Faërie—Utopia? A Theological-Philosophical Defence of Escapism

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What is the difference between the escape of the prisoner and the flight of the deserter Tolkien emphasises in *On Fairy-stories* (cf. FS 69)? The answer seems simple enough, especially if we take into account Tolkien's own remarks that a prisoner should not be scorned for trying to get out and go home or thinking and talking about the real world outside and thus the escape of the prisoner should not be regarded as treachery. Without discussing the ethical implications of desertion, indicating that even this should not be scorned prematurely, there is a deep similarity between the two that will be the focus of this essay: in both cases, the protagonists want to get out of a specific situation they regard as negative and to enter a new situation deemed better. Although it may be a little far-fetched to claim that every escaping prisoner and flying deserter has a special utopia in mind, I assume this to be the case with fairy stories in the sense Tolkien proposes.

To support this claim, I am harking back to the distinction between utopias and heterotopias made by Michel Foucault without fully agreeing to the implied criticism of utopian thinking. With reference to Ignacio Ellacuría, it is possible to develop utopian thinking rooted in heterotopias, or more specifically, that it is possible to understand Faërie as a disturbing heterotopia that implies a concrete and realisable utopia towards which the escape of the prisoner is directed.

The Concept of Utopia

The distinction between utopias and heterotopias can already be found in the preface of Foucault's early writing *The Order of Things* (fr.: *Les mots et les choses*):[1]

> *Utopias* afford consolation: although they have no real locality there is nevertheless a fantastic, untroubled region in which they are able to unfold; they open up cities with vast avenues, superbly planted gardens, countries where life is easy, even though the road to them is chimerical. *Heterotopias* are disturbing, probably

1 Cf. Pittl for a concise discussion of this distinction.

> because they secretly undermine language, because they make it impossible to name this *and* that, because they shatter or tangle common names, because they destroy 'syntax' in advance, and not only the syntax with which we construct sentences but also that less apparent syntax which causes words and things (next to and also opposite one another) to 'hold together'. (*Order* xix)

Thus utopias can be the subject of fables and discourse whereas heterotopias desiccate speech and dissolve our myths. While utopias and heterotopias have in common that they can be connected to all other emplacements[2] but in a suspending, neutralising, reverting way, they can also be clearly distinguished since utopias are emplacements with no real place and maintain a general relation of direct or inverted analogy with the real space of society. "They are society perfected or the reverse of society, but in any case these utopias are spaces that are fundamentally and essentially unreal" (*Spaces* 178). On the other hand, heterotopias are real and actual places, sorts of realised utopias that represent, contest and reverse all other real emplacements. Because of their utter difference from all the emplacements they refer to, Foucault calls them heterotopias. The correlation between utopias and heterotopias is a mixed one, that of a mirror. This is a placeless place in which I see myself where I am not, in an unreal space, but it has also a return effect on the place occupied by me. While utopias allow me to see "where I am absent", heterotopias force me to "reconstitute myself there where I am" (*Spaces* 179).

They can have very diverse forms, changing from society to society. Foucault mentions two major types: first, "crisis heterotopias" in so-called 'primitive' societies, meaning "privileged or sacred or forbidden places reserved for individuals who are in a state of crisis with respect to society and the human milieu in which they live" (*Spaces* 179). In 'civilised' and/or modern societies, these heterotopias disappear and are replaced by "heterotopias of deviation", places where individuals whose behaviour is not regarded as appropriate or adequate are locked away, e.g. psychiatric hospitals, prisons, etc.

