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GEORGE MACDONALD: DIVINE CARELESSNESS AND FAIRYTALE LEVITY. Daniel Gabelman. Waco, TX: Baylor UP, 2013. 261 p. 9781602587823. \$49.95; Kindle edition \$36.96.

THIS VOLUME IS PART OF A SERIES CALLED *The Making of the Christian Imagination* and edited by Stephen Prickett. A short series introduction by Rowan Williams, former Archbishop of Canterbury, describes the purpose of these books as to “look at creative minds that have a good claim to represent some of the most decisive and innovative cultural currents of the history of the West (and not only the West), in order to track the ways in which a distinctively Christian imagination makes possible their imaginative achievement” (vii).

This particular volume is the first book-length treatment of a much-ignored facet of George MacDonald’s literary output: the tone and attitude of levity that he adopts in many of his fairy tales. In a nutshell, the book’s thesis is that MacDonald’s fairytale levity actually serves the “[high] moral function” of enabling readers to “[take] the self and the world lightly” (201).

In his introduction, Gabelman contends that “lighthearted” literary modes are central to serious theological thought, and that MacDonald’s fairytales, though neglected by critics looking for his deep religious ideas, are actually key to his worldview. He amplifies and illustrates his basic argument with Biblical, historical, and literary material, as well as references to MacDonald’s essays and devotional works, which the following synopsis largely omits.

The text is divided into two parts. The first and briefer of the two, called “Modalities of Levity,” elaborates the concepts that Gabelman will, in the second part, apply to MacDonald’s fairy stories.

In Chapter One, “The Levity of Saints and Angels,” the author explains that in premodern usage, the concept of “levity” was associated with “lifting up” or “making light,” and thus (as in Dante) with freedom from the weight of sin and pride. “Levity” was the mobility enabled by freedom from attraction to the world (“gravity”); thus, flight is attributed to angels and levitation to saints.

In Chapter Two, "Ecstasy and Folly," Gabelman asserts that ecstasy, the state of being "outside" or "beside" oneself, is integral to Christianity and associated with folly. Ecstasy, escape from or "rising above" oneself, is made possible by the "the holy folly" of *kenosis*, the self-emptying akin to Jesus's "descent" into flesh. For instance, when Peter "foolishly" gets out of the boat, he achieves the ability to levitate on water. Kenosis (the foolishness of letting go of the self) permits the self to go free ("lightly" rise toward God).

Chapter Three, "Vanity and Play," begins with a look at Ecclesiastes. Perceiving all of human life to be vanity (emptiness, "breath" or "vapor") is not necessarily pessimistic; Qoheleth uses this observation to endorse a life of joy and and play ("eat, drink, and enjoy the fruits of your labor"). Perceiving the impermanence of all things can liberate people for playful transformation. Gabelman cites a tale by Max Beerbohm in which a "dissolute" old rake puts on the mask of a saint to win the heart of a good woman and later finds that his real face has changed to conform to the mask. (This brings to mind the contemporary recovery mantra, "Fake it till you make it.") Similarly, Christians realizing the vanity of the world are enabled to joyfully (as C.S. Lewis puts it) "dress up as"—and thus eventually become "conformed to"—Christ.

Chapter Four, "Carnival and Sabbath," observes that Carnival is liberation from normal social rules, and the Sabbath a release from normal routine. Likewise, Jesus transgressed and inverted the conventions of his society to establish "true order." Abandoning or reversing the normal enables a new way of seeing, a letting-go of everyday seriousness that allows people to recognize and abandon their "normal" faults. Carnival and Sabbath allow people to escape from rule-bound everyday time and enter an anarchic, creative "mythical time" that participates in and evokes the eschatological future.

The second part of the book, "MacDonald's Fairytale Levity," discusses the application of these concepts to MacDonald's short fairy stories.

In Chapter Five, "Never so Real as When They Are Solemn," Gabelman says that in Victorian Britain, utilitarianism and positivism focused people on material facts, evangelicalism, on morality. People were suspicious of imaginative literature as frivolous, irrelevant to the central concerns of life. Unlike many of his contemporaries, MacDonald believed that "light" literature could effectively be used to express "serious" concerns. The fairytale particularly suited him because its form encourages the "play" of many different meanings, allowing the reader to tap into the "region of the uncomprehended." Thus the "weakness" of the fairytale's indeterminacy is actually superior strength, as "holy folly turns out to be true wisdom" (98).

In writing fairytales, MacDonald was encouraging his audiences to be "childlike," a state of being in which moral earnestness is expressed through lighthearted play. This combination is enabled by a trust in God that liberates

one from anxiety and from clinging to things, and allows one to see the true “wonder” in what others see as commonplace.

Chapter Six, “Time: Fairyland’s Festive Sabbath,” observes that MacDonald tends both to set and to publish his fairytales in the context of Christmas, the festival that “interpenetrate[s] all of time with joy and revelry” (110), when God became a child and all people should “grow younger” and thus able to combine celebration and reverence. The “once upon a time” of the fairytale relates it to the mythic “festival” time of Christmas. Like the Sabbath and twilight, fairytales refer to and create for the reader “liminal moments when past, present and future touch” (117). MacDonald’s fairyland is often entered at twilight, and a sojourn there provides a “Sabbath rest” which evokes eternity.

Fairyland is not an escape from reality, but a realm in which reality is deepened so that hope and a sense of adventure return to “normal” life. The topsy-turvy principle of carnival is explicitly invoked in “The Shadows” and “The Light Princess.” In the first, the “play”(which is actually serious spiritual work) of the Shadows is aimed at encouraging people to take themselves more lightly, and in the second, the princess’s “true gravity” is restored, not through suffering, but through her experience of supreme joy. In MacDonald’s fairylands, death (to the self) is “more life” and time perfects, rather than destroys, beauty and wisdom.

MacDonald’s fairytales, like real life, take place in the time after human redemption but before its full escatological manifestation. In them, evil still exists (as in the witches Watho and Makemnoit), but serves as a “dupe” of God, used to achieve good ends despite itself and therefore deprived of ultimate seriousness. MacDonald’s fairy stories don’t really end, but only point toward a conclusion, thus encouraging hope for a future of ultimate good.

Chapter Seven, “Space: Fairyland’s Ecstatic Cosmology,” discusses MacDonald’s belief that the desire to go “home” to our perfection-in-God is central to human existence. The fairy tale as a quest-narrative expresses this longing, as all MacDonald’s fairy tale characters enter fairyland alone, experience the numinous which liberates them from their “natural” selves, and then connect with others. This “outgoing” from the self enables ascent to a divine perspective that beholds the true “wonder” of the world, exemplified by Nycteris’s first ecstatic experience of a moonlit night in “The Day Boy and the Night Girl.”

MacDonald’s fairylands are simultaneously orderly and anarchic because in them, body is perfectly subservient to spirit and the spiritual directly affects matter, which is the intended divine order of things demonstrated historically in the miracles of Jesus. Matter was created to be plastic toward any spirit which is “at home” in God. Gabelman argues that none of MacDonald’s fairy tale characters is an “allegory” for God, but all are imaginative creations inhabiting an imaginative “perfected” world in which even the “creatures”

exhibit divine power through their harmony with the Divine. Thus, no character “is” God, but all characters are potentially “angels” or divine messengers, and all nature is sacramental.

Chapter Eight, “Transformation: Shall not the Possible Become the Real?” examines MacDonald’s belief that a genuine experience of a fairytale could actually change the reader. Almost all of his fairytales portray the results of reading stories. First, imaginatively entering a story alters the reader’s perception, helping him see the world’s vanity and his own and thus distancing him from “commonplace worries and concerns” (182). MacDonald portrays the ideal effect of reading fairytales in *Phantastes* when Anodos reads stories in the library of the Fairy Queen’s palace and later behaves like the protagonists in those stories, dying to restore freedom to others and rising again into a “higher” world. By “mirroring” the stories in their minds, readers allow the stories to “take on a transformative life of their own” within them (193). Specifically, fairytales can “nurture” in the reader a “light mode of engaging with the self and the world” (195), because the reader has to adopt such a mode to engage with the fairy tale. Fairy tales resemble Jesus’s miracles in that they can bring home to a reader that “the only thing of true weightiness is divine love” (198). This brings us back to where I began: The “high moral function” of fairytale “levity” is to enable readers to “[take] the self and the world lightly” (201).

In a short conclusion called “The Haunting Force of Levity,” Gabelman briefly recalls the claims of C.S. Lewis and G.K. Chesterton to have been fundamentally shaped by their experience of MacDonald’s fairy stories: *Phantastes* in Lewis’s case and *The Princess and the Goblin* in Chesterton’s. These examples, of course, validate MacDonald’s belief in the transformative power of fairy story.

This extremely worthwhile book significantly enlarged my appreciation of MacDonald. I much prefer MacDonald’s evocations of wonder, awe, terror, and longing to his facetious tones. The flippant air of “The Light Princess” makes it my least-favorite among MacDonald’s fairytales, and I find the jocularity of “Little Daylight” an annoyance that spoils the haunting image of a woman literally waxing and waning with the moon. Yet one of MacDonald’s most central and, I believe, important, themes is that the only human attitude that accurately reflects Reality is a trust in God’s love and fidelity so profound as to enable one to live one’s life as a child at play. And Gabelman convincingly shows that the “lightness” of many of MacDonald’s fairy tales makes that point precisely.

—Bonnie Gaarden

THE GENDER DANCE: IRONIC SUBVERSION IN C.S. LEWIS'S COSMIC TRILOGY. Monika B. Hilder. Preface by Matthew Dickerson. New York: Peter Lang, 2013. Studies in Twentieth-Century British Literature, Vol. 11. xviii + 224 pp. \$81.95. 978-1-4331-1935-4.

MONIKA B. HILDER has published three volumes about C.S. Lewis and gender in the last two years from the same publisher. The first is *The Feminine Ethos in C.S. Lewis's Chronicles of Narnia* (2012) and the third is *Surprised by the Feminine: A Rereading of C.S. Lewis and Gender* (2013). The third does not indicate its literary focus in its title, but it is divided roughly half and half between a survey chapter on *Dymer*, "The Queen of Drum," *The Pilgrim's Regress*, *The Screwtape Letters*, *The Great Divorce*, the short stories, "After Ten Years," and other poems; and a thorough discussion of *Till We Have Faces*. All three of Hilder's books have the same chart in their introductory chapters:

Root Metaphors of Two Western Heroic Models

<i>Classical</i>	<i>Spiritual</i>
Reason	Imagination
Autonomy	Interdependence
Activity	Passivity
Aggression	Care
Conquest	Submission
Deceit	Truthfulness
Pride	Humility (11)

Her charts also identify the Classical Heroic Model as stereotypically Masculine and the Spiritual Heroic Model as stereotypically Feminine—but they need not be added to the chart here, since Hilder is more after a general effect (at some points) than a hard-and-fast classification.

Implicit in what has been said is that Hilder finds Lewis's works basically non-classical and spiritual in their positive statements. This can be most easily illustrated in the discussion of *That Hideous Strength* from the book under review. She divides the people in the fiction between the classical—those who are interested in conquest—and those whose essential concerns are elsewhere: that is, N.I.C.E. for aggression and conquest and St. Anne's for interdependence and humility. Her catalogue of Frost, Wither, Hardcastle, *et al.*, ends with Mark Studdock and Jane Studdock as they are when the novel begins. Mark is the would-be leader, attracted to power structures, with a conscience he tries to ignore; he is also a male chauvinist. Jane "begins as a strongly 'masculine' classical hero: proud, independent, hostile to humility" (106). Her "discomfort with emotion" and the mysterious and her trust in "analytic reason" (as an indication of superiority over other women) explains why the "visionary

dreams" so disturb her (106-7). "Jane's idolization of intellectual work is only a somewhat milder version of the N.I.C.E.'s worship of intellectual power" (108). Since Jane has been the focus of a number of critics' assertion of Lewis's chauvinism, Hilder spends more space discussing her than she does the other characters in the classical category (106-110); after the catalogue of the people at St. Anne's, Jane's later conversion also receives careful analysis (137-150).

