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Abstract

Examines how Lewis’s idea of “transposition [...] the incorporation of the eternal into the material” operates in *That Hideous Strength*.

Additional Keywords

Lewis, C.S.—Transposition, concept of; Lewis, C.S. *That Hideous Strength*

Resurrecting the 'Ancient Unities'

The Incarnation of Myth and the Legend of Logres

in C.S. Lewis' *That Hideous Strength*

Dorothy F. Lane

C. S. Lewis writes in his preface to *The Great Divorce* that earth "if chosen instead of Heaven, will turn out to have been ... only a region in Hell: and earth, if put second to Heaven, to have been from the beginning a part of Heaven itself" (7). It is these two viewpoints which Lewis explores in *That Hideous Strength*, the final volume in his science-fiction trilogy. Both *That Hideous Strength* and *The Great Divorce* appeal to a new way of seeing, which recognizes that, as Lewis writes, "real landscapes enter into pictures, and not that pictures will one day sprout into real trees and grass" (*TAP*, 179). This perspective is manifested in all of Lewis' writing; even in descriptions of his frequent walks through the countryside, the landscape seems, like our final glimpse of Narnia in *The Last Battle*, "deeper country" (154-155). Lewis uses the term 'transposition' to describe the incorporation of the eternal in the material which allows the fantastic in *That Hideous Strength* to infringe upon the ordinary, rather than to exist as a mere parallel world.

In his study, *Miracles*, Lewis defines myth as a "unfocussed gleam of divine truth", which must be incarnated into a temporally and spatially restricted form by undergoing "a long process of condensing or focussing" (*Miracles*, 139n). Thus, he argues, myth may even become incarnate in earthly history. In his article, "Transposition", Lewis describes other instances in which the temporal incorporates the eternal: for example, natural landscape may point towards heavenly, and human language may incorporate the 'word of God'. In order to 'prove' his theory, he cites examples of transpositions which occur among observable phenomena when a higher, more complex, medium must be incorporated into a lower and simpler one: the relation between piano and orchestral scores, between languages with varying numbers of characters or syllables, and between three-dimensional reality and two-dimensional pictures. He then argues that if one can imagine a three-dimensional world by looking at a picture, one may, by a similar perspective, envision a more complex, transcendent world by looking at this one. For Lewis, the natural world is always mythopoetic — always full of significance — and one of the roles of literature is to broaden the reader's horizons by intensifying his/her longing for the transcendent.

Lewis' notion of transposition is influenced by neo-Platonism, and by the works of the Renaissance 'Golden' writers — Sidney and Spenser, for instance — whom Lewis examines in the *Oxford English Literature in the Sixteenth Century*. He is also influenced by Dante's *Divina*

Commedia — upon which his own *The Great Divorce* is modelled — which, according to Erich Auerbach, depicts characters such as Virgil as 'figurae': reflections of an eternal identity. All of these writers, along with 19th-century fantasy-writer, George MacDonald, attempted, as Lewis explains, to 'baptise the reader's imagination'; to suggest a deeper reality by describing an uplifted material world.

In transposition, the lower medium is made more significant by its incorporation of the higher; for example, each note of a piano score must signify more in suggesting an entire orchestra. At the same time, the higher medium is humiliated — compressed — by its incarnation in the lower (*TAP*, 159); the orchestral score must be reduced in order to be encompassed by the piano. Using another analogy, one might say that for Lewis, a frozen concentrate contains all of the substance of, but in a less watery form than, its original liquid. Transposition, then, describes both an ascent and a descent; a lifting up of the natural, and a humiliation of the supernatural. For this reason, images of ascent and descent — of compression and expansion — appear in many of Lewis' writings.

