's *The Lord of the Rings*" because it includes a listing of previous translations of Tolkien's narrative into other mediums. Although the paper titles may point in other directions, some contributions stand out for offering, among other things, new answers or perspectives on questions and issues familiar to Tolkien fans and scholars: What does a Balrog look like (Dimitra Fimi)? Why is Bombadil not included in the film (Verlyn Flieger, John D. Rateliff, Kristin Thompson)? Why is there so much emphasis on Aragorn and Arwen in the film (Richard C. West)? And what about Tolkien's narrative structure (Yvette Kisor and E.L. Ridsen)?

Others stand out because they address subjects also treated in the alternate section; thus this collection provides a more studied treatment of those subjects than might be expected. For example, Gollum is discussed by Kristin Thompson in the Techniques in Story and Structure section and by Philip E. Kaveny in the Techniques of Character and Culture section. Thompson gets down to the effectiveness of the shot/reverse shot treatment of Gollum's arguments with himself, while Kaveny shows how Gollum serves as "an abridger," who "integrat[es] the big picture of what is at stake on a moral ethical and spiritual level" (189). Sharin Schroeder's discussion of the influence and treatment of monsters ranges from Tolkien's fascination with *Beowulf* to the filmic cave troll and makes frequent reference to the Frankenstein myth; while Janice M. Bogstad shows how the role of horses is expanded in the film so they "seem to exist as both non-sentient and sentient beings [that] function at mythic/mystical levels" (239). The translation of the real world into the reel world is foregrounded in Robert C. Woosnam-Savage's paper on the Weta Workshop's manufacture and provision of arms and armor for the film, while the Anglo-Saxon contribution to Tolkien's imagining of the Rohirrim is considered by Michael D.C. Drout.

Still other contributions stand out for their use of a particular concept or theory as a pivot for discussion or argument, and for that distinction they might even have made a tidy collection independent of the rest. Judy Ann Ford and Robin Anne Reid's paper might be placed first in this collection within the

collection for its reminder to readers that Tolkien borrowed from pre-existing mythic and narrative patterns and adapted them, just as Jackson adapted Tolkien's work, and for its observation that the story is "eschatological; that is, [a story] about the end of the world, or the narrow averting of that ending, in a final battle between good and evil" (169). Second, in this sub-collection might be Janet Croft's discussion of the filmic adaptation of Aragorn in relation to the hero monomyth as defined by Joseph Campbell and to the American superhero monomyth common in American film. Tolkien's narrative fits primarily in the first pattern, but, as Croft shows, Jackson was very much influenced by the American variation that he knew from his own film-viewing experience. A natural follow-up to Croft's study is Dimitra Fimi's well-articulated paper on folklore in relation to the book and film. Fimi makes and develops the distinction between folklore in film, "that is, the use of myth, tale types, legend and any other expression of folklore in films and television" and "folklore *about* film and television, including popular legends and stories about these media, as well as fan ethnography or 'the folklore of audiences'" (84). She notes that Tolkien's own writing is marked by his keen awareness and study of myth and legend; just so, Jackson's reformulation of Tolkien's tale was influenced by fandom and fans. Fourth, Brian D. Walter's analysis of Gandalf is focused on the problem of representing a figure of power in a story with many characters and events; he shows how Jackson, like Tolkien, had to find ways of removing Gandalf from the stage to allow other characters and aspects of the story to develop. Fifth and last but by no means least, is Joseph Ricke and Catherine Barnett's consideration of the numinous in relation to the role and presentation of Lothlórien. The authors of each of these five essays chose a concept or theory to mediate a discussion of the translation of text into film, provide a careful description of that concept or theory, layout the relevant points of comparison from text and film, and show how certain aspects of the story were translated from one medium to the other by way of Jackson's treatment of the particular concept or theory. Like almost any publication on *The Lord of the Rings*, however, all of *Picturing Tolkien* will be of interest to scholars and fans, and although the objective throughout this collection is the analysis of the Jackson trilogy, the comparisons and references to the text are sufficiently numerous and careful to make it a worthwhile study even for those most dedicated to Tolkien in the original.

—Emily E. Auger



GOOD DRAGONS ARE RARE: AN INQUIRY INTO LITERARY DRAGONS EAST AND WEST. Fanfan Chen and Thomas Honegger, eds. *Arbeit zur Literarischen Phantastik*, Band 5. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2009. 439 pp. ISBN 973 3 631 58219 0. \$116.95.

IN HIS FAMOUS 1936 SIR ISRAEL COLLAN CZ MEMORIAL LECTURE "Beowulf: The Monsters and the Critics," J.R.R. Tolkien writes of the dragon in the Old English poem, "one dragon, however hot, does not make a summer, or a host; and a man might well exchange for one good dragon what he would not sell for a wilderness. And dragons, real dragons, essential both to the machinery and idea of the poem or tale, are actually rare" (*Monsters* 12). From this dictum Thomas Honegger and his co-editor Fanfan Chen derive the title of their polyglot collection of essays on literary depictions of dragons in Western and Eastern traditions, *Good Dragons are Rare*. Honegger, a medievalist at the University of Jena and frequent author and editor of volumes on Tolkien, and Chen, a Comparative Literature specialist from the National Dong Hwa University in Taiwan, have compiled an ambitious, if somewhat disjointed, assortment of papers in English, German, and French on the figure of the dragon in mythology, the sagas, medieval European literature, Victorian fairy tales, Anglo-American fantasy ranging from *The Hobbit* and other works by Tolkien up to J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter series and Christopher Paolini's *Eragon*. The book also touches upon Asian representations of the dragon from antiquity up through the contemporary era of globalization. The overarching theme of the volume is ongoing quest for Tolkien's elusive "good" dragon—the wilder *draco* or *draco ferox* of the older mythological tradition versus the symbolic dragon or the more "domesticated" literary dragon of the nineteenth century and later periods.

The eighteen essays in this volume are not grouped into any particular order, but are roughly divided into clusters based on different literary periods and genres. The essays jump from one language to another, making this a volume useful to European scholars or the comparativist who is familiar with the literary history and fantasy fiction of several countries, but daunting to many other scholars of myth and fantasy studies, especially since classic and contemporary English-language works are covered in all three languages. For the sake of clarity, I have indicated the language of each essay in brackets after the author's name in my appraisal of the collection.

Friedhelm Scheidewind [German] and Honegger [English] both provide broad overviews of the many aspects of the dragon in different cultures and literatures, and establish the dragon as a multivalent symbol of the human relationship to power, religion, and the natural world. Honegger's discussion of dragons as literary characters in the works of the fantasists Edith Nesbit, Barbara Hambly, and Gordon Dickson culminates in a detailed analysis of Tolkien's

portrayals of Chrysophylax Dives from *Farmer Giles of Ham* and Smaug from *The Hobbit*. Using Smaug as the prototype for the “good” dragon, Honegger concludes that such a beast inevitably “carries the unmistakable stamp of ‘Faery’” (54). The next three essays focus on dragons in Western medieval literature. Anne Berthelot [French] looks at female dragons in medieval French and Italian romances and their relationship to attitudes towards women and sexuality. Maik Goth [English] studies dragons in Edmund Spenser’s Renaissance epic *The Faerie Queene* and Paul Michel [German] provides an overview of accounts of supposed dragon encounters in the natural histories of the seventeenth-century Swiss scientist Johann Jakob Scheuchzer. These essays document how the dragon appeared in European literary and scientific texts from the twelfth century through to the cusp of the Enlightenment.

The next set of essays turn to the dragon in children’s literature starting with Dieter Petzold’s [German] account of the dragons in Nesbit and Kenneth Grahame and Maren Bonacker’s [German] survey of the domestication of dragons in contemporary children’s fantasy. Tolkien’s dragons are the focus of essays by Patrick A. Brückner [German] and Anne C. Petty [English]. Petty’s comparison of Glaurung and Smaug is one of the more thoughtful contributions to the volume and one that would be of interest to readers of *Mythlore*. Roger Bozzetto [French] and Marie Burkhardt [French] both look at fantasy dragons and science fiction dragons, particularly the dragons of Anne McCaffrey’s Pern books. The modern fantasy section concludes with Anne Isabelle François [French] on the fantasy of Walter Moers and Thomas Fornet-Ponse [German] on the somewhat parodic dragons of Terry Pratchett.

The four essays on Asian dragons include Fanfan Chen [English] on the Chinese dragons in Michael Ende’s *The Neverending Story* and Naomi Novik’s Temeraire novels. Chiwaki Shinoda [French] offers a summary of the traditions of the dragon in Japan; Nathalie Dufayet [French] investigates the dragon in Hayao Miyazaki’s anime film *Chihiro*; and Anna Caiozzo [French] examines dragons in medieval Arabic texts on astronomy, astrology, and magic.

The scope of this collection is vast, and, the linguistic challenges aside, researchers seeking a convenient handbook on images of the dragon in literature risk getting lost in the welter of facts and references to works from different nationalities. The contributors come from Europe, Asia, and some from the United States, and the level of scholarship and critical incisiveness of the contents vary greatly. The lack of an introduction (Honegger’s piece is a de-facto introduction, but its placement as the second entry in the volume dulls its effect) coupled with the lack of a cohesive structure apart from general through-line of the search for “good” dragons make this an occasionally enlightening but mostly frustrating compendium of fantastic dragon lore. Researchers may want to consult selected essays for the specific treatment of dragons by certain authors

and in certain genres and periods, but *Good Dragons are Rare* as a whole is unfortunately one dragon that cannot fully take flight.

—David D. Oberhelman

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CRITICAL PERSPECTIVES ON PHILIP PULLMAN'S *HIS DARK MATERIALS*: ESSAYS ON THE NOVELS, THE FILM AND THE STAGE PRODUCTIONS.

Steven Barfield and Katharine Cox, eds. Jefferson, North Carolina, and London: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2011. 280 pages. Softbound: \$40. ISBN978-0-7864-4030-6.

THIS NEW VOLUME OF ESSAYS ON PHILIP PULLMAN'S TRILOGY is organized into four sections, each of which are "key areas of engagement for Philip Pullman, as a writer and as a critic" (1). In her introduction, Cox gives background information on Pullman as a writer before outlining themes of each of the book's sections. She situates the essays in each group within the larger pictures of each theme present in Pullman's work.