As a woman who chooses submission to wedded life with children she visibly embodies what classical heroism denigrates: women and children, who are typically devalued unless they prove to be/come classical heroes. [...] Jane's journey into humility is fraught with the typical struggle to renounce imagined mastery over her own life [...] and instead to embrace submission to the divine. (140)

That statement by itself does not show the thoroughness of Hilder's arguments, but it does show that a spiritual heroism is very different from a classical (or worldly) heroism.

At this point, one may back up and consider the first and second volumes of the Ransom Trilogy ("the Cosmic Trilogy"). Concerning *Out of the Silent Planet*, Hilder writes, "I will explore the problem of 'masculine' classical heroism as posed in Weston, Devine, and Ransom; the solution offered in 'feminine' spiritual heroism evident in the Malacandrian beings, the *hrossa*, the *sorns*, and the *eldila*; and the spiritual education of Ransom from *enfances* to manhood" (24). The desire of Weston and Devine to conquer Mars is obvious, but classical traits of Ransom may seem less apparent. However he thinks in classical terms: "Who rules?" "When he does not receive a satisfactory answer from the *hrossa*, he assumes that the *sorns* are the 'intelligentsia,' the albeit disguised but 'dominant species'" (33). Also, his classical tendencies are shown in the *hnakra* hunt: Ransom "regards his participation in the impending *hnakra*-hunt as a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to prove his manhood" (47). Thus his insistence on completing the hunt, despite his summons by the Oyarsa. He becomes the *hnakrapunt*, but at the cost of the death of his friend Hyoi. "Although in overcoming fear he has attained a limited maturation through the hunt, [...] he is sobered by the realization that full maturation is inextricably and primarily linked to the higher demand of obedience" (49). The *hnakra*-hunt is just one step in Ransom's education as Hilder traces it, but it will do for an example of both his classical heroics and of his education in spiritual heroics.

The discussion of *Perelandra* sets up the same polarities as discussed above, but perhaps a different emphasis will enlarge the concepts. Hilder sums up the general action this way:

The emerging and decisive victory of Ransom's spiritual heroism over Weston's familiar classical heroism is the main action of the novel, at least as important, if not more so, than its main subject—the temptation of Tinidril and possible fall of this planet. (66)

But how can Ransom's killing of Weston be an act of *spiritual* heroism? Isn't the killing an act of aggression and thus belongs to the classical side of the chart? This is one of the points at which Hilder complicates the terms. "Ransom's physical combat with the enemy raises for many the troublesome question of jihad" (62). However,

Ransom's physical battle with the Un-man [...] is not an act of classical heroism but a manifestation of the spiritual battle [...]. This jihad is no longer against Weston but against the diabolical Un-man—which is no longer human but only a tool exploited by a "furious self-exiled negation" [...]. (63)

Hilder quotes some parallel critical readings of the episode and also quotes from the book some of the narrator's warnings against applications of the episode to this world. "Ransom's experience of hatred for the Un-man [is] something no one can ever actually experience on earth: a flood of sinless 'hatred'" (63), she writes. Here is how Hilder justifies Ransom's action in her terms:

[T]he battle between [Ransom] and the Un-man may be understood as a transformation of the classical heroic paradigm. Whereas the wrath of Achilles and the martial valour of all classical heroes are ego-driven and bound to obtaining secular glories, the spiritual grounding of Ransom corrects the classical stance of autonomy. Out of the "feminine" ethos of submission to the divine, Ransom enacts what might be regarded as a "masculine" (but not classical) ethos of conquest over the demonic. He understands the "joy" that comes from discovering "what hatred was made for" [...]. (63-64)

In light of the crusades and other religiously motivated killings, one can understand the insistence that this cannot be acted in reality, only in a prose romance. But the significance for this review is how Hilder (above) can fit the episode into her general thesis.

In the discussion of *Perelandra*, Hilder's treatment of the Great Dance is important—important enough that the main title of her book, *The Gender Dance*, alludes to it. "Unlike the typical understanding of hierarchy as consisting of rigid, discrete parts, Lewis, like Milton [...], emphasizes its fluidity. [...] In a paradox that challenges ordinary Western logic, the centre of the dance is always Maleldil, and yet the centre is also occupied by everything else" (80). Thus

hierarchy is not fixed. Hilder's concluding paragraph of the chapter on *Perelandra* ties in her thesis:

In the cosmic dance [...], Lewis celebrates the biblical paradox that supersedes classical heroism: to abdicate is to receive power, to bow is to rise, to mirror the other is indeed to find one's self. [...] [E]ach is subordinated to the other in hegemony and thereby exalted. [...] Gender is essential; hierarchy is the cosmic order; but these differences-in-unity suggest wonder, liberty, and life. Plainly, Lewis's commitment to gender metaphor in the cosmic dance subverts cultural sexism, and thereby serves as a means to illustrate what it means to be human in relation to the divine. (82)

The last sentence refers to Lewis's statement in "Priestesses in the Church?" that all humans are feminine in comparison to God's masculinity (a statement of gender, obviously, not of sex); for Lewis, a statement of essential hierarchy. But the Great Dance seems to modify this, if one accepts centering to be a hierarchical statement: "Each thing was made for [Maleldil]. He is the centre. Because we are with Him, each of us is at the centre. [...] Each thing, from the single grain of Dust to the strongest eldil, is the end and the final cause of all creation and the mirror in which the beam of His brightness comes to rest and so returns to Him" (*Perelandra* 185-6). Hilder is using the *principles* of the Great Dance in her statement that gender hierarchy is modified in it.

Some will not find gender implied in the Great Dance, and other details of Hilder's argument at points can be faulted. For example, when discussing Ransom's killing of the Un-man, Hilder writes this: Nancy-Lou "Patterson makes the important observation that Weston's descent into hell through demonic possession may not be final. She reminds readers that the Christian Creeds speak of Christ's harrowing of Hell, and suggests that similarly Maleldil the Younger might have followed Weston to Hell in order to rescue him at last" (64-65). That is certainly making an argument that is not based on what is said in the novel. Within the fiction, Weston seems to be damned. Indeed, Ransom refers to Weston's damnation in the first paragraph of Ch. 14. No suggestion is offered that he may escape from Hell; Weston, it is clearly implied, has been digested by Satan. Patterson (and thus Hilder, in citing it) is re-writing the text in order to soften what the author says.

These quibbles with Hilder's precision of argumentation do not disturb her basic thesis: Christian ("spiritual") virtues are not the same as worldly ("classical") values. She argues that Lewis saw the difference and wrote them into the Ransom Trilogy, and that most criticism of Lewis as being a male chauvinist comes from those who unconsciously accept worldly values. (She admits Lewis was not perfect in his references about women and gives an

example in her first chapter from two letters; Hilder call it “contextual and personal sexism” [6-7].) Overall, Hilder makes a good case for her approach. Up to this time, the usual treatment has been one of three theses: to say that Lewis started as a male chauvinist but improved, or that he was a male chauvinist throughout, or that he was a firm believer in sexual hierarchy throughout. Hilder offers a fourth approach, obviously outside of feminists’ concern with a woman’s power in society. Can her approach be dismissed? This reviewer thinks not. Arguments about Lewis’s attitudes about the sexes and the genders will be more complicated in the future, for Hilder has defined the key values being discussed.

—Joe R. Christopher

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SIR GAWAIN AND THE GREEN KNIGHT: IN A MODERN ENGLISH VERSION WITH A CRITICAL INTRODUCTION. John Gardner. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 2011. 203 p. 0226283283. \$12.00.

AS THIS EDITION IS EQUAL PARTS critical introduction and translation, I have chosen to evaluate the merits and continued relevance of each separately. This translation is, of course, a reissuing of the *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* material of Gardner’s 1965 edition of *The Complete Works of the Gawain Poet*. This re-release raises obvious questions pertaining to the viability of reissuing this translation as a stand-alone work four decades after its initial publication. While the beautiful writing evident in this translation still provides a pleasurable reading experience, several oversights caused by the movement of the translation from a complete collection to a stand-alone edition, as well as the lack of a scholarly apparatus, make this book difficult to recommend for scholarly pursuits or classroom usage.

The editors devote a significant portion of this re-release to a lengthy critical introduction by the late Professor Gardner. Perhaps most readily notable is that, while this edition contains only the translation of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, the critical introduction for this text is transplanted in its entirety from Gardner’s *Complete Works of the Gawain Poet*. As such, in this introduction to a

single poem, Gardner frequently makes reference not only to the titular work, but also to his translations of *Pearl*, *Patience*, and *Purity*. As a result of this editorial choice, a great deal of the introduction lacks context for readers without access to Gardner's older, more complete edition. The introduction itself serves as a quality, though somewhat dated, primer for readers who require a background in medieval literature or culture. While the information provided is similar to that presented in any introductory course on medieval texts, it would greatly assist readers who lack this background in gaining context for the poem. Of particular effectiveness in establishing this context is Gardner's choice to include a lengthy contrast between the unknown Gawain poet and Chaucer. Furthermore, since Gardner establishes his desire to situate his translation outside of ongoing scholarly debates, a great deal of potential anachronism is mitigated in this reissuing, though frequent references to the *New Exegetes* will likely cause, depending on the background of the reader, either a bemused chuckle or arched eyebrow. Overall, while showing some minor signs of age and severely hindered by the absence of the remaining works of the Gawain poet within the body of the text, this introduction serves well in providing a reader new to medieval texts the background needed to enjoy the Gawain poet's work.

Gardner presents his purpose for translating *Gawain* openly in the his Preface, asserting, "My object in translating and commenting on these poems has been to make generally accessible as much as I could of the technical ingenuity, the music, the narrative subtlety and vigor, the dramatic power, and the symbolic complexity to be found in the original Middle English" (vii). However, several omissions in the presentation and layout of the work prevent readers from being able to easily navigate and evaluate his translation's merits. While this translation of the poem is properly separated into its 101 stanzas, line numbers are notably absent from this edition. Furthermore, although the introduction to this edition contains copious endnotes and notations that help assist in situating it within the scholarship of its time of publication, the poem itself is strikingly lacking in authorial commentary. Because of this, it is difficult for a reader interested in uncovering the reasons behind Gardner's translational choices to properly appraise his editorial decisions. This is particularly disappointing to readers interested in translation theory, as Gardner makes much in his critical introduction of his philosophy of translating, and these claims could have been buttressed tremendously if he had included continuous annotations regarding their uses during the reality of translating. As such, the reader is deprived of potentially valuable commentary on the translation process. For these reasons, this release cannot be recommended to those seeking a translation of this poem for a classroom setting, nor to those who seeking to engage in serious scholarly endeavors.

However, it is the readability that Gardner sought to achieve that allows this particular translation to stand alongside those crafted by his contemporaries as well as later translations. The opening section detailing Britain's relation to Troy is of particular aesthetic appeal, and easily stands beside Borroff's rendition in its sheer poetic merit. Though it is easy to criticize this work for lacking the things that those accustomed to interacting with contemporary translations find commonplace, the sparseness of this edition does provide a valuable service—by removing the paratext typically associated with translations, Gardner's edition brings the beauty of the Gawain poet's story and writings to the fore. Coupled with its sheer ease of reading and accessibility, this allows for a surprisingly pleasant reading experience. While one searching for a translation for either scholarly pursuits or a classroom setting would do best choosing the translations provided by Marie Borroff, James Winny, or J.R.R. Tolkien, the accessibility of the critical introduction and the poetic quality of the translation would make this edition a welcome addition to the libraries of those with little background in medieval studies or for those predominately interested in reading the poem for pleasure. In this, even decades after the work's original publication, Gardner continues to succeed in his goal of making the work accessible.

