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TRANSPOSITION AND BAPTISM:

The incorporation of C.S. Lewis's notion of myth
in literary form

by

Dorothy F. Lane, B.A.

Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Arts.

Department of English
Carleton University
Ottawa, Ont.
Dec. 1, 1987

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Abstract

The following is an examination of C.S. Lewis's particular notion of myth, and how that notion becomes the cornerstone for his literary works. I argue that Lewis writes from a particular perspective, influenced by neo-Platonism and the 'Golden' writers of the 16th Century. Through a clear development, Lewis finally succeeds in meeting his own definition of mythopoeic literature, and he no longer simply writes about myth, but actually retells it. My thesis follows that development towards Lewis's discovery of the proper form. Key words in the study are 'transposition' and 'baptism'--notions which appear in several different contexts to define a descent and reascent--and which describe how the initial gleam of inspiration which Lewis defines as myth is incorporated in literary forms, and how a submissive response on the part of the reader can allow him or her to experience that gleam.

The first chapter establishes Lewis's definitions of literature and myth, and introduces central ideas which are drawn through the thesis. Chapter Two looks at Lewis's allegory, Pilgrim's Regress, as an examination of myth as a concept. Chapter Three explores The Great Divorce, which emerges partly as an attempt to reveal the eternal 'forms' transposed into the material world. Till We Have Faces is a retelling of myth, which thus incorporates Lewis's notion of mythopoeic literature. The final chapter displays the development and connection of these works explicitly, particularly through an examination of The Last Battle.

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Introduction:

A Brief Note on Methodology

It might be of some help to my readers to explain the methods which I have used in this study examining C.S. Lewis's notion of myth, and the connection of his notion with his literary works. A brief glance at my study will reveal my concentration on primary rather than secondary sources. I discovered, almost by accident in the course of my own writing, that Lewis himself was the most enlightening 'source' for his own works, and required only such basic background texts as the Bible, Dante, Milton, and Bunyan, and biographical studies of Lewis, such as Griffin's C.S. Lewis: A Dramatic Life, Carpenter's The Inklings, Como's C.S. Lewis at the Breakfast Table and Other Reminiscences, Roger Lancelyn Green's biography of Lewis, and the compiled Letters of C.S. Lewis.

I was also strongly influenced by Lewis's own emphasis on primary sources which he defines in his Experiment on Criticism, and therefore set out to read the body of his work, whether that be literature, criticism, or apologetics. What developed was the premise that a notion of myth, which Lewis develops in Allegory of Love and which fascinates him until Experiment in Criticism, also appears strongly in his literary works. How that notion of myth emerges in certain texts--and not an interpretation of the 'myths' themselves--is what fascinated me and led me to believe that the appearance of myth was the differential which sets works such as Pilgrim's Regress firmly apart from ones such as Till We Have Faces.

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The work of Dabney Adams Hart, who first wrote a doctoral dissertation examining myth in Lewis's works, gave me the courage to continue my own argument that Lewis's notion of myth is central in his own works. In her book, Through the Open Door: A New Look at CS Lewis, she writes: "I now see the theory of mythopoeia not only as the basis of all Lewis's fiction and criticism, but also as the perspective for his revisionary outlook. 'For now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face.' This is the lesson that Lewis had been teaching all along" (11). Hart also looks at how myth is central to Lewis's criticism, and is reflected, for instance, in Lewis's privileging of 'mythopoeic literature', in which the Platonic 'Idea' is fitted to the 'Logos', or Form (18).

Works such as J.M. Chard's Master's thesis, titled C.S. Lewis: The Mythmaker, build upon this idea that myth is central in Lewis's literature; however, Chard, as most other critics, is more interested in interpreting the myth in the novels--something which Lewis himself would argue to be impossible--than in examining Lewis's own theory of myth. Both Chad Walsh and Lewis's companion Clyde Kilby restrict themselves to describing the plots, characters, and themes, of the works, perhaps remembering Lewis's own caution against attempts to 'use' literature rather than to 'receive' it; I am convinced, however, that there is another, more interesting and productive way of studying these works, apart from interpretation and strict summary. It emerges in reading Lewis's works, and drawing from them certain phrases and ideas which appear repeatedly, and which therefore are, I believe, significant to an examination of Lewis's ideas, while still not committing a 'personal heresy' by defining the works according to Lewis's own 'personality'.

Kilby's "An Interpretation" (in Longing for a Form) is typical of my argument against most Lewis criticism, and one of the reasons why my own use of secondary critics has been careful, if not limited. In this essay, Kilby examines Till We Have Faces as an explanation of Lewis's own life and personality, and attempts to pull out the 'autobiographical bits'. Certainly, these 'bits' are there, throughout Lewis's work; however, focusing upon them does not turn up anything interesting and new in terms of literary ideas or criticism. Moreover, Kilby makes a radical 'appraisal' at the end of the article, which actually quotes Lewis out of context; he quotes Orual's complaint to the gods as a speech 'which lay at the core of her being', and then draws a connection between this and Apuleius' rendition of the myth of Cupid and Psyche, which supposedly lay at the core of Lewis's being. This, of course, is hardly what Orual is talking about in the passage containing her complaint; she is describing, rather, in vivid and graphic terms, the poison of jealousy and self-will which has enveloped her spirit. Kilby, amazingly, appears to be aware of this distinction, but goes ahead in citing the connection anyway--conceding that the 'speech which lay at the core of Lewis', the myth of Cupid and Psyche, is not a complaint but a vision--and adds his appraisal that Lewis's 'vision' in the book is powerful and enticing.

John Beversluis expresses a similar sense of frustration with critics of Lewis, in his work C.S. Lewis and the Search for Rational Religion. In an extensive endnote, Beversluis attacks with strong irony many of the critical works I have cited here:

"In compiling this list, I am not consigning all these books to the same category. Some are better than others, and several contain useful summaries of Lewis's ideas in addition to interesting biographical information. A few even venture to be critical" (169).

In Kilby's Christian World of C.S. Lewis, he commits a similar error. He writes, when discussing again Till We Have Faces: "Although the worship of Ungit had many evil aspects, its basic assumptions, 'water-spouts of truth from the very depth of truth', were correct..." (83). In the passage which he quotes from the novel, Orual is describing the paradoxical nature of dreams as containing images which are 'water-spouts of truth'; she is not describing the religion of Ungit, which I have argued in this thesis is comparable with the worship of natural things for their own sakes.

Remembering Lewis's own emphasis on language, and on taking care with one's expression of ideas, I was also critical of the many works (Walsh's Literary Legacy again included) which use particularly the terms 'allegory', 'symbol', and 'myth', seemingly with little thought about how they are being used. For instance, Stella Gibbons' essay, "Imaginative Writing" (in Longing for a Form) discusses the "tremendousness of the allegory" in The Last Battle, which can never be completely translated, and then goes on to say, "I imagine the accusation [that Lewis was deliberately writing allegory] would pass by completely. He would not have thought it mattered" (101). Considering Lewis's emphasis on reception of story, I am certain it would have mattered to him that his readers were seeking an allegorical translation. Gibbons also writes of the ending of Till We Have Faces, "I feel that Lewis was clear about his allegories and symbols but I also feel that, like his Gods in the story, they do not make themselves clear" (97). Many other works, such as Cunningham's Defender of the Faith, discuss Lewis's notion of myth quite clearly and correctly, I believe, but then attempt to examine the literary works without using this as a focus.

The principle which tied all of my own ideas together was that of transposition, which Lewis explains in his sermon "Transposition", but which also emerges in contexts too countless to examine completely. Once I had grasped the notion of transposition, and its connection with Lewis's prevalent neo-Platonism, the remainder of his idea of myth began to come into focus, and along with that, most of the perspective from which Lewis was working, and which I believe colours all of his work. For Lewis, all nature is a transposition of supernature into another form; humans can house the divine spirit, natural landscape can point towards Heaven, language can incorporate the 'word of God'. These things, however, cannot stand on their own, or they become a kind of Hell. Transposition is thus what sets Lewis apart from other 'mythologists'; he holds to myth as the extra-literary entering literature, as the eternal entering Time.

This 'transposition'--as explanation of how one medium incorporates another, so that myth can become part of literature, or even part of history--is also missing from most other studies of myth in Lewis. Hart makes the most of this idea, explaining how "Although scholarly emphasis on mythopoeia was avant-garde in the 1950s, Lewis identified it with an intellectual tradition going back at least as far as Plato" (135). She writes that the Gospel of John (which begins by discussing the Incarnation), is an explanation of the Messiah using the Platonic notion of Logos or Idea: "But our literature has always embodied, in words, the copies or shadows of the Word. No theme was more central to Lewis, yet he recognized that the teaching of Plato is urgent only in the temporal perspective of the gray beard, not in the eternal perspective of the golden". (135).

Cunningham's Defender of the Faith is an excellent book for describing Lewis's notion of transposition and myth, especially in the section titled "Foundation of Apologetics" (67-140). Cunningham is concerned with how Lewis uses literature to argue or 'apologise' for his beliefs, and admits that the final form which he chooses, that of Till We Have Faces, is not well-suited for apology. Lewis, he writes, wanted to instill in his readers what he thought to be missing in the adult modern world: "...we live in an age dominated by realism, an age barren of the qualities found both in childhood and in the infancy of the race--that tireless curiosity, that intensity of imagination, that facility of suspending disbelief, that unspoiled appetite, that readiness to wonder, to pity, and to admire'" (50).

Scott Oury's article "The Thing Itself" (in Longing for a Form) is also interesting, in that it concentrates on Lewis's emphasis of the Object--the ultimate reality to which we should submit our minds and imaginations, and towards which myth points. Oury writes, "But Lewis did feel that literature of a certain type or quality could approach and somehow convey 'the object'--reality in its ultimate sense...He labels this literature...myth". Oury even writes that Lewis regarded myth as an incarnation of absolute reality, but goes no further in describing the transposition of that absolute reality into myth.

It is no accident that most of these important statements about Lewis's notion of myth often contain quotations from his own works. If one truly wants to see how Lewis regarded myth and mythopoeic literature, one has only to read Lewis himself; these other critics have encapsulated and explained--drawn more fully to our attention--only what Lewis

described in his own writings. For instance, Bede Griffiths, a friend and student of Lewis, builds an argument against Lewis's notion of the individuality which emerges through submersion of self-writing, for instance, that Lewis overemphasised the idea of 'personality', and therefore of a personal, factual, concrete God. However, Lewis would probably agree with Griffiths' revised statement concerning myth: "Myth is not simply an ideal symbolic expression of ultimate reality, but an expression of the ultimate meaning of life in the context of actual history" (24). This seems quite similar to the idea which I discuss in this study, of the experience of myth through its incarnation in language and history. Myth puts the whole of life and history in an eternal perspective, and must rely on the things of this world, and chronology, to do so. I would, however, disagree with Griffiths' speculation that Lewis "would have been influenced by the new currents in theology and biblical criticism that have been developed since the Second Vatican Council". (24). Lewis was always skeptical of 'new ideas', and of the acceptance of anything simply because of its 'newness'.

The literary texts which I have chosen to exemplify the development of Lewis's notion of myth also made it difficult to rely on secondary sources. Few critical works examine either Pilgrim's Regress or The Great Divorce; Cunningham gives each only a page of study, and Kirby and Walsh (as I have said) are almost exclusively surveys of the works. It is clear that these works were not favourites of the critics, partly because they are admittedly quite difficult to categorise; I would not call Pilgrim's Regress a strict 'apology', nor The Great Divorce an 'allegory', and Till We Have Faces is hardly a 'novel'. All three of these, however, are worth examining intensively, because of their attempts to incorporate myth in language and

story. For instance, Kathryn Ann Lindskoog, in her Lion of Judah in Never-Never Land, recognises the significance of Pilgrim's Regress to Lewis's notion of myth, and quotes the 'voice' which speaks to John at the end of the work; however, she never explains this notion any further, and simply leaves it, at the very end of her book, for the reader to discern (129-130).

In conclusion, the reader will notice that my own emphasis is on Lewis's own works, and on some works which would not, at first glance, perhaps seem relevant to a study of literature. I must only argue that these works, as I studied them, reconfirm again and again the argument which I have constructed in this thesis, and the more I read of Lewis, the more certain I become. What I attempt, therefore, is to tie together the threads which emerge in Lewis's own writings, and to establish the definition of mythopoeic literature which Lewis never quite communicated, explicitly himself.

Gleams of Truth

(1)

I am saying that the Spiritual Reality, which existed before there were any creatures who ate, gives this natural act a new meaning, and more than a new meaning; makes it in a certain context to be a different thing. In a word, I think that real landscapes enter into pictures, not that pictures will one day sprout into real trees and grass. (They Asked for a Paper 179)

The literary works of C.S. Lewis are dominated by the struggle to focus and contain a vision, the vision which Lewis argues precedes the writing of all powerful literature (On Stories 45). Part of the key to understanding this struggle emerges through Lewis's own notion of myth, which appears not only in his literary works, but in his critical, apologetic, and philosophical ones also. In this thesis, I will argue that Lewis's notion of myth is central in his own novels and stories, and that the development which one can witness in this writing is a movement towards a practical application of his notion of myth. Thus, by clarifying Lewis's idea of 'myth', one may gain an understanding of Lewis's literary works; conversely, by studying his literary works, one may understand better Lewis's notions about all literature.

In this first chapter, I will begin by discussing Lewis's notion of literature and proper reading, demonstrate how that is influenced by the neo-Platonic argument for art, and how his definition of myth becomes essential to his literary theory. Lewis regards myth as something omnipresent, and always having a direct impact on the imagination;

I avoid using the term 'concept' in this thesis, since to apply that term to myth would contradict Lewis's statement that myth can never be de-mythologised--examined as an abstract concept.

however, that initial spark must be transposed into another, lower, medium. For Lewis, as a writer, the most important such transposition is that of myth into language and story. Therefore, I will concentrate on how this notion of myth affects his perception of language as a medium for eternal and universal truths. Finally, over the next four chapters, I will examine four of Lewis's stories, showing how certain threads may be drawn through the texts, and each of these threads works towards developing a statement about the connection between myth and literature. By the conclusion, I will have demonstrated that, in Lewis's² writing, the notion of 'myth'-- admittedly a tenuous one--is, ironically, clearer than even Lewis himself recognised.

*

Lewis states in the article "Sometimes Fairy Stories May Say Best What's to be Said" that good literature begins with a 'bubbling up' of raw story material, immediately accompanied by the 'longing for a form' to contain the resulting pictures. This view of the creative process gives us an initial indication of Lewis's emphasis on a basic unbidden image as the starting-point of literature.² For instance, his own Chronicles of Narnia apparently began with mental pictures--a faun carrying an umbrella, a

² Chad Walsh records, for instance, that for Lewis, "the main value of pure story is not the characters, not even the excitement of events, but the feel or atmosphere created by the events" which is built by the imaginative mental pictures incorporated in the work (197).

snowy forest, and finally a picture of Aslan which tied it all together.³ However, once these pictures had emerged in his imagination, he still had to communicate them to his readers. The "author's impulse", he writes, should be "a thing inside him pawing to get out. He longs to see that bubbling stuff pouring into the Form as the housewife longs to see the new jam pouring into the clean jam jar...It's like being in love" (On Stories 46).