The essays in the first section, "Adversaries and Influences," deal with the intertextuality of Pullman's work. The first essay, Rachel Falconer's "Recasting John Milton's *Paradise Lost*: Intertextuality, Storytelling and Music," discusses *His Dark Materials* as a "highly significant crossover text" (14), a "secular revision of classical myth" (23) that recasts Milton's *Paradise Lost* to express the importance of freedom in moral, spiritual, and intellectual matters. Pullman's realist views seem at odds with his genre choice, but Falconer says that Pullman "deploys fantasy the way Milton deploys the Devil, knowing that his weak-willed, post-lapsarian audience will be more easily seduced by bears and witches and hot-air balloons than they ought to be" (20). Pullman uses the dichotomy of fantasy and realism as a parallel to the child/adult dichotomy. This essay is one of two in the volume that discuss Pullman's musicality, here in

terms of the text itself possessing a musical structure and in the resemblance between Pullman and Orpheus. In his essay, "'When I Grow Up I Want to Be...': Conceptualization of the Hero Within the Works of C.S. Lewis, J.R.R. Tolkien and Philip Pullman," Phil Cardew compares the heroes of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, *The Return of the King*, and *Northern Lights* (the first book in the *His Dark Materials* trilogy) and applies Northrop Frye's "anatomy of a hero" framework to the intellectual maturation of these heroes within their respective narratives. The models of heroism for each author are outlined, and Cardew shows that Pullman's heroes are less fortunate than those of Tolkien or Lewis, in that they never fully reach heroic status. Cardew suggests that they never fully mature so that we as readers can "empathize with their limitations as much as their successes" (37).

Elisabeth Eldridge's essay, "Constructions of the Child, Authority and Authorship: The Reception of C.S. Lewis and Philip Pullman," explores public constructions of Pullman and Lewis as authors and how these constructions affect the authority of narration. Too much is going on here to be contained in a concise essay; Eldridge's initial deconstruction of "Pullman's" construction of "Lewis" is muddier than this sentence. As it is, we are given no direct indication of how this section betters our understanding of the "public construction of these notions of author and text" (41) more than would reading Pullman's undeconstructed quotes. Despite these and other small issues, Eldridge's discussion of the relationships between these two authors, their constructed personae, and the power they exert over groups of potential readers is attention-worthy. Steven Barfield makes a good case in his essay, "'Dark Materials to Create More Worlds': Considering *His Dark Materials* as Science Fiction." Barfield compares *HDM* to science fiction novels, namely C.S. Lewis's Space Trilogy and Madeleine L'Engle's *A Wrinkle in Time*, to show that Pullman borrows Christian science fiction motifs to undermine them, but could still be considered a science fiction author as the genre is "determined by political, social and cultural aims" (70).

The second section, "Traditions and Legacies," focuses on cultural historical aspects of Pullman's work, such as Victorian influences and his debt to the Romantics. In the first essay, "Revitalizing Old Machines of a Neo-Victorian London: Reading the Cultural Transformations of Steampunk and Victoriana," Steven Barfield and Martyn Colebrook examine Victoriana and Steampunk tropes used in the creation of Lyra's London. The authors explain how Pullman reinterprets both genres and why he situates Lyra's origins in the classic Steampunk site of London. Laura Peters describes Pullman's use of popular Victorian literary tropes, such as orphaned characters, as a means of highlighting current issues in a new way. Peters argues in "Revisiting the Colonial: Victorian Orphans and Postcolonial Perspectives" that for literary purposes, Will and Lyra are orphans; Lyra was raised by the people in Jordan College, rather than her

parents, and Will lived with his mother but was her primary caretaker. This essay would be of particular interest to *Mythlore* readers as the author describes how Pullman revises the Victorian orphan trope to develop a new heroic. Peters also shows how Pullman explored class concerns and notions of home via his challenge to the traditional Victorian gypsy trope. Peters pairs well with Cardew.

Nicola Allen's essay brings out a connection between the feminine knowledge-seeker's social class and lapsarian shame. This is an interesting link, but Allen's path is not clear. This is the weakest essay of the volume. Other essays here, particularly the next essay by Katharine Cox and Sarah Gamble's in the third section, give better treatments to gender and social class. Halsdorf and others give better treatments of the Fall.

In "Imagine *Dust* with a Capital Letter': Interpreting the Social and Cultural Contexts for Philip Pullman's Transformation of Dust," Katharine Cox shows that Dust deserves more than a singular reading, that it is a "complex metaphor [...] achieved through a manipulation of our historic and contemporary ideas of attitudes toward dust" (127), used to express a Pantheistic universe. Cox's essay fills a gap in the study of "social implications and cultural history of dust" (127), and offers both history and historiography of human attitudes toward dust. Pullman's Dust represents as an industrial byproduct, a cause of disease, and our mortality.

"Religion, Sexuality and Gender," the third section, begins with John Haydn Baker's essay, "The Man Who Walked With God: Philip Pullman's Metatron, the Biblical Enoch, and the Apocrypha." Baker examines the roots of *His Dark Materials* theology in the oft-overlooked Apocrypha, specifically the Book of Enoch. He distinguishes between what Pullman has borrowed from the Apocrypha and details Pullman has invented for his narrative purposes. Here, Pullman's Metatron character represents authoritarian religion, especially to the contemporary Western reader, and with this Baker says that Pullman is "pulling down the temple from within" (153). J'annine Jobling's "The Republic of Heaven: East, West and Eclecticism in Pullman's Religious Vision" shows that Pullman may share an intellectual heritage with Buddhism. Jobling gives several textual examples from Pullman that are evidence of Buddhist retellings of Hindu myths. She also argues that William Blake, who has been established as a direct inspiration to Pullman, had Buddhist leanings in his philosophy. Jobling admits freely when links between Pullman and Buddhism are tenuous, and that Pullman may have had no intentions to include Buddhism in his narrative. Jobling's and Baker's pieces are good compliments to each other.

Tommy Halsdorf contends in "Walking into Mortal Sin': Lyra, the Fall, and Sexuality" that *His Dark Materials* reworks the Fall and thus reinstates a pre-lapsarian gender balance, calling it a "modern feminist rewriting of Eve's role" (184). Halsdorf discusses sexuality's specific place in the Fall in the Bible, John

Milton's *Paradise Lost*, and Pullman's *His Dark Materials*, and makes the claim that Lyra's physical relationship with Will, specifically the fact that they touch each other's daemons, is more polemic than Pullman's anti-religious contentions within the narrative. This is even more apparent in the stage version. Halsdorf outlines the Fall-related differences between the original novels and the first stage version. This is the first of two essays outside section four that discusses the stage versions. In "Becoming Human: Desire and the Gendered Subject," Sarah Gamble applies Judith Butler's sex and gender theories in *Undoing Gender* (2004) to Will's and Lyra's maturation to highlight Pullman's expressions of female subjectivity, the active pursuit of transformation, and the acceptance of difference. Sally R. Munt, the second scholar to discuss the stage versions, says that several characters within the narrative, namely Will's father and Lyra, cannot be confined to one gender stereotype. In her essay "After the Fall: Queer Heterotopias," she says that these characters are actively transcending their genders. Munt uses Foucauldian analysis of Pullman's sexual constructions of selfhood to show that these constructions are anti-heteronormative, or non-normative.

Two authors thus far have discussed the stage versions scripted from Pullman's trilogy as part of their essays, but the fourth section of the book is comprised of two essays focused specifically on dramatizations. In the first, "Staging the Impossible: Severance and Separation in the National Theater's Adaptation," Patrick Duggan explores the staging decisions made at England's National Theater concerning the separation of human and daemon. After a brief history of the increasing number of traumatic scenes on stages in the 1990s, Duggan delves into trauma theory to describe why it is so hard for the audience to see Lyra and Pantalaimon separated, and why scenes were staged as they were. The stage dynamics are a visual text that should not be ignored. The final essay, Karian Schuitema's "Staging and Performing *His Dark Materials*: From the National Theater Productions to Subsequent Productions," is an analysis of directorial decisions made for both the large stagings such as the ones at the National Theater as well as smaller Playbox-type productions. Schuitema found that larger productions relied more heavily on sets, whereas smaller productions sometimes had no sets at all. Included is a long interview with the artistic director of the Playbox theater in Warwick, UK; Schuitema asks him to elaborate on previous press releases outlining directorial decisions and to talk about choices he made on how to portray the daemons or Will's knife that opens alternate worlds. Schuitema found that the size of the theater and its budget are not what determined the effectiveness and individuality of the respective interpretations of the original script, but that having a strong leader as director was the key element.

The volume is sans conclusion, instead ending only in a bibliography organized into sections: first are Pullman's works, then secondary journalism, critical works, readers' guides, and suggested further reading divided further into the same topical sections that divide the essays. At first glance this is a good bibliography, but there are mistakes in a few of the citations, which is more problematic for the scholarly reader than the typos sprinkled throughout the rest of the text.

Five critical volumes solely on *His Dark Materials* were previously published in addition to pieces published in more broadly-focused works. This particular volume adds to the discussion with pieces like Cox's essay on cultural aspects of dust and Dust, Jobling's humble suggestions of unintentional Buddhist leanings, and Baker's account of Apocryphal influence on the narrative. This reviewer greatly enjoyed seeing discussions of physical staging in the book's final section. Overall, however, this volume is nothing too special.

—Amy S. Rodgers



FROM ELVISH TO KLINGON: EXPLORING INVENTED LANGUAGES. Michael Adams, ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011. vi + 294pp. ISBN 9780192807090. \$19.95.

AFTER DECADES PRIMARILY IN FANDOM, THE FORMAL STUDY of invented languages has found something of a milestone here. *From Elvish to Klingon* has a top-shelf scholarly publisher (OUP), as well as an academic editor previously published in the area of fictive linguistics. Many of its contributors are well-known within the areas of their contributions, and all are comfortable with basic linguistic terminology, concepts, and ideas. *From Elvish to Klingon* is, despite its folklorish book jacket and promotional plug, a scholarly publication, more so than Arika Okrent's *In the Land of Invented Languages*, from which it seems to take its inspiration. It is much more generally accessible than Umberto Eco's *Search for the Perfect Language*, but, unlike Okrent's book, it is not something that a general audience would thoroughly enjoy. Though not abstruse, its attention to—and occasional emphasis on—the technical details of its subject languages requires of its audience a certain amount of learned passion, or at least patience.

The result is a mixed bag. While it is encouraging to see invented languages being afforded this level of treatment, it is always a risk of importation that they be subjected to institutional stances and modes of understanding. More often than not with material from the popular domain, these attitudes are

expressed through carelessness for precise details (as when Adams declares that, “[i]n *The Lord of the Rings*, the Elves are about to return to Valinor from their exile in Middle-earth” [6]), and indifference toward grass-roots cultures and loyalties (see the consideration below of Chapter 8, “Revitalized Languages as Invented Languages”). In this collection, invented languages of the eponymous variety have been subsumed into an extremely broad class of linguistic manipulation, which includes everything from poetic wordplay to official language control. Some readers will no doubt find this disappointing, but the book does include several individual contributions and features that are very worthwhile.

