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Intertextuality of C.S. Lewis' The Last Battle

The Chronicles of Narnia has an established position in the canon of children's literature. However, what on the surface is a fairy tale involving adventures and magic; with children, kings, talking beasts, and wood spirits as main protagonists; is, in fact, a set of stories deeply rooted in Christian and chivalric traditions, containing elements of beast fable and morality tale. The story, according to Madeline L'Engle, depending on the reader's cultural knowledge and experience, may be understood on various levels, from the literal one of an adventure story for children, through the moral and allegorical levels, eventually reaching the anagogical level. While reading *The Chronicles*, one is able to notice various references to other written works, interwoven into the text, with the Bible, chivalric romances and beast fables being the most prominent sources of intertextual allusions. In *The Last Battle* Lewis attempts to answer John Donne's question, "What if this present were the world's last night?" (Holy Sonnet XIII) and presents a comprehensive image of Narnian apocalypse and life after death in Aslan's country. The following paper will present the most noteworthy intertextual references in the final volume of *The Narniad.*

key words: Narnia, chronicles, intertextuality, apocalypse, Bible, chivalric, beast, fable, Arthur, Roland.

In his essay "On Criticism," Lewis stated that:

> The meaning of a book is the series of systems of emotions, reflections, and attitudes produced by reading it . . . This product differs with different readers . . . The ideally true or right meaning would be that shared by the largest number of the best readers after repeated and careful readings over several generations, different periods, nationalities, moods, degrees of alertness, private preoccupations, states of health, spirits, and the like cancelling one another out when . . . they cannot be fused so as to enrich one another. (56)

The Chronicles of Narnia, a fairy tale about kings, talking beasts, magic, with children as main protagonists is, in fact, a set of stories deeply rooted in Christian and chivalric traditions which, depending on the reader's cultural knowledge and experience, may be understood on various levels. The following paper will discuss the most prominent intertextual allusions including references to the Bible, and the Book of Revelation in particular; the most popular chivalric romances: *Le Morte d'Arthur* and *The Song of Roland*; and finally beast fable represented by Aesop's *The Ass in the Lion's Skin*.

1. Main Biblical references

Paul F. Ford praises Lewis for "the successful attempt to remythologize the Christian creed," which means that through his stories Lewis succeeds in providing a new meaning to the well-known doctrines (353). Allusions to the Bible are numerous, starting with the Great Lion

called Aslan who is the counterpart of Jesus Christ. The similarities are multifarious: he sacrifices his life for a traitor; he is praised by the Narnians as their God; all believers go to his country after death and, eventually, he returns to Narnia in its final day to pass the last judgment on all creatures (138; 140). A huge lion, both terrible and beautiful, with golden luminous mane and radiant fur, and equal in size to a young elephant (138; 154), he is "the epitome of the majestic, the glorious and the numinous" (55). His breath is not only able to resurrect, e.g. the creatures turned into stone by the White Witch, but also to comfort and give courage. The motif of "holy breath" or "the breath of life" is deeply rooted in the Judaeo-Christian tradition and associated with the Holy Spirit. In St John's Gospel, when Jesus visits his apostles after the resurrection, he breathes on them: "then said Jesus to them again, peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost" (20: 21-22). Aslan's breath plays the same role, which one may notice in *The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe,* when he forgives Edmund his treason and breathes on him in order to fill him with grace. The creation of Narnia is another significant moment when Aslan's breath is described in terms of "the breath of life." When he breathes, animals receive his grace and become talking beasts. Such properties of the Holy Spirit are mentioned in the Second Letter to the Corinthians (3:18). Aslan is merciful and loves all Narnians exactly like Jesus loves all people. He addresses his worshippers using phrases like "dear child," "son," or "beloved" (154, 155) which is reminiscent of the Gospel of Matthew, where God rewards faithful servants with equivalent words (25: 21-23). At the same time, Aslan's great Father – a God figure – is called The-Emperor-beyond-the-sea. He is omnipotent, thus he resurrects Aslan the day after he is killed, which is an obvious allusion to Jesus' crucifiction and resurrection. Prior to the apocalypse, Aslan's name becomes mispronounced as Tashlan (by mixing it with Tash, the name of the Calormene god) to prove that they are in fact one and the same creature, which may serve as an allusion to the philosophy of Universalism.[1] Tash, Aslan's antagonist,[2] is presented in such a way that he may be considered a counterpart of the devil, with an appearance of a demon or a monster. The High King Peter dismisses this creature from Aslan's world to "his own place" (125), which suggests that since he is not allowed to stay in heaven, it is hell that he comes from.

