

## **Some Reflections on Robert Graves, J. R. R. Tolkien, World War I, and the Sixties Counterculture**

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**Abstract:** This paper traces similarities in the life and work of two WWI veterans who became icons in the 1960s, Robert Graves and J. R. R. Tolkien, looking at their wartime experiences, mutual interest in fairy-stories, music, and their propensity for remaining outside of the mainstream culture they influenced. It also looks closely at their modelled ideas about children's literature and its cross-over audiences.

**Keywords:** fairy tales, World War I, children's literature

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### **An Unexpected Meeting**

We begin with a letter written over the ninth and tenth of January 1965. The epistle in question was written by J. R. R. Tolkien and was sent to his son, Michael. In it, we find a Tolkien humbly assessing his growing fame. Tellingly, the ever-modest Tolkien puts the word *fame* in arch quotations, and the narrative he relates functions primarily as a refutation of his fame or at least an acknowledgment of its 'limitations'. He announces his thesis rather directly – 'I am neither disturbed (nor surprised) at the limitations of my "fame"' – before illustrating his point concerning his fame's 'limitations' with a short anecdote concerning Tolkien's only meeting with Robert Graves, who was also (as we shall see) a favourite among various 1960s counter-cultural movements. Tolkien explains,

There are lots of people in *Oxford* [sic] who have never heard of me, let alone of my books. But I can repay many of them

with equal ignorance: neither willful nor contemptuous, simply accidental. An amusing incident occurred in November, when I went as a courtesy to hear the last lecture of this series of his given by the Professor of Poetry: Robert Graves. (A remarkable creature, entertaining, likeable, odd, bonnet full of wild bees, half-German, half-Irish, very tall, must have looked like Siegfried/Sigurd in his youth, *but* an Ass.) It was the most ludicrously bad lecture I have ever heard. After it he introduced me to a pleasant young woman who had attended it: well but quietly dressed, easy and agreeable, and we got on quite well. But Graves started to laugh; and he said: 'it is obvious neither of you has ever heard of the other before'. Quite true. And I had not supposed that the lady would ever have heard of me. Her name was Ava Gardner, but it still meant nothing, till people more aware of the world informed me that she was a film-star of some magnitude, and that the press of pressmen and storm of flash-bulbs on the steps of the Schools were not directed at Graves (and cert. not at me) but at her.<sup>1</sup>

We know little else about Tolkien's feelings about Graves or Graves's work, and we know even less about Graves's feelings about Tolkien. An old-fashioned Oxford philologist with singular tastes (he was particularly fond of Lewis Carroll's *Sylvie and Bruno*), Tolkien was not impressed by The Professor of Poetry's November lecture. He thought Graves mythologically impressive (like a seventy-year-old 'Siegfried'), and although Graves was both 'remarkable' and 'likeable', Tolkien adds tantalizingly, '*but* an Ass'. They were not friends; they were not even acquaintances; they met but this once, and they travelled in very different circles (it likely goes without saying, but Tolkien spent little time cheerfully introducing colleagues to Hollywood starlets). Still, Graves and Tolkien shared many commonalities, only one of which was the peculiar fact that they and their works were both adopted by the youth movements of the 1960s (however, while our Sigurd welcomed the attention, our hobbit most decidedly did not).<sup>2</sup>