The main characteristic of heterotopias that is of interest here is their capacity to "represent, contest and invert… all the other emplacements of society" (179). The two other aspects which may be applicable to fairy stories are the principle that heterotopias are able to juxtapose several incompatible emplacements in a single real place, e.g. the succession of places in a stage play, and the last one concerning their relationship to the remaining space. On the one extreme, they create "a space of illusion that denounces all real space, all real emplacements within which human life is partitioned off, as being even more

2 "Emplacement" is referring to the relations between locations in space as constitutive for space perception.

illusionary" (184), e.g. brothels. Or they create as heterotopias of compensation a perfect, meticulous, well-arranged space in contrast to our disorganised, badly arranged, muddled one, e.g. the Jesuit reductions in Paraguay. But the heterotopia par excellence is the ship as,

> a piece of floating space, a placeless place, that lives by its own devices, that is self-enclosed and, at the same time, delivered over to the boundless expanse of the ocean, and that goes from port to port, from watch to watch, from brothel to brothel, all the way to the colonies in search of the most precious treasures that lie wait-ing in their gardens ... the greatest reservoir of imagination. (185)

In this last paragraph of his essay, Foucault links heterotopias very closely to imagination and stresses that in civilisations without ships dreams will dry up.

The main and obvious difference between utopias and heterotopias according to Foucault is the essential unreality of utopias and the essential reality of heterotopias. Thus, this approach could be used for fundamentally criticising utopias as something completely abstract and unrealistic, opposed to the real world and being prone to exclusivism and totalitarianism. But that is neither a necessary consequence of Foucault's definitions—since he emphasizes with the imagery of the mirror the interrelatedness of both—nor is it unavoidable to conceive utopias as having no foundation in a specific place.

A good example of this is the utopian thinking of Ignacio Ellacuría that is clearly rooted in the socio-economic reality of Latin America, which leads Pittl to point out "that the place of Latin America in the utopian thinking of Ellacuría resembles many of the characteristics of Foucault's heterotopias" (*Manuskript* 5). For it is excluded from the cultural, economic and religious centres of the globalized world, but nevertheless a real place which represents, contests and inverts the hegemonic order. Ellacuría stresses the dialectical character of utopia: "Utopia is history and meta-history, but above all meta-history, although springing from history and inexorably referring to history, whether by way of escape or by way of realization" (Ellacuría 9). A Christian utopia fulfils the reign of God by both pointing out its utopian character and historicising it into the realm of the concrete.

On this basis we can address the following questions: Is Faërie as understood by Tolkien a heterotopia and if this is the case, which utopia is implied by it?

Faërie as Heterotopia

According to Foucault's definition of heterotopia summarized above, Faërie can possibly be regarded as a heterotopia if it meets the following criteria: First, it has to be a real place that represents, contests and inverts the order of things in the "normal" world by being a place or space where individuals behave in a way not regarded as appropriate in the "normal" world. Second, it should enable or force someone to reconstitute oneself where one is. Third, it juxtaposes several incompatible emplacements in one single place. Fourth, it should be opposed to the remaining space by either creating an illusionary place or by being a perfect space. Finally, it should be a reservoir of imagination.

At first glance, especially the first characteristic seems to be a problem since we normally hesitate to speak of Faërie as a real space. Flieger and Anderson summarise Tolkien's use of "Faërie" as signifying first the Otherworld, that is a parallel reality tangential to our ordinary world, second the practice of enchantment and third the "altered mental or psychological state brought about by such practice" (Flieger/Anderson 85, cf. more extensively Krüger). Interestingly, Tolkien addresses the reality of entities important for "escapists" explicitly by pointing out the permanent and fundamental things fairy stories talk about (like lightning) in contrast to "real life" as proposed by the critics (e.g. a street lamp). "The notion that motor-cars are more 'alive' than, say, centaurs or dragons is curious; that they are more 'real' than, say, horses, is pathetically absurd." (FS 71) Even more, he cannot convince himself to regard the roof of Bletchley station as more 'real' than the clouds and claims it to be a less inspiring artefact than the dome of heaven—as Bifröst is more interesting than the bridge to platform 4 and a world containing the imagination of Fáfnir richer and more powerful than one without it (cf. 55). Interestingly, when he wonders about the existence of elves independently of our tales, he does not use "real" or "unreal" but: "for if elves are true" (32) indicating a difference between existence and reality. When he later writes indicatively about elves, he makes an important modification: "even if the elves are, all the more in so far as they are, only a product of Fantasy itself" (64).[3]