Narnian chronology is similar to the Biblical one. It starts with the world's creation, continues with Aslan sacrificing his life on the stone table, his resurrection, and eventually the description of the apocalypse, the last judgment, and the afterlife in Aslan's country. This eschatological vision is presented as the reversal of the act of creation.[3] Plants and trees are eaten by monster lizards and dragons, and when there is no life left, everything becomes covered with water, even the stars that had previously fallen from the sky. Ultimately, at Aslan's command the sun absorbs the moon and is squeezed by Father Time which signals the advent of eternal darkness. Everything, including time, ceases to exist (148). The majority of those motifs may be encountered in St John's Apocalypse, e.g. the destruction of the sky, the Moon's death, and the rain of stars: "There was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places" (Revelation 6: 12-14). Also, the lands' demolition is present in the Book of Revelation: "And every island fled away, and the mountains

[1] Universalism: "The belief that all religions are basically the same and thus one is as good as another" (Ford 444).
[2] Tash is "a Scottish dialectical word for blemish, stain, fault or vice" (Ford 423).
[3] Described in the chronologically first volume entitled The Magician's Nephew.

were not found" (16:20). In both Lewis's and Biblical visions of the apocalypse the dominating atmosphere is the one of fear and chaos. Also, the Last Judgement is conducted in an analogous manner. In the Bible people are obliged to stand in front of God and wait to be judged (Revelation 16: 11-18; 20:12) and so are the inhabitants of Narnia when they face Aslan before entering his country. Prior to the Apocalypse, some of the Narnians, on seeing evil that is being performed in the name of their God, are disheartened and lose faith in Aslan: "would it not be better to be dead than to have this horrible fear that Aslan has come and is not like the Aslan we believed in and longed for?, they cry" (29). Those who convert are allowed to pass into the Aslan's country, others are annihilated in the dying world.

The stable around which the main plot of *The Last Battle* is concentrated is a very mysterious place. A wooden hut on the outside, it contains an enormous land without borders inside (132). Drawing conclusions from Lucy's utterance, "in our world too, a stable once had something inside it that was bigger than our whole world" (132), one may assume that she refers to the place where Christ was born in Bethlehem. Lucy emphasizes God's greatness by remarking that what is inside the stable is beyond the material and the human. Similarly, the hill called Aslan's How, where the Lion once sacrificed his life and rose from the dead, evokes immediate association with Calvary where Christ was crucified. Ford, in addition, suggests that the hill resembles Celtic burial places (96).

After the apocalypse believers are saved behind the stable door in the land called "the Real Narnia" (159), which is another clear allusion to the Bible: "and I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea" (Revelation 21:1). The description of this land is an extended metaphor. Spring and nature bursting with colours are, in the majority of world mythologies including Christian beliefs, associated with life, festivity, joy and God's grace, whereas winter, darkness and emptiness left outside clearly allude to death, decay, and hell (Ford 246). Those two worlds are separated by the locked door – a metaphor of death, a border between life and the afterlife. In Aslan's country one cannot experience fear even if one desires to, because it is the land of love and grace (162; 163). A similar motif can be found in the New Testament with regard to heaven (1 John 4:18). Another Biblical motif are fruit trees. One can find them as early as in the story of Adam and Eve in Genesis, up to the description of the Apocalypse: "On either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations" (Revelation 22:2). Again, Lewis repeats this motif in both the first and the last volume of the series. While travelling across Aslan's country, the characters reach the garden where the Tree of Protection grows (128), which is an immediate allusion to the Biblical garden of Eden: "and the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed" (Genesis 2:8). The garden has exactly the same properties as the stable: it appears to be far larger inside than it seems to be from the outside. The fact that people in Narnia are called sons of Adam and daughters of Eve is an obvious Biblical reference as well.