Michael Adams of Indiana University is the editor and not, in fact, the author, of this book (as the cover and title page represent him). He does, however, provide the first chapter, contribute to the fifth, and compile a five-to-eight-page appendix for each of the eight chapters as a whole. In Chapter 1, “The Spectrum of Invention,” Adams addresses the conceptual range of the collection, which is far spottier than the title suggests. The parameters of the title, Elvish and Klingon, imply a survey of conlangs (constructed languages) invented for fictional worlds, of which there are a great many out there (for a basic survey, see Rogers). What we have here instead are essentially a chapter each for Elvish and Klingon, one chapter for the conlangs of video-game worlds, and a chapter each for five other kinds of linguistic creativity. Because Adams’s introduction seeks to sew all these activities together, it consumes a great deal of space making very broad stitches. Some of these involve assumptions about language which would not be tolerated in serious linguistic circles:

Language, the kind in which we speak and write every day, began as a biological and social phenomenon in prehistory. From that hypothetical point forward, almost all of the world’s languages have developed from the proto-language. (1-2)

Adams borrows from Okrent (who borrows from Eco) the thesis that language invention is in many ways about recovering the ‘perfect’ language of Adam, and is premised upon dissatisfaction with existing language. This needs to be better developed if it is to be made so habitual. With fictional-world conlangs, for example, the artistic dimension is foremost; these languages suggest their speakers’ experience within and perspective on a fictional sense of reality, something natural languages can only ever do in translation (there is a reason Tolkien expressed a wish he could have written *The Lord of the Rings* in Elvish [Tolkien 219]). Failure to conceptualize adequately the difference between the fictive and the fictional likely represents the most grievous critical flaw in the way the collection approaches its material.

Chapter 2, “Confounding Babel: International Auxiliary Languages,” is one of the collection’s most rewarding pieces. Written by Arden Smith, it is professional and well-researched, and manages to survey almost four centuries of IAL (International Auxiliary Language) schemes without becoming dry. He locates the origins of IAL movements in the seventeenth century and classifies their products according to an established schema of *a priori* (John Wilkins’s Philosophical Language), *a posteriori* (Esperanto), and mixed systems (Volapük) (20). It should be recognized that, although longstanding, such a division is imperfect in that no language can truly be “invented from scratch,” as the *a priori* examples are alleged or intended to be (20). The inventions of real people, they must always be grounded in or inspired by some sort of model or experience, whether Chinese writing—whose influence Smith explores—or the particular systems of philosophical thought they were intended to facilitate in the earliest examples. The attention to Volapük is appreciated, the coverage of Esperanto multifaceted and sympathetic. Especially admirable is Arden’s use of publications by Esperanto organizations and institutions themselves. There is some heavy reliance on certain secondary sources, particularly Edmund Privat; this may have been unavoidable, however.

The last two sections of the chapter, which look essentially at schemes to simplify and even ‘purify’ certain languages, verge on parts of Chapter 8. If indeed such industries and the mindsets behind them might be considered modern IAL movements, the chapter should have been greatly expanded, as well as better tempered in the light of contemporaneous contexts. For example, in the case of Elias Molee’s turn-of-the-century Germanic inventions—Germanik English, Saxon English, and various forms of ‘Teutonish’—Arden cannot help but underscore a racial—in this sense, racist—dimension (46). Fashionable as this indictment may now be, Molee’s ideas can also be understood as testament to the intoxicating philological discoveries of the period, as well as the various nationalist movements that continue to drive language protection the world over. The works and interests of William Morris, J.R.R. Tolkien, and a great many others are part of its legacy, and it is certainly not difficult in the modern day to find those who believe the Old English language was ruined—at least, aesthetically—by the invasion of the French-speaking Normans. Though Edward Said once declared that philology itself is racist in motivation, language has no blood. The tongue, as it were, is not made of flesh.

Chapter 3, “Invented Vocabularies: The Cases of Newspeak and Nadsat,” is by Howard Jackson, and looks at the treatment of language and lexicons in George Orwell’s *Nineteen Eighty-four* and Anthony Burgess’s *A Clockwork Orange*. Because both novels are canonical twentieth-century classics and their significance is so well established, the material may at first seem stale. Furthermore, Newspeak and Nadsat are not conlangs in the traditional sense.

The chapter is nevertheless commendable for looking at the novels' invented vocabularies within the light of their sociopolitical themes, both literary and historical, rather than simply analyzing their use within their own fictional contexts. The essay is very clearly structured, particularly with the treatment of Newspeak, which is twice as long as that of Nadsat. Vocabulary reduction in *Nineteen Eighty-four*, which is about reducing the range of thought, is considered in the light of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis of linguistic relativity, which works well (61). Invented-language scholarship must take care nonetheless not to dwell on Benjamin Lee Whorf and Edward Sapir much further (for examples, see Okrent 203-7, Rosenfelder 153, Rogers 30), lest it create axioms of understanding. Eco is more ambivalent (330-1), and there are many other linguistic schools and theories that stand to enrich this area of study. In all, the chapter turns out to be a pleasant and illuminating part of the collection, not least because it never allows its formal focus ("the power and possible misuses of language" [72]) to compromise its qualities as a survey.

Though it looks at more than Elvish, Chapter 4, "Tolkien's Invented Languages," provides one of the two eponymous chapters of the book. Written by E.S.C. Weiner and Jeremy Marshall (two of the co-authors of *The Ring of Words: Tolkien and the "Oxford English Dictionary"*), it endeavors "to consider Tolkien's remarkable work of language invention both as a feature of his published works and as a creative activity in itself" (76). It is a wide-sweeping survey, divided into sixteen sections ranging among literary and technical (phonetic, grammatical, etc.) details of the languages, as well as biographical and other historical influences on their development. Quenya, Sindarin, Khuzdul, Adûnaic, Gnomish/Goldogrin/Noldorin, Black Speech, and most others—including many old and dialectal forms—are here. Touched upon to various extents are the appearances and uses of these languages across Tolkien's *legendarium* (including the *History of Middle-earth* series and other works), their relationship with Tolkien's own linguistic tastes and beliefs, their etymological depth and genetic evolution, their correspondence (intentional and unintentional) to natural languages, their sources, their modification over time, their mythopoeic motivation, and Tolkien's achievements as a language inventor.

This is a staggering amount of material to address in a single, thirty-six-page chapter—too much, it turns out. For one, a single language could probably have been selected as a case-study—even one language family would have outstripped the available space and format. It should be appreciated, however, that this overreach was almost guaranteed, premised as it is upon a recognition of the material's seminal importance to the field, and the fact that this chapter in many ways anchors the whole collection. Again, however, there is too much to cover and too many possible ways to cover it; the authors appear to have been simply overwhelmed. Though the chapter begins on a general note, promising to

avoid the “painstaking analysis in both print and online articles” of Tolkien’s languages (76), it immediately falls into random parsing and word-sampling:

Few may realize that *Gandalf* is a name borrowed from Norse legend (*Gandalf* < Old Norse *Gandálf*, from *gand* ‘staff’ and *álf* ‘elf’), but that the rather similar place name *Nindalf* is an Elvish compound (from Sindarin *nîn* ‘wet’ and *talf* ‘flat field’); or that, while the flower names *elanor* and *niphredil* are Elvish, *simbelmynë* ‘evermind’ comprises Old English elements; or that *mathom* is a ‘real’ word in a way that *mithril* is not [...]. (76-7)

As an usher to what follows, this remains one of the more accessible passages; some of the later, technical considerations are truly numbing, not because they are technical, but because they are unsystematic. Many of the positions the authors choose to elaborate—that, for example, Sindarin grammar displays features similar to Welsh (and all attested Celtic languages, it could have been added), or that Tolkien felt languages to be inherently beautiful or ugly—have been reiterated over the decades. One cannot but feel that an opportunity was forfeited here to do more than provide another introduction, especially when the authors recognize that “many [who study classical and modern languages in depth] were introduced to it through Tolkien’s languages” (91).

Chapter 5, “Wild and Whorling Words’: The Invention and Use of Klingon,” is written by Marc Okrand (the inventor/designer of Klingon), editor Michael Adams, Judith Hendriks-Hermans, and Sjaak Kroon. Little scholarly discourse has yet been dedicated to *Star Trek*, despite its decades of development and limitless imaginative freeplay. While Klingon is the most developed single language, the linguistic dimension of the franchise has grown steadily from the days of the universal translator as a mere stopgap, so much so that Hoshi Sato of the most recent series, *Star Trek: Enterprise*, is a linguist. A straightforward and engaging chapter, “Wild and Whorling Words” follows the origins, development, and use of the Klingon language (*tlhIngan Hol* in Klingon itself) inside, and then outside, the *Star Trek* franchise, detailing its structure and vocabulary, as well as its much-publicized—and often exaggerated—community of real-world users. Like the previous chapter, there is attention to technical detail, but it is focused and much more sparing, relegated for the most part to phonology. The choppy, guttural sounds of Klingon are clearly a—if not *the*—fundamental part of the language’s design, and like so many other fictional-world languages are intended to represent the cultural nature of its speakers:

To lend the phonology an alien feel, certain common patterns found in human languages were skewed. [...] There is no sound in Klingon that

does not occur in any number of natural languages, but the particular inventory of sounds is unique to Klingon. (116-7)

It is satisfying at last to read such an unreserved chronicle of Okrand's imaginative investment in the language to date, including his insights into dialects, hierarchical varieties, and youth slang. It is also interesting to learn that the blade-like Klingon 'characters' which appear in the various *Star Trek* series and films are not actually a functional orthography, but are simply artwork, and cannot be deciphered (126).

The chapter's coverage and analysis of Klingon-speakers in the real world builds largely on Arika Okrent's material in *In the Land of Invented Languages*, which it cites repeatedly. The chapter also spends three pages relaying the results of Hendriks-Hermans's 1999 Internet survey on their actual number (79, of whom 61 were male) and competency (13.9% "very good," etc.) (130). This data seems protracted and overemphasized, especially when many specific and quirky examples about the use of the language go unspoken. Okrent's anecdotes mention several, of course, but another such case can be seen on an episode of BBC's *Planet Word*, where one speaker (d'Armond Speers) explains to host Stephen Fry how difficult it was to teach his son Klingon as a 'native' language because, while there are words for 'shuttle-craft' and 'phaser,' there are no extant Klingon words for basic household items. Reportedly, the experiment failed when Speers's child eventually refused to speak the language, reinforcing to the authors' conclusion here that the language cannot survive unless its users assume creative control (132).

Chapter 6, "Gaming Language and Language Games" by game designer and gaming journalist James Portnow, is one of the collection's treasures. At once professional, confident, and humorous as only a long-time industry-insider can be, Portnow demonstrates the powerful contribution non-academics can make to scholarship, especially during the infancy of a subject's study. Despite what some might assume, invented languages of depth are almost nonexistent among the invented worlds of video games, extensive as the geography, history, and other features of those worlds might be. While there are a great many of what Portnow calls "flavour languages" (140), he identifies only three true languages to date: Gargish (of *Ultima VI*), D'ni (of the *Myst* series), and Logos (of *Tabula Rasa*). Other considerations include a "substitution cipher" (Al-Bhed [of the *Final Fantasy X* franchise], which must be gradually decoded through the discovery of 'Al-Bhed Primers') and gibberish (Simlish [of the *Sims* games]). Two languages of gamers themselves are also considered: Leet (or 1337) which is a sort of "digital calligraphy" where words are written using ASCII characters, and gamer slang, which is explored primarily by Michael Adams's appendix to the chapter.