Literature, thus always contains some element of inspiration, which allows the reader not only to acquire some new perspective on his own self, but to bring him closer to a sense of the universal. This idea is partly related to Lewis's repeated statements that by submitting oneself to something other--such as a work of literature, or, in other instances, a sense of the divine--one becomes 'more oneself'. For instance, by 'receiving' a literary text, and by leaping into the world which the text has created, Lewis argues that new perspectives which are complementary to our true selves can be experienced. Austin Farrer expresses a similar notion of the divine will, that "the control of our Creator is not an alien control, preventing us from being ourselves. The more he directs, the more we are what we have it in us, to be" (Revelation of St. John 25). Thus, in

See the essay, "It All Began With a Picture..." in On Stories (53-54).

Austin Farrer describes a similar longing for form when discussing John's Revelation. The longing for the form by which to communicate his vision actually shapes the vision: "the revelation is 'the poem and the poem is the revelation. He sees what he writes and writes what he sees" (Rebirth of Images 15).

Lewis writes on criticism, in An Experiment in Criticism: "We must look, and go on looking till we have certainly seen what is there...Look. Listen. Receive. Get yourself out of the way" (19).

all reading, Lewis stresses, we seek "enlargement of our being" (Experiment in Criticism 137).⁶

Lewis writes in this work:

Literary experience heals the wound, without undermining the privilege, of individuality...in reading great literature I become a thousand men and yet remain myself. Like the night sky in the Greek poem, I see with a myriad eyes, but it is still I who see. Here, as in worship, in love, in moral action, and in knowing, I transcend myself; and am never more myself than when I do. (141)

Thus, Lewis argues that the best kind of literary criticism is that which works to discern what exactly the author wrote--what some term 'dryasdust' criticism. Next are the literary historians, who help to place a work in its historical context. The worst criticism, he claims, is that which evaluates a work according to a social relevance established by the critic himself (121-129). Ultimately, then, Lewis argues that in criticism, as in straight reading, the base text must be regarded as primary to any secondary critical material. At the same time, he also argues against what he terms 'the personal heresy', which reads every literary work according to the author's personality (Personal Heresy 20).

All of these points are summarised by Lewis in the notion that reading should be an act of 'reception' rather than 'use'. However, Lewis should also perhaps have stressed more firmly that these terms can only apply to reading when corresponding notions are used in writing. While Lewis argues that one should not make a text 'relate' to one's own life--that one

⁶ For instance, he writes in "Hamlet: The Prince or the Poem" (They Asked for a Paper 51-71) that one should surrender to the poetry and story of the play, rather than actively seeking its 'meaning'.

Lewis seemed rather pessimistic about secondary critical works. For instance, he writes of book-reviewers in Fernseed and Elephants, "I can't remember a single hit" (115).

should imagine oneself in knight's armour rather than removing it from the knight in a novel--many writers attempt to create texts which can be 'used' in just such a manner." Lewis's preference for fantasy and lyric poetry is perhaps explained by this distrust of 'realistic' fiction, which encourages the reader to identify with the characters rather than to empathise with them. Lewis thus assumes that the author, as well as the reader, should work from a particular idea of the imagination, which Lewis regards as an ideal.

For the writer of fiction, the imagination itself is a receptor of images which seem to spring from unknown sources. Imagination, Lewis argues, is the instrument of meaning (Cunningham 73). Those images which appear in the imagination are therefore assumed to be in some sense 'more true', which is why, although the author is not pictured by Lewis as a prophet, he does appear to have some secret passageway to ultimate truth, or at least be able to see and communicate things in some 'new' manner. The reader, then, must allow himself also to become an almost passive receptor of the author's vision--a clearly impossible task--instead of creating the world "which he enjoys" and "flood[ing] wretched material with suggestion" (On Stories 16). However, through these attempts at self-submission and passivity, Lewis argues, the reader may actually glimpse something important, and, as I explained earlier, may become even 'more

Lewis's ideal reading is expressed in Preface to Paradise Lost: "Instead of stripping the knight of his armour you can try to put his armour on yourself; instead of seeing how the courtier would look without his lace, you can try to see how you would feel with his lace...For the truth is that when you have stripped off what the human heart actually was in this or that culture, you are left with a miserable abstraction totally unlike the life really lived by any human being" (64).

himself' through experiencing a multiplicity of personalities and perspectives more intensely in a concentrated time frame.

These notions of imagination as receptor of an initial 'gleam', and of the act of reading as submission to a text, will become more significant to Lewis's notion of myth, and demonstrate how Lewis is in fact arguing that all literature should be in some way 'mythopoeic'--meaning, for Lewis, having some 'mythical' quality. Lewis writes, for instance, that the Fantastic or Mythical has the power "to generalise while remaining concrete, to present in palpable form not concepts or even experiences but whole classes of experience, and to throw off irrelevancies...at its best...it can give us experiences we have never had and thus, instead of 'commenting on life', can add to it" (On Stories 48). Criticism must come after this initial submersion in a text, since "only as we emerge from the mode of consciousness induced by the symphony do we begin once more to attend explicitly to the sounds which induced it" (Preface to Paradise Lost 61).

It is clear, by looking not only at the particular works which Lewis studied in his own criticism, but by examining his lectures and essays, that the element of the mediaeval was quite strong in Lewis, and instrumental in shaping his notion of literature and of myth in particular. The most explicit statement of Lewis's affiliation with what he termed "Old Western man" appears in the inaugural speech which he gave at Cambridge University, on his acceptance of the chair for Mediaeval and Renaissance Studies.

Lewis writes:

It is my settled conviction that in order to read Old Western literature aright you must first suspend most of the responses and

unlearn most of the habits you have acquired in reading modern literature...Speaking not only for myself but for all other Old Western men whom you may meet, I would say, use your specimens while you can. There are not going to be many more dinosaurs. (They Asked For a Paper 25)

The speech thus gives expression to Lewis's prevalent sense of being an outsider both in the academic world, and in a modern world which celebrates 'progress' and 'change'; his perspective was radically different from those of his contemporaries. Lewis did not believe in progress, although he did believe that mankind had changed over the centuries--that the notion of the "unchanging human heart" was indeed a fallacy (Preface to Paradise Lost 62-65). Thus, Lewis's ideal for reading Old Western texts is similar to his ideal for all reading: that reading should be an act of submission, and that the effort of the imagination should lead the reader into the world of the text, rather than leading the text into the reader's own world. Although Lewis argues in Allegory of Love that the human journey is not like a train-ride in which the lands of the past are actually left behind. (1), he does hold that at the turn of the 20th century, man crossed some kind of "frontier", and dwells now in a society which is 'post-Christian' rather than 'pagan' (They Asked For a Paper 16, 20). Lewis himself, on the other hand, along with other members of the informal study group 'The Inklings', remains stubbornly on the other side of the frontier and his writings reflect that affinity with the perspective of the past of Old Western man.

Lewis writes in Allegory of Love, for instance, that "we shall understand our present, and perhaps our future, the better if we can succeed, by an effort of the historical imagination, in reconstructing that long-lost state of mind..." (1).

In The Discarded Image, Lewis's work explaining this perspective, he stresses that while in modern thought "man stands at the top of a stair whose foot is lost in obscurity", in the Mediaeval viewpoint "he stands at the bottom of a stair whose top is invisible with light" (74-75). Modern man, then, with his belief in progress, is convinced that he has accomplished things far beyond the scope of his predecessors, and that it therefore is not necessary to attempt to understand the Old Western mind; there is no limit to his ability, and no god above him. The Mediaeval perspective, however, views man as at the bottom of a ladder which cannot be climbed in this world, and at the top of that ladder is a non-material world in which all will be explained.

In looking at Lewis's study of English Literature in the Sixteenth Century, we realise further that Lewis's own viewpoint was strongly influenced by his study of Mediaeval literature, and the neo-Platonists in particular. Plato argued, of course, that the natural world is a copy of the original and eternal supersensuous forms which exist on another dimension. For this reason, his opinion of literature and of the arts in general was unfavourable. In Ion and Phaedrus, for instance, he states that art is indeed inspired by something divine, but that this divine inspires art which will deceive and alienate mankind. His more well-known argument against the arts appears in the Republic, in which he explains that art, being representational of Nature, is even further removed from the original forms (Plato 421-439).

Lewis summarises this doctrine in English Literature in the Sixteenth Century:

Nature, the phenomenal world, is, in Plato's dualism a copy of the real and supersensuous world. Dialectic leads us up from unreal Nature to

her real original. But the arts which imitate Nature lead us down, further away from reality, to the copy of a copy. (319)

The Neo-Platonists of the early-to-late Middle Ages had several ways of resolving the dilemma between art and the Platonic ideal. Chrysostom of the 1st century, for instance, was one of the first to introduce a notion of the imagination which altered the way in which the arts could be regarded by those who followed the Platonic ideals. He argued that the image in an artist's mind, rather than Nature itself, is the model for art. Philostratus supports this idea by saying that "Imagination made them, and she is a better artist than imitation; for where the one carves only what she has seen, the other carves what she has not seen" (quoted in English Literature in the Sixteenth Century 320). From this, it becomes clearer why Lewis preferred fantasy and mythopoeic literature to 'realism'; these other literary forms, he felt, actually could give a closer picture of 'true reality' by not pretending to be literal copies of the natural world. The imagination, bound up with the human soul, exists in a metaphysical rather than a phenomenal world; therefore, it is actually closer to the supersensuous forms.

The neo-Platonists, then, regarded Art and Nature as two distinct copies of the same original forms; however, the artist, it is assumed, actually goes beyond Nature. From these notions derived works of literature such as the Furioso, the Liberata, the Arcadia, and the Faerie Queene, which Lewis himself studied in depth. These writers delivered a 'golden world', which would be termed 'escapism' today; to the neo-

Platonists, exactly the opposite was true. The depiction of the 'golden world' actually brought them closer to 'reality'."

The work of another Mediaevalist, Erich Auerbach, also enlightens the Old Western perspective, and thus is significant background to understanding Lewis's literary works. In his Scenes from the Drama of European Literature, Auerbach discusses how Mediaeval writers regarded the material world as a reflection of itself in another, or 'higher', dimension. Writers such as Dante therefore attempted to depict that higher dimension through their writing (11-76); thus, for instance, Dante's 'Virgil' in the Divine Comedy is a 'figura'--a depiction of the Latin poet as he is raised to his highest level of being. Lewis uses a similar idea in his discussion of 'sacrament', in which something simple and material is a reflection of itself in a higher dimension (see the sermon "Transposition" for instance). Similarly, in the sermon "The Weight of Glory", Lewis explains that each human being on earth is the reflection of an eternal being in Heaven or Hell. The strongest use of the 'figura' emerges in The Great Divorce, which I shall examine in the third chapter.

These notions of 'figura' and 'sacrament' are quite significant to Lewis's discussion of literature--and, later, of myth--as a clearer reflection than is Nature of a greater reality. Lewis thus regards literature as a kind of window which allows the reader to see into a world which could not otherwise be seen. At the same time, that other world is a raising up of the material world, depicting that world in another dimension. Writing, and

¹⁰ / See Hart's discussion of English Literature in the Sixteenth Century, and of Lewis's emphasis on Spenser as creating "a vast, invented structure which other men could walk all round and in and out of for four centuries", which, Hart argues, is a "supreme example...of myth as the basis of literature" (63-64).

mythopoeic writing in particular, serves to cast a new light on the material world, alters not only the readers' perspectives--as stated earlier--but their actual perceptions of the natural.

The works of George MacDonald, a Scottish fantasy writer of the 19th century, were also a strong influence on Lewis's notion of myth and of its importance in literature. In fact, Lewis describes several times how his reading of MacDonald's Phantastes transformed his perception of the world and 'baptised' his imagination. Phantastes, he writes in Surprised by Joy, cast a "bright shadow", which he later identified as holiness, over the natural world, and developed a sense of "a world behind or around the material world", which was also described by Yeats and Maeterlinck' (168-171). Thus, the work satisfies the ideal defined by the neo-Platonists, by Auerbach's 'figura', and most important, by Lewis himself. The sense that mythopoeic writing not only allows the reader to glimpse a vision of the supernatural world, but puts the material world into the perspective of this primary immaterial one, is fundamental to Lewis's idea of myth, and of the purpose of literature in general.

Lewis writes, for instance, of the trainride during which he read Phantastes:

It is as if I were carried sleeping across the frontier, or as if I had died in the old country and could never remember how I came alive in the new. For in one sense the new country was exactly like the old. I met there all that had already charmed me in Malory, Spenser, Morris, and Yeats. But in another sense all was changed. (Surprised by Joy 169)

The paradox of waking and sleeping, or of death and life, is prominent in MacDonald's works, especially in his novel Lilith. According to this paradox, the world of dream is regarded as 'reality', while natural waking

life is actually dream." All of Lewis's works which I shall examine use an element of dream, either setting the story in a supposed dream-world (Pilgrim's Regress and The Great Divorce), or introducing visions into waking life (Till We Have Faces and The Last Battle).

Not surprisingly, then, Lewis's love of literature in general, and of the 'Greats' in particular, was always accompanied by a fascination with myth.¹¹ Mythopoeic works always had an intangible air of grandeur which Lewis sought to achieve even in his earliest writing; however, the element of 'baptism', or of the myth as providing a new enriching perspective, was not developed until later. The 'Joy' which Lewis describes in his autobiography is strongly connected as well with myth, as we witnessed in his experience of it while reading MacDonald's Phantastes.¹² Other works which incited this sense of elation and longing were Longfellow's Saga of King Olaf, Tegner's Drapa, and the Ring cycle of Wagner's operas (Surprised by Joy 23, 74). Lewis's first attempted literary piece, in fact, was an early poem based on the Nibelung (75-76). His focus began moving outwards away from himself; as he explains in Surprised by Joy, for instance, "Up till now my thoughts had been centrifugal; now the centripetal movement had begun" (209).

¹¹ See, for instance, my study in chapter two of MacDonald's lines in Lilith which appear in The Pilgrim's Regress (54-55).

¹² Lewis's choice of companions, the informal study group "The Inklings", also influenced and shaped his theory of literature. The group's most prominent members were J.R.R. Tolkien, Hugo Dyson, Nevill Coghill, and Lewis's brother Warren.

¹³ In the second chapter, I will examine how this connection between Joy and myth emerges in Lewis's allegory, The Pilgrim's Regress, as John's desire and his imaginative picture of the island.