2. Philosophy

Apart from Christian beliefs, Lewis notably often alludes to Platonic philosophy. "To lose what I owe Plato and Aristotle," he once said, "would be like an amputation of a limb. Hardly any lawful price seems to me too high for what I have gained by being made to learn Latin and Greek" (32). The references to Plato's theories recur throughout the saga with a spectacular climax in *The Last Battle*, when Lord Digory exclaims, "it's all in Plato, all in Plato!" (160). This

statement gives the reader a clear clue as to the correct way of interpreting the final scene of *The Narniad.* In accordance with the Platonic tradition, all material objects on the earth are merely images or imitations of the transcendent ideas existing in "a higher, more perfect, spiritual reality" (Ford 339). In Narnia this "overworld of self- subsisting ideas" (Ford 339) is Aslan's eternal country. The world outside, the disappearing Narnia, is referred to by Aslan as "The Shadowlands" (171), which, again, is a reinterpretation of Plato's Allegory of the Cave, where all that people could see were merely shadows of things. Although Narnia is destroyed, it is only shadows that are gone and not the genuine country. Another reference to the Allegory of the Cave is the situation of the renegade dwarfs locked in an imaginary stable (140). Because of their lack of faith and stubbornness, they mentally do not enter Aslan's country but stay imprisoned. "They have chosen cunning instead of belief. Their prison is only in their own minds, yet they are in that prison; and so afraid of being taken in that they cannot be taken out," says Aslan (140).

As I have remarked, Aslan's land has one unusual property: it is far larger inside that it seems to be from the outside. While the characters move "Further up and further in!," the world around them becomes more and more real, bigger and flawless and they experience greater and greater beauty and perfection. The landscapes are almost identical to the ones in the old Narnia but somehow deeper and more real. Such a situation was discussed by St. Thomas Aquinas and referred by Ford to the Narnian situation thus: "Were one able to go 'further up and further in' – into the very mind and being of God – one would find not an utterly new reality but something strangely familiar, something 'like' the world one had always known before, only supremely better" (340). The protagonists, being unable to comprehend the new situation, initially do not see the resemblance, yet with time they learn to notice it.

Another concept drawn from Plato and St Augustine is the "ascent of the soul," which Lewis in his *Pilgrim's Regress* defines as "a restless piercing desire for the unlimited source of all reality and perfection" which has been commenced by God's creation (7). The creature that embodies the concept in *The Last Battle* is Jewel the Unicorn, who exclaims upon arrival to Alan's country: "I have come home at last! This is the land I have been looking for all my life, though I never knew it till now" (161). "Platonic quest for reality" becomes realized when all believers eventually find their place in Aslan's world and their souls make a full circle returning to the place where they were created (Ford 341).

3. Chivalric Romance and The Middle Ages

"Let there be wicked kings and beheadings, battles and dungeons, giants and dragons, and let villains be soundly killed at the end of the book," Lewis defined his concepts of adventure prose in *Letters to Malcolm* (54). The Middle Ages is an epoch that strongly influenced the writer, thus references and allusions to this period are fairly explicit in his works. *The Chronicles of Narnia* bear a particularly strong resemblance to chivalric romance, *The Song of Roland* and *Arthurian Legends* being perfect examples. Similarities are connected with plots, events and descriptions of places. The setting evokes the one that dominated in chivalric stories. Narnian topography is very European and may be compared to the Northern and Western areas of the continent. Lewis "recovers a medieval worldview of a Narnia-centered universe," professes Ford (104). The protagonists wear mediaeval robes and armour and use bows and swords in combat. Narnian clothes are made of natural fabrics in earth colours, which may be a reference to Celtic robes. The food is also simple: meat, cheese, bread or wine are a major source of sustenance. The fact that Narnia is a pre-industrial world is not a matter of coincidence; Ford claims that Lewis

archaised the temporal plane of the series in order to overcome the "increasing separation of humanity from nature" (424).