Furthermore, his remarks on the supernatural character of man in contrast to the "far more natural" (28) fairies reflect not only a traditional Catholic ontology, but also challenge a simple understanding of "reality" as being essentially combined with materiality and naturalness. Similarly, by discussing

3 Cf. the detailed discussion in Krüger.

the several desires that are satisfied in stories, according to Tolkien using the machinery of Dream cheats on "the primal desire at the heart of Faërie: the realization, independent of the conceiving mind, of imagined wonder" (35). Obviously, the desire will not sufficiently be satisfied in the mind alone but longs for a "true" realisation. Although Tolkien does not claim that centaurs or dragons are "real" (but perhaps more 'alive' than motor-cars), his argument can be corroborated by referring to a more constructivist understanding of reality which is not primarily based on materiality or similarity but on effectiveness.

Is it plausible to say that dragons are not real if they clearly have an effect in our world?[4] The relation of fantasy to sub-creation stressed by Tolkien who claims that "[a]n essential power of Faërie is thus the power of making immediately effective by the will the visions of 'fantasy'" (42) can perhaps be understood as a hint in this direction because he points out the difference between sub-creation and mere representation or symbolic interpretation. As he writes in the epilogue, every sub-creator wants to draw on reality or truth. However, this seems not applicable to the distinction between utopias and heterotopias since utopias, too, can have an effect in our world but are specified as being unreal spaces in contrast to heterotopias. Thus, heterotopias can be visited while utopias can only be imagined.

In this regard, Faërie seems more a utopia than a heterotopia. Yet there is an important difference if we consider Faërie in literary works, e.g. *Smith of Wootton Major*—there it is a real space, although perhaps not easily entered, that is in relation to the "normal" world and functions as a reservoir of imagination for Smith. Similarly, the tales of fairies as workers of illusion presuppose that the fairies in these stories "are not themselves illusions; behind the fantasy real wills and powers exist, independent of the minds and purposes of men" (35). It is therefore an essential trait of a fairy story to be presented as "true", as believable (in contrast to the often quoted "willing suspension of disbelief" suggested by Coleridge).[5] This is closely related to the notion of sub-creation for a successful sub-creator "makes a Secondary World which your mind can enter. Inside it, what he relates is 'true': it accords with the laws of that world... The moment disbelief arises, the spell is broken; the magic, or rather art, has failed. You are then out in the Primary World again, looking at the little abortive Secondary World from outside" (52). This secondary belief is an enchanted state which does not depend on the existence of the things mentioned or the

4 Cf. for epistemologies dealing explicitly with the (un)reality of the "world" the notion of "epistemologically different worlds" by Vacariu or the "New Realism" proposed by Gabriel.

5 „One who suspends disbelief does not eo ipso believe. Hence the importance of the regularity of the Secondary World's structure: suspension of disbelief allows the reader to accept flaws and inconsistencies which true secondary belief will not admit" (Shank 154). Cf. Also Sandner.

events told in "real life" because fairy stories deal more with desirability than with possibility. An important aspect of secondary worlds is their relation to the primary world as "composed of language that reflects human experience of primary reality" (Shank 152).

The very beginning of *On Fairy-stories* supports this specific "reality" of Faërie because Tolkien writes:

> Faërie is a perilous land, and in it are pitfalls for the unwary and dungeons for the overbold...
> The realm of fairy-story is wide and deep and high and filled with many things: all manner of beasts and birds are found there; shoreless seas and stars uncounted; beauty that is an enchantment, and an ever-present peril; both joy and sorrow as sharp as swords. (FS 27)

Faërie is thus depicted as a deeply ambiguous space which is in itself an indication for a combination of utopia and heterotopia (like the mirror). Its strangeness and peril as well as the extremes found there are signs of its heterotopian character because they disturb and contest the order of things. They thus challenge the wanderers in Faërie to reconstitute themselves where they normally live (second criterion)—the best example being Smith who due to his contact to and acquaintance with Faërie via the star is able to produce not only good workmanship with the tools being strong and lasting and graceful, but also some things made only for delight, "and they were beautiful, for he could work iron into wonderful forms that looked as light and delicate as a spray of leaves and blossom, but kept the stern strength of iron, or seemed even stronger" (SWM 21). However, he cannot live in Faërie but has to live and work in Wotton Major. Finally, he even has to pass on the star which allows his successor to enter Faërie (cf. SWM 44ff).

