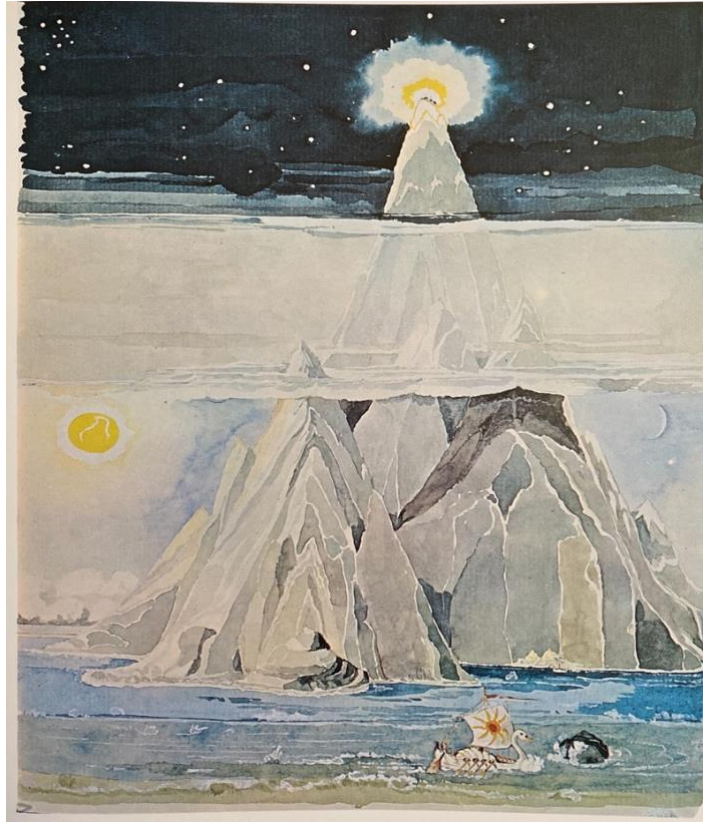


C. S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien: Faith and Fantasy



The intellectual collaboration and friendship of C. S. Lewis, the literary historian, religious writer, critic, and fantasist, and J.R.R. Tolkien, the philologist and mythographer of Middle-earth. Attention given to their contributions to medieval studies, their mythopoeic fiction, moral and theological themes in their writings, and their response to war and “the Machine.”

Professor Carol Zaleski

Class taught weekly via Zoom during the pandemic

BOOKS



- ☞ C. S. Lewis, *Surprised by Joy: The Shape of My Early Life*.
- ☞ C. S. Lewis, *Out of the Silent Planet*.
- ☞ C. S. Lewis, *Perelandra*
- ☞ C. S. Lewis, *The Great Divorce*
- ☞ *The Letters of C. S. Lewis*, ed. W. H. Lewis and Walter Hooper
- ☞ J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Lord of the Rings: 50th Anniversary, One Vol. Edition* [this edition is preferred, but if you already have a different edition, such as the old ‘trilogy’ version, that will be fine]
- ☞ J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Silmarillion*
- ☞ *The Letters of J.R.R. Tolkien*, ed. Christopher Tolkien and Humphrey Carpenter

Other readings and supporting material, including study guides for our readings, will be posted.

REQUIREMENTS

- I) Participation (40% of grade).** **Be sure to complete the assigned reading** in advance of our Tuesday seminar meeting and be prepared to discuss it. In addition:
- ☞ At the beginning of each class meeting, while we are arriving and getting settled, please post in the chat box on Zoom **a question** you’d like us to discuss.
 - ☞ At each class meeting, one person, whom we will call **Reader**, will read aloud **a favorite (or most puzzling) passage**, comment on the passage or pose a question about it, and initiate discussion prompted by the passage.
 - ☞ At each class meeting, one person, whom we will call **Diarist**, will be assigned to read aloud **an excerpt from the letters** of Lewis or Tolkien. Letters enable us to listen in on our authors’ thoughts about their work, the state of the world, religious concerns, academic rivalries, literary questions, or daily life. The letters will help us get a feel for the personalities of our authors, their moods and mannerisms, their enthusiasms and anxieties, and the way they relate to family, friends, and strangers.
 - ☞ **A book we should be reading, if only we could keep going forever:** Everyone will have a chance to report on a book *by or about* Lewis or Tolkien that isn’t on our syllabus but would be a worthy addition “had we but world enough and time.” It may be a book you are reading in connection with your seminar paper.
- II) Seminar Paper (15 pages) on a topic chosen in consultation with instructor** (60% of grade). See the schedule below for due dates for topic statement, drafts, and final version.

SCHEDULE

WEEK 1 *A preliminary sketch*

Introductory material to be discussed at our first meeting:

- ☞ C. S. Lewis, why read? Excerpt from the epilogue to *An Experiment in Criticism*
- ☞ J.R.R. Tolkien, why invent a mythology? Excerpt from a 1951 letter to publisher Milton Waldman
- ☞ J.R.R. Tolkien, excerpt from “On Fairy-stories” #1 (subcreation)
- ☞ J.R.R. Tolkien, excerpt from “On Fairy-stories” #2 (eucatastrophe)
- ☞ “Oxford’s Influential Inklings,” *Chronicle of Higher Education*, excerpt from *The Fellowship*

WEEK 2 *The Medieval Model*

- ☞ Lewis, *Out of the Silent Planet*
- ☞ Lewis, “The Discarded Image” chap. 5, “The Heavens” and Epilogue

WEEK 3 *Paradise Ransomed*

- ☞ Lewis, *Perelandra* (entire)
- ☞ *Perelandra* study guide
- ☞ Zaleski & Zaleski, excerpt from *The Fellowship* on *Perelandra* and *Paradise Lost*