## **Soldiers, Witches, and Hippies**

J. R. R. Tolkien and Robert Graves both saw action as members of the British Army in the Great War, Graves seriously injured by shrapnel from a German shell, Tolkien hospitalized with a severe case of trench fever. Their time during that woeful conflagration greatly influenced their poetic sensibilities and inflamed their incipient interest in children and the folk and fairy tales so often associated with them (Tolkien explains that, for him, ‘A real taste for fairy-stories was awakened by philology on the threshold of manhood, and quickened to full life by war’.<sup>3</sup> Similarly, Michael Joseph suggests that for Graves ‘the traumas of war and childhood are not merely interchangeable; they are indivisible, a single egg with two yolks’.)<sup>4</sup> Although both saw success as professional writers during the first half of the twentieth century, their reputations soared during the mid-to-late 1960s, when counter-cultural movements in the United States and Europe adopted texts by both authors as crucial parts of their back-to-nature ideology. Alan Moore reflects, ‘I read *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy in the ‘60s because that was kind of mandatory [...] You had to read *The Lord of the Rings* or you’d have been, I don’t know, thrown out of the counterculture or something like that’.<sup>5</sup> As Jane Ciabattari notes, ‘Hippies embraced Tolkien’s vision because of its critique of materialism, its environmentalism and anti-war stance’ adding that

certain aspects of Tolkien’s worldview matched the perspective of hippies, anti-war protestors, civil rights marchers and others seeking to change the established order. In fact, the values articulated by Tolkien were ideally suited for the 1960s counterculture movements.<sup>6</sup>

Likewise, as we’ve seen in recent issues of *The Robert Graves Review*,<sup>7</sup> Graves’s work – particularly *The White Goddess: A Historical Grammar of Poetic Myth*, but also *The Rubaiyyat of Omar Khayyam* – was required reading for members of the growing Wicca movement, students of mythology and paganism, as well as Hippies looking for new ways of conceptualizing gender

and dethroning patriarchal mythic and religious systems while embracing spiritual alterity. It is remarkable that two seventy-year-old poets who managed to survive the Great War when so many of their contemporaries were blotted from the pages of history also managed to create a body of work so incredibly relevant some fifty years after their war-time experiences.

### **Alston Anderson, *Lover Man***

In 'Black Talk on the Move', a review of *Lover Man*, 'a newly reissued collection of melancholy stories by Alston Anderson originally published in 1959', Darryl Pinckney positions Anderson in relation to the 'black hipster of the 1940s and 1950s', noting that '[the zoot-suited figures who show up at the end of *Invisible Man* correspond to Anderson's coming of age. They are the hepcats whom Claude Brown memorialized and Malcolm X had been, not marginal, but unabsorbed, nonconformist. It was an attitude'.<sup>8</sup> Alston Anderson was not a citizen of the United States, yet during World War II he enlisted in the U.S. military, serving in Germany, Iran, and France. It was while studying philosophy in Paris that he began to write, an interest that led to Anderson meeting 'Mordecai Richler, who may have pointed him toward Majorca' (ibid). This would be Graves's Mallorca, or more specifically, Deià, the small coastal village which forms the northern ridge of the Spanish island of Mallorca, where Graves lived from 1929 until his death. In 'Black Talk', Pinckney explains, '*The White Goddess* was the backpack book of its day, and Anderson turned up [in Mallorca] in the early 1950s, perhaps in search of Robert Graves' (ibid). As we'll see, he was not alone, as Graves – and by extension, his home in Deià – 'was connected in several ways with music, drugs and a general spirit of inquisitive mysticism'.<sup>9</sup> The Balearic islands of Ibiza, Formentera, and Mallorca were the home of at least three flourishing hippie scenes in the 1960s: 'the community of artists and writers centred around Robert Graves in Deià, which attracted musicians such Kevin Ayers, Robert Wyatt and Daevid Allen; the hedonistic hippies of Ibiza; and the more hardcore scene on

Formentera, that was filled with escapees from London and which had connections to Pink Floyd' (ibid). However, a decade before the action really started to boil –and just as J.R.R. Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* was coming into print – Anderson and Graves's friendship was beginning to wax (Graves would write the foreword to Anderson's 1959 *Lover Man*). In a 1955 letter to Graves, Anderson accepted that '[t]he [Mallorcan] life of apricots and yogurt was easier' than 'hanging out with juiceheads and hopheads on the [New York City] waterfront'.<sup>10</sup> By 1962, Anderson moved back to Mallorca.