Examples of transposition are intertwined particularly throughout *That Hideous Strength*. For instance, commentators such as William Norwood Jr. have noted that the myth which Lewis develops in the first two interplanetary novels — set on Malacandra and Perelandra — is incarnated into the earthly history of the third volume. Here, the story of the creature who establishes himself as creator emerges in the portrait of Belbury's National Institute for Coordinated Experiments (N.I.C.E.).¹ Charles Moorman argues in *Arthurian Triptych* that "myth offers the poet a complete and ordered cosmos, an irreducible system of coherent belief upon which he can construct an ordered and meaningful poetry" (2); however, in *That Hideous Strength*, that cosmos is transposed into the chaotic world of history. Moreover, Arthurian legend also becomes incarnate in this novel, and, as Lewis describes, rises up "like a solid thing" (*THS*, 284). Mythical themes, then, appear as part of — or intruding upon — what we know as material reality. For instance, Lewis presents English history as a manifestation of the continuing mythical struggle of Logres and Britain, and the Ransom of the first two novels becomes both modern Pendragon and wounded Fisher-King in *That Hideous Strength*.

In one of many revelations, heroine Jane Studdock perceives that "the largest thing ... had, apparently, found room for itself in a moment of time too short to be called

time at all" (395); a good example, then, of the eternal entering time. Similarly, language is so 'foggy' at Belbury that Wither does not even notice when Jules's speech goes awry in the memorable 'Tower of Babel' scene — he even admits that he did not really expect the speech to make any sense;² however, in the Great Speech spoken by Ransom, Merlin, and Dr. Dimble, meaning is "inherent in [words] as the great Sun is inherent in the little waterdrop" (281). Those things which are eternal — "the present operations of God, the planets and the Pendragon" — speak themselves "through [them] from some strong place at a distance" (281). Merlin's prophesying is similar in that, as Jane describes, it appears as though "something like a camera shutter opened at the back of his mind and closed again immediately, and just one little item came through" (348).

Transposition also justifies the joining of interplanetary myth and Arthurian legend in the novel; a juxtaposition often regarded as overly complex or even incongruous. Both *That Hideous Strength* and *The Great Divorce*, along with the nonfictional *The Abolition of Man*, describe a world on the brink of ultimate revelation and 'the last battle', in which everything is, as Dimble states, "always hardening and narrowing and coming to a point" (*THS*, 350). Lewis writes in the preface to *The Great Divorce* that "life is not like a river but like a tree. It does not move towards unity but away from it" (7). Into the center of this world of disunity, the figure of Merlin is resurrected into the landscape of Bragdon Wood, as emblematic of what Owen Barfield — one of the philosopher 'Inklings' — terms the "ancient unities". Transposed into human history in *That Hideous Strength*, then, is the gradual division of the perspectives of Hell and Heaven which Lewis outlines in his preface to *The Great Divorce*, and which I quoted at the beginning of this paper. The resurrection of Merlin — which appears to unite the two perspectives — is, paradoxically, that which forces the final division, as the "intelligible virtues" descend and he becomes their instrument. This image of increasing polarity, in the center of which stands a well of possibility, is a motif similar to that which appears in Charles Williams' *Taliessin Through Logres*.

Barfield argues that for the 'primitive' consciousness physical and psychical meaning were inseparable; division of the two takes place with the emergence of abstract conceptual thought which examines experience from the outside. Expressions which are now considered metaphorical — which describe the abstract in concrete terms³ — were once simple statements of a particular world view.³ Moreover, Barfield writes that "Another name for polarity is triunity: the two poles, with their originating unity as the relation between them" (in Schakel, 32). Another influence on Lewis was Samuel Alexander's *Space, Time and Deity*, which argues that direct experience and thought concerning experience are two separate and distinct events. Lewis draws on these ideas to apply to his own version of physical and psychical division: the division of those who adhere to abstractions and concepts as an end, and those who view them only as 'signposts'

which point towards the more concrete eternal world. More important, perhaps, he associates these two perspectives with good and evil; encoded in his texts is the idea that the vague, massive, or watery is to be avoided as false temptation, while the clear, concrete, and concentrated is to be sought as a reflection of the Real. That may be one reason why he favours images over abstract explanations in his own writing.⁴

In *The Abolition of Man*, Lewis explains that by not focusing upon the ultimate reality revealed in Nature, one adheres to what he describes as a "transparent world" of mere nature. He writes that "The whole point of seeing through something is to see something through it ... But a wholly transparent world is an invisible world. To see through all things is the same as not to see" (55). Mere nature, then, is that which looks at Nature from a supposedly objective position outside of it — a viewpoint manifested in Belbury's Objective Room, which ultimately controls even the apparently omnipotent viewer.⁵ Lewis argues that "that process whereby man surrenders object after object, and finally himself, to Nature in return for power" is a 'magician's bargain' (52); that is why both Companies in the novel expect Merlin to join forces with Belbury. Ironically, it is the crafty Lord Feverstone who states that "If you try to be neutral you simply become a pawn" (46), which is indeed what the Belbury people become; pawns to the overwhelming influence of mere nature and its encompassing attitudes.