3.1 Royal references

Narnia is a monarchy; hence various elements of courtly life are described, including customs, knightly courtesy, duels, coronations and oaths of allegiance to the crown. The story is centred on Cair Paravel[4] and its inhabitants, but does not take place in the castle itself. Tirian, the last king of Narnia, cultivates the tradition of his ancestors and follows royal commitments. He attaches great importance to observing virtue and the code of chivalry. When he kills a Calormene soldier without previously challenging him to a fight, he feels ashamed and unworthy of being a king, says, "I who was king of Narnia and am now a dishonoured knight" (29). Moral obligation forces him to surrender to the enemy, since, "to seek honour unselfishly and to behave honourably may be said to be one definition of a true Narnian" (Ford 251). Even facing danger in battle, Tirian behaves like a warrior. He urges Jill not to weep or at least to protect the bow against her tears (116), and he reminds Eustace to clean his sword every time it is stained with blood (75). Regardless of being a king, Tirian does not hide in the castle giving commands, but bravely fights alongside his faithful servants to save Narnia. Being a skilful knight, he instructs the children in the basic principles of warcraft (58; 59). Although Narnia has not recently been involved in any conflicts with neighbouring countries, the king attaches great importance to keeping up all the military buildings prepared to serve as a shelter in case of danger (53). The king's courtesy reveals itself in his noble manners. "I have done thee some discourtesy, soldier, but such was my need" (63), he says, and rebukes Eustace for his swearing at the dwarfs, "no warrior scolds. Courteous words or else hard knocks are his only language" (116).

3.2 Allusions to the Song of Roland and Le Morte d'Arthur

The most striking similarities between *The Last Battle* and *The Song of Roland* begin with their inclusion of the battle as the main event (*The Last Battle* 108; *Song of Roland*, Stanza 123). In the latter, the Frankish army of Chalermagne tries to force the Muslims, led by king Marsilla, to leave Christian Europe (Stanzas 123, 124). In Narnia, the reader is able to notice a parallel situation: the Narnians bravely fight with dark-skinned Calormenes, Tash's followers (108-25). The culture of the invaders clearly resembles Arabic traditions, as presented in *Arabian Nights*. Similar clothes, weapons and a highly sophisticated manner of speaking, ("Know, O Warlike Kings, and you, o ladies whose beauty illuminates the universe, that I am Emeth of the city of Tehishbaan" [152]), leave no doubt as to the correct interpretation. The last battle of Narnia is very cruel. Lewis does not restrain himself from picturing violence, but shows it together with a specific reaction of the characters, such as Jill's weeping on seeing cruel treatment of Narnian horses and Eustace's gallantry in battle. He realizes that wars and battles were an inseparable part of medieval reality and there is no war without blood and suffering. In *The Song of Roland* the descriptions of combat are also quite detailed. For instance, Roland's death and his physical injuries are meticulously described (Stanzas 135; 168).

[4]"The etymological derivation of *Cair Paravel* is probably from *kaer*, which is an old British word for *city* and *paravail*, from the Old French *par aval*, meaning *down*, and Latin *ad vallem* meaning *to the valley*. Thus *Cair Paravel* is a *city in the valley"* (Ford 126).

The presence of a traitor is another common feature of both literary works. Ganelon and Shift,[5] though for different reasons, both act against their fatherland (*The Last Battle* 15; Stanzas 80, 272). The traitors become punished and die a painful death: Shift is devoured by Tash (109, 135) and Ganelon is torn into pieces by galloping horses (Stanza 289).

Although in both cases the opposing forces substantially outnumber Roland and Tirian's armies, the leaders bravely face the invaders, regardless of the consequences. Most of the warriors sacrifice their lives on the battlefield, including Roland whose death has become one of the most memorable images of chivalric literature and Tirian who leaves earthly life behind entering Aslan's country through the stable door (124). In both stories a magical horn is used at the end. In *The Song of Roland* it is supposed to bring help when there is no hope of winning (Stanza 135). In *The Last Battle* Father Time, on Aslan's command, blows the horn to make the world end and throws the instrument into the sea afterwards (141).

Le Morte d'Arthur contains many elements parallel to *The Narniad* as well. The protagonist is a king who is a young man: Tirian clearly echoes Arthur (17). Moreover, magic is a crucial constituent of both texts. In the case of Narnia the representatives of black and white magic are The White Witch and Aslan (Ford 304). Lewis gives more priority to prayer than to magical practices and presents Alsan's power theologically (Ford 301). When Aslan is killed and resurrected, he explains that there is magic more powerful and older than everything in the world, which clearly refers to God and his omnipotence (Ford 305). In Arthurian legends Merlin the wizard is Arthur's tutor. He represents a traditional medieval archetype of an alchemist and a magician (White 114).