As Tolkien writes in his accompanying essay, the special skill and artistic quality were primarily valid for the several crafts of Wootton only deteriorating because of their commercial success with possible negative consequences not only for the prosperity of the village but also for a good life and that which makes life worth living and transcends mere existence. "History and legend and above all any tales touching on 'faery', have become regarded as children's stuff, patronizingly tolerated for the amusement of the very young"[6] (SWM 93, cf. 100f). This evoked a reaction by Faery, namely the King of Faery com-

6 That this may apply for Tolkien also to contemporary England is supported by Flieger's note on his reference to a "reformed" church and the memory of "merrier" days since this "recalls the expression 'Merry England', a phrase evoking a utopian, pre-industrial way of life now ruined by the rise of commerce and the profit motive" (SWM 147).

ing and serving as an apprentice in the village, thus emphasising the serving function of Faërie for a full and proper human development by showing the importance of love—and thus indicating a utopia—, “a relationship towards all things, animate and inanimate, which includes love and respect, and removes or modifies the spirit of possession and domination” (94).

Furthermore, the plenty of Faërie mentioned in the quote above is an indication for the third criterion, the juxtaposition of incompatible things—others are these entities which in combination raise disbelief in an unsuccessful sub-creation and secondary belief in a successful one, and mark Faërie as an Other-world, e.g. a place where the well-known green sun can exist. “Fantasy, the making or glimpsing of Other-worlds, was the heart of the desire of Faërie” (FS 55). Tolkien stresses not only the connection of Faërie and imagination as the mental faculty of conceiving images but also that of Faërie and Fantasy as expressing both the sub-creative art— “the operative link between Imagination and the final result, sub-creation” (59)—and a quality of strangeness and wonder in a successful expression of the imagination.[7] Fantasy in the sense proposed by Tolkien thus combines imagination and “the derived notions of ‘unreality’ (that is, of unlikeness to the Primary world), of freedom from the domination of observed ‘fact’, in short of the fantastic” (60). Fantasy is not to be confounded with dreaming, imagining things that cannot be found in our primary world (or are seen as such) and thus implying an arresting strangeness—in measure of the unlikeness of the images and rearrangements of primary material to the primary world. This alludes clearly to the escape of the prisoner; the prison being observable facts or, more generally speaking, a primarily materialistic worldview in contrast to which Fantasy produces the ‘inner consistency of reality’ and thus points out the “reality” of the Fantastic.[8]

More explicitly, he deals with these two opposing worldviews in his poem *Mythopoiea*, e.g. arguing for stars being more than “some matter in a ball / compelled to courses mathematical” but “living silver made that sudden burst / to flame like flowers beneath an ancient song” (TL 85/87) and emphasising the human right to sub-creation in the likeness of their own maker in contrast to the “progressive apes” he refuses to walk with, not surrendering his golden sceptre of creativity (TL 89).[9]

7 Tolkien relies here heavily on the entry “Fancy” in the first edition of the OED, cf. Anderson/Flieger 110.

8 This can also be seen in a paragraph in the miscellaneous pages edited by Flieger and Anderson: Faërie “reposes (for us now) in a view that the normal world, tangible visible audible, is only an appearance. Behind it is a reservoir of power which is manifested in these forms” (FS 270).

9 In his analysis of *Mythopoeia*, Weinreich considers the critique of a materialistic worldview, the dualism implied by the proposition of a second level of existence or the notion of knowledge in light of “pure Platonism” or a poetical short version of the epistemology of *Phaidon* and *Politeia* (cf. 48).