Thus, I have established Lewis's notion of 'good' literature, and how that also stems from neo-Platonic influences. By focusing particularly on his notion of myth, it becomes clear that Lewis envisions a tight connection between the two. The most basic definition of myth which Lewis himself provides appears in the work, Miracles. Myth, writes Lewis, is "a real, though unfocussed gleam of divine truth falling on human imagination" (138). This short definition supplies a concentrated amount of information: first, that myth is something real--or a reflection of the more real supersensuous forms; second, that myth is unfocussed, thus indicating that while myth is real, it is not necessarily a clear or literal depiction of the 'other world'; third, that the origin of this truth is divine, and that it falls, unbidden, on man; finally, that the imagination is the receptor of this gleam of truth--it cannot be perceived intellectually, but only by its direct impact on the imagination.

In Lewis's work of science fiction, Voyage to Venus, Ransom expresses a similar notion of myth; he recognises that "Our mythology is based on a solid reality than we dream: but it is also at an almost infinite distance from that base" (187). The quotation expresses that paradox of dream found in George MacDonald's works: in other words, that myth is modelled on immaterial reality, but at the same time is only an unfocussed reflection of that reality. Lewis also writes in Voyage to Venus that "Ransom at last understood why mythology was what it was--gleams of celestial strength and beauty falling on a jungle of filth and imbecility" (187). Myth, then, throws the light of a new perspective onto the material world.

The notion of myth in Lewis remains purposely vague and intangible, partly because Lewis refuses to provide an adequate abstract definition for myth; it is difficult, he emphasises, to talk about myth, since, for example, different people will regard different things as myth. In the essay "Religion Without Dogma" Lewis compares various opinions of myth with his own: "Myths have been accepted as literally true, then as allegorically true (by the Stoics), as confused history (by Euphemerus), as priestly lies (by the philosophers of the enlightenment), as imitative agricultural ritual mistaken for propositions (in the days of Frazer)...I believe that in the huge mass of mythology which has come down to us a good many different sources are mixed...But among these sources I include the supernatural, both diabolical and divine" (God in the Dock 132).¹² Quotations such as these, of course, refer to myth in a non-literary form; once the myth appears in literature its appearance is somewhat different, as we shall see. In his Allegory of Love and An Experiment in Criticism, Lewis can provide a more practical definition for myth as it appears in literature than is possible for 'pure' myth outside of literature.

In Allegory of Love, for instance, he describes the two ways of using the notion of original and copy, which emerge in myth and in allegory. There is, he argues, a pre-existing "equivalence between the immaterial and the material"(44) which is reflected in language; only in the material world are truth and fact viewed as separate. With allegory, the writer begins with an immaterial fact or concept, and then invents 'visibilia' to express

¹² Interestingly, each of these opinions of myth emerges in the works which I will study in this thesis; each is shown to be superficial or even false. For examination of myth as a diabolical message, see The Screwtape Letters on the mythologisation of science (39).

or reveal that concept more fully. Symbolism or myth, on the other hand, reflects a certain viewpoint or perspective--that the material world is a copy of an immaterial world, which is more 'real' and more concrete. For the symbolist, Lewis explains, we are the allegory; we are the 'personifications' of mere abstractions when viewed from the perspective of this immaterial, but no less 'real' world.

One can never completely conceptualise or 'interpret' myth, according to Lewis, although one can observe how myth appears in various works of literature.¹⁵ This viewpoint is much like the neo-Platonism which Lewis described in English Literature in the Sixteenth Century.¹⁶ It also appears in Coleridge's Miscellaneous Criticism, which distinguishes between allegory and symbol in a manner similar to Goethe: "'Allegory changes a phenomenon into a concept, a concept into an image...(whereas symbolism) changes the phenomenon into the idea, the idea into the Image, in such a way that the idea remains always infinitely active and unapproachable in the image, and will remain inexpressible even though expressed in all languages'" (Fletcher 17).

Lewis repeatedly stresses that the other or primary reality which is defined by myth is actually more concrete than the one with which we are familiar, thus reflecting his neo-Platonic affinity. Lewis writes, for instance, that while allegory leaves the known immaterial world of abstract

Corbin Scott Cornell, for instance, emphasises the untranslatability of myth--that myth discusses that which cannot be expressed in literal language (107).

¹⁶ In his critical work, Allegory. The Theory of a Symbolic Mode, Angus Fletcher explains that in "simplest terms, allegory says one thing and means another" (92). In Lewis's view, myth is distinct from this in that it says one thing, and means, not something completely unrelated or other, but all that that one thing implies (see again "Transposition").

concepts for the less real constructions of the artist, myth reverses the process by leaving the known material world for the more real supernatural one (Allegory of Love 45). His notion of myth stresses that the mythical copy is actually closer to the original than is the material copy.

Lewis thus disagrees with critics such as Bultmann, who claim that while myth is an expression of supernatural truths in natural terms one may by the same token strip off the mythology to glimpse these truths more completely. Bultmann believes that one can actually de-mythologise the Bible, by citing abstract explanations for the concrete mythological truths which emerge in the Bible; one may, for instance, speak of God as a 'great spirit'.¹⁹ For Lewis, the attempt to de-mythologise is not only impossible but is quite dangerous. Because myth is something too concrete even to depict in terms of our less concrete material world, an attempt to make abstract explanations from these mythical pictures will lead one even further from 'reality'. The truths which are concrete in myth reflect an even more concrete dimension: each of these gives birth to "innumerable truths on the abstract level" (Undeceptions 20). Abstract language--the 'great spirit', for instance--is more vague and metaphorical than the myth; and is hardly a clarification of it.²⁰ As Lewis writes in Beyond Personality, abstract language is actually "less real" and cannot escape

Lewis writes, for instance, of Bultmann and Vidler's 'new theology', which reads the Bible as a literary text: "These men ask me to believe they can read between the lines of the old texts; the evidence is their obvious inability to read (in any sense worth discussing) the lines themselves" (Fernseed and Elephants 11).

¹⁹ See Cunningham for an explanation of the contrast between Bultmann and Lewis (94-102).

²⁰ See, for instance, the essay "Is Theology Poetry?" in They Asked for a Paper (161).

metaphor (9). One must decide what images work best for one personally (31).

For instance, Lewis writes in the essay "Myth Became Fact" (in Undeceptions) that "In the enjoyment of a great myth we come nearest to experiencing as a concrete what can otherwise be understood as an abstraction", but stresses that one can never translate from the concrete into the abstract (42). Myth gives an experience of certain governing principles--the original forms reflected in all experiences. He adds that in reading myth "You are not looking for an abstract meaning at all. If that was what you were doing the myth would be for you no true myth but a mere allegory. You were not knowing, but tasting...The moment we state this principle we are admittedly back in the world of abstraction. It is only while receiving the myth as story that you experience the principle correctly" (42).

Scott Oury writes in his article "The Thing Itself" (in the Longing for a Form collection) that Lewis's own recognition of the divine as absolute reality "did not proceed from a system of theology or philosophy to the awareness of the 'sheerly objective'; it was a progression from experience to realization" (6). Therefore, one cannot know myth except by experiencing it directly, and stories--the language of literature--are essential to Lewis's notion of how one can experience myth. To understand the way that myth works in language, we need to examine closely Lewis's notion of transposition, which he explains most fully in his sermon, "Transposition", but which also emerges throughout his other works. The manner in which the initial extraliterary gleam in myth enters the form of language and literature--one can compare this to the notion of beginning

with a picture and the longing for a form--is through a kind of transposition from a higher medium to a lower one.

In "Transpositions", Lewis discusses the relation between higher and lower media, particularly in the occurrences of 'glossolalia' or 'speaking in tongues' in the Early Church. In this phenomenon, Lewis explains, one can see how the Holy Spirit works through human communication; the Spirit is the higher medium, and that is transposed into the lower medium of speech. Lewis also uses other analogies to explain how transposition works: for instance, the relation between piano and orchestral scores, a three-dimensional reality and a two-dimensional picture, the relation between sensation (lower) and emotion (higher), the relations among languages. In all of these situations, the lower medium must accommodate the higher; that is, each unit in the lower medium must bear more significance, or each unit in the higher must be reduced in some way to fit into the lower.

Writes Lewis:

If you are to write a language that has a large vocabulary into a language that has a small vocabulary, then you must be allowed to use several words in more than one sense. If you are to write a language with twenty-two vowel sounds in an alphabet with only five vowel characters then you must be allowed to give each of those five characters more than one value. (171)

In each of these transpositions, the higher medium is in control of the lower, and yet only through this lower medium can the higher medium be observed (172).

Rather than the higher medium alone descending into the lower, Lewis argues that in transposition the lower medium is also raised up to accommodate the higher. For instance, he argues, "emotion descends bodily into the sensation, and digests, transforms, transubstantiates it" (173); a similar occurrence happens during the enactment of a sacrament. Bread and

wine, water, or oil are all transformed or 'transubstantiated'--changed even in substance rather than in form alone--by the transposition of the Spirit into them as media. Thus, the effects of transposition are paradoxical: the lower medium is made more significant by accommodating the higher, and yet the higher medium is 'humiliated' through its incarnation in the lower ("Is Theology Poetry?" in They Asked for a Paper 159).²⁰

The Incarnation, in which God reputedly became Man, is the most important instance of transposition for Lewis (180); not only a transposition of godhead into manhead, but a transposition of myth into history. Recognition of this event brought Lewis to his intellectual conversion from atheism to theism, and finally to Christianity.²¹ In his recent biography of Lewis, William Griffin writes of the intellectual conversion which was influenced by Lewis's companions Tolkien and Dyson, and his recognition that pagan myths were actually fragments of the truth finally made incarnate in Christ:

If pagan stories were 'God expressing himself through minds of poets, using such images as he found there', then Christianity might very well be construed as 'God expressing himself through [what they called] real things'. Why couldn't the story of Christ be construed as a myth, argued Tolkien and Dyson with vigor, but a myth that was true? 'A myth working on [them] in the same way as on the others, but with this tremendous difference, that it really happened'? (78)

In the Incarnation, once again, God is humiliated by becoming Man, while Man is raised up by incorporating God.

²⁰ Lewis writes in "Transpositions" that "humanity, still remaining itself, is not merely counted as, but veritably drawn into deity; [which] seems to me like what happens when a sensation (not in itself a pleasure) is drawn into the joy it accompanies" (They Asked for a Paper 180).

²¹ See Surprised by Joy (217-224) for a detailed description of Lewis's conversion to Christianity.

Lewis argues that the process of transposition makes the elements of the lower medium more than 'symbols' in the traditional sense, which is why he prefers to use the term 'sacraments'. Rather than representing something, which is what a symbol might do, the sacrament actually contains the substance of that higher medium. The confusion between sacrament and symbol, Lewis explains, causes many failures in attempts to translate or interpret myth--to say 'this is a myth about...'--just as if it were an allegory. While allegory is translation, myth is transposition, and thus, mythopoeic literature can be regarded as sacramental.²² This notion is similar to that of Coleridge, Paul Tillich, and others, who interpret 'symbol' to imply a 'participation mystique': that a symbol is actively present in that which it symbolises. Coleridge also emphasises the idea of "unmediated vision"--that one perceives the relation between symbol and symbolised directly with the imagination (Fletcher 17-18). This kind of interpretation of 'symbol' is, for Lewis, comparable to that of 'sacrament'.²³

Reading myth for Lewis, therefore, is like growing up in a dungeon, and knowing the material world only by the two-dimensional pictures drawn by one's mother (They Asked for a Paper 177-179). Even when one finally

²² See "Transpositions" (They Asked for a Paper 173) for an explanation of the difference between sacrament and symbol. With symbol, there is a discontinuity between the one thing and the other, whereas with sacrament, "the thing signified is really in a certain mode present". In talking of symbol here, Lewis is not discussing the 'symbolism' about which he writes in Allegory of Love.

²³ When Lewis writes of 'symbolism' in Allegory of Love, he certainly seems to hold the view of 'symbol' described by Coleridge. In "Transpositions", however, Lewis redefines the term, so that 'symbol' is a different term from 'sacrament'; like Luther's argument concerning Communion, Lewis holds that 'symbol' implies that one thing represents another, while the symbol does not contain any 'Real Presence'. Thus, Coleridge's sense of symbol is actually comparable with Lewis's sense of sacrament.

does see the natural world, one does not immediately recognise it because there are no pencil lines--it has that extra dimension which renders the lines unnecessary (177-178). If one takes the pictures too literally, then, one will not recognise the 'real world'; instead, one must allow the pictures to work directly on one's imagination, to give one a sense of the richness of the two-dimensional picture world. For instance, Lewis writes in Experiment in Criticism of the images of the mythopoeic story that they "have struck roots far below the surface of my mind" (49).²⁴ Myth in its incarnation is both general--because it expresses something far more broad and concrete than we can imagine--and particular--because it must be concentrated into one story, ceremony, or image.

The element of myth as essentially extra-literary sets Lewis firmly apart from Northrop Frye, who holds to the primarily Greek idea of myth as 'mythos'.²⁵ Frye is concerned mainly with myth as a cultural and literary phenomenon, and writes in The Great Code that "man lives...within a mythological universe, a body of assumptions and beliefs developed from his existential concerns" (xviii). Lewis, on the other hand, explains that the "Greek muthos does not mean this [what he terms mythopoeic] sort of story but any sort of story" (Experiment in Criticism 43). In his opinion, myth is "a particular kind of story" (41), with "a particular flavour or

²⁴ Lewis writes in "Psychoanalysis and Literary Criticism" that things in the unconscious have deeper roots than can be determined by psychoanalytical studies (291). Even Jung could not find the answers. This is just one of his main criticisms of psychoanalytical criticism of literary texts.

²⁵ By this definition, both myth and allegory are 'mythical' in the sense of having 'mythos' or 'story'. Frye writes that allegory is "a special form of analogy, a technique of paralleling metaphorical with conceptual language in which the latter has primary authority" (10).

quality", which contains the following characteristics: first, its plot is in some way inevitable--it excites our imaginations although is not suspenseful; second, one cannot identify with the characters but identifies those characters with a universal; third, myth contains a strong element of the fantastic or the supernatural; finally, it is always grave or awe-inspiring.

For Lewis, the reader of myth is more important than the writer; in other words, a story can be myth only if it is read as myth. He writes that "What shows that we are reading myth, not allegory, is that there are no pointers to a specifically theological, or political, or psychological application. A myth points, for each reader, to the realm he lives in most. It is a master key; use it on what door you like" (quoted in Cunningham 145). The distinction is admittedly elusive, since it means that one cannot look 'objectively' at something to determine its mythopoeic nature. It must be read--and read again. Myth is something which colours a story, but is not the story itself.

For instance, in writing about myth particularly in Rider Haggard, one of his favourite popular writers, Lewis argues that "literary delight will be distinct from [the reader's] appreciation of the myth" (Experiment in Criticism 46-47).²⁶ Although myth must be contained in language to be communicated, that language and plot may be (and usually is) fairly simple, rather than 'highbrow' or 'cultured'.

