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TRINITY COLLEGE

Thesis

". . . the Holy War as I see it"[1]: The literary portrayal of eternal life and death in some fictional works of C. S. Lewis

Submitted by

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(B. A., Tufts University, 1959)

In Partial Fulfillment of Requirements of

the Degree of Master of Arts

1973

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Preface

When asked several years ago whether I had read a current best-selling novel, I replied that I had not nor did I intend to do so. Modern literature,I said, merely portrays man as a creature in need of redemption without indicating how he might accomplish it. I found that characteristic of modern novels not only discouraging but dull.

From the moment in high school senior English when I realized that poetry could reach me, I began an adventure with ideas. From the "Ode on Intimations of Immortality" and intellectual bouts with high school friends on the concept of reincarnation through a fascinating undergraduate study of the mystics culminating in a series of term papers on the subject, I set myself firmly on course with other-worldliness.

This study itself might have become an extension of the trend had it not been for the wisdom of Dr. Kenneth Cameron of the Department of English, Trinity College. During one of my early graduate courses, he realized the danger inherent in a growing fascination with the mystic experience and cautioned me not to succumb to the fate of the Hindu seer. Protected by the shade of a palm tree from the hot noon-day sun, he sat in a trance, unaware that "in this world" a horde of ants had begun to consume him. Then Dr. Cameron assigned reading in the works of C. S. Lewis. The initial impact of _The Pilgrim's Regress_, and _Mere Christianity_ was memorable. The _Regress_ reinforced appreciation

for the didactic value of allegory which The Pilgrim's Progress had first taught me; Mere Christianity taught me to appreciate Christianity.

There are several other persons who have been my spiritual and intellectual counselors. They know who they are, for I have "hounded" them on numerous occasions. I am grateful to them; to my family who have seen me through a protracted graduate career; and to Mr. Henry J. Ferri of the Wethersfield School Department for an interesting, flexible, job which has granted me time to write when I most needed it. All have contributed to making this paper what it had to be: a logical outgrowth of total experience.

Particular thanks to Trinity College and its Department of English for their faith and patience. This paper has long been due. No one understands this better than its author.

Introduction

"Decisions, decisions!" complains the television advertisement. The viewer, should he be paying heed, might well consider these words a fair assessment of his own reaction to life as well as a summary of the dilemma which puzzles the consumer overwhelmed by floods of wares in the marketplace. "What is the one experience that all people share against their will?" a newspaper article begins.[2] "Death," it says, and then adds that physicians now find people more willing to talk openly of sex than of death. Doctors studiously rationalize death as a subject and as a fact of life. They "tell themselves they've 'done all they can' for the dying patient"[3] when they have moved him to an isolated room, restricted his visitors, and drugged him into a stupor, all the while maintaining his vital functions through a phenomenal array of biomedical machinery. Perhaps the numerous precautionary measures he orders lessen the "keen sense of professional defeat"[4] which the physician often encounters upon losing his patient to death.

The schism which has produced a "subject-object" viewpoint predominant in our technologically advanced society also reveals itself through the persistent, homely complaints of a "faceless and anonymous"[5] citizenry: does no one "care" about anyone anymore? Who can be trusted "these days"? The "establishment," "city hall" to an earlier generation, having grown bloated, unresponsive, labyrinthine, is difficult to under-

stand, much less to approach. "They've got my number" may now mean that one more business enterprise has chosen to identify its clientele by means of computer-spewed digits, a system far tidier than one employing names, but one which ignores the living human being. "Grass," the magic carpet to nowhere, has gained a vast following among a new crop of anguished human beings seeking to substitute one delusion for another. The fast-paced modern hospital, its armada of biomedical and mechanical equipment ready to prolong the life of any financially secure patient, lends dramatic scientific credence to the myth of immortality. The funeral director promises a dignified, professionally correct disposal of the remains "if" the "worst" occurs.

No longer is it relevant to provide answers. The "climate of opinion,"[6] as these examples suggest, claims there are none. Instead, because our cultural achievements allow us to avoid, postpone, ignore, or eliminate numerous physical and emotional difficulties, we find it safer to discuss questions, follow routines, pose fail-proof escape routes, tranquilize anxiety, temporize. Yet we do not find a corresponding transformation in our spiritual lives. While we glut ourselves visually and emotionally on endless displays of entertainment from television, moving pictures, the "spectator sport," we participate in an updated version of idolatry. Apostatic spectators, we are then unable -- or unwilling -- to distinguish the daylight street-corner murder from its dramatized imitation. The recognition we crave from "society" we are unable to extend to ourselves or to each other. We no longer know what it means to be fully human. Our sense of loss plagues us.

Accepting a technological truism with the scope and durability

of myth has distorted not only our imagination and sense of values but also our vision of "Man's place in nature."[7] This "new archetypal image"[8] addresses itself to the immortality of the machine rather than that of man:

> Between Jane Austen and us, but not between her and Shakespeare, Chaucer, Alfred, Virgil, Homer, or the Pharoahs, comes the birth of the machines. This lifts us at once into a region of change far above all that we have hitherto considered. For this is parallel to the great changes by which we divide epochs of pre-history.[9]
>
> . . . .
>
> It is the image of old machines being superseded by new and better ones. For in the world of machines the new most often really is the better and the primitive really is the clumsy.[10]

Nevertheless, each of us will die. Despite our elaborate rationalizations, we are yet "Everyman" travelling alone with all that we are, ever were, or ever could have been, to a confrontation with enigmatic destiny. We find little comfort in our society, which places hope in the ongoing life of machines rather than that of persons. Thus, we do not like to talk about "the last act" of life. When we do, we console ourselves that it is like all the acts which have preceded it and, more importantly, that it is final. However, we sense absurdity in this view of death which implies that we are not important enough to exist for more than a few years. Yet the prospect of immortal life makes us uneasy. And our sense of loss continues to trouble us.

Artistic spokesmen of our century have articulated this feeling in various ways. T. S. Eliot, leading poet for a generation of disillusioned twentieth century seers, wrote bitterly of the shattered remains of men and their lackluster visions, of the emergence of their myopic dreams

into nightmares. James Joyce, experimenting with stream-of-consciousness writing, built novels into psychological monuments while attempting to discover where and how man had lost his sense of worth and perspective. The canvasses of modern art have presented few clearly defined images of man. In their stead occur tragic displays in which "man is laid bare; more than that, he is flayed, cut up into bits, and his members strewn everywhere, ..."[11]

At least one critic has observed that the concluding moments of Shakespearean tragedies, and of all great plays, perhaps, bring perspective.[12]

> Besides the momentary responses to various scenes, the play evokes a single, however complex, response which is produced at the end, when the whole play _is_ simultaneously present to the minds of the audience, and present as a single structure.[13]

Significant because they impart a last impression, the final moments of a play linger in the mind as more than anticlimactic inevitability, for

> . . . the effect which tragedy most often seeks to achieve defines the essence of the tragic hero in terms of what he comes to, not in terms of his beginnings, nor of the essential nature which he shares with all men, nor of a potentiality never realized, nor, as in the serial, of a compromise among all that he has been and done during the play. . . . Indeed, it is only at his end that the hero may be "really himself," only then that he may be fully real, that he may fully be.[14]

Both the play and the role of its hero achieve fulfillment through resolution: "the only adequate definition _is_ the total dramatic structure."[15]

Life, like dramatic art, seeks definition, fulfillment of meaning.

The resolution of life, death, although it is part of a process, is unique among concluding acts, however. It is the supreme climax -- rather, the anti-climax -- taking all but returning nothing. It stands mute, irrefutably the victor over all that lives. An integral part of life, death has an apparent singular connotation: total negation. Man has indeed suffered a serious loss if his artifacts can offer more meaning than his being.

Footnotes through Introduction

1. C. S. Lewis, The Pilgrim's Regress: An Allegorical Apology for Christianity Reason and Romanticism (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1960), p. 14.

2. The Hartford Courant, December 26, 1971, p. 20.

3. Courant, p. 20.

4. Courant, p. 20.

5. William Barrett, Irrational Man: A Study in Existential Philosophy (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1962), p. 61.

6. C. S. Lewis, "De Descriptione Temporum," presented as an Inaugural Lecture at Cambridge University in 1954, and reprinted in They Asked for a Paper: Papers and Addresses (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1962), p. 21.

7. Lewis, "De Descriptione Temporum," They Asked, p. 20.

8. Lewis,"De Descriptione Temporum," They Asked, p. 21.

9. Lewis, "De Descriptione Temporum," They Asked, p. 20.

10. Lewis, "De Descriptione Temporum," They Asked, p. 21.

11. Barrett, p. 61.

12. Dean Frye, "Reading Shakespeare Backwards," presented to the McGill Literary Society, January 28, 1963, and reprinted in Shakespeare Quarterly, XVII (Winter, 1966), pp. 19-24.

13. Frye, Shakespeare Quarterly, p. 24.

14. Frye, Shakespeare Quarterly, p. 23.

15. Frye, Shakespeare Quarterly, p. 23.

Chapter 1

> There is a myth that has always haunted mankind, the legend of the Way Out. 'A stone, a leaf, an unfound door,' wrote Thomas Wolfe -- the door leading, out of time and space into Somewhere Else. We all go out of that door eventually, calling it death. But the tale persists that for a few lucky ones the door has swung open before death, letting them through, . . . : or at least granting them a glimpse of the land on the other side.
>
> . . . .
>
> C. S. Lewis, . . . calls it simply the Island. Whatever we call it, it is more our home than any earthly home.
>
> -- Joy Davidman, These Found the Way, p. 17.

> How little people know who think that holiness is dull. When one meets the real thing . . . it is irresistible.
>
> -- C. S. Lewis, Letters to an American Lady, p. 19.

Convinced that mortal life acquires its finest meaning only when lived with a view to its inevitable end, Clive Staples Lewis -- twentieth century British author, teacher, scholar, former atheist, Christian layman and apologist -- rejected the concept that we must know life merely as the summation of its activities. Rather, we must measure mortality by the irrevocable fact of death. And it is horrible. "'Maledil Himself wept when He saw it,'"[1] said Ransom, his scholarly space-trilogy hero as he explained to the first woman of the unfallen planet, Perelandra, what, indeed, was death. Although Lewis arrayed

familiar concepts in new verbal garments to promote the sense of fantasy which he used to contrast with the reality he sought to portray, "death" remained "death." There could be no mistaking it: "'it has a foul smell.'"[2] It is a "'bitter drink.'"[3]

"I am trying to find out truth,"[4] he said, having returned in adult life to the Christian faith by means of the circuitous intellectual and emotional route described in his autobiography, Surprised by Joy. Although "physically . . . uneventful,"[5] the life story of C. S. Lewis represents the triumphant spiritual victory of a "profoundly analytical mind"[6] over the "thin little rind"[7] of life lived without conviction or purpose. Acceptance of death as the logical fulfillment of his own life led him to believe, moreover, that it was not the final episode of being. Furthermore, the quintessence of tragedy could await each person beyond death, if Christianity were true. To the dialectical mind of C. S. Lewis, the ultimate truth contained in the Christian message suggested that if the startling enigma of earthly life were compared to a game which one could win, the possibility existed that one could also lose it.[8]

Following his career as an undergraduate and graduate student there and military service in World War I, Lewis was temporarily appointed a lecturer in philosophy at Oxford for the year 1924-1925 and was elected a fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford, and appointed tutor in English literature for the next year. This position he held until his departure from Oxford in 1954.[9] He excelled as critic and scholar during the years at Oxford. His study of the tradition of courtly love, The Allegory of Love published in 1936, won the Sir Israel

Gollancz Memorial Prize for work in "Old English or early English language and literature."[10] His English Literature in the Sixteenth Century Excluding Drama in 1954 prompted an immediate and enthusiastic reception within the realm of letters for several reasons. Sound scholarship, to be sure, was among them; yet appraisers of the volume found themselves also lauding its style and wit.

> Mr. Lewis takes us back into a period we can barely imagine; with superb and sustained organising power, he conducts us through a forest of books which, without his help, we should hardly understand; and he illuminates each one until we seem to stand at the author's elbow. Since I reviewed his book . . . a year ago, I have read it a dozen times, and always with the same astonishment that. . . he should have found something original and enlightening, something always sustained by a directing purpose, to say about so many authors.[11]

The prestigious British Academy, which had honored Lewis with election to its membership in 1955,[12] highlighted its obituary and farewell to the science-fiction-writing medieval and Renaissance scholar by observing,

> The merits of this book are very great indeed. It is, to begin with, a genuine literary history.
> . . . .
> Who else could have written a literary history that continually arouses delighted laughter?[13]

Notwithstanding the fact that "constant discussion"[14] of two of his academic works, The Allegory of Love and A Preface to Paradise Lost, apparently dotted conversation at his beloved Oxford, when the Professor of Poetry was to be selected there in 1954, it was C. Day Lewis, the poet, an "outsider and the only other serious candidate"[15] who received

the honor -- by a "wide margin."[16] Clive Staples Lewis, after more than twenty years at Oxford, had become the victim of his own considerable literary achievements. His school had failed to grant him due recognition.

Few could have disputed the fact that he was "an omnivorous reader with a phenomenal memory";[17] that his was "perhaps the most powerful and best trained intellect in the world";[18] or, that his reputation as a scholar deserved the accolade "towering."[19] Even those who reacted less favorably to his fanciful literary works [20] had not failed to grant him credit for sheer hard work in the realm of scholarship, or for making substantial contributions to letters.

> Lewis, unlike so many dazzling stars of the "Eng. Lit." business, is not one too proud to get down and do some of the dull, slogging work involved in the academic study of the subject -- making a bibliography, looking up endless dates, all the long vistas of headaches and inky fingers.[21]

However, during those same years at Oxford he had won another following: many knew C. S. Lewis as a Christian layman. As such, he had received an honorary Doctor of Divinity degree from St. Andrews University, Scotland, in 1946, "a rare distinction for a layman without theological training."[22] Thus, the university formally acknowledged his numerous, wide-ranging, and popular lay activities. Oxford students filled the University Church "to capacity" in order to hear him (and only one other, Archbishop William Temple) whenever he delivered a sermon there.[23] British Broadcasting Corporation listeners who endured the World War II years may have found strength from listening to

C. S. Lewis share his insight into the workings of the faith to which he had returned at the age of 30. About 600,000 listeners heard each of the twenty-nine broadcasts which he delivered for the BBC during those somber war years.[24] By 1941, readers of The Guardian[25] had found his serialized diabolical missives, The Screwtape Letters, intriguing,[26] for they purportedly offer a satanic perspective on Christianity and its blameworthy adherents. The Royal Air Force had invited him to speak to its servicemen about being a Christian.[27] Stuart Barton Babbage, an RAF chaplain who met Lewis during World War II, tells of reminding him that some men would be unable to hear him without enduring "costly and difficult"[28] hardships. "'It might be helpful,' he quietly replied, 'if I told them somewhat of what it costs me to be a Christian.'"[29] Then the Oxford don "stood in the aisle, a dishevelled and dumpy figure in a baggy suit"[30] recounting his experiences as a Christian. Babbage continues:

> One might have expected to find within a university environment, and particularly at Oxford University, that home of lost causes, some measure of tolerance and liberality, some recognition and acceptance of the sanctity of honest belief and sincere conviction. Lewis discovered, as others have discovered before and since, that in this world there are few persons so illiberal as those who claim to be liberal and few persons so irrational as those who claim to be rational. His liberal and rational friends, he explained, did not object to his intellectual interest in Christianity; it was, they agreed, a proper subject for academic argument and debate; but to insist on seriously practicing it -- that was going too far. He did not mind being accused of religious mania, that familiar gibe of the natural man; what he was unprepared for was the intense hostility and animosity of his professional colleagues. Within the academic community, he unexpectedly found himself an object of ostracism and abuse.[31]

What was more, Lewis told them, he had encountered criticism in his domestic life as well. The chaplain recalls Lewis explaining how his attendance at worship antagonized those at home where

> his desire to attend early service was represented as a selfish desire to inconvenience the other members of the household; it was clear, they said, that he was becoming a fanatic and losing all sense of proportion.[32]

A "superb expositor"[33] known for his "easy lucidity,"[34] "wit,"[35] "sharp intelligence,"[36] and "fundamental earnestness,"[37] Lewis, the Christian, cultivated enemies as well as staunch friends. Although he was not malicious, he was

> a formidable controversialist. He had a kind of Johnsonian pugnacity, but, though aggressive, he was not offensive. He expressed himself vigorously and empathically, but always in the context of great good humor. . . .His dogmatism was the product of a burning honesty; he was incapable, intellectually or morally, of evasion or equivocation.[38]

The respected Oxford scholar and popular teacher had won undisputed acclaim in two fields, but he paid for fame. One of his former students assesses the cost to Lewis in the following terms:

> As far as I know, he had only two friends at the university, Professor Tolkien, and Dyson, the English don at Merton. The lack of rapport between Lewis and the dons at Magdalen, on their side, was due not only to their envy of his fame but also to their distaste of the nature of his fame and to their suspicion of the achievement on which his international repute rested. As popularizer of Christian dogma, Lewis was embarrassing to the academic community.[39]

The offer of the chairmanship of medieval and Renaissance English

at Cambridge came to him later in the same year during which he had been overlooked for the poetry professorship at Oxford. Lewis must have welcomed it, for he "readily accepted."[40] Upon his departure Oxford granted him an honorary fellowship.[41] Like their Oxford counterparts, the Cambridge students of Lewis "jam-packed"[42] his Chaucer lectures until poor health forced him to resign from teaching shortly before his death in November, 1963.

Although there have been persons who found the Christian witness of C. S. Lewis offensive, undoubtedly there have been many more for whom Lewis, the Christian, was a grand ally and friend. The cancer-stricken wife of his later years, Helen Joy Davidman Gresham Lewis, and her former husband, William Lindsay Gresham, for example, had been members of the Communist Party for well over a decade beginning in the depression years. Having declared her "own atheism at the age of eight,"[43] Joy later rejected all objective values. "In 1929 I believed in nothing but American prosperity; in 1930 I believed in nothing."[44] The Greshams have been described as former "devoted"[45] and "enthusiastic"[46] American Communist Party members; yet neither had found Communist ideology or party activity satisfying. While they continued to be active in the party following their marriage, the emotional, idealistic, or spiritual longing which had drawn them into the party, and then to each other, persisted. A series of emotional upheavals brought Joy, whose lengthy intellectual quest in its early stages strangely resembles that of the young Lewis,[47] literally to her knees[48] and Gresham, nearing emotional collapse, to a profound understanding of himself. Each became a devout Christian, but spiritual transformation failed to

salvage their marriage.[49] Shortly after their conversions, however, Gresham acknowledged that during their crises both he and Joy had found the religious works of C. S. Lewis invaluable.

> No story of our spiritual growth would be complete without a tribute to C. S. Lewis. His books exposed the shallowness of our atheist prejudices; his vision illumined the Mystery which lay behind the appearances of daily life. We used his books as constant reference points, ...Lewis' clear and vivid statement of Christian principles served as a standard by which to measure the other religions we studied. . . .[50]

Three other persons, of the thirteen whose testimonies form the volume, These Found the Way: Thirteen Converts to Protestant Christianity, tell of similar indebtedness to Lewis. A fourth person, its editor, David Soper, does not indicate whether he personally found Lewis helpful. Soper was instrumental, however, in establishing the means by which one of the three found his way to conversion: the reading of Mere Christianity and Beyond Personality by C. S. Lewis.[51]

It is apparent that when Lewis spoke, people listened; that when he wrote, they read what he had to tell them. The fact that they still do so is evidenced, for example, by the statistics regarding sales of The Screwtape Letters thirty and more years since their first appearance in The Guardian. The small volume of letters from the nether world continues to sell in this country at the annual rate of 50,000 volumes and has been made available in fifteen languages.[52] One seminary bookstore employee observed recently that lay persons more often request the works of Lewis than those of any other author of religious literature, A Grief Observed and Reflections on the Psalms being the most popular of his works on sale there.[53] The manager of a bookstore located

in a new shopping mall said that older persons frequently call for The Screwtape Letters while students from a neighboring university often purchase The Abolition of Man for their required reading assignments.[54]

Why? What has made Lewis a notable and sought-after Christian layman? What has prompted the eleventh printing of Miracles since 1947; the ninth printing of the paperback editions of the first two volumes of his space-trilogy, Out of the Silent Planet and Perelandra in five years (1965-1970); the eighth printing of the paperback edition of its third volume, That Hideous Strength, in four years (1965-1969)? Perhaps one critic has come closer than any other to the reason for his popularity:

> The enormous success of his moral and theological writing would not have been possible if he had not spoken to something really present in the consciousness of his contemporaries.[55]

By addressing himself to something in his listeners and readers, he had learned how to befriend an unhappy world -- on his own terms:

> I do not think I should value much the love of a friend who cared only for my happiness and did not object to my becoming dishonest.[56]

Those critics who saw Lewis as intractable, anti-social, "curiously unlikeable"[57] were not unmindful of his significance as a proponent of Christianity.

> One has, . . . only to pick up a book like Country Parson's Evensong to be grateful for the cold steel of a Christian writer like Lewis. Written by a retired clergyman calling himself Pilgrim [sic] it is a series of pious little vignettes and countrified musings which seem aimed at lulling

> the mind and spirit into a drugged tranquility . . . .,this sort of whimsical pottering can do the Christian faith nothing but harm.[58]

The "cold steel" of C. S. Lewis formed a two-edged sword keen with purpose --

> All I am doing is to ask people to face the facts -- to understand the questions which Christianity claims to answer. And they are very terrifying facts. I wish it was [sic] possible to say something more agreeable. But I must say what I think is true.[59]

and personal conviction --

> In a civilization like ours, I feel that everyone has to come to terms with the claims of Jesus Christ upon his life, or else be guilty of inattention or of evading the question.[60]

The world has known formidable thinkers and exponents of ideologies from time immemorial. What makes one man more appealing and credible than another may involve his style as well as his message; however, what makes one man endure while others are forgotten may depend upon nothing less than his acquaintance with truth. C. S. Lewis is emerging as durable in terms of his avocation, if one considers the fact that he earned his livelihood through teaching and scholarship in the field of literature. The world has not ceased to know him well in those capacities during the decade since his passing. It has, however, passed through a socially violent, terrifying ten years into resurgent political conservatism, religious fundamentalism, occultism, and romantic nostalgia, seeking escape or security. As a result, it has come to need him more

as Christian apologist of the first order, his "sideline."

> Once upon a dreary era, when the World of Functional Specialization had nearly made obsolete all universal geniuses, romantic poets, Platonic idealists, rhetorical craftsmen, and even orthodox Christians, there appeared a man . . . who was all of these things as amateur, as well as probably the world's foremost authority in his professional province, medieval and Renaissance English literature. Before his death in 1963 he found time to produce some sixty first-quality works of literary history, literary criticism, theology, philosophy, autobiography, Biblical studies, historical philology, fantasy, science fiction, letters, poems, sermons, formal and informal essays, a historical novel, a spiritual diary, religious allegory, short stories, and children's novels. Clive Staples Lewis was not a man: he was a world.[61]

Nor are glowing epithets misplaced with regard to this man. The "world" which was C. S. Lewis knew universal reality to be physical fact. Not by whim had he turned from atheism to Christianity.

Critics who have complained that Lewis was not explicit about how he became a theist, much less a Christian,[62] thus tending to ignore those who might wish to follow suit, have overlooked the obvious in the story of his spiritual growth: the whole of his life constituted a preparation for the experiences which changed him. From childhood he knew the lure of a powerful but fragmentary desire which he called "Joy." Through personal experience, through the literature and philosophy of the centuries, he pursued the elusive quality with the bravado of a young intellectual secure in an impersonal universe pervaded by this and other comfortably abstract sublimities. For a number of years, preoccupied with his intellectual quest, he was content believing that the effort which he was expending in behalf of desire arose from his own initiative.

> Joy was not a deception. Its visitations were rather the moments of clearest consciousness we had, when we became aware of our fragmentary and phantasmal nature and ached for that impossible reunion which would annihilate us or that self-contradictory waking which would reveal, not that we had had, but that we were, a dream. This seemed quite satisfactory intellectually. Even emotionally too; for it matters more that Heaven should exist than that we should ever get there. What I did not notice was that I had passed an important milestone. Up till now my thoughts had been centrifugal; now the centripetal movement had begun. Considerations arising from quite different parts of my experience were beginning to come together with a click. This new dovetailing of my desire-life with my philosophy foreshadowed the day, now fast approaching, when I should be forced to take my "philosophy" more seriously than I ever intended. I did not foresee this. I was like a man who has lost "merely a pawn" and never dreams that this (in that state of the game) means mate in a few moves.[63]

That he was not the subject but rather the object[64] in a quest, that he was being asked to respond to Someone or Something, he could continue to deny only with difficulty. Then there came a time unlike any other he had known. No recognizable fanfare heralded its onset.

> I was going up Headington Hill on the top of a bus. Without words and (I think) almost without images, a fact about myself was somehow presented to me. I became aware that I was holding something at bay, or shutting something out. . ..I felt myself being, there and then, given a free choice. I could open the door or keep it shut;. . ..Neither choice was presented as a duty; no threat or promise was attached to either, though I knew that to open the door. . . meant the incalculable. The choice appeared to be momentous [sic] but it was also strangely unemotional. I was moved by no desires or fears. In a sense I was not moved by anything. I chose to open, ...I say, "I chose," yet it did not really seem possible to do the opposite. On the other hand, I was aware of no motives.
>
> . . . .
>
> Then came the repercussion on the imaginative level. I felt as if I were a man of snow at long last

> beginning to melt. The melting was starting in my back -- drip-drip and presently trickle-trickle. I rather disliked the feeling.[65]

Caution and independence had been watchwords for Lewis, a young man more desirous of avoiding suffering than of achieving delight: "I had always aimed at limited liabilities."[66] He had developed an "ideal of virtue" so constructed that it "would never be allowed to lead me into anything intolerably painful; I would be 'reasonable.'"[67] Notwithstanding a carefully guarded existence, experience proved to him that "what had been an ideal became a command."[68] It left no room for philosophical speculation about the nature of truth. "The reality with which no treaty can be made was upon me. The demand was not even 'All or nothing.' . . . Now, the demand was simply 'All.'"[69] The convenient unifying principle which Lewis had used to harmonize his "acts, desires, and thoughts,"[70] invaded his idealism, dashing all hope that it "might be of such a kind that we can best symbolize it as a place; instead, I found it to be a Person."[71] But there he would hold the line. He would believe in God, go to church, appear respectable, and remain comfortable. That would be enough. One step further would mean having to make changes -- many, drastic, unreasonable. Again, the choice was no longer his.