Apart from exploring these examples in depth, Portnow looks at the nature of invented languages in video games. He identifies five features of a good gaming language, summarized in the examination of Logos: "it is well integrated, it is part of game play without being a requirement of game play, it has a well orchestrated learning curve, and the way it's taught is exciting and fun" (155). It is perhaps because there are so many bases that few games include in-depth languages. Portnow postulates this is also because "games occupy a shorter period of time than other activities (reading books, watching a television series) that include invented languages" (139). This is, however, untrue; the author himself goes on to admit that, with MMOGs (Massive Multiplayer Online Games), "an individual player can easily log thousands of hours during a multi-year engagement with a single game" (151-2). The chapter is nevertheless excellent in that it invites much greater examination of its subject without seeming to neglect it. Such areas to be examined might include the linguistic features of games aside from languages proper (including otherworldly accents in speech [*Final Fantasy XII*], wholly subtitled narratives [*Shadow of the Colossus*, *The Legend of Zelda: Skyward Sword*], and electronic expansions of franchises with invented languages [*Lord of the Rings: War in the North* (see Sims)]. Portnow's conclusion states that "[g]ames stand now where film stood at the turn of the last century, on the verge of making the transition from an entertainment to an art form" (158). With an industry whose products now both outbudget and outsell those of film, the results of this transition will be exciting to witness.

Chapter 7 is titled "'Oirish' Inventions: James Joyce, Samuel Beckett, Paul Muldoon," written by Stephen Watt of Indiana University. It looks at some of the ways in which Joyce, Beckett, and Muldoon, allegedly dissatisfied with both the English and Irish languages, experimented with different forms of literary expression in order to, as Watt argues, "construct a something, [...] something enough to mark Irishness in modern and postmodern literature" (162). The term Watt actually uses is "linguistic invention" (166, etc.), and it seems characterized for the most part by neologicistic enjambment, usually intended to pun. As with such words as *clearobscur* (Joyce), *collapsion* (Beckett), and *Acacacademy* (Muldoon), the writers toy with the sounds, forms, and etymological semantics of words in order to grant their words poetic slippage. One of Muldoon's terms is *conglomewriting*, which defines the shared style well (179). Watt's emphasis is understandably on Joyce, particularly *Finnegans Wake*. His position on the eccentric opus is deferential, arguing not only for the brilliance of its opacity, but also that Joyce—as with Beckett and Muldoon—chose to tailor his expression in such a way because existing language could not adequately express his ideas.

The chapter does not belong in this collection. Its inclusion directly after Portnow's contribution makes this starkly clear. First of all, and despite both

Adams's and Watt's attempts to characterize this sort of linguistic gimmickry as a type of invented language, the result is clearly a form of *wordplay*, and not—save through nonchalance—comparable to the invented linguistic systems for which the book is named and in whose interest it is marketed. If indeed wordplay were to be offered as a consideration here, a chapter on the works of Rabelais would certainly take precedence over Joyce, though countless earlier works in English alone, including *Beowulf*, are also full of *paronomasia*, neologistic or otherwise. A more thorough justification for inclusion would nevertheless be required, preferably one emphasizing the rhetorical nature of the technique. Another reason to disqualify this chapter is its style. Whereas the rest of *From Elvish to Klingon* remains both accessible and specific, "'Oirish' Inventions" is neither. Its language, material, and argumentation bespeak a postmodernist academic literary critic content to frolic with his peers in semiotic solvent. Its single reference to Tolkien and Klingon (referred to in that way) is tacked-on (162), as seem its references to Adams's corresponding appendix on Synthetic Scots (which is vastly more relevant to this book than the chapter itself).

The final and longest contribution is "Revitalized Languages as Invented Languages" by Suzanne Romaine. Romaine has published widely on minority languages, including both the moribund and revitalized varieties. For the most part, the chapter focuses on the industry of *revitalization*—that is, the stimulation, promotion, and often purification of tongues and dialects that never ceased to be spoken from historical times in some form—and touches upon *revival* only in the case of Cornish, whose last native speaker is believed to have died in the late-eighteenth century. This distinction is my own; Romaine's categories are blurry, which turns out to be necessary when it comes to including a consideration of Irish, Welsh, Hebrew, Māori, Hawaiian, and other, natural languages in a book called *From Elvish to Klingon*. The chapter likely belongs here more than the preceding one, but its case for inclusion is poorly made. If Romaine's purpose is to show how revitalized languages are both malleable and manipulated, she succeeds. This does not in itself mean they are 'invented,' nor that they are different from languages such as English. What is curious is that Romaine admits the latter several times, but she does not go on to consider the repercussions for her thesis.

While this treatment of revitalized languages cannot, like some, be considered "scornful" (see George and Broderick 644), the chapter seems indifferent to the emotions and loyalties at the very heart of its topic. This may be a result of the distance academia often puts between itself and its study material, or it may be that Romaine's endeavor to align revitalized languages with constructed ones led to some rather careless comparisons. Some are, to put it bluntly, outrageous:

Recognition that language can be used for promoting or changing the social, cultural, and political order leads to conscious intervention and manipulation of the form of the language, its status, and its uses. In this sense, then, the idea of a modern standard Hebrew as the language of a secular Jewish state sprang from the mind of Eliezer Ben-Yehuda, no less than Klingon did from the imagination of its inventor Mark Okrand. [...] Speaking or narrating in a feminist woman-made language in [Suzette Haden] Elgin's *Native Tongue* (1984) becomes a liberating force for women dominated by a patriarchal society in the twenty-third century, just as Irish became and continues to be the language of resistance in the struggle against British rule. (215)

The less said about this, the better. It is nevertheless disturbing that Postmodernism has become such a defining ideology within the liberal arts—and possibly that research has become so bibliocentric—that a linguistic study might compare real and fictional peoples in earnest. By the conclusion of the chapter, the ability of language to hold value is questioned into dismissal simply because it is human beings who must put value there. Though an exponent of the Saussurean *status quo*, such an attitude represents an irony here, antithetical in many ways to the mindset that would seek to invent, revive, or otherwise revitalize a language.

From Elvish to Klingon includes some good contributions and stimulating insights all around. Each of its papers might stand alone in appropriate journals, and Adams's supplementary appendices provide engaging afterthoughts. In the end, however, these scattered merits are hard-pressed to redeem the collection thematically. Even should one forgive its title and presentation, the book suffers from overextension. Invaluable space is sacrificed in the attempt to circumscribe its range, while many of the papers themselves seem unsure of their positions therein. Either too much was attempted, or too little. The book is nevertheless one more step toward legitimacy in the study of invented languages, and one hopes the next contribution will not be long in coming.

—Harley J. Sims

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MYTHOPOEIC NARNIA: MEMORY, METAPHOR, AND METAMORPHOSIS IN THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA. Salwa Khoddam. Hamden, CT: Winged Lion Press, 2011. 9781936294114. 250 pp. \$16.99.

In *The Magician's Nephew*, the children Polly and Digory carefully mark the one pool in the Wood Beyond the World that leads back to home. If they had not done so, their exploration of the other pools could have become endless and aimless. The scene is a useful caution to scholars: it is all too easy to become distracted by the richness of C.S. Lewis's *Chronicles of Narnia* and lose sight of one's intended destination.

Salwa Khoddam's *Mythopoeic Narnia* is a book that gets lost, setting out to do too much and ending up distracted, unfocused, and ultimately unsuccessful. The subtitle "Memory, Metaphor, and Metamorphoses in *The Chronicles of Narnia*" hints at the ambitious scope of Khoddam's analysis, and her thesis as articulated in the book itself is even broader. In the Preface, she notes that the *Chronicles* drew her "to literary and art works, to philosophy and mythology, to the Bible" and that she hopes "to share with readers these traditions that have enriched [her] imagination [...] to describe what they are, follow their development, and answer such questions regarding how Lewis uses these traditions in his own way to support his themes" (ii). In summing up, she says that her work is intended "to uncover some of the 'learned' sources and traditions of the images (iconographical at times) in the *Chronicles* and show how they enriched the theme of metamorphosis/*theosis* in each of the seven chronicles—what in mythical terms is termed metamorphosis and in Christian terms *theosis*" (218).

The Introduction and Chapter 1 attempt to address preliminary questions, defining mythopoeia and establishing memory, metaphor, and

metamorphosis as elements of Lewis's use of mythopoeia. Chapters 2-9 provide thematic analyses of various books in the Chronicles, and Chapter 10 attempts to tie together the various threads with the "universal theme of Metamorphoses [sic]" (202). The word "attempts" is key: *Mythopoeic Narnia* is a frustrating book that hints at a potential level of quality that is, alas, never achieved.

The strength of the book is found in Khoddam's ideas about key themes and structures in the Chronicles. For instance, she provides an insightful, if limited, analysis of the role of memory in *Prince Caspian* in Chapter 3, garden imagery in *The Horse and His Boy* in Chapter 5, and the use of Cair Paravel as the City of God in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* in Chapter 6. Similarly, Khoddam's idea of the significance of "pageants" in the Chronicles is one that is well worth taking up. However, she does not develop these or any of her ideas sufficiently.

The chapters are often unfocused, with overly broad statements that render the argument unconvincing; for instance, Khoddam broadens the term "metamorphosis" to include change in general, including "natural, or organic change" (30), the building of cities (30), magic and miracles taken broadly (33), and spiritual growth (145). As a result, the term becomes so diffuse as to be useless. Likewise, "pageant" is used so broadly as to be applicable to any scene described in detail, whether static or with action. Khoddam also frequently directs readers to earlier or later chapters for a fuller discussion of key points, while never delivering on the promise of a clear explanation of her points; this habit of cross-referencing without development has the effect of making the book seem more like a sketch of a future project than a complete argument.

However, the most serious problem with *Mythopoeic Narnia* is the ineffective and sometimes even careless use of sources. To begin with, the scholarship that Khoddam cites in support of her argument is uneven in both quality and relevance. For example, she makes extensive use of the work of non-Lewisian scholar Mircea Eliade, yet makes only a token reference to Michael Ward's *Planet Narnia*, although the latter has direct bearing on her thesis and could have been used to develop her analysis considerably. The idea of including illustrations to support the text is a good one, but the actual choices for inclusion seem almost random and are largely irrelevant to the argument.