It is not surprising that plot is less important than image to Lewis's ideal of mythopoeic fiction. Because the gleam of truth which appears through myth is outside of the material world, it must also be regarded as

²⁶ See also Lewis's statement in Experiment in Criticism that "It is true that such a story can hardly reach us except in words. But this is logically accidental" (41).

outside of Time. Once again, however, the gleam can only be communicated through Time--in the fragmenting of plot into particular actions or events--just as it can only appear through words or some other form of (broadly-termed) 'language'. This view of the accidental or temporal nature of plot, its arbitrariness, keeps Lewis's notion of the character of myth separate from both Frye's and Joseph Campbell's.²⁷ For Frye, as for Campbell, the actual story patterns or plots are quite important to the myth; these he often terms archetypal (35). Campbell, like Frye, seeks recurring story patterns in the actions of the hero, and in fundamental events such as creation and fall. For Frye, myth can be literary without being believed, while for Lewis, myth which is no longer 'believed'--even as a glimpse of some eternal truth--is no longer myth.

To Frye, also, myth is in some ways not man-created, because the imagination is the receptor of myth; but this imagination also stands as an insulator between Man and Nature rather than a receptor of something beyond Nature. Thus, while Frye does not speak of a divine origin for myth, he does seem to look towards the notion of a 'collective unconscious' from which these archetypes spring--therefore, similar to Jung's psychoanalytical theory. Lewis's notion differs from this; while Jung and others hold the view that literature springs from the seed of archetype in the unconscious--rather like a tree springing from a seed in the soil of culture and other influences--Lewis argues that the tree is contained in the seed. The source of inspiration is a broader, more complex thing, and the

²⁷ See Hart on the plot of myths as "secondary, sometimes unnecessary" (16). The image (for instance, of the Natural Man) is often more important.

language and story that emerges from it is smaller, harder, and more concentrated.

The approach of James Frazer differs from those of Frye and Campbell in that Frazer clearly regards myth as a creation of man, a device man uses to explain certain events, and usually to explain those events incorrectly. While Frye believes that myth is part of human culture, and claims that the significance of myth is in telling "society what it needs to know, whether about its gods, its history, its laws, or its class structure" (32-33), Frazer regards these stories as 'mistaken explanations' or even 'lies'.²⁸ He writes in The Golden Bough, "Clearly [the stories] belong to that large class of myths which are made up to explain the origin of a religious ritual and have no other foundation than the resemblance, real or imaginary, which may be traced between it and some foreign ritual" (7). Like Campbell, then, Frazer's interest is in looking at myth comparatively; however, he does not believe in its truth, or in any divine origin for myth.

On the other hand, the notion of myth as a breaking through of the supernatural into the natural does appear also in the works of Campbell and Mircea Eliade. Campbell, for instance, writes:

It would not be too much to say that myth is the secret opening through which the inexhaustible energies of the cosmos pour into human cultural manifestations. (Hero With a Thousand Faces 3)

Campbell, however, does not appear to imagine a personal divine source, as Lewis does, but a kind of cosmic energy.

²⁸ Ironically, Frazer's work actually was a major influence in the conversion of one of Lewis's contemporaries, Harry Weldon (a confirmed atheist also). Griffin records that Weldon shocked Lewis one evening by saying that the 'dying god stuff' in Frazer actually made one think it had really happened (28). Lewis himself could not have been converted if he had not resolved the comparison of pagan myths expressed in The Golden Bough.

Eliade defines myth in one place as "breakthroughs of the sacred into the World" (Myth and Reality 6), rather than the 'fiction' or 'illusion' which he says that modern man now regards it. Eliade is less concerned with myth appearing in literature than he is with myth manifested in ritual and ceremony. For Eliade, myth establishes a kind of 'sacred history', which sets the stage for a 'natural history'. To him, "Myth narrates a sacred history; it relates an event that took place in primordial Time, the fabled time of 'beginnings'. In other words, myth tells how, through the deeds of Supernatural Beings, a reality came into existence..." (5). This 'sacred story', Eliade notes, is true because it explains a true reality—for instance, how the world came to be.

The main purpose of myth, according to Eliade, is in understanding human behaviour and culture. The 'archaic' man who believes in myth is actually constituted by it, in a similar way to that in which modern man is constituted by his own established and written historical accounts. Myth, reiterated in ritual, becomes an important part of culture. In fact, ~~by re~~ enacting these myths, archaic man can do what the gods have done, and can experience a kind of "primordial Time" (19).²⁰ Eliade quotes Malinowski on the significance of myth that "These stories...are to the natives a statement of a primeval, greater, and more relevant reality, by which the present life, fates and activities of mankind are determined, the

²⁰ Lewis would also have problems with Eliade's depiction of 'archaic man', since he perceives myth as something unchanging and is particularly hostile towards the modern notion of 'progress'. See, for instance, "Myth Became Fact" (Undeceptions 42 & 65): "It is...the myth, that abides; it is...the modern and living thought that moves away". This notion is not surprising if one considers that, for Lewis, myth contains a fragment of eternity.

knowledge of which supplies man with the motive for ritual and moral actions, as well as with indications as to how to perform them" (20).

For Eliade, then, myth is a way of reaching back to man's origins, back to the 'absolute beginnings' in Primordial Time (88-89). Repetition of rituals confirms the existence of a permanent 'sacred' and the 'transmundane'. The World itself can in fact be recreated: "Through myth, the World can be apprehended as a perfectly articulated, intelligible, and significant Cosmos. In telling how things were made, myth reveals by whom and why they were made and under what circumstances" (145). For Eliade, the nature described in myth is both a veil and a camouflage.

For Lewis, it is language as well as nature that becomes the veil, through its incarnation of myth, although language is also an important way of incorporating the gleam of myth in a temporal medium. Nature appears to be the original while it is still only a copy; mythopoeic stories, on the other hand, are clearer reflections of truth, but still under a kind of disguise. The importance, then, is in using language as revealer rather than a concealer by writing in simple language, allowing the images to speak their own truth, and being aware of the significance of the original gleam which 'must be contained in the linguistic seed.'¹⁰ Language must be translucent rather than opaque--must be seen through more than seen. As Chad Walsh writes about Lewis's own use of language, "The uncanny literary skill moves the reader's thoughts beyond the gleaming metaphors and directs them to concepts and hopes that leave language behind. It is as though all the brilliant writing is designed to create clear windows of

¹⁰ See Hart on the significance of language for Lewis (words as "'ancient, fragile, and...immensely potent instruments'"), and its connection with Barfield and with myth (30-47).

perception, so that the reader will look through the language and not at it" (247).

In the works of all of these other 'mythologists' whom I have mentioned, myth is regarded as part of culture, that which shapes other cultural structures such as literature, ritual, and religion; for Frye, the most important structure is literary, for Frazer it is ritual, and for Campbell and Eliade it is both ritual and religion. For Lewis, myth becomes part of culture once it is transposed into literature, art, or belief. However, the gleam itself is a predecessor of culture--it comes from outside our temporal and material world. Thus, while all literature should incarnate that gleam, and all literature should be mythopoeic, all myth is not literary, because it can appear in other forms; in fact, the gleam stands outside of literature, strikes the imagination, and is fragmented through its transposition into language and story. For Lewis, however, literature is still the most relevant transposition of myth for his own purposes.

Lewis's notion of myth is therefore strongly influenced by the 'linguistic Platonism' of his colleague Owen Barfield, which appears especially in Barfield's Poetic Diction: A Study in Meaning. Barfield holds the view that the original Meaning hits the imagination through inspiration, and that only poetry can give one a sense of the original unity. This argument is similar to the neo-Platonic view that poetry is able to reach back towards the original forms, and to Lewis's notion that transposition of the metaphysical into the physical requires that the higher medium be incorporated or incarnated into the lower. According to Barfield, the poetic use of 'metaphor draws connections between things which are naturally inseparable, but which man has increasingly perceived as separate;

for example, the Latin word 'spiritus' originally was applied both to 'wind'--the physical--and to 'spirit'--the metaphysical. He argues that "the poesy felt by us to reside in ancient language consists just in this, that, out of our later, analytic, 'subjective' consciousness, a consciousness which has been brought about along with, and partly because of, this splitting up of meaning, we are led back to experience the original unity" (71).

Myth is firmly connected to Barfield's ideal of poetry by giving some sense of the "original unity" between the immaterial and the material. He writes: "Mythology is the ghost of concrete meaning. Connexions between discriminate phenomena, connexions which are now apprehended as metaphor, were once perceived as immediate realities. As such the poet strives, by his own efforts, to see them again, and to make others see them, again" (80). The main purpose of literature, then, is to give the reader a sense of the significance borne in his words, which carry not only the material realities but the more real immaterial ones. The poet is like the Painter Ghost who emerges later in Lewis's The Great Divorce, whose ability is in seeing the original forms reflected through the natural world.

Thus, while Lewis holds that myth can appear in story, he still emphasises that story is only one instance of the transposition of something eternal and immaterial into the material world. As such, myth, initially outside of culture, must become immanent in it, or it cannot be known or communicated, just as the only way of knowing the divine is through his

Lewis's own linguistic study, titled Studies in Words, expresses a similar notion, since he examines the roots of words in order to enlighten their "meanings". For Lewis, language must incorporate all of the significance of the original gleam, and thus language becomes mythopoeic and sacramental.

Incarnation into history, and through the myth set down in language and story in Scripture. The imagination is the primary receptor of the gleams of myth, but the artist or writer must then struggle to focus this gleam into a communicable vision. At the same time, unlike allegory, the vision can never be translated into the abstract language of interpretation. The concepts and principles embodied within it are innumerable.

Mythopoeic literature also must somehow make use of the natural world in determining powerful imagery. In Preface to Paradise Lost, for instance, Lewis emphasises that the ingredients of myth which emerge in image are like words in language; they mean nothing apart from their combination within the form, express basic elements, and speak what cannot be expressed any other way. As Auerbach stresses, then, mythopoeic writing raises up the material world in some manner, to depict it in a higher dimension. This is the kind of thing which occurs in Lewis's interplanetary trilogy, which depicts an unfallen world, and a world on the brink of a fall, setting these next to the familiar, fallen world. The overall effect of this juxtaposition is that the material world is given more significance. Like the fiction of George MacDonald, mythopoeic literature sheds a 'bright shadow' over our natural world, and transforms our perceptions of reality.

In the chapters which follow, I will examine how Lewis's notion of myth in literature actually emerges in his works. Each work which I have chosen shows a distinct aspect of myth as Lewis struggles to incorporate the gleam and to focus a unique vision, by displaying particular transpositions of human choices, of love, and of other natural things; by attempting to allow the reader to see with new eyes the 'bright shadow' of

holiness upon the world, through its incorporation of the eternal. My difficulty in looking at the 'mythology' in these works is expressed by Fletcher in his noting that "a critic may say of The Castle or The Trial or The Metamorphosis that they are 'mythic', and then proceed to read them...as the purest sort of allegory" (14). Such a reading, in my opinion, would not only be an injustice to Lewis's literary works, but would contradict my own examination of Lewis's notion of 'myth' as beyond 'interpretation' or 'translation'. That kind of reading, unfortunately, has been the trend of most Lewis criticism in the past.¹² Both my choice of works, and my approach to them, will demonstrate a movement towards Lewis's development of a mythopoeic fiction of his own, according to his own standards. Once incorporated into a literary text, the vision which emerges is one of complexity and power.

¹² For instance, ironically, Fletcher writes in a footnote that "Lewis is himself the author of several fables [i.e. allegories], That Hideous Strength, Perelandra, Out of the Silent Planet, The Screwtape Letters, The Chronicles of Narnia, [sic]" (12). I would argue that the jury is still out on the nature of these works; they are certainly not simple fables, although they do have allegorical elements, and one can read them allegorically--but then, one can read almost anything allegorically.

An Allegory of Myth

The Pilgrim's Regress

(2)

In the first chapter, I introduced Lewis's notion of myth, especially its connection with neo-Platonism, and the idea of transposition. I also argued that the notion of myth is strongly connected with Lewis's ideal of 'good' literature--that it should begin with a picture, should invite the reader to submit his imagination to the text, and in some way should baptise his imagination. The Pilgrim's Regress, Lewis's first major work of fiction, shows the beginning of the development of his notion of myth, and of its practical application in his own writing. Lindskoog, in her work The Lion of Judah in Never-Never Land, quotes Chad Walsh as saying that The Pilgrim's Regress displays the seeds of many ideas which appear later in Lewis's literature (129). The work, of course, is not intended as myth but as allegory, built on the model of Bunyan's The Pilgrim's Progress. It depicts the journey of a pilgrim in his search for something which will satisfy his continual bouts of deep longing. The pilgrim's attempt often fails, until he finally learns that the image which he believes to be the object of his desire--a Picture of an Island in the distance--is a transposition of something outside the material world.

The Pilgrim's Regress is thus, in a sense, begun with a picture: a picture of a Picture. My argument is that the Island picture in The

Lewis even names his pilgrim 'John', and places him in the allegorical land of 'Puritania'. The publishers Sheed and Ward, who first published the work, interpreted 'Puritania' as Lewis's own Ulster, although Lewis firmly denied this.

Pilgrim's Regress is an early attempt to conceptualise myth: the image which is often the focus of our desire for the transcendent. In The Pilgrim's Regress, Lewis introduces his notion of transposition, and the relation between original and copy through the Picture of the Island, arguing that all attempted satisfactions of human longings are lower media into which myth is transposed, and that the source of the Pictures is an even higher medium. He writes in the Preface, for instance, that "This desire was, in the soul, as the Siege Perilous in Arthur's castle--the chair in which only one could sit" (10).

Second, the work introduces the idea of the baptism of imagination which Lewis experienced on reading George MacDonald, and which he feels is essential in all reading of mythopoeic works. This baptism is only made possible through self-submission, and through this submission one can have an experience of the eternal and supernatural which raises up the material world and allows one to become 'more oneself'. The path that Lewis describes in this work is a path which remains very much in the natural world; while the emphasis in The Pilgrim's Progress is on the 'progress' of the soul from the world toward salvation and heaven, in The Pilgrim's Regress, the emphasis is on 'regress'--a turning to examine the familiar world with an altered or converted perspective, as did Lewis in his own life. Thus, the work describes the effects of myth on the imagination as a baptism; just as Lewis's reading of MacDonald transformed his perception of the natural world, so does John's final recognition of the gleams of truth which emerge in the Island vision. Awareness that the Island is a reflection of real, concrete forms, transposed into image, gives the material world more significance. Finally, the work deals with the importance of

language for Lewis, and the importance of how one should use language to incorporate meaning rather than to conceal ignorance. Thus, Lewis ends up arguing (apologising) in The Pilgrim's Regress that myth is an extra-linguistic picture which cannot be completely conceptualised, instead of creating a mythopoeic fiction himself. The approach of using an allegorical figure to represent myth itself, in fact, leads to difficulties; allegory, by Lewis's definition, begins with a familiar abstract, while myth is a transposition of something too concrete to conceptualise fully.² Once Lewis has worked through his notion of myth, and begins to follow it in his own novels, his works become more powerful; we will see this in later works such as Till We Have Faces and The Last Battle.