—Perry Neil Harrison



MYTHS OF LIGHT: EASTERN METAPHORS OF THE ETERNAL. Joseph Campbell. Novato, CA: New World Library, 2012. 166 p. 9781608681099. \$14.95.

*M*YTHS OF LIGHT: EASTERN METAPHORS OF THE ETERNAL is another welcome addition in the Collected Works of Joseph Campbell from New World Library. The book is probably not the ideal starting point for someone new to Campbell's writings—for that, readers might want to try *The Power of Myth* or *The Hero With a Thousand Faces*—but it is an excellent companion to those other works. Though first published in 2003, this edition is the first paperback printing of the book.

As in his other works, Campbell is focused on comparative mythology, and here he is working with Asian myths and comparing them with myths of the West. There is a lot that is interesting and worthwhile in this slim volume. For those new to Asian myths, this book can serve as a good primer. As always,

Campbell looks for the universal themes in these religions and compares them to other myths around the world. In the first section of the book, he writes broadly about the Eastern tradition. He uses an excellent anecdote here, from an occasion when he attended a lecture by Martin Buber, who was talking about humans and their problem with being 'exiled' from God. Campbell asked Buber what he meant by 'God,' and mentioned that in India the conception of God was quite different from the West, to which Buber replied: "Do you mean to compare?" (2).

As Campbell showed in his lifetime of work, that was exactly what he set out to do. Here he writes, "the whole point of Oriental wisdom and mythic themes is that we are *not* in exile—that the god is within you. You can't be exiled from it. All that can happen is that you can fail to know it, that you don't realize it, that you haven't found a way to open your consciousness to this presence that is right within you" (2). Through the book Campbell does an admirable job of introducing readers to these myths and hopefully opening them to new ways of thinking about them.

In looking for common threads among Hinduism, Buddhism, and the Western tradition, Campbell sometimes seems to reach a bit far, but more often than not his message comes across clearly. One interesting comparison he makes is between what he calls the individualism of European Renaissance art compared to that of the Eastern tradition. He writes of Japanese art in terms of Taoism, and how natural landscape is a hallmark of this artistic tradition, while the art of "personality" and the "individual entity" evoked by the Renaissance is "antagonistic to the spirit of Oriental art" (80). He says that the spirit of Taoism is "the way of nature," and is reflected in the artwork, while the art of the West is more concerned with the individual. Through these kinds of comparisons, he tries to make distinctions between East and West clearer. It is a difficult task for such a short work, but for those interested in such comparisons, this book is a good start.

Campbell's gift was making difficult concepts accessible to a broad audience, and he again does a good job of that here. "Mythologies are not invented," he writes, "they are found. You can no more tell us what your dream is going to be tonight than you can invent a myth. Myths come from the mystical region of essential experience" (xix). As he has written elsewhere, Campbell suggests in this book that modern culture is in deep trouble because it has forgotten what its symbols are, and how they work as metaphors for the world. By taking myths that are less well known to westerners, such as the ones in this book, he demonstrates how they function for those who are "hunting around for something they have lost," as he puts it (xviii).

—Christopher Tuthill

THE RIDDLES OF THE HOBBIT. Adam Roberts. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013. 186 p. 9781137373632. \$28.00.

One notion I am setting myself against, here—I may as well be plain—is that a given riddle has one right or correct answer. [...] I do not repudiate this pleasure [of finding an appropriate solution]; but neither do I think it a simple thing. The thesis of this study (to repeat myself) is that riddles are, amongst other things, ways of *ironising* the world; and adding an answer to an unsolved riddle does not resolve away such irony. (51)

ADAM ROBERTS' *The Riddles of The Hobbit* ranges wide. A simple critical work about *The Hobbit* it is assuredly not; Roberts explores Anglo-Saxon wordplay, Tolkien's Middle-earth, the conventions of the fantasy genre, and the acts of reading, writing and literary criticism, with the titular *Riddles* as a kind of locus, a central point to which he invariably returns.

Decoding Roberts' term 'riddling' is essential to understanding both his perspective on Tolkien, and his project in presenting that perspective here. Central to it is the idea that the *answer* to a riddle is less important than the process of solution and the mindset by which it is found; a process which reveals greater and more significant truths than either a straightforward depiction of an imagined world, or a simplistic map-A-to-B analysis of that depiction. In short, riddles are "a truer representation of the nature of reality than simple declarative statements [...]. [T]he world is not a simple or transparent business, but a mystery to be plumbed" (20).

This ludic aspect, the story-as-puzzle-game, the focus on process rather than product, characterizes Roberts's approach to Tolkien and also to the act of criticism. Some of his conclusions—his "solutions" to the Riddles of *The Hobbit*—are more tenuous than others, but the perspective which Roberts adopts suggests that this quality is a merit, that the ingenuity of his reading is its own reward.

The very act of writing is represented as a riddling practice. Roberts points out (128-129) that there are very few actual written texts mentioned or deployed within Tolkien's novels, and that they are frequently ambiguous, puzzling, or actually threatening. Rather than the simplistic notion that writing "tends to mislead or wrongfoot us, to distract us from the answer" (129), which is ultimately at odds with his central thesis concerning answers, Roberts argues instead that writing "bridges the gap between text and world too immediately, and makes itself real with a dangerous completion" (129).

Such a process is essentially postmodern, as Roberts acknowledges, but his product—the book I am reading right now—skews away from explicit alignment with, or namedropping of, postmodern theorists. Indeed, Roberts occasionally actively rejects theoretical approaches. Analysis of the dreams

Tolkien described to Christopher Bretherton, connected to Tolkien's re-envisioning and repurposing of Atlantis as drowned Númenor, is dismissed as "an impertinence quite apart from anything else" (36). In this course Roberts is in many ways taking inspiration from Tolkien himself, focusing his attention on content rather than "rationalised, historical or social explanations" (41), as Roberts paraphrases "The Monsters and the Critics."

In his focus on Tolkien's content and its sources, Roberts presents us with the writer as a disingenuous riddler, exploring the contradictions in his correspondence and the layers of implication in those riddles he either borrows from the Anglo-Saxon culture, or those for which that culture has been a definite inspiration. As a result, Roberts spends several chapters detailing Tolkien's probable or definite sources, many of which are impenetrable without the insight into the Anglo-Saxon world and worldview which Roberts provides. Roberts is explicit about his reasons for doing so—"the point of the exercise is not really, ingeniously or otherwise, *to answer these riddles*. Rather the point is one of imaginative entry into the mind of an Anglo-Saxon. That is to say, the modern-day scholar sets out to answer them in a way that is consistent with the worldview of an Anglo-Saxon mind" (52-3).

This critical tack has much in common with Old Norse and Anglo-Saxon "kenning." In Roberts' words, "'kennings' like full riddles are games of knowledge: they ask, in the first sense, 'do you know what this is?' and more broadly they open more puzzling questions about the certainty, ground and transparency of all knowledge" (42). "Kenning" has, to me, always resembled a continuous verb more than a noun—an act of "knowing" rather than a thing by which knowing occurs—and this accidental resemblance suggests a parallel with Roberts's "riddling." Knowing about the culture and context in which the riddle was constructed is essential both for constructing it and decoding it, for weaving that web of *possible* solutions which Roberts claims as his central project.

One crucial thing that must be "kenned" in order to "riddle" Roberts's book and larger purpose, is the idea that Anglo-Saxon culture "tried to understand the puzzling nature of divine-mortal interaction was by having a god actually pose riddles to a mortal, in a contest" (45). This idea of interface between the mortal and the divine, through the medium of an intellectual puzzle, is another thread in Roberts's web. In his later chapters he posits the Ring as a sacramental symbol, innately bound up with and binding the Catholic with the fantastic in an ideological and textual marriage. Roberts uses this as a standpoint to dismantle the reading of Tolkien's works as allegory, reminding us that Tolkien himself disapproved of this perspective and insisting that for once we take the riddling Professor at his word. "A better way to think of the novel is not as allegory but as a sub-creative materialization—an incarnation, in a manner of speaking—of what Tolkien took to be certain spiritual realities" (119). The Ring,

and the narrative which surrounds it, are a means of thinking about —“kenning” or “riddling”—the divine, through a series of symbolic associations and narrative representations of divinity, mortality, and movement or interface between these states of being.

Roberts is an erudite thinker, and his approach laudable if a little too loudly defended, but *Riddles* is by no means flawless. There are glimpses in which the scholar of ludology and literature is edged aside by the sharp-tongued genre fan and author with a more personal investment in the topic at hand; the pastiche of the Sphinx and Oedipus’s contest (53-54) is one, as is the fifth chapter, “The Puzzle of the Two *Hobbits*.” This chapter begins with an exploration of the anachronism between the Victorianesque hobbits and the Anglo-Saxon or earlier world existing beyond the borders of the Shire.

However, Roberts derails into a lengthy critique of “the notion that *all our bents and faculties have a purpose*” [italics his] (97)—an attack on the serious from the perspective of the diverting, ludic approach Roberts himself is taking. His tone lapses from the scholarly into the personal, as though he has transferred a blog post defending the incompetence of *The Hobbit*’s protagonists and the self-interest of their expedition. It is a perspective I happen to share, but here it is an interruption: out of place, both stylistically and thematically, with the work in which it sits.

The same might be said of Roberts’s later critique of genre writers whose “bourgeois discursive style constructs a bourgeois world [...] only an anachronism, a theme park or a World-of-Warcraft gaming environment rather than actual place” (102). While his point—that the writing of a pre-modern world in a contemporary style undermines the heroic potential of the setting—is sound, the style feels like a demonstration of Tolkien’s superiority, a defense of *The Silmarillion* in particular against genre readers who are simply too bourgeois, too creatively inadequate or under-educated, to appreciate it. Very similar in tone is the dismissal of popular, unscholarly discourse and its terms, like his treatment of “mcguffin” (114), which feels hypocritical after the bloggish outburst of the fifth chapter. Roberts hastily recovers his direction, returning to the function of anachronism as bridge between Tolkien’s contemporary readership and his work, but the sense of intellectual shift is jarring, as is the sudden alteration in critical style and direction.

This is not to say that Roberts’s assessment of genre fantasy is inadequate or inaccurate; he quite rightly reappraises the monsters and the quests of fantasy as not a distraction from the genre but the point of the genre in the first place (104). He is also quick to defend and explore the perceived limitations of that genre, with chapters on Tolkien’s “lack” of characters in the modern, Hero’s Journey, *Bildungsroman* sense of the word, and on the “enigma” of genre fantasy. The first claims that Tolkien’s writing is immersed in a culture

which relies more on types and roles than inner trauma and development. The second asks, at length and with a successful-at-last fusion between Roberts the genre fan/author and Roberts the scholar, “what is behind the desire for fantasy?” (151).

If it seems that I have scudded or skimmed over these chapters, presenting their purpose and conclusion too clearly, it is because *The Riddles of the Hobbit* demonstrates Roberts’s thesis better than the thesis itself does. The conclusions are not the point. Answering the question, solving the riddle, is not the point. The process of “kenning” by which Roberts achieves them, the ease with which he moves from historical context to textual engagement to positing elaborate “solutions,” is the point. *Riddles* is worth reading, but perhaps not for its critical approach (an insistence on close textual analysis and cultural context, in many ways a quiet rejection of highly theoretical and ideological literary criticism) or for its answers to the questions it raises. As a long and involved conversation about Tolkien, Catholicism, Anglo-Saxon culture and the fantasy genre, however, it is by turns engaging, erudite and amusing, albeit marred by the occasional ill-judged swipe.

—Jon Garrad



THE MODERN LITERARY WEREWOLF: A CRITICAL STUDY OF THE MUTABLE MOTIF. Brent A. Stypczynski. Jefferson NC: McFarland, 2013. 217 p. 9780786469659. \$40.00. Kindle edition \$14.74.