Both Belbury and the Hell of *The Great Divorce* are representations of this reduction of all things to transparencies. Both are, as Lewis describes them, "invisible" worlds (*THS*, 146), whose inhabitants succumb to blindness, and adhere to abstractions as reality. In *The Great Divorce*, the significance of earthly choices which lead towards, or away from, the Real is revealed through the encounters of Ghosts and Solid People. The dreamer's guide, 'George MacDonald', explains that the eternal weight of these choices has been viewed only through what he calls "the lens of Time", which has shrunk the whole picture like an inverted telescope. In *That Hideous Strength*, the Ghosts and Solid People — the contrasted landscapes of Hell and Heaven — emerge again, but here Lewis tightens the focus even further, to reveal these choices exactly as they might appear during our lifetimes; at the same time, because these events must make an impression upon us, Lewis makes the choices more dramatic.

Choice emerges through the contrast which is carefully developed between Belbury and St. Anne's on the Hill, and through the marriage of Mark and Jane, who are, respectively, drawn to each space; their marriage and subsequent separation is a good image, then, of a kind of universal 'divorce'. Lewis suggests the things which point each in a particular direction: Mark, for instance, is a sociologist, who adheres to the truth of abstract statistics over direct experience;⁶ Jane, a visionary English doctoral student, is fascinated — albeit reluctantly — by the mystical aspects of love and faith.⁷ We see the division between their two

perspectives even from their first journeys to Belbury and St. Anne's: while Mark speeds along in Feverstone's motorcar, so that the landscape through which he travels is a blur, Jane travels by train, aware of the details of her surroundings.⁸

Lewis' vivid description of landscapes also reveals the division and contrast of the two perspectives, and shows how, as this division is transposed into the material world, Hell and Heaven become respectively more watery and more concrete. It seems significant, for instance, that Belbury is in the lowlands while St. Anne's is on a hill, and that Ransom's room is "only to be reached by descending to a landing and ascending again" (201). The world of Belbury also appears bigger from the outside than it actually is. Mark Studdock initially perceives Lord Feverstone as "a big man driving a big car to somewhere where they would find big stuff going on" (56), and one is apparently struck — upon seeing the grounds of the N.I.C.E. — by the "greatness and grandiosity of the whole undertaking" (123). The Edwardian mansion at Belbury is characterized by a "wide staircase", a "big-windowed room", and a "large room furnished as a lounge" (59). In contrast, the Georgian house at St. Anne's, like the Stable in *The Last Battle*, is bigger from the inside than from the outside; the house itself is "sparsely furnished" and has "narrow and plain passages" (72). St. Anne's garden is in a state of apparent chaos with "narrow paths ... and then rose bushes, all stiff and prickly in their winter garb" (71); in contrast, the Ornamental Pleasure Gardens at Belbury are, notably, "not the sort of grounds that anyone could walk in for pleasure" (122). These descriptions suggest that smaller and harder elements may actually be more significant, an idea similar to Psyche's platonic image of life in *Till We Have Faces* as a small room opening out onto increasingly larger ones. Belbury is, then, the world of the grey town in *The Great Divorce*, which appears larger than Heaven but is paradoxically shrunken by its adherence to abstractions.

"All mortals," claims Screwtape in *The Screwtape Letters*, "tend to turn into the thing they are pretending to be" (54). In *The Great Divorce*, the Ghosts are repeatedly absorbed into the roles they play.¹⁰ Similarly, Mark Studdock, having tentatively joined the N.I.C.E., soon discovers that "his facial muscles and his voice, without any conscious volition, [take] on the tone of his colleagues" (157), and later, that his mind has been "changed beyond recognition" (332). Dr. Frost, after his initiation in the Objective Room, ultimately finds himself "a mere spectator" of his own actions; rejecting the final possibility of salvation, he "[flings] himself back into his illusion" and commits suicide (445). Lewis writes that "in that attitude eternity overtook [Frost] as sunrise in old tales overtakes trolleys and turns them into unchangeable stone" (445); the flexibility of his choice, once made, has now become eternal and unalterable.