> Every step I had taken, from the Absolute to "Spirit" and from "Spirit" to "God," had been a step toward the more concrete, the more imminent, the more compulsive. At each step one had less chance "to call one's soul one's own." To accept the Incarnation was a further step in the same direction. . . .And this, I found, was something I had not wanted. But to recognize the ground for my evasion was of course to recognize both

> its shame and its futility. I know very well when, but hardly how, the final step was taken. I was driven to Whipsnade one sunny morning. When we set out I did not believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and when we reached the zoo I did. Yet I had not exactly spent the journey in thought. Nor in great emotion. . . ..It was more like when a man, after a long sleep, still lying motionless in bed, becomes aware that he is now awake. And it was, like that moment on top of the bus, ambiguous. Freedom, or necessity? Or do they differ at their maximum? At that maximum a man is what he does; there is nothing of him left over or outside the act.[72]

He had learned the paradox of truth: it was alive, no longer "a philosophical theorem, cerebrally entertained," but "a living presence" he could not ignore.[73] His new perspective on reality created a new outlook on the nature and function of man in an awful relationship: "from the moment a creature becomes aware of God as God and of itself as self, the terrible alternative of choosing God or self for the centre is opened to it."[74] Man, eternally distinct from his Creator, must not want "to be the centre -- . . . to be God, in fact."[75] Instead, his "highest activity must be response, not initiative."[76] To do otherwise meant succumbing to the "sin of Satan,"[77] thereby not only forsaking the creature role of the "good child. . . [whose] great and undisguised pleasure in being praised" is the "most creaturely of pleasures -- nay, the specific pleasure of the inferior: . . . ."[78] but also forfeiting a place in Heaven, "the home of humanity."[79] That, Lewis believed, would be his fate if man did not understand that "the universe is personal . . . because God is in it."[80]

Yet the "spell"[81] under which man lives can be broken; for evil, a "parasite" utilizing "powers given it by goodness,"[82] "can be undone, but it cannot 'develop' into good."[83] Both his earthly happiness and

eternal reward derive from the ability of each person to see to his own "tidying up inside,"[84] a necessity inferred from the doctrine of the Incarnation. As Lewis notes,

> This is the point non-Christians always seem to forget. They seem to think that the Incarnation implies some particular merit or excellence in humanity. But of course it implies just the reverse: a particular demerit and depravity.[85]

While committing destruction, including his own, man, gifted with free will, could yet reflect his divine source:

> You make a thing voluntary, and then half the people do not do it. That is not what you willed, but your will has made it possible.[86]

Moreover,

> if a thing is free to be good it is also free to be bad. And free will is what has made evil possible . . . .[it] is also the only thing that makes possible any love of goodness or joy worth having.[87]

Not "all who choose wrong roads perish; but their rescue consists in being put back on the right road,"[88] Lewis believed. How would he create in his fellow man an understanding of what he himself had failed to grasp before reading The Everlasting Man by G. K. Chesterton? The book had been a milestone in his intellectual and spiritual quest. It had enabled him to see "for the first time. . . the whole Christian outline of history set out in a form that seemed to me to make sense."[89] The reordering of his life which the serious acceptance of Christianity implied led him to consider that "the best, perhaps the only, service

I could do for my unbelieving neighbors was to explain and defend the belief that has been common to nearly all Christians at all times."[90] Literature had played a significant role in the evolution of Clive Staples Lewis, Christian. He would return the favor. But how?

> What. . . is the good of -- what is even the defence for -- occupying our hearts with stories of what never happened and entering vicariously into feelings we should try to avoid having in our person? Or of fixing our inner eye earnestly on things that can never exist -- . . . .
> . . . .
> The nearest I have yet got to an answer is that we seek an enlargement of our being. We want to be more than ourselves.
> . . . .
> We want to see with other eyes, to imagine with other imaginations, to feel with other hearts, as well as with our own. . . ..We demand windows. Literature as Logos is a series of windows, even of doors.[91]

By his own definition, presented in An Experiment in Criticism, it would be difficult: the reader as well as the writer would be involved. Good reading asks that a reader be receptive and willing to believe, given a work written well.[92] Good reading does not preclude disagreement between reader and author, but it does insist that for the reader "there ought to be no 'problem of belief.'"[93] Furthermore, Lewis knew that the nature of his reader as man would also determine the success of his attempt to open the "windows" and "doors" of spiritual understanding through literature, for man must always choose. He could choose either not to read C. S. Lewis at all, or he could choose not to believe what he had read. Therein, moreover, was the irony of the message Lewis would convey: the temporal choices which man makes

continually are seedlings of the harvest of reward or punishment he would reap eternally.[94]

As a writer, as a human being, Lewis knew that he could do no more than nudge his reader and fellow human into an awareness of possibilities. Furthermore, the precedent had already been authoritatively established, he believed.

> The Dominical utterances about Hell, like all Dominical sayings, are addressed to the conscience and the will, not to our intellectual curiosity. When they have roused us to action by convincing us of a terrible possibility, they have done, probably, all they were intended to do;. . . .[95]

Yet he also believed firmly that he must try to teach his fellows that deliberate evasion was deadlier than being ignorant or honestly mistaken.[96]

> We are told that it [Hell] is a detestable doctrine -- . . . and are reminded of the tragedies in human life which have come from believing it. Of the other tragedies which come from not believing it we are told less.[97]

What better way for a writer to approach a literary "credibility gap" than to cloak his argument in mystery? And what could be inherently more mysterious than Christianity, a religion which essentially

> . . . is not a patent medicine. . .. [but instead a claim] to give an account of facts -- . . . [of] what the universe is really like. Its account may be true, or it may not, and once the question is really before you, then your natural inquisitiveness must make you want to know the answer.[98]

Of those claims to fact, what could arouse the curiosity of man more than those relating to death as process, not simply an end, and thus to his own indeterminate future? Each story must be told, despite the vacillations of man between "fear and courage," between the reluctance to learn and the obligation to act in accord with expanding knowledge.[99] To do otherwise was perilous nonsense, said Lewis:

> . . . I mean exactly what I say -- nonsense that is damned is under God's curse, and will (apart from God's grace) lead those who believe it to eternal death.[100]

This study maintains that the space-trilogy of C. S. Lewis is foremost among his fictional apologetic works and that a careful evaluation of it will reveal Lewis as an effective Christian apologist and teacher demonstrating not only what is true of Christianity but also why it is so.

This study assumes that Lewis, consciously or unconsciously, regarded the reader of apologetic literature as a student to be instructed in truth. It further assumes that he was a purposeful writer who made deliberate use of the romantic mode throughout the trilogy in order to teach his reader about a coherent, moral, living universe where the Christian doctrines of the Creation and Fall of Man, of the Incarnation and Resurrection of its Creator, continually reappear as historical facts. This study also assumes that a universe thus structured is specifically Christian and necessarily emphasizes the dependent nature of all life, human life in particular fulfilling its potential through spiritual growth. This study assumes that it is this potential for growth which logically inspires the basic

romantic structure and mythic tendency of the space-trilogy.

The critical concern of this study, therefore, will be directed toward an attempt to prove that the trilogy is apologetic Christian literature having a general romantic structure which is realized through the personal fulfillment of its major characters. This study will attempt also to prove that Lewis has consistently incorporated two modal factors of apologetic significance into the portrayals of his major characters: the need for a character to recognize and then to accept himself as a creature living in an inescapable, awesome relationship with his Creator. Finally, this study will attempt to prove that the exploration of the relationship between creature and Creator is responsible for the mythopoetic tendency of the space-trilogy and for its effectiveness as a spiritual armory in "the holy war as I see it."

Footnotes through Chapter 1

1. C. S. Lewis, Perelandra: A Novel (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1970), p. 67.

2. Lewis, Perelandra, p. 67.

3. C. S. Lewis, The Great Divorce (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1971), p. 127.

4. C. S. Lewis, Mere Christianity (rev.; New York: The Macmillan Company, 1960), p. 13.

5. Peter Kreeft, C. S. Lewis: A Critical Essay ("Contemporary Writers in Christian Perspective," ed. Roderick Jellema [Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1969]), p. 4.

6. Clyde S. Kilby, "The Creative Logician Speaking," C. S. Lewis: Speaker and Teacher, ed. Carolyn Keefe (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1971), p. 19.

7. Lewis, Perelandra, p. 168.

8. C. S. Lewis, The Problem of Pain (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1970), p. 118.

9. William Luther White, The Image of Man in C. S. Lewis (New York: Abingdon Press, 1969, p. 24.

10. While accepted generally, it is apparent misinformation that authoritative recognition for The Allegory of Love came to Lewis in the form of the Hawthornden Prize of 1936. At least three major critics of Lewis (Chad Walsh, C. S. Lewis: Apostle to the Skeptics [New York: The Macmillan Company, 1949], p. 9; Clyde S. Kilby, The Christian World of C. S. Lewis [Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1964], pp. 20-21; Roger Lancelyn Green, C. S. Lewis ["A Walck Monograph"; ed. Kathleen Lines (New York: Henry C. Walck, Inc., 1963)], p. 24, report the awarding of the Hawthornden Prize to him. However, William Luther White offers a convincing rationale, based upon the sketch of Lewis in Who's Who, which supports the case for his receiving the 1937 Gollancz Memorial Prize, instead. The latter conclusion has been presented recently in The Image of Man in C. S. Lewis, pp. 24-25.

11. John Wain, "Leavis on Lawrence," Spectator, CXCV (October 7, 1955), p. 457.

Footnotes through Chapter 1 (cont'd.)

12. White, Image, p. 24.

13. Helen Gardner, "Clive Staples Lewis," Proceedings of the British Academy, LI (1965), p. 426.

14. George Bailey, "In the University," C. S. Lewis: Speaker and Teacher, p. 91.

15. Bailey, Speaker and Teacher, p. 91.

16. Bailey, Speaker and Teacher, p. 91.

17. Gardner, Proceedings, p. 419.

18. Bailey, Speaker and Teacher, p. 79.

19. Bailey, Speaker and Teacher, pp. 79, 91.

20. John Wain, "C. S. Lewis," Encounter, XXII (May, 1964), p. 53.

21. Wain, Encounter, p. 56.

22. White, Image, p. 24. Roger Lancelyn Green, in C. S. Lewis ("A Walck Monograph") has said, "Of the many other honours and degrees which later came his way, that of Hon. Doctor of Divinity is most unusual, as Lewis is almost the only man not in Holy Orders to receive it." (p. 23)

23. White, Image, p. 26.

24. Walsh, Apostle, p. 9. White uses the same estimate in The Image of Man, p. 26. Because his figure corroborates the one cited by Walsh, I have used the earlier source of this information. Carolyn Keefe, editor of C. S. Lewis: Speaker and Teacher, also uses the same figure and cites reference to the Time magazine article, "Don vs. Devil" (September 8, 1947), p. 65, where the figure probably first appeared.

25. The Guardian, formerly "a weekly Anglican newspaper which was founded in 1846," has not been published since 1951, says Walter Hooper, God in the Dock, p. 13.

26. Walsh, Apostle, p. 9.

27. Kilby, Christian World, p. 21.

Footnotes through Chapter 1 (cont'd.)

28. Stuart Barton Babbage, "To the Royal Air Force, " C. S. Lewis: Speaker and Teacher, p. 74.

29. Babbage, Speaker and Teacher, p. 74.

30. Babbage, Speaker and Teacher, p. 75.

31. Babbage, Speaker and Teacher, p. 75.

32. Babbage, Speaker and Teacher, p. 76.

33. "The Scholar's Tale" (lead article), Times Literary Supplement (January 7, 1965), p. 1.

34. Walsh, Apostle, p. 136.

35. Walsh, Apostle, p. 136. Also, Monica Furlong, "Second Thoughts on Screwtape," John O'London's (March 16, 1961), p. 288.

36. Furlong, John O'London's, p. 288.

37. Owen Barfield, "In Conversation," C. S. Lewis: Speaker and Teacher p. 100.

38. Babbage, Speaker and Teacher, p. 68.

39. Bailey, Speaker and Teacher, p. 90.

40. Bailey, Speaker and Teacher, p. 91.

41. Green, C. S. Lewis, p. 23.

42. Harry S. Kruener, "A Tribute to C. S. Lewis," Religion in Life, XXXIV (Summer, 1965), p. 453.

43. Joy Davidman, "The Longest Way Round," These Found the Way: Thirteen Converts to Protestant Christianity, ed. David Wesley Soper (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1951), p. 15.

44. Davidman, These Found the Way, pp. 15-16.

45. White, Image, p. 24.

46. Kilby, Christian World, p. 22.

47. Davidman, These Found the Way, p. 17.

48. Davidman, These Found the Way, p. 23.

Footnotes through Chapter 1 (cont'd.)

49. White, Image, p. 24.

50. William Lindsay Gresham, "From Communist to Christian," These Found the Way, p. 77.

51. Lee Jordan, "The Problem of Pain," These Found the Way, p. 91.

52. White, Image, p. 26, citing John D. Haigh, "The Fiction of C. S. Lewis" (unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, Leeds University, England, 1962), no page given.

53. Interview with bookstore personnel, Hartford Seminary Foundation, Hartford, Connecticut, January 28, 1972.

54. Interview with bookstore personnel, Walden Bookstore, Meriden Square Mall, Meriden, Connecticut, February 23, 1972.

55. "The Scholar's Tale," p. 1.

56. Lewis, Problem, p. 49.

57. Furlong, John O'London's, p. 288.

58. Furlong, John O'London's, p. 288.

59. Lewis, Mere Christianity, p. 25.

60. C. S. Lewis, interview with Sherwood E. Wirt of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, Ltd., May 7, 1963, published as "I was Decided Upon," Decision, II (September, 1963), p. 3, and as "Heaven, Earth, and Outer Space," Decision, II (October, 1963), p. 4, and reprinted as "Cross-Examination," God in the Dock: Essays on Theology and Ethics, ed. Walter Hooper (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1970), p. 265.

61. Kreeft, Critical Essay, p. 4.

62. Wain, Encounter, p. 51.

63. C. S. Lewis, Surprised by Joy: The Shape of My Early Life (New York: Harcourt Brace and World, Inc., 1955), p. 222.

64. Lewis, Surprised, p. 227. Also, Kilby, p. 19.

65. Lewis, Surprised, pp. 224-225.

66. Lewis, Surprised, p. 228.

Footnotes through Chapter 1 (cont'd.)

67. Lewis, Surprised, p. 228.

68. Lewis, Surprised, p. 228.

69. Lewis, Surprised, p. 228.

70. Lewis, Surprised, p. 226.

71. Lewis, Surprised, p. 230.

72. Lewis, Surprised, p. 237.

73. Lewis, Surprised, p. 227.

74. Lewis, Problem, p. 75.

75. Lewis, Mere Christianity, p. 38.

76. Lewis, Problem, p. 51.

77. Lewis, Mere Christianity, p. 38.

78. C. S. Lewis, "The Weight of Glory," a sermon presented at the Church of St. Mary the Virgin, Oxford, and reprinted in They Asked for a Paper, this reference appearing therein on p. 204.

79. Lewis, Problem, p. 127.

80. Samuel Shoemaker, "The Word Was Made Flesh," Christianity Today, III (December 8, 1958), p. 4.

81. Lewis, Divorce, p. 6.

82. Lewis, Mere Christianity, p. 35.

83. Lewis, Divorce, p. 6.

84. Lewis, Mere Christianity, p. 58.

85. C. S. Lewis, first published in "The Christian Hope -- Its Meaning for Today," Religion in Life (Winter, 1952), and reprinted as "Religion and Rocketry" in The World's Last Night and Other Essays (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1960), p. 86.

86. Lewis, Mere Christianity, p. 37.

87. Lewis, Mere Christianity, p. 37.

Footnotes through Chapter 1 (cont'd.)

88. Lewis, Divorce, p. 6.

89. Lewis, Surprised, p. 223.

90. Lewis, Mere Christianity, p. vi.

91. C. S. Lewis, An Experiment in Criticism (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1961), pp. 137-138.

92. Lewis, Experiment, pp. 11, 12, 86, and passim.

93. Lewis, Experiment, p. 86.

94. Lewis, Mere Christianity, p. 72.

95. Lewis, Problem, p. 119.

96. C. S. Lewis, "Man or Rabbit?" which was first published, Walter Hooper says in God in the Dock, p. 14, as a pamphlet of the Student Christian Movement in Schools, about 1946. It has been reprinted in God in the Dock, with this particular reference appearing therein on p. 111.

97. Lewis, Problem, p. 119.

98. Lewis, "Man or Rabbit?", God in the Dock, p. 108.

99. Abraham H. Maslow, "The Need to Know and the Fear of Knowing," Toward a Psychology of Being (New York: D. Van Nostrand Company, Inc., 1962), p. 64. Lewis, in "Man or Rabbit?", God in the Dock, parallels Maslow when he says that the man who tries to live the good life without being a Christian, yet who knows that Christ lives, is "shirking. He is deliberately trying not to know whether Christ is true or false, because he foresees trouble if it should turn out to be true." (p. 111) Maslow notes, "Often it is better not to know, because if you did know, then you would have to act and stick your neck out." (p. 63)

100. Lewis, Mere Christianity, footnote, p. 31.

Chapter 2

ESTRAGON: Let's go.

VLADIMIR: We can't.

ESTRAGON: Why not?

VLADIMIR: We're waiting for Godot.

ESTRAGON: Ah! (Vladimir walks up and down.) Can you not stay still?

VLADIMIR: I'm cold.

ESTRAGON: We came too soon.

VLADIMIR: It's always at nightfall.

ESTRAGON: But night doesn't fall.

VLADIMIR: It'll fall all of a sudden, like yesterday.

ESTRAGON: Then it'll be night.

VLADIMIR: And we can go.

ESTRAGON: Then it'll be day again. (Pause, Despairing.) What'll we do, what'll we do!

-- Samuel Beckett,
Waiting for Godot, pp. 45-46.

* * *

To complain that man measures God by his own experience is a waste of time; man measures everything by his own experience; he has no other yardstick.

-- Dorothy Sayers,
The Mind of the Maker, p. 36.

The narrative pattern of a scholarly hero[1] emerging victorious over threatening divisive forces[2] is the hallmark of comedy as well as of romance. Elements of all four mythoi, however, are to be found in the vision of created life which Lewis depicts in a monumental space-trilogy that opens with Out of the Silent Planet.

His is an unlikely hero, Professor Elwin Ransom, who, as the substitute victim in an abduction, becomes the scapegoat of two unscrupulous villains, Weston and Devine, in an extraterrestrial venture on Malacandra. Shortly after their arrival in the strange world, however, Ransom escapes from them to avoid being a living sacrifice to sorns, rational, feathered Malacandrian giants. During a peaceful interlude, genial, seal-like hrossa befriend Ransom and teach him of their culture, including a belief that he has come from Thulcandra, the "silent planet" (Out of the Silent Planet, hereafter referred to as "OSP," 27) in the heavens. In the aftermath of a tragedy ironically precipitated by Ransom and culminating in the death of his hross friend Hyoi, Ransom, travelling to appear before Oyarsa, ruler of the planet, learns more about the enigmatic world of Thulcandra and of Maleldil, ruler of all worlds, from the giant, feathery sorn, Augray, who conducts him through the arduous finale of his journey to the island home of Oyarsa. Ransom, Weston, Devine, and the hross colony, bearing the bodies of Hyoi and other dead hrossa, appear before Oyarsa, who finds each human flawed by a form of evil. He sentences them to return to Thulcandra (Earth) immediately rather than taking life from them. Ransom, now marred only by a "little fearfulness," (OSP, 142) and thus allowed to choose whether to remain on Malacandra, casts his lot with his fellow humans. After

a dangerous journey of inordinate length, they land safely. Following an illness, Ransom contacts "C. S. Lewis," in whom he confides. Together they ponder how to warn Earth about the evils of Weston and Devine, concluding that "the dangers . . . are not planetary but cosmic, or at least solar, and they are not temporal but eternal." (OSP, 153)

Because Perelandra, the second book of the trilogy, is constructed as a flashback, it deëmphasizes the physical survival of Ransom. Yet it is not without strong overtones of mystery and mortal danger. When Weston arrives unexpectedly on Perelandra soon after Ransom and then undergoes sinister changes in manner and physical appearance, Ransom begins to function as the intermediary between the "Madonna"-like Lady (Perelandra, hereafter referred to as "P," 64) of the paradisial world and an increasingly demonic Weston. As the latter becomes wanton and destructive, Ransom senses the advent of a long-awaited crisis but recoils from the prospect of thwarting the repulsive creature physically. Yet that is what Maleldil asks of him, Ransom concludes after an agonizing debate with the "Voice" (P, 146) of the ruler of worlds. Fierce hand-to-hand fighting, a lengthy land, sea, and underground cave pursuit of Weston, and final combat in a fiery cavern highlight their encounter. The recovery and reappearance of Ransom; his reunion with Tor, the King and Father, and with Tinidril, the Queen and Mother of Perelandra; and the "'Great Dance'" (P, 218 ff.) of created life which celebrates the survival of Perelandra, follow upon his victory over Weston. Except for a stubborn heel wound which afflicts Ransom with constant bleeding, all is well, and he departs mysteriously from

Perelandra in a white coffin-like container as Tor and Tinidril declare him their "'Friend and Saviour.'" (P, 222).

The last book of the trilogy, That Hideous Strength, reiterates through its two central characters, Mark and Jane Studdock, the theme of personal victory established in the two earlier books. Surrounded by exotic allusions to the myths of the solar hero and of the Fisher-King, Ransom appears as a charismatic, superhuman figure. He emerges late in the narrative as the "Director" (That Hideous Strength, hereafter referred to as "THS," 141, 189) of a band of stalwart Christians sequestered at a sunlit outpost, St. Anne's on the Hill, in the midst of a fog-shrouded, strife-torn English countryside. Having retained the youthful demeanor, golden aura, and bleeding heel wound which distinguished him physically upon his return from Perelandra, Ransom does not engage in active combat against the evil forces which form the N. I. C. E., the "National Institute for Co-ordinated Experiments," (THS, 23). Instead, he functions in a secondary, although more sublime, role, administering orders received from the eldila, the servants of Maledil who contact him from Deep Heaven. The diabolical counterparts of Ransom, the puppet Director of the N. I. C. E., Jules, and the ubiquitous Deputy Director, John Wither, lead the N. I. C. E. against St. Anne's in contending for the addition of Jane Studdock to their midst. Without her consent, however, neither side may claim the clairvoyant Jane, who reveals through prophetic dreams the turn of events in the ongoing contest between good and evil. The winning of each of the Studdocks to St. Anne's, the temporary defeat of the N. I. C. E., and the revelation of Ransom as the legendary, immortal

Pendragon who is to return to Perelandra to be with King Arthur for the duration of time form the balance of the narrative of the final book of the space-trilogy.

As a critic, writer, and apologist, Lewis was mindful primarily of the reader who cannot know, initially, what any writer is trying to do.[3] ". . . writing," he observed, "is like driving sheep down a road. If there is any gate open to the left or the right the readers will most certainly go into it."[4] However, he did not believe that a writer must or should confine himself to a literary reconstruction of real life in order to make his purpose evident to the reader. Rather, such an artistic exercise fostered deceit which threatened the development of an honest relationship between writer and reader. Like other art forms, literature masquerading as life itself was inherently dishonest, Lewis believed, for as art it could never do more than imitate, or give partial expression to, life in its totality.[5] The writer who treated his literature as if it were synonymous with life and utilized "apparent realism of content"[6] in his works misled the reader with a dangerous creativity which would encourage him to demand of the writer answers and certainties, if not also strict conformity to his own perception of life.[7] But if a writer must abandon "realism" as dishonest, then what must his stance be, obligated as he is to make his intention clear to the reader?

As a Christian, Lewis upheld a concept of truth grounded in the supernatural. The doctrines of the Creation and Fall of Man, the Incarnation, Resurrection and Second Coming, and the Four Last Things,[8] the formalized expressions of the supernatural element in Christianity,

well accounted for the unique position of Christianity among the myths and religions of the world, he believed. For him they bore the indelible sign of self-evident truth, assertiveness:

> If any message from the core of reality ever were to reach us, we should expect to find in it just that unexpectedness, that wilful, dramatic anfractuosity which we find in the Christian faith. It has the master touch -- the rough, male taste of reality, not made by us, or, indeed, for us, but hitting us in the face.[9]

These doctrines were singular and true for Lewis because they were "not transparent to the reason: we could not have invented . . . [them] ourselves."[10] Nor could we have wished for them, inseparable as they are from the "detestable doctrine,"[11] Hell:

> There is no doctrine which I would more willingly remove from Christianity than this, if it lay in my power. But it has the full support of Scripture and, specially, of Our Lord's own words; it has always been held by Christendom; and it has the support of reason. If a game is played, it must be possible to lose it.[12]

His former secretary noted, "Lewis maintained that the Faith stripped of its supernatural elements could not conceivably be called Christianity."[13] Moreover, implicit in these supernatural claims was the means by which Lewis, the writer, could establish an honest relationship with his reader: being extraordinary, these claims openly invite disbelief.