While Pilgrim's Regress emphasises the importance of self-submission in experiencing the power of myth, because he writes this as allegory, it actually focuses on Lewis's own journey and invites other readers likewise to focus on themselves, rather than to submit themselves to the literary text. This is probably one reason why the work was not one of Lewis's own favorites, and why he later abandoned allegory as a form. At the same time, Lewis was fascinated with the allegorical form--'archaic' as it was then considered. William Griffin, for instance, writes in his biography that Lewis was strongly influenced by other allegories, such as The Pilgrim's Progress, Langland's Piers Plowman, and the Mediaeval Dutch/English play, Everyman (86). However, Lewis also clearly wanted The Pilgrim's Regress to have some significance as myth, and to make some

² See, for instance, my explanation in Chapter One of the distinction between allegory and symbolism in Allegory of Love.

³ See, for instance, his choice of Allegory of Love for a first critical work.

connection between allegory and myth. In fact, he writes in the Preface that he should not need to translate the allegory, since "wherever the symbols are best, the key is least adequate. For when allegory is at its best, it approaches myth, which must be grasped with the imagination, not with the intellect..." (13).⁴

According to Lewis's autobiography, his own experience of 'Joy' or desire--"an experience of longing which cuts across our ordinary distinctions between wanting and having" (The Pilgrim's Regress 98)--was often connected in some way with myth. He discovered that the images which he saw as the base of myth often incited that sense of longing in him. It was his search for the significance in the myth which led him eventually to Theism, and in The Pilgrim's Regress, John (the pilgrim) follows this same path: from popular realism to Philosophical Idealism, from Idealism to Pantheism, from Pantheism to Theism, and from Theism to Christianity.⁶ However, few readers grasp the connection between longing and myth which is portrayed in the book, partly because the allegorical figure which Lewis uses to represent myth is almost unrecognisable. Critics like Clyde Kilby, for instance, actually associate the Island Picture entirely with Lewis's longing, rather than with the focus of that longing (29).

⁴ Many critics disagree with the benefits of the allegorical form. See, for instance, The Art of Enchantment, which argues that allegory serves no purpose beyond adornment of ideas (68). Cunningham disagrees with this, and stresses that allegory can depict the inner life of man--his abstract thoughts--and can say better that which theology attempts to say.

⁵ In Surprised by Joy, for instance, he writes of how his sense of Joy was brought out in listening to Wagner's Ring cycle, and reading other mythopoeic texts (73-83).

⁶ In this way, the work differs from Bunyan's, whose allegorical 'road' represents the road of life, towards salvation.

Both Bunyan's The Pilgrim's Progress and Lewis's The Pilgrim's Regress use the technique of the narrator's dream as a frame for the allegory. William Griffin writes on Lewis's choice of the dream-vision over the early plays and poems which he had written before this:

The dream-vision would be a far better model than drama; it would allow for the many uses of allegory. Lewis could move backward and forward in time without respect to causality. He could fabricate the incidents of the allegory in such a way that they had one meaning for the characters and an additional meaning, perhaps several meanings, for the reader. What was philosophically complex in his own pilgrimage, therefore, Lewis could make ridiculously simple and not a little interesting. (86)

The dream takes one into the world of the unconscious where self is envisioned as fragmented, and since Lewis in particular believes that allegorical figures are personifications of these fragments, dream does become a useful frame for allegory. In his later works, dreams become increasingly more a technique for visions into the future, and in fact into eternity. As this happens, Lewis's writing becomes more mythopoeic; he uses the dream in a manner similar to George MacDonald's Lilith, in which the vision in the dream is regarded as a closer copy of the 'real' original forms.

The earliest volume of Lewis's poetry was titled Spirits in Bondage. A Cycle of Lyrics (the title was a quotation from Milton's Paradise Lost); the book contained poems "mainly strung around the idea...that nature is wholly diabolical and malevolent and that God, if he exists, is outside of and in opposition to the cosmic arrangements" (Griffin 5). Lewis also produced a long lyric poem titled Dymer--an early attempt to use myth, although once again awkwardly and autobiographically. His language in this work is far from the clear and simple prose which he later developed.

I do disagree with Griffin's assessment of The Pilgrim's Regress as a "ridiculously simple" depiction of Lewis's difficult philosophical journey. It is true that the purpose of allegory is often to simplify the complexity of human existence; characters become wooden and expressive of a single characteristic. However, Lewis's work is much too complicated (without the headings) and topical; the allegory, in some ways, makes the journey even more confusing.

The work also examines other contrasting notions of myth in the reactions of various characters to John's vision of the Island. All of these notions are reduced to absurdity or dismissed partly because of their use of language as a disguise for faulty reasoning, or for empty ideas.⁹ Lewis, with his emphasis on words as bearing significance--'saying what one means', recognising the meaning made incarnate in language--calls on the reader to recognise the basic falsehood of the notions he criticises through these other characters. These characters also represent the various attempts to satisfy John's desire, and to explain his Island vision, by citing (what we learn to be later) things which are only 'less real' copies of that vision.

For instance, Mr. Enlightenment, the older spirit of modern progress and science, interprets the Picture of the Island from the perspective of an anthropologist.¹⁰ His 'explanation' also is quite similar to that of James Frazer, who regards myths as mistaken explanations of natural phenomena. Enlightenment says of a village's 'myth' of the Landlord (god) as having a trunk:

'...they know that the escaped elephant must have been the source of the trunk story because they know that an escaped snake must have been the source of the snake story in the next village--and so on. This is called the inductive method. Hypothesis, my dear friend,

⁹ As D.A. Hart points out, this concealing element of language emerges in the interchange between Weston and Oyarsa in Out of the Silent Planet, during which Weston's jargon is translated or reduced to its true meaning, and away from the tendency to abstract or attempt to confuse and impress his listeners (34). Language is very important in the interplanetary trilogy.

¹⁰ See Lewis's own argument against 'the anthropological approach' to literary criticism in his article of the same name. Lewis claims that the anthropologist proceeds in the wrong direction in his reasoning--since myth and literature are often the only things which remain to define a particular 'primitive' culture (Selected Literary Essays 301-311).

establishes itself by a cumulative process; or, to use popular language, if you make the same guess often enough it ceases to be a guess and becomes a Scientific Fact'. (37)

Like Frazer, then, Mr. Enlightenment provides endless examples in order to 'prove' his position of myth as mistaken explanations; however, his language conceals his distortion of the scientific method. At no point can his conclusion be deduced from the data which he provides.

In contrast to Enlightenment's view, Mr. Halfways and his children associate myth with aesthetic, romantic, or literary experiences. Halfways, for instance, stresses that the islands are not visions of something outer, but expressions of something inner which can be called up by music or romantic love (42-44); these things, in fact, are the true objects of our desire, he argues. His son Gus, on the other hand, looks to machines and the newest trends in literature for the satisfaction of his own desire (46-47). Lewis's criticism of these trends appears most strongly in the headings which he added later: "the swamp-literature of the Dirty Twenties" (52), and "the gibberish-literature of the Lunatic Twenties" (54). Once again, the representatives of the literary trends of this period, the Clevers, use language to conceal their ignorance and lack of talent. For instance, John's attempt to summarise Phally's poem as 'erotic' is regarded by the Clevers as "a low-brow blunder" (53), and he is attacked for his clarification and summary of something which has been made intentionally unclear. According to Lewis, then, the highbrow--whom he dislikes--often reads between the lines, while ignoring the lines themselves.¹¹ The most

¹¹ Lewis's argument against 'highbrows' was long and heated. Although in Pilgrim's Regress he aims towards this audience, his later literary works reach more towards 'lowbrows' and children (see, for instance, The Great Divorce, the science fiction trilogy, and Narnia).

difficult and yet valuable task, he emphasises, is to discern what the writer has actually written, from what intention; and from what perspective.

Media Halfways (who is perhaps Mr. Halfways' daughter, but is also in the pay of the 'brown girls') offers John romantic love to satisfy his desire--the Island, she says, is their infatuation for each other. Once Media and John have apparently 'fallen in love' (although this 'love' does not last long), drawn together by the musical magic of Mr. Halfways, they speak in the heightened language of Donne's "The Ecstasy" (ed. Eastman 231-232). Once again, however, the words only disguise their lust:

'Media, I love you,' said John.

'We have come to the real Island,' said Media.

'But oh, alas!' said he, 'so long our bodies why do we forbear?'

'Else a great prince in prison lies,' sighed she. (45)

More sinister responses to John's vision of the Island are depicted in the portraits of the Spirit of the Age, and the victims of excessive psychoanalysis. Enlightenment's son Sigismund, for instance, decides that the Island is actually just a wish-fulfillment fantasy, which serves to hide his sexual desire for the brown girls, who are representative of basic uncomplicated lust (59).¹² Gus Halfways likewise argues that "Our fathers made images of what they called gods and goddesses; but they were really only brown girls and brown boys whitewashed...All self-deception and phallic sentiment" (47). Similarly, the Spirit of the Age has the power to see through anything or anyone to what one would presume to be 'truth', envisioning "all humanity as a bundle of complexes", while ignoring his

¹² See Lewis's own criticism of psychoanalysis and psychoanalytical literary criticism in "Psychoanalysis and Literary Criticism" (They Asked for a Paper 120-138).

individuality or his soul." According to Lewis, of course, the psychoanalytic interpretation of images and mythopoeic literature is faulty, since "liberal use of marvellous, mythical, and fantastical in a story is...an argument against the charge of wish fulfilment" (They Asked for a Paper 289); while we daydream what we know, we imagine what is strange. Moreover, Lewis argues, the self ideally disappears in literature--is killed as fantasy and raised as art.

Lewis regards Jungian psychoanalytic theory as "a much more civil and humane interpretation" (296). However, he argues against the notion that the interest in archetypal images springs from their long history in human imagination; scratching, he writes, is also historical, but is not very interesting. Moreover, even Jungian psychoanalysis will never discover the source of these archetypes by looking inward, he emphasises, writing that "the mystery of primordial images is deeper, their origin more remote, their cave more hid, their fountain less accessible than those suspect who have yet dug deepest, sounded with the longest cord, or journeyed farthest in the wilderness" (300). These images can only speak their truth if they are allowed to hit the imagination directly, and are left, for the most part, unanalysed.

Therefore, in The Pilgrim's Regress, Lewis argues that the Spirit of the Age and his followers are not at all rational in their way of seeing. Master Parrot, for instance--one of the Spirit's new trainees--exemplifies Lewis's notion of 'Bulverism', a faulty arguing technique which attacks 'ad hominem', rather than arguing a position (see Undeceptions 223-229).

¹³ One can contrast this to the 'seeing through' in the heavenly world in The Great Divorce, which sees into men's souls (therefore they become ghosts).

Parrot, and others like him, use language like Humpty Dumpty in Lewis Carroll's Alice: words can mean whatever one wants them to mean (261-276):

'Argument,' said Master Parrot, 'is the attempted rationalisation of the arguer's desires.'

'Very good,' replied the jailor, 'but you should turn out your toes and put your hands behind your back. That is better. Now: what is the proper answer to an argument proving the existence of the Landlord?'

'The proper answer is, "You say that because you are a Steward."' (62)

The portraits of Mr. Sensible and Mr. Broad depict other notions of myth which use language as a disguise. Lewis explains in the page heading that Sensible represents "the pretentiousness and cold frivolity" of the modern world (83).- Sensible uses language to conceal his own ignorance, and ultimately to deceive his listeners. For instance, he peppers his conversations with Latin and Greek phrases, left untranslated, out of context, and therefore meaning nothing. He also suggests that he has produced all of the food which he serves his guests, but later reveals that none of it is his own. Dangerously, he contrasts his own way of life to that of Reason, and appeals to his guests for a life of ease:

'The one seeks comfort and finds it, the other seeks truth and is still seeking...The baggage has a pretty face, I allow; but she leads us from our true aim--joy, pleasure, ease, content, whate'er the name!' (86)

Thus, Sensible plays with language--creating a little rhyme for his guests' amusement--but he actually expresses nonsense, categorically assuming that his listeners respond to the same fruitless goals as he does.

Mr. Broad is a friend of Sensible, which initially demonstrates a great deal of his character: like Sensible, more inclined toward easy answers, 'pleasure', 'joy', and 'content'. Ironically, it is actually Broad who has provided the drinks for Sensible's dinner-party. His own notion of language

follows the pattern explained by Bultmann and others like him: a shift towards abstract expression of concrete truths, which actually serves only to confuse these truths. He stresses for instance that "the great truths need re-interpretation" (119), which goes much beyond Lewis's ideal of 'old' truths in new form. Broad does not only want to change the trappings of these truths; he wants to alter their meaning altogether. He claims, for instance, that Mother Kirk has allowed herself to "get a little out of date", and suggests that she also follow the trends of the modern world (119). Lewis's argument is that some things, like divine revelation in Scripture, for instance, are permanent and absolute.

This kind of translation into abstract interpretation is similar to that which I will examine in characters such as "The Episcopal Ghost" in The Great Divorce and the new priest of Ungit in Till We Have Faces. Lewis felt that these distortions of our mythological copies and images of the concrete--for instance, the absence of belief in a 'literal' heaven and hell--are more dangerous than complete denial of belief, or excessive emphasis on the images themselves. Partly, this is an expression of Lewis's notion of the mythical images as reflections or copies of the eternal truths transposed into the only forms in which we can perceive them: language and image. Ironically, however, Lewis's own allegorical figure of myth--the Island--is an even less 'real' copy of the concept of myth, since, as he explains in Allegory of Love, the allegorical constructs of the writer are 'less real' even than the material world, and can only incidentally 'approach' the more real copies of myth. Here, then, Lewis aims at translation rather than transposition.

Pilgrim's Regress manages to show us some interesting things about Lewis's notion of myth, even while his representation of myth in the Island-Picture is, therefore, not effective. In the latter half of the work especially, Lewis explores more intensively the relation between original and copy, and focuses mainly on two main instances of transposition: the Rules and the Pictures. By the end of the book, Lewis has stressed two points: first, that both Rules and Pictures are transposed copies of eternal originals, and must be recognised for their reflection of the original forms; and second, that these reflections are still only copies of some even higher medium.