In *The Great Divorce*, MacDonald explains that "Hell is a state of mind ... [a] shutting up of every creature within the dungeon of its own mind ... But Heaven is not a state

of mind. Heaven is reality itself" (69). The dungeon image reappears in *The Last Battle*, in which the dwarfs are unable to see the landscape which is incorporated in the Stable. As Aslan explains, "Their prison is only in their minds, yet they are in that prison; and so afraid of being taken in that they cannot be taken out" (135). Lewis' examination of the mental prison also appears in "Transposition"; a young boy, growing up in a dungeon, must imagine the world outside only through the pencil-drawings of his mother. His greatest difficulty, writes Lewis, will be to match the drawings he has seen with the reality he will finally glimpse — one in which there are no pencil-lines; his potential prison, then, is also an inner one. The image is, for Lewis, a metaphor for the material world, similar to the underworld perspective described in *The Silver Chair*, and also, of course, to Plato's 'cave' image.

Studying these examples, it seems significant that Belbury's 'Head' is exactly that: a belief in the self-reliance of a mind which operates on nature from the outside, without body or, as Frost describes, the 'chemical reactions' of emotional response. The scientist, Filostrato, states his plan "to make our brains live with less and less body" (211), and Frost claims that "The individual is to become all head" (318). Interestingly, the physical features of face and eyes indicate perhaps most clearly the contrast of the Belbury and St. Anne's perspectives. In the Belbury portraits, these descriptions show that without the body, the mind too becomes insubstantial. For instance, Cossar has a "smooth, freckled face and non-committal eyes" (113), and Frost reminds Jane "of a waxworks face" (165). Frost also wears prince-nez which "kept on catching the light so as to make his eyes invisible" (11), and which later become "opaque windows concealing his eyes" (304). Mark's vision of Filostrato and Striak as two severed heads in the moonlight which "looked like masks hanging in the air" (217), both indicates their perspective, and foreshadows their own horrible ends.

Wither, Belbury's Deputy Director, is probably the most 'advanced' in his pursuit of objectivity. Notably, his face has "watery eyes and something rather vague and chaotic about it" (59). He, too, is now controlled by the perspective which he once adopted; "an organism which functioned almost independently" (307). Mark later discovers the phantasmal nature of Wither — that he is able to be in several places at once — but this ability has transformed him into a "shapeless ruin" (369) so that his soul spreads and dissipates "like a gas" (230).¹¹ Individual characters thus become manifestations and reinforcements of the landscapes which they have incorporated within themselves; for instance, Mark later perceives Jane as having within her "deep wells and knee-deep meadows of happiness, rivers of freshness, enchanted gardens of leisure", which he contrasts with the "tin-can" world of Belbury (304). Belbury, he realizes, would seem "metallic, unreal" in comparison with Jane and her accompanying images of home, comfort, and buttered toast (208). This 'loading' of landscape with significance is similar to the emblematic physical world of *Till We Have Faces*, in which

nature is transformed into a god's palace by Psyche's altered vision.

In contrast to Wither, the presence of Ransom, St. Anne's Director, is ageless and overpowering because of his direct experience of eternity on Perelandra. Jane, for instance, notes that next to him, Miss Ironwood "struck her as a little old woman, shrivelled and pale — a thing you could have blown away" (172). Similarly, as the eddils descend to speak with Ransom, Jane perceives that "Something intolerably big, something from Brobdnag, was pressing on her" (181). A glimpse of what Lewis terms "the weight of glory" — the individual's reflection of divinity — appears as the gods descend to Ransom and Merlin, and the Company downstairs undergoes a multitude of transformations "as if the god and goddess in them burned through their bodies and through their clothes" (339). Even Ivy Maggs, a simple servant at the beginning of the tale, is transfigured by the festive gown she later wears; using again a musical analogy, Lewis describes how the robe takes up her commonness "as a great composer takes up a folk tune and tosses it like a ball through his symphony ... yet leaves it still itself" (449). For Lewis, then, those hints of the symphony are transposed into the simple tune which is Mrs. Maggs.¹² At the end of the story, Venus lingers near the Earth, both humans and animals are affected by her approach, and winter turns to spring.