IN THIS REVIEW OF MODERN LITERARY EXAMPLES of werewolves, Stypczynski sets himself the task of establishing a continuity of the shapeshifter tradition, a sort of genealogy as it were, stretching back to the earliest works of civilization (Gilgamesh, Ovid, Petronius) against which to examine the werewolf as archetype in modern literature. He seeks to examine a number of works, spanning the gamut of series, novels, and short stories, in order to support a theory of the Jungian Shadow as an underlying impetus to explain the dual nature of the man-beast inherent in the term werewolf.

In order to appeal to a wider audience, the book would benefit from some basic definitions in the introduction. Stypczynski writes about fairly esoteric concepts as if his audience is fully aware of what are arguably academic

nuances. For example, he brings up the Jungian shadow, contrasting it with Freudian analysis of man's darker nature. Yet he fails to give a basic definition for either concept. Again, Stypczynski states that he has excluded paranormal romance from his study, but he makes no attempt at distinguishing between the paranormal and the supernatural in his decision to exclude works such as the Twilight series.

Stypczynski describes five critical traditions as ways to explain, or tame, the inner wolf: illusory or a religious impossibility (classical), a psychological phenomenon (medieval), political allegory (post-colonial), scientific manifestation (early modern), and societal allegory (general). In all traditions, "(t)he ability to change forms is also the physical manifestation of the shape-shifter's principal psychosocial role: crossing boundaries" (11). He devotes subsequent chapters of the study to exploring how these five groupings of historical source materials are reflected, modified, and in some cases intensified, by their modern literary descendants.

In his study of *Darker Than You Think* by Jack Williamson, Stypczynski focuses on the demonic trickster according to the medieval theological concepts of metamorphosis. He contrasts the modern Darwinian evolution of change as a scientific counterpoint to highlight themes of concealment and the morality of change. All werewolves in this tale, but especially Barbee, are seen as a monstrosity and psychologically cannot exist in a pre-Freudian world.

With Terry Pratchett's *Constable Angua*, the pattern that emerges is suppression of her beastly nature: "She wrestles with her shadow in an honest attempt to tame it" (47). In contrast, her kin let the inner wolf howl no matter what form their body may take. Pratchett uses the various stories in which Angua plays a role as a way to explore issues of racism, fundamentalism, and social, technological evolution. There is a constant struggle in which socialization triumphs over the shadow, and thus is society built up instead of torn down.

J.K. Rowling's Lupin lives on the fringe of society and is ostracized irrespective of his position as a teacher. He is a sympathetic werewolf in the tradition of Bisclavret (Marie de France) and William of Palerne. Lupin manages to create his own society, a substitute family consisting of classmates, and later the offspring of his former friends. The monstrous reputation of the werewolf is in direct contrast to the gentle, meek, and somewhat disheveled man. Yet even Lupin, when he transforms, is at a loss to control the beast. Stypczynski emphasizes Lupin's role as a moral guide to the young students at Hogwarts, while also highlighting his on-going struggle to create community, ultimately finding its apotheosis in his own wife and newborn son. He sacrifices that community when he and Tonks die in the final battle, which serves to re-enforce his nobility. Lupin's duality of nature embodies "the thin line between civil humanity and wild beastiality" (105).

The werewolves in Charlaine Harris's Sookie Stackhouse series present lycanthropy as disease, taking a scientific approach to the condition. While the werewolves all act as secondary characters in the stories, they present a united image of violence and pack mentality, more beast than human. They are minions "sowing confusion, representing the shadow and society, and acting as an agent of growth" (115). They most closely track to the early modern tradition, as the germ theory of the bite and genetics lend pseudo-scientific support the basis for the species' existence and ongoing survival.

Charles De Lint's short stories "Wolf Moon" and "Dingo" are unique in that they track to the aboriginal traditions of Australia instead of a Euro-centric source. De Lint places a great deal of significance on story telling as key to building society and culture. Stypczynski sees the werewolves in "Wolf Moon" and "Dingo" as "agents of change, and connecting the natural to the urban" (137). While the protagonist Kern in "Wolf Moon" is a commoner, he harkens back to the medieval tradition of nobility of character. Kern also tries, like Lupin, to create his own community in the face of societal rejection. It is because of the Tinker setting aside prejudices that Kern largely is able to fit in, thereby changing people's opinions about werewolves. Again the dual nature of the man-beast acts as a bridge between worlds. De Lint continues these themes in "Dingo," where the twins Lainey and Em act out the two sides by virtue of being in alternate states at all times. The theme of shifting temporal planes and dissonance creates a link between the ancient tradition of dream state and current reality. According to Stypczynski, the added dimension of aboriginal tradition refreshes what would otherwise be a standard tale of teenage werewolves.

Stypczynski concludes his study with an examination of a variety of short stories highlighting various singular aspects of the archetype. He comes back to the underlying premise of the Jungian shadow as a counter-balance to societal constraints. The cycle of tearing down or violating societal norms brings about a rebirth, or at least an evolution of that very society, keeping it from stagnation and decay. In the debate about nature vs. nurture, taming the wolf seems to be a recurrent theme reflecting man's need to tame the beast within. In other words, according to Stypczynski, we all carry a bit of the wolf within us.

—Sharon L. Bolding



FAIRY TALES REIMAGINED: ESSAYS ON NEW RETELLINGS. Ed. by Susan Redington Bobby. Jefferson. MacFarland & Company, Inc, 2009. 0786441151. \$35.00 Kindle edition \$14.74.

FROM THE FOREWORD TO THE FINAL CHAPTER, *Fairy Tales Reimagined: Essays on New Retellings* is a brilliant collection of essays, focused on new renditions of the fairy tales that many of us grew up with. This collection clearly has a mixed audience. It is certainly meant for the academic/scholarly audience, but it also appears to be intended for those of us who simply love fairy tales. Susan Redington Bobby, whose specializations include fairy tale studies and adolescent literature, and who has also published a review essay on fairy tale scholar Jack Zipes's work for *Marvels and Tales*, a peer-reviewed journal of fairy tale studies, has gathered a fascinating collection of essays; these essays seize you from the beginning and urge you to read on—much like the fairy tales they analyze. However, these are not the tales you think you know. After reading any one of these essays you will never be able to look at those tales you've read so often in the same way again. Now there is a new filter, a new lens through which you will forever be looking, re-seeing, and reimagining those old tales, tales to which you are so accustomed. Bobby's collection is that lens.

Bobby sets up this collection very straightforwardly. She immediately explains that *Fairy Tales Reimagined* "explores new methods of storytelling" (9), and to guide readers through these "new methods" she organizes the collection into four distinct sections: "Redefining Gender and Sexuality," "Rewriting Narrative Forms," "Remembering Trauma and Dystopia," and "Revolutionizing Culture and Politics." This structure promotes a more cohesive work. It also allows readers to clearly see what themes and arguments are running through each group of essays, thereby succinctly and efficiently guiding readers through the work and preparing them for what they are about to discover. Bobby further guides her readers by providing them a road map of sorts with a pithy summary of each section of the work thus giving the readers better insight into the essays to come. This is excellent, especially for readers who may not be scholars of fairy tale literature; it allows them a brief summary of what they are about to read and what key points they should be looking for. This layout is convenient for scholars as well.

Though, in general, essay collections have their strong and weak points, this collection suffers that unevenness much less than most. Every essay (with only one exception) was exceedingly insightful, scintillating, and absolutely fascinating. These essays urge you to go reread every fairy tale you have ever read, then to go read the new renditions, and then see them all in an entirely new light; with a new lens on your imagination. It is easy to lose yourself in these essays—completely enticed by their compelling arguments. Even though, at

times, there is some pretty intense academic jargon, what is claimed and proven is ground breaking in the field of fairy tales and Fantasy literature.

However, with all that said, I must briefly report that there was one essay, Christa Mastrangelo Joyce's "Contemporary Women Poets and the Fairy Tale," that stood out as the weakest link, and whose facts seemed to be unchecked. A quick glance over this essay sent many red flags up concerning improper research and inattention to details. She states that the history of fairy tales is "filled with women authors who created rich archetypal themes in their works" (31), but then she only provides two sparse examples of *conteuses* and an even shorter list of the tales, both of which are from Elizabeth Wanning Harries' research:

Marie Catherine le Jumel de Barneville, barrone d'Aulnoy, and Harriet-Juile de Castelnau, countess de Murat, were among the aristocratic women who began the vogue of writing fairy tales down in France at the end of the seventeenth century. In 1690 Marie-Catherine d'Aulnoy published a fiary tale, *L'île de la felicite* . . .

But these are rather unknown tales and even more unknown women. Joyce doesn't really even delve into their importance or relevance except for a passing recognition and summary of their themes, though she appears to be using them as her foundation for her own examination of modern female writers who have "reclaimed a literary history that once belonged to women authors" (31). Quickly these fundamental *conteuses* are abandoned and Joyce rather fragmentedly continues. Throughout the essay Joyce jumps from one author to the next, often with no final summation of connection from between any of the authors. She always refers back to or connects back to Sexton even when the connection is not clear. So much of this essay is simply Joyce's summarization of the works discussed in this essay and provides no pivotal insight to heighten the readers understanding of her argument. Furthermore, Joyce claims that the *conteuses'* fairy tales varied from male ones in that they were not meant for children—but really no fairy tales were meant for children originally. Fairy tales really weren't focused on kids until the Victorian age when there was a major shift towards marketing these classic and rather gruesome tales for children—especially for young girls as a mode for learning manners and social norms. Perhaps she means in their contemporary time period—but this is not made clear. Although there were some interesting points made in this essay, it was hard for me to focus on them as the lingering thought of "your primary facts are wrong" cast a shadow over the entire work. Yet, this was the only "bad apple" in the entire bunch, which is rather rare in a collection of this sort.

Moreover, *Fairy Tales Reimagined* is a novel work. This is a great value to scholars not only of fairy tales, but also of Fantasy Literature, as it details the

ways in which fairy tales have affected our culture; “Fairy tales contain us like a picture or poem, and reflect back to us in language, image, and trope” (2). Bobby is able to take a microcosmic look at modern society and through the essays included here and is able to prove just that, that fairy tales reflect our society and values and allow us through each tale to see our world on a microcosmic level so we can better understand the world around us. Fairy tales do indeed “contain us.” This collection provides a well-organized argument for how fairy tales give perspective on our culture and history in many cases—and this work in particular asks us to be aware of those preconceived notions of society from these tales that we presume to know, and then takes what we know and twists it completely around so that we are, in the end, facing an utterly new tale from the one we knew before and are questioning the societal norms to which we are so accustomed.

So often when readers see a fairy tale on the bookshelf, immediately “we know them; we sense what they are” (4). However, this collection of essays pushes that boundary of knowing and leads the readers to linger in these pages to meet these works again, with a new perspective—perhaps a more modern perspective. Each essay, in its own way, is delving into that very issue of “knowing” fairy tales. And not only are these scholars revealing that these new tales are not what we “know,” but even more, are turning fairy tales on their heads and shifting the paradigm completely. These essays answer questions about the importance of fairy tales in the modern world.