This study contends that Lewis sought to make the incredible foundations of Christianity plausible to the reader and that for this

purpose he employed, by his own definition, "Realism of Presentation -- the art of bringing something close to us, making it palpable and vivid, by sharply observed or sharply imagined detail."[14] This study assumes that Lewis wished to challenge first the imagination and then the intellect of his reader with the truth of Christianity, fantastic by virtue of its supernatural origin, and that he therefore rejected a slavish adherence to "realism of content,"[15] which concentrated upon mirroring real life, because it lacked the potential to carry out such a challenge. If the reader could anticipate every turn of the life Lewis portrayed, then why read Lewis? Furthermore, if Lewis could challenge the imagination of his reader, he might then help him to suspend his disbelief, to cease to "do reverence to nothings and pass by what is really great." (OSP, 124) Truth would proclaim itself. Lewis, as a writer and artist, need only show it to proper advantage. This the mythos of romance and its attendant narrative, modal, and symbolic structures would allow him to do better than another, for as he noted in An Experiment in Criticism,

> No one can deceive you unless he makes you think he is telling the truth. The unblushingly romantic has far less power to deceive than the apparently realistic. Admitted fantasy is precisely the kind of literature which never deceives at all.
>
> . . . .
>
> The real danger lurks in sober-faced novels where all appears to be very probable but all is in fact contrived to put across some social or ethical or religious or anti-religious 'comment on life.' For some at least of such comments must be false. To be sure, no novel will deceive the best type of reader. He never mistakes art either for life or for philosophy.
>
> . . . .
>
> But others lack this power. (67-68)

This study, therefore, specifically seeks first to prove that the space-trilogy is apologetic literature using the mythos of romance within the genre of science fiction to demonstrate Christianity in terms of its basic supernatural doctrines. Second, it seeks to prove that Lewis found this mythos -- defined through its narrative as adventure,[16] and through its dianoia as wish-fulfillment[17] -- eminently satisfactory for conveying these doctrines openly and interestingly to his reader. Moreover, this study seeks to prove that in attempting to keep the reader from "straying," Lewis constructed a literary work essentially specific and personal in order to reflect a universe which is unfailingly so. To this end he employed "Realism of Presentation" as the stylistic expression of the personal, joyous vision of Christianity. This study assumes that underlying his attempt to be specific and personal was, first, an awareness of the escapist nature of his reader, in whom "human intellect is incurably abstract . . . ."[18] However, Lewis believed that Christianity addressed itself to and demanded the total person -- his senses and emotions as well as his intellect. From mortal experiences man could learn something of what awaited him beyond death:

> . . . the only realities we experience are concrete -- this pain, this pleasure, this dog, this man. While we are loving the man, bearing the pain, enjoying the pleasure, we are not intellectually apprehending Pleasure, Pain, or Personality.[19]

Beyond death, "the whole man is to drink joy from the fountain of joy,"[20] he said. Second was his conviction that abstraction in the universe, the eternal home of man, was pleasant and soothing like a daydream.

It was also a deadly snare:

> . . . one must always get back to the practical and definite. What the devil loves is the vague cloud of unspecified guilt feeling or unspecified virtue by which he lures us into despair or presumption.[21]

Footnotes through Chapter 2

1. Northrop Frye, Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays (Princeton: Princeton University Press), 1957, p. 365.

2. Frye, Anatomy, p. 187.

3. Lewis, God in the Dock, p. 263.

4. Lewis, God in the Dock, p. 263.

5. There is indebtedness to be acknowledged here, and gladly, but to whom the credit should go this author can only surmise despite her best efforts to locate the passage she is very sure -- or almost certain -- that she found in Lewis's An Experiment in Criticism somewhere in the vicinity of page 66. However, about the time she was re-reading Experiment, she was also dabbling in Frye's Anatomy (pp. 12, 51, 76, for example) where much is said about the art of verisimilitude, and in Grammar of Motives, Rhetoric of Motives, and Language as Symbolic Action by Kenneth Burke. The author willingly admits her dependence upon any -- or all -- of these gentlemen, or upon William Barrett for one statement in Irrational Man, p. 51, although she would be far more content being able to cite the specific page on which -- she thinks -- she recalls having found the one passage which finally helped to put everything in its proper place. Four readings of Experiment did not solve the mystery, but it is likely that the answer is to be found there after all.

6. Lewis, Experiment, p. 67.

7. Lewis, Experiment, p. 55.

8. C. S. Lewis, "Mere Christians," first appeared as a letter in Church Times, CXXXV (February 8, 1952), p. 95, and is reprinted in God in the Dock, p. 336.

9. Lewis, Problem, p. 25.

10. Lewis, Problem, p. 25.

11. Lewis, Problem, p. 119.

12. Lewis, Problem, p. 118.

13. Lewis, "Preface," God in the Dock, p. 11.

14. Lewis, Experiment, p. 57.

15. Lewis, Experiment, p. 59.

Footnotes through Chapter 2 (cont'd.)

16. Frye, Anatomy, p. 186.

17. Frye, Anatomy, p. 177.

18. C. S. Lewis, "Myth Became Fact," first appeared in World Dominion, XXII (September-October, 1944), pp. 267-270, and is reprinted in God in the Dock, p. 65.

19. Lewis, "Myth Became Fact," God in the Dock, p. 65.

20. Lewis, "The Weight of Glory," They Asked, p. 209.

21. C. S. Lewis, Letters to an American Lady, ed. Clyde S. Kilby (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1967), p. 74.

Chapter 3

> . . . everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of the human freedoms -- to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one's own way.
>
> And there were always choices to make. Every day, every hour, offered the opportunity to make a decision, a decision which determined whether you would or would not submit to those powers which threatened to rob you of your very self, your inner freedom; which determined whether or not you would become the plaything of circumstance, renouncing freedom and dignity to become molded into the form of the typical inmate.
>
> -- Viktor E. Frankl, _Man's Search for Meaning_, p. 104.

> EMILY:
> Mother Gibbs?
>
> MRS. GIBBS:
> Yes, Emily?
>
> EMILY:
> They don't understand, do they?
>
> MRS. GIBBS:
> No, dear. They don't understand.
>
> -- Thornton Wilder, _Our Town_, p. 103.

I

With due attention to the need for ready imaginative appeal and a narrative focus for the attention of his reader, Lewis began each book

of the epic space trilogy with immediate references to particular characters being engulfed by mystery-shrouded experiences. Thus, for example, we first meet Ransom in OSP and the Studdocks in THS as each is about to be caught up into a cosmic whirlwind of fantastic events. As OSP opens, Lewis has portrayed Ransom being on holiday, far from the press of college duties, and thoroughly engrossed with his leisure activities. In fact, if you were to query brusquely, "'May I ask,' . . . 'who the devil you may be and what you are doing here?'" (12) his spontaneous reply in "rather an unimpressive voice" (12) would reveal a pathetic self-image submerged, perhaps habitually, in duties and tasks: "'I'm on a walking tour,' . . . 'and I promised a poor woman --.'" (12) Noble but hardly authoritative. It would take a repeated demand to extract a name from "The Pedestrian," (7) but so great is your amazement when you do learn his name that you unhand the rebellious farm boy (who clearly would not have given you any peace) to turn scintillating charm upon your old school chum, Elwin Ransom, the "great philologist." (13) Ransom, however, was uneasy. He sensed that Devine, whom he "had disliked . . . at school as much as anyone he could remember," (13) had told him everything but the truth about this scuffle with the simple youth. Yet he found it hard to believe that his profound sense of having stumbled onto "something criminal" (13) implicated, of all people, "professors and old schoolfellows," (14) the former including "the Weston . . . .the great physicist." (13) Nonetheless, he soon found himself easily relating the shape of his life since their school days, although there was little to tell which Devine was likely to find of interest. They had established that

bachelor Ransom had no family other than "a married sister in India" (17); that his current whereabouts were neither known, nor of particular concern, to his College; that he was, in fact, free of all ties and responsibilities, when Devine at last opened a bottle and put the finishing touches to his chores as host by getting Ransom water for his drink from the kitchen. Within minutes of taking the first sip, Ransom found he was no longer in control of himself. Much later, determined to escape, he realized that he would have to act quickly. It was apparent that Devine and Weston meant him harm, much as they must have intended for the boy. Fiercely he struggled with Weston and gained access to the hallway, then to the front door. Freedom was within reach. "For one glorious moment the door was open, the fresh night air was in his face, he saw the reassuring stars and even his own pack lying in the porch. Then a heavy blow fell on his head." (20) Ransom was trapped.

THS also opens at the threshold of profound mystery. Jane Studdock had asked of life merely that it respect her need for independence. And it had. After six months of marriage to Mark, her days were now as empty as their small flat and getting longer with each sunrise. Mark was always at College. Perhaps that was the reason for the nightmare she was having: subconscious worry that she displeased him. But her dreams were not of Mark, nor were they as insubstantial as an ordinary fantasy. Instead, they were as vivid as physical reality and haunted her long after she had awakened. The world at large carried constant reminders of them, as well. Before her was the morning paper with a picture of the same face she had seen in a recent dream, an aspect

memorable for being "foreign-looking . . . bearded and rather yellow, with a hooked nose . . . . frightening because it was frightened . . . . [with] eyes [that] stared as she had seen other men's eyes stare . . . when some sudden shock had occurred." (14)

Keenly she felt that she must assert herself, revive a wilted enthusiasm for writing a disseration of John Donne, and continue from there to develop her talents, herself. Yet that picture and the dream -- particularly where the dashing man with the pointed grey beard and _pince-nez_ coldly unscrewed the head of the very man whose picture now hypnotized her -- these and other incredible recollections overwhelmed her this morning. She could not know that the headline, "Execution of Alcasan," (16) and the caption, "Scientist Bluebeard Goes to Guillotine," (16) were opening a Pandora's box for her. So, too, were her suspicions that the more involvement Bracton College required of her husband, the happier he was. Becoming preëminent among the distinguished Bracton fellows was the one desire which eclipsed all others in the life of Mark Studdock. He now worked at least as hard courting the "Progressive Element" there as he had wooing Jane. Certainly it fascinated him more than his status as a newlywed. And certainly it had its rewards. Take the National Institute for Coördinated Experiments, or the "N. I. C. E.," (23) as the Progressives called it. In one year this unique attempt to "mobilise all the talent of the country" (37) had further advanced the cause of religion, considered "in the deepest sense," (37) within the village of Edgestow than had its resident College under a lifetime of leadership by Canon Jewel. The N. I. C. E., they all agreed, was the hallmark of progress: "it's the first attempt to take

applied science seriously from the national point of view." (37) Sociologist Mark, having "recently emerged" (26) from a five-year hibernation among the ranks of underpaid Bracton Junior Fellows, listened eagerly. When the time came, when at last they asked him for his opinion of the N. I. C. E., Mark was ready. To the enigmatic, dashing, provocative ("'Total war is the most humane in the long run.'" [35]) Lord Feverstone, he replied with studied enthusiasm, "'I think, . . . that James touched on the most important point when he said that it would have its own legal staff and its own police . . . . One hopes, of course, that it'll find out more than the old free-lance science did; but what's certain is that it can do more.'" (38) He knew there was a place for him in the N. I. C. E. He felt giddy. Romance was in the air, but his marriage was dying.

The space-trilogy, despite its promise of excitement, has had its opponents. Among them is John Wain, who accused Lewis of literary decadence and "imaginative bankruptcy" for having succumbed to writing science fiction. To Wain, the genre was a "tell-tale" indicator of a writer's fading or non-existent talent.[1] Yet more recently Darko Suvin has offered this same genre his critical support. Science fiction, he contends,has a legitimate place in the history of literature as the modern exponent of Utopian quest sagas. Moreover, such contemporary spell-binding has both literary and philosophical validity:

> Eden is the mythological localization of utopian longing, just as Wells' valley in the Country of the Blind is still within the liberating tradition which contends that the world is not necessarily the way our present empirical valley happens to be, and that whoever thinks his valley is the world, is blind.[2]

Perhaps more important than either the literary or philosophical justification ascribed to this fantastic literature is that given to the assumed contrast between the "real world" of man and the strangeness inherent in the genre:

> . . . the new framework is correlative to the new inhabitants. The aliens -- utopians, monsters or simply differing strangers -- are a mirror to man just as the differing country is a mirror for his world. But the mirror is not only a reflecting one, it is also a transforming one, virgin womb and alchemical dynamo: the mirror is a crucible.[3]

Into his crucible, the space-trilogy, Lewis has put a Utopia both palpable and immanent, and Elwin Ransom. What happens? Like his memorable allegories, "sophisticated"[4] because they reveal maturation and change in a central character, the space-trilogy is a formidable work. Dramatically, through the evolution of Ransom, Lewis develops his theme of eternal life as a consequence of necessary choice within a personal universe, restates it in the Studdocks, and parodies it primarily through Weston and Devine. Each is an integral part of his trinitarian comment on the nature of the universe, a statement made memorable through the canons of romance: adventure and conflict,[5] dialectical alignment of characters in relation to the conflict,[6] and "an extraordinarily persistent nostalgia.[7]

The space-trilogy contains four stages, identifiable by symbolic structure, which distinguish it as a "complete" romance,[8] i.e., a narrative in which one character, overcoming great odds, emerges as a hero and later is recognized as having made unique achievements. OSP represents its initial stage, the birth of the hero. This narrative

contains allusions to birth or new life as well as images of the scholar, the scapegoat, incipient conflict, evil protagonists in search of the hidden "child" or hero;[9] and the "perilous journey."[10] These follow the brief appearance of an obscure mother-figure who precipitates[11] the actions of Ransom. Each of the three perilous journeys occurring in OSP has at least an indirect association with life-yielding water: travelling to Malacandra (Mars), Ransom experienced outer space as an "ocean of radiance in which they swam," (32) and a warm lake of fizzing blue water greeted his arrival in the frosty world; his meeting with Oyarsa, supernatural ruler of Malacandra, necessitated his crossing by boat to the island of Meldilorn; and a final dangerous return to Earth through "the ocean of eternal noon" (146) culminated in his being drenched during a heavy downpour. Thus, the initiation of Ransom into herohood has a significant symbolic conclusion. It is as if, after having summoned him, outer space itself had baptized him.

P is replete with symbols which herald the two mature stages of the romantic mythos in it, that of "vanishing youth"[12] and that of the ritualistic creation of the romantic hero by means of a great victory. Several images present in OSP recur in this second book of the trilogy, but their treatment is singular here. The allusion to birth reappears in Perelandra (Venus) as a water world, for example, but it coincides symbolically with that of late youth through the predominant colors of Perelandrian sea and sky (green and gold, respectively),[13] and through the immediate need for Ransom to learn to walk on its undulating floating islands. From the outset, death symbolically taints the narrative in the form of a white "coffin"-like (22) box which has

carried Ransom to the embryonic world. Tinidril, the mother-figure who is the catalyst for his latest adventure, is a recreation of the Biblical Eve. The wise companion who accompanies Ransom into the heart of danger, physical confrontation with a clawed, Satanic Weston, is Maleldil Himself, ruler of all worlds. Once more the key episode for Ransom is a purgatorial Dantesque journey, this one through the labyrinthine interior of a mountain following his disappearance and ritual death beneath the waters of the uncorrupted world. In the darkness of a submarine cave he engages in mortal combat with Weston as non-human "Death" (119) in the guise of an "Un-man" (122) and survives, although the fingernails of the latter have shredded his flesh in mythic _sparagmos._[14] Transported by a swift river to the exterior summit of the mountain, Ransom recovers and his body heals in a garden paradise. Old Testament Genesis images interspersed with New Testament Christian references in _Perelandra_ suggest that the reappearance of Ransom is not simply the image of rebirth found in cyclical romance but, in fact, the resurrection of dialectical Judaeo-Christian myth.[15] Like Dante, Ransom experiences a vision of rejoicing created life following his service to Maleldil and a "long Sabbath" (185) of recovery. Lewis concludes with an apparent symbolic return to the _mythos_ of romance through the physical transformation of Ransom into the legendary creations of man, the solar hero of golden skin and beard and the mysterious scapegoat, the wounded Fisher-King. Servants of Maleldil transport Ransom through Deep Heaven in a second coffin-like box, and he returns during a sunrise to his place in time. Earth had completed a solar year in his absence.

THS is both romance considered in its fifth, or late, phase, when

evaluated in terms of its central characters, Jane and Mark Studdock, and romance considered in its sixth, or final, phase when evaluated in terms of the role of its hero, Ransom. Despite the fact that there are these two distinct threads to its narrative, THS is perhaps best termed a "contemplative adventure"[16] when considered as a whole work. As the successor to the powerfully mythopoetic P, it bears the distinguishing features of late-phase romance through its true lovers (the Studdocks and the Dimbles, for example) capping a hierarchy of morally stratified characters,[17] and through an impersonal, "idyllic view of experience from above"[18] (Mother Dimble advising Jane on her marriage; the group at St. Anne's sequestered on a sunlit hilltop waiting out the struggles of the Studdocks with the N. I. C. E.). Narrative features of final-phase romance, full recognition of the hero as well as completion of movement from active to contemplative adventure,[19] are also apparent in THS through the images of the "cosy spot" (the kitchen at St. Anne's and the blue room of its leader, Ransom) and the old man preoccupied with supernatural activities (Ransom seeking Merlin and directing opposition to the N. I. C. E.);[20] through those of the close-knit, "intimate" group and of hearsay, the "reported tale" (Ransom as the Pendragon).[21] Lewis uses the Arthurian legend to enhance the heroic stature of Ransom, who is known at St. Anne's as "Mr. Fisher-King" (114) and the "Director" (140) prior to his revelation as "The Pendragon" (274) to an overwhelmed Merlin. With Ransom in an inscrutable, opaque role in THS, Lewis gives personal focus and meaning to the narrative of this final book of the trilogy through the adventures and experiences of Mark and Jane. Each undergoes

essentially spiritual growth, as had Ransom on Malacandra and Perelandra. It is growth appropriate both to the pensive mood[22] of this last phase of romance and to the mythopoesis which Lewis re-introduces in THS. This narrative concludes as do the two earlier trilogy narratives, with mythopoetic allusions: the image of the supernatural vision, the curse of Babel, and ascendance.

II

While it is apparent that the space-trilogy is a complete romance, it is equally obvious that a final assessment of the character of Ransom must admit to his being more than a classic hero of that *mythos*. He acquires mythic stature. The abundant romantic and mythic references associated with him in each book of the trilogy suggest that Lewis endowed him with such stature because he wanted Elwin Ransom easily recognizable as a larger-than-life character. This study maintains that he is foremost among the characters who act as apologetic spokesmen in the trilogy. More pertinent to a consideration of whether these books effectively convey what Christianity is and why it is important is an evaluation of how Ransom acquired superhuman dimensions. This study claims that through him Lewis demonstrated his firmly held conviction that Christianity not only requires us to develop but also shows how we may grow from complacent, somewhat timid, solitary "creatures of God" into courageous, dependable partners and "sons of God."[23]

Assuming that he was trying to show how men became sons of God, or "New Men,"[24] in the space-trilogy, we may reasonably conclude that his ability to show this transformation in literature likely produced both a noticeable process of change in some of his characters and a growing

sense of fitness about their roles in relation to the narrative structure of the trilogy. For a character becoming a new man, the trilogy must refine his role until it has clarity and uniqueness. Such a character would acquire a distinction he did not have early in the trilogy. This study maintains that Lewis gave Ransom such a definition of character, one beginning with Ransom as a being splintered by self-centeredness. As such, he is a prey for a myriad of selfish, imaginative fancies, purposeless activities, and powerful feelings. Each can affect his reason and his will. A visual representation of this early state might result in his resembling those desperate existential portraits of which Barrett has noted.

> . . . if an observer from Mars were to turn his attention . . . to the shape of man as revealed in our novels, plays, painting, and sculpture, he would find there a creature full of holes and gaps, faceless, riddled with doubts and negations, starkly finite.[25]

Like many contemporary expressions of man, the space-trilogy portrays his confrontation with the reality of his death as well as that of his life. Lewis insisted that man must look frankly at both if he is to be a whole being. However, for Lewis the "realistic" thrust of this confrontation ultimately produced not a despairing, disjointed creature without reason, place, or meaning in life or death but, rather, an invincible, complete being secure in the knowledge that he has reason, place, and meaning in life as well as death. To Lewis, the agony of anxiety and doubt indigenous to existentialism are valid because they symbolize man as an incomplete being who thinks he knows what reality is. These and other feelings have an important place in the space-trilogy.

Once man is aware of what reality is, however, they must necessarily become a part of his past -- or destroy him. In confronting the reality of life and death, the space-trilogy affirms that both life and death express the joy emanating from the living source of the cosmos, God, and that while the universe may be ultimately inexplicable because it is not of our own making, it is far from being meaningless or absurd.[26] Lewis's new men are those creatures who have grown to know and to accept this as fact.

Responsible for the technical problem of translating into fictional terms the internal, spiritual dynamics implicit in this growth, Lewis could have abandoned his belief that it is we who are difficult, not Christianity. He might have resorted to psychological or literary tricks to make his process Christianity easier to accept. He did neither of these. The intellectual honesty, the penetrating and poetic insight into human nature and the nature of the universe, the literary skill, and the intelligence evident in his scholarly works is also apparent in the space-trilogy. The trilogy is an honest effort consistent with literary and theological traditions and, as this study further claims, with man's philosophical tradition as Lewis understood it.

Lewis maintained that all man's expressions of his dealings with truth and ultimate reality, whether "Platonic, Aristotelian, Stoic, Christian, . . . [or] Oriental,"[27] express the same "doctrine of objective value."[28] Ultimate reality confronts us with something we cannot fail to acknowledge. The doctrine does not imply that we necessarily accept what we have acknowledged. Rather, it signifies that what is true and real has an objective existence which makes a

minimal claim on us: that we "recognize a quality which demands a certain response from us whether we make it or not."[29] Lewis referred to this dynamic confrontation of man and ultimate reality as "the Tao," borrowing the Oriental term to summarize both the essence of truth and reality as "the Way in which the universe goes on," and man's potential response to it, "the Way which every man should tread in imitation of that cosmic and supercosmic progression."[30]

Lewis regarded Christianity as the most significant expression of the Tao because he believed it to be no less than a divine statement to us that there are eternal punishments as well as rewards contingent upon our response to ultimate objective reality. In the Christian Tao, ultimate reality expresses itself objectively and historically as a living Person. If we respond to this person in accord with the Tao as presented in the New Testament, we will change. We will grow into qualitatively different beings and thereby properly fulfill our nature as human persons. "We are like eggs at present," Lewis said. "And you cannot go on indefinitely being just an ordinary, decent egg." The time will come when "we must be hatched or go bad."[31] From the Christian doctrines of Hell and of Judgment Lewis inferred that, indeed, our time would eventually run out. It is the "Way" of creation.

This study maintains that in Elwin Ransom, the Lady of Perelandra, and the Studdocks, Lewis explored the nature, process, and consequence of a positive acknowledgment of objective reality ultimately expressed by Christianity in the concept of God as a living Person. It further maintains that he demonstrates the nature, process, and consequence of a qualitatively different response through Weston, Devine, and

Frost. Finally, it maintains that the significance of the trilogy as apologetic literature is a direct result of the component similarities between his treatment of Ransom and the Studdocks, and that it is primarily through these three characters he has attempted to show each of us what we must do and why.

The following are steps in a general plan to prove that this is so. First, this study will trace the evolution of Ransom from a low mimetic figure into a mythic hero by means of the modal and narrative structures of each book of the trilogy, with emphasis on P. Then the results of this analysis will be used to form a modal and narrative standard for assessing the Studdocks as apologetic spokesmen for Lewis. Finally, this standard will be applied, either by comparison or contrast, to the previously mentioned characters in order to form a conclusion about the entire trilogy as an apologetic device.

Specific considerations for the modal analysis will involve the following expressions of a character's power of action as established through Ransom. First are the hopes or desires a character has for himself as determined at the outset of each book or when the character first appears in the narrative. Second is the need for and ability of each character to effect change in himself and others in an attempt to realize these hopes or desires. The dynamics of change will be determined by alterations in speech patterns, physical actions and characteristics as they reflect the loyalties and attitudes of a character. The third aspect of modal structure considered will be the irreducible factor of will revealed as an ongoing need to make choices in order to effect change. This study maintains that there is a strong relationship

between the modal factor of will expressed as deliberate choice and the structure of the narrative. It further contends that this relationship is the dominant symbolic expression of Lewis's belief in human will as the key element determining the nature of his response to the Christian Tao.

The chief feature of the narrative structure is a re-telling of the Christian myth in P. A romantic displacement of it occurs in OSP. Although the complete narrative of THS constitutes an entirely new myth based on the character and function of Ransom in it, it also contains a low mimetic displacement of the Christian myth featuring the Studdocks. This study maintains that common to each version of the Christian myth is a symbolic or actual confrontation of man and the ultimate objective reality of the Christian Tao, God as a living Person. That such a confrontation, as an intellectual and physical experience, is not only possible but also essential in our lives is the raison d'etre of the space-trilogy, this study contends. What man does in the face of impending confrontation suggests its dianoia, or meaning. The latter conviction of Lewis is also the impetus for the trilogy's "allegorical tendency."[32] Lewis noted that the fundamental allegorical motif or image is that of the battle, "the root of all allegory,"[33] although only the "crudest"[34] allegory would attempt to portray and sustain the struggle of a brave creature hoping to meet its Creator, or that of the cowardly creature hoping to avoid his Creator, as a fight or "pitched battle."[35] Instead, a better literary representation of this spiritual conflict emerges through the motif of the journey with its

> ups and downs, its pleasant resting-places enjoyed for a night and then abandoned, its unexpected meetings, its rumours of dangers ahead, and, above all, the sense of its goal, at first far distant and dimly heard of, but growing nearer at every turn of the road . . . . [representing] far more truly than any combat . . . the perennial strangeness, the adventurousness, and the sinuous forward movement of the inner life.[36]

Thus, both the metaphysical concept of the Tao as a "Way" for man and creation and the allegorical trend inherent in the romantic _mythos_ moving toward pure myth inspire Lewis to maintain a consistently high level of concrete explication in the space-trilogy, a fact evident even where he must deal with God, eternal life, and negative doctrines like death and Hell. It is a commendable, clever feat particularly when considered in the light of Kenneth Burke's statement, "linguistically, _God_ can be nothing but a term"[37] because it is an ultimate word. As such, it exemplifies a "purely linguistic paradox whereby words of greatest generality have the least empirical content."[38] In sum, the word "God" means all or nothing.