Belbury is, like Hell in *The Great Divorce*, a state of mind which has enveloped the mind itself, so that even Dimble asks himself whether "there [is] a whole Belbury inside of you, too?" (275). Just as the residents of the grey town in *The Great Divorce* suffer a continuous rainstorm against which they can establish only mental shelters, Belbury and Edgestow are enveloped in a fog which causes the visible world to shrink. Jane, climbing above the fog towards St. Anne's, looks back and realizes that, in that world, she had lived "as if in a room, for only objects at hand were visible" (167). Struck by the size of the sky and remoteness of the horizon, she comes close to envisioning an even clearer reality beyond the metaphorical fog of the natural world. She notes that "Certainly what had been grey was becoming white. A few yards further and luminous blue was showing overhead, and trees cast shadows ..." (167). The ascent above the fog emerges again during *The Great Divorce's* magical bus-ride towards Heaven, in which the grey-world of Hell changes "to mother of pearl, then to faintest blue, then to a bright blueness which stung the eyes" (24). As a result of her various experiences, Jane finally accepts the alteration in perspective:

Here ought to have been the vivid, perilous world brought against their grey, formalised one: hers the quick, vital movements and theirs the stained glass attitudes. That was the antithesis she was used to. This time, in a sudden flash of purple and crimson, she remembered what stained glass was really like. (391)

Eventually, Belbury sinks into an abyss, while St. Anne's is raised up and transfigured by the incorporation of divine powers in Merlin. However, as in *The Great*

Divorce, in which 'MacDonald' points to a mere crack in the earth of Heaven as the abyss of Hell, one gets the sense that the illusory powers of Belbury bear no weight against the concrete powers incarnated at St. Anne's. The role of both Companies in the battle therefore seems minimal, although Ransom assures MacPhee that they have done their part: "You have obeyed and waited" (460).¹³ Perhaps, as in *The Great Divorce*, while the Solid People can overcome Belbury within themselves, they are simply too large to enter the insubstantial world of Hell. In *The Great Divorce*, 'MacDonald' explains that only the highest — therefore, the most Real — can descend to the lowest. Similarly, in *That Hideous Strength*, only the highest powers of the 'intelligible virtues' can descend into Belbury, and even then, they require a earthly channel. Only Merlin can play that role, because of his delicate position between the two perspectives, and because he once willingly laid himself open to these supernatural powers.

Both Merlin and Mr. Bultitude, the "performing bear" (234), are relics of Barfield's 'ancient unities' introduced into a world of increasing division. Mr. Bultitude, for instance, cannot distinguish between subject and object, or between sensation and emotion. Dimble explains that, for the bear, "mental processes [are] much more like physical actions" (351); he experiences "a single undifferentiated thing in which you can find the germ of ... friendship and ... physical need" (321).¹⁴ Merlin's own perspective is similar in that the powers through which he worked are also "a single undifferentiated thing" — neither concrete nor abstract, good nor evil. Merlin's art "go[es] back to an era in which the general relations of mind and matter on this planet had been other than those we know" (246).¹⁵

Lewis' version of the shutting up of Merlin contains hints of the mediaeval prose romance, *Merlin*, which describes the "forest of brochelonde", in which Merlin and Nimue "satt[e] in the shadowe" (Volume III, 681); similarly, Lewis' Bragdon Wood, is "sunlit green and deep shadows" (19). The narrator describes his journey towards the well at the center of the wood — a "penetration into a holy of holies" (18) — back through a history engraved in the landscape. He, like Merlin and many others after him, is overpowered by the hypnotic quality of the forest, which allows him to live not "exactly in the 20th century" (389). Lewis' Bragdon Wood emerges as a world of possibilities and unities within the natural world of limitation and increasing division. The image of Broceliande Wood which appears in Charles Williams' Arthurian texts is also connected to this idea of 'ancient unities'. In *The Arthurian Torso*, Lewis writes of the Wood that "into it good and bad mystics go ... You find it equally in whatever direction you set out" (AT, 101).¹⁶ Lewis' own wood was clearly inspired by Williams' description of a vast and womblike forest-sea, which extends all the way to the Antipodes. Moreover, it seems significant that Williams' evil Emperor of P'O Lu is Headless, while the Belbury's Head lacks a body.