When we bind together the study of both classic and contemporary fairy tales, we see that we can no longer dismiss such narrative forms as simplistic or irrelevant. We must recognize Bernheimer’s accurate observation, that “we are experiencing an explosion of fairy tale influences in art and literature” [...] and this resurgence of works whose archetypal motifs allude to the genre have become quite diversified. (7)

Bobby’s collection seeks to fill the void of fairy tale criticism because fairy tales have inextricably woven themselves into the modern world. Society is currently obsessed with the creatures and characters from these tales. Think of the latest TV shows: *Once Upon a Time*, *Grimm*, *Almost Human*, and even before that shows like *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* and *Stargate*; all at their foundation deal with fairy tales, and so does much of our modern literature. This collection, *Fairy Tales Reimagined*, reveals that very “thread that binds all of these writers and their work is their awareness of the fairy tale tradition and their innovation as each reimagined tale both reflects our time and shapes the genre for years to come” (9). Every essay, regardless of which category they “fit” in the collection, delves into this very idea. These tales which are so engrained in our culture have shaped our past and are shaping our future. They have seeped into our society and allow

us to explore societal norms and expectations while also probing into the possibilities for our collective future should these norms and expectations begin to shift—as indeed they are shifting in our modern times. Traditionally female roles are no longer solely for women, the big bad wolves are not always the villains, a spindle is not simply a spindle, the characters may have full metaphysical awareness, and these modern renditions—in an echoing to their roots—are not generally meant for children.

Susan Redington Bobby's *Fairy Tales Reimagined: Essays on New Retellings* makes you want to go back and reread the fairy tales you grew up with: *Snow White*, *The Goose Girl*, *Sleeping Beauty*, *Rapunzel*, *Thumbelina*, *Cinderella*, *Sun Moon and Talia*, *Peter Pan*, and *Alice in Wonderland*, along with many of the new renditions of those classic tales: *Wicked*, *Stardust*, *Briar Rose*, *Lost Girls*, *I was a Rat*, *Kissing the Witch*, *Smoke and Mirrors*, and *The Princess Academy*, just to name a few. As for myself, even as I finish typing I am reaching to my bookshelves and digging out my editions of these works, and am reimagining them all one by one with a new filter and a new lens through which to read the tales.

—Kazia Estrada



C.S. LEWIS'S *PERELANDRA*: RESHAPING THE IMAGE OF THE COSMOS.

Ed. Judith Wolfe and Brendan Wolfe. Kent, OH: Kent State UP, 2013. 160 p. 9781606351833. \$45.00. Kindle edition \$17.49.

*P*ERELANDRA IS A LITERARY MIDDLE CHILD, OFTEN overshadowed by its siblings in the Ransom Trilogy, yet undeservedly so; indeed, C.S. Lewis considered it one of his two best novels. *Perelandra* is an imaginatively powerful and theologically rich book that amply repays both attentive re-reading and scholarly study, but until now it has been comparatively neglected. *C.S. Lewis's Perelandra: Reshaping the Image of the Cosmos*, the first book-length study of *Perelandra*, goes a long way toward filling this gap.

The editorial skill of Judith and Brendan Wolfe is evident both in their choice of contributing authors and in the arrangement of the essays within the book: while some edited volumes display a potpourri approach, this one is organized in such a way that the essays make a coherent whole. Two short pieces preface the main content of the volume. Judith Wolfe's introductory essay provides the context for appreciating the individual essays as they fall into the two sections of the book: "The Perelandran Cosmos" and "Morality and Meaning

in *Perelandra*." A short, semi-autobiographical piece by Walter Hooper gives a light-hearted but insightful look at Lewis's attitude toward academic interpretation of his work.

Michael Ward's excellent "Voyage to Venus: Lewis's Imaginative Path to *Perelandra*" opens the critical essays and sets the tone, suggesting that "plenitude" (13) is the key term for *Perelandra*, both in terms of the story and in terms of the scholar's engagement with the novel. Noting that studies of *Perelandra* have too often "focused on the superficially biblical properties of the novel [...] without showing an awareness of the Venereal imagery that underlies the whole subcreated world" (27), Ward argues convincingly that "The fundamental message of *Perelandra* and, indeed, of the entire trilogy [...] is to be read off the entire form and content of the story. Love never sleeps—that is the theological truth to which Lewis's imaginative involvement with Venus drives him" (27-28).

Ward's essay is well placed as the opening piece, for his evocation of *plenitude* serves as a subtle connecting thread among the other essays in this volume. "Plenitude," Ward suggests, "should be seen as the quality that informs, envelops, and fulfils all the other literary, philosophical, and theological elements in the novel, not merely making of them a series of discrete banquets, pleasing to the intellect and the imagination in recognizable ways, but elevating them into a banquet of another order, a higher, epiphenomenal order, a whole new genus of literary pleasure" (13). Such a description of *Perelandra's* effect is an implicit challenge: can the novel live up to it? The excellence of this collection is demonstrated by the effectiveness with which the following essays successfully take up this challenge in various ways, providing readings of *Perelandra* that are both insightful and expansive, unpacking the treasures of the novel while also suggesting the wealth of meaning that remains to be explored.

Paul Fiddes's essay "'For the Dance All Things Were Made': The Great Dance in C.S. Lewis's *Perelandra*" engages productively with the image of the Great Dance as part of Lewis's overall interest in medieval cosmology. Fiddes argues that this extraordinary passage at the end of the novel "uncovers the depths of Lewis's religious vision of the universe" (33). Noting that the medieval authors depict "the spheres, angels, and other beings" in a dance around God (38), Fiddes shows that Lewis has converted this dance "into a dance of the Trinity" (38), an image of the nature of God as well as of creation's response to God. Noting the possible influences of Henri Bergson and, significantly, Charles Williams (39-41), Fiddes goes on to give an insightful reading of the way the Great Dance scene "embodies the themes of the novel" (45).

Nikolay Epplée's "The Center and the Rim: Inversions of the System of the Heavens in *Perelandra* and *The Discarded Image*" is an interesting complement to Fiddes's piece, as Epplée looks at the way Lewis uses a kind of inversion in his

depiction of the heavens, presenting in fictional form the mental model he describes in *The Discarded Image*. Though Epplée stumbles in defining Tolkien's term *euclatrophe* somewhat inaccurately as "joyful disappointment" (87), his analysis overall is excellent.

Most serious readers of Lewis are aware that *Out of the Silent Planet* is a challenge to the H.G. Wells-style "'materialist' view of the evolutionary process" (50), and that Lewis's critique of "Wellsianity" continues and is further developed in *Perelandra* and *That Hideous Strength*. Sanford Schwartz's "*Perelandra* in Its Own Time: A Modern View of the Space Trilogy" takes this idea further, making a considerable contribution toward a more sophisticated understanding of this aspect of the Ransom Trilogy. Schwartz shows that Lewis is critiquing not one, but two strains of popular materialist thought: the "mechanistic" and the "vitalist" views of the evolutionary process (51), popularized by H.G. Wells and Henri Bergson, respectively.

Monika Hilder's "Surprised by the Feminine: A Rereading of Gender Discourse in C.S. Lewis's *Perelandra*" argues that "Lewis's [transformation of] medieval imagination [...] challenges familiar Western paradigms of power and value in ways that may surprise and even liberate us from sexist oppression" (70). Hilder's piece provides some insight into Lewis's presentation of "'feminine' [...] spiritual heroism" (72), but is less effective than the other essays in this volume, largely because of its narrow focus: it is difficult to get an adequate understanding of Lewis's treatment of the feminine in *Perelandra* without considering his exploration of the masculine in *Out of the Silent Planet* and the culmination of the two in the marriage-themed *That Hideous Strength*.

The second section of the book comprises four essays that focus on more specific thematic aspects of the novel. Tami Van Opstal's well-developed "Perelandran Diction: A Study in Meaning" explores the conceptual links between *Perelandra* and Owen Barfield's *Poetic Diction*. Noting that "as much as Lewis may have come to agree generally with Barfield's thesis on language, meaning, and metaphor, he in a sense corrects and 'christens' those aspects of Barfield's thought that prove incompatible with orthodoxy" (104), Van Opstal shows that Lewis's characterization of the consciousness of the Green Lady, Ransom, and Weston "corresponds strikingly to Barfield's theory of the development of language and meaning, and of its implications for language" (119-20).

Bruce Johnson's "Frightful Freedom: *Perelandra* as Imaginative Theodicy" complements several of the earlier essays in this volume that address the Great Dance. After exploring questions of volition, Johnson suggests that the Great Dance passage may be "an attempt to let the reader encounter a mystical experience" (140). The argument here resonates with Ward's point in the opening essay that love is the primary theme of *Perelandra*. Johnson makes the case that

"In *Perelandra*, the simple advice to confront evil with courage, human sympathy, and the least tincture of God's love is expanded and developed" (141); in sharing Ransom's experiences as he confronts evil, "readers are able to try these practical approaches on for size" (142).

Meriel Patrick and Michael Travers both explore questions of human freedom in *Perelandra*. Patrick's "Myth, Pluralism, and Choice: *Perelandra* and Lewis on Religious Truth" is the slighter of the two. Travers's "Free to Fall: The Moral Ground of Events on *Perelandra*" is a more substantial reading of the question of free will and innocence, attending to three characters "with markedly different moral conditions in the narrative: Ransom, Tinidril, and Weston" (146) and showing Lewis's skillful handling of the difficult task of showing "moral tension in a sinless being" (154).

In this well-edited volume, only a few minor quibbles arise. It would have been a smoother read had all the contributors used the same citation style; most used end-notes but a few used both end-notes and parenthetical citations. The index is useful but could perhaps have been fleshed out a bit more.

C.S. Lewis's Perelandra: Reshaping the Image of the Cosmos is that rare and delightful creature, a book of essays with a coherent vision, excellent contributors, and solid content across the board. The essays by Ward, Fiddes, and Schwartz stand out as particularly insightful, but in truth there are no weak essays here, only good and excellent ones. Any scholars or general readers interested in Lewis's Ransom Trilogy would do well to add this volume to their shelves.

—Holly Ordway



THE IDEAL OF KINGSHIP IN THE WRITINGS OF CHARLES WILLIAMS, C.S. LEWIS, AND J.R.R. TOLKIEN: DIVINE KINGSHIP IS REFLECTED IN MIDDLE-EARTH. Christopher Scarf. Cambridge: James Clark & Co., 2013. 200 p. 9780227174012. \$50.00.

PUBLISHED BY A BRITISH COMPANY WITH A LONG HISTORY of specialization in academic theological works, this book provides a thought-provoking study of a narrow but well-developed concept. Scarf focuses not simply on kingship, but the exact ways in which many presentations of or allusions to kingship as it appears in the fiction, nonfiction, and poetry of the three best-known Inklings is a reflection of a very specific concept about God.

The book is structured in a rather simple manner, focusing first on Williams, then Lewis, then Tolkien, before pulling it all together in a conclusion that points out the main similarities in their ideas. While this makes the book highly accessible for the reader or researcher who is interested in only one of the three, it is not a convenient structure for the reader who is primarily interested in the ways that their ideas about kingship as a reflection of the divine reflect or interact with each other. That sort of reader would be best served by beginning with the conclusion and then going back through the other chapters in order to understand how each chapter supports the claims he makes.

The primary conclusions that Scarf draws from his meticulous study of the work of these three authors is as follows: they share a belief that a king is a “viceregent” of God, they believe that kings owe their allegiance to God, they believe that kings have an inherent glory, and they believe, in a paradoxical way, that the crucified Christ is a model for kingship. As viceregent, the king makes decisions in the place of God. As such, kings must be obedient to God and therefore cannot be the absolute authority themselves. Intrinsic to the title instead the person, the glory of Kings reflects not their own power, but the power of God. And finally, the kings that these three write about do not use their countries to serve their own ends and interests, but instead love their people in a self-sacrificial way. They put their kingdoms before themselves.