More seriously, cited sources are too often used poorly. For instance, to support her argument that Lewis is interested in *theosis* Khoddam provides a brief quote from "The Weight of Glory": "There are no ordinary people. You have never talked to a mere mortal" (qtd. Khoddam 36). However, in the fuller context of Lewis's essay it is clear that Lewis is not in fact addressing *theosis*, but rather the broader issue of the immortality of the soul: "There are no *ordinary* people. You have never talked to a mere mortal. Nations, cultures, arts, civilizations—these are mortal, and their life is to ours as the life of a gnat. But it

is immortals whom we joke with, marry, snub, and exploit—immortal horrors or everlasting splendours” (Lewis 46). Similarly, Khoddam makes extensive use of Tolkien’s idea of *euclastrophe*, but oversimplifies the definition. It is not merely “the happy ending” (Khoddam 8), but more fully the “sudden joyous ‘turn’ [...] a sudden and miraculous grace [that] does not deny the existence of *dysclastrophe*, of sorrow and failure” (Tolkien 68).

Other references call into question Khoddam’s attention to her primary texts. In her discussion of memory in *Prince Caspian*, she writes that the children, coming to Cair Paravel, “spot apple trees—from the same tree that was planted in *LWW*, whose fruit, like the silver apples in *MN*, was and will prove to be an agent of healing and regeneration” (56). However, the reference to the planting of the apple trees does not appear in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* at all; it is part of the backstory that is introduced for the first time in *Prince Caspian*.

The book is also afflicted with more basic errors. Spelling and typographical errors are frequent, including some in direct quotes. A footnote states that Tolkien “made his hobbits with large feet so they can travel by foot and appreciate the land” (15), which is factually incorrect, though it is not evident whether the mistake is in the cited source or is Khoddam’s own. Elsewhere, she refers to the “Emperor-Of-the-Sea” (86) rather than the “Emperor-Beyond-the-Sea” (*LWW* 138). No single error is damning in itself, but taken as whole, the result is that it is difficult to have confidence in the quality of the scholarship here.

Probably the best way to look at *Mythopoeic Narnia* is as the rough draft of a future book. The strengths of the book are genuine, but remain largely conceptual; the problems of the book are numerous and, in total, serious. The problems could be addressed in an overhaul of the book, but are more than sufficient to make it impossible to recommend the book as currently published.

—Holly Ordway

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ABIDING IN THE SANCTUARY: THE WAITE-TRINICK TAROT: A CHRISTIAN MYSTICAL TAROT (1917–1923). Tali Goodwin and Marcus Katz. Preface by Mary K. Greer. Keswick: Forge Press/blurb.com, 2011. 186 pp. including 65 full-page Tarot images, 23 full pages of support images, 2 diagrams with color thumbnails, and 4 charts. \$97.00.

IT IS A WELL-ESTABLISHED FACT THAT CHARLES WILLIAMS became a member of Arthur Edward Waite's (1857–1942) Fellowship of the Rosy Cross in 1917 and was inducted into the innermost and secret part of that order in 1927. Waite was privy to the rituals and secret practices of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, founded on March 1, 1888, by William Robert Woodman (1828–1891), William Westcott (1848–1925), and S.L. (MacGregor) Mathers (1854–1918), but ultimately favored the path of Christian mysticism over that of magic. With the help of artist Pamela Colman Smith (1878–1951), Waite created the *Rider-Waite Tarot* (1909), which became the most popular Tarot deck of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries; in 1910 he published a guidebook for its use titled *The Pictorial Key to the Tarot*. Though he knew the correspondences the Golden Dawn developed between the 22 Tarot trumps—the “fifth” suit added to the regular playing deck to create the Tarot gaming deck in the fifteenth century and later imbued with esoteric significance—and the paths on the Cabbalistic Tree of Life, Waite did not include any overt references to Cabbala in his first deck. He also expressed contradictory opinions regarding the validity and usefulness of such correspondences.

Williams shared Waite's interest in Tarot, as is evident in his novel *The Greater Trumps* (1932), as well as Waite's love of ritual, and readers may have wondered to what extent he shared Waite's apparent ambivalence on the subject of Jewish mysticism and Tarot. *Abiding in the Sanctuary*, however, proves definitively that Waite found his own meaningful connection between the Tree of Life and the cards, as he went so far as to commission c. 1919 a second set of 23 Tarot images, most of which were created by artist John Brahm's Trinick, and two by W.F. Pippet between 1919 and 1921. In 1973, Waite's executors bequeathed the results of this commission, including preliminary sketches, to the British Museum; the museum's records indicate that no one ever requested to look at this bequest. Black-and-white photographs of the images are held in a few private collections, some of which surfaced in Ronald Decker and Michael Dummett's *History of the Occult Tarot 1870–1970* (2002). When Marcus Katz discovered some similar photographs on eBay, he and Tali Goodwin set out on a quest to find the originals and the result is *Abiding in the Sanctuary*.

Abiding in the Sanctuary is a work-in-progress publication that is intended to make the core primary source material immediately available:

because of it, black-and-white jpegs of the Waite-Trinick deck are now posted on the British Museum website for research purposes. The book itself includes

- a preface by Tarot scholar and expert Mary K. Greer;
- a personal account of Katz and Goodwin's search for and discovery of Waite's second Tarot;
- biographical sections on those individuals associated with the creation of the new Tarot, including Waite, Trinick, Pippet, H.M. Duncan, and, less directly, Williams;
- full color and black-and-white reproductions of the Waite-Trinick Tarot and related developmental sketches;
- commentary and relevant text annotations taken from Westcott's translation of the *Sepher Yetzirah* or *Book of Formation* (1887), Waite's poems, and other sources; and
- other supporting color and black-and-white plates and discussion.

Katz and Goodwin believe that Waite may have intended to complete a full set of 32 images to correspond to the 22 paths and 10 *Sephiroth* of the Tree of Life, but even the initial set of 23—the standard 22 trumps plus an image for “Da’ath”—remained unfinished as five of the images are incomplete. They do not believe these trumps were intended for use as cards, but rather “They were likely hung in the temple and a set of plates [...] created from the images, possibly for personal study by members of the FRC” (24). Even more intriguing is Katz's discovery that the assignments Waite made of the trumps to the Tree of Life paths differs from those that were standard in the Golden Dawn. While this new arrangement does not match any that might be inferred from *The Greater Trumps*, the revelation of Waite's second Tarot, designed and executed for ritual purposes during the years of his known association with Williams, is one that could potentially lead to a better understanding of *The Greater Trumps*, as well as Williams's other novels.

—Emily E. Auger



TOLKIEN AND WALES: LANGUAGE, LITERATURE, AND IDENTITY. Carl Phelpstead. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2011. ISBN 9780708323724. 183 pp. Hardback £95, paperback £19.95.

CHAPTER ONE OF THIS STUDY ON THE AFFINITY THAT J.R.R. Tolkien felt for Wales offers much biographical detail to show the background to his affection for, and fascination with, the Welsh language. The focus here is on the O'Donnell lecture that Tolkien gave in 1955, one day after the publication of *The Return of the King*, called "English and Welsh."

Phelpstead begins with an in-depth description of Tolkien's "Celtic library," expressing his surprise at the lack of academic scholarship on these sources—an area that has, indeed, remained relatively untouched until now. What is also surprising is the fact that, according to the notes he wrote when preparing for the O'Donnell lecture, Tolkien was apparently able to discern differences in regional dialects of Welsh despite having learned the language only from books. This, and his translation in 1923 of a portion of a text in medieval Welsh into Middle English, serves to demonstrate Tolkien's extraordinary linguistic ability. For readers of Tolkien's creative writing, the most interesting aspect of this particular translation is his rendering of "hoc terrarium angula" (this corner of the earth) into "pisse middeleardes hurne." "Middellearde," says Phelpstead, was a "normal Middle English term for this world" (14). At this point, Phelpstead embarks upon an exploration of linguistics. Unfortunately, he uses a number of linguistic terms that, lacking an in-text explanation, may leave some readers rather confused. A quick Google search of terms such as 'i-mutation' and 'i-affection' help to solve this problem, but it does break up the flow of reading.

Next, this chapter examines the interaction of philology and creativity in Tolkien's work. The coming of the Hobbits into the Shire (as recounted in the Prologue) parallels the mass Anglo-Saxon migration of the 5th and 6th centuries. Settlers led from Bree by the Fallowhide brothers Marcho and Blanco correspond to the Anglo-Saxons Hengest and Horsa—as discussed at length by Tom Shippey in his *Road to Middle-earth*. In Appendix F of *The Lord of the Rings*, Tolkien is explicit regarding the intentional connections he draws between the imagined linguistic translation of *The Lord of the Rings* from "The Red Book" and the use of deliberately non-English sounding nomenclature. Phelpstead argues that this use of a Celtic feel to the style of writing, as mentioned by Tolkien in Appendix F, "illustrates effectively the influence Tolkien's love of Welsh and his scholarly engagement with the language over many years had on his creative writing" (19-20). The way in which, within this first chapter, Phelpstead engages with these connections between Tolkien's creative writing and his interest in Welsh is both persuasive and interesting, boding well for the rest of the book.

The second chapter opens with Phelpstead explaining his own linguistic preferences (German over French, for example), which have much to do with the *sounds* of the language. Much like Tolkien, Phelpstead has a fascination for phonology. In the lecture "English and Welsh," Tolkien attempts to account for these linguistic preferences, arguing that they are not purely subjective. He claims that there is a general inability to pin down satisfactorily a definition of "linguistic beauty," which may explain the wide variations to be found in the many different languages of the world. The lecture "English and Welsh," Phelpstead reveals, is Tolkien's discussion of a theory of linguistic aesthetics.

According to the lecture, Tolkien's own linguistic preferences led him to favor Greek over French, as it offers "fluidity . . . punctuated by hardness" (qtd. 23). He enjoyed Spanish, mostly due to its relationship with Latin; Gothic, however, was the first language that Tolkien encountered that he truly *loved*. Finnish, a language that was to have a great influence on Tolkien's creation of the Elvish language Quenya, gave him "overwhelming pleasure" (qtd. 23). His greatest preference, though, according to the lecture, was for Welsh.

In this chapter, Phelpstead shows that Tolkien's professed preference for Welsh is not limited to this one lecture. He points to other sources, such as his essay "A Secret Vice" and some letters, including a letter to W.H. Auden in June 1955 which mirrors closely the contents of the O'Donnell lecture. Rather surprisingly, Phelpstead discloses, Tolkien's love for Welsh did not lead to a similar enjoyment of the Irish language. In fact, he seems to have regarded Irish with antipathy, which makes his affinity for Welsh all the more particular. Tolkien spent more time in Ireland than in Wales but found the language "wholly unattractive" (qtd. 25-26). Phelpstead believes that this may stem from Tolkien's inability to learn Irish, despite owning around thirty grammars, readers and editions of texts in that language. In fact, Phelpstead points to evidence that Tolkien, in 1937, expressed distaste for all things Celtic due to what he called their "fundamental unreason" (qtd. 27). However, by 1950 he was hoping that his *legendarium* would possess "the fair elusive beauty that some call Celtic" (*Letters* 144).