### **Audre Lorde and the Hippies of the Gay-Girl Scene**

Just as hepcats like Anderson enjoyed Graves, cool young women such as Audre Lorde found much to dig in Tolkien's seminal piece of high fantasy. Writing about her life between 1954 and 1956 (again, the period when the three volumes of *The Lord of the Rings* were first published in the United States), Lorde explains, '[m]y friends and I were the hippies of the gay-girl circuit, before the word was coined'.<sup>11</sup> *The White Goddess* was initially published in 1948, but revised and enlarged editions were released in 1952 and 1961, right around the time *The Lord of the Rings* was finding its way into the backpacks of college students and hippies. If '*The White Goddess* was the backpack book of its day' (as Pinckney suggests) it had a companion in the form of *The Lord of the Rings*. Here's Audre Lorde reminiscing about New Year's Eve, 1954:

At a few minutes to midnight, we switched off the tinny portable phono and turned on the radio to hear the cheer go up in Times Square to greet 1955, even while we were saying how square that all was. Muriel gave me a copy of Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings*, an underground bestseller which she'd lifted, she said, from a Stamford bookstore. Then we all kissed each other, and had some more wine. (P. 191)

### **Soft Machine**

A major figure in the burgeoning jazz, fusion, psychedelia, and progressive rock scenes in England, musician Robert Wyatt was a great admirer of Robert Graves. Wyatt knew Graves from childhood, as Wyatt's folks were friends of Graves. Wyatt would later recollect that from his childhood perspective, Graves was 'an awe-inspiring giant',<sup>12</sup> inadvertently giving credence to Tolkien's guess that in his youth Graves must have resembled Sigurd. Wyatt moved to Mallorca in 1962 to study with jazz drummer George Neidorf, who lived near Graves. During the 1960s, Graves was (unlike Tolkien) doing considerable amount of traveling, from Mexico to Oxford, from New York to Mallorca, getting a taste of the age firsthand. Alston Anderson, *supra*, was only one of the host of artists and poets and hippies and witches and mystics who would visit Mallorca to hobnob with Graves and enjoy the environs. Wyatt recalls,

you'd think, given his culture, if [Graves] liked other arts it would be classical music. But in fact he was a jazz fan. Not just a jazz fan, but he really liked [avant-garde pianist and composer] Cecil Taylor. He'd heard Cecil Taylor in New York and had rushed up and embraced him at the piano onstage, he was so moved.<sup>13</sup>

Likewise, just after the May 1968 revolution in France, Daevid Allen of the psychedelic pop group Soft Machine and his friend Gilli Smyth (poet, Professor of English at the Sorbonne, and co-founder of the psychedelic rock band, Gong) 'sought sanctuary in Deià [...] Allen had first visited the island several years earlier with Robert Wyatt, who had introduced him to the poet Robert Graves'.<sup>14</sup> Smyth explains, 'Graves was part of an intense artistic community. He had an amphitheatre in the grounds of his house where he would perform poetry. There were musicians and writers and artists who lived there, and lots of interesting visitors, too, like Spike Milligan, Kenneth Tynan[, ...] the Sufi scholar Idries Shah' and jazz saxophonist Didier Malherbe (whom they found 'living in

a goatherder's cave on the island'). 'It was very inspiring', Smyth reflects.<sup>15</sup> A source of that inspiration was likely psilocybin mushrooms, a subject with which Graves was fascinated. Graves shared a deep and ranging correspondence with ethnomycologist, botanist, anthropologist, and magic mushroom enthusiast, R. Gordon Wasson (a correspondence that, it turns out, proved very useful to Wasson's scholarship). In fact, if you'll allow me to share someone else's anecdote, while visiting Graves in Mallorca, Michael Joseph noticed on Graves's bookshelves a copy of Wasson's seminal 1968 study, *Soma: Divine Mushroom of Immortality*. Michael was also interested in mushrooms (and had read Wasson himself), so he thought to use the book to get a conversation going:

'Oh, I have this book', says Michael, gesturing towards *Soma*.