These themes are presented through close examinations of a wide variety of the work of each of these three authors. These close readings are, in fact, the strongest feature of this book. Scarf does not hesitate to venture into works rarely discussed, including such texts as Charles Williams’s set of poems titled *The Silver Stair* and several of his biographies of British Royalty. One example of Scarf at his best is a two-page explanation of Williams’s *Shadows of Ecstasy* which focuses on the way in which King Inkamasi works as a Christ-figure; another is the way he explores an argument in Lewis’s *Preface to Paradise Lost* regarding who should be ruled as opposed to who should do the ruling. At the same time, Scarf also spends a good amount of time on some of the better known works of these authors. He gives a particularly lucid interpretation of Charles Williams’s Arthurian poems, focusing on Arthur as Christ’s viceregent, on money as a symbol of sacrifice, and the importance of hierarchy and order in these texts. The time spent on Tolkien’s *Silmarillion* discussing Ilúvatar’s role as a God-figure is also well done. His interpretation of Lewis’s space trilogy as a working out of many of the same ideas as Williams’s Taliessin poems is quite intriguing.

While this book does present many fascinating ideas, it also has a few weaknesses. Sometimes, for example, transitions between paragraphs would help the reader more clearly understand the relationship between ideas. There are a few places in which the author’s train of thought is unclear because two

paragraphs next to each other seem to have nothing in common. Another weakness lies in the assumptions that the author makes about what the reader does or does not already know and understand from his perspective. For example, in one paragraph Scarf makes the statement that Aslan's sacrifice is clearly an example of an "Anselmian" idea of "salvation through Substitution" (66). Unfortunately, he immediately states that this can be seen in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* without explaining how, and he then moves into what Lewis says about Charles Williams's views of substitutional atonement. There are multiple ways in which this paragraph is problematic. First, Scarf is talking about the atonement, a specific Christian doctrine that has been presented through many different models over the two thousand years of Christian history. The vast majority of them are based in substitution; Anselm's model is certainly not the only one that does this. Added to this is the complicated fact that many who have written about the atonement from different perspectives have used *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* to explain what they mean. For example, it has been used to support the *Christus Victor* model, in which Christ pays a debt to the devil, as well as Anselm's model, in which God's honor has been diminished and therefore a debt needs to be paid. The reader who does not know what "Anselmian" means will not gain any understanding about the topic at hand from Scarf's use of the word, while the reader who does know will want an explanation of why this particular model has been named, how he sees it at work in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, and what connection he wants his reader to draw between it and Williams's writing about sacrifice. In other words, Scarf attempts to cram into one paragraph what would have been enough material for, if not an entire chapter, at least a decent-sized subsection.

At the same time that readers are expected to understand highly specific words, this text appears to occasionally feel the need to explain some words or concepts that are in much more common usage. For example, by far the most unfortunate sentence in the entire book reads as follows: "During a period of Atheism, Lewis found it difficult either to believe in God or to see Him as King" (67). "Well, yes," the reader is tempted to respond, "That would be the definition of 'atheism.'"

In spite of these weaknesses, however, this book is well worth reading for anyone interested in a specifically Christian interpretation of the work of Tolkien, Lewis and Williams. It is also worthwhile for those who are interested in the idea of kingship as presented in their books. In spite of occasional weaknesses, Christopher Scarf has created a scholarly approach to a narrow concept that presents some rare gems waiting to be mined by the careful reader.

—Melody Green

THE RING OF WORDS: TOLKIEN AND THE OXFORD ENGLISH DICTIONARY. By Peter Gilliver, Jeremy Marshall, and Edmund Weiner. New York: Oxford University Press, Inc., 2009, 2006. 240 pages. 9780198610694. \$25.00 hc, \$17.95 pbk, Kindle edition \$9.89.

THE BEST THING THAT READERS CAN SAY ABOUT A BOOK is that it makes them want to read other books. In this case, bring on the *Oxford English Dictionary* and all the 34 words between “waggle” and “wold,” as well as J.R.R. Tolkien’s *The Hobbit*, *The Lord of the Rings*, *Farmer Giles of Ham*, *Smith of Wootton Major*, *Finn and Hengest*, *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, and many selections from Christopher Tolkien’s edition of *The History of Middle-earth*.

For starters.

Then add selections from Robert Louis Stevenson, E.R. Eddison, Lord Dunsany, Sir Walter Scott, Wayne Hammond & Christina Scull, and re-re-readings of John D. Rateliff’s *The History of The Hobbit*, Douglas A. Anderson’s *The Annotated Hobbit*, Mark Hooker’s *A Tolkien Mathomium*, and Tom Shippey’s *J.R.R. Tolkien: The Author of the Century*.

Gilliver, Marshall, and Wiener, staff editors at the OED, describe Tolkien’s work there, beginning when he was twenty-seven years old and ending eighteen months later, and delineate how his training as a philologist contributed to not only his later academic career but also suffused his later fiction.

Like Julius Caesar’s Gaul, *The Ring of Words* is divided into three parts. The first, “Tolkien as Lexicographer,” chronicles the tale of the author’s deep-rooted interest in philology, going back to when he was about seven and his mother Mabel said that “one could not say ‘a green great dragon’, but had to say ‘a great green dragon.’” Tolkien said, “I wondered why and still do” (3).

In thirty-eight pages, the authors tell the tale of how Tolkien’s love of words led to his first professional job, working on the *OED* beginning in January, 1919, and concluding at the end of June, 1920. Illustrations with examples in Tolkien’s own quirky, unforgettable holograph enrich this book throughout. According to biographer Humphrey Carpenter, in his first weeks Tolkien was assigned etymologies of *warm*, *wasp*, *water*, *wick*, and *winter*, among others (qtd. 9). He also began writing alliterative verse of his own, some the earliest manuscripts of “The Lay of the Children of Húrin,” on scraps of *OED* paper. Perhaps this concentration on words which all began with a single letter influenced his fancy for alliteration in later works, such as his modern English translation of “Sir Gawain and the Green Knight.”

Part II, “Tolkien as Wordwright,” comprises forty-one pages of revelations about etymology and the *OED*. “An etymology truly can be the unlocking of a word-hoard. A whole history of peoples and rulers, wars and

trade, inventions, mysteries, beliefs, fears, and loves can spring to life from the investigation of a single word's origin" (49).

They begin their cache of examples with "walnut," one of the words Tolkien worked on, a word whose history is as tough to crack as the nut itself. For Tolkien as philologist, "a word had an aesthetic pleasure in itself" (54). He enjoyed happenstantial puns such as "Boulder," used in *The Fellowship of the Ring* as a term describing those hobbits who guard the boundaries of the Shire, with its almost forgotten sense "one who sets out or marks bounds" vying with its more modern usage signifying "a person of objectionable manners or anti-social behavior" (59).

He was also coining his own words. "[F]rom Old English models he devised *Arkenstone*, *Dernhelm*, *ent*, *mathom*, and *smial* [...]. Using Middle English patterns, he came up with *dwimmerlaik*, *Easterling*, *elven*, *Mannish*, *sigaldry*, and *Westerness*; and he adapted Old Norse to produce *daymeal*, *Elvenhome*, *Oakenshield*, *Over-heaven*, [...] and *warg*" (61).

Many archaisms found in the formal diction of *The Lord of the Rings*, especially in the chapters on Rohan, are noted here. Tolkien's friend in the Inklings, C.S. Lewis, borrowed and adapted words freely; these are itemized on pages 84 and 85 at the end of Part II.

The finale, "Word Studies," runs to 135 pages, the thickest and richest vein tapped here. Beginning with "amidmost" and proceeding to "wraith," these 113 annotated commentary definitions are a Smaug's trove of word-lore. Unsurprisingly, "hobbit" (142-152) is the longest entry. The Rohirrim's Anglo-Saxon "holbylta" (hole-dweller) that Pippin and Merry discover links the language of the Shire to Old English. Thus engendered is a fascinating disquisition on this invention, ending with the 2004 discovery of *Homo Floriensis*, a meter-tall race of humans in Flores, Indonesia, in a chapter that beggars summary.

Words weave webs here. The comment on *dingle* (102), defined here as "A deep dell or hollow," tangles the reader into the etymology of *Derndingle*. Does *blunderbuss* (97-98) imply "blunderbussted," or *mathom* (161-162) "mathomic" or "mathom-worthy," or *legendarium* (153-54) "legendaria"?

"Middle-earth" has deep roots (162-64). The authors note precursors in Gothic, Old Norse, Old English, Shakespeare, Sir Walter Scott, and E.R. Eddison. "Mirkwood" turns up in William Morris' *The House of the Wolfings* (1889) as the setting for the story. Laurence Sterne's *Tristram Shandy* used "ninnyhammer" in 1767; the term first appeared in Thomas Nashe's encyclopedia of invective *Strange Newes* in 1592 (170-71).

Since it would have been anachronistic to use "Queen Anne's lace" in Middle-earth, and unbecomingly anti-romantic for Beren to discover Luthien dancing amid the cow-parsley, Tolkien employed "hemlock" instead (141-42).

“Glamoury,” first noted in 1811, is “glamour” as well as “grammar” (in the entry for *sigaldry*, 186-87).

A five-page “Epilogue” gift-wraps the precious present for the reader. Here, influences of Tolkien’s vocabulary on other writers, including some who claim never to have read him, provides a droll and illuminating conclusion.

Robert Louis Stevenson is quoted in this book’s epigraph:

Bright is the ring of words
When the right man rings them,
Fair the fall of songs
When the singer sings them.

Precious indeed is *The Ring of Words*. It brightens and deepens our understanding of Tolkien, his tales, and the words he crafted them with.

—Mike Foster



TOLKIEN: THE FOREST AND THE CITY. Ed. Helen Conrad-O’Brian and Gerard Hynes. Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2013. 197 p. 9781846824296. €60.00.

Helen Conrad-O’Brian and Gerard Hynes’s edited collection *Tolkien: The Forest and the City* prints the proceedings of a conference of the same name held at Trinity College Dublin on September 21-22, 2012. Although published by a small academic press based in Ireland, the volume deserves a wide readership, and will have something to offer anyone interested in Tolkien studies. The contributors include heavyweights of Tolkien scholarship like Tom Shippey, Verlyn Flieger, Thomas Honegger, and Michael D.C. Drout, but also several newer voices, many of whom are identified as graduate students from Trinity College itself or other universities across the UK. As one might expect of contributions to a conference proceedings, the essays run on the shorter side, averaging only 10 to 15 pages in length; many also retain markers of oral delivery such as extraneous anecdotes and jokes obviously intended to warm up a live audience. For example, here is Tom Shippey introducing his work on the exams that Tolkien administered at Oxford, potentially a rather dry subject: “One name [of a co-examiner] that showed up in 1924 and 1926 looked to me very like ‘Gollum’, who would of course have been a very suitable Oxford examiner, both in personality and because he must have known a lot about old forms of the

language" (20). In most cases, however, neither the brevity nor the relative informality of the essays diminishes the strength of their arguments, and, after all, one of the advantages of a collection like this one is that a larger number of shorter essays can be included in it. The authors approach Tolkien from many different critical perspectives, but, as the editors explain in their brief introduction, one of the unifying aims of the conference and the resultant proceedings was to challenge the prevailing uncomplicated view of Tolkien as a defender of "nature" against the encroachment of industrial civilization, and instead "recogniz[e] the interdependence of nature and culture in Tolkien's world as well as his art" (18). Because of the diversity of the subject matter as well as the critical approaches of the essays, the volume can also serve as a kind of overview of the state of the field. For instance, the frequent references to material from *The Children of Húrin* and *The Legend of Sigurd and Gudrún* demonstrate that these newer publications have become well integrated into Tolkien scholarship, although the conference did predate the publication of *The Fall of Arthur* in early 2013. Perhaps the one major weakness of the collection as a whole is that few essays will likely appeal to scholars working outside of Tolkien studies. Because of the narrow focus and intimate setting of the conference, this circumstance is understandable, but several of the essays strike me as having missed opportunities in revision to engage with other critical movements and subfields in literary studies. In short, the picture of Tolkien studies that this Hibernian volume provides remains something of an insular one.

