

Programme

- 10.00 Arrivals and coffee
 10.30 Introductions
- 10.45 **Valentine Cunningham**
Thirties (de)constructs of the Christian
- 12.00 **Colin Duriez**
Inklings of Immortality
- 1.15 Lunch
- 2.15 **Richard Brewster**
'A place for the genuine'? An exploration of Christian poetics
- 3.15 Tea
 Work in progress
 Plans
 Prayer

Valentine Cunningham is Professor of English Language & Literature at Oxford and a Fellow of Corpus Christi College. He is author of *British Writers of the Thirties* and editor of *The Penguin Book of Spanish Civil War Verse* and *Spanish Front: Writers on the Civil War*. He has twice been a Booker Prize judge.

Professor Cunningham will look at how Thirties writing and Thirties movements of thought and imagination evolved in contests with Christianity, and how Christians were driven to define their positions as thus contested ones.

Colin Duriez is General Books Editor for InterVarsity Press, Leicester, and author of *The C.S. Lewis Encyclopedia* (2000), *Tolkien and 'The Lord of the Rings'* (2001), and (co-authored with David Porter) *The Inklings Handbook* (2001). He has also compiled *The Poetic Bible* (2001).

The Inklings – the informal literary group associated with C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien –

began in the early nineteen thirties. In his paper Colin Duriez explores the origins and context of the group, especially as part of what might be called a minor Christian literary renaissance of the time. He tracks the group's regular members and significant occasional visitors, including Lewis, Tolkien, Owen Barfield, Charles Williams, H.V.D. 'Hugo' Dyson, W.H. 'Warnie' Lewis, and Dr 'Humphrey' Havard.

Selected Reading

- Primary:** Essays Presented to Charles Williams. Edited by, and with an introduction by, C.S. Lewis. Oxford University Press: London, 1947.
- Letters of C.S. Lewis.* Edited, with a memoir, by W.H. Lewis. Geoffrey Bles: London, 1966. Revised edition, edited by Walter Hooper, 1988.
- They Stand Together: The Letters of C.S. Lewis to Arthur Greeves* (1914-1963). Edited by Walter Hooper. Collins: London, 1979.
- The Letters of J.R.R. Tolkien.* Edited by Humphrey Carpenter, with the assistance of Christopher Tolkien. George Allen and Unwin: London, 1981.
- Kilby, Clyde S. and Meade, Marjorie Lamp (ed). *Brothers and Friends: The Diaries of Major Warren Hamilton Lewis.* Harper and Row: San Francisco, 1982.
- Wain, John. *Sprightly Running.* Macmillan: London, 1962.
- Secondary:** Carpenter, Humphrey. *J.R.R. Tolkien: A Biography.* George Allen and Unwin: London, 1977; Houghton Mifflin: Boston, 1977.
- The Inklings: C.S. Lewis, J.R.R. Tolkien, Charles Williams and their Friends.* George Allen and Unwin: London, 1978.
- Duriez, Colin and David Porter. *The Inklings Handbook.* Azure (SPCK): London, 2001.
- Duriez, Colin. *The C.S. Lewis Encyclopedia.* Crossway Books: Wheaton, Illinois, 2000.
- Duriez, Colin. *Tolkien and 'The Lord of the Rings'.* Azure (SPCK): London, 2001.
- Green, R.L. and Hooper, Walter. *C.S. Lewis: a Biography.* Collins: London, 1974.
- Hooper, Walter. *C.S. Lewis: A Companion and Guide.* HarperCollins: London, 1996.
- Myers, Doris, C.S. Lewis in Context. Kent State University Press: Kent, 1994.
- Sayer, George. *Jack: C.S. Lewis and his times.* Macmillan: London, 1988.
- Schofield, Stephen (ed). *In Search of C.S. Lewis.* Bridge Publications: USA, 1984.

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Booking Form

CLSG Conference 3 November 2001

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Walsh, Chad. *C.S. Lewis: Apostle to the Skeptics*.
Macmillan: New York, 1949.
Wilson, A.N. *C.S. Lewis: A Biography*. Collins:
London, 1990.

Richard Brewster is currently studying for a PhD at the University of Durham. His research project is an exploration of the religious aspects of contemporary poetry, and focuses on the poets Geoffrey Hill, Les Murray and R S Thomas. In particular he is looking at the conceptions of God behind these three poets' respective religious visions. Themes that have arisen include the place of laughter in religious poetry, the human experience of suffering both large-scale and small, and the figure of Christ in relation to the *deus absconditus* of recent religious thought.

Richard writes: Various attempts have been made over the last two hundred years – most notably by Matthew Arnold and George Santayana – to equate the religious with poetry, arguing that poetry is the ideal vessel for religious thought and experience. In contrast, many prominent Christian writers, ranging from Samuel Johnson to W H Auden, have been sceptical concerning the possibilities of poetry when contending with the religious. Meanwhile, much Romantic and post-Romantic poetry seems intent on rejecting God and revealed religion, in favour of the elevation of the individual and of subjective experience.

Selected Reading

Michael Edwards, *Towards a Christian Poetics*, Eerdmans, 1984.
T. S. Eliot, *Selected Essays*, Faber, 1951.
W.H. Auden, 'Postscript: Christianity and Art', in *The Dyer's Hand*, Faber, 1962.
J. Hillis Miller, *The Disappearance of God*, Belknap Press, 1963.
Helen Gardner, *Religion and Literature*, Faber, 1971.



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DAY CONFERENCE

Thirties Polemics: Christian Voices in Literature

Saturday 3 November 2001

The Seminar Room
Corpus Christi College
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