At this point it becomes quite clear that there has been some academic disagreement between Phelpstead and Dimitra Fimi, who has also written extensively on the Celtic connections to Tolkien's work. Phelpstead states that Fimi over-simplifies the situation when she argues that Tolkien ceased to see Celtic and Anglo-Saxon as opposites in favor of valuing them both as co-invaders and co-inhabitants of Britain by the time of the O'Donnell lecture. Instead, Phelpstead argues, there is plenty of evidence of Tolkien's love for Wales and Welsh language/literature before 1955 and that he was still, at this point, expressing the same bitter response to the 1937 criticism of his work as being too Celtic. Phelpstead takes issue with a number of Fimi's theories on the Celtic

influence on Tolkien's work—it would be extremely interesting, having read Phelpstead's side of the argument, to hear Fimi's response to his criticisms.

Chapter Three—"Inventing Language"—begins by commenting on the similarities between Welsh and Sindarin, which Phelpstead finds to be the natural result of Tolkien's enjoyment of the ways in which Welsh matched his own linguistic tastes and preferences. He then assesses Tolkien's well-known claim that Middle-earth was invented solely to provide context for his invented languages. Given that Fimi has recently demonstrated the independent beginnings of Tolkien's creative and linguistic writing, Phelpstead does not fully accept Tolkien's assertion of the one existing merely to contextualize the other (Fimi 63-7). To explore this further, he delves into Tolkien's essay "A Secret Vice," originally delivered as a talk in 1931 but not published until 1983. In this talk, Tolkien explores the aesthetic pleasure to be had from inventing languages, first describing his childhood experiences with Animalic and Nevbosh and then moving on to a discussion of his enjoyment of Greek, Welsh and Finnish.

Phelpstead then mines Tolkien's letters for further relevant commentary on language, where he discovers numerous references to the influence of what he refers to as "natural languages" (43) on Tolkien's invented languages. Apart from Welsh and Finnish and their effects on the Elvish languages, Phelpstead also discusses the Semitic roots of the Dwarvish language Khuzdul. This leads, in what is unsurprisingly the largest section in this chapter, to a far more detailed examination of the influence of Welsh on Sindarin, and Phelpstead offers plenty of evidence of the links between these two languages. These range from syntactic connections to the similarities in phonemes and the phonological changes as experienced by the two languages.

Phelpstead concludes this first section of the book by reasserting Tolkien's emphasis on linguistic aesthetics, which, he contends, holds similar importance for many of his readers, as demonstrated by both academic and fan interest in the philological roots of Tolkien's invented languages. Leading into the second section of the book, Phelpstead also comments on the significance of the literature of Wales, especially medieval literature in both Welsh and Latin, as a source of Tolkien's fiction.

Chapter Four begins with Phelpstead assessing the contribution of Celtic mythology to Tolkien's creative writing, as well as the contribution that Tolkien himself made to Celtic scholarship. Phelpstead pays particular attention to Tolkien's "Note on the name 'Nodens,'" showing how Tolkien used what is known as the "comparative method"—in which scholars piece together "divine activities and attributes from a range of sources separated in time and place" (54)—to construct this report, which was produced for the excavations at Lydney Park in Gloucestershire in 1928-29.

Phelpstead offers a wealth of interesting detail on how Tolkien explored etymological and comparative literary evidence that he gathered from the name of this Celtic god. Phelpstead refers to Fimi's question of why Tolkien—a professor of Anglo-Saxon—was asked to contribute this report rather than John Fraser, who was the Jesus Professor of Celtic at Oxford at this time. Phelpstead believes that the answer lies with R.G. Collingwood, philosopher and historian of Roman Britain, who knew Tolkien well and may have recommended him. In addition, Phelpstead argues that a study of the name 'Nodens' called for a command of both Celtic and Germanic philology, in which Tolkien was undeniably an expert.

Phelpstead then moves on to a consideration of manuscript sources of prose narratives such as the *Mabinogion*, a text that Tolkien studied in detail. Of greatest interest to many readers of Tolkien is the fact that one of the manuscripts that contains the tales of the *Mabinogion* is called "The Red Book of Hergest"—a name which certainly brings to mind the Red Book of Westmarch, the fictional source of *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*. In one of the most interesting sections of this chapter, Phelpstead tracks Tolkien's references to the Red Book of Westmarch, first alluded to in the note to the second edition of *The Hobbit*, published in 1951. He examines details of this Red Book as offered by Tolkien in the Prologue to *The Lord of the Rings* and demonstrates the parallels between this fictional text and the Red Book of Hergest. Phelpstead also reveals that several other medieval Welsh manuscripts "besides those of the *Mabinogion* are known by the colour of their original bindings" (62), but that the Red Book of Hergest is the most likely source for Tolkien's choice of color for his fictional text. As evidence for this assertion, Phelpstead cites the size and importance of the *Mabinogion* text, as well as the fact that it was named after the place it was kept before it was donated to Jesus College, Oxford: "Hergest Court, near Kington Rural in Herefordshire, one of the counties of England bordering Wales and thus forming part of the Marches or, as one might say, the Westmarch of England" (63).

Phelpstead prefers these explanations of the origins of Tolkien's Red Book over that offered by Verlyn Flieger, who argues that the discovery of the Winchester manuscript of Sir Thomas Malory's Arthurian cycle in 1934 had an effect on Tolkien's conception of the Red Book of Westmarch (Flieger). Phelpstead contends that Flieger's theory is not convincing, as the links between the Red Books of Hergest and Westmarch are stronger, offering as evidence the fact that, in contrast to the other two books, Malory's work contains no verses.

The next section of the chapter, which is disappointingly brief, examines potential Celtic sources for the One Ring. Phelpstead admits that stories including rings that confer invisibility on their owner are hardly rare in European and other myth and folklore but, like John D. Rateliff before him,

offers the *Mabinogion* tale of “The Lady of the Fountain” as a likely source, especially given Tolkien’s interest in these particular stories (Rateliff 174-82). I would have liked to have seen more on this; it does seem rather strange that Phelpstead should mention one of the most important objects in the Middle-earth legendarium, only to dispense of it in one short paragraph. It might, perhaps, have been better to leave it out entirely rather than to have offered it such brief treatment.

The next section of the chapter deals with possible sources for Tolkien’s Elves. Having moved away from the Victorian and Edwardian Fairies of his earliest works, Tolkien then drew on the tradition of medieval and Celtic writing like *Sir Orfeo* and the *Mabinogion* to create the Elves that begin to appear from *The Book of Lost Tales* onwards. Here, Phelpstead is in agreement with Fimi that Tolkien was specifically trying to create an ‘English’ mythology for Elves, as he presents them as more authentic than the “garbled” versions found in Irish and Welsh traditions (*BoLIII* 290). Finally, he looks at dragons, that staple of the fantasy genre, which feature regularly in Tolkien’s stories. These include Smaug, of course, as well as Ancalagon the Black and Glaurung from *The Silmarillion*, Chrysophylax in *Farmer Giles of Ham* and the Great White Dragon of *Roverandom*. Although Phelpstead recognises that the most important sources for Tolkien’s dragons were almost certainly from Germanic, rather than Celtic, legend, there are still sufficient references to dragons in the Welsh mythology with which Tolkien was so familiar to offer these as an important subsidiary source.

Phelpstead then mines texts such as the ninth-century *Historia Britonum*, Geoffrey of Monmouth’s *Historia regum Britanniae* and the *Mabinogion* tale of “Lludd and Llefelys” for dragon-lore that may have influenced Tolkien’s writing. The most convincing case that is suggested here is that of *Farmer Giles of Ham*, which appears to offer a number of Welsh references, including the fact that it gives “Venedotia” as the home of Chrysophylax the dragon. This, according to Phelpstead, “securely locates the dragon’s home in north-west Wales; the kingdom of Gwynedd was called Venedotia in medieval Latin” (68).

Using references, at the end of this chapter, to the mock scholarly Foreword to *Farmer Giles of Ham*, in which Tolkien alludes to King Arthur, Phelpstead moves naturally into Chapter Five, which considers Tolkien’s engagement with Arthurian literature. He begins with Geoffrey of Monmouth, whose life, Phelpstead tells us, bore striking similarities to Tolkien’s. His magnum opus was the *Historia regnum Britanniae*, completed in 1138, which has its roots in the Arthurian tradition in Welsh and Welsh-Latin texts. Like Tolkien, Geoffrey claims that his work is a translation of an older text but, also like Tolkien, this is not the case as the bulk of the work is entirely his own invention. More than a third of the *Historia* is devoted to a narrative of the life of King Arthur, which he appears to have created from the “brief allusions to him in

earlier sources and, presumably, folklore" (70). Tolkien alludes to this part of the *Historia* in his edition of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, a collaborative work with E.V. Gordon. His Welsh roots notwithstanding, Geoffrey's work demonstrates his preferred connections to the Anglo-Norman elite, even going so far as to declare that "the Welsh are so called and no longer known as Britons because they have proved unworthy of their ancestors' name" (71). Despite this, the *Historia* was translated into Welsh and became, Phelpstead reveals, the "most widely copied of all the medieval Welsh narrative texts" (71).

Phelpstead's next task is to show how Tolkien used this source for his own creative writing. Here, he draws on Randel Helms who, in 1981, wrote persuasively on the parallels between one of the stories—"Culhwch and Olwen"—and Tolkien's story of Beren and Lúthien (Helms 15-17). At this point, Phelpstead also brings in Alex Lewis and Elizabeth Currie's recent study of Arthurian sources in Tolkien's work. Although he praises their wide knowledge of Tolkienian Arthurian text and refers to their work as both spirited and ingenious, Phelpstead offers some severe criticisms of the way in which they have "too ready an assumption that if a particular medieval text is in some way (more or less) similar to Tolkien's and *could* have been read by him it *must* be a source: as a consequence, they leave little to Tolkien's own imagination" (73). In Phelpstead's opinion, Lewis and Currie are right to draw greater attention to Tolkien's Arthurian sources but he finds many of their theories "unconvincing" (see note 6, p.144) and their case undermined by overstating the influence of such sources.

With the help of Tom Shippey's studies of the connections between Tolkien's work and various translations of the *Historia*, Phelpstead discovers resonances that are to be found more within the *language* of Tolkien's work, as well as within characters and plot. Words such as 'dwwimmerlaik,' 'Dwimordene,' and 'Dwimorberg' from *The Lord of the Rings* are echoes of the language to be found in a thirteenth-century English version of the *Historia*. Perhaps unsurprisingly, Phelpstead finds most to discuss in Tolkien's scholarly work on *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, in which may be found "detailed evidence of Tolkien's knowledge of medieval Welsh language and literature and of related Arthurian literature in other languages" (77).