'Well, I wrote it', Graves replies.

'But the cover says ...' Michael offers, a little confused.

'I told him where to look', Graves concludes.<sup>16</sup>

Which is to say, mushroom research and experimentation was not uncommon in Mallorca (both Soft Machine and Gong owed much of their absurd grooviness to psilocybin). According to Peter Watts, '[a]rtists, writers, musicians and actors from London would often visit Graves', a squad of aesthetes that included 'Alan Lomax, the great musical folklorist' as well as Ronnie Scott, legendary British tenor saxophonist and proprietor and co-founder of Ronnie Scott's Jazz Club (where 'Graves was a regular [...] whenever he was in London',<sup>17</sup> which he often was in the early sixties, as in 1961 Graves began his four-year tenure as Oxford's Professor of Poetry, a tenure that would end shortly after his Oxford encounter with Tolkien and Ava Gardner).

### **William Graves: A Bunch of Hippies**

Clearly, the psychedelia of 1960s counterculture touched the Graves's household more profoundly than it did the home of

Professor Tolkien. Of course, Tolkien received more than letters at his Oxford home; he also received calls – phone calls and social calls – the former often late at night, the latter usually in the afternoon, long-haired visitors with sideburns and body odour and a hazy, far-away look in their eyes. As a rule, they were nice enough, but Tolkien didn't invite them in for tea and a smoke. Eventually Tolkien had to leave the home he and Edith, his wife, had lived in for decades. Not so with Graves. William Graves's memoir, *Wild Olives*, redounds with stories of Graves hanging with the hippies. William is Graves's son, and he reflects on this time, when William was in his mid-to-late twenties, for the Robert Graves Oral History Project, a section of which appears, 'rev. and ed. by Carl Hahn, Michael Joseph and William Graves' in *The Robert Graves Review* (2022).<sup>18</sup> Carl Hahn asks him, 'Do you sense that Deyá changed from a small Mallorcan village to an international literary empire presided over by your father?' To which William replies, 'No, because I don't think there were very many international writers there. There were a bunch of hippies' (p. 345). Here he transforms the textured and diverse crew of artists and intellectuals to a conservative stereotype. William explains – with good humour, it appears – that to his father and 'his [hippy] friends' – William and his cadre (who 'rented the premises of a guest house, and had a bar and restaurant as well as guests') had 'started to represent a sort of authoritarianism, fascism, whatever else you want to call it' (p. 351). This gives us the delightful picture of a seventy-year-old Robert Graves rebelling against his twenty-five-year-old son. I should note, if William wasn't the hippest twenty-year-old in the 1960s, abstaining from psychedelic mushrooms and jazz cigarettes while turning his nose up at Wicca founder Gerald Gardner (whom he wryly refers to as, 'the head of a Witches Coven') (p. 340), and Idries Shah (and his – as William puts it – 'bogus Rubaiyat') (p. 358), he was nonetheless whip smart and a rigorous thinker. Robert Graves obviously appreciated his son's insight and intelligence, eventually appointing him executor of his literary estate.

William's characterization of Mallorca's panoply of expats as 'a bunch of hippies' resonates with a broader cultural response to the counterculture. In *Imagine Nation: The American Counterculture of*



*the 1960s and '70s*, P. Braunstein and Michael William Doyle note that:

By the late 1960s – and thereafter – getting high could result in jail time but did not necessarily mean you believed in peace and love. The Illegal Nation of drug takers was populated by a citizenry without one overarching higher purpose. Exotic drug use [...] tie-dyed clothes, strobe lights, and psychedelic posters had made their way into the great American shopping mall. The structures of the marketplace did consume much of the sublime, raw visions of alternative realities that LSD had flashed inside the minds of individuals.<sup>19</sup>