Lewis tried to have God, goodness, death, and Hell assume their rightful places as concrete phenomena in nature where "every situation is positively what it is."[39] To this end, he employed the following concepts or traditions in his narrative structure to build convincing "concrete" literary evidence that man, as Elwin Ransom, must come to terms with himself as an extension of a totally physical universe.

First, the genre of science fiction, a recent expression of the romantic _mythos_, has allowed him the use of two narrative devices having potential apologetic significance, extraterrestrial settings and the

journey, or the concept of "wandering," whether mental or physical. The use of other worlds helps Lewis to convey Christianity as being operative universally, if not also eternally. As such, it is therefore inescapable. The journey, a symbolic projection of man's inner life, is a major, purposeful undertaking. Whether it is ultimately an act of escape or of acceptance, it ends in a goal won or lost. It begins with a necessary consideration, however brief, of how and why it will occur. Thus, the image of the journey helps Lewis make a fictional portrayal of both transition and conflict in man. It also provides "tangible" contours to the important factor of decision-making in the space-trilogy modal structure.

Another narrative device Lewis has used to make the reader aware of Christianity as ongoing fact rather than a remote "good idea" is apparent in his handling of abstract qualities like perfection and evil, or complete negation. Unlike more "positive" qualities, the negative is wholly abstract, Burke says, because it is an idea. It is a product of mind and language.[40] Depicting death and Hell, as well as good, Lewis relied not only upon the allegorical ontours of Dantesque journeys previously mentioned in this study but also upon the tradition of allegorizing particular characters in order to make the negative as alive and threatening, good as gracious and durable, as he believed them to be. He understood why abstractions of a philosophical nature might be lost on people (like the weary British during World War II) seeking answers to, and escape from, their own problems. These war years during which the trilogy appeared were like those years of social decline leading to the Dark Ages. Unable to find security in the world about

them, people then retreated into themselves in their search for answers. As pre-medieval literature indicates, theirs was not a futile retreat, for they found themselves. Of this earlier period, Lewis wrote,

> With the decay of civilization the subtleties of St. Augustine were lost: the vivid interest in the inner world, stimulated by the horrors and hopes of Christian eschatology, remained, and drove men, as always, to personification.[41]
>
> . . . .
>
> . . . widespread moral revolution forces men to personify their passions.[42]

This study maintains that Lewis used the seemingly anachronistic literary tradition of allegorical characters with confidence becuase he knew that desperate people of the mid-twentieth century were like those of any age. They would be grateful to find someone acknowledging their suspicion that evil was real and present but also vulnerable in the face of courageous good. Readers would respond well to allegory because they were, and always are, ready for it:

> Humanity does not pass through phases as a train passes through stations: being alive, it has the privilege of always moving yet never leaving anything behind. Whatever we may have been, in some sort we still are.[43]

Certain of his characters are also developmental phenomena as allegorical creations. By a relentless, thematically significant process, Weston becomes the personification of evil on Perelandra; the Lady of Perelandra, while never less than the quintessence of goodness, is unable to reveal more about her true nature than Ransom and Weston require of her. She cannot tell them who she is because

she does not know: she is also Innocence itself. The dialectical tendency of romance, together with the need for a "concrete" literary recreation of the meaning of the Christian myth, has made Lewis's selection of the allegorical technique an obvious choice. He used it judiciously, nevertheless, aware of "the art of dropping such tools when they have done their work."[44]

He utilized another old and durable concept, that of the Great Chain of Being, to give his vast, yet personal, universe imaginative, concrete structure. Even the gods of ancient western mythology are more than awe-inspiring literary "decorations"[45] in the trilogy. They are none other than superhuman expressions of Maleldil Himself.[46]

Another narrative "device" Lewis has used to give "life" to the space-trilogy as apologetic literature is the confrontation of man and God in historically authentic, physical terms. In P Maleldil makes Himself known to Ransom as He did to the ancient Hebrews: He speaks to Ransom. Portraying the creature and Creator meetings of the Studdocks and God, Lewis relies on none other than his own inscrutable experiences related in Surprised by Joy and quoted at length in Chapter 1 of this study.

Finally, Lewis has required his reader to make an intellectual pilgrimage of his own along the Christian Tao. He has achieved this by throwing a linguistic screen around the Christian myth, retelling it gradually through extraterrestrial creatures who speak of its cosmic truths in the language of our solar system.

These are the factors of modal and narrative structure to be considered in an assessment of the space-trilogy as apologetic

literature. Each contributes in a direct, concrete manner to Lewis's effort to shake the reader out of smug complacency and "veiled egoism."[47] The space-trilogy is a literary antidote containing "adequate recognition of the great fact of self-deception."[48]

III

A story becomes plausible as the author defines its hypothetical foundations early in the narrative and then works within the limitations which they necessarily impose on him. Lewis said that an author owed his reader insight into the assumptions, or "postulates,"[49] governing the degree of lifelike realism in a work. Otherwise, the reader would look for authenticity never intended.[50] He asked that authors be ethically responsible to their readers without sacrificing their freedom to create. It was both possible and fair if one understood "not that all books should be realistic in content, but that every book should have as much of this realism as it pretends to have."[51] Similarly, the reader was obligated to accept whatever assumptions the author chose.

> To question the postulate itself would show a misunderstanding; like asking why trumps should be trumps . . . . That is not the point. The _raison d'etre_ of the story is that we shall weep, or shudder, or wonder, or laugh as we follow it.[52]

He is a fine exponent of his own advice. Three of the characters who figure prominently in the trilogy -- Ransom, Weston, and Devine -- make early appearances in _OSP_. The major conceptual scene or background against which they function, determining a universal, physical context for man, emerges with them as a trilogy "given." While it is a part of the modal and narrative matrix of the trilogy, it is a product

of neither. It is Lewis's access to the thematic development of the trilogy as apologetic literature.

Ransom is immediately credible as "one of us." We learn that he is a solitary, learned man who has been viciously kidnapped. Essentially he is a low mimetic figure, and the less glamorous aspects of his humanity are entirely plausible. He is, for example, proud: he assumed the cooking chores while en route to Malacandra because volunteering to do so helped him to deny his obvious bondage to Weston and Devine. He is cowardly. Fearfully rejecting the sacrificial role imposed upon him by his captors, he fabricated an imaginative escape from sorns. They had to be "loathsome sexless monsters," (35) and he chose anything, "any change -- death or sleep, or best of all, a waking which should show all this for a dream . . . ." (25) If all failed, "if escape were impossible, then it must be suicide." (35) He is virtually faithless. Believing neither in himself nor in the future, he wallowed in the fear engulfing him as a "formless, infinite misgiving." (25) The best he could do to counter the thoughts of escape by death which flickered through his brain (25, 35, 37) was to reach feebly for an idea learned once long ago but never before needed: he "hoped he would be gorgiven." (35-36) Ransom was a "pious man" (35) who had taxed the limits of his courage and faith.

Gently and deftly Lewis introduces the thematic structure and theological orientation of the trilogy. It is a simple gesture and therefore unspectacular, but it is important. He implies a relationship between Ransom and a source of pardon if fear should drive him to take his own life. Forgiveness is the bridge between men and eternity

in the Christian myth.

As his romantic antagonists, Weston and Devine are also low mimetic figures, but they are caricatures of evil and satirically drawn. A physicist, Weston has a contemptuous disregard for individual human lives. In part, his attitude is the outgrowth of an ego carefully nurtured by the professional objectivity of "solemn scientific idealism." (30) He symbolizes arrogant twentieth-century science striving to command the processes of life and death. He is a gambler in an impersonal universe where tangible, "scientific" evidence is all that matters. The laws of science tell him that Ransom does not count.

> As far as we know, we are doing what has never been done in the history of man, perhaps never in the history of the universe. We have learned how to jump off the speck of matter on which our species began; infinity, and therefore perhaps eternity, is being put into the hands of the human race. You cannot be so small-minded as to think that the rights or the life of an individual or of a million individuals are of the slightest importance in comparison with this.
>
> . . . .
>
> I had thought no one could fail to be inspired by the role you are being asked to play: that even a worm, if it could understand, would rise to the sacrifice. I mean, of course, the sacrifice of time and liberty, and some little risk. (27)

He does not equate himself with Ransom in human terms, however. The discrepancy suggests that his attitude is also "pure Weston" and one for which he alone is responsible. Otherwise, the same laws of science would encourage him to offer himself as a noble sacrifice to <u>sorns</u>.

Earthier clichés make Devine recognizable as an extraordinary self-seeking villain. Indeed, he was "'not running all these risks

for fun.'" (30) He consoled himself with speculations about those luxuries he would consider sufficient reward for his pains: "ocean-going yachts, the most expensive women and a big place on the Riviera." (30) All these he would buy with the life of Elwin Ransom.

Having isolated Ransom by an "astronomical distance" (30) from the security of his earthly home and the company of his two closest fellows, Lewis offers him comfort and strength from an unexpected source, outer space itself. Space is "Deep Heaven," (P, 60) a reservoir of life rather than a void. In OSP the reader may find himself caught up in its physical enchantment immediately, for Lewis presents it as a total aesthetic, sensual, and even intellectual experience to Ransom:

> Often he rose after only a few hours' sleep to return, drawn by an irresistible attraction, to the regions of light; . . . . There, totally immersed in a bath of pure ethereal colour and of unrelenting though unwounding brightness, stretched his full length and with eyes half closed . . . faintly quivering, through depth after depth of tranquillity far above the reach of night, he felt his body and mind daily rubbed and scoured and filled with new vitality.
>
> . . . .
>
> . . . the very name 'Space' seemed a blasphemous libel for this empyrean ocean of radiance in which they swam. He could not call it 'dead'; he felt life pouring into him from it every moment . . . . He had thought it barren: he saw now that it was the womb of worlds,. . . . No: Space was the wrong name. Older thinkers had been wiser when they named it simply the heavens -- . . . . (31-32)

As in any good tale, however, there is the nether side of nostalgia, dread. The possibility of a place for death, as there is for the life which teems throughout the solar system, is considered briefly by means of a question which Lewis raises in the opening pages of OSP.

The remainder of the space-trilogy constitutes its answer.

> What had been a chariot gliding in the fields of heaven became a dark steel box dimly lighted by a slit of window, and falling. They were falling out of the heaven, into a world. Nothing in all his adventures bit so deeply into Ransom's mind as this. He wondered how he could ever have thought of planets, even of the Earth, as islands of life and reality floating in a deadly void. Now, with a certainty which never after deserted him, he saw the planets -- the 'earths' he called them in his thought -- as mere holes or gaps in the living heaven -- excluded and rejected wastes of heavy matter and murky air, formed not by addition to, but by subtraction from, the surrounding brightness. And yet, he thought, beyond the solar system the brightness ends. Is that the real void, the real death? (39-40)

Subtle, engoing, and powerful, the concept of outer space as a fullness, together with that of "real death," form the scene or background for the modal and narrative matrix of the trilogy. Each concept is a part of its theological development; each, imaginatively drawn through realism of presentation, is a cosmic projection of Lewis's faith.

The concept of teeming life extends beyond outer space to Malacandra and to Perelandra where, as might be expected of science fiction, strangely exotic plants and animals abound. They are functional as well as decorative creations of Lewis's imagination, however. In their functional capacity, they gradually interpret the Christian myth to Ransom and the reader in cosmic terms. From their perspective in Deep Heaven all know Earth as "Thulcandra -- the silent world or planet" (OSP, 67) where an Oyarsa once "'brighter and greater'" (120) than the ruling Oyarsa of Malacandra yet reigns. Oyarsa of Thulcandra is no longer one of the loyal servants of Maleldil Himself, however. To the

creatures of Deep Heaven he is known as the "'Bent One'" (121) who imposes on Ransom's world a reign of destruction, death, and fear. None in Deep Heaven knows that Maleldil Himself came to Thulcandra to save it from certain doom, for He, in turn, sealed Thulcandra in silence to prevent it from contaminating Deep Heaven and other worlds with its miseries.

The Lady of Perelandra knows this, however. She knows also that she and the creatures of other worlds are, equally, servants of Maleldil. No one but she is able to tell Ransom that hers is a world different from both Thulcandra and Malacandra in terms of cosmic history. Everything changed when "'our Beloved became a Man'" (P, 82) in the world of creatures like Ransom. Then a "'wave'" (82) swept over space and time, separating Malacandra from Perelandra forever. Now only the ancient worlds, formed before Maleldil Himself came among men, know external rule by eldila, "'the great and ancient servants of Maleldil . . . . [who] neither breed nor breathe. Whose bodies are made of light. Whom we can hardly see. Who ought to be obeyed.'" (82) These worlds, like Malacandra, will pass away because they are on the "'far side of the wave that has rolled past us.'" (82) Some eldila "'linger still'" (82) in the air of Thulcandra because it stands at "'time's corner,'" (67) at the peak of the wave that rolled through the heaven more than nineteen Thulcandrian centuries ago.

Perelandra is a wholly new creation. As one of the "'first of worlds to wake after the great change'" (82), the Incarnation, it is a cosmic home for beings who answer directly to Maleldil Himself. His glory and power, reflected through the eldila in the ancient worlds,

have come to rest entirely within the creatures of the new worlds. "'There is nothing now between us and Him,'" the Lady tells Ransom (82).

Thus, in their decorative capacity Lewis's creations -- from Oyarsas to gnomish Malacandrian pfifltriggi, from a Perelandrian Eve, dragons, and gentle mermen to Weston, Devine, and Ransom of Thulcandra, from those life forms nearing extinction for some inscrutable reason to those drawing first breaths -- sparkle with the infinite varieties of life Maleldil has extended beyond Himself. They dramatize the Great Chain of Being which Lewis uses as an artistic "'container'"[53] for the Christian myth in the space-trilogy. It captures the imagination with its vertical dimension and acquires a unique, "modern" linear aspect through the artistry of C. S. Lewis, for Ransom, neither angel nor devil, is man living nearly twenty centuries after Maleldil came to him. The world of Ransom, Thulcandra, is our world, at the "'corner'" of time, neither ancient nor new but decidedly a part of the life scheme of Maleldil. We have yet to discover the meaning of our place in time, but Lewis has assured us that it is somehow unique: a depraved Oyarsa still reigns within our own air, and Deep Heaven continues to ponder our silent presence among the worlds (OSP, 121).

What must we understand about ourselves? Lewis believed that we have been told the truth and that we need not indulge in idle speculation about what it might be. As the martyred William Hingest said of truth upon severing his ties with the N. I. C. E., "'There are a dozen views about everything until you know the answer. Then there's never more than one.'" (THS, 72) In the pursuit of truth, Lewis has given us Ransom, Weston, Devine, and a living universe to demonstrate what it is.

In the pursuit of truth, Professor Elwin Ransom became actually, as well as symbolically, a new man.

IV

If awareness of a power infinitely greater than self can define theology, then it is apparent that being unaware, not understanding, or "not seeing," may be artistic indications of the non-theological, "'all-too-human'"[54] condition of self-centeredness. Considered thematically as apologetic literature, OSP is a portrayal of a non-theological state; considered technically as the first stage of a complete romance, it is the introduction or initiation of the potential hero to powers greater than he. Child-like, he is uncertain about what to do with them.

In The Divine Comedy, Frye notes, Dante first asserts an understanding of and sympathy for his fellow man. He "reverses the usual structure of the contrast-epic, . . . [by beginning] with the ironic human situation and . . . [ending] with divine vision."[55] Like Dante, Lewis imprisons Ransom in a situation he has neither created, anticipated, nor desired. Moreover, the Dantesque reversal apparent in OSP is due largely to Ransom himself. While he will become the conquering hero of the space-trilogy, at its outset in OSP he is not only light-years away from such a role but also stubbornly resistant to the tests for it which Lewis sets before him. However, it is inaccurate to say that Ransom displays what Frye describes as a "retreat from the conventional knight-errant role"[56] in OSP. Lewis has not charged him with being a knight in the first book, as an examination of its modal structure will reveal. Rather, he is to be his best self because Lewis is preparing him for a new world where the child in him must be refined. In terms of obedience,

trust, and understanding, being one's "best self" is synonymous with being a child. To Lewis each of these concepts is entirely compatible with his portrayal of a mythic hero. Thus, the motif or image of a child learning to see, to talk, and to walk is the basic analogy symbolizing the first stages of spiritual growth in Ransom and theological development in the space-trilogy.

Providing an unusual, quasi-supernatural means to the child motif, Lewis catapulated Ransom into action. Although he had hoped to find food and lodging for the night instead, Ransom was impelled to respond to a troubled old woman because he actually saw himself acting in her behalf:

> Whatever the process of thought may have been, he found that the mental picture of himself calling at The Rise had assumed all the solidity of a thing determined upon. (9)

As if his mind were not his own, as if someone or something had momentarily taken over, Ransom had been allowed to peer into the future. Hungry and tired, he had not wished for involvement, and he responded with an "unfortunate promise" (11) to the woman. It is the last dimly admirable act he will display for some time. It is also the first of a chain reaction of events over which Ransom has virtually no control, but with which he must learn to live -- or die.

Developing the motif of the child, Lewis literally teaches Ransom how to see, talk, and walk on Malacandra. He teaches us that in a personal universe what we desire or hope for ourselves may not be the better thing that could happen to us, particularly when we do not understand or "see" and thus do not know how to desire or hope properly.

For example, Ransom needed to learn to see the essential physical qualities of the new world. They were not soon apparent to him because his universe was hysterically "peopled with horrors." (35) Torn between fear and curiosity, his ambivalent reaction to landing on Malacandra affected him physically. Thus, like a newborn infant,

> . . . his desire to take in the new world at a glance defeated itself. He saw nothing but colours -- colours that refused to form themselves into things. Moreover, he knew nothing yet well enough to see it; you cannot see things till you know roughly what they are. (42)

Paradoxically, when he could distinguish its blue "soda-water" streams (45), pink and red plant life (43), and "vivid purple" twilight through towering forests (44), he found the world enchanting and "beautiful." (42) His former attitude was a mockery: "he even reflected how odd it was that this possibility had never entered into his speculations about it." (42) Similar "out of focus" doubtful moments influence his early relationship with the friendly hrossa. Ransom learns to dispell them with courage, willingness, and reason.

> . . . sudden losses of confidence. . . .arose when the rationality of the hross tempted you to think of it as a man. Then it became abominable -- a man seven feet high, with a snaky body, covered, face and all, with thick black animal hair, and whiskered like a cat. But starting from the other end you had an animal with everything an animal ought to have -- glossy coat, liquid eye, sweet breath and whitest teeth -- and added to all these, as though Paradise had never been lost and earliest dreams were true, the charm of speech and reason. Nothing could be more disgusting than the one impression; nothing more delightful than the other. It all depended on the point of view. (58)

Trapped in a strange world against his will, Ransom has been able to effect one desire within his given limitations. He has escaped from Weston, Devine, and sorns. For the moment he discovers that he must simply cope with life on Malacandra. Among the hrossa it is an unexpectedly pleasant task. The more he learns about the planet and his benefactors, the more mere endurance becomes for Ransom a matter of conscious, willing choice. He begins to feel at home among the hross colony:

> It was with a kind of stupefaction each morning that he found himself neither arriving in, nor escaping from, but simply living on, Malacandra; waking, sleeping, eating, swimming and even, as the days passed, talking. . . . A few weeks later he had his favourite walks, and his favourite foods; he was beginning to develop habits. (65)

Unchallenging ease reigns long enough for Ransom to develop some fluency in hrossian speech. One outgrowth of it is a subsequent degree of familiarity with their theology. Ransom learns of "Maleldil the Young [who] . . . made and still ruled the world." (68) Maleldil lived with "'the Old One'. . . . [who] is not that sort, . . . that he has to live anywhere.'" (68) One part of the divine hierarchy puzzles Ransom, however, and it prevents him from equating the Malacandrian theology, common knowledge among even the hross cubs, with his own. Clearly the Old One and Maleldil were spirits "without body, parts or passions." (68) But who was Oyarsa, the hnau who ruled Malacandra? How like him were Ransom, the hrossa, seroni or sorns, and the pfifltriggi who craft Malacandrian gold? There had to be some resemblance, for they, too, were hnau, the hrossa told him. Or was there an Oyarsa at all? Was he

learning of primitive gods in an ancient myth, of a cruel idol? What should he believe of what he had heard?

Lewis challenges Ransom's character and faith by direct confrontation. Thus far nothing has been asked of Ransom that he had not already been willing to do for himself in order to survive among the _hrossa_ on Malacandra. He has gained confidence and wisdom in their midst. Symbolizing the former is his willing participation in a hunt for the deadly _hnakra_; symbolizing the latter is his physical ability to see as a cluster of light the _eldil_, a servant of Oyarsa (76), who summons him from the hunt to meet Oyarsa at Meldilorn. Abruptly the pace of the _OSP_ narrative changes. The ensuing events mark the beginning of greater wisdom for Elwin Ransom. Lewis sketches him caught in a familiar tug-of-war whether it is to be found on Earth or Malacandra. Both pride and disbelief win major victories in the skirmish. A bolder Ransom is about to test himself against a deadly beast. If he were to leave immediately, he would never know how he might have dealt with it. He must stay, if only to know that he did not run. From somewhere came an enchanting appeal to his vanity, to "new-found manhood." (80) Despite the warnings of Hyoi and Whin that he must not delay, he did not leave them. Oyarsa meant little or nothing to him, whereas the prospect of having "a deed on his memory instead of one more broken dream" (80) dazzled his imagination. Ransom gave his allegiance to pride, a familiar companion resembling "something like conscience" (80), rather than to the cluster of light with a voice. Moments later he agonized in "speechless guilt" (81) to see the good _hross_, Hyoi, dying, the innocent victim of a stray bullet apparently meant for him. Overwhelmed

by the outcome of his choice to stay, he groped for the Malacandrian words for "'forgive,' or 'shame,' or 'fault.'" (81) Until then he had not needed to learn these words or "hardly the word for 'sorry.'" (81) The ironic, swift sequence of events implied a decisive causal relationship between the summons of the eldil and Whin's ominous warning to Ransom, "'Once an eldil has spoken, ...'" (80) If it were a lesson to Ransom, then it was a tragic one requiring further emphasis: "'All this has come from not obeying the eldil,'" Whin told him. (83)

With the motif of the child as an indicator, it is apparent that Ransom has demonstrated a capacity for change. He has learned to see and to talk on Malacandra. He has not yet learned to walk on other than his favorite paths, however. If seeing symbolizes understanding, then walking can be equated with obedience when it becomes involved with necessity. Such is the case with Ransom following the death of Hyoi. He leaves the hross colony because he must, not because his feelings tell him that it is correct to do so. Whin reminded him that what was required of him at the moment was not his life but doing the will of Oyarsa. The death of Hyoi had not altered the charge that Ransom go to Meldilorn. Consciously, deliberately Ransom undertook the task for which the eldil had summoned him. From Whin he also knew that Oyarsa took lives and that if there were further killing to be done because of Hyoi, it would be Oyarsa, not the hrossa, who would do it. Convinced that he must be punished for the death of the hross, he headed for the strange Malacandrian highlands and the shorter route to Meldilorn. He moved numbly, a "stupor of humiliation" (84) driving him away from the hrossa and chastening him. Ransom was "anxious only to do whatever they

wanted him to do, to trouble them as little as was now possible, and above all to get away." (84) No matter what he felt, however, he had chosen to make the journey -- at last.

Given a human being abruptly removed to a new planet where physical order and strange but rational creatures prevail, the reader may find that he can readily accept their being hospitable and "civilized." The *hrossa* possess speech and an array of knowledge extending from astronomy to poetry and, apparently, to theology. Given a new world of physical order and reasoning creatures, perhaps he can also accept without great difficulty their belief in a moral order. To the *hrossa* the tragedy of Hyoi's death was not only a reasonable but comprehensible outgrowth of willful, albeit momentary, selfishness, of deciding rather than listening and following instructions. Even *hrossian* cubs knew that his going to Meldilorn was unequivocal for a very simple reason: "'It is not a question of thinking but of what an *eldil* says.'" (83) What the reader may find virtually incredible is the fact that forgiveness, an occurrence rare enough in his own life and world, occurred on Malacandra -- simply because it was needed. Elwin Ransom, seeking pardon from the dying Hyoi but ignorant of the Malacandrian words enabling him to ask for it, had found it:

> '*Hnā* -- *hmā*,' . . . [Hyoi] muttered and then, at last, *Hmān*, *hnakrapunt*.' (82)

A change in motif corresponds with the resumption of the forward movement of the *OSP* narrative. Ransom is no longer the child having much to learn. Instead, sobered by the death and words of Hyoi, he has

become the pilgrim penitently struggling toward a goal. Lewis rejects the obvious symbolic potential in the journey as an allegorical projection of his growth toward perfection.[57] He favors, rather, a modified stream-of-consciousness technique to trace Ransom's spiritual growth through the modal structure of OSP. This psychological orientation combined with the image of a correct path to be followed frees him to accomplish three matters of apologetic significance to a modern reader of the book: distinguishing between legitimate hardships of the way and those we, as pilgrims, create; isolating the rational functioning of the mind, or will, from that of the imagination and of the emotions; establishing by direct confrontation on the non-symbolic goal, the existence of a life and will greater than our own, which gives meaning and direction to the way of a pilgrim.

