



Centre for Studies on the Classical Tradition / Ośrodek Badań nad Tradycją Antyczną (OBTA)

Faculty of "Artes Liberales", University of Warsaw / Wydział „Artes Liberales” UW

invites you to a lecture in the cycle / zaprasza na wykład z cyklu

OBTAMISTIC MEETINGS / SPOTKANIA OBTYMISTÓW

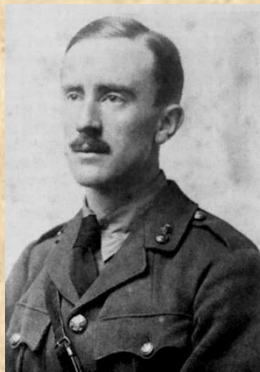
12 VI 2019, at / o godz. 10.00 (środa / Wednesday, s. 23 / room 23, ul. Nowy Świat 69)

Dr. Hamish Williams

Leiden University

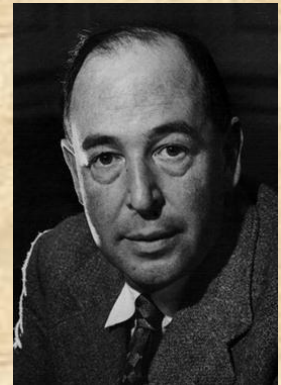
Classical Worldbuilding among the Inklings:

J.R.R. Tolkien and C.S. Lewis



In this paper, I discuss the role of Classical worldbuilding in the works of two 'Inklings', J.R.R. Tolkien and C.S. Lewis (phot. Wiki). This discussion is divided into three parts: (i) the modern reception of fantasy as a genre, and the neglect of Classics therein; (ii) the role of Classics in the lives of Tolkien and Lewis; and (iii) some examples of Classical intertextualities in their works. On the first part, how has the modern genre of fantasy been 'coded' against a Classical provenance? To this end, the recent filmic depiction of Lewis' Narnia story *Prince Caspian* provides an excellent example of generic expectations shaping

interpretations of a story with manifest Classical intertexts. On the second part, I examine how biographers have tended to characterise the role of Classics in the lives of Lewis and Tolkien. I interrogate these, particularly, in the case of Tolkien, with respect to evidence from the writer's own epistles. On the third part, I run through some Classical intertextualities which have been found in the works of the two fantasy writers.



Hamish Williams holds a PhD in Ancient Greek Literature from the University of Cape Town (2017). Currently, he is teaching at the BA International Studies programme at Leiden University. From 2019, he will be pursuing a Humboldt Fellowship at the Department of English and American Studies at Friedrich-Schiller-Universität Jena. His research project investigates the works and life of English fantasy novelist J.R.R. Tolkien from various perspectives: mythological, philosophical, and spatial. On the mythological side, his writing explores the extent to which Classical literature and thought influenced Tolkien's writings.