As Lewis notes, Merlin left "our one dimensioned time" (*THS*, 248) on the eve of the Saxon invasion: "[he]

fades into the rich, fertile, dimness from which he came, leaving the world harder and brighter, better and worse, more redeemed and more condemned ... The world is growing sharper, the focus harder" (AT, 172). Merlin, in his own time, had not made a distinction between abstract conceptual thought and concrete experience, but resurrected into the modern world, he too must now make a choice; and it seems reasonable that he must choose in favour of St. Anne's. As Dimble explains, Merlin is almost the reverse of Belbury, because he still confuses matter and spirit, and works upon Nature only from within it; the N.I.C.E. has irredeemably severed matter and spirit in order to work from outside of Nature.¹⁷ He is not a sorcerer in the Faustian sense, or in the sense implied by Lewis' 'magician's bargain', because his "operation on Nature is a kind of personal contact" (352).

As a result, Merlin is able to enter the world of abstractions in Belbury, but not to remain there. Ransom and Merlin—"The man who had been dug up out of the earth, and the man who had been in outer space" (342)—are two sides of the same coin; each has been "taken off time's mainroad, behind the invisible hedges, into the unimaginable fields" (248). Merlin, however, recognizes only the "earthly wraiths" (392) of the realities which Ransom has encountered on other planets; what Merlin regards as a password for the Atlantean Circle, Ransom views as a simple statement of fact. Therefore, rather than being shut up within a mental prison, he has been shut up within an earthly one; he stands as if "planted like a tree" (334), and his voice is "drawn up through roots and clay and gravel from the depths of the Earth." (334) With an all-encompassing perspective, rooted at the bottom of the metaphorical tree which Lewis describes, Merlin becomes the instrument which explodes the illusions centered in the Belbury world and thus increases the gap in this transposed 'great divorce'.

While this paper has drawn only one thread of Lewis' complex web of history, legend, and myth in *That Hideous Strength*, it emphasizes the novel's revelation of eternal undertones which resound in the material world; that, as C.N. Manlove writes, "the most ordinary event ... may contain the deepest of implications" (78). Dimble explains that each character has played a role in a historical event as well as a mythical struggle; more important, perhaps, is that each has made the personal choice which leads towards either the dullness of *mere* nature or the perspective of transposition. Nobody knows exactly how this event *would* be written up in the history books—Dimble suggests that the important details will be left out altogether—but Lewis thus demonstrates that these deep significances constantly surround us, and probably often go unnoticed. At the same time, Lewis himself can only reveal glimpses of "the full statement of that theme" (376) by 'baptising' us in a fictional world in which, like the eternal Narnia, "every rock and flower and blade of grass looked as if it meant more" (154-155); a world in which the enclosed spaces of garden, forest, and tomb, may actually contain infinity. ☞