Numerous fears plague Ransom as if they are ghosts from his former life. He recalls his role in the death of Hyoi, his renewed anxiety about Weston and Devine, his fear of sorns, his doubt about the existence of Oyarsa and mounting terror should Oyarsa be real. Lewis never discounts the fact that the way itself is difficult, for Ransom finds his ascent into Malacandrian highlands increasingly demanding. He is without food, shelter, or oxygen in the colder, thinner atmosphere. Worse than these, however, are the deterrents his moods, or feelings, and hysterical, vain imaginings impose on him. It is these, Lewis implies, which threaten his successful completion of the journey more than physical hardships. Moods and fancies offer tempting but illusory choices. One by one Ransom confronts the deadly but vulnerable foes accosting him -- and wins. Lewis heralds his victories with a series of straightforward,

aphoristic statements. Thus, manfully Ransom curbs the inadequacy which had not let him go when the eldil spoke nor now lets him forgive himself. It yields to reason:

> . . . Ransom sternly repressed an insistent whining impulse to renewed protestations and regrets, self-accusations that might elicit some word of pardon. Hyoi with his last breath had called him hnakra-slayer; that was forgiveness generous enough and with that he must be content. (84)

Earlier Ransom had been anxious about the strength of his conviction to remain free in a strange world. He had wondered whether his seeming courage were no more than a "short-lived illusion." (37) Then Weston, Devine, and sorns had concerned him; now they and Oyarsa, the latter certain to be formidable as "some alien, cold intelligence, super-human in power, sub-human in cruelty" (86) threatened him. Weeks ago he had quavered in his resolve because he knew little about himself, having, "like many men of his own age, . . . rather underestimated than overestimated his own courage; . . . ." (37) Now he grimly ascended the mountain because he had been told he must go to Meldilorn, and "he was determined henceforward to obey . . . ." (85) Whether he now felt courageous had no bearing on what he knew and consciously decided to do as a result of that knowledge. If the feeling of courage never came, then stubbornness was a serviceable alternative because it would help him to accomplish what he had made up his mind to do. Steadfast in his commitment, Ransom subdued mounting fear mingled with guilt and hope of escape:

> His efforts to rely on his own judgment in Malacandra had so far ended tragically enough. He made a strong resolution, defying in advance all changes of mood, that he would faithfully carry out the journey to Meldilorn if it could be done. (85)

Lewis has not attributed to his pilgrim magical properties. Ransom is treading the path of the Tao, and all that he will have or become he now possesses. Fullblown, latent, or embryonic, rusty from disuse or misshapen by abuse, the qualities of Lewis's hero are in him. He must learn to use them, as did Bunyan's Christian. Rational insights crowding his consciousness reward his efforts. For example, he had all the evidence necessary to conclude that an Oyarsa waited for him. His existence as well as his nature could be no less definitive than that of his servant, the eldila, of whom Ransom had empirical proof:

> . . . Ransom pulled himself up. He knew too much now . . . . He and all his class would have called the eldila a superstition if they had been merely described to them, but now he had heard the voice himself. No, Oyarsa was a real person if he was a person at all. (86)

The journey no longer was a task to be borne grudgingly but an "accepted duty" (86) to be carried out responsibly. His self-concept assumed its rightful place in the scheme as he began to experience a "sober sense of confidence in himself and in the world, and even an element of pleasure." (86-87) Nor was there need for concern about being lost or misunderstanding Whin's directions to the Meldilorn "road," for "when it came it was unmistakable." (87)

At least for the moment Ransom has effected masterful changes in

himself and has acquired a new meaning for his being. He would do what someone else asked of him rather than what he wanted for himself. The fact that he is willing to face Augray, a sorn and the "very trap" (85) he had once hoped to avoid on Malacandra, in order to achieve his goal is proof enough that he has learned to listen to and obey claims to life other than his own.

Both real and imagined difficulties continue to assault him, however, as if taunting him for having made up his mind. The road led Ransom away from all that was familiar to him on Malacandra. The "desolating force" (88) of strangeness he had first experienced upon landing in the new world again engulfed him. In the thin, cold atmosphere of the mountains he breathed heavily and became confused. Yet his decision to go to Meldilorn held as if it were now the soundest part of his being. Stubbornly he overcame a rapacious imagination with "the old resolution, taken when he could still think, ... "(88) He approached his long-dreaded confrontation with a sorn with the same strength, "determined to carry out his programme; . . . ." (91) Ironically, Augray befriended Ransom at the critical point of his mountain-top journey, as Whin had said he would (83), and thus refuted his hastily-drawn but ill-founded fear of sorns. Augray did little to dispell his growing dread of Oyarsa, however. The sorn itself knew only that Oyarsa had sent for Ransom; he did not know why. (95)

It is tempting to make further associations between the story of Ransom and familiar allegories like Pilgrim's Progress. The various temptations of doubt, fear, and pride which Lewis's pilgrim has endured are not far removed from the flesh-and-blood figures Bunyan used to

dramatize the inner conflicts of Christian. Nevertheless, this first book of the space-trilogy contains a precedent of profound theological import to be explored at length in _P._ Lewis has, therefore, deliberately constructed the reality of Oyarsa at Meldilorn as something external to Ransom rather than a fanciful product of an hysterical imagination. Furthermore, if Oyarsa is to symbolize anything, he will represent that superhuman life undeniably real to Ransom in the scheme of creation. While the trilogy can be read for fun as a good romance in which anything is possible, or as a practical handbook for correct spiritual growth, it is in each instance a monumental denial of man as the highest and best expression of creation. He is but one among many such expressions.

Ransom has come to eliminate or control numerous irrational fears through reason and practical evidence. His fear of Oyarsa continues to nag him, however, and for good reason. On the basis of information gleaned from the _hrossa_ and the knowledgeable Augray, this fear has grown into the most substantial, pervasive, and well-founded of them all. As such, it is fundamental to the theological devleopment of the trilogy. It is symbolic of man's reaction to God. For the moment, man, as Ransom, need deal only with Oyarsa. That was disheartening enough: without having confronted him, Ransom was convinced that Oyarsa was a person who did exist; it was common knowledge among the _hrossa_ that Oyarsa, "'the greatest of _eldila_ who ever come to a _handra_'" (94) did take lives; Ransom had offended the ruler by contributing directly to the death of one of his creatures. Without knowing how or why he had become involved with Oyarsa, he steeled himself for the worst. He dared no hopes in meeting with "'the last fence'" on Malacandra (97).

Old Testament tradition and imaginative construction through realism of presentation make Oyarsa physically discernible. While he is barely visible to Ransom, Oyarsa can be heard. Like his servant, the eldil, Oyarsa is light and voice. He is also power. The sublime ruler, perceptible as the "merest whisper of light -- no, less than that, the smallest diminution of shadow -- . . . ;or rather some difference in the look of the ground, too slight to be named in the language of the five senses," (119) is master of time and space (141). He has overseen Malacandra from times before Thulcandra contained life (121). He can see into the minds of man (134). He is simultaneously present in the heavens and in a world (120). He can, like the "'least of . . . [his] servants,'" (123) bring instant death to Ransom or any hnau should he find it necessary to act and "'stretch . . . authority beyond the creatures . . . of [his] own world.'" (122) While hnau from earth have demonstrated their own ability to bring instant death wherever they choose, the ability of Oyarsa in this respect is apparently unique. He can terminate the life of a creature by returning it to Maleldil (123) or by splitting its atoms (133) in order to eliminate the creature altogether.(139) To defy Oyarsa would be sheer folly. One would have to be mad or supremely foolish to invite his anger and a certain disastrous fate.

Weston is both of these. He and Devine arrive at Meldilorn after Ransom, accompanied by the hross colony bearing the bodies of Hyoi and two other hrossa for a funeral. Lewis uses satire to emphasize the irony underlying their true relationship to Oyarsa. Thus, they speak

baby-talk in order to address Oyarsa because they believe they are superior to him. Weston and Devine are convinced that he is nothing more than a "'witch-doctor'" among extraterrestrial "'savages'" (126). We laugh cautiously while we realize that tragedy, the companion piece to comedy, as if it were a universal law, is ready to claim them in an instant. Oyarsa overpowers every creature present. Weston and Devine are the only ones who refuse to admit such a possibility to themselves. Lewis signifies the depravity of their egos by limiting their vision and facility with the Malacandrian language. Hence, they first address themselves angrily to a false Oyarsa, a sleeping, elderly hross whom they threaten and cajole. (126-127) Weston has been clever, Lewis notes,

> Due credit must be given to Weston for his powers of observation: he had picked out the only creature in the assembly which was not standing in an attitude of reverence and attention. (126)

but far from wise.

"Relation is reciprocity," Martin Buber has stated. In the universe man is neither alone nor independent. He is, rather, "inscrutably involved" because he is a part of living creation and exists in the midst of its ceaseless "currents" of mutual response.[58] In Lewis's universe, as in Buber's, relationship and response are possible because there is a life-giver, God, i.e., the Old One personified in Maleldil. All creatures are hnau, or "'copies of Maleldil'" (120). He has endowed each one with something of his own nature, a moral sense emanating from internalized laws like "'pity and straight dealing and shame . . . and the love of kindred.'" (138) As a whole, these laws form Lewis's Tao,

or moral path, along which creatures are to direct their lives as hnau of Maleldil. Such laws make it possible for each creature to know instinctively what it should do in order to honor Maleldil who has given him the gift of life. Among hnau, the hmān, or human hnau, is free to choose whether he will send his life along the path Maleldil has made for his creatures to travel. Travelling another path may make a hmān happy, but he must be prepared for the possibility that his choice does not honor Maleldil. If he travels far on another path and has no wish to leave it, hmān must eventually answer for his poor choice. Therefore, it is not surprising to find that Oyarsa pronounces Devine unfit for natural death and a return to Maleldil. He has travelled so far down the path of greed that his hnau (life as composed of gifts or talents) has already died, the victim of an insidious morality. All that Oyarsa might do for Devine is to "'unmake his body'" (139) and commit him to "real death." He finds Weston curable, however. (139) Despite his boistrous defiance and proud arrogance, Weston has a hnau desperately fighting to survive. Curiously, he fears natural death in spite of his stated willingness to die in order to assure life for his fellow hnau, the human "'race.'" (137) Oyarsa sees that Weston has fallen victim to the Bent One, the eldil of Thulcandra, who has long used doubt, suspicion, and a variety of fears to turn hnau of that world away from a trusting obedience of Maleldil (121, 140). Oyarsa might be able to "'cure'" Weston of creating his own Tao by teaching him to accept living and dying as Maleldil intended for each hnau. As for Ransom, his piety had not served him very well. Rebellious and fearful, he had been unaware that the entire fabric of his journey from Thulcandra

had been the reluctant response to a "'call'" (120) from Oyarsa of Malacandra. Many hnau had tried to tell him, but he had chosen to believe the "bent" version of the call as a sacrifice rather than an invitation as it first came from Weston and Devine. Guilt and awe had brought a humbled Ransom to the sacred grove at Meldilorn. His "certain sinking of heart" (118) had been entirely appropriate to a hnau who failed to understand that he was safe because Maleldil had made everything and that his laws were operative everywhere. Nevertheless, Ransom is also curable. Bravery will make him fit for an imminent return to Maleldil (123).

Lewis demonstrates the intellectual confrontation with Maleldil which is the onset of Weston's potential cure. Oyarsa tries to convince Weston that fear of natural death is unreasonable because Maleldil has planned for it. Furthermore, it is an unnatural fear which he has acquired from the Bent One of Thulcandra who teaches it to every hnau who will listen to him rather than to Maleldil. From it arise other evils which hmān does, but all are futile, "'vain troubles'" (122). Rather than living peaceful lives, the hmān who follows the Bent One through fearful deeds "'wastes'" his life and "'befouls . . . [it] with flying from what . . . [he knows] will overtake . . . [him] in the end.'" (140) Weston, a Freudian nightmare coming to life, hears talk of Maleldil but dislikes what he hears. Contemptuously he rejects the courteous servants of Maleldil and dismisses the idea of Maleldil with a passionate vehemence:

> 'Trash! Defeatist trash!' he shouted at Oyarsa in English; then, drawing himself up to his full height, he added in Malacandrian, 'You say your

> Maleldil let all go dead. Other one,
> Bent One, he fight, jump, live -- not
> all talkee-talkee. Me no care Maleldil.
> Like Bent One better: me on his side.' (140)

Realizing that Weston had turned an invisible corner or shut an invisible but real door and left them all far behind, Oyarsa concluded their session with a final pronouncement. Weston and Devine were "'unteachable'" (OSP, 122) and thus unable to grow into better hnau. They would destroy the peaceful planet. He would not tolerate their presence unless they changed. Their minds were impenetrable, however; they were not willing to do so. Therefore, he would return them to their own world or kill them should they remain in his. Servants of fear, they responded to feeling rather than reason: their thoughts were "'at the mercy of . . . [their] blood.'" (103) Weston and Devine were powerless to resist the lure of a dangerous return flight to Earth. They would take any risk in order to live as they wanted. Their journey home would be a victory for the Bent Oyarsa because Devine was as insatiable as ever and Weston had openly cast his lot against Maleldil.

The call from Oyarsa that some one among them extend the courtesy of explaining why hmān came to Malacandra had at last been answered by Ransom (122 ff.). To him Oyarsa now gave a choice and a new charge: to remain at liberty on Malacandra or to return with his kind to Thulcandra and resist them. Responding to the law of love of kind, Ransom chose to return to Earth (142). His journey home would be both a personal and a cosmic victory, for he, unlike Weston and Devine, would return a more knowledgeable and courageous hnau. He had listened well and learned, although not without effort, in the new world. Oyarsa, like

Hyoi, saw that his role in the death of the creature had been a chance act of the blood and feeling rather than an intentional act of mind. Since then, Ransom had proved that he could be taught to be a better hnau. Lewis symbolizes his growth by giving him a new role. Ransom would be a new servant of Oyarsa (143) on the side of Maleldil in the pending cosmic battle with the Bent One. Underlying its symbolic significance is a subtle modal structure, however. Wiser because he had learned obedience to life naturally greater than he, Ransom had also dutifully responded to an obligation to return. On Earth, he would be the only hmān to know that Weston and Devine were infinitely dangerous and how they might be kept from exploiting the solar system for its "'Sun's blood,'" or gold (69). Like the journey to Meldilorn, the return to Earth had become a necessity for Ransom.

OSP concludes as a sketch of man within a rational cosmic scheme. As the first book of the space-trilogy, it is significant because it is Lewis's early effort to explore through literature the human side of a human-divine relationship. While he does not discount the fact that divinity can make itself known to man, as history will acknowledge through Old Testament evidence, his concern as an apologist is man's reaction to the presence of divinity. In OSP he has presented an intellectual encounter of man and divinity through Weston who cannot accept the idea or possibility of the existence of God. A symbolic encounter of man and God occurs in the relationship of Ransom to Oyarsa. The early references to his piety and thoughts of catechizing the hrossa suggest that Ransom has long been a nominal Christian, i.e., he has confronted and accepted the idea of life forms beyond himself,

and of God in particular, including the possibility of His incarnation as Maleldil. Ransom is therefore receptive to the existence of Oyarsa, a being greater than he but one who is equally a derivative of, and dependent upon, Maleldil for his life. He is also receptive to learning to respond actively to the God he has thus far known intellectually.

V

The first book of the trilogy indicates that man can determine for himself what he shall do within the cosmic scheme of life but that he cannot escape being a part of it even in death. Oyarsa represents the basic nature of the scheme of life. He is alive and will survive "'in the body'" (143) long after Ransom, Weston, and Devine have returned to Maleldil or have been unmade in person as well as body. He is reason and can penetrate to the truth of all matters where he reigns. He is justice and carries out the will of Maleldil. He is power but also _hnau_, or creature, and knows fewer restrictions from time and space than _hmān_. If Oyarsa is so much greater than Elwin Ransom, what more is Maleldil whom both serve?

Like an existential treatise, _OSP_ has dealt with man as he faces the unknown. But Lewis is a Christian. His universe is neither mechanistic nor unknowable but alive under the nurture of its Creator. His universe is personal. Throughout, it is a place where survival of the self, of one's own person, matters. While Lewis believed that such survival was contingent upon "faith," the space-trilogy is his demonstration of concern that the reader understand faith as an attitude as well as an act rather than as a nebulous term of convenience. Confronting the unknown with fortitude and resolve is the basis for faith in a personal universe. Fear is the foremost deterrent to man's

acting effectively, "faithfully" in situations to which he has been unquestionably called. Yet the fact that he has been called or summoned, as Ransom had been summoned to Malacandra, is indicative of his significance in the divine tending of the cosmos.

In the second book of his space-trilogy Lewis portrays man as worthy enough to have been admitted to the company of the Olympian servants of Maleldil. No longer the child who must be trained in obedience, the most elementary act of faith, Ransom confronts the disintegration of paradise from Earth's historical past as an ominous, certain threat revived on Perelandra. As the unknown becomes a terrible possibility to which the sin-filled history of Earth itself attests, we learn what comprises "faith" in the universe of Maleldil. We understand better our own resources in the face of detestable necessity. Maleldil Himself is among them.

As in OSP, the impetus for the second narrative is the summons of Oyarsa to Ransom on Thulcandra. This time, however, Ransom is not only aware of his call from Oyarsa but also knows that it is an "'order . . . [coming] from much higher up'" (P, 23). All orders do "'in the long run,'" he tells his confidant, "C. S. Lewis." (23) More confident and courageous than the Ransom of OSP, the Ransom who is to take on the "'black archon,'" or Bent Oyarsa, of Earth (23) is realistic about his chances of surviving whatever happens: they are few. "C. S. Lewis" has been called not only to assist in his mysterious departure but also to oversee the disposition of his estate should Ransom fail to return from the strange mission (28).

Lewis implies that trust is the major factor underlying the modal

structure of the second book of the trilogy. To "C. S. Lewis" who inquires about the nature and purpose of his latest cosmic venture Ransom is deliberate but evasive:

> "No idea at all what I'm to do. There are jobs, you know, where it is essential that one should not know too much beforehand . . . things one might have to say which one couldn't say effectively if one had prepared them." (25-26)

The planet Perelandra reinforces the picture of a universe brimming with visible and invisible life. There the Lady lives as a paradisial creature. For her, Maleldil is a constant and dependable companion. Startled by her knowledge of his own world, Ransom could not resist questioning her source of information.

> "How do you know that?" asked Ransom in amazement.
>
> "Maleldil is telling me," answered the woman. (61)

Lewis does not immediately affirm the truth of her statement but intimates that it is fact. To a creature from the "bent" world of Thulcandra, the "voice" of Maleldil is a diffused experience lacking focus as Ransom's first view of Malacandra had been:

> And as she spoke the landscape had become different, though with a difference none of the senses would identify. The light was dim, the air gentle, and all Ransom's body was bathed in bliss, but the garden world where he stood seemed to be packed quite full, and as if an unendurable pressure had been laid upon his shoulders, his legs failed him and he half sank, half fell, into a sitting position. (61)

Although Perelandra is a beautiful world, the joy and goodness

abounding there are matters of attitude as well as physical experiences of its delights. The Lady can say truthfully that each deed is pleasurable,

> "The fruit we are eating is always the best fruit of all," (83)

because there are no imperfect creations in her world. Nevertheless, Lewis implies that Paradise is also a product of mind. Evil, she tells Ransom, is possible wherever one ceases to regard time as a reservoir of good from Maleldil. Then one would be forever "'clinging to the old good instead of taking the good that came.'" (83)

With the arrival of Weston from Thulcandra, the static image of Paradise ominously comes to life, and _P_ moves inexorably from the _mythos_ of romance into operative myth.

Claiming to have changed since his venture to Malacandra, Weston declared that he had become as religious a man as Ransom. He sported a new vocabulary, but there was no discernible change in the attitude underlying his newest insight. He saw beyond an exclusively scientific outlook on life and had abandoned his "'rigid specialisation of knowledge.'" (89) Science fostered a dualistic philosophy that was both inadequate and wrong (93). Weston had proof that all life was one in the cosmos. His proof was the sense of an "'unconsciously purposive dynamism'" (90) pulsating through all matter. Ransom and he now stood at opposite ends of the same diameter in the same plane separated only by words and some old-fashioned ideas. "' . . . nothing now divides you and me except a few outworn theological technicalities, ...'" (91) he declared.

On Malacandra Oyarsa had tried to convince him that the universe belonged to Maleldil. The great physicist knew better, however. Ultimate Intelligence, "'this blind, inarticulate purposiveness,'" (91) rather than Maleldil, had groomed him for a brilliant career in science and then sent him to Malacandra. In gratitude to the universal power for his fame, Weston called it the "'Holy Spirit'" (91) or "'Life-Force.'" (93) Following his safe return from Malacandra, he had been moved to adopt a new goal for his talents and ambition as an added measure of thanks to it:

> "to spread spirituality, not to spread the human race, is henceforth my mission." (91)

Undoubtedly Weston was no longer the pragmatic exponent of a narrow-minded humanitarianism "'an exclusive devotion to human utility.'" (90) However, in becoming "religious," he had abandoned neither the amoral ruthlessness familiar to Ransom nor his penchant for talking about the universe of Maleldil in curiously impersonal terms:

> "The world leaps forward through great men and greatness always transcends mere moralism. When the leap has been made our 'diabolism' as you would call it becomes the morality of the next stage; . . . ." (95)

Weston is Lewis's portrait of man at the forefront of knowledge engaging in an ongoing intellectual confrontation with ultimate reality. He has learned that there is order in the cosmos because one factor, an impersonal force, has given rise to all that it is. The order is an outgrowth of Life seeking to extend itself through a continuum of

Nature. Man is an integral part of Nature, the order of Life. He is therefore obligated to undertake his own expression of the ultimate purpose which has created him: he must keep Life alive. With his recognition of cosmic unity has come a convenient obliteration of moral distinctions, for life as an abstraction without sight or speech, form or face, does not generate selfless concern in its supporters. Unlike Oyarsa, an "'arm'" (OSP, 121) of Maleldil who is a fair-minded person having reason and insight, Weston is the vindictive scapegoat of an indeterminate power without definition or meaning but its own energy. Through a linguistic equation Lewis symbolizes the recklessness overcoming his newest student of spiritual matters: Life-Force is the synonym for the Holy Spirit of Christianity in Weston's vocabulary. Similarly, means and ends are also synonymous where the Life-Force is concerned. Weston is a walking sacrilege and dangerous:

> "How far does it go? Would you still obey the Life-Force if you found it prompting you to murder me?"
>
> "Yes."
>
> . . . .
>
> "God help you!" said Ransom. (95)

Weston has grown blind to others but, in contrast to the inarticulate Life-Force, is able to speak. He defends himself with vociferous rationalzing:

> "You are still wedded to your conventionalities, ... Still dealing in abstractions. Can you not even conceive a total commitment -- a commitment to something which utterly overrides all our petty ethical pigeon-holes?" (95)

Desperately Ransom tried to salvage his would-be killer from the unknown horrors of a "'next stage'":

> "That may be a point of contact. . . . you're giving up yourself. . . . wait half a second. This *is* the point of contact between your morality and mine. We both acknowledge -- " (96)

Weston responded with a new-familiar decision. His last rational, conscious acts on Perelandra were a refusal to listen to Ransom, as on Malacandra he had refused to hear Oyarsa talk of Maleldil, and an invitation to the Life-Force:

> "Idiot, ... Can you understand nothing? Will you always try to press everything back into the miserable framework of your old jargon about self and self-sacrifice? . . . In so far as I am the conductor of the central forward pressure of the universe, I am it. Do you see, you timid, scruple-mongering fool? I *am* the Universe. I, Weston, am your God and *your* Devil. I call that Force into me completely . . . . " (96)

"Life Force" became synonymous with "Weston."

The precipitous transition of *P* from romance to myth is a direct result of the melodramatic, Faustian desire of Weston to elevate himself to a larger-than-life being -- with a little help from the Life-Force. His appearance as an archetype of evil is not readily apparent, however, nor is his immediate influence as an evil figure widespread. What little Lewis dramatically reveals of Weston after his egotistic display is, nevertheless, highly symbolic of the possessive, consuming nature of evil apparent throughout the modal construction of the space-trilogy.

A worried Ransom, offering brandy to the prone figure of a stunned Weston, was startled to find him biting into and swallowing the top of the glass bottle in a suicidal response to an offer of help. (96) The Life-Force began to search for its next victim.

Incorporating Biblical tradition into P, Lewis has used the Genesis myth of the Old Testament and the Christian myth of the New Testament to shape its modal and narrative construction and to produce myth. The Genesis myth predominates throughout, although its influence is directly felt in the earlier part of the narrative. The Lady Tinidril and Ransom are the respective main characters of the Genesis and Christian myths. Weston, whose physical transformation symbolizes his spiritual degeneration, is the Satanic element in the Genesis myth. As such, he inspires the re-enactment of the Christian myth through Ransom. Weston is the technical link between the two narratives. He is also the impetus for the archetypal role which Ransom plays as a redeemed creation of Maleldil. Primarily because of Weston, Ransom is compelled -- is permitted -- to discover what it means to be a human creature of Earth, "'time's corner.'"