Throughout the work, then, a conflict is built between the Rules and the Pictures, and not until the end is their inter-relationship defined. The Rules are Lewis's representation of the Law, while the Pictures represent myth; both, he argues can lead us toward their ultimate source--the divine--although the tendency is always to worship them for their own sakes, and not for what they reflect, or to reject them altogether. Humans also tend to distort or corrupt the messages which they receive through Rules and Pictures, as Lewis shows in the portraits of Enlightenment, Halfways, and so on.

The contrast between Rules and Pictures emerges initially in John's growing recognition of the hypocritical and superficial attitudes of his own home of Puritania. The religion which the Puritans practice is particularly unattractive and laden with superstition. The Puritans have taken the copy of the Rules, and have distorted it; they worship it as if it were the original, and the image of the Landlord--cruel and demanding--is

their only Picture of God.¹⁴ At the same time, the difficulty of following the strict Rules which they have grasped causes hypocrisy to flourish. For instance, when Uncle George 'dies', John's attempt to discuss the event with his mother--to bring hidden things to light--is met with contradiction and empty promises:

'Will the Landlord put Uncle George in the black hole?'

'How dare you say such a thing about your poor uncle? Of course he won't.'

'But hasn't Uncle George broken all the rules?'

'Broken all the rules? Your Uncle George was a very good man.'

'You never told me that before,' said John. (27)

The Rules themselves, at least as they appear in Puritania, are self-contradictory; that is, one side of the rule-card cites a rule, and the other side cites its contradiction (23). It is no wonder, then, that John becomes confused and easily influenced by the purity of his very different vision of the Island. Naturally, he does not see any connection between his vision and his conception of the cruel, hypocritical Landlord. The images of the Puritanian religion--from the Landlord's portrayal by the Steward to the 'black hole'--are distortions of other mythical Pictures. The Puritanians have chosen to favour the Rules, and these Rules have blocked out all else, and have shaped the Pictures which they now--except for the Steward who does not truly believe what he preaches--unreservedly follow.

The Picture of the Island thus seems more promising initially, although John tends to worship it for its own sake, and seeks any experience which will call up the image in his imagination. At the same time, the quests for the desired which John undertakes, either through the material world itself,

¹⁴ Lewis's creation of the Landlord is probably a reference to the two parables of the 'householder' which Jesus tells, recorded in Matthew's Gospel (20, 1-16; 21, 33-41).

or within himself, are compared by Lewis to the search for the risen Jesus in his tomb on Easter Day: "Quem Quaeritis in Sepulchro? Non est hic" (31). The sepulchre, then, is the material world--the world of reflections and images, like the brown girls who repeatedly appear and then disappear. John must therefore recognise that these things are copies of an original which he can only perceive through his image of the Island, and yet which also stands outside that image, and outside himself.

Despite the glimpses of original and copy in the introduction of the Rules and Pictures, and in the 'sepulchre' idea, which appear in the first part of the book, it is the figure of Reason who introduces the notion by name, in her questioning of the Spirit of the Age. Reason destroys the Spirit by asking him several riddles which reveal that his own 'vision'--which sees into men's bodies, but not into their souls--is actually false. She asks him, for instance, how one can tell which of two things is the copy and which is the original, and he "cannot answer." She thus introduces the principle of transposition.

Reason explains that the popular way of regarding originals and copies in the modern world is to maintain that the foul thing is the original and the fair is the copy. For instance, a Freudian (like Sigismund E.) would usually say that the vision of the Island is only a copy of sexual fantasies.¹⁶ Likewise, the Spirit of the Age assumes that bodily workings

¹⁵. See Lewis's essay, "Religion: Reality or Substitute" for further explanation of the difficulty (Christian Reflections 37-43).

¹⁶. Screwtape explains that "The general rule which we have now pretty well established among them is that in all experiences which can make them happier or better only the physical facts are 'Real' while the spiritual elements are 'subjective'; in all experiences which can discourage or corrupt them the spiritual elements are the main reality and to ignore them is to be an 'escapist'" (Screwtape Letters 154).

or psychological disorders are the originals to which our sensations and emotions are only copies. As Lewis explains in "Transpositions", however, a higher medium is closer to the original than is a lower, but even these point towards a still higher, supersensuous medium. Emotion, he argues, is a higher medium than sensation, and sensation is a higher medium than actual physical workings. His 'proof' for this is his belief that several emotions can be transposed into or accommodated by one particular sensation (recall Pepys suffering from the stomach-ache during a musical performance who feels as if he is in love), and several sensations can be transposed into one bodily function or mental disease. Lewis deduces from this--and in this work he begins developing the idea through the figure of Reason--that something even higher is transposed into all of these things. Thus myth, the Picture of the Island, is another copy of something even greater, rather than a copy of mere sensation or emotion, as Sigismund would have us believe.

In terms of transposition and the contrast between Rules and Pictures, the Pictures appeal to (or are transposed into) desire, while the Rules appeal to (or are transposed into) the will. The contrast is built especially through the figures of John (desire) and Vertue (will). The two figures thus emerge as examples of the human distortion of both Pictures and

.. In The Screwtape Letters, Screwtape warns that music, art, and the natural world are all able to draw humans to the divine: "Even if we contrive to keep them ignorant of explicit religion, the incalculable winds of fantasy and music and poetry -- the mere face of a girl, the song of a bird [see John's reaction to the bird in Pilgrim's Regress], or the sight of a horizon [the Island] -- are always blowing our whole structure away" (144).

Rules.¹⁸ Vertue represents one who is constantly concerned with following his own will, and cannot say 'I want'; John, on the other hand, lacks discipline in following his desire. Each, then, is sent in a separate direction, and must learn from the other. Each must fight the Dragon from the region in which he is most weak.

Vertue, having finally glimpsed the evil in the world, chooses to reject it cynically--to discipline his body and his mind through an exercise of will. After this, Vertue loses both his sight and his hearing, and only after meeting Wisdom can he be healed intellectually, if still not spiritually. The blinding-scene is quite powerful, representative of virtue which has lost its faith and vision of good (114-115). Wisdom, a spokesperson for a kind of Hegelian philosophy, detached from religious faith, helps both Vertue and John to a new perspective. Both Vertue and John emerge with the notion that all things are part of a Whole which is essentially Good. However, even after Vertue is healed by Wisdom, he continues to be filled with self-hatred and bitterness, arguing that since all things are derived from Good, all things are thus tainted and removed from the Good. John, on the other hand, holds that all things are intrinsically good because of their connection to the Good Whole (139-140). This contrast between their reactions seems very similar to the paradox that transposition introduces: that the lower medium is made more significant through its incorporation of the higher, while the higher medium is humiliated by its incorporation in

¹⁹ Notably, these two figures are portrayed as separate individuals, rather than one as an aspect of the other; although one can envision them as two forces in one character. One can contrast this to the relationship between Christian and Faithful in Pilgrim's Progress, in which Faithful is one characteristic of Christian, but also emerges as a character in his own right.

the lower; for instance, in the Incarnation, God was humiliated in becoming Man, yet Man was made more significant by incorporating God. Thus also, both Rules and Pictures are significant because they "concentrate the original gleam, while that original gleam undergoes a humiliation.

John is brought to an understanding of the relation between Rules and Pictures, and their mutual source and purpose, through his encounters with Wisdom, History, and Mother Kirk, each of whom develops further the notion of transposition. Wisdom holds Pictures to be 'appearances'--rather than either literal representations or illusions--which we 'find' rather than 'make': representations of something related to them, while not necessarily resembling that something. However, he also rejects the notion of the divine, saying that "it helps us not at all to assume a Landlord for their maker" (128). Thus, Wisdom "explains, the world reflected in Rules and Pictures is "not in this mind, or in that, but in Mind itself, in that impersonal principle of consciousness which flows eternally through us, its perishable forms" (134).

Because the image of a personal deity is missing from Wisdom's concept of the Universal, his words only serve to abstract further from the gleam which shines through John's Picture of the Island. He thus, rather like Broad, attempts to de-mythologise--to translate or explain the Landlord image in conceptual (although no less metaphorical) terms. At the same time, he does grasp the notion of the original forms as a highest principle which is transposed into human imagination through myth and law. The figure of History must then introduce the notion of a concrete eternal deity to substantiate and add to Wisdom's argument.

History introduces the idea that both Rules and Pictures are of divine origin, and are used to express eternal truths, to make people aware of the supernatural, concrete world. The Pictures, History explains, were directed mainly at the pagans since the pagans' illiteracy demanded an extra-literary medium. However, without knowledge of the source of the Pictures (since the Pictures themselves were the only sign), the pagans tended to idolise them. Thus, once again, Lewis presents the two halves of his argument for the original/copy notion: first, that the Pictures are gleams of eternal truths; and second, that one must recognise them as copies only, and not worship them as originals. The older priest of Ungit and the priest of Essur in Till We Have Faces are other, perhaps clearer, examples of the idol-worship which results from a failure to recognise the Pictures as copies; one priest believes in the Pictures wholeheartedly as literal truth, while the other has attempted to conceptualise the Pictures, and holds onto the story alone.

The Shepherd People (presumably the Hebrews), on the other hand, received primarily Rules because of their literacy, according to History. At the same time, John finds the Shepherd People--like the Puritans perhaps--"peculiarly unattractive", "illiberal, narrow, and bigoted" (154-155). The Rules also can be distorted, History argues, by being exaggerated or made contradictory. However, History still seems to privilege the Rules, saying that those who received the Law had "Their feet...set on a road: and as the Landlord's Son once said, if the feet have been put right the hands and head will come right sooner or later" (155).¹⁹ The pagans, who

¹⁹ This is probably a reference to Jesus' words to Simon Peter when he insists on washing the latter's feet: "He who has bathed does not need to wash, except for his feet, but he is clean all over" (John 13, 10a).

received only Pictures, could (and did) follow any number of paths, many of which led to the "false Florimels" of sexual satisfaction, anthropology, psychoanalysis, and art (8).

Through History's statement that "Only a third" can reconcile the break between Rules and Pictures, Lewis again explores the notion of transposition, especially its role in the Incarnation. Christ, he argues, is both an incarnation of the law (who came to fulfill rather than destroy the law), and an incarnation of myth into history. Through him, Rules and Pictures were transposed into humanity. Since this "third" becomes the pivotal figure standing between the Rules and Pictures, it is only 'Mother Kirk', the allegorical figure of Christianity, who is able to carry John over the canyon of Original Sin, and to reconcile him to the eternal deity.

Thus, while Reason begins and supervises John's discovery of the reality in his Picture, while Wisdom enlightens and History substantiates, only basic faith can complete it.²⁰ John recognises, by composing a simple prayer, that not only is his Island a gleam of eternal truth, but even his words are transpositions of some greater medium--some ultimate Meaning--and can be transposed back towards their original forms. However, this second transposition must be left to the divine--to the highest medium; John himself must not attempt to translate his own metaphorical prayer.

Oddly, while the Gospel appears to stress the primacy of having "hands and head" washed first, History emphasises that once one's feet are headed in the right direction, these other things will follow naturally.

²⁰ Griffin writes of Lewis's own movement from philosophy to religion: "He reconsidered Hegel's philosophy of the absolute and festooned it with Berkley's notion of the spirit. What resulted was a philosophical construct which he called God...When his stop came, he got off the bus believing...that an absolute spirit of God did indeed exist" (52-53).

At the same time, he must accept it as a copy, and not "blaspheme" by mistaking the mythical copy or image of the divine for an actual original.²¹

John's prayer thus expresses Lewis's notion of transposition in language. In words or stories, the myths become incarnate, and yet even these myths are only gleams of original forms. Through words, we see as if through the bottom end of a telescope: things become smaller, and yet the resulting Picture incorporates more of the landscape. This idea will emerge again in The Great Divorce, in which Time is seen as the glass which inverts the image of heaven, and of principles like 'Freedom' so that that image appears smaller.

In this passage, John cries out:

All prayers always, taken at their word, blaspheme,
 Invoking with frail imageries a folk-lore dream;
 And all men are idolaters, crying unheard
 To senseless idols, if thou take them at their word...
 Take not, oh Lord, our literal sense, but in thy great,
 Unbroken speech our halting metaphor translate. (145)

The contrast which is built in the prayer between the "unbroken speech" of the divine and the "halting metaphor" of man reveals this process of transposition. The metaphors are but brief and "frail" expressions of a higher medium. More important perhaps, one cannot translate these metaphors oneself; instead, they must remain in Pictures. Likewise, one cannot translate myth, because any attempt to conceptualise it is a step further away from the concrete and towards the abstract.

²¹ In Lewis's work, Screwtape Letters, Screwtape warns his nephew about a man who has recognised both the truth in his image of the divine, and the fact that it is only a copy: "Once all his thoughts and images had been flung aside or, if retained, retained with a full recognition of their merely subjective nature, and the man trusts himself to the completely real, external, invisible Presence, there with him in the room, and never knowable by him as he is by it -- why, then the incalculable may occur" (27-28).

In the final section, John undergoes a baptism of his will and of his imagination, in a final reconciliation between the Rules and the Pictures. Once again, this is an early expression of Lewis's belief that 'good' literature demands a kind of submission to a text, and that the divine also demands such a submission of will. Lewis discussed often his own tendency to resist submission to the divine will by using the metaphor of the ocean: "To go down to that sea (I think St John of the Cross called God a sea)...and there neither dive nor swim nor float, but only dabble and splash, careful not to get out of my depth and holding to the lifeline which connects me with all things temporal" (Griffin 373). The alternative to this attitude, which is baptism, will allow one to emerge with a renewed vision and a new perspective: the perspective which Lewis describes in Surprised by Joy of his own reading of Phantastes.

This notion that submission is necessary in order to wake from the dream which is temporal life emerges again in the epigraph to Book Nine taken from Lilith:

You will not sleep, if you lie there a thousand years, until you have opened your hand and yielded that which is not yours to give or to withhold. You may think you are dead, but it will only be a dream; you may think you have come awake, but it will still be only a dream. Open your hand, and you will sleep indeed--then wake indeed. (163)

These lines also mark the beginning of the 'regress'--the journey back towards Puritania, although John must first encounter his Pictures again, and undergo a spiritual transformation. During his baptism--a plunge into the waters which Lewis also describes as part of the conversion-process--'his head comes right also', and he hears the voice of the divine explaining the meaning of his vision of the Island. The voice says, "Child, if you will, it is mythology. It is but truth, not fact: an image, not the very real. But

then it is My mythology" (171). Thus, the voice expresses Lewis's concept of myth: an extra-linguistic gleam of divine truth, separated from fact in the material world.²² However, the voice also goes on to distinguish this 'true' mythology from the distorted mythology of Wisdom. Wisdom, it explains, has not recognised 'the gleam as "truth, not fact", and has attempted to translate this gleam into abstract language.' Thus, the resulting 'myth' is "of man's inventing"; it bears very little resemblance to the original. The words (the lower medium) always are in control, and do not recognise themselves as a transposition, but as either literal fact, illusion, or 'appearance'. The voice explains:

'But this is My inventing, this is the veil under which I have chosen to appear even from the first until now. For this end I made your sense and for this end your imagination, that you might see My face and live.' (171)

The appearance of the voice presents a difficulty for Lewis, since the voice claims that myth is beyond conceptual explanation--that the Pictures alone must stand--and yet here Lewis attempts an explanation himself through the rather flimsy veil of the divine voice. The problem which thus emerges is that which I mentioned at the beginning of this chapter: that while Lewis is developing a notion of myth as something more concrete than abstract linguistic expression, by creating an allegorical figure of myth he presupposes that such a conceptualisation of myth is possible.