The remainder of this chapter serves to emphasize, should this be required, Tolkien's extraordinary affinity for and appreciation of medieval literature. Phelpstead shows how Tolkien's knowledge of such texts enabled him to produce both scholarly and creative writing. This includes, besides his Middle-earth narratives, *The Legend of Sigurd and Gudrún*, as well as an as yet unpublished alliterative poem on "The Fall of Arthur," still eagerly awaited by Tolkien scholars. *The Lord of the Rings* itself, whilst not explicitly an Arthurian

text, does make use of certain Arthurian motifs and it is clear that this literary tradition had some influence on the creation of aspects of the narrative.

Phelpstead examines Verlyn Flieger's suggestion that certain motifs in *The Lord of the Rings* find their origins in Arthurian tradition: the 'tutulary wizard,' the 'hidden king,' and his sword. Phelpstead spends most time on the tutulary wizard, discussing possible parallels between Gandalf and Merlin. First acknowledging that Tolkien himself offered an alternative source of inspiration for Gandalf, in the shape of a postcard painting by Josef Madelener of a white-bearded old man in a wide-brimmed hat and cloak, Phelpstead discusses the many similarities between Gandalf and Merlin. He concludes, fairly persuasively, that the morally ambiguous, politically motivated Merlin of Arthurian tradition has more in common with Saruman than Gandalf.

Phelpstead then turns his attention to Aragorn, the 'hidden king,' whose character suggests resonances of Arthur himself. Aragorn is a returning king, who bears a sword of great importance and delivers the land from evil. Interestingly, Phelpstead puts forward the character of Frodo as also echoing the traditional Arthurian hero: he, too, bears a sword of some importance, and his actions in taking the Ring to Mordor also deliver the land from evil. Phelpstead concludes, however, that neither Aragorn nor Frodo truly epitomize the Arthurian hero. Unlike Arthur, Aragorn does not taste the bitterness of ultimate defeat. The withdrawal of Frodo from the world has more in common with the end of Arthur's story, as his departure into the West mirrors Arthur's removal to Avalon. Frodo, though, is not a returning or hidden king come to claim the kingdom as rightfully his. There is always a limit to how much one should assume about the author—for example, the extent to which the author's reading has influenced his/her writing, what resulting resonances may be found, and how much of this is deliberate. In this chapter, Phelpstead offers a carefully considered view of the influence of Arthurian literature on Tolkien's writing but resists the temptation to map one onto the other. The reader is left with the impression that Tolkien was extremely well-versed in Celtic, Arthurian and other medieval literature, drew occasionally on elements of these that were appropriate for his writing but did not simply set out to write a narrative that could then be placed within these traditions. Of the three, in Phelpstead's opinion, Celtic language and literature seems to have had the greatest influence, but the legends of other lands certainly had their place also. As Tolkien himself said, in his long letter to Milton Waldman (here quoted by Phelpstead), he was also knowledgeable in other legends such as "Greek [...] and Romance, Germanic, Scandinavian, and Finnish" (qtd. 86) As Phelpstead says, the reason for Tolkien not adhering to one tradition more than another seems to lie in his declared desire to produce a mythology for England, something he felt even Arthurian legends failed to do.

In Chapter Six, Phelpstead investigates the Breton Celtic literary tradition, to which Tolkien's *The Lay of Aotrou and Itroun* is indebted. He begins with a short biography of Gwyn Jones who, in addition to his academic career as professor of English Language and Literature at first Aberystwyth and then Cardiff University, was also the founder/editor of *The Welsh Review*. This periodical, which ran from 1939-1948 with a break for the paper shortage of the Second World War, was significant for its provision of a forum for writers in English from Wales. Jones and Tolkien became friends when Tolkien visited Aberystwyth in his role as external examiner for the University of Wales (1944-5) and they had much in common; both were academics who wrote scholarly and creative pieces and they shared an interest in the Celtic literary tradition. It is thanks to Jones that Tolkien's *Lay of Aotrou and Itroun* was published, as it appeared in *The Welsh Review* in December 1945. What is surprising about this, at first glance, is the fact that *The Welsh Review* bore the subtitle "A Quarterly Journal About Wales, its People, and their Activities" (91). Tolkien's Lay—a poem set in medieval Brittany—seems to fit none of these criteria. Phelpstead spends most of the remainder of this chapter explaining that, in fact, the publication context does not suit the poem and that it was published in *The Welsh Review* primarily because Tolkien and Jones were friends. Phelpstead recounts the story of the Lay in some detail—this is very helpful, as it would be unfamiliar to many readers of Tolkien, due to the fact that it has never been reprinted since its appearance in *The Welsh Review*.

We are then told of Tolkien's great interest in the Breton culture, as evidenced by the number of books on this topic in his personal collection, now held in the English Faculty Library in Oxford. Tolkien also studied and prepared his own edition of *Sir Orfeo*, a late thirteenth- or early fourteenth-century poem in the Breton tradition. Phelpstead offers the reader some excerpts from this text, and shows how it influenced some important aspects of Tolkien's own creative writing. The Elves of Middle-earth seem to come from its faerie realm and Phelpstead concurs with Carl Hostetter's view that elements of the tale of Beren and Lúthien and the return of Aragorn to Gondor can be seen within *Sir Orfeo* (Hostetter).

In the last section of this chapter, Phelpstead draws a number of parallels between Breton language and literature and *The Lord of the Rings* but, ultimately, concludes that *The Welsh Review* was not the most obvious home for *The Lay of Aotrou and Itroun*. The reader may, as a result, struggle to see the links between this chapter and the rest of the book, as its sole connection seems to be in the fact that this one piece of writing was placed in a Welsh publication, where it did not truly belong. The discussion of Tolkien's knowledge of Breton literary tradition is interesting, certainly, but this chapter does feel as misplaced in this book as Tolkien's Lay was in *The Welsh Review*. The connection to Wales and

Welsh is so slight in this chapter that the reader is left with a feeling of having been pulled away from the main theme of this study and sent off in a different direction. It is a shame, as there are some important things to be said about the influences of Breton language and literature on Tolkien's work, but this chapter may have fared better as a standalone essay, or within a different book dealing with Tolkien's connections to medieval literature in general.

The final chapter looks at Wales and Welsh from the point of view of national identity and begins with a brief history of the various Acts of Union that brought the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland into being. As Phelpstead says, one might surmise that Tolkien, with his love of Welsh and his own "sense of regional identity as a west Midlander, Mercian or Hwiccan," might have led him to "favour the concept of 'Britishness' as a way of uniting the two in a single identity" (108). In fact, as Phelpstead makes clear in this chapter, Tolkien detested this understanding of 'British' and believed that "true devotion to both English and Welsh requires that their differences be celebrated rather than obscured by labelling them both as British" (109).

Phelpstead then considers Tolkien's writing in the light of Humphrey Carpenter's assertion that the ultimate aim was to create a "mythology for England," an idea that has inspired a number of academic articles exploring whether this was indeed the case. Phelpstead examines this claim through a consideration of Tolkien's own sense of self-identity, which led him to prefer the label of 'English' over 'British,' but even more the specific identity of the region of the west Midlands of England. The next section of the chapter explores the effect that Tolkien's identification with this particular region had on his writing, as well as how this informed his ability to pinpoint the precise geographical origin of Old and Middle English literary texts such as *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* and the *Ancrene Riwele*. All of this, Phelpstead contends, expresses Tolkien's strong sense of regional identity that was firmly situated in the west Midlands or, more specifically, Hwicca, the south-west corner of the Anglo-Saxon kingdom of Mercia.

What comes out of this chapter is a sense of the value that Tolkien placed on linguistic diversity, as is evident in both his academic and creative writing. The languages of the different Peoples of Middle-earth demonstrate the ways in which he saw language and identity as being inextricably linked. Phelpstead then endeavors to connect this to Tolkien's love for Wales by commenting on the geographical proximity of the west Midlands to the borders of Wales, here attempting to unite the main theme of this study—Tolkien and Wales—with this fiercely regional self-identification. Tolkien, we are told, "valued the local and the particular as against the imperial and the global because he sensed a close connection between identity and the local environment" (116). This, Phelpstead declares, at least partly explains Tolkien's

love for Wales and the Welsh language as, like the Elves in Lothlórien: “Whether they’ve made the land or the land’s made them, it’s hard to say” (*LotR* II.6.360).

This final chapter argues persuasively that Tolkien favored a sense of regional identity and valued the resulting linguistic diversity. What is less persuasive, perhaps, is the relationship that Phelpstead attempts to draw between this and Tolkien’s love for Wales and Welsh. Given the stated theme of this study, it is only natural that Phelpstead should feel the need to create these connections but, like the previous chapter on Breton, these links do seem rather forced at times. This does not in any way detract from the academic value of Phelpstead’s work, which is both interesting and well-written, but he does not always retain the links to Wales that the reader might expect. Instead, room might have been made for the expansion of certain sections, such as that on the Celtic sources for the One Ring in Chapter Four, which were dealt with rather disappointingly briefly.

Despite these few caveats, this is a book that offers much to both the serious student of Tolkien, as well as those who are simply interested in discovering more about the various influences on Tolkien’s writing. Happily, Phelpstead tends to refrain from the kind of excluding academic jargon that prevents many from accessing some studies on Tolkien, with the exception of a few instances in the earlier chapters, when some explanation of linguistic terminology might have been useful. This work is both interesting and accessible, deserving of a place on the bookshelf of anyone who is interested in learning more about one of the greatest authors of our time.

— Sara Brown

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NORTH WIND: A JOURNAL OF GEORGE MACDONALD STUDIES. #29 (2010). Edited by Fernando Soto and John Pennington. ISSN 0265-7295. <http://www.snc.edu/english/northwind.html>. Available with membership, \$18 annually in US.

VII: AN ANGLO-AMERICAN LITERARY REVIEW. #28 (2011). Edited by Marjorie Lamp Mead et al. ISSN 0271-3012. \$16.50 for US subscribers.

TOLKIEN STUDIES: AN ANNUAL SCHOLARLY REVIEW. #8 (2011). Edited by Douglas A. Anderson, Michael D.C. Drout, and Verlyn Flieger. ISSN 1547-3155. \$60 for US individual subscribers.

NORTH WIND: A JOURNAL OF GEORGE MACDONALD STUDIES has moved into the digital age. The opening article in this issue, by editorial intern Gretchen Panzer and editor John Pennington, "George MacDonald in the Virtual Library: The *North Wind* Digital Archive and the Evolution of MacDonald Scholarship," chronicles *North Wind's* entry into digital humanities scholarship with the digitization of its entire back run, now available online at <http://www.snc.edu/english/nwarchive.html>. The authors take this opportunity to review the history and current state of MacDonald scholarship by looking at trends in their own journal and elsewhere in the field. The Appendix to this issue consists of an article title list in order of publication, with subject headings.