The divine negative command implicit in the Genesis myth and expressed symbolically as "forbidden fruit" in the Old Testament narrative becomes a non-undulating island, the "Fixed Land" (73), in P. Each image symbolizes the essence of a natural relationship between God and man, however. As secondary beings derived from Him, men cannot have the boundless freedom and power of divinity without divine consent. They exist, therefore, within limits, both physical and moral. The Genesis myth relates that paradisial creatures know of their limitations

because God has told them what they are. Furthermore, paradisial creatures accept these restrictions. Thus, human and divine will are one in the Genesis myth. But the Genesis myth has a tragic conclusion. Earth is no longer an Eden. Here human will has set itself apart from divine will to create its own world. The Christian myth is a re-affirmation of the fact that there is a divine will to which the human will can respond. Together the Genesis and Christian myths point to man as the variable in an ongoing relationship. God has not changed; man has.

What is evil? To suggest that it emanates from God would be to imply that He is evil as well as good. The heretical nature of this argument is obvious. For Lewis, the evil implicit in both the Genesis and Christian myths is, nonetheless, a powerful, cosmic reality having the mind, i. e., "intelligence and will,"[59] of good but lacking its acceptance of limitations. Briefly, evil is good in rebellion and wholly dependent upon good to sustain it. Evil is a parasite which survives through the consent, or will, of good. "The powers which enable evil to carry on are powers given it by goodness,"[60] Lewis said. Derivative good, i. e., the good creature formed by divinity, creates evil; the good creature, not God, insures its survival.

The foremost value of P as apologetic literature is its graphic demonstration of why and how evil exists according to Christian doctrine. Through the creation of Weston as the embodiment of evil stalking the Lady Tinidril, the embodiment of good, Lewis gives life to the doctrines of the Fall of Man and to Hell. Through the creation of Ransom as a Christian hero, he reaffirms that man has been redeemed

and can, if he will, re-enter Paradise.

As a paradisial creature, the Lady of Perelandra has a natural proximity to Maleldil. It is her salvation. She can hear Maleldil speaking to her. So long as she can believe what He tells her to do, she is secure and happy. As a demonic figure, Weston seeks first the distortion of this relationship with Maleldil prior to attempting its destruction altogether. Without disturbing the integrity of the creature-Creator relationship, Weston is powerless to claim the Lady for his own use. Thus, he begins to draw her into his sphere of influence and away from that of Maleldil by introducing her to thinking and to doubt. Carefully he coaxes her through the simplest of analogies into an imaginary realm, that of "'Might Be'" and "'Story'" (104). If he were to succeed, she would be unable to distinguish fact from fancy or Maleldil from herself. The Lady listens as Weston relates his own fancy:

> ". . . this forbidding is such a strange one," said the Man's voice. "And so unlike the ways of Maleldil in my world. And He has not forbidden you to think about dwelling on the Fixed Land."
>
> "That would be a strange thing -- to think about what will never happen."
>
> "Nay, in our world we do it all the time. We put words together to mean things that have never happened and places that never were: beautiful words, well put together. And then tell them to one another. We call it stories or poetry. In that old world you spoke of, Malacandra, they did the same. It is for mirth and wonder and wisdom."
>
> "What is the wisdom in it?"
>
> "Because the world is made up not only of what is but of what might be. Maleldil knows both and wants us to know both." (104)

So long as she depends upon the voice of Maleldil, however, Weston cannot win:

> ". . . [Ransom] and I have already made you older about certain matters which the King never mentioned to you. That is the new good which you never expected . . . ."
>
> "I begin to see now why the King and I were parted at this time. This is a strange and great good He intended for me."
>
> "And if you refused to learn things from me and kept on saying you would wait and ask the King, would that not be like turning away from the fruit you had found to the fruit you had expected?"
>
> "These are deep questions, Stranger. Maleldil is not putting much into my mind about them." (105)

Weston chooses another avenue of destruction, feelings. If Maleldil is a rational Being who appeals to the minds of his creatures, then Weston's new attack is likely to succeed where mind and reason have little dominion. He courts vanity, a powerful lure. His appeal to the creature's love of self is indirect, beginning not with the Lady but with creatures similar to her. He tries to convince Tinidril that she is capable of becoming as beautiful and lovable as the women of his world. There men love them more than the King loves her because the women have learned how to become creators in their own right. As "'little Maleldils,'" (106) they have learned well the lesson of "Might Be." Women in his world know that it is not sufficient to be content with things as they are. Instead, "'they always reach out their hands for the new and unexpected good, and see that it is good long before the men understand it.'" (106) Momentarily we see ourselves thoroughly victimized

by evil while, like us, the Lady succumbs to unfulfilled feeling for the first time since her creation:

> "I wish I could see them" (106)

Her recovery from the spell is immediately forthcoming and effective. She attributes to Maleldil the good she has found in what Weston has told her:

> "How beautiful is Maleldil and how wonderful are all His works: . . . .
> . . . .
> Joy also widens out and comes where we had never thought." (106)

A variety of evils readily follow the advent of a non-human Weston on Perelandra. The most insidious of these is the unrelenting temptation of the Lady. In recreating the corruption of Eve from the Genesis myth, Lewis closely examines the initial impact of evil on good and clarifies the role Ransom is to play on Perelandra. The matter of her downfall is a discernible process starting with a known locus, the mind of the creature. Until Ransom and Weston came to her world, the mind of the Lady filled with information from Maleldil. He Himself gave her wisdom and made her "'older'" (60). She had depended solely upon Him to learn what she needed to know as creation fully and independently alive in a paradisial world. In Maleldil she, as "'His beast,'" (76) had an abiding, unquestioning trust. Implicit obedience, its corollary, is her conscious response to "'His biddings.'" (76) Without hesitation she had left the Fixed Land before nightfall, for example. Because she is able to hear Maleldil speaking to her, the Lady commands a natural authority

over herself, particularly evident in her frequent silencing of both Ransom and Weston as each attempts to put into her mind his version of wisdom and truth. When she grew tired, for example, she went "instantly [to] sleep," "wholly unconcerned." (122) As if responding to a verbal order from Maleldil Himself, she thwarted each with "'Hush!'" (128). With laughter that overtook her "for a whole minute on end," (132) she halted further serious discussion of the nobility in a lonely life. She had found neither joy nor dignity in the favorite topics of Weston, "the Great Risk" and "Creative" (132). They were frankly absurd when considered from her secure vantage point, "'beside'" Maleldil (70). Unless that vantage point were changed, unless the Lady stood far from Maleldil so that she could no longer hear Him, or unless she had reason to question what she could yet hear Him saying, Ransom had little cause to worry about her succumbing to Weston, the Un-man.

The Man with the voice of Weston had not been able to make her feel unworthy. As if her declaration of loyalty to Maleldil exasperated him, he gave in abruptly to sleep.

To Ransom, enveloped in the thick blackness of an impenetrable Perelandrian night, there came unexpected relief. "The whole darkness about him rang with victory." (107) The Lady had triumphed over someone he could not identify until daybreak. Meanwhile, he realized that he had not found it necessary to join in her defense. He surmised happily that he need never do so:

> The feeling of a great disaster averted was forced upon his mind, and with it came the hope that there would be no second attempt; and then, sweeter than all, the suggestion

> that he had been brought there not to do anything but only as a spectator or a witness. A few minutes later he was asleep. (107)

Lewis has blanketed his hero with a false security, however. It enhances his subtle creation of a formidable adversary for the Lady and a memorable romantic antagonist for Ransom. Chief among the indicators of the Man as a threatening force is his curious revelation as "Something" (107) like Weston. In the clear light of day, Ransom saw the figure behind the voice in the night and realized that Weston had survived. Yet he had also changed. "Weston" was a picture of horror assaulting a frog,

> . . . surgically inserting his forefinger, with its long sharp nail, under the skin behind the creature's head and ripping it open. Ransom had not noticed before that Weston had such remarkable nails . . . . He saw a man who was certainly not ill, to judge from his easy stance and the powerful use he had just been making of his fingers. He saw a man who was certainly Weston, to judge from his height and build and colouring and features. In that sense he was quite recognisable. But the terror was that he was also unrecognisable. He did not look like a sick man: but he looked very like a dead one. The face which he raised from torturing the frog had that terrible power which the face of a corpse sometimes has of simply rebuffing every conceivable human attitude one can adopt towards it. The expressionless mouth, the unwinking stare of the eyes, something heavy and inorganic in the very folds of the cheek, said clearly: "I have features as you have, but there is nothing in common between you and me." (110)

Dumbfounded, Ransom stared back and resisted the "conviction" which now overtook him: "that this, in fact, was not a man: that Weston's body was kept, walking and undecaying, in Perelandra by some wholly different

kind of life, and that Weston himself was gone." (110) Although the figure began to smile at him, Ransom kept his silence and then -- fainted.

Capitalizing upon the scholarly background of his hero, Lewis introduces the Great Chain of Being concept to indicate that the actual drama of the Eden-on-Perelandra myth is about to unfold. As any child would know, its prologue has just concluded:

> As he lay there, still unable and perhaps unwilling to rise, it came into his mind that in certain old philosophers and poets he had read that the mere sight of the devils was one of the greatest among the torments of Hell. It had seemed to him till now merely a quaint fancy. And yet (as he now saw) even the children know better: no child would have any difficulty in understanding that there might be a face the mere beholding of which was final calamity. The children, the poets, and the philosophers were right. As there is one Face above all worlds merely to see which is irrevocable joy, so at the bottom of all worlds that face is waiting whose sight alone is the misery from which none who beholds it can recover. And though there seemed to be, and indeed were, a thousand roads by which a man could walk through the world, there was not a single one which did not lead sooner or later either to the Beatific or the Miserific Vision. He himself had, of course, seen only a mask or faint adumbration of it; even so, he was not quite sure that he would live. (111)

Thus far, the Lady has been self-possessed because she understands the will of Maleldil. This knowledge, together with her trust in Him, foiled the attempt of Un-man to overtake her mind with doubt. Nevertheless, Lewis indicates that evil is not only ruthless but also well-equipped and able to sustain its assults on good. Un-man has numerous weapons in his armory, as many as are needed to make the mind of his

intended victim a maze of confusion. If the Lady were unable to distinguish the will of Maleldil from her own creations of mind, she would lose herself in a psychological labyrinth of indistinct choices. Isolated from Maleldil, she would be the ideal target for Un-man's ultimate weapon, terror. Then feeling rather than a reasoning mind would dominate her; then she would be lost to Maleldil, perhaps forever.

Ransom himself had made a significant contribution to a potentially victorious assault by Un-Man on Tinidril. He had taught her that she, as a creature of Maleldil, was not a passive object. Inadvertently he had made her aware of her own will, the intentional part of her mind which she called the "'Alongside'" self (60). It sent her to each gift of Maleldil, she realized:

> "I thought that the good things He sent me drew me into them as the waves lift the islands; but now I see that it is I who plunge into them with my own legs and arms, as when we go swimming." (69)

This insight into herself and into her relationship with Maleldil had made her rejoice upon learning of it.

> ". . . this, O Piebald, is the glory and wonder you have made me see; that it is I, I myself, who turn from the good expected to the given good. Out of my own heart I do it." (69)

Yet it is also the very means by which "Weston's body" seeks to gain access to her soul. The being no longer worthy of the names "Weston" or "Man" stalked her voluntary self through her imagination as well as through powerful feelings like self-love. He would force her to choose

whether she would serve Maleldil. He spun captivating lies in order to trap her in his web:

> "He longs -- oh, how greatly He longs -- to see His creature become fully itself, to stand up in its own reason and its own courage even against Him. But how can He tell it to do this? That would spoil all.'" (117)

He produced a clever gadget to introduce her to her own image, the illusion of self-sufficiency, and to crippling self-awareness. Ransom watched as she examined her first looking-glass, "an English pocket-mirror that might have cost three-and-six." (136) Its effect on the Lady was devastating.

> "Look!" he said. Then taking it from her he held it up to her face. She stared for quite an appreciable time without apparently making anything of it. Then she started back with a cry and covered her face. Ransom started too. It was the first time he had seen her the mere passive recipient of any emotion. The world about him was big with change.
>
> "Oh -- oh," she cried. "What is it? I saw a face."
>
> "Only your own face, beautiful one," said the Un-man.
>
> "I know," said the Lady, still averting her eyes from the mirror. "My face -- out there -- looking at me. Am I growing older or is it something else? I feel . . . I feel . . . my heart is beating too hard. I am not warm. What is it?" She glanced from one of them to the other. The mysteries had all vanished from her face. It was as easy to read as that of a man in a shelter when a bomb is coming.
>
> "What is it?" she repeated.

> "It is called Fear," said Weston's mouth.
> Then the creature turned its face full on
> Ransom and grinned. (136)

Whereas Lewis has defined her as a paradisial creature whose hopes or desires for herself are contingent upon the will of Maleldil for her, i. e., the will of the creature and the will of the Creator are one, he defines Weston/Un-Man as the antithesis of the will of Maleldil. He is the end result of a rational, lifelong process of unbridled self-serving. As if Oyarsa of Malacandra had disembodied the essence of Weston as a final gesture of the creature's uselessness, Weston has committed himself to something like the "real death" awaiting those who were found unfit for a return to Maleldil. Weston, if he were yet "alive" in some sense of the word, now served the Self whose hopes and desires he had begun long ago to feed carefully and without hestitation. Ransom himself succumbed to the spell of the dis-ease before him, finding that "worst of all were those moments when it allowed Weston to come back into its countenance." (129) Insight and understanding help Ransom to accept what has become of Weston and to regain his composure.

> He discovered that any hatred he had once felt
> for the Professor was dead. He found it natural
> to pray fervently for his soul. Yet what he felt
> for Weston was not exactly pity. Up till that
> moment, whenever he had thought of Hell, he had
> pictured the lost souls as being still human; now,
> as the frightful abyss which parts ghosthood from
> manhood yawned before him, pity was almost
> swallowed up in horror -- in the unconquerable
> revulsion of the life within him from positive
> and self-consuming Death. If the remains of
> Weston were, at such moments, speaking through
> the lips of the Un-man, then Weston was not now
> a man at all. The forces which had begun, perhaps
> years ago, to eat away his humanity had now

> slowly poisoning the intelligence and the affections had now at last poisoned itself and the whole psychic organism had fallen to pieces. Only a ghost was left -- an everlasting unrest, a crumbling, a ruin, an odour of decay. (130)

Ironically, Lewis implies that what Weston has become is not far removed from Ransom and the Lady themselves. An ideal perverted but nevertheless fulfilled, or "perfected," in the Aristotelian tradition of entelechy,[61] Un-man is the sum of the desires and conscious efforts of Weston. Weston, rather than Maleldil, has been the creator of the horror. Thus, Un-man exemplifies the destiny of anyone who habitually responds first to his own appetites rather than to the voice of Maleldil. Through an allegorical allusion, Lewis intensifies the actual gravity of the Lady's encounter with Un-man and the precarious relationship of Ransom to both: "' . . . this, 'thought Ransom, 'might be my destination; or hers.'" (130) At which point in the course of his "perfection" had Weston become enslaved to himself?

The conflict of the Lady Tinidril and Un-man has generated the major portion of the drama in P thus far. As a flawless creation of Maleldil, the Lady expresses His perfect will as Good itself. Un-man, however, is a creature of man. As the expression of a mortal, imperfect will, he is Evil itself. Consequently, theirs is an archetypal encounter, the apologetic significance of which depends upon Lewis's careful depiction of the manner in which Good, despite its intrinsic divinity, can yield to Evil. Therefore, it is with some relief that Ransom has found the actions of Tinidril not yet questionable, indicating that the attempts of the Un-man to invade and possess her mind have had minimal results.

"No evil intention had been formed in her mind. But if her will was uncorrupted, half her imagination was already filled with bright, poisonous shapes." (134) It was the look on her face that told him she was succumbing to Un-man's false but hypnotic disclosures of Maleldil as secretive, of herself as having great physical beauty and invincible loyalty to Him -- no matter what she did. Ransom could see that she had begun to take herself too seriously.

> She stood like one almost dazed with the richness of a day-dream. . . The expression of her face was noble. It was a great deal too noble. Greatness, tragedy, high sentiment -- these were obviously what occupied her thoughts. Ransom perceived that the affair of the robes and the mirror had been only superficially concerned with what is commonly called female vanity. The image of her beautiful body had been offered to her only as a means to awake the far more perilous image of her great soul. The external and, as it were, dramatic conception of the self was the enemy's true aim. He was making her mind a theatre in which that phantom self should hold the stage. (138-139)

The onset of the Christian myth <u>per se</u> is subtle. It begins with the sense of urgency that Ransom must, after all, do something. The Lady has not yet succumbed to Un-man. Furthermore, she must never do so if the sad history of Earth-after-Eden is to remain confined to time's corner. The legacy of this history, the Judaeo-Christian tradition, belongs to Ransom. His is the dilemma of the human condition among those who know both Eden and Golgotha and who yet would serve Maleldil faithfully. The drama of <u>P</u> evolves into the conflict of Un-man and Ransom. For Ransom there is no precedent in all of Earth's history. He stands alone in time and history, and he does not know

what to do. He is merely mortal, despite his conscious decision to obey Oyarsa and come willingly to Perelandra. The "job" for which he has been chosen has begun to reveal itself to him in all its horrible, repulsive dimensions. His humanity attacks him as it had on Malacandra during the hnakra-hunt.

The dross of his being, the "chattering part of the mind," (140) introduced round after round of rationalizations which he found it difficult to escape. For example, he had already done everything he could -- his best, in fact. If matters ultimately called for someone important, "'Maleldil's representative,'" (141) then surely he was not that. It would be the height of egotism to believe that he was such a person (141). To think it was absurd. If he were that person after all, presumably he need but study what happened on Perelandra and report faithfully to the people of his own world about the presence of evil beyond their own air. Why, it was not possible for Maleldil to have given him so much responsibility or that "the fate of Venus, . . . could . . . really rest upon his shoulders." (141) But the awesome Presence closing upon him like a great weight in the darkness shut out all but the real issue: Ransom must act. Otherwise, admittedly his very presence on Perelandra was absurd, for his journey to the planet had been frankly miraculous (141). He would turn it into a farce, reduce it to a "moral exercise, . . . a sham fight" (142) simply by doing nothing. He wrestled with the commitment he had made -- how long ago? -- to carry out the order from beyond Oyarsa, to do a "job". An answer began to shape itself in his mind.

> If the issue lay in Maleldil's hands, Ransom and the Lady were those hands. The fate of a world really depended on how they behaved in the next few hours. The thing was irreducibly, nakedly real. (142)

The last obstacles fell as Ransom prepared himself for the course ahead:

> He writhed and ground his teeth, but could not help seeing. Thus, and not otherwise, the world was made. Either something or nothing must depend on individual choices. And if something, who could set bounds to it? A stone may determine the course of a river. He was that stone at this horrible moment which had become the centre of the whole universe. The eldila of all worlds, the sinless organisms of everlasting light, were silent in Deep Heaven to see what Elwin Ransom of Cambridge would do. (142).

Lewis reintroduces the motif of human wish-fulfillment at this point in the development of the character of Ransom. In so doing, he demonstrates that, in a universe where human potential is superceded only by its Creator, human wish-fulfillment is a paradox.

Maleldil was his partner. Of this Ransom was certain as he had perhaps never before been. He was safe. He need not take extraordinary risks. He need not know the extent of his limitations. There could be none (142), he thought, for Maleldil would give him whatever he would require. In fact, there were no risks, he reasoned, for his would be a decidedly "spiritual struggle" with "the Devil," Un-man (143). Of things spiritual his partner Maleldil knew more than he, Ransom thought comfortably. The prospect of physical contact with a cadaverous monster appalled him. He was pleased that Maleldil had chosen him for something other than degrading combat, a "crude, materialistic struggle" (143)

with the "night-nursery horror" (122) of "an imbecile or a monkey or a very nasty child" (128) which was wholly and forever the remains of Weston. Whatever Maleldil might ask of him in dealing with Un-man, it was physical contact which struck Ransom as being the least likely, unappealing, "impossible" (146) solution to the dilemma of Perelandra. Yet it was becoming clear to him that it was precisely that which he would have to undertake, for he was a creature from time's corner:

> What happened on Earth, when Maleldil was born a man at Bethlehem, had altered the universe for ever. The new world of Perelandra was not a mere repetition of the old world Tellus. Maleldil never repeated Himself. As the Lady had said, the same wave never came twice. When Eve fell, God was not a Man. He had not yet made men members of His body: since then He had, and through them henceforward He would save and suffer . . . . If Ransom refused, the plan, so far, miscarried. For that point in the story, a story far more complicated than he had conceived, it was he who had been selected. . . .
>
> . . . .
>
> Nothing was more or less important than anything else, nothing was a copy or model of anything else. (144-145)

Calling upon a precedent dramatically illustrated earlier in the trilogy by Weston, Lewis utilizes an intellectual confrontation with Maleldil to create a unique place for Ransom in P and thus define him as a character. With the words "God" and "Bethlehem" Lewis boldly sweeps aside allusions to the Christian myth as an imaginative catalyst used to produce the space-trilogy. The fact of the Incarnation, of God, the "Old One," having become the Man of Jesus, "Maleldil," is the determiner of what happens in the new world. There, in Ransom's mind beyond the reach of time, is the knowledge that God had come among men

and had died at their hands, a universal sacrifice. Whatever Ransom were to do, did not do, would stand in perpetual relationship to this act. The journey from Bethlehem to Golgotha was the eternal background for all acts in all times and places. His actions, always and everywhere, would be the dynamic variable in an inflexible act/scene ratio because Maleldil had walked on Thulcandra. However repulsive Un-man might be to him, Ransom's feelings had no actual bearing on whether he would support Maleldil. He had been sent to Perelandra to work. If combat with Un-man were necessary, so be it. He did not readily accept the challenge, and he groped through a maze of feeling for some reassurance that he might win, or at least not be hurt (147). As if the agony of his decision-making were a purgatory which had stripped away his last ties to earthly flaws, as if he were now co-equal with the Lady, Ransom heard his partner speak.

> "It is not for nothing that you are named Ransom," said the Voice. (147)

By way of reassurance and comfort He offered a reminder

> "My name also is Ransom, ..." (148)

and, as if Ransom were yet The Pedestrian on the back road to Sterk, a look at the plan -- as accomplished fact.

> The thing still seemed impossible. But gradually something happened to him which had happened to him only twice before in his life.
> . . . .
> In both cases the thing had seemed a sheer impossibility: he had not thought but known that, being what he was, he was psychologically

> incapable of doing it; and then, without any apparent movement of the will, as objective and unemotional as the reading on a dial, there had arisen before him, with perfect certitude, the knowledge "about this time tomorrow you will have done the impossible." The same thing happened now. His fear, his shame, his love, all his arguments, were not altered in the least. The thing was neither more nor less dreadful than it had been before. The only difference was that he know -- almost as a historical proposition -- that it was going to be done.
> . . . .
> The future act stood there, ... It was a mere irrelevant detail that it happened to occupy the position we call future instead of that which we call past. The whole struggle was over, and yet there seemed to have been no moment of victory. (149)

In the actual confrontation of Creator and creature, Lewis demonstrates that it is the receptive creature, totally dependent upon its Creator for guidance, who can make his way through a labyrinth of confusion to divine will. Shrouded in emotional concern for himself, Ransom had taken himself and the nature of his confrontation with Un-man too seriously. The realization that he was incapable of doing what must obviously be done had overwhelmed him. Nothing less than knowing the will of Maleldil Himself could sustain Ransom, for Un-man was Weston having become Death itself. That knowledge was now his. All he needed to do was to decide whether he would try to stop it from claiming Perelandra as it had Thulcandra. That was all. Faith, reason, and perspective were once more within Ransom's grasp.

> It was true that if he left it undone, Maleldil Himself would do some greater thing instead.

> . . . .
> He asked no longer "Why me?" It might as well be he as another. It might as well be any other choice as this. (150)

What in fact had made this decision loom before him as momentous, what had forced Ransom to regard his appointed role in time as impossible, or at least extraordinary, may have resulted from pride or cowardice or an overzealous inferiority complex or any of these spiritual detours in combination. All were errors, however, for neither the time nor the place could alter the fact that this task, like all others, sprang from Maleldil Himself and was therefore a part of creation. Whether he chose to participate in the creative process now was neither more nor less important than whether he did so at any other moment in time. All moments and tasks were gifts from Maleldil. Suddenly Elwin Ransom from Thulcandra saw and understood. Everything had mattered, would always matter, because Maleldil was alive.

> The fierce light which he had seen resting on this moment of decision rested in reality on all. (150)

It would be, after all, but a small thing (150): a question of his persistence, a matter of time.

VI

It may be fairly said of Ransom and Weston that each represents a potential in man which becomes fulfilled, or perfected, in the first two books of the trilogy. However, their fruition produces characters who are not simply different but mutually antagonistic to a degree requiring that one or the other be eliminated. This study has attempted to illustrate that ultimately their development as such is a matter of

free, conscious choice, an act of will. A final exercise of choice plunges Weston into chaos. By a decisive act of his conscious mind, Ransom elects to travel to Perelandra to carry out an unspecified task for Maleldil, the source of life. These episodes are examples of the modal means which Lewis uses to propel the narrative. In turn, they also illustrate the ability of man to move his own life forward. They help to answer the question of how Ransom and Weston became mortal enemies.

The factor of human will _per se_ cannot explain why they became so, however. The definitive choice of Ransom to go to Perelandra contrasts with his reluctant acceptance of the journey to Oyarsa on Malacandra and also with that of his combat with Un-man on Perelandra. Each is an exercise of will, but between the decision of the journey and that of combat there is a marked difference. While it is a qualitative one signifying Ransom's spiritual growth and awareness, each choice has been a matter of necessity. Lewis constructed a narrative which demanded that Ransom and Weston accept, reject, or ignore its latest turn. In each instance, the assertion of a will other than their own required their attention, their obedience, and, if necessary, a change of mind or will despite their personal desires. Each time Maleldil, through Oyarsa, as an idea, or actual presence, sought a better self than that which Ransom and Weston had been.

