

ences and readings of Tolkien's works. I think Testi's work is easily the most authoritative and intelligent approach on this topic to date, and I hope it produces more work using his suggested "synthetic" approach.

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## Book Notes

**Ruth Pitter.** *Sudden Heaven: The Collected Poems of Ruth Pitter, A Critical Edition*, ed. Don W. King, Kent State UP, 2018, \$70.00 (hardcover), 464 pp.

Poetry helps us to see the world with new eyes; to imagine nature, life, and things as they ought to be or as we secretly wish them to be. Ruth Pitter, while not well-known today, was much-loved and admired by her peers such as C.S. Lewis, Owen Barfield, Hilaire Belloc, and Lord David Cecil. Her poetry has been compiled and arranged by Don W. King in *Sudden Heaven: The Collected Poems of Ruth Pitter, A Critical Edition* (2018). King supplies an Introduction and Chronology of Ruth Pitter's Life as well as several appendixes based on his previous scholarly work on Pitter and her poetry. Students and fans of Pitter will appreciate this collection. The uninitiated will no doubt benefit from Pitter's insightful, inspiring, and revealing poems.

**Janice Brown.** *The Lion in the Waste Land: Fearsome Redemption in the Work of C.S. Lewis, Dorothy L. Sayers, and T.S. Eliot*, Kent State UP, 2018, \$45.00 (hardback).

Janice Brown considers the works and legacies of three modern writers, C.S. Lewis, Dorothy L. Sayers, and T.S. Eliot, as a single spiritual unit in *The Lion in the Waste Land*. This trio, it could be said in Brown's imagining, comprise a miniature set of Inklings with its own dynamic creative life. Brown alternates between historical and literary analysis to argue that these three spoke together a common message against the encroaching modernist spiritual landscape (i.e., the "Waste Land" from Eliot's memorable poem): a message of deliverance through suffering, rather than from suffering; of a God who is not safe and a hope that is also terrible. In summary, a fearsome redemption.

Brown devotes herself to overcoming what might seem the initial difficulty of discerning the continuity between these three contemporaries. Though modern readers associate them freely, in context they had little in common. All three were laypeople, none of whom worked in the same field

or even published in the same genre. What they did have in common was British citizenship, mastery of language, and an Anglican faith staring down the barrel of a post-war desacralizing modernism. It is in this task of “harmonizing” Lewis, Sayers, and Eliot that Brown produces the most fruit.

Of especial note is the friendship she traces between Lewis and Eliot. At the beginning of their relationship, Lewis, an old-school Oxford academic, was severely critical of Eliot and the modernist avant-garde milieu to which he belonged. Brown likens Lewis and Eliot to a pair of combatants waging the same spiritual campaign. Despite their considerable disagreements on literature and poetry, a deep friendship developed, as it were, shoulder-to-shoulder rather than face-to-face. In this manner, Brown shows Eliot to be a considerable figure in Christian thought and not merely an esoteric poet who observed his faith on the side.

Brown pays especial attention to Sayers, who is often overlooked in studies of this sort. This aspect of the study alone is worth the purchase. Since her *The Seven Deadly Sins in the Works of Dorothy L. Sayers* was nominated for the Edgar Allan Poe Award, Brown has emerged as a leading expert on the famous detective-fiction writer and playwright. Although a female scholar at the time could not expect a significant voice among the dons of Oxford, Brown argues convincingly that Sayer’s influence in the lives and works of Lewis and Eliot and their common cause was significant and should not be undervalued.

Of Lewis, Brown says nothing particularly original, except to reinforce his impact. Scholars will appreciate the literary analysis of major works which brings into consideration the colorful friendships between these three contemporaries. Brown also adds much to studies of both Eliot and Sayers and gives us a clearer view of their import, as well as a historical explanation of their unlikely status as luminaries of the Church’s gospel of redemption in the context of the early-20th century.

**Laird R. Blackwell. *The Metaphysical Mysteries of G.K. Chesterton: A Critical Study of the Father Brown Stories and Other Detective Fiction*, McFarland Books, 2018, \$55 (softcover).**

The metaphysical dimension of G.K. Chesterton’s mystery stories are examined through the lens of Carl Jung’s “psychological/mythological perspective on spirituality” in this 2018 monograph by Laird R. Blackwell (2). The first chapter explores forerunners of Father Brown in *The Club of Queer Trades* and *The Man Who Was Thursday*. Chapters two through six explore the five Father Brown books with an eye to the unity of the stories with their titular virtue or quality. (Hence chapter two explores the many facets of innocence in *The Innocence of Father Brown*, while chapter three focuses on wisdom.) At least a half-page of analysis is devoted to each story. Blackwell’s enjoy-

ment of the Father Brown stories is evident, and his analyses draw out the many metaphysical movements toward openness and wonder. He makes no attempt to either disguise or justify his preference for “the ‘metaphysical’ without dogma” (56), however, and any articulation of specifically Christian belief swiftly demotes a story to the level of “religious chauvinism” (72).

The final two chapters of *Metaphysical Mysteries* address the mystery elements in *Manalive*, *The Man Who Knew Too Much*, *The Poet and The Lunatics*, *The Four Faultless Felons*, and *The Paradoxes of Mr. Pond*.