Tom Shippey's keynote address on "Goths and Romans in Tolkien's Imagination" has been placed first in the collection, and this essay is probably also its best. Generations of scholars have now pored over all of Tolkien's papers and correspondence that have been made available to the public, but to my knowledge no one before Shippey had gone to the trouble of investigating the Oxford examinations Tolkien set in the 1920s and 30s. Surprisingly, the exams turn out to yield no small amount of insight into Tolkien's views on the Goths and their possible relationships with the English, and as such they lend important evidence to the larger argument about Tolkien and the Goths that Shippey wishes to develop. In *The Road to Middle-earth*, Shippey had previously proposed that Tolkien intended a "deliberate paralleling" between the history of the hobbits and the history of England (23), but in this essay Shippey expands on this claim considerably to argue that Tolkien "meant to equate the history of the Riders [of Rohan] with the history of the Goths *slowly but plausibly turning into another kind of English*" (26, emphasis in original). In its mapping of the history of Europe onto various points in the history of Middle-earth, the argument is both original and ingenious, and Shippey even provocatively suggests that Tolkien's corrective "fixing" of the fate of the Goths in their respective analogues in both

The Lord of the Rings and "The New Lay of Guadrún" constitutes a form of alternate history more usually associated with science fiction than fantasy (31).

While a wonderful piece of scholarship in itself, Shippey's keynote admittedly bears very little on the conference's stated theme, and the essays that follow it vary quite widely themselves in their interpretations of what "The Forest and the City" means for Tolkien studies. Jane Suzanne Carroll, for one, "aims to provide an introduction to the manners of Middle-earth and to examine the connection between these ['civilized'] pleasures and place" (33). She concludes that Tolkien overturns the binary of uncultivated wilderness and civilized city: "Tolkien disrupts the relationship between manners and topography. Civil behaviour is not linked to civic spaces" (42). Carroll's decision to consider collectively the scenes of welcome and hospitality across Tolkien's works is a brilliant one, even if her essay ultimately suffers somewhat due to its collapsing of the concepts of civility and courtesy. For Tolkien the medievalist creating his neo-medieval world, the incredibly complex concept of "courtesy" may not be as interchangeable with civility, etiquette, and good manners as Carroll assumes, and further work could be done examining Tolkien's usage of that particular word "courtesy," a foundational concept in medieval romance. The Middle English word "curteisye," for example, represents one of the five virtues that a chivalrous knight must embody in Tolkien's beloved *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*.

Other essays apply the familiar strategy of source criticism to illuminate Tolkien's views on the relationship between nature and culture, but most of these do so in refreshingly original ways. Dimitra Fimi, for example, turns not to the well-known medieval narratives that Tolkien drew on, but instead usefully juxtaposes the classical story of Oedipus with the tale of Túrin Turambar in order "to interrogate the dichotomies of city and wilderness, or civilization and nature, in Tolkien's construction of the landscape of Middle-earth and its peoples" (46). Rebecca Merkelbach's essay suggests several parallels for Tolkien's conception of the forest in folk and fairy tales, and Erin Sebo returns us to more familiar territory in a learned essay analyzing the multiple heritages of Tolkien's riddle contests in both classical and medieval literatures as well as English folk ballads. In particular, Sebo stresses the significance of apparently unsolvable "neck riddles" like the final question Bilbo asks of Gollum: "neck riddles are the most important point of the contest and the most riddlic of all its questions because they refers [*sic*] directly to the meta-contest, to the real conflict between the two riddlers, the conflict which caused the riddle contest in the first place" (139). I do remain skeptical about the dimension of her argument that must suppose that "*The Hobbit's* riddle contests take place in cities" (143), because it seems quite a stretch to reconfigure Gollum's underground habitation as a city environment rather than a wilderness, a point on which this part of the argument hinges.

Alison Milbank, in her self-declared capacity as both literary critic and theologian, extends our understanding of Tolkien's relationship with another medieval author, Dante, by comparing the role of the Earthly Paradise in the *Purgatorio* with several of Middle-earth's landscapes. In Milbank's analysis, these two authors share "a common project of philosophical realism, expressed in and through the fictional" (155). Moving away from literary antecedents, Karl Kinsella breaks entirely new ground in an essay tracing the possible influence of the Arts and Crafts movement of *fin-de-siècle* England on the architecture of Middle-earth. His fascinating essay should encourage further work examining the shared medievalism of both projects, as well as architecture in Tolkien in general. Finally, Meg Black's contribution, "The Party Tree and Its Roots in the Spanish Civil War," posits an unexpected but provocative connection between a neglected tree in Tolkien studies—the one under which Bilbo delivers his farewell speech—and the oak of Guernica, a symbol of Basque national pride that received widespread coverage after the infamous bombing of the town. In Black's argument, Saruman's destruction of the hobbits' beloved tree during his takeover of the Shire draws some of its force from a contrast with the story of the oak of Guernica, which avoided a similar fate. The richness of these examples of source criticism, which search for Tolkien's unexplored sources not only in new texts but new media, demonstrate that this familiar line of inquiry has far from exhausted itself.

The remaining contributors adopt an eclectic mix of approaches to understanding the forest and/or the city in Tolkien. Jennifer Harwood-Smith has the most to say about the city itself, and compares the divided aesthetic of the film *Metropolis* with the divisions in Tolkien's own cities. Gerard Hynes connects Tolkien's Númenórean writings with contemporary concerns about "imperialism and environmental destruction" (124), which Hynes finds fundamentally linked to one another in Númenór and its fate. The essay convincingly argues that "Tolkien's treatment of empire is neither naïve nor simplistic" (129), and I found its examination of Manwë's eagle as an imperial symbol particularly suggestive. Dominika Nycz emphasizes how closely the wizards Radagast and Saruman become tied to their environments, yet her simplistic mapping of a wizard living as a hermit in Isengard onto the concept of "the city" seems an example of the binary thinking that the volume as a whole endeavors to work against. The essay introduces some interesting ideas—"by mirroring their landscapes, Radagast and Saruman lose the essential otherness to Middle-earth that defines them as Istar" (75)—but seems underdeveloped in the end. Likewise, I found Ian Kinane's argument that Bilbo develops into a "proto-cultural materialist" over the course of *The Hobbit* largely unpersuasive (144), although one can't help but admire the pun "ad-venture capitalist" (146).

Although there are some weaker essays included in the volume, Tolkienists may wish to consult it if only for the trio of very strong essays by veteran scholars Honegger, Flieger, and Drout. Honegger's "'Raw Forest' Versus 'Cooked City'—Lévi-Strauss in Middle-earth," nuances the anthropologist's famous culinary triangle as it bears on Middle-earth. Honegger concludes that, rather than reflecting relative levels of civilization and refinement, "cooking reflects the moral attitude of people" (85). Gollum, for one, "remains unrepentant in his rawness" (86). I was particularly impressed by how this essay encourages us to take the hobbits' relationship with food in *The Lord of the Rings* seriously, since it is so often understood as nothing but a source for quick humor (the Jackson films, for instance, play up the humorous aspect considerably). Flieger became unable to attend the conference, but has generously shared her planned talk for publication here. Her essay examines the relationship between the objective and the subjective in Tolkien's depiction of trees, how "Tolkien's trees, the most memorable ones, seem to be sentient beings, alive and aware in a world that is equally aware of them" (107). Tolkien's lecture "On Fairy-Stories" is a frequent reference point for the majority of the essays in this book, but Flieger takes particular care to tease out the implications of the enigmatic concept of "faërian drama" that Tolkien outlines therein, particularly as it relates to the role of perception in Tolkien's narratives and the rebuke of the birch tree in *Smith of Wootton Major*. Again, one might wish that Flieger had attempted to engage with an audience beyond Tolkien studies, because many of her points could be productively tied to other discussions in literary scholarship concerning the pathetic fallacy, the function of personification, or possibly even posthumanist theory or object-oriented ontology. Michael Drout provides a fitting conclusion to the volume with another analysis of architecture in Middle-earth, but focused on the towers and ruins that dot the landscape: "The tower [...] is not intrinsically good or evil, but rather an idea given solid form, a representation of power" (176); "The permanence of the ruin preserves the memory but also emphasizes the permanence of the loss" (177). Based on the landscapes of ruin in Tolkien, Drout eventually argues that "[t]he eucatastrophic moments—powerful as they are—are less significant than the sadness" (185). While Drout provides insufficient evidence in just these few pages to support such a bold claim, the essay issues an important challenge that others can take up, whether to argue against or in support of. Indeed, each of the fifteen essays in this conference proceedings volume will act as a stimulus to further thought and scholarship, and there is no better measure of its success.

—T.S. Miller

TOLKIEN STUDIES X (2013). Edited by Michael D.C. Drout, Verlyn Flieger, and David Bratman. 311 pp. ISSN 1547-3155. \$60.00/year.

SEVEN: AN ANGLO-AMERICAN LITERARY REVIEW 30 (2014). Edited by Marjorie Lamp Mead. 122 pp. ISSN 0271-3012. \$16.50/year.

Tolkien Studies, the beautifully bound hardback annual journal, has reached a milestone with its tenth issue. David Bratman has filled the gap left by the departure of Douglas A. Anderson last year, and Merlin DeTardo has taken over sole authorship of "The Year's Work in Tolkien Studies."

Claudio Testi's invaluable lead article, "Tolkien's Work: Is it Christian or Pagan? A Proposal for a 'Synthetic' Approach," discusses the arguments for Tolkien's legendarium as a Christian or pagan creation in a clear and logical manner, summarizing the views of a number of scholars on both sides of the issue. He then proposes a compelling argument for a synthetic view of Tolkien as "a Christian author sub-creating a non-Christian world that is in harmony with the Revelation" (10). This article is well worth savoring for its clarity and logical organization and for its engagement with the whole of Tolkien's writing, both fiction and scholarship, in support of its conclusions. I found Testi's examination of Beowulf, the Northern ethics of courage, and heroism in support of his arguments particularly interesting.

In "Vague or Vivid? Descriptions in The Lord of the Rings," Nils Iver Agøy follows up on his 2005 observation that Tolkien's generally vague descriptions invite reader participation, examining the text closely for evidence of exactly how vague they are. One may, as a reader, *feel* that landscapes are described more specifically than people, but Agøy's methodical survey is supported by stylistic analysis of the text. Along the way, we learn, for example, that Ioreth has three times as many lines as Arwen, and that we know more about Bill Ferny's tobacco pipe than Sam's. Agøy concludes that Tolkien is concerned to show us *where* characters are in relation to the landscape and *how* they perceive their surroundings, but leaves personal descriptions purposefully vague so that the reader may more easily identify with the characters; in other words, Tolkien was aiming for "*universal* appeal by letting the reader's experience be *poignantly particular*" (65).

Intercultural marriage is often praised as an unalloyed good in Tolkien's works, but Hope Rogers give us a more nuanced reading in "No Triumph Without Loss: Problems of Intercultural Marriage." While Tolkien presents it as "essential for dispelling prejudice and creating peace" (70), he does not shy away from exploring concerns about its effects on the individuals involved, including the multicultural products of these intermarriages and the choices they face. Rogers's reading of Túrin as someone who consistently rejects

opportunities to accept and marry into other cultures, to the point where he (unwittingly, of course) marries his own sister, is a compelling one. It would be interesting to see Rogers's critique applied to the Ents; while the Entwives are of the same race as the Ents, they developed a distinctly separate culture from the males of their species.

Thomas Honegger gives us a close reading of Bilbo and Gollum's riddle-game and its revision history in "My Most Precious Riddle: Eggs and Rings Revisited." He touches on the imbalance of the "prizes," for example; in the original, Gollum wagered a "present" and Bilbo wagered his very life, while the later stakes—the way out of the tunnels against a life—is far more plausible. Yet if the "present" is understood to be the One Ring, and Gollum has an inkling of its importance, the original stakes are not that unevenly balanced. Honegger also speculates that Bilbo's sixth riddle, the one to which the given answer is "eggsees," is presented in a brief truncated form in order to set up a possible alternate answer of "Bilbo's pocket containing the golden ring" (97).