This study maintains that human will contending with necessity, expressed as divine, unchangeable will, is the modal and narrative standard Lewis has used to define the characters of Weston and Devine. Furthermore, if this standard can apply to the characters of Mark and

Jane Studdock and to Frost, each of whom remains "earthbound" in the narrative of THS, then the reader is obliged to regard the trilogy as having major significance as apologetic literature. It will have ceased to be an escapist's fantasy of other worlds.

VII

The third book of the space-trilogy brings the Christian myth back to earth. One critic has said of its major characters, Mark and Jane, that through them Lewis has detailed an average marriage "neither idyllic enough to suggest the great lovers of history and fiction, nor unhappy enough to demand the divorce court."[62] In one respect, the critic is correct. Throughout the book their relationship is decidedly mundane. And why not? Until the closing chapters theirs is little more than a union of raw selfishness. Like the N. I. C. E., the marriage of Mark and Jane is strangely predatory. As Frye has described the nature of demonic relationships, it is a "molecular tension of egos."[63] The Studdocks have a typical marriage filled, as they are, with unrealized potential. Not until Mark and Jane learn to understand themselves as creatures and begin, thereby, to exist as human beings in an eternally awesome, secondary role, does their marriage begin to live.

The realization of Jane's potential begins as abruptly as that of Ransom on the back road to Sterk seeking lodging for the night. Lewis thrusts upon her a role she cannot fathom or accept, the invasion of her mind by someone or something. Aloof and proud, she imagines herself to be more of a scholar than she is. Lewis quickly establishes the fact that her role in THS is far grander than that which she would rather have as a part-time wife and full-time individual. As a seeress, her role is extraordinary. Jane would rather ignore her ability to

foretell the future, however. It disrupted her plans. In fact, it began to undo her. After one such incident, Mark came home to find her hysterical and in need of comfort. A "humble" Jane without her usual "certain indefinable defensiveness" (THS, 44) was very glad to see him. But Mark was preoccupied and had to remain at College more often in order to get ahead. Thus, Jane was left to her own resources. They were pitiable in the face of her mounting "extreme confusion" (44) and a state of fright tantamount to "terror." (45) Desperation forces her out of a self-imposed isolation in order to pursue help from a strange source, a "Miss Ironwood" who resided at the hilltop manor, St. Anne's. (48) Rather than help from Miss Ironwood Jane received facts. She rebelled.

> "Can you then do nothing for me?"
>
> "I can tell you the truth," said Miss Ironwood. "I have tried to do so."
>
> "I mean, can you not stop it -- cure it?"
>
> "Vision is not a disease."
>
> "But I don't want it," said Jane passionately. "I must stop it. I hate this sort of thing." Miss Ironwood said nothing. (66)

Then she began to plead:

> "Don't you even know anyone who could stop it? . . . . Can't you recommend anyone?" (66)

Told there was nothing she might gain from psychotherapy, she then proceeded to question Miss Ironwood and learned that the weight of history itself would not permit her to lead a life of her own choosing,

an "'ordinary life.'" (66) She was a member of the Tudor family whose visionary ability, "'the power of dreaming realities,'" (65) she had inherited. Her involuntary "'gift'" (67) allowed her to observe persons whose evil nature and purpose were well known to Miss Ironwood. Furthermore, her life was in danger because they would be likely to know she had been "'spying'" on them (67).

If she disliked what she had thus far learned about herself, Jane liked even less the alternatives which Miss Ironwood gave her. None allowed her an opportunity to rid herself of her "bad dreams"; each insisted that she live with them. Three choices were open to Jane: suppression of her visions, a disclosure of them to a third party like a psychiatrist, or their practical disposition through Miss Ironwood and her friends at St. Anne's. Of the three alternatives, the first would greatly frighten Jane if she were to try to deny her dream-visions and maintain her independence. They were likely to recur, and she, better than anyone else, knew the impact of their seeming reality. If she were to treat them as a symptom of mental illness and request treatment from a third party, the persons frequenting her dream-visions would find her more readily. In their hands her fate would be in doubt and far from pleasant.

The prospect of permitting herself to be used by an unfamiliar group like the friends of Miss Ironwood unsettled Jane more than either of the other two choices. She was not prepared to believe matters had come to the point where she must submit the direction of her life to others. She found ready comfort in belittling what she had learned. It was nonsensical. Collecting herself, she retreated from Miss Ironwood

and St. Anne's. There had to be another way.

> She was not indeed sure that it was nonsense; but she had already resolved to treat it as if it were. She would not get "mixed up in it," would not be drawn in. One had to live one's own life. To avoid entanglements and interferences had long been one of her first principles. Even when she had discovered that she was going to marry Mark if he asked her, the thought, "But I must still keep up my own life," had arisen at once and had never for more than a few minutes at a stretch been absent from her mind. Some resentment against love itself, and therefore against Mark, for thus invading her life, remained. (72)

Lewis has thrust her into the midst of a battle she neither understands nor believes. She cannot ignore it or escape from it despite her sincere objections to becoming involved. Reality demands Jane's attention once more following the murder of Hingest, another bizarre event which she had "foreseen":

> It came over her with sickening clarity that the affair of her dreams, far from being ended, was only beginning. The bright, narrow little life which she had proposed to live was being irremediably broken into. Windows into huge, dark landscapes were opening on every side and she was powerless to shut them. It would drive her mad, she thought, to face it alone. (83)

Symbolic of the decay of her old life is the encroachment of the destructive N. I. C. E. upon the village of Edgestow. From within and without ominous changes impinge upon her. Among these is the sudden "disappearance" of Ivy Maggs, the housekeeper. Without a word to Jane, Ivy went to live at St. Anne's.

Like Ransom on Malacandra during the <u>hnakra</u> hunt, Jane Studdock

stubbornly clutches a self-prescribed life. The idea that she cannot remain independent, or "'neutral,'" puzzles her; the fact that she cannot know fully the nature of the conflict involving her offends her; the fact that she must act in good faith and join the group at St. Anne's because she has been told she must provokes her. Refuge, solace, and a full explanation await her there, but they lie beyond the hurdle of conscious choice. Jane must "'take a leap in the dark'" and "'give'" herself to the group at St. Anne's. She will not. (115)

One of the most notable recurrences of the journey motif in THS is that of the train ride. It signifies the onset of the spiritual growth of Jane, as does the Meldilorn journey of Ransom. She determines to return to St. Anne's a second time not because she has ceased to be aloof but because she is overwhelmed by fright and disgust. Out of a dream and into her morning in the midst of Edgestow had come a face. Her reaction to it is immediate and spontaneous. Like that of Ransom to the face of Un-man, it is an overwhelming experience.

> She would have known him, anywhere: not Mark's face, not her own face in a mirror, was by now more familiar. She saw the pointed beard, the pince-nez, the face which somehow reminded her of a waxworks face. She had no need to think what she would do. Her body, walking quickly past, seemed of itself to have decided that it was heading for the station and thence for St. Anne's. It was something different from fear (though she was frightened too, almost to the point of nausea) that drove her so unerringly forward. It was a total rejection of, or revulsion from, this man on all levels of her being at once. Dreams sank into insignificance compared with the blinding reality of the man's presence. (137)

The motif of the child succeeds that of the journey. Jane rediscovers an old self long ago abandoned. It is a suitable reward for the decision to return to St. Anne's, however ignoble her reasons for doing so might have been.

> The train was blessedly warm, her compartment empty, the fact of sitting down delightful. The slow journey through the fog almost sent her to sleep. She hardly thought about St. Anne's until she found herself there: even as she walked up the steep hill she made no plans, rehearsed nothing that she meant to say, but only thought of Camilla and Mrs. Dimble. The childish levels, the undersoil of the mind, had been turned up. She wanted to be with Nice people, away from Nasty people -- that nursery distinction seeming at the moment more important than any later categories of Good and Bad or Friend and Enemy. (137)

The apologetic significance of her return to St. Anne's extends beyond its resemblance as a much-resisted act to the Meldilorn journey of Ransom. The two space-trilogy journeys are important for their similarity not to one another but to the Biblical parable of the prodigal son. Like the son who had depleted his financial resources in self-centered indulgences, both reach the limits of inner resources permitting them to live as they wished. Inflexible external circumstances, i. e., reality, require them to abandon their proud independence and begin a new way of life. Its advent is a journey whose goal is more than a physical destination. Like the son who will see his father, like Ransom who will meet Oyarsa, Jane Studdock at St. Anne's is to undergo a meeting.

> On a sofa before her, with one foot bandaged as if he had a wound, lay what appeared to be a boy, twenty years old.
>
> On one of the long window sills a tame jackdaw was walking up and down. The light of the fire with its weak reflection, and the light of the sun with its stronger reflection, contended on the ceiling. But all the light in the room seemed to run towards the gold hair and the gold beard of the wounded man.
>
> Of course he was not a boy -- how could she have thought so? The fresh skin on his forehead and cheeks and, above all, on his hands, had suggested the idea. But no boy could have so full a beard. And no boy could be so strong. She had expected to see an invalid. Now it was manifest that the grip of those hands would be inescapable, and imagination suggested that those arms and shoulders could support the whole house. (142)

The confrontation is the beginning of the end of the "old" Jane. Her composure disappears before a person whose magnitude she immediately perceives in a myriad of ways:

> . . . she tasted the word King itself with all linked associations of battle, marriage, priesthood, mercy, and power. At that moment, as her eyes first rested on his face, Jane forgot who she was, and where, and her faint grudge . . . . It was, of course, only for a flash. Next moment she was once more the ordinary social Jane, flushed and confused to find that she had been staring rudely . . . at a total stranger. But her world was unmade; she knew that. Anything might happen now.
>
> . . . .
>
> Shortly after this she found herself seated before the Director. She was shaken: she was even shaking. She hoped intensely that she was not going to cry, or be unable to speak, or do anything silly. (143)

The meeting with Ransom, the Director, is but a foreshadowing of that final invasion of her well-guarded self which destroys the stubborn remnants of pride in Jane Studdock. Tortured by Fairy Hardcastle, a nominal female chief of the N. I. C. E. police, Jane made a second and final return to St. Anne's. It is a significant act because it is an instinctive one. Numbed with pain and fatigue, she had chosen to go "home" to the Manor. She had begun to accept the fact that she must -- and could -- depend on others for her well-being while simultaneously rejecting those who were an obvious threat to her. She had learned to have some degree of faith in the people at St. Anne's. Momentarily, she is beyond the reach of the N. I. C. E., but she is not beyond the influence of time and cosmic life at the Manor. An unexpected vision of a fiery woman (304-305) compels her to question Ransom about its meaning. He tells her that she has seen unbridled, destructive love. It is the earthly, "'demoniac'" (314) counterpart of the Oyarsa of Perelandra, or Venus. Jane has been allowed to foresee what she would become if she failed to restrain her own desires and refused to accept the unalterable ways of the universe. Ransom assures her that her vision is a sign that her desires would, indeed, be granted if she were certain they were what she wanted. She had not liked her experience, however. Thus, Ransom declared that one alternative remained for her: in a positive, personal universe, she must accept the steadfast reality "'above and beyond all things'" (316). It would not change because it was beyond change; it was "'masculine.'" (316) Therefore, it was Jane who must change if it were possible for her to do what the Director said

she must: become a Christian (316).

By means of an intellectual confrontation with the idea of the existence of God, Lewis has prepared both Jane and his reader for an actual encounter with Him. Through Ransom he has indicated that Jane must "do" something and acquire the name "Christian," or live with the knowledge that certain consequences awaited her choice to be otherwise. But how did one "'agree'" with the Director's Maleldil and "'become'" Christian? (316) Precisely what was one to "do"?

In an earthly garden Jane Studdock wrestled with the unknown obstruction in her life, Maleldil, her "'adversary'" (316). She hoped, much as Ransom himself had done on Perelandra, that she could avoid further distasteful, unpleasant claims upon her life. If she were to do something "religious," she would have to give it considerable thought. What would it be?

> "Religion" ought to mean a realm in which her haunting female fear of being treated as a thing, an object of barter and desire and possession, would be set permanently at rest and what she called her "true self" would soar upwards and expand in some freer and purer world. For still she thought that "Religion" was a kind of exhalation or a cloud of incense, something steaming up from specially gifted souls towards a receptive Heaven. (318)

Lost amid impersonal, "adult" ideas wandering through her mind, Jane stumbled upon a realization which promptly dispatched them all to oblivion:

> . . . quite sharply, it occurred to her that the Director never talked about Religion; nor

> did the Dimbles nor Camilla. They talked about God. They had no picture in their minds of some mist steaming upward: rather of strong, skilful hands thrust down to make, and mend, perhaps even to destroy. (318)

Presently, in the garden at St. Anne's, ultimate reality manifested itself to Jane as it had to Ransom in the midst of a Perelandrian Eden. More than Voice, it was a Person confronting Jane's personhood. It was undeniably present and alive, impossible to ignore although it could not be seen. The idea of God became God, and her idea of religion as a cloud of an organized but indefinite substance vanished forever:

> . . . at one particular corner of the gooseberry patch, the change came . . . . There was no form nor sound. The mould under the bushes, the moss on the path, and the little brick border, were not visibly changed. But they were changed. A boundary had been crossed. She had come into a world, or into a Person, or into the presence of a Person. Something expectant, patient, inexorable, met her with no veil or protection between. (318)

The presence was life in its fullness. It required a complete Jane Studdock, without reservation or defense -- or no Jane Studdock at all:

> This demand which now pressed upon her was not, even by analogy, like any other demand. It was the origin of all right demands and contained them. . . . There was nothing, and never had been anything, like this. And now there was nothing except this. (318)

For Jane, as for Ransom on Perelandra with Un-man, it is no longer a matter of having to think about what to do. What must be done is obvious. "The more lucidly we think, the more we are cut off: the more

deeply we enter into reality, the less we can think."[64] Thus, it is a matter of what Jane wills to do. She must do and be what she will or what another wills for her. To an approximation of life and of herself, or to that Life of which she is an integral part, she must say "yes." It is childishly easy, ultimately.

In a now, a "moment of time too short to be called time at all," (319) one Jane died while another was born:

> In this height and depth and breadth the little idea of herself which she had hitherto called me dropped down and vanished, unfluttering, into bottomless distance, like a bird in a space without air. The name me was the name of a being whose existence she had never suspected, a being that did not yet fully exist but which was demanded. It was a person (not the person she had thought), yet also a thing, a made thing, made to please Another and in Him to please all others, a thing being made at this very moment, without its choice, in a shape it had never dreamed of.
>
> . . . .
>
> The largest thing that had ever happened to her had, apparently, found room for itself in a moment of time . . . . Her hand closed on nothing but a memory. And as it closed, without an instant's pause, the voices of those who have not joy rose howling and chattering from every corner of her being. (318-319)

Mark Studdock, devoted to the precision of dispassionate science and to achieving recognition as an authority in human group behavior, had never believed in beings, fanciful or otherwise, beyond himself. Unlike his wife, he had known neither a milksop "Religion" nor fanciful childhood approximations of transcendent reality like "fairies and Santa Claus." (334) The possibility of his attributing the meaning of his life to an ultimate Person rather than to a grand summation of

statistics was, therefore, remote. Through him Lewis depicts man living in a world of delusion and travelling a labyrinthine course to the brink of tragedy.

Like Ransom on Malacandra, Mark must learn to "see" matters for what they are. Endowed with a budding sense of professionalism and a number of "sociological convictions," (87) he is a victim of scientific training. " . . . his education had had the curious effect of making things that he read and wrote more real to him than things he saw." (87) Objectivity and aloofness came easily to Mark Studdock, sociologist.

> Statistics about agricultural labourers were the substance; any real ditcher, ploughman, or farmer's boy, was the shadow. Though he had never noticed it himself, he had a great reluctance, in his work, ever to use such words as "man" or "woman." He preferred to write about "vocational groups," "elements," "classes" and "populations": . . . . (87)

Paradoxically, what hope there might be for Mark to avoid becoming another egotistical Weston lies in the fact of this acquired remoteness. As Lewis notes, "in his own way, he believed as firmly as any mystic in the superior reality of the things that are not seen." (87) Furthermore, Mark is instinctively a good person. For example, despite the N. I. C. E. plan to uproot and modernize the quaint village of Cure Hardy, Mark found that he enjoyed its colorful setting and agreeable citizenry. In short, "he could not help rather liking this village." (87)

His sojourn into N. I. C. E. membership is an introduction to evil as a corrosive factor in the life of man. As such, it obliterates distinctions so that objective reality is no longer valid. Good

instincts become synonymous with bad once "differences" are eliminated. Thus, the chief members of the N. I. C. E. swarm about Mark and proceed to confuse him about his place among them. For example, he cannot determine what his salary is except in the vaguest of terms -- "'allowing for fluctuations calculated on a very liberal basis.'" (104) His actual position in the N. I. C. E. is less important than the nobility of his function within the organization. He is to follow orders blindly: "'the great thing is to do what you're told'" (98) and to become "'generally useful'" (120) to the N. I. C. E. His role is to expend effort in learning immediate adaptability, or "'elasticity,'" (121) to its current needs rather than fulfilling the requirements of given position. In the turn-about world of the N. I. C. E. where no one can or will tell Mark who he really is in terms of what he is to do, he must learn to be content with pursuing elusive goals in the name of unified scientific endeavors.

Coerced into staying at the Belbury Manor headquarters of the N. I. C. E. (112), Mark gradually lost his sense of propriety as he adapted to the demands of the group. At one particular point in time Mark lost his ability to resist wrong in the face of objective reality. Asked to write influential newspaper articles about a riot in the village of Edgestow -- well in advance of the occurrence to be staged by the N. I. C. E. police -- Mark capitulated to a minimum of comradely persuasion from Fairy Hardcastle and from Lord Feverstone, his former benefactor at Belbury as well as at Bracton College. The act is symptomatic of the vague, passive person Mark is allowing himself to become among the N. I. C. E. As Lewis notes,

> This was the first thing Mark had been asked to do which he himself, before he did it, clearly knew to be criminal. But the moment of his consent almost escaped his notice; certainly, there was no struggle, no sense of turning a corner. There may have been a time in the world's history when such moments fully revealed their gravity, with witches prophesying on a blasted heath or visible Rubicons to be crossed. But for him, it all slipped past in a chatter of laughter, of that intimate laughter between fellow professionals, which of all earthly powers is strongest to make men do very bad things before they are yet, individually, very bad men. (130)

To gain money and popularity, Mark compromised himself still further until it was easier for him to acquiesce to fear induced by the coercive efforts of the N. I. C. E. than to find the courage to resist. Wither, the Deputy Director, and Fairy accused him of the murder of Hingest (206 f.). Wither then ordered Mark to bring Jane to Belbury (212). Suddenly threatened with exile from the abundant food and fellowship, "alchohol and tobacco" (223) of the N. I. C. E. headquarters, Mark determined to set himself right with his accusers. He was comfortable there, and if he must bring Jane in with him to preserve the N. I. C. E. way of life,he would. Thus,a fatter, paler, and peculiarly vulgar-looking Mark Studdock (217) sought his wife at their apartment. She had gone to St. Anne's, however, a fact which Mark was unable to glean from Dimble, a fellow member of the Bracton faculty (220)

Mark has become a stereotype of decadence. He has grown spiritually as well as physically flaccid. While he can yet admit to having had a desire to leave the N. I. C. E. (223), he lacks both the will and the

courage to do it without a guarantee of safety or security from Dimble. Dimble assures him that his associates among the N. I. C. E. are a danger to everyone because they are "'the worst men in the world.'" (222) Dimble no longer believes Mark to be trustworthy because of his association with them (222), but he offers Mark help and an opportunity to leave the N. I. C. E. Mark fails to detect the urgency of Dimble's belief that his escape from Belbury is not, finally, a matter of his future or "career" but, rather, the fact of his being damned. (223) Mark would have to give the thought some time. He is unprepared for the resolute, manly commitment to Dimble and "'the right side'" (223) which will restore his integrity and thus give him "'a way back into the human family'" (223). Mark is not desperate enough to want to believe what he hears. He does not have enough convincing evidence that he is caught up in an actual "'battle.'" (223) He would have to manage by himself. Rudely he stalks out of Dimble's residence -- and into the keeping of the N. I. C. E. police (224). If there were yet a "'question'" of his being damned (223), perhaps he would have a "'last chance'" (223) to make amends -- to someone.

The incarceration of Mark Studdock is a necessary precursor to his transformation from a non-descript, passive figure into an assertive character having a definitive role in THS. He has indulged in a lifetime of evasion, a cumulative intellectual and emotional habit (244-247) which has made him a stranger to his actual thoughts and feelings. Solitary confinement permits him to rediscover, if he will, what they are and, perhaps for the first time in his life, to

acknowledge the fact that he will one day die. The first of several honest admissions, the idea of his mortality inspires a sober review of his life. Under scrutiny, Mark realizes that it has been neither vague nor meaningless. Instead, it has a moral definition he had hardly suspected. Its cornerstones are a series of shabby acts marking his journey into slavery.

He derided himself for having been weak and allowing himself to become a tool of the N. I. C. E.: "a fool -- a blasted, babyish, gullible fool -- " (245) and in his mind's eye he traced his downfall among its members. Now it was obvious to him that "they" had found him expendable; he wondered if he had ever been anything else to the "D. D.," Wither, the Deputy Director. Where had it all begun? His yielding to Wither, succumbing to Feverstone, falling for Curry and Busby at Bracton long before he knew them to be but decorations or "puppets" (245) of the N. I. C. E. were late defeats in a game begun long ago. One tantalizing lure after another had claimed him, and Mark was aghast at the toll on his integrity: "was there no beginning to his folly?" (245) As far back as his childhood he could trace the longing to "get into" (246) one group or another which soon taught him to deny what he knew or felt to be true in order to get ahead.

> The hours that he had spent learning the very slang of each new circle that attracted him, the perpetual assumption of interest in things he found dull and of knowledge he did not possess, the almost heroic sacrifice of nearly every person and thing he actually enjoyed, the miserable attempt to pretend that one could enjoy Grip, or the Progressive Element, or the N. I. C. E. -- all this came over him with a kind of heart-break. When had he ever done what he wanted? (246)

There was no end to the art of compromise which Mark had mastered and by which he had alienated himself. He was an opportunist of the first order.

The isolation Lewis has imposed on Mark is essential to his survival as a unique, whole individual in a physical and personal universe. A matter impossible for him to ignore, it is comparable to those solitary moments of candor Jane experiences on the train to St. Anne's and in the Manor garden, to those which came to Ransom while travelling to Meldilorn and while preparing to combat Un-man. Like Jane and Ransom, he can assess himself and what he must do should it become necessary for him to translate into action his mounting disgust with the N. I. C. E. Neither his current situation nor the lifetime which his imprisonment symbolizes inspires his pride or brings him contentment, however. Mark behind bars is the sum of a life of dishonesty for which he alone is responsible.

> In his normal condition, explanations that laid on impersonal forces outside himself the responsibility for all this life of dust and broken bottles would have occurred at once to his mind and been at once accepted. It would have been "the system" or "an inferiority complex" due to his parents, or the peculiarities of the age. None of these things occurred to him now. His "scientific" outlook had never been a real philosophy believed with blood and heart. It had lived only in his brain, and was a part of that public self which was not falling off him. He was aware, without even having to think of it, that it was he himself -- nothing else in the whole universe -- that had chosen the dust and broken bottles, the heap of old tin cans, the dry and choking places. (247)

Under the tutelage of Professor Frost of the N. I. C. E., that intriguing man with the pince-nez and pointed beard (127), Mark is to

learn to disregard his feelings in all future relationships. He has been selected to acquire the hallmark of all members of the N. I. C. E. "'Circle,'" total "'objectivity.'" (255) The N. I. C. E. knew emotions to be chemically dependent (255) and thus rejected them as an unsound basis for unity among Circle members. Mark, a cell-bound audience of one, listened while Frost discoursed at length about his reduction of the human race to a few dependable persons capable of acquiring the remoteness essential in a technological paradise. Oddly, the plan for his objectivity elicited minor interest from Mark when compared with the emotional warfare raging in him. If he had never known the lure of a fatal temptation, one gripped him now. He had immediately renounced any pretense of Frost as an agreeable, trustworthy person because he had seen at first glance something in his demeanor which would have put children and dogs on their guard (248). Nevertheless, Mark barely withstood an assault from a lifelong desire. The allegorical impulse pervades Lewis's description of the inner conflict Mark endures. The motif of frenzied battle encroaches upon his struggle as Lewis intimates that Mark is in actual physical rather than fancied "abstract" danger.

> He had felt, in fact, very little emotion at Frost's programme for the human race; indeed, he almost discovered at that moment how little he had ever really cared for those remote futures and universal benefits whereon his co-operation with the Institute had at first been theoretically based. Certainly, at the present moment there was no room in his mind for such considerations. He was fully occupied with the conflict between his resolution not to trust these men, never again to be lured by any bait into a real co-operation, and the terrible

> strength -- like a tide sucking at the shingle as it goes out -- of an opposite emotion. For here, here surely at last (so his desire whispered to him) was the true inner circle of all, the circle whose centre was outside the human race -- the ultimate secret, the supreme power, the last initiation. The fact that it was almost completely horrible did not in the least diminish its attraction. Nothing that lacked the tang of horror would have been quite strong enough to satisfy the delirious excitement which now set his temples hammering. (259-260)

From somewhere came the counter-attack, a piece of rational knowledge the spellbound Mark could not have acquired through his own captive resources.

> It came into his mind that Frost knew all about this excitement, and also about the opposite determination, and reckoned securely on the excitement as something which was certain to carry the day in his victim's mind. (260)

He lapsed momentarily into smugness.