The Pilgrim's Regress never quite gets beyond the topical, while The Pilgrim's Progress depicts a journey which, while in some ways topical, is actually universal, and thus approaches myth, according to the definition

²² This notion emerges again in Voyage to Venus, in which Ransom recognises that "the triple distinction of truth from myth and of both from fact was purely terrestrial--was part and parcel of that unhappy division between soul and body which resulted from the Fall" (131).

which Lewis established later in Experiment in Criticism. As Fletcher notes, the latter part of The Pilgrim's Progress designs a vision quite unlike the 'pure allegory' throughout Christian's journey. This final vision of the Heavenly City is a reflection of the final liberation of the hero, after struggling with various difficulties and temptations (22).²¹ This kind of liberation does emerge in The Pilgrim's Regress also, after a long journey; however, the struggles are not 'psychomachia' in the traditional sense (the inner voices of the psyche), but the voices of society. Similarly, the vision at the end is not of the Heavenly City, but of Puritania again--this time transformed by the pilgrim's new faith and imaginative baptism.

Various other factors influence the universality or non-universality of each work, beyond their uses of autobiographical material. For instance, The Pilgrim's Regress has a strong satirical ring, which has been the focus of many criticisms of the book. Lewis again recognised this difficulty himself, and explains the 'bad temper' of the work by saying that "The different intellectual movements of that time were hostile to one another; but the one thing that seemed to unite them all was their common enmity to 'immortal longings'," and adds that "In the end I lost my temper" (The Pilgrim's Regress 10-11). Lewis was, in fact, defending a spiritual position which was unpopular with most of his intellectual contemporaries.

However, the work thus tends to fall into the trap described by George Whalley in his Poetic Process, by which allegory becomes primarily a cipher used to hide social criticism, and the allegory is used to conceal the

²¹ Fletcher sees similar 'liberations' in many particular allegories: "the apocalyptic, visionary moments into which 'mere allegory' sometimes emerges" (22). This is similar to Lewis's sense that allegory sometimes rises to myth, and why, according to Frye, there are no 'mere allegories' (Fletcher 8).

objects of his satire rather than to make the journey depicted more clear (191-192). While some critics have indeed concentrated on the satire in The Pilgrim's Progress, Bunyan certainly does not emphasise this aspect in the work; the connections between allegorical figures and actual historical figures, in fact, are very difficult to determine. In Lewis's allegory, on the other hand, the satirical element is often so overwhelming that the work appears to accomplish little else, except perhaps in the second half of the book, which tends to be less 'bad tempered'. One is often laughing too hard, or trying too hard to determine the object of the satire, to seek any deeper meaning.

For instance, interesting and often comic caricatures appear in portraits of various characters who attempt to satisfy John's desire in vain: The Clevers, the Pale Young Men, Mr. Broad, Mr. Sensible, Mr. Enlightenment, and his son, Sigismund Enlightenment. In the Clevers, Lewis portrays the contemporary artistic movements, such as Dadaism, Cubism, and Surrealism; in Mr. Broad, Lewis portrays the Broad Liberal Church; in Savage, the response to oppression culminating in the totalitarian regimes of Marxism and Fascism; in Enlightenment and his son, the attitudes of the modern world; the Pale Young Men, Lewis admits, were modeled on Eliot (Neo-Angular), Babbitt (Neo-Classical), and Santayana (Neo-Humanist). These figures contrast to Bunyan's 'Faithful', 'Worldly Wiseman' and so on, who tend to be the traditional personifications of abstract characteristics, rather than exaggerations of certain societal trends.

Lewis's page headings compound this sense of topicality, and he expresses in his Preface his regret at having added them. However, most important, perhaps, is that the prominence of the satire reveals Lewis's

desire to 'apologise'--to argue his position, rather than being firm and comfortable in it. Not until later, when he is more sure of his own ideas, does his work gradually relinquish this tone of argument and defensiveness--Barfield associates this with the 'centripetal' movement away from himself--although some small element of apology is still apparent in both his literary and his critical texts.

An examination of the difficulties of this work suggests why Lewis turned away from strict allegory in his later works, and turned towards more imaginative writing. The appeal of works such as The Faerie Queene and Paradise Lost, Lewis discovered, was not centred on their use of allegory, but in the reaching of that allegory towards myth. The Pilgrim's Regress attempts to explain myth, rather than to be mythopoeic itself. At the same time, as I have shown, Lewis does develop many of his ideas in this work. He begins to explore the importance of Pictures, and their effect on the imagination; he struggles with myth and transposition conceptually. He also discusses the importance of language as reflecting and incorporating the divine Word, and of myth and law as other gleams which give us a glimpse of the eternal. He explains how that glimpse can actually alter our perspectives and transform our perceptions of reality, if we submit ourselves to the experience. However, that Island-Picture which incites the desire of John still remains only at the corner of the work, rather than being the cornerstone which Lewis later describes in On Stories. In the next chapter, on The Great Divorce, I will examine how that Island Picture at the edge of Pilgrim's Regress becomes slightly more focused, and begins to encompass more of the work, as Lewis develops more clearly his notion of mythopoeic fiction.

A Bright Shadow
The Great Divorce

(3)

At present all we see is the baffling reflection of reality; we are like men looking at a landscape in a small mirror. (Phillips 59)

Lewis's next short work, titled The Great Divorce, was published early in 1945, and, unlike The Pilgrim's Regress, probably, began not with a serious attempt to make a statement but with an imaginative leap into the worlds inhabited by the damned and the saved. Ghosts, seemingly residing in Hell, are given an opportunity to visit--and ultimately to choose--Heaven, through a meeting with a Solid Person whom they knew on earth. As the reader discovers, the ghosts very seldom do choose that other path. They are, however, lucky, in that they have the opportunity to see themselves ~~as ghosts~~ to get a glimpse of the more solid world of Heaven; while in their own world--be it Earth or Hell--they lack this other perspective.

The work thus depicts the kind of choices which send each of us towards Heaven or Hell while we live out our natural lives, by placing these choices in the perspective of eternity, and thus giving a sense of their significance. The Great Divorce is not allegory, then, although allegorical elements do emerge. Instead, it pulls in ideas related to the notion of 'figura'; an attempt to display the multitude of meanings incorporated in natural reality through the transposition of eternal forms.

The primary notion was that of the 'refrigerium', described by Prudentius and Jeremy Taylor, which emphasised that the damned have holidays. How exactly they would spend these holidays struck Lewis's imagination (Griffin 231).

In this chapter, I will argue that The Great Divorce is another step towards the practical application of Lewis's notion of myth, and its relation to 'good' literature. I will examine Lewis's exploration of the relation between originals and copies--the notion of transposition--by studying the various interchanges which contrast the luminous world of Heaven to the phantasmal world of Hell, and how Lewis thus shows that earth is actually a part of each of these other spaces. With this work, Lewis attempts to cast a 'bright shadow' over material reality in the tradition of his major influence, George MacDonald, and to build a new 'model' of both the temporal and the eternal.

Lewis repeatedly denies, in fact, that he was interested in depicting a 'literal' view of heaven, but only in adding to our experience of earth by revealing the significance it bears. However, his decision to do this by depicting a vision of the eternal forms reflected in the natural world causes him some serious problems, since his readers are likely to interpret the work as a 'supposal' or a mystic vision. Lewis also faces an almost insurmountable difficulty of depicting this eternity within Time, and of depicting the concrete, though immaterial world of the original forms within the natural world and the world of the literary text. Moreover, because Lewis attempts a clear moral message in the work--by demonstrating the kind of attitudes and choices which lead us to Hell--the work is often regarded as allegory; sometimes, in fact, it is not regarded as literature at all.

The depiction of the world of the eternal as more concrete demonstrates once again Lewis's notion that the original forms, of which

our material world is the copy, are solidier and more 'real'.² In the Preface to the work, Lewis explains where he derived his vision of the things of Heaven as more concrete than those of earth.¹ He writes:

The unbendable and unbreakable quality of my heavenly matter was suggested to me by him [an unknown science-fiction writer], though he used the fancy for 'a different and most ingenious purpose. His hero travelled into the past: and there, very properly, found raindrops that would pierce him like bullets and sandwiches that no strength could bite--because, of course, nothing in the past can be altered. I, with less originality but (I hope) equal propriety, have transferred this to the eternal (7).

One can compare this feature of the work, and its use in the original work, with the Screwtape Letters' emphasis that "the Past is frozen and no longer flows, and the Present is all lit up with eternal rays" (77). The Great Divorce likewise expresses the notion that the present is closest to eternity; in it are endless possibilities and a sense of stepping outside of chronological time, while still a fundamental solidity--what we do now is frozen eternally. Writes Screwtape: "For the Present is the point at which time touches eternity. Of the present moment, and of it only, humans have an experience analogous to the experience which our Enemy [the divine] has of reality as a whole; in it alone freedom and actuality are offered them" (76).⁴ This explains why the ghosts in Hell seldom return home; they are

² In Beyond Personality, Lewis writes: "Christianity claims to be telling us about another world, about something behind the world we can touch and hear and see" (11-12).

³ Lewis also writes in Letters to Malcolm: Chiefly on Prayer: "It is of the very nature of the real that it should have sharp corners and rough edges, that it should be resistant, should be itself. Dream-furniture is the only kind on which you never stub your toes or bang your knees" (101-102).

⁴ In Beyond Personality, Lewis writes that in eternity, all moments are present. He compares the perspective of the divine on the world of Time to reading a book; one is not restricted by the time-frame in the book, and in fact can put the book down and go away without changing that time-frame (20-21).

bound to a past which cannot be altered, while in Heaven, anything is possible and yet all is concrete and permanent.

The portrait of the Painter-Ghost who very nearly accepts Heaven is perhaps most significant as an example of Lewis's presentation of myth in this work. The Painter can perhaps be regarded as a 'mythmaker'--a creator of pictures which depict the workings of this world in the light of another. Once again, Lewis presents the ability of 'making myths', not as a conscious effort, but as a way of seeing; the Painter's vision does not come from inside himself. However, he cannot seem to recognise this, or to imagine that Heaven is a world which he does not need to paint; it is the original for the copies which he has been creating from the beginning to give his audience a glimpse of eternity within the material world.

Says the Spirit to the Painter-Ghost:

"When you painted on earth--at least in your earlier days--it was because you caught glimpses of Heaven in the earthly landscape. The success of your painting was that it enabled others to see the glimpses too. But here you are having the thing itself. It is from here that the messages came. There is no good telling us about this country, for we see it already. In fact, we see it better than you do." (80)

The words are quite important for our understanding of Lewis's view of myth, and they also depict the inherent limitations of myth as a medium for truth. Like the Pictures in The Pilgrim's Regress, paintings and myths can lead one away from the right road. Also important, the Painter cannot submit his sight in order to see--cannot submit his mind in order to think rationally. Thus, the Painter, as the writer and the musician, "but for grace is drawn away from love of the thing he tells, to love of the telling, till, down in Deep Hell, they cannot be interested in God at all but only in

what they say about Him" (81).⁵ Thus, Lewis once again emphasises the necessity of self-submission both in reading and writing--that myth is something which not only has direct impact on the imagination of the writer of mythopoeic literature, but must be 'received' by the reader.

The Great Divorce is clearly built on the model of Dante's Divine Comedy, a connection whose importance becomes apparent if one recalls Erich Auerbach's emphasis on 'figura' in Dante. Both Dante's text and Lewis's are difficult to categorise in terms of genre; the Divine Comedy is often regarded as allegory, and yet it lacks many features of traditional allegory. The characters in the text are not primarily abstracts given human form, but actual humans shown in their ultimate lights of salvation and damnation. Therefore, Auerbach stresses that the work is 'figura': that each of the characters in it are copies of real people, but revealed under a new light.⁶ At the same time, because the work is represented as a dream vision, each of the figures could be regarded as features of the dreamer, revealed under the masks of familiar faces. Lewis's work is quite similar in this manner. His figures do appear as 'real people', while each also displays a certain temptation or 'evil' to which the dreamer is likely drawn.

⁵ While the artist can potentially be drawn away from the right path, he is also perhaps more reflective of the creative energy of God. Lewis stresses in Letters to Malcolm that the composer or poet or artist is more like God than is a ruler; and that for each of these, the individual matters more than the complete picture: "If each note or word were conscious it would say: 'The maker had me myself in view and chose for me, with the whole force of his genius, exactly the context I required'" (77).

⁶ In this, Auerbach is following the argument of Coleridge, who emphasises that the Divine Comedy is actually 'quasi-allegorical': "The Divina Commedia is a system of moral, political, and theological truths, with arbitrary personal exemplifications, which are not, in my opinion, allegorical" (quoted in Fletcher 10).

Both works also use literary figures to guide the dreamer through Heaven and Hell; in Dante the figure is Virgil, and in Lewis, George MacDonald. Dante, of course, stresses that Virgil can only lead him to the gate of Heaven, since he was never a Christian and must remain in Limbo himself; therefore, Beatrice (the focus of Dante's 'courtly love') must help Dante to take the final steps towards Paradise. Lewis's guide, 'MacDonald', appears as neither Virgil nor Beatrice--he does not show the dreamer through Deepest Hell, neither can he take him to Deepest Heaven. The dreamer in Dante's work, on the other hand, does appear to go to both places with the help of his guides. Both 'Virgil' and 'MacDonald' are depicted as human and also as bearing the same, although more defined, personalities which they displayed on earth; 'MacDonald', for instance, still speaks with a strong Scottish burr. By depicting 'MacDonald' in this manner, with his constant use of 'ye' and his craggy Highland appearance, Lewis demonstrates his neo-Platonic belief that individuals become 'more themselves' in Heaven or Hell, while their personalities on earth were mere reflections or transpositions.

The use of the dream vision in The Great Divorce can not only be compared to Dante's use, but to that in The Pilgrim's Regress, especially since dream appears as an important element of both allegory and myth. The dream can be regarded in psychoanalytical terms, as the expression of the dreamer's repressed desires, or in terms of a supernatural vision, as

Lewis emphasises this point in his description of 'MacDonald': "Here was an enthroned and shining god, whose ageless spirit weighed upon mine like a burden of solid gold: and yet...here was an old weather-beaten man, one who might have been a shepherd..." (64). See Lewis's argument in Beyond Personality on the point that humans become more 'themselves' in submission to the divine (15).

divinely inspired. While the dream in Pilgrim's Regress seems perhaps more like an expression of the dreamer's self, the dream in The Great Divorce is depicted as a vision of divine origin.