Daniel Gabelman, in "'The Day of All the Year': MacDonald's Christmas Aesthetic," points out that MacDonald refers to Christmas far more frequently than any other church holiday in all of his works, and his accounts of family celebrations of the season are delightfully Dickensian. The author explores the centrality of the Incarnation to MacDonald's imagination, finding that MacDonald's ability to "see the shadow of the cradle even at the cross" is the source of his theological emphasis on transformative joy.

In "Getting Lost in *The Princess and the Goblin*," Natalie L. Merglesky shows how, in reaction to the predominating rational and empirical modes of thought of his age, MacDonald attempted to validate the importance of the imaginative and Romantic through his fairy tales. In *The Princess and the Goblin*, MacDonald uses the familiar experience of getting lost as a way to awaken the imaginations of Irene and Curdie to the "extra-ordinary possibilities of an ordinary experience" (36). "Getting lost" wakes them up to the previously unknown and opens their eyes to the numinous.

Tania Scott's "Good Words: *At the Back of the North Wind* and the Periodical Press" demonstrates the usefulness of reading *At the Back of the North Wind* the way readers would originally have encountered it—as a serialized publication in *Good Words for the Young*. In this light, the episodic nature of the

story makes more artistic sense, and it is also worth noting that individual chapters occasionally reflected and built on themes from other items—articles, poems, editorials, etc.—published in the same issue.

Osama Jarrar's "Children's Fiction Discourse Analysis: The Critique of Victorian Economics in George MacDonald's *The Princess and Curdie*" is a somewhat disjointed article—it's heavy on discourse theory at the beginning, but it doesn't come back and tie it all together at the conclusion. Nevertheless, Jarrar has some interesting points to make about the way the fairy tale mode gave MacDonald a useful and instructive way to criticize self-interest, privatization, and the utilitarian and centralized economics of his contemporary England.

Two short articles follow. "A Royal Pain: The Comic Spirit in George MacDonald's 'The Light Princess'" by Greg Levonian is a brief note analyzing the princess's laughter and the contrasting sober characters using theories about humor proposed by Bergson and Freud. Robert Trexler's "Dombey and Grandson: Parallels Between *At The Back of the North Wind* and *Dombey and Son*" notes a number of striking plot and thematic parallels between the two novels and speculates that MacDonald consciously borrowed from the earlier work.

The issue concludes with Daniel Gabelman again, with his textual study "'Tell Us a Story' (or 'The Giant's Heart') in *The Illustrated London News*." This short story first appeared in a Christmas Supplement of the *News*, then became one of the tales interpolated in *Adela Cathcart*, and finally was published in *Dealings With the Fairies*. This issue reproduces the original text, complete with framing story, concluding poem, and two illustrations.

THE 2011 VOLUME OF *VII* AGAIN PROVIDES US with some previously unpublished or hard to obtain texts of interest. First, David C. Downing and Bruce R. Johnson study "C.S. Lewis's Unfinished 'Easley Fragment' and his Unfinished Journey." This 1927 manuscript, held in the collection at the Wade Center, consists of two draft chapters of Lewis's only attempt at a realistic novel. The first chapter describes a ferry-crossing of the Irish Channel in realistic detail; the second veers towards more metaphysical territory, though at this point Lewis had not yet converted to Christianity. This article reproduces the fragment, and the commentary places it within Lewis's development as a writer and thinker and speculates that part of the direction in which the story appears to be headed may have been influenced by Lewis's experiences helping care for Janie Moore's brother during his mental breakdown.

In "Nocturnal Anarchist, Mystic, and Fairytale King: G.K. Chesterton's Portrait of George MacDonald," Daniel Gabelman makes the point that contemporary MacDonald criticism finds its *fons et origo* in C.S. Lewis's "baptism" by *Phantastes* on the eve of war in 1916, and tends towards analysis of his more adult and mystical themes and a certain dismissal of his style based on

Lewis's assessment in the introduction to his MacDonald *Anthology*. However, if MacDonald criticism had instead had G.K. Chesterton as its father, its focus might today be different. Chesterton's first encounter with MacDonald was with *The Princess and the Goblin* in childhood, and the portrait of the author that emerges from his essays and other mentions is that of "a mystic 'half mad with joy'" (37), always concerned with "the mysterious dance of gravity and levity" (38) and filled with "the gravity of a child at play" (Chesterton qtd. 39). The article includes two drafts of Chesterton's essay "George MacDonald. The Mystic," and *VII*'s website makes available two articles from *The Daily News* here reprinted for the first time.

Chris Willerton, in "Dorothy L. Sayers and the Creative Reader," traces the development of Sayers's Trinitarian theory of creativity from the early war-time essay *Begin Here* (1941) through *The Mind of the Maker* (1941) to the later essay "Towards a Christian Aesthetic," comparing and contrasting it with reader response theory, Bloom's theory that all readings are misreadings, and other ideas about creativity, and providing a useful way to use her theory in judging the reaction of a reader or a critic to a given piece of work. But why did Sayers chose this topic for a war-time essay? In part this was due to her "holistic view of civilization" and ability to see the dignity and creative opportunities available in all work, and her opinion that the "alert and ready" citizen would be best prepared for the work of post-war reconstruction by wide and responsive reading. A fascinating article that would resonate even further by bringing in the Sayers essays "Are Women Human?" and "Why Work?"

In "The *Ainulindalë* and J.R.R. Tolkien's Beautiful Sorrow in Christian Tradition," Michael David Elam examines the concept of "beautiful sorrow" in Christian philosophy and how it can be applied to the creation story in Tolkien's *Silmarillion*. Sorrow "recognizes the contrast between what-is-and-shouldn't-be (the actual) with what-ought-to-be-but-isn't (the ideal)" (62); thus "[s]orrow is a proper response to lack of goodness" (67) and its beauty resides in its looking towards the good. Therefore the beauty of the third movement of *Ilúvatar's* music lies in its sorrow for the marred world's departure from the good and the hope that it will be set right. The author also makes the observation that the poignancy of eucatastrophe lies in the restoration of order—the "what-ought-to-be" that nearly wasn't and the "impotence of chaos to resist" being set right.

Pageants depicting local historical events and legends in a series of short plays, poems, tableaux, etc., were an important form of popular entertainment in late 19th and early 20th century England. In "Dorothy L. Sayers and the Somersham Pageant of 1908," Martin Ferguson Smith has gathered information on the previously unknown participation of Sayers in the 1908 pageant in Somersham, shortly before her departure for boarding school at the age of fifteen. Sayers wrote several historical poems and performed on the violin,

and the article identifies two pictures of Sayers, thought to have been from a school performance of *Coriolanus*, as actually dating from this pageant.

The issue concludes with a review section.

TOLKIEN STUDIES 2011 BEGINS with Philip Irving Mitchell's "Legend and History Have Met and Fused": The Interlocution of Anthropology, Historiography, and Incarnation in J.R.R. Tolkien's 'On Fairy-stories,'" in which the author examines concepts of progress and evolution in "On Fairy-Stories" in relation to similar discussions by Owen Barfield, G.K. Chesterton, and Christopher Dawson. These writers, while to a greater or lesser extent accepting the mechanisms of physical evolution, object to applying the notion of progressive evolution to the soul and to human artistic activity and the resulting application of labels of primitivism to early human religion and folklore and the privileging of modernism.

John M. Bowers's "Tolkien's Goldberry and *The Maid of the Moor*" is a brief source-study finding a basis for the character of Goldberry in a fourteenth-century lyric with the modern title *The Maid of the Moor*. This song or poem is about a species of water-sprite, more common in European sources than English, and the author speculates that Goldberry becomes a sort of asterisk-reality version of this water spirit.

Tolkien once said that the Gothic language took him by storm and moved his heart. In "Language in Tolkien's 'Bagme Bloma,'" Lucas Annear analyzes two of his short poems in Gothic in *Songs for the Philologists*, "Bagme Bloma" and "Eadig Beo þu," not only for Tolkien's use of known Gothic and reconstruction of asterisk-forms, but also for the tree-imagery and vocabulary choices which resonate with his other work and the overarching love of language shown in the poems' themes.

Jose Manuel Ferrández Bru, in "'Wingless fluttering': Some Personal Connections in Tolkien's Formative Years," discusses two aspects of Tolkien's early life somewhat neglected by biographers: his relationship with his mentor, Father Morgan Francis, and his summer as a companion to two young Mexican boys visiting France. The author provides insights into the character and ancestry of Fr. Francis and the Mexican family. There is a (remotely) possible source for the "wind" riddle in *The Hobbit* in a book of riddles and verses collected by Fr. Francis's great-aunt Cecelia Böhl de Faber.

While John Garth quoted extensively from Rob Gilson's letters in his *Tolkien and the Great War*, he of necessity concentrated on the letters concerning Tolkien. "Robert Quilter Gilson, T.C.B.S.: A Brief Life in Letters" gives us the opportunity to get to know Gilson for himself—a lively and prolific letter-writer with a deep appreciation for natural beauty and a painterly talent for describing it in words. The letters cover his college years, his love for Estelle Wilson King,

his experiences in officer training and later in the north of France in the trenches. There are some interesting observations on Tolkien as a young man from a friend and equal, and a touching final letter from Estelle describing the site of his grave in Bécourt.

My own "The Hen that Laid the Eggs: Tolkien and the Officers Training Corps" describes the training Tolkien would have encountered in his time with the OTC at King Edward's School, and speculates on how this early exposure to the principles of civilian preparedness plays out in *The Lord of the Rings*, particularly in the Shire-muster and Hobbitry-in-arms and the chapter "The Scouring of the Shire."

The issue ends with the usual reviews and other material, including, notably, a nearly 100-page review by Deidre A. Dawson of *The Ring Goes Ever On*, the two-volume Proceedings of the Tolkien 2005 Conference at Aston University. Dawson provides quite detailed critiques of nearly 100 articles and the collection as a whole. It closes out with David Bratman's ever-useful "Year's Work in Tolkien Studies" section for 2008, now co-authored with Merlin DeTardo, and the Bibliography (in English) for 2009.

—Janet Brennan Croft

ABOUT THE REVIEWERS

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BOOKS AVAILABLE FOR REVIEW

BEYOND HORATIO'S PHILOSOPHY: THE FANTASY OF PETER S. BEAGLE
by David Stevens

ABOVE KER-IS AND OTHER STORIES
by Evangeline Walton with Introduction and Notes by Douglas A. Anderson

MONSTERS AND THEIR MEANING IN EARLY MODERN CULTURE: MIGHTY MAGIC
By Wes Williams

THE ECOLOGICAL AUGERY IN THE WORKS OF J.R.R. TOLKIEN
By Liam Campbell

LIGHT BEYOND ALL SHADOW: RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE IN TOLKIEN'S WORK
Edited by Paul E. Kerry and Sandra Miesel