Not speaking of an escape, but of a break-out, Tolkien summarises the several effects of Faërie in his essay on *Smith of Wootton Major*:

> Faery represents at its weakest a breaking out (at least in mind) from the iron ring of the familiar, still more from the adamantine ring of belief that it is known, possessed, controlled, and so (ultimately) all that is worth being considered—a constant awareness of a world beyond these rings. More strongly it represents love: that is, a love and respect for all things, 'inanimate' and 'animate', an unpossessive love of them as 'other'. This 'love' will produce both *truth* and *delight*. Things seen in its light will be respected, and they will also appear delightful, beautiful, wonderful even glorious. (SWM 101)

The breaking out from familiarity combines the aspects of recovery and escape discussed below, the awareness of a world beyond, and the representation of love allude to the combination of heterotopia and utopia in Faërie. To produce the inner consistency of reality characteristic for a successful Fantasy is a very demanding task and requires labour, thought and "a special skill, a kind of elvish craft" (61) which is best accomplished in literature. Going even beyond secondary belief is possible in contact with a "Faërian Drama", a play presented to men by elves that produces a realistic and immediate Fantasy: "If you are present at a Faërian drama you yourself are, or think that you are, bodily inside its Secondary World" (63). This resembles the mirror-function of utopias and heterotopias. Tolkien calls the art necessary for producing a secondary world that can be entered by designer and spectator alike; it is an Enchantment (in contrast to magic).[10] To this form of "realistic" sub-creative art Fantasy aspires. It is important for the ability to produce a believable secondary world that Fantasy is a natural activity for humans that does not contradict reason; on the contrary: "The keener and the clearer is the reason, the better fantasy will it make… For creative Fantasy is founded upon the hard recognition that things are so in the world as it appears under the sun; on a recognition of fact, but not a slavery to it" (65).

In addition, the otherworldliness of Faërie marks its relation to the remaining space or emplacements as an opposition (fourth criterion). When Fantasy provokes suspicion and is regarded as a childish folly, as illusionary or only suited for children or youths, it can be understood as another expression of this

10 'Enchantment' is both the act of enchanting and the state of being enchanted, cf. Anderson/Flieger 112. "This double meaning reflects how Faërie plays a role both in the author's production of works of Fantasy, and the reader's reception and experience of these works" (Shank 148).

relationship of opposition (as illusionary or perfect space). The otherworldliness and opposition of Faërie in comparison to the ordinary world is exemplified by the dangers and evils mentioned in *Smith* that can only be challenged with special weapons that cannot be wielded by mortals. Although Smith would have been able to forge weapons "that in his own world would have had power enough to become the matter of great tales and be worth a king's ransom, he knew that in Faery they would have been of small account" (SWM 24).

Another aspect emphasised by Tolkien is that Faërie can be perceived but not completely be described or defined, and therefore it is necessary to approach it asymptotically or circumscribe it by analysing fairy stories (cf. FS 32). That differs indeed from heterotopias that are set in a psychiatric clinic but corresponds to heterotopias undermining language by shattering or muddling common names.

Although not all of the mentioned criteria are met totally by the concepts of Faërie and Fantasy as proposed by Tolkien, the similarities should be sufficient to understand them as heterotopias in close relation to a utopia.

Which Utopia?

Having established the possibility of conceiving Faërie as heterotopia, we can now turn to the question, which utopia is hinted at and aspired to by the escape of the prisoner?