WEEK 4 *Faith, Reason, and Romanticism*

- ☞ **Helen Louise Gardner, “Clive Staples Lewis, 1898-1963,”** a “memorial minute” published on the occasion of Lewis’s death in *Proceedings of the British Academy* [This brief biographical reflection offers an overview of Lewis’s many-sided personality and literary achievements. Note: the ‘second string’ who declined, in favor of Lewis, the newly created Cambridge professorship in medieval and Renaissance literature, was Helen Gardner herself. Gardner was an outstanding literary critic in her own right, and in 1967 was awarded a knighthood as Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire. A similar knighthood was offered to Lewis but he declined it, so perhaps the knight who declined the professorship and the professor who declined the knighthood were comparable in chivalry!]
- ☞ **Lewis, *Miracles*** chapters 1-3 and notes on chapters 4-8 and 12 [Here is Lewis the philosopher, arguing against ‘naturalism’ – a broad category that is most familiar in the form of reductionistic or eliminative materialism. This is known as his ‘argument from reason.’]
- ☞ **Lewis, “Transposition”** [Here is Lewis the lay preacher; it’s a sermon he preached on Pentecost in 1944 to a Congregationalist chapel at Mansfield College, Oxford. In this sermon Lewis connects his argument against naturalism (as in *Miracles*) with his thoughts on symbol and sacrament. How well do the analogies work?]
- ☞ **Lewis, speech by Puddleglum the Marshwiggle in *The Silver Chair*** [Here is Lewis the Narnian, with a condensed argument against the ‘enchantment’ of materialism! You might want to google *The Silver Chair* to get an overview of the plot]
- ☞ **Lewis, excerpt from preface to *The Pilgrim’s Regress on Romanticism*** [Here is Lewis the Romantic, sketching what came to be called his ‘argument from desire’]

WEEK 5 *The Lord of the Rings – The Fellowship of the Ring - Book One*

- ☞ Tolkien's Foreword to the second edition, the Prologue "Concerning Hobbits, and other matters," and chapters 1-5 and 9-12 of Book One (just skim the Tom Bombadil chapters 6-8)

For background, read/skim the following articles:

- ☞ Lewis on *The Hobbit*
- ☞ Lewis on *The Lord of the Rings*
- ☞ "Tolkien on Tolkien."
- ☞ J.R.R. Tolkien, "A Secret Vice," from J. R. R. Tolkien, *The Monsters and the Critics and Other Essays* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1984), 198-223.
- ☞ W. H. Auden, "The Hero is a Hobbit"
- ☞ Tom Shippey, "Creation from Philology in The Lord of the Rings"
- ☞ Tom Shippey, "Tolkien as a Post-War Writer"

- **Note:** Be sure to consult the LORD OF THE RINGS SYNOPSIS AND CHAPTER TITLES document as we move through the book. I'll also post study guides.

WEEK 6 *The Lord of the Rings – The Fellowship of the Ring - Book Two, entire*

WEEK 7 *The Lord of the Rings – The Two Towers - Books Three and Four entire!*

- **Detailed topic statement with annotated bibliography due in two weeks.** The annotations should be very brief capsule summaries of the sources you expect to use, mentioning how they relate to your topic.

WEEK 9 *The Lord of the Rings – The Return of the King - Books Five and Six entire!*

- ☞ Also skim W.H. Auden, "At the End of the Quest, Victory"

WEEK 10 *Surprised by Joy*

- ☞ Lewis, *Surprised by Joy*: the brief preface, and chapters 1-6, stopping at this line in chapter 6: *What does a certain type of examiner mean when he says, 'To show up work like this is an insult to the examiners?'* (= pp. 1-91 in the Harcourt paperback) and chapters 8-15 (= pp. 118-238 in the Harcourt paperback)
- ☞ Addison's Walk and Mythopoeia. Tolkien instructs Lewis

WEEK 11 *The Silmarillion – Creation and History*

- ☞ *Ainulindalë (The Music of the Ainur)* and *Valaquenta*
 - The creation myth. Read with Letter 131 (to Milton Waldman, also included as the preface to the *Silmarillion*) and Letter 200.
 - ☞ *Quenta Silmarillion (The History of the Silmarils)*, chapters 1-10. On the Elves and the captivity and escape of Melkor. Read with Letter 131 and Letter 212.
 - ☞ *Quenta Silmarillion* chapter 19 (Of Beren and Lúthien). Read with Letter 332 and Letter 340. Compare to *The Fellowship of the Ring* book one, chapter XI, “A Knife in the Dark” and part V of Appendix A at the end of *Return of the King*.
 - ☞ *Quenta Silmarillion* chapters 23-24: The Voyage of Eärendil with the Silmaril into the Far West, on behalf of Elves and Men. Eärendil appeals to the Valar, who invade Middle-earth. Morgoth is finally overthrown and cast out from the world.
 - ☞ *Akallabêth (The Downfall of Numenor)*. Tolkien’s version of the Atlantis myth. Cf. Letter 131.
 - ☞ *Of the Rings of Power and the Third Age*. The events of the Third Age, leading to the War of the Ring and destruction of Sauron
- ☞ Also read or skim: John Gardner, “The World of Tolkien” – a review of *The Silmarillion*

WEEK 12 *Lewis’s Divine Comedy*

- ☞ Lewis, *The Great Divorce*
- ☞ Lewis, “The Weight of Glory”
- ☞ Lewis, “Transposition”
(review)

- **Draft of the first five pages of your seminar paper (with outline of the rest of the paper) due – one copy will be shared with a member of the seminar**

WEEK 13 Paper workshop, informal presentations

- **Draft version of seminar paper this week**
- **Final version of seminar paper one week after**