Connected to magic is the presence of supernatural creatures. Most of them are taken from the world's mythologies,[6] especially the Greek and Celtic ones. In Narnia they peacefully coexist with people and talking beasts, being legitimate citizens of Narnia, and their aim is to "be the symbols for qualities present in our own world" and "to convey psychology and character type to a wider audience than lengthy novels will reach" (White 71). The forests are inhabited by dryads, sprites, fauns, centaurs and dwarfs. Each of the "species" is unique and plays a different role in the Narnian hierarchy. Jewel the Unicorn deserves special attention. He is an outstanding figure, an embodiment of a knightly ethos, "a heraldic figure, almost too noble to be true" (Ford 265). "In Christian mythology a Unicorn is a symbol of the Word of God," argues Ford, drawing attention to the fact that a duel between a lion and a unicorn can be found in Lewis Carroll's *Through the Looking Glass* (265). In *The Chronicles*, however, Jewel should by no means be associated with Aslan's foe; on the contrary, he is the one who keeps the faith in Aslan until the end.

The motif of the holy blood is another common element of both stories. Aslan's blood is shed to save Edmund in *The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe*, and in *Le Morte d'Arthur* the story of the Holy Grail, the legendary goblet that was supposed to be used during the Last Supper and later on to hold Christ's blood, is told (Ford 101). In both cases readers experience the mysticism connected with sacredness, and the aura of mystery accompanying both Aslan and Christ. The motif of a sword, characteristic of chivalric romance, also reappears in the *Narniad*. In *The Song of Roland* and *Le Morte d'Arthur* the warriors posses wonderful steel weapons, one of them being the mythical Excalibur; in *The Narniad* the sacred sword, or rather a big knife, is

[5] "Shift is indicative of his manipulative personality: He is 'shifty' – underhanded, sneaky, and a liar; and he has a great facility for shifting meaning – he redefines the meaning of freedom to suit his purposes" (Ford 398).
[6] Lewis defines myth as a "nonincarnate history" and "not unlikely tale" (White 38).

made of stone and used to kill Aslan on the stone table (Ford 410). The knife is later left on the magical table on Ramandu Island as a holy relic (Ford 411).

Literary works discussed above present similar problems: what it means to be a good knight and a good ruler, the consequences of following or disregarding knightly morality, and the coexistence of the supernatural with the earthly. What is highly valued are "the three theological virtues of both medieval thought and Christian theology: faith, hope and love" (Ford 254).

4. Beast fable elements and their didactic purpose

As far as literary genres are concerned, *The Last Battle* is deeply indebted to beast fable conventions. *Encyclopædia Britannica* defines this kind of literature as "a prose or verse fable or short story that usually has a moral. In beast fables animal characters are represented as acting with human feelings and motives" ("Beast Fable"). One may begin enumerating the resemblances by stating that most of the protagonists in Narnia are talking beasts which in the book embody various human features. They are bigger than ordinary animals, often walk straight using two legs (or, in fact, hoofs or paws) and are "anthropomorphized to a high degree" (Ford 420). Narnia is a beast land, the only representatives of "Sons of Adam and Daughters of Eve" (*The Last Battle* 169) are members of the royal family and English children summoned by Aslan. The neighbouring countries, Calormene and Archenland are, in contrast, mainly inhabited by people.

In accordance with beast fable conventions, Lewis equips each of his animal characters with certain features of human personality, which is often echoed by the choice of their names or species they belong to. He uses them as hieroglyphs of human features, which is in a perfect way illustrated by his poem entitled "Impertinence":

> Why! All cry out to be used as symbols,
> Masks for Man, cartoons, parodies by Nature
> Formed to reveal us
> Each to each, not fiercely but in her gentlest
> Vein of household laughter" (27).