In "Tolkien's Japonisme: Prints, Dragons, and a Great Wave," Michael Organ argues convincingly that we should be paying far more critical attention to Tolkien's work as a visual artist (as Nancy Bunting does in this issue of *Mythlore* as well). In this particular case, the author looks for evidence to support a trace of the influence of Japonisme, the late 19th century/early 20th century reaction to the availability of Japanese artwork, and especially ukiyo-e prints, to the West. While there is little direct evidence of the movement's influence on his own art, Tolkien did buy Japanese prints to decorate his rooms at Oxford, and the palette and the flat, somewhat abstract perspective of works like the cover of *The Hobbit* and "Bilbo Comes to the Huts of the Raft-elves" do show some kinship. Organ also draws parallels between Tolkien's "Atlantis-complex" and the well-known Hokusai print "The Great Wave off Kanagawa," and Tolkien's frequent depiction of solitary conical mountains bearing a resemblance to Mt. Fuji.

Renée Vink's "'Jewish' Dwarves: Tolkien and Anti-Semitic Stereotyping" is a direct response to Rebecca Brackmann's "Dwarves are Not Heroes: Antisemitism and the Dwarves in J.R.R. Tolkien's Writing," which was published in *Mythlore* #109/110 in 2010. In this article Vink takes Brackmann to task for writing that "anti-Semitism [or] Jewish stereotyping contributed to Tolkien's depiction of the Dwarves" and that this depiction changed in his later work "because Tolkien got a bad conscience thanks to Hitler" (142). I think Vink's critique, while it raises some interesting chronological questions that should send someone to Doug Kane's *Arda Reconstructed* for a third viewpoint on the topic, fails primarily on two points. The first is not considering Brackmann's careful definition of what she means by "antisemitism" (notably, Brackmann insists on this spelling instead of "anti-Semitism"), precisely in order to forestall

this sort of argument. For the purposes of her paper, she uses “antisemitism” to refer to the idea that there has historically been a set of characteristics associated with the Jews as a race, not to any act of racism or violence arising from these beliefs. Her argument is that Tolkien imported these stereotypes wholesale into his early depictions of the Dwarves. If Tolkien is guilty of a fault, then, it is in using this set of characteristics uncritically; even in his later work, there still remains a problematic identifiable group of racial characteristics associating Dwarves and Jewishness. I don’t believe that at any point Brackmann considers Tolkien’s use of these stereotypes “virulent” (Vink 133)—merely unfortunate.

I feel that Vink also misinterprets Brackmann as saying that the single overwhelming source for the Dwarves is in supposed Jewish characteristics, ignoring any Norse influence entirely. I don’t think she is claiming this, though perhaps Brackmann could have stated it more clearly. In the *Soup of Story*, there is no reason why Tolkien’s Dwarves might not be an ever-evolving amalgam of Norse myth, medieval religious and social attitudes towards the Jews, Tolkien’s own later reactions to these stereotypes in the light of WWII and the threatening Arab-Israeli conflict (which neither mentions as a potential source for his 1965 remark about the “warlike capacities” of the Jews), and his own thinking on sub-creation. In any case, this remains a topic that is by no means exhausted.

Derek Shank’s exploration of structuralism in “‘The Web of Story’: Structuralism in Tolkien’s ‘On Fairy-stories’” is somewhat rough going for someone unfamiliar with this particular literary theory. But like Tolkien’s famous rejection of allegory, it seems to come down to the author disavowing it, yet still using it; and on a closer look, actually transforming it. Structuralism in both literature and folklore breaks texts down into components and rules and mechanics, dismissing “the colouring, the atmosphere, the unclassifiable individual details” that make each story unique” (OFS 24, qtd. in 149). Yet Shank contends that elsewhere in “On Fairy-Stories” Tolkien “relies on a structuralist framework” (158), particularly in his definition of the elements that make a tale eucatastrophic. However, Tolkien adds an element left out of structuralism: the reader, and the story’s effect on the reader. Shank concludes, then, that Tolkien “both moves away from structuralism and also extends it into the realm of phenomenology and psychoanalysis” (160).

This is followed by another theory-dense paper, Benjamin Saxton’s “Tolkien and Bakhtin on Authorship, Literary Freedom, and Alterity.” It’s rather difficult to conceive of how a character could be considered to have freedom and independence from its author, and I’m not sure Saxton has entirely convinced me that Bakhtin’s dialogic theory of “author-hero relations” really means that characters can be “on equal terms with the author,” though many an author has complained about characters who don’t seem very cooperative in the writing (168). However, there are some very useful insights in this article about

monologic versus dialogic characters—those that interact with others as equally free beings, like Gandalf or Frodo, and those who treat the Other as an object, like Sauron. Saxton goes on to examine Ilúvatar’s creation of Arda, Melkor’s rebellion, and Aule’s creation of the Dwarves in this light. Indeed, using Tolkien’s ideas about sub-creation, allegory versus applicability (the freedom of the reader against the “purposed dominion” of the author), and the value of mutual respect and acceptance among individuals, does help to make Bakhtin’s theory clearer. While Saxton mentions the Jackson films as an instance of “the freedom of shared creation” carrying on an unfinished work, it would be interesting to see these concepts extended further to offer a critique of fan fiction and the work of “other minds and hands” in general as a dialogue with Tolkien.

Kris Swank’s “Tom Bombadil’s Last Song: Tolkien’s ‘Once Upon a Time’” is a welcome study of a much-neglected poem. Swank first conjectures that the poem was written sometime between spring of 1962 and mid-1965, then proceeds to a critical analysis of the poem’s meter, imagery, language, and meaning, paying particular attention to the *lintips*, creatures which appear nowhere else in Tolkien’s work and epitomize the evocative, elegiac, yet unsettling mood of the poem. I would suggest there’s still work to be done to positively identify the “earth-star” in the poem; the daisy is far more likely than the fungus, as the latter closes in hot, dry conditions, not at night like the earth-stars do in the second stanza. But there may be other nyctinastic candidates that bloom in late May in the same climate and at the same time as buttercups and wild roses, such as chickweed, which has star-shaped flowers and is actually named *Stellaria media*.

An extensive book review section, “The Year’s Work in Tolkien Studies for 2010,” and the “Bibliography (in English) for 2011” close out the issue.

SEVEN HAS REACHED A MILESTONE AS WELL, WITH ITS 30TH ISSUE (the first was published in 1980, so it is the journal’s 34th year). This issue coincides by chance with the 50th anniversary of C.S. Lewis’s death, and the introduction to this volume includes some coverage of the ceremony inducting him into Poet’s Corner at Westminster Abbey.

It’s fitting, therefore, that *Seven* has secured permission to print the “Early Prose Joy,” Lewis’s first effort at a prose autobiography, in this issue. Most likely written in early 1931, at a time when Lewis had converted to Theism but not Christianity, this is, as Andrew Lazo says in his introduction, a portrait of “an incomplete conversion, a conversion still in process” (9). As Lewis states in his opening paragraph, at this point in his spiritual journey he had “arrived at God by induction”; something else will later take him the rest of his way. At a technical level, this manuscript will be invaluable in helping to clarify chronological questions about Lewis’s life and his writing process at this point in

his long career. At a deeper level, of course, it is even more interesting. Why did Lewis, with his “tendency to hide himself and hold secrets” (7), so frequently turn his hand to autobiography? What can we make of the evolution of his religious and philosophical views over his lifetime with the addition of this far more detailed view of his period as a Theist?

There is additional material here on his initial reaction to George MacDonald’s *Phantastes* (“*Hic incipit vita nova*,” 21) and his opinions on Modernist authors, as well as some intriguingly sympathetic thoughts on atheism (29 et seq.). Lewis doesn’t use the terms *Joy* or *Sehnsucht* in this fragment, but the events familiar to us from his other biographical materials—the miniature garden he and his brother created with moss and flowers, associating Beatrix Potter’s *Squirrel Nutkin* with the real world experience of Autumn, and especially encountering the lines about Balder the Beautiful in Longfellow which led to an obsession with Northern mythology—are first recounted here. Andrew Lazo has done a great service to Lewis studies in providing an accurate transcription and extensive commentary in the form of his introduction and endnotes. I foresee a great deal of interesting future scholarship re-examining Lewis’s other autobiographical writings in the light shed by this manuscript.

An excellent partner piece to the above is Walter Hooper’s study of *A Grief Observed*. This is an earlier and longer version of the section in his *C.S. Lewis: A Guide to his Life and Works* on the topic. Hooper begins by looking at five sonnets on grief which Lewis had written ten years before Joy’s death; there he notes a structure parallel to that of *The Divine Comedy*, which is also used to effect in the later book. Following an interesting discussion about the initial pseudonymous publication of *Grief*, Hooper summarizes and critiques the book, relating it to a number of Lewis’s other works. Photos of Joy and Jack precede the article.

Bruce R. Johnson’s “C.S. Lewis and the BBC’s *Brains Trust*: A Study in Resiliency” is an interesting study of Lewis’s appearances on British radio from 1941-1944; the listenership statistics Johnson provides are a corrective to “the romanticized notion that, during the war, C.S. Lewis was the second-most-recognized voice on BBC radio, after Winston Churchill” (80). The transcripts included indicate that Lewis did not always make a good showing, but Johnson’s point is that Lewis learned from each experience and became better at tailoring his talks to his audience and choosing formats that worked best for his style and approach.

In “‘Shifting Change’: Liminality and Gender in *Till We Have Faces*,” Suzanne Rosenthal Shumway takes an unusual approach to *Till We Have Faces*, positing that an easily-overlooked event early in the story is a key to understanding what Lewis does with gender over the course of the novel. She refers to the castration of a palace guard, Tarin, who dares to flirt with Orual’s

sister Redival; this event precipitates his father's leadership of an uprising against the king, and Tarin later reappears in the novel as a successful profiteer. Keeping this story in mind, one can see parallels with Orual's increasing rejection of herself as a woman and taking on of masculine duties and characteristics: her "desire to re-fashion [herself] in a supremely violent way to create a superior, ungendered version of [herself], one that is free of desire and weakness" (95). In the end, though, before the gods, gender is shown to be of no importance; Shumway's remarks on "the gods' surgery" have an interesting resonance with Erin K. Wagner's essay in this issue of *Mythlore*.

The issue concludes with Adam Schwartz's review essay on Ralph Wood's recent title *Chesterton: The Nightmare Goodness of God*, and a number of shorter reviews.

The Journal of Tolkien Research has recently been announced as a new title in the area of Tolkien studies. It will be edited by Bradford Lee Eden, Dean of Library Services at Valparaiso University, and will be the first peer-reviewed open access electronic journal in the field. Open access is becoming a form of publication of increasing interest to academics who want to retain their copyright and yet achieve wide dissemination of their work, so this will be a title to watch. It will be hosted on the Valparaiso University's institutional repository at scholar.valpo.edu.

—Janet Brennan Croft



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Through Silver: The Inklings' Moral and Mythopoeic Legacy (ed. Jonathan B. Himes, Cambridge Scholars, 2008). Besides other editorial work, he has published essays on Lewis, Tolkien, Charles Williams, Dorothy L. Sayers, and some related authors, as well as such popular writers as Anthony Boucher, Ellery Queen, John Dickson Carr, Poul Anderson, Robert A. Heinlein, Isaac Asimov, and Gene Wolfe, and such standard authors as the Pearl Poet, Shakespeare, Coleridge, Hawthorne, Tennyson, and John Heath-Stubbs. He has published well over 150 poems. He has had one play—a farce about a vampire—produced at his university. His book of poems about poetry—listed as *Ars Poetica* on Amazon.com, but in full *The Variety of Poetic Genres: Ars Poetica*—was published by Mellen Poetry Press in 2012.

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