> Already he was with Jane and with all she symbolised. Indeed, it was he who was in the front line: Jane was almost a non-combatant . . . .
>
> The approval of one's own conscience is a very heady draught; and specially for those who are not accustomed to it. Within two minutes Mark passed from that first involuntary sense of liberation to a conscious attitude of courage, and thence into unrestrained heroics.
>
> . . . .
>
> It wasn't everyone, after all, who could have resisted an invitation like Frost's. An invitation that beckoned you right across the frontiers of human life . . . . (268)

Certain that he is safe from the influence of the N. I. C. E. and of Frost in particular, Mark placidly considers his victory over them. He arrives at the reasonable conclusion that he no longer can be tempted into their midst: "how it would have attracted him once!" (268)

These words are a call to arms. As if the idea of his being safe were a challenge to battle, the onslaught of temptation revives and dispells both the idea of security and the emotional need for it.

> Suddenly, like a thing that leaped to him across infinite distances with the speed of light, desire (salt, black, ravenous, unanswerable desire) took him by the throat. The merest hint will convey to those who have felt it the quality of the emotion which now shook him, like a dog shaking a rat; for others, no description perhaps will avail.
>
> . . . .
>
> Everything else that Mark had ever felt -- love, ambition, hunger, lust itself -- appeared to have been mere milk and water, toys for children, not worth one throb of the nerves. The infinite attraction of this dark thing sucked all other passions into itself: the rest of the world appeared blenched, etiolated, insipid, a world of white marriages and white masses, dishes without salt, gambling for counters. (268)

So vivid is his experience of desire that Mark attributes its force to the actions of living, although unknown and invisible, beings.

> These creatures of which Frost had spoken -- and he did not doubt now that they were locally present with him in the cell -- breathed death on the human race and on all joy. Not despite this but because of this, the terrible gravitation sucked and tugged and fascinated him towards them. (269)

Harsh reality, like cold water splashed on a sleep-numbed face, restores his reason. He and the N. I. C. E. are mutually attractive, but if or when the organization ceased to regard him favorably, most likely he would be eliminated. He, Mark Studdock, would die -- be murdered -- when someone in the nebulous hierarchy of the N. I. C. E. pronounced him useless. With that, Mark regained command of himself.

> As soon as he thought of that, he became once more aware of the cell -- the little hard white empty place with the glaring light, in which he found himself sitting on the floor. He blinked his eyes. He could not remember that it had been visible for the last few minutes. Where has he been? His mind was clear now at any rate . . . . Of course they meant to kill him in the end unless he could rescue himself by his own wits. What had he been thinking and feeling while he forgot that? (269)

Unrelenting compromise has all but destroyed Mark. Without his being aware of the cumulative effect of deceit and half-truth upon his moral instincts, he has lost the strength to assume a determined posture against selfish desires. While he has weakened himself morally, he has not destroyed himself altogether, however. He is not yet depraved. Thus, in time he begins to understand what has happened to him.

> Gradually he realized that he had sustained some sort of attack, and that he had put up no resistance at all; and with that realization a quite new kind of dread entered his mind. Though he was theoretically a materialist, he had all his life believed quite inconsistently, and even carelessly, in the freedom of his own will. He had seldom made a moral resolution, and when he had resolved some hours ago to trust the Belbury crew no further, he had taken it for granted that he would be able to do what he resolved. (269)

He does not realize that moral irresolution has made him a helpless victim susceptible to the unseen but real evil maintaining itself in the universe and flourishing among the N. I. C. E. Mark has progressed so little in his retreat from the maze of Belbury relationships that he has merely vowed to treat the N. I. C. E. much as it would be likely to treat him: capriciously.

> He knew, to be sure, that he might "change his mind"; but till he did so, of course he would carry out his plan. (269)

He cannot know that evil continues to find him vulnerable and, hence, attractive because he has failed again to be honest with himself. Having believed himself to be the sole guardian of his mind and will, it shocks him to realize that events of the past few hours belie such a conviction.

> It had never occurred to him that his mind could thus be changed for him, all in an instant of time, changed beyond recognition. (269)

A wave of self-pity tempts Mark to console himself for the failure of his first valiant effort to be resolute, and he rails at the cosmos.

> . . . the very first moment you tried to be good, the universe let you down. It revealed gaps you had never dreamed of. It invented new laws for the express purpose of letting you down. That was what you got for your pains. (270)

As if they are symptoms of a disease, signs of the next attack -- a "flavor" of "the other mood" (270) -- quickly succeed Mark's pouting self-indulgence. With them comes despair. Mark Studdock would do

anything to avoid being stricken again. He senses that his situation has become a matter of necessity.

> Oh not that, at any price. He clenched his hands. No, no, no. He could not stand this much longer. He wanted Jane; he wanted Mrs. Dimble; he wanted Denniston. He wanted somebody or something. 'Oh don't, don't let me go back into it," he said; and then louder, "don't, don't." All that could in any sense be called himself went into that cry; . . . . (270)

As if the universe itself were satisfied to know that Mark had at last decided what it was he really wanted, as if it were capable of lifting up as well as "letting . . . down," it sent "somebody or something" to his rescue.

> . . . the dreadful consciousness of having played his last card began to turn slowly into a sort of peace. There was nothing more to be done. Unconsciously he allowed his muscles to relax. His young body was very tired by this time and even the hard floor was grateful to it. The cell also seemed to be somehow emptied and purged, as if it too were tired after the conflicts it had witnessed -- emptied like a sky after rain, tired like a child after weeping. A dim consciousness that the night must be nearly ended stole over him, and he fell asleep. (270)

Mark Studdock is man who does not know that he is a fallen creature because he has never acknowledged or believed in the Genesis myth. Furthermore, he does not know why he should be other than who it pleases him to be. In the impersonal universe of the materialist, life is nothing more nor less than a series of opportunities won or lost, an easy game in constant flux played without scruples. For the materialist

with training in science like Mark, the game of life can be played with calculated accuracy. He had begun early in life to play as do expert materialists, beginning with his practiced treatment of people as objects. He might have succeeded in mastering the N. I. C. E. members once he had gotten "in" among them, had they not first succeeded in mastering him. Mark Studdock did not like being treated as an object for Wither, Fairy, Feverstone, and, now, Frost, to use at will. He now knew himself to be a person who needed the simple company of other persons in order to be happy. Therein lay his cure as a human being and the fulfillment of his potential as a cosmic creature. He had taken the first step toward that consciousness which distinguished between good and evil, people and things, God and self. He had groped his way far enough out of a cocoon of self-concern, out of the "deepest and darkest vault of its labyrinthine house," (268) so that he was accessible to reason, to facts, to ultimate reality and eternal rescue.

To the contrary ideas of Frost ("'Motives are not the causes of action but its by-products.'" [296]); to the petty, increasingly obscene gestures he must make routinely as a candidate for admission to the N. I. C. E., Mark instinctively, then consciously, seeks alternatives. For example, he finds Frost himself intolerable, and suppresses a growing urge to strike him.

> "I get the idea," said Mark though with an inward reservation that his present instinctive desire to batter the Professor's face into a jelly would take a good deal of destroying. (296)

He rejects with mounting vengeance the lop-sided training room with its

irregular ceiling spots where he makes bizarre, automatic responses to Frost's directions. He learns instead to respond to conventional ideas like that of the "Straight or the Normal," (310) an appealing thought which gradually assumes a central place in his mind. There, untouched by Frost, by objectivity training, by Mark himself, the Straight or the Normal becomes the inspiration for his sanity.

> [It] . . . grew stronger and more solid in his mind till it had become a kind of mountain . . . . when his head was continually attacked and often completely filled with the clinging corruption of the training, this Idea towered above him -- something which obviously existed quite independently of himself and had hard rock surfaces which would not give, surfaces he could cling to. (310)

Capable now of distinguishing between himself and an unalterable reality beyond self, Mark is but an experience away from learning to see the mortal face of the Idea to which he has stubbornly, desperately clung. In the training room Frost charges him to defile a piece of wood vividly carved in the "ghastly and realistic Spanish tradition." (334) The early Jane in her most disgracefully selfish moments would have hesitated to abuse the figure on the crucifix because even then she had been vaguely religious. Her husband, unused to thinking in terms of faith in the supernatural, proceeds with caution, considering whether he will humor Frost and follow instructions. What harm could come from a piece of wood? The Idea of the Straight and Normal which has recently sustained him is seemingly unrelated to the disturbing work on the floor. Yet for some reason Mark discovers that he cannot ignore the

contorted person, its central image, without assurance that the Idea and the image have no bearing on one another. For the moment he would withhold rude treatment from the "carved image of such agony." (335)

He is confused, but his newest state of mind is healthy and honest, more open to finding the truth than it has, perhaps, ever been.

> With the introduction of this Christian symbol the whole situation had somehow altered. The thing was becoming incalculable. His simple antithesis of the Normal and the Diseased has obviously failed to take something into account. Why was the crucifix there? Why were more than half the poison-pictures religious? He had the sense of new parties to the conflict -- potential allies and enemies which he had not suspected before. (335)

Mark does not have answers at the moment. Rather, he is filled with questions to which must be asked and resolved before he would know precisely what he would do here and why. To himself he explains the predicament as a physical matter,

> "If I take a step in any direction, . . . I may step over a precipice." (335)

and resolves to go no further with training in N. I. C. E. objectivity:

> A donkey-like determination to plant hoofs and stay still at all costs arose in his mind. (335)

To Frost, Mark voices resistance.

> "It's all bloody nonsense, and I'm damned if I do any such thing." (337)

That was that. Perhaps Dimble had been correct. Perhaps his involvement with the N. I. C. E. was, in fact, a matter no less serious than that of his being "damned." If so, he would first have to know about the figure on the carved cross. He would ask until he was satisfied that Christianity was or was not fictitious, "a fable." (337) He would find out whether the universe was false and "a cheat" (337) for all who suffer. Meanwhile, the lessons were finished. They had taught him more than Frost knew.

The bloody demise of the N. I. C. E. through Merlin and the powers of Deep Heaven does not immediately affect all its members. Several inner circle figures escape the chaotic banquet hall where Merlin and the experimental animals he has freed stalk the "scientific" tormentors of the N. I. C. E., seeking just revenge. Those who flee must depend upon their own resources in order to survive, for Merlin has invoked the curse of Babel upon the N. I. C. E., and their speech is unintelligible to themselves and others. Having granted them a momentary reprieve that they might at last welcome the limitations of their humanity, Lewis allows Straik, Filostrato, and the tormentor of Mark Studdock to hear only the voices of their consciences, among the unfailing vestiges of goodness which their self-idolatry has not yet destroyed.

Professor Frost, master of objectivity, persisted in denying the impulses for good welling up in his heart, addressing his consciousness. Unlike the Lady Tinidril, who rejoiced to discover that she had a conscious self guiding the actions of her body and permitting her to

glorify Maleldil in deed as well as thought, Frost in his last moments of mortality resembled his former associate, Weston. For each, life as a derived being eternally subordinate to his Creator had been an agonized act of negation and endurance rather than a joyful expression of acceptance and praise for the gift of his life. Each had borne the dictates of his Alongside conscious self until such time as he succeeded in creating a rationale allowing him to be happy without having to consider the moral, i. e., divine, tendencies inherent in him as a human creature. They and their N. I. C. E. associates regarded the need to distinguish right from wrong as a matter of mind, a volatile situation arising from physical conditions in the body. Moral distinctions were, therefore, abstractions to be repressed or ignored. A product of the imagination, chemically induced, was not sufficient reason for doing one thing and not another. One respected the body, the true master of the "self," rather than obey the impulses of heart or mind. In Frost, the divorce of mind and heart from body neared its triumphal conclusion.

> For many years . . . [Frost] had theoretically believed that all which appears in the mind as motive or intention is merely a by-product of what the body is doing. But for the last year or so -- since he had been initiated -- he had begun to taste as fact what he had long held as theory. Increasingly, his actions had been without motive. He did this and that, he said thus and thus, and did not know why. His mind was a mere spectator. (357)

A self-made automaton, Frost began mechanically to seal his eternal doom, strangely irritated at having to observe himself departing from the

banquet room at Belbury.

> . . . never, until this evening, had he been quite so vividly aware that the body and its movements were the only reality, that the self which seemed to watch the body leaving the dining room . . . was a nonentity. How infuriating that the body should have power thus to project a phantom self! (357)

At a corner in time Frost, like Jane, Mark, and Ransom on Perelandra, beheld that singular perception of himself which allowed him to understand that his former life was the shadow rather than the substance of reality. Whatever it was that he alone needed to know about himself before he could truly live as a whole creature of Maleldil, this now came to him as an urgent necessity demanding his attention, awaiting his invitation to assume its rightful place in his being. Frost saw, understood, and renounced -- for a last time. To him, as to Weston, came real death.

> Like the clockwork figure he had chosen to be, his stiff body, now terribly cold, walked back into the Objective Room, poured out the petrol and threw a lighted match into the pile. Not till then did his controllers allow him to suspect that death itself might not after all cure the illusion of being a soul -- nay, might prove the entry into a world where that illusion raged infinite and unchecked. Escape for the soul, if not for the body, was offered him. He became able to know (and simultaneously refused the knowledge) that he had been wrong from the beginning, that souls and personal responsibility existed. He half saw: he wholly hated. The physical torture of the burning was not fiercer than his hatred of that. With one supreme effort he flung himself back into his illusion. In that attitude eternity overtook him as sunrise in old tales overtakes and turns them into unchangeable stone. (358)

Epilogue

Morality is indispensable: but the Divine Life, which gives itself to us and which calls us to be gods, intends for us something in which morality will be swallowed up. We are to be re-made. All the rabbit in us is to disappear -- the worried, conscientious, ethical rabbit as well as the cowardly and sensual rabbit. We shall bleed and squeal as the handfuls of fur come out; and then, surprisingly, we shall find underneath it all a thing we have never yet imagined: a real Man, an ageless god, a son of God, strong, radiant, wise, beautiful, and drenched in joy.

. . . .

Morality is a mountain which we cannot climb by our own efforts; and if we could we should only perish in the ice and unbreathable air of the summit, lacking those wings with which the rest of the journey has to be accomplished. For it is _from_ there that the real ascent begins. The ropes and axes are 'done away' and the rest is a matter of flying.

-- C. S. Lewis, _God in the Dock_, pp. 112, 113.

SIMON STIMSON:

With mounting violence; bitingly.

Yes, now you know. Now you know! That's what it was to be alive. To move about in a cloud of ignorance; to go up and down trampling on the feelings of those . . . of those about you. To spend and waste time as though you had millions of years. To be always at the mercy of one self-centered passion, or another. Now you know -- that's the happy existence you wanted to go back to. Ignorance and blindness.

-- Thornton Wilder, _Our Town_, p. 101.

What is said of the space-trilogy regarding its effectiveness as a coherent defense of Christianity must involve a final assessment of the human nature it reflects and transforms. As Frye has said of the evolutionary tendency of a literary work, it may happen that an author discreetly propels his work toward the mythos of comedy and union or toward that of irony and dissolution. Perhaps no more than "a sentence or two"[65] determines his ultimate intention. Like grace notes in a song, the few words which conclude the story of Ransom and simultaneously perfect the trilogy indicate that it has developed from a romance into myth. For Ransom, at least, the space-trilogy has been a divine comedy:

> "I suppose you got to go, Sir?" said Ivy.
>
> "My dear," said he, "What else is there to do? I have not grown a day or an hour since I came back from Perelandra. There is no natural death to look forward to . . . ." (THS, 367)

Mysteriously released from the confines of his humanity, Ransom is a mythic rather than a low mimetic figure at the conclusion of the trilogy. We have followed him, as we have followed Mark and Jane, through a maze of human feelings and misconceptions until each had outgrown the limits of self-sufficiency. That the sequence of active and contemplative events on Perelandra, portrayed through narrative and modal structures, is the key to the mythic stature of Ransom we must believe, for Lewis gives us no other opportunity to see where or how he might have grown into the masterful character of THS. In the midst of his paradisial venture, he beheld the ways of life and of death through the presence of Maleldil and Un-man, respectively. And he chose the way

of Maleldil, not without anguish or fear but, at the very least, willingly. If eternal life belongs to Ransom, it is so not primarily because he has earned it but because it is the promise of the Christian myth that those who choose the will of Maleldil shall not die.

Mark and Jane, like the early Ransom, know the emotional crises which Lewis has used to dramatize the death throes of the old self. As low mimetic figures for the major portion of the third book, they, too, experience the fright, anxiety, doubt, disbelief, overweening pride, the self-centered will first displayed in Ransom before his meeting with Oyarsa. Each is intractably selfish and engaged in his or her own hnakra-hunt for recognition before the abrupt, unexpected events with which Lewis signals the advent of ultimate reality disturb their self-contained lives. Forced to undergo an honest appraisal of what to do rather than how to be content, each of the Studdocks follows Ransom in a quest for answers. In a manner appropriate to the understanding of each, and one symbolizing both the uniqueness of each creature and of his relationship to his Creator, Maleldil appears as a certainty to which the whole body responds. To Mark, He is yet an Idea, a supreme appeal to his reason. To Jane who has progressed beyond intellectual confrontation of the idea or possibility of divinity as a Person, He asserts His existence. The Studdocks, too, choose the way of Maleldil, although Mark has yet to know the union of mind and body, idea and being, which will tell him that Maleldil is as alive and "real" as he. Jane Studdock, the inspiration of her husband because she is an untarnished ideal rich in "deep wells and knee-deep meadows of happiness, rivers of freshness, enchanted gardens of leisure," (THS, 247) remains an

experience beyond him. She awaits him there with Maleldil. The Christian promise which has been realized in the creation of an immortal Ransom is also theirs.

As a literary form, the space-trilogy proclaims in memorable terms that it is our promise, as well, if we do not overlook the fact that Weston and Frost also demonstrate the eternal truth of which the Christian assurance of unending life is a partial expression. These are the trilogy characters who remind us that the "universal principle"[66] they, too, realize is a matter none other than that of having our wishes granted eternally. For this reason Lewis has used the basic structure of the romantic _mythos_ to convey his belief in the universe as the domain which God shares with us; where, because of Him, anything is possible; where the unexpected and the fantastic are ordinary events which sometimes become those glimpses of eternity which we call "myth" in literature. Beyond the romantic structure he has reached for the eternity of which we are, and shall continue to be, a part as favored or rejected creatures. Lewis has created myth from romance through the lives of Ransom, the Studdocks, Weston and Frost: " . . . in myth the imagined events are the body and something inexpressible is the soul: the words, or mime, or film, or pictorial series are not even clothes -- they are not much more than a telephone."[67] He has given us an unobstructed view of the heroic psyche through the modal structure of the trilogy. Ironically, the heroic psyche of the Christian myth is much like ours. Like Ransom, Mark, and Jane, we are potentially Christian heroes with victories to win over our lesser earthly selves.

> It is the present life which is the diminution, the symbol, the etiolated, ... If flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom, that is not because they are too solid, too gross, too distinct, too "illustrious with being." They are too flimsy, too transitory, too phantasmal.[68]

We sense that we are journeying to somewhere, that we are being urged away from our quiet back roads to Sterk. What we may fail to remember is that our unease is a response to a call -- perhaps from an Oyarsa, at first -- we have failed to recognize. It is a call to life from Maleldil.

> He commands us to do slowly and blunderingly what He could do perfectly and in the twinkling of an eye.
> . . . .
> We are not mere recipients or spectators. We are either privileged to share in the game or compelled to collaborate in the work, ... Is this amazing process simply Creation going on before our eyes? This is how (no light matter) God makes something -- indeed, makes gods -- out of nothing.[69]

The space-trilogy demonstrates repeatedly through the five major characters of Ransom, Jane, Mark, Weston, and Frost that we cannot escape inheriting eternally the perfection of ourselves as godly beings or idolatrous vacuums of self-love. The ways of the doctrines of man's Fall and of his Creator's Incarnation and Resurrection in order to rescue him from himself have appeared in the trilogy as vital, inevitable matters of choice. The vivid portraits of Un-man and of the fixed robot and human torch, Frost, together with the majestic character of the later Ransom, are reminders of the horrors and the joys which are the promises

of a life fulfilled within a personal universe. And it is this, the power of inevitability, which is the hallmark of authentic art, Barrett has said.[70] The space-trilogy is indeed authentic in its faithful depiction of ourselves as creatures: "it shows us where we stand, whether or not we choose to understand it."[71] Whether it is effective apologetic literature is a matter the reader alone will determine through the course of his life. C. S. Lewis has described the battle and let us glimpse its outcome.

> Once again the artist and the spinner of tales proves the best persuader.[72]

Footnotes through Epilogue

1. Wain, _Encounter_, p. 53.
2. Darko Suvin, "On the Poetics of the Science Fiction Genre," _College English_ 34 (December, 1972), p. 373.
3. Suvin, _College English_, p. 374.
4. Frye, _Anatomy_, p. 117.
5. Frye, _Anatomy_, p. 187.
6. Frye, _Anatomy_, p. 195.
7. Frye, _Anatomy_, p. 186.
8. Frye, _Anatomy_, p. 187.
9. Frye, _Anatomy_, p. 199.
10. Frye, _Anatomy_, p. 187.
11. Frye, _Anatomy_, p. 193.
12. Frye, _Anatomy_, p. 200.
13. Frye, _Anatomy_, p. 200.
14. Frye, _Anatomy_, p. 192.
15. Frye, _Anatomy_, p. 192.
16. Frye, _Anatomy_, p. 202.
17. Frye, _Anatomy_, p. 202.
18. Frye, _Anatomy_, p. 202.
19. Frye, _Anatomy_, p. 202.
20. Frye, _Anatomy_, pp. 185, 202.
21. Frye, _Anatomy_, p. 203.
22. Frye, _Anatomy_, p. 202.
23. Lewis, _Mere Christianity_, p. 170.
24. Lewis, _Mere Christianity_, p. 169.

Footnotes through Epilogue (cont'd.)

25. Barrett, Irrational Man, p. 65.

26. Barrett, Irrational Man, p. 64.

27. C. S. Lewis, The Abolition of Man: or, Reflections on Education with Special Reference to the Teaching of English in the Upper Forms of Schools (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1971), p. 28.

28. Lewis, Abolition, p. 29.

29. Lewis, Abolition, p. 29.

30. Lewis, Abolition, p. 28.

31. Lewis, Mere Christianity, p. 155.

32. C. S. Lewis, The Allegory of Love: A Study in Medieval Tradition (New York: Oxford University Press, 1958), p. 61.

33. Lewis, Allegory, p. 68.

34. Lewis, Allegory, p. 68.

35. Lewis, Allegory, p. 68.

36. Lewis, Allegory, p. 69.

37. Kenneth Burke, Language as Symbolic Action: Essays on Life, Literature, and Method (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), p. 456.

38. Burke, Language, p. 457.

39. Burke, Language, p. 419.

40. Burke, Language, p. 419.

41. Lewis, Allegory, p. 86.

42. Lewis, Allegory, p. 63.

43. Lewis, Allegory, p. 1.

44. Lewis, Allegory, p. 31.

45. Lewis, Allegory, p. 75.

Footnotes through Epilogue (cont'd.)

46. Lewis, Allegory, pp. 57-58. He states that monotheism is the mature expression of polytheism rather than its rival. Where the gods appear in the midst of monotheism, they do so as the "personifications of the abstracted attributes of the One."

47. Lewis, Allegory, p. 71.

48. Lewis, Allegory, p. 71.

49. Lewis, Experiment, p. 66.

50. Lewis, Experiment, pp. 66-67.

51. Lewis, Experiment, p. 67.

52. Lewis, Experiment, p. 66.

53. Burke, A Grammar, p. 3.

54. Frye, Anatomy, p. 317.

55. Frye, Anatomy, p. 317.

56. Frye, Anatomy, p. 318.

57. Lewis, Allegory, p. 69.

58. Martin Buber, I and Thou, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Charles Scribener's Sons, 1970), p. 67.

59. Lewis, Mere Christianity, p. 35.

60. Lewis, Mere Christianity, p. 35.

61. Burke, Language, p. 17.

62. Walsh, Apostle, p. 149.

63. Frye, Anatomy, p. 147.

64. Lewis, "Myth Became Fact," God in the Dock, p. 65.

65. Frye, Anatomy, p. 360.

66. Lewis, God in the Dock, p. 66.

Footnotes through Epilogue (cont'd.)

67. George Macdonald, George Macdonald: An Anthology (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1947), p. 16.

68. C. S. Lewis, "Transposition," a sermon delivered at Mansfield College, Oxford, and reprinted in They Asked for a Paper, this excerpt appearing therein on p. 179.

69. C. S. Lewis, "The Efficacy of Prayer," The World's Last Night and Other Essays (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1960), p. 9.

70. Barrett, Irrational Man, p. 43.

71. Barrett, Irrational Man, p. 56.

72. Fuller, "The Christian Spaceman: C. S. Lewis," Books, p. 146.

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". . . all answers deceive. If ye put the question from within Time and are asking about possibilities, the answer is certain. The choice of ways is before you. Neither is closed. Any man may choose eternal death. Those who choose it will have it. But if ye are trying to leap on into eternity, if ye are trying to see the final state of all things as it will be (for so ye must speak) when there are no more possibilities left but only the Real, then ye ask what cannot be answered to mortal ears. Time is the very lens through which ye see -- small and clear, as men see through the wrong end of a telescope -- something that would otherwise be too big for ye to see at all. That thing is Freedom: the gift whereby ye most resemble your Maker and are yourselves parts of eternal reality. But ye can see it only through the lens of Time, in a little clear picture, through the inverted telescope. It is a picture of moments following one another and yourself in each moment making some choice that might might have been otherwise.

. . . .

"The Lord said we were gods. How long could ye bear to look (without Time's lens) on the greatness of your own soul and the eternal reality of her choice?"

-- C. S. Lewis, The Great Divorce,
pp. 124-125.