Shift, the Ape, was created as an embodiment of greed and avarice, and as a miscreant who exploits others, including Puzzle, a donkey being "a hieroglyph of the stubborn, foolish, braying person" (Ford 174). This character must have been inspired by Aesop's tale entitled "The Ass in the Lion's Skin," which is a story of a donkey that finds a lion's skin, wears it and wanders through the woods, trying to frighten other animals. What betrays him is his bray being heard by a fox, who reprimands the ass, saying: "Clothes may disguise a fool, but his words will give him away" (Aesop). A similar motif can be found in one of the Indian traditional fables of the same title. Its plot is, however, slightly different. Here, a hawker, which wanders from village to village with his ass, dresses the animal in the lion's skin and lets it graze in a barley field. People who see it mistake the donkey for a real lion and attack it. Their rage even increases when they hear the beast's bray and they kill the creature. The future Buddha being a witness of this occurrence, comments on the situation in the following way:

> Long might the ass, clad in a lion's skin,
> Have fed on the barley green. But he brayed!
> And that moment he came to ruin. (Jacobs)

In both fables the moral is exactly the same: no matter how good one's disguise is, a single sound is enough to betray the impostor; hence, one's true nature cannot be hidden.

The fact that Shift is an ape is meaningful. Although all Narnian inhabitants are anthropomorphized and intelligent, they usually possess features associated with their particular species, i.e. foxes are sly, owls are clever, and horses are hard-working. The primates are human's closest relatives possessing the best developed minds of all animals, which may suggest that they are clever and cunning enough to contrive a plot having such horrible consequences as Shift's malicious plan had. Moreover, the Ape, probably to emphasize his usurped authority, renounces his animal descent and claims to be an old wise man (32). He is definitely the most repellent creature of those who take part in the Narnian apocalypse. His relationship with Puzzle is rather like the one of a master and servant, since Shift is selfish and unconcerned with anything but himself (11). He degenerates more and more as his power increases and becomes an alcoholic dressed up in silly, gaudy clothes and a paper crown, calling himself, "lord Shift, the mouthpiece of Aslan" (30). On every occasion he takes advantage of his position and makes all creatures serve him. This feature of his personality reveals itself when he makes a series of Freudian slips, such as "I want – I mean Aslan wants" (31).

Among all the other beasts that participate in the events preceding the end of Narnia, one creature, namely a lamb, deserves special attention. The author equips the lamb with wisdom and moral courage and makes him "a hieroglyph of innocence" (Ford 281). Undoubtedly, the immediate association with the Christian symbol of a lamb as Christ the Redeemer ought to appear in readers' minds.

Beast fable conventionally possesses a didactic tone and a moral at the end which is usually very explicit and clear – the good characters are rewarded, the bad ones punished, and the reader draws his or her conclusions from the situation described. Węgrodzka comments on this feature as follows: "didactic purpose evidently and palpably dominates . . . with focus on such didactic conventions as saint's legends . . . or moral manuals" (16). Fables often end with an aphorism conveying some general truth about the world. In *The Last Battle* the situation is parallel. The author quite distinctly specifies what the moral is: traitors and villains pay for their wickedness, whereas good deeds are rewarded by Aslan. The lesson is that decent and honest behaviour is always profitable. Lang specifies the role of tales claiming that they ought to "unobtrusively teach the true lessons of our wayfaring in a world of perplexities and obstructions" (52).

5. Conclusion

Reading *The Chronicles of Narnia* is a unique experience. Each chapter makes the reader more and more involved in the story and eventually one begins to believe that Narnia truly exists, right at the back of one's wardrobe. Lewis created the land so real and so perfectly organized that one finds it hard to resist the feeling that Narnia really exists somewhere. The Narnian saga was constructed in such a way that it embeds serious religious and philosophical considerations into children's fiction and thus the multiplicity of levels on which the story can be understood makes the *Narniad* suitable for readers of all ages. Węgrodzka encourages adult readers to appreciate the intricacies of children's literature in the following way: "The inherent complexity of communicative situation should be a warning against dismissing children's literature per se as unworthy of critical attention" (20). Lewis emphasizes in *The Chronicles* the significance of remaining childlike and innocent, and tells the stories from a child's point of view, though enriched with serious mature considerations (Ford 140-41). Most readers begin their

acquaintance with Lewis when they are children, becoming familiar with *The Chronicles of Narnia*. What is revealed to them at that time is a series of very interesting adventure stories, with wide spectrum of various kinds of protagonists. With increasing awareness of the world, which is acquired in the process of growing up, they reach for the book once again. During this second reading certain intertextual references and allusions come into view. But only as a mature reader, acquainted with other Lewis' works, is one able to fully appreciate the complexity of his Narnian saga.

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