

PABLO-11 is published for the 59th OMPA mailing by Darroll Pardoe, 15 Selkirk Court, Whitley Road, London N17 6RF, England, and is subtitled 'She Moves Through the Fair-5'. As always, a Cringe binder Publication, and copyright 1970 to Darroll Pardoe.



Today I received a fanzine from Greg Pickersgill. I almost read it backwards before I realized that it was stapled upside down. It appears to be devoted to castigating British fandom for forming a tight little clique with no interest in being friendly with Mr Pickersgill, who is of course on the outside looking in. Haven't we heard all this before from other people? An inspection of his comments may give some idea why he is on the outside instead of being an accepted member of fandom.

'British fandom has sunk so low into the slough of despond that it has virtually disappeared'. Not so; so far as I am aware, British fandom is in a healthy state, as the Globe always shows on the first Thursday of the month.

'most fans are not worthy of any especial consideration or aid, incapable of helping themselves to an inordinate degree, and unwilling to make even the slightest gesture of assistance to any potential fan who has the misfortune... not to be a member of their tight little clique' Most of the fans I know are quite the opposite of this.

'this particular issue...is a great deal better than any one of a dozen incompetent fanzines over which much 'care' 'attention' and 'intellect' have been slavered'. Apart from the intrustion of slavered, which my dictionary informs me is connected with saliva dripping from the mouth, this phrase may be true enough, but not if he is referring to current British fmz, on a number of which much care and attention is applied, and the result is a lot better than Mr Pickersgill's offering, both in physical form (he admits himself to having paid no attention whatever to layout and production) and in content. Very few fanzines indeed devote most of their space to deliberate insult.

'this editorial, carrying the message it does, will probably enrage a significant number of the people who are reading it.' Rage, no. Pity, yes. If Greg devoted his energy to more constructive fanac it would be better received.

'archetypal crudzines' What on earth are they???

'(NPR) wOULD instantly have reached the same level as such epic magazines as MORFACH, PHILE, BEYOND and HYPHEN'. While all the fmz he mentions were good in one way or another, the combination is an interesting one. Does he consider these four the cream of fmz publishing? Hyphen stands well above the other three, for one thing.

I suggest that Mr Pickersgill give up his insults, publish a real fanzine, and devote some time to developing social contacts within fandom. If he does this then I think he will be accepted very readily as one of ourselves. But one receives from fandom only if willing also to put into it. It is interesting to note, though, that while insulting fans and fandom so much, Greg Pickersgill has taken the trouble to publish his insults, and also asks that people trade with him (two copies, yet!). So he must want very much to be part of British fandom, in spite of his protests to the contrary.

Incidentally, Ro has never read the Britannica article on unicorns, if there is one. Her articles are based on research in secondary sources (thus far, but work on primary sources is in progress).

Recently I've been reading 'The White Goddess' by Robert Graves, a fascinating book, and one that I intend to re-read very carefully at least once in the near future. Its author calls it a 'historical grammar of poetic myth' and that is what it is, but in the course of a most detailed argument it brings together all kinds of facts and speculations about European culture of the neolithic and later periods. I'd never realized until I read this book how unified the Europe (including the middle east and north Africa) of ancient times was. I knew about the Roman empire, of course, but it never occurred to me to suppose that the contacts had always been there - in trade, religion and so on.

Graves even goes into the christian religion in his book, and regards the dogma of the Holy Trinity as a classical mystery in the full sense. This is an interesting idea, and his evidence for it is quite persuasive. I'm quite sure that if Jesus Christ returned to the Earth, he'd be totally unwilling to accept any connection at all with modern christianity. We too often forget that Jesus was a Jew, and operated completely within the framework of the Jewish religion. After his death his followers formed themselves into a Jewish sect, and were quite narked when Paul (a Hellenicised Jew) came along and preached his own brand of christianity to the gentiles: the original christians, led by James the brother of Jesus, favoured keeping christianity Jewish. Meanwhile the Romans were also getting narked, with the whole Jewish problem, and after the revolt beginning in AD 66, they destroyed the Temple and Jerusalem, and dispersed its inhabitants. In this exercise they incidentally destroyed the Jewish christians, who were largely Jerusalem-based. Thenceforth, christianity was Pauline christianity, which gradually took on many of the elements of the pagan religion in its various forms, and became a very different thing than that which the original christians, and Jesus himself, knew.

Now, one of the peculiar things about christianity now, is how its followers persist in confounding myth with historical happening. Anyone of the ancient world would have been quite at home with the accounts of the birth and death of Jesus; they have many parallels elsewhere. Jesus was certainly born and died, but that he was born of a virgin, and rose from the dead, and bodily ascended to heaven (not to mention all the later accretions such as the Coronation of BVM) - these are myths, and perfectly valid as such. But they are no more historical fact than the Creation myth in Genesis, which was once on an equal footing of history as far as christians were concerned, but which they were (most of them) forced to drop by the advance of the evidence to the contrary. To insist on a historical resurrection or virgin birth is to render the historical Jesus absurd, and to debase the myth to an equally absurd level.

But how many christians today would agree with me? Precious few. The attitude of the churches seems to be: this is the Truth, and you must believe in it, even if it conflicts with your powers of reasoning. They overlook the origins of christianity, and its development over the centuries, which are there for those who look to see. Most christians, indeed, have only the most shadowy of notions of the theology and the history of their own religion: and even of those who read the bible regularly (quite a lot), how many ever bother to relate what they read to the contemporary situation? (very few). How many christians have read Josephus, for instance, or bothered to learn about the findings of biblical archaeology? They for the most part are content as an article of 'faith' to accept a weird confusion of myth and history, which does service neither to myth nor to history.

I've even been told that as an atheist I have no right to argue with those who call themselves christians about such matters - but why not? Perhaps my perspective on these things is wider than theirs.