Before discussing Tolkien's account of the escape offered by fairy stories, it is important not to skip his reflections on recovery since from an epistemological perspective this is also a form of escape. Recovery— "return" in Manuscript B (FS 237) emphasises the direction towards a former state as an effect of fairy stories—is the possibility to see familiar things in a new light after having been confronted with unfamiliar ones. Tolkien uses visual metaphors of seeing clearly to describe it more specifically:

> Recovery (which includes return and renewal of health) is a regaining—regaining of a clear view. I do not say 'seeing things as they are' and involve myself with the philosophers, though I might venture to say 'seeing things as we are (or were) meant to see them'—as things apart from ourselves. We need, in any case, to clean our windows; so that the things seen clearly may be freed from the drab blur of triteness or familiarity—from possessiveness. (67)

Tolkien here makes the epistemological claim that familiarity hinders our ability to see things as we should see them—everything "in proper perspective and in its proper place" (Sandner 136)—but is not entering the philosophical

discussion on the possibility of perceiving the noumenon (cf. Shank 155f). He illustrates the relation to possessiveness or (legal or mental) appropriation and thus the danger of familiarity narratively in *Smith of Wotton Major* where the festivals have become vulgarly self-satisfied among most of the community, with one exception being Smith and his family. They include no more dancing, singing and tale-telling but mainly eating and drinking, as he points out in his essay on *Smith* (cf. SWM 84, 93, 100). The recuperative effects of a contact with Faërie can be seen when the boy Tim swallows the star: "But soon a light began to shine in his eyes, and he laughed and became merry, and sang softly to himself. Then he got up and began to dance all alone with an odd grace that he had never shown before" (SWM 61).

Although there are several means for recovering a clear view besides fairy stories, e.g. humility or seeing things from a new angle (like in the famous *Mooreeffoc* example)[11], Fantasy does this most thoroughly and mainly concerning simple or fundamental things. While a state where we see things as we are meant to see them may be considered as an abstract or unrealistic utopia, the term "recovery" (and especially "return" in the first draft) implies it is a state which existed before and can be achieved again.

Similarly, Escape and Consolation can be achieved through various forms, one of which being fairy stories. In his defence of Escape, Tolkien underlines first the practicality of it in "real life" where it should not be blamed. He believes critics are misusing it by confusing the escape of the prisoner with the flight of the deserter (and prefer acquiescent collaborationists to resisting patriots) and thus scorn not only desertion, but also "real Escape, and what are often its companions, Disgust, Anger, Condemnation, and Revolt" (69). Tolkien gives the example of electric street-lamps that are not mentioned in stories, which illustrates that he understands Escape as a critique of things in the primary world that are often taken for granted or seen as indispensable without ruling out the possibility of reaction (e.g. pulling out the street-lamps). The accusation of escape from the so called "real life" is thus not appropriate for fairy stories in contrast to some 'serious' literature that Tolkien compares to playing "under a glass roof by the side of a municipal swimming-bath. Fairy stories may invent monsters that fly the air or dwell in the deep, but at least they do not try to escape from heaven or the sea" (71).

Tolkien seems to link Escape strongly to a critique of the modern world which does not necessarily lead to reaction but nevertheless prefers horses, castles, knights, kings and priests to factories, machine-guns and bombs. This critique is—at least in this essay—primarily aesthetical; pointing out the ugliness of modern life which seems allied with evil and thus producing the desire to

11 It is interesting to note the development of Tolkien's thought on *Mooreeffoc* from a rather sceptical perspective in the first drafts (cf. Manuscript B) to the given lecture and the several emendations for publication.

escape “not indeed from life, but from our present time and self-made misery” (72). But this is only a rather accidental and special ‘escapist’ aspect that fairy stories have in common with other stories about the past. More profound escapisms are concerned with hardships like “hunger, thirst, poverty, pain, sorrow, injustice, death” (73) or the limitations of human beings, both excusable weaknesses like the desire to visit the deep sea or flying like a bird, and more profound wishes like being able to communicate with other living things. Satisfaction or consolation of both can be found in fairy stories, e.g. talking beasts or the magical understanding of animal speech. This implies another critique of modern human life, namely human detachedness from its fellow creatures which results out of human guilt. “Other creatures are like other realms with which Man has broken off relations, and sees now only from the outside at a distance, being at war with them, or on the terms of an uneasy armistice” (74).