In some ways, by the late 1960s, both Graves and Tolkien, too, had become similarly iconic representations, yet they managed to stay outside traditional celebrityhood, their works resisting the recuperation and epitextual commodification that followed the initially idealistic and progressive ‘back-to-nature’ movements of the 1960s (a resistance that, for Tolkien, has largely faded since the release of Peter Jackson’s *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy of films at the turn of the millennium, the number of dolls, rings, chess sets, costumes, and other Tolkien-related epitexts having grown exponentially over the last two decades). In the 1960s, one had the books, and that was largely it. Among these books was Graves’s *The White Goddess*, which remained outside ‘the Great American shopping mall’ and inside young people’s backpacks, where it functioned as Thráin’s key, opening another modality for perceiving and interacting with and potentially remaking the world, one that, for many Wiccans, at least, managed to subvert traditional patriarchal religious norms and systems so prevalent during Eisenhower’s fifties and within post-war Britain.

### **An Escape from the Horrors of the Peace**

Graves’s children’s poems are often read as an escape from the darkness of the war – but that commonplace oversimplifies

something much more complex and nuanced. As Michael Joseph joked during a recent conversation, ‘Graves didn’t turn to fairy tales and children’s literature as an escape from the horrors of the war; rather, it was an escape from the horrors of the peace’. This position is quite different from the opinion John Garth articulates in *Tolkien and the Great War: The Threshold of Middle-Earth*. Garth argues that ‘Robert Graves pictured the simultaneous arrival of maturity and war as the obliteration of Faërie’.<sup>20</sup> As evidence, Garth points to Graves’s ‘Babylon’ (published in his 1916 collection, *Goliath and David*):

Wisdom made a breach and battered  
Babylon to bits: she scattered  
To the hedges and ditches  
All our nursery gnomes and witches.  
Lob and Puck, poor frantic elves,  
Drag their treasures from the shelves.<sup>21</sup>

Seems pretty convincing, but Graves would later remove ‘Babylon’ from his collected poems, suggesting there was something about it that did not quite work for him. However, what Garth then goes on to say about Tolkien (by way of contrast) actually applies equally to both. He begins by arguing that the sentiment in Graves’s ‘Babylon’

was more than metaphor. Faërie came close to vanishing altogether during the First World War, thanks to this associative confusion of the pre-war era, childhood, and fairy-tales. Yet Tolkien did not regard fairies as childish, and he was not writing nursery-tales, but an epic history of the world through faëry eyes.<sup>22</sup>

And, yes, Tolkien did not regard fairy-tales (and the fairy lands in which they are set) as inherently childish: after the war Tolkien would write a great deal about his dissatisfaction with the candy-floss faërie-lands of Victorian England even as he lamented the Modernist fruit of the Enlightenment, fruit that seemed to have led

to the industrialization of war he witnessed during the Great War. As Tolkien writes in 'On Fairy-Stories', 'the proximity of mass-production robot factories, and the roar of self-obstructive mechanical traffic' are no more exemplars of 'real life', no more "alive" than, say, centaurs or dragons'.<sup>23</sup> No doubt Graves's retreat from an increasingly industrialized post-war England to the idyllic, Mallorcan life of apricots and yogurt was fed by similar sentiments. (Or, as Tolkien puts it in 'On Fairy-Stories': 'How real, how startlingly alive is a factory chimney compared with an elm-tree: poor obsolete thing, insubstantial dream of an escapist!')

Like Tolkien, Graves did not leave fairyland behind after the war but continued writing for and about children throughout his life. Of course, the attention he paid to childhood and its literatures over his life is too often forgotten by those writing about his life and work. More attention is paid, of course, to his war poems, but even those are often inflected by childhood and the fairy-stories and nursery rhymes so commonly associated with it. In 'Orphans of Poetry,' Michael Joseph explains:

But what makes Graves's writing about childhood and for children particularly fascinating is the extent to which he sought to radically re-interpret, even re-invent, his own childhood – replacing the Victorian childhood he rejected as part of the 'all that' to which the title of his autobiography, *Good-bye to All That* (1929), refers, with one that conformed more closely to his experience in the trenches and his intuitions as a poet.<sup>25</sup>