Endnotes

- Charles Moorman writes in *Arthurian Triptych* "Thus Lewis posits myth as manifestation of universal reality, which is seen only in 'hints and guesses' and is awaiting its final Incarnation as history. In Lewis' fiction this view of myth is graphically presented. On the planets that he visits, Ransom sees the substantive realities of what on Earth men are used to think of as myth presumably. ..." (122)
- Mark, for instance, recognizes that, at Belbury, "a perfectly direct question would have sounded a crudity in that room" (61-62). Later, Jane views the notice of her arrest as "a mass of compartments, some empty, some full of small print, some scrawled with signatures in pencil, and one bearing her own name: all meaningless" (187).
- An obvious example is the Latin word *spiritus*, which meant both wind (physical) and breath or life (psychical). Barfield's argument is that the psychical was once regarded as a physical entity; and that no separation was made between the self and the world.
- Lewis also draws a pattern emphasizing the significance of enclosed spaces, which is suggested but not explored exhaustively in this paper. For instance, both Bragdon Wood and the garden at St. Anne's are contained by walls. Lewis writes that "when a thing is enclosed the mind does not willingly regard it as common" (99). The symbolism of enclosure emerges also in *Till We Have Faces* and *The Last Battle*.
- The effect of the Objective Room on Mark is, of course, the opposite to what is expected. From his experience, he becomes aware of a solid idea of the 'normal', which "towered up above him—something which obviously existed quite independently of himself and had hard rock surfaces which would not give, surfaces he could cling to" (384)
- For Mark, "Statistics about agricultural labourers were the substance: any real ditcher, ploughman, or farmer's boy, was the shadow" (106).
- She is, significantly, writing a dissertation on Donne.
- From the car, "Telegraph posts raced by bridges rushed overhead with a roar, villages streamed backward to join the country already devoured" (59); in the train, Jane observes the live poultry (in contrast to the chicken which Feverstone accidently kills), and "branches freckled with red and yellow leaves" (57).
- The garden at Belbury is described as having "immense" flower-beds, laurel "which looks as if it were made of cleverly painted and varnished metal", "massive summerseats" placed at regular intervals (122-123). This appearance of order hides Belbury's underlying chaos.
- For instance, one Ghost named Frank (who is now a dwarf), is controlled by, and eventually absorbed into, the role of Tragedian which he is accustomed to playing; the encounter between him and his earthly wife (now in Heaven) is one of the most poignant in the novel.
- Mark perceived of Wither that "What looked out of those pale watery eyes was, in a sense, infinity—the shapeless and interminable" (230); "The man [Wither] looked at him as if out of a dream, as if divided from him by an immense distance, but with a sort of dreamy distaste which might turn into active hatred if ever that distance were diminished" (143).
- We also see this in Jane's experience with the Lady in Red, who is described as "the full statement of that theme which had elusively haunted Mother Dimble's face for the last few hours" (376); "a Mythological picture by Titian come to life" (388).
- MacPhee, the skeptic, complains that "It may have occurred to you to wonder ... how any man in his sense thinks we're going to defeat a powerful conspiracy by sitting here growing winter vegetables and training performing bears" (234).
- Lewis calls this experience "a pure quality" (379); "more like a mythology than a thought" (380).
- As Dimble explains, Merlin is "the last trace of something the later tradition has quite forgotten about—something that became impossible when the only people in touch with the supernatural were either white or black, either priests or sorcerers" (33).
- Williams describes Broceliande as "both a forest and a sea—a seawood. It joins the sea of the Antipodes. ... A place of making, home of Nimue" (99). Lewis comments that the Wood "is by no means the Absolute. It is rather what the Greeks call the *Aperion*—the formless origin of forms" (101).
- Lewis draws a distinction between *magia* (working with the spiritual qualities within Nature) and *goetia* (a 'brutal surgery' from outside of

Nature). This establishes the contrast between Mediaeval magicians like Merlin (who "produces his results by simply being Merlin" [THS, 246]), and the Renaissance magicians of popular imagery.

CALL FOR MANUSCRIPTS

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Tales Newly Told (continued from page 4)

and the essential unity of experience in myth. It is the very specific psychological drama at the heart of the Huxley and Keeton families that creates the mythago patterns in the story, yet the drama is shown to have been enacted many times in human memory, and all the characters that have ever enacted it are linked together within an archetypal Story that gives life and value to all its subsequent versions. Tallis' long polishing of her childhood fairy tale, waiting for the certain intuition that each episode is "true," cannot help but remind us of Tolkien's lengthy, circular re-workings of *The Lord of the Rings*, now made intimately available to us by the publication of the manuscripts. And, just as Tallis' desire for her brother awakens a series of mythic resonances extending all the way back to the Ice Age, so do the fictions of Tolkien and C.S. Lewis, though rooted in identifiable circumstances of their author's lives, transcend the psychological situations that give rise to them and attain a timeless universality. Holdstock, through, a complex weaving of powerfully charged images, confirms to us that fantasy and reality, the particular and the universal, time and eternity, joy and grief, life and death are all intimately linked, and that it is in the cultivation of that link — the secret of mythopoeia — that transformation and healing are to be found. *Lavondyss* is very much, as Tolkien said of his own work, about "death and the desire for deathlessness": a concern of poignant relevance to all of us, and which can be dealt with only in the realm of myth. ♣