Thus the escape from this separation implies a utopia in which all living things not only live together in peace but also communicate with each other. But the oldest and deepest desire is the Escape from Death—at least for humans since their counterparts among the elves deal with the Escape from Deathlessness as Tolkien not only claims in this essay, but also exemplarily develops in his legendarium, discussed theoretically especially in *Athrabeth Finrod ah Andreth* (MR 301-360; cf. Fornet-Ponse). In view of this escape, Tolkien stresses the lesson taught in fairy stories of the burden of the elfish kind of immortality, meaning endless serial living. Therefore, our first assumption regarding the utopia hinted at by this escape, that it includes immortality, is challenged by this perspective establishing a utopia in which death is not seen as negative but as a necessary part not only of biological life but for human perfection.

This is a good example of how the heterotopia of Faërie forces us to reconstitute ourselves, how we are and where we are—mortal beings in a limited world. Shank emphasises that the desires are only temporarily satisfied while the individual is immersed in a secondary world and therefore offers no ultimate satisfaction. “The insatiability of desire explains why individuals may read the same story again and again, and why more and more stories continue to be told” (Shank 155, with reference to FS 75f).

This leads to the aspect of consolation provided by fairy stories which does not mean the satisfaction of the desires (which could only be temporal during the stay in the secondary world) or a successful escape but primarily the Happy Ending, especially the sudden positive turn, the Eucatastrophe which is neither escapist nor fugitive,

> a sudden and miraculous grace: never to be counted on to recur. It does not deny the existence of *dyscatastrophe*, of sorrow and failure: the possibility of these is necessary to the joy of deliverance;

> it denies (in the face of much evidence, if you will) universal final defeat and in so far is *evangelium*, giving a fleeting glimpse of Joy, Joy beyond the walls of the world, poignant as grief.
>
> (FS 75)

A good fairy story is able to produce a corresponding joyous effect in hearers or readers experiencing this turn, depending on the story and the. Tolkien explains this joy by referring to the wish of every sub-creator to make something real or draw on reality, respectively. Thus the specific quality of the joy of a successful Fantasy is a reference to the underlying reality or truth. While it is true at first only in that secondary world, it may offer a brief vision of a greater answer—"it may be a far-off gleam or echo of *evangelium* in the real world" (77).[12] His often quoted remarks on the Christian belief of human redemption in a way corresponding to their nature and thus regarding the Gospels as containing a fairy story are of interest for our question which utopia a fairy story contains, insofar as the Gospels themselves and especially the Christ-event can be regarded as a heterotopia connected closely to the realisable utopia of the reign of God. By pointing out how according to Tolkien the joy evoked by a successful fairy story depends on its underlying reality and truth we can assume that the utopia ultimately intended by a fairy story (and Faërie) and the escape of the prisoner is this ultimate Christian utopia of the reign of God, of a living together in peace and plenty not only among human beings but among the whole of creation. Although this utopia is not yet realised, it has clear consequences for Christians in their present time.

> The *Evangelium* has not abrogated legends, it has hallowed them, especially the 'happy ending'. The Christian has still to work, with mind as well as body, to suffer, hope, and die; but he may now perceive that all his bents and faculties have a purpose, which can be redeemed. So great is the bounty with which he has been treated that he may now, perhaps, fairly dare to guess that in Fantasy he may actually assist in the effoliation and multiple enrichment of creation. (78f)

These show clearly the intrinsic relatedness of this special kind of heterotopia and utopia since Faërie with Fantasy as heterotopia points to a utopia which is at present a placeless space but which can be realized and thus calls for a human contribution to realise this utopia. The necessity of Faërie as the compound of

12 "Eine Realitätsebene, mitsamt ihren (schrecklichen) Bedingungen, wird als nur *eine* Realitätsebene sichtbar" (Krüger 208).

awareness of a world beyond our domestic parish, love for the things in it and desire for wonder etc. is stressed by Tolkien in his essay on *Smith*: "this 'Faery' is as necessary for the health and complete functioning of the Human as is sunlight for physical life: sunlight as distinguished from the soil, say, though it in fact permeates and modifies even that" (SWM 101).

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