Both Tolkien and Graves were suspicious of the tropes and associations accompanying the predominant Victorian notions of fairyland, and although some of Tolkien's early children's work participates in these very tropes, by the 1937 publication of *The Hobbit* and the 1939 delivery of the lecture that would become 'On Fairy-Stories' (entitled simply, 'Fairy Stories,' and given as an Andrew Lang lecture at the University of St Andrews, Scotland), Tolkien had distanced himself from the 'flower-and-butterfly minuteness' typical of depictions of fairies and fairyland in the late-

1800s and early twentieth century.<sup>26</sup> This minuteness, Tolkien maintained, was a “product of “rationalization””, a point-of-view shared by Graves,<sup>27</sup> and according to Tolkien, this rationalized minuteness ‘transformed the glamour of Elfland into mere finesse, and invisibility into a fragility that could hide in a cowslip or shrink behind a blade of grass’.<sup>28</sup>

Neither writer was naïve to the fact that by 1915 *fairy* was a troubled concept and an increasingly troubled term. John Garth reminds,

Tolkien’s old King Edward’s schoolteacher, R. W. Reynolds, soon warned him that the title he proposed for his volume of verse, *The Trumpets of Faerie*, was ‘a little precious’: the word faerie had become ‘rather spoiled of late’. Reynolds was thinking, perhaps, not of recent trends in fairy writing, but of the use of fairy to mean ‘homosexual’, which dated from the mid-1890s.<sup>29</sup>

Garth stresses that Tolkien’s affection for faerie – if not its Victorian prettiness – was shared by Robert Graves, who ‘entitled his 1917 collection *Fairies and Fusiliers*,’ adding with a wink, ‘no pun apparently intended’ (Garth, p. 77). Both Tolkien and Graves – along with many of their compeers in the service – had been ‘weaned on Andrew Lang’s fairy-tale anthologies and original stories such as George MacDonald’s *The Princess and the Goblin*, and Faërie’s stock had surged with the success of *Peter Pan*, a story of adventure and eternal youth that now had additional relevance for boys on the threshold of manhood facing battle’ (p. 77).

Clearly, the complex relationship both Graves and Tolkien maintained with fairy stories and myth, unironic and deeply complex and textured, made the pair so resonant with the idealism of the 60s counterculture. Tom Shippey writes, ‘Tolkien, as a philologist, and also as an infantry veteran, was deeply conscious of the strong continuity between that heroic world and the modern one’.<sup>30</sup> So too with Graves. Their dedication to the complexity of childhood, the power of an unironic treatment of Faërie, and their profound appreciation of darkness and light within both – an

appreciation heightened by their experience of war – made these unlikely septuagenarians central to youth culture: Graves from the inside, Tolkien, decidedly, from without.

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## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> *The Letters of J. R. R. Tolkien*, rev. and expanded edn, ed. by Humphrey Carpenter (New York: HarperCollins, 2023), pp. 493–94.

<sup>2</sup> Deborah Webster wrote to Tolkien asking about his life (Webster was a doctoral student at the University of Wisconsin, her dissertation focusing on Tolkien and C. S. Lewis). In a letter dated 25 October 1958, Tolkien replied:

I am in fact a *Hobbit* (in all but size). I like gardens, trees and unmechanized farmlands; I smoke a pipe, and like good plain food (unrefrigerated), but detest French cooking; I like, and even dare to wear in these dull days, ornamental waistcoats. I am fond of mushrooms (out of a field); have a very simple sense of humour (which even my appreciative critics find tiresome); I go to bed late and get up late (when possible). (pp. 411–12)

<sup>3</sup> J. R. R. Tolkien, ‘On Fairy-Stories’ in *The Tolkien Reader* (New York: Ballantine, 1966), pp. 64–5.

<sup>4</sup> Michael Joseph, “‘Orphans of Poetry’: The Poetry of Childhood and the Poetry for Children of Robert Graves’ *Book 2.0*, 6:2-3 (2016), 11.

<sup>5</sup> Alan Moore, “‘The Superhero Dream Is Essentially Fascism’:  
Alan Moore Eviscerates Superheroes & Fixes Pop Culture in In-  
Depth Interview’, *ScreenRant* (Oct 4, 2023)

<<https://screenrant.com/alan-moore-interview-illuminations-jerusalem-superheroes-part-2/>> [accessed 5 May 2024]

<sup>6</sup> Jane Ciabattari, ‘Hobbits and Hippies: Tolkien and the  
Counterculture’, *BBC* (19 November 2014)

<<https://www.bbc.com/culture/article/20141120-the-hobbits-and-the-hippies>> [accessed 5 May 2024]

<sup>7</sup> See Richard Carder’s ‘Graves, Ghosts, Madness, Magic &  
Religion’ (*The Robert Graves Review*, 1.2) Grevel Lindop’s “Good  
Luck ... and Blessed Be’: Robert Graves and F. A. C. Booth’ (*The  
Robert Graves Review*, 1.3), and Steven Michael Stroud’s ‘Wicca  
Reading *The White Goddess*’ (Ibid).

<sup>8</sup> Darryl Pinckney, ‘Black Talk on the Move’, *The New York Review*  
(20 July 2023)

<<https://www.nybooks.com/articles/2023/07/20/black-talk-on-the-move-lover-man-alston-anderson/>> [accessed 5 May 2024]

<sup>9</sup> Peter Watts, ‘Never mind the Balearics: London and the Hippies  
of Ibiza, Formentera and Deià’, *The Great Wen: A London Blog* (3  
August 2016) <<https://greatwen.com/2016/08/03/never-mind-the-balearics-london-and-the-hippies-of-ibiza-formentera-and-deia/>>  
[accessed 5 May 2024]

<sup>10</sup> Pinckney [accessed 5 May 2024]

<sup>11</sup> Audre Lorde, *Zami, a New Spelling of My Name* (Trumansburg,  
NY: Crossing Press, 1982), p. 225.

<sup>12</sup> John Mulvey, ‘Robert Wyatt Interviewed: “I’m not a born rebel  
...”’ *Uncut* (28 January 2015)

<<https://www.uncut.co.uk/features/robert-wyatt-interviewed-i-m-not-a-born-rebel-49/>> [accessed 5 May 2024]

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> John Lewis, ‘Daavid Allen: “Absurdism is the Highest Form of  
Comedy”’ *Uncut* (13 March 2015)

<<https://www.uncut.co.uk/features/daavid-allen-absurdism-is-the-highest-form-of-comedy-67118/>> [accessed 5 May 2024]

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Personal interview with Michael Joseph: Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 5 January 2024.

<sup>17</sup> Watts, [accessed 5 May 2024]

<sup>18</sup> Robert Graves Oral History Project, 'To Return to Wild Olives: Interview with William Graves', *The Robert Graves Review*, 1.2 (2022), 327–62.

<sup>19</sup> Peter Braunstein and Michael William Doyle, *Imagine Nation: The American Counterculture of the 1960s and '70s* (New York: Routledge, 2002), pp. 36–7.

<sup>20</sup> John Garth, *Tolkien and the Great War: The Threshold of Middle-Earth* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2003), p. 292.

<sup>21</sup> Qtd in *ibid*, p. 292.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>23</sup> Tolkien, pp. 80–1.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>25</sup> *Orphans of Poetry*, p. 10.

<sup>26</sup> Tolkien, p. 35.

<sup>27</sup> An idea a thirty-year-old Robert Graves would develop in *Poetic Unreason* (London: Palmer, 1925).

<sup>28</sup> Tolkien, p. 35.

<sup>29</sup> Garth, p. 76.

<sup>30</sup> Tom Shippey, *J.R.R. Tolkien: Author of the Century* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2000), p. xxviii.