For instance, the reader (and, in fact, the dreamer) is not told until the end of the work that the story has been a dream, while in Pilgrim's Regress the element of dream is made clear from the very beginning. The dreamer (and perhaps the reader) is shocked to discover that the young man with whom he speaks on the bus is a victim of suicide (17). The aspect of self-awareness in Pilgrim's Regress gives the dream a somewhat artificial flavour, while the technique used in The Great Divorce allows the reader to experience the vision along with the dreamer. The dreamer participates in the events of the dream, while he also stands aside as observer and disciple; the combination of these features also makes the dream appear more 'real'. For instance, while the dreamer is not asked to make any kind of explicit choice based on a meeting with a Solid Person, he does learn from the choices of others with the help of his guide.

'MacDonald's' strict command at the end of the book also adds to the dream's sometimes striking sense of authenticity as a vision:

"

And if ye come to tell of what ye have seen, make it plain that it was but a dream. See ye make it very plain. Give no poor fool the pretext to think ye are claiming knowledge of what no mortal knows."
(127)

In this passage, Lewis implicitly pleads his ignorance of theology and his refusal to be regarded as a mystic; similar disclaimers appear throughout Lewis's works. However, the effect of the command is exactly the opposite--the words of the guide actually seem to verify the dream's

expression of eternal truths, because, like an authentic dream, it does not pretend to be an exact replica of what it represents.

The dreamer, then, emerges as primarily an autobiographical figure, although he is also firmly integrated into the story and interacts with the other visitors from the grey town. The personality of the dreamer, however, is quite distinct from that which we see of Lewis in most biographies--especially in the dreamer's obedience and almost childlike wonder and trust in the surroundings of Heaven. Lewis often pokes fun at himself in the figure of the dreamer; for instance, he concludes the interesting interchange between the dreamer and 'MacDonald' quoted above with the following response by the dreamer: "'God forbid, Sir,' said I, trying to look very wise". 'MacDonald' says to this: "'He has forbidden it. That's what I'm telling ye.' As he said this he looked more Scotch than ever" (127). Thus, the dreamer is made to appear quite silly in his exaggerated earnestness and attempts to please his Teacher. However, Lewis's satire, which emerges in episodes such as this, is much more subtle in The Great Divorce than the harsh invective in Pilgrim's Regress, for which he later apologised in his Preface; his use of sarcasm--a primary form of humour in Pilgrim's Regress--is softened into gentle irony in The Great Divorce.

In studying this work as a particular stage in the development of Lewis's notion of mythopoeic literature, it is helpful to examine how Lewis works with the idea of transposition, especially in drawing a contrast between Heaven and Hell. I will, for instance, distinguish among various fragments of the text which appear allegorical and those which are more

symbolic or sacramental in Lewis's sense of the terms. For instance, allegorical elements emerge because The Great Divorce is in part a fantasy which concretises the abstract choices of earthly life. However, once again, allegory is not central and does not appear in a traditional form.

For instance, many of the characters--as in the Pilgrim's Regress--are satirical. However, this time they are also notably ordinary people. Rather than representative of certain trends in contemporary thought which presented temptations to Lewis--such as anthropology, psychology, and modernist art and literature--they appear as representatives of certain personality traits which, allowed to dominate, can lead one along the primrose path to Hell. An example of this is the woman who, once a grumbler, becomes merely a 'grumble', having been completely absorbed by this aspect of herself. The Divine Comedy, on the other hand, is full of famous figures: for instance, Brutus, Clement V, and Ulysses all appear in the lower circles of Hell. A few famous people are referred to in The Great Divorce; however, the appearance of Napoleon in Hell, for instance, is actually quite comical (20-21). Lewis is more interested in 'ordinary' people in this work, and even introduces a cynical Ghost whose vision of Hell--clearly steeped in Dante--is very much disappointed:

"Yes. It's a flop too. They lead you to expect red fire and devils and all sorts of interesting people sizzling on grids--Henry VIII and all that--but when you get there it's just like any other town." (54-55).

The figure of 'Frank' in The Great Divorce is an example of an allegorical figure representing a particular personality complex. Frank appears as two phantoms--a Dwarf and a Tragedian; the Dwarf represents the man that Frank truly was 'inside' (become a dwarf after years of repression), and the Tragedian, Frank's theatrical tendency when

confronting a situation or issue. Gradually, we see Frank the Dwarf shrink, until he is finally absorbed into the character he is accustomed to playing. He thus becomes a clear example of Screwtape's comment that "All mortals tend to turn into the thing they are pretending to be" (Screwtape Letters 54). The scene is a quite powerful depiction of the ultimate result of self-centredness; the character, in the end, actually loses his true self, although only through his own free choice:

At the same moment he gathered up the chain which had for some time been swinging uselessly at his side, and somehow disposed of it. Then for the first time it became clear that the Lady saw and addressed him only.

"Where is Frank?" she said. "And who are you, Sir? I never knew you..." (118)

The elaboration of particular tendencies in human nature, and the fact that the characters are almost never named, allows one to read them either as universal figures of human nature, or as aspects of the dreamer's personality which, once again, present him with temptations. Interestingly, then, the book both presents an introspective vision, and at the same time reveals the dangers of introspection: To reach Heaven, Lewis emphasises throughout, one must deny oneself, and recognise the world only in the light of something greater; Hell, on the other hand--like Milton's Satan in Paradise Lost--is depicted as the ultimate result of self-absorption.⁵ As 'MacDonald' says:

Hell is a state of mind--ye never said a truer word. And every state of mind, left to itself, every shutting up of the creature within the dungeon of its own mind--is, in the end, Hell. But Heaven is not a state of mind. Heaven is reality itself." (69).

MacDonald writes, "The principle of hell is 'I am my own!'" (ed. Lewis 88). Screwtape also says that "Nothing matters at all except the tendency of a given state of mind, in given circumstances, to move a particular patient at a particular moment nearer to the Enemy or nearer to us" (98-99).

This statement recalls once again the image of the boy who grows up in a dungeon, and must somehow believe that there is a 'more real' three-dimensional world outside that dungeon. The image also emerges in Till We Have Faces, in the depiction of a well, and in Orual's descent into the Pillar Rooms. Finally, in The Last Battle, the prisoners inside the stable discover their freedom--simply by believing in Aslan--while the dwarfs remain locked into the dungeon by their doubt and cynicism.

Thus, the emphasis on perspective which appears predominantly in The Great Divorce is associated, once again, with the necessity for submission of self, which is for Lewis both an important element of mythopoeic fiction, and an important element in his notion of 'good' literature and proper reading. Various transpositions in the Ghosts also appear throughout, which build this new perspective on the material world and on their temporal choices. The Ghosts, landscape, and other imagery, are not transformed--do not actually change in form--as much as they are either raised up, or diminished in some manner. Like the bus, which must grow in size as it sails up towards Heaven (122), "blazing with golden light, heraldically coloured", the true nature of things--whether human beings or scenery--is revealed through a transposition of spaces between Heaven and Hell, and a powerful shift in perspective.

For instance, once the bus reaches Heaven, Hell becomes a shadow and Heaven the sharp reality. The contrast as seen from the perspective of Hell and that of Heaven is quite fascinating. For instance, from the bus initially, Hell is seen as "spreading without a break as far as the eye could reach" (15), but later becomes tiny in comparison to Heaven. *For instance, the dreamer says that from the ground, he "got the impression that the

grey town still filled the whole field of vision" (18). Hell is depicted as movement away from the universal--somewhat similar to Sartre's notion that "l'enfers c'est les Autres" (92)--and its residents are constantly quarreling and moving further away from one another. Thus, the grey town continues to spread, while at the same time the stress on self which this movement implies is regarded by 'MacDonald' as an actual shrinking (123).^o

Throughout the work, Lewis constantly plays with perspectives in this manner, continually re-focusing the telescope, and altering the viewpoint. The result is that he manages, to a certain extent, to present a clearer picture of the natural world and natural choices through their relation to eternity and to ultimate reality. These choices take on a new powerful significance. The character in Hell who actually owns a telescope is both symbolic and ironic: symbolic because he is representative of these alterations in perspectives, and ironic because through the glass of the telescope from Hell--which therefore makes things larger--one could hardly see Heaven, which is already too large and too concrete to see with the naked eye. Therefore, the focus of the residents must remain upon Hell alone--even upon themselves--and the man must spend his leisure hours watching the activities of his distant neighbours. The world which each resident in Hell has created centres on him or herself, so that when that world appears in its ultimate light it means self-absorption and isolation. That is all that each has left.

^o We shall see this once again in the study of Till We Have Faces, in which the expansion of the 'hell' inside Orual is envisioned as a shrinking of all that is Orual; in a sense, the process is also similar to that undergone by Frank.

The features of darkness and light also become 'symbolic' in the sense which Lewis describes in Allegory of Love and Experiment in Criticism, mainly because they, like North and South in The Pilgrim's Regress, are untranslatable, and communicate a multitude of meanings. Hell remains always in twilight while Heaven exists in a state just before dawn--that is, while each is still seen from the perspective of earth. Therefore, for the residents of Hell, both in their own natural habitat and at the gate of Heaven, the approach of night or dawn is a terrifying prospect; it implies a time at which all truth will be revealed, and the Ghosts will be destroyed either by utter darkness or by the purity of light.¹⁰ As 'MacDonald' explains, the places that the dreamer has seen are not Deep Hell nor Deep Heaven, but once again only shadows of the same which will be seen as Hell or Heaven when they are brought into still another perspective. The damned do not recognise that they are in Hell, since only by standing next to the Solid People can they see their Ghostly appearances.

Lewis's descriptions of landscape are quite effective in conveying the sense of these spaces of Hell and Heaven. For instance, his depiction of the journey from Hell to Heaven is very powerful:

It began to grow light in the bus. The greyness outside the windows turned from mud-colour to mother of pearl, then to faintest blue, then to a bright blueness that stung the eyes. We seemed to be floating in pure vacancy. There were no lands, no sun, no stars in sight: only the radiant abyss. (24)

The emphasis on colour, which is a sign of the transposition from Hell to Heaven, is also significant, since the appearance of colour is actually the

¹⁰ For instance, Lewis writes in "Dogma and the Universe": "It may happen to us at any moment. In the twinkling of an eye, in a time too small to be measured, and in any place, all that seems to divide us from God can flee away, vanish, leaving us naked before Him..." (Undeceptions 25).

division of the white light which shines constantly in Heaven. In Hell, the rain, the dull air in which light is almost completely absent, indicate its removal from the vibrancy of Heaven. Also, in Hell, as Lewis emphasises, men are more alike in their common humanity, whereas in Heaven (as we have seen with 'MacDonald') they become more individual--more themselves. Therefore, the grey town, in which there is no colour, also gives a sense that the great light of Heaven which we glimpse later has not been picked up or reflected by a variety of things in Hell. In Hell, everything is the same. The light of Heaven is depicting as piercing through things, and thus appears to transform the travellers into Ghosts. One can contrast this perception with that of the Spirit of the Age in The Pilgrim's Regress; while the Spirit of the Age sees through things falsely, to their physical diseases and psychological disorders, this light sees into their true inner beings--into their souls (26)."

At the same time, this apparent transformation of the travellers is, again, only a matter of perspective. It is not that the men are actually changed into Ghosts, but that they appear as such next to the more concrete reality of Heaven. The reader learns that "The men were as they always had been; as all the men I had known had been perhaps. It was the light, the grass, the trees that were different; made of some different substance, so much solidier than things in our country that men were ghosts by comparison" (28). Even the dreamer, who is not yet dead, is shocked to see his own "face" in the mirror of the bus, and to recognise his

Lewis quotes from Charles Williams in Miracles: "A light that shone from behind the sun; the sun/Was not so fierce as to pierce where that light could" (131).

vulnerability in contrast to the solidity of Heaven. Lewis writes of the various faces of the Ghosts on the bus:

They were all fixed faces, full not of possibilities but of impossibilities, some gaunt, some bloated, some glaring with idiotic ferocity, some drowned beyond recovery in dreams; but all, in one way or another, distorted and faded. One had a feeling that they might fall to pieces at any moment if the light grew much stronger. (25)

Lewis's attempt to depict both the world of Ghosts and the world of the 'very real' was clearly quite difficult, which is one reason why he relies primarily on a contrast between the two. In fact, the dreamer admits that the world of Heaven is almost indescribable; he despairs of "conveying the real quality" of the place (27). Once again, this demonstrates the difficulty of communicating the more concrete, atemporal forms, while still bound by Time and by the less solid world of nature and language.

Landscape must be therefore made more significant and must reveal hidden deeper meaning, but without making that meaning too explicit. Like the landscape, the Solid People who emerge from this vision of Heaven give a sense of eternity through their sharp contrast to the Ghosts. Lewis appeals to all sensory perception in his depiction of these immortal beings: "a tiny haze and a sweet smell went up where they had crushed the grass and scattered the dew" he writes; one could not notice whether they were naked or clothed; "the earth shook under their tread as their strong feet sank into the wet turf" (30). The description--and its effects on the Ghosts who "huddled closer to one another" (30)--is quite powerful.

Less successful are the various closeup portraits of the Solid People, who tend to appear rather plastic--instead of more real as they are intended to appear; the portraits of the Ghosts are surprisingly much more effective. For instance, the Solid People, one finds, have a rather annoying

tendency of saying potentially insulting or disturbing things, while wearing placid or even joyful facial expressions. The murderer, for example, who makes it into Heaven, tells his former employer that the latter will never complete the journey to the mountain (presumably Deep Heaven) alone, and 'mirth dances in his eyes' as he says it. He says, flippantly to our ears, "You weren't a decent man and you didn't do your best...Lord bless you, it doesn't matter. There is no need to go into it all now" (34-35), and we perhaps can truly empathise with the Ghost's responding gasp!

This, then, emerges as a failed attempt by Lewis to give a sense of the eternal reality through images.¹² In other situations, he is fortunately more successful; for instance, in the depiction of Heaven's flora and fauna which appears in the following chapter, and the lions whose "manes looked as if they had been just dipped in the river whose noise I could hear close at hand" (37). In chapter 5, the conversation between what Lewis later termed "The Episcopal Ghost" (he was made a bishop on earth for his conforming and yet radical statements) and his respective Solid Person, a former colleague, shows further Lewis's notion of myth and its connection with the original forms. The Episcopal Ghost, like the Painter, does not believe in a 'literal' Heaven and Hell; he has only accepted these terms in an abstract sense. These terms have therefore become nothing more than metaphors to him, and he rejects anything "superstitious or mythological" (38). Like the boy in the dungeon, again, the Ghost refuses to believe that he is actually in Heaven, or that he has actually been in Hell. The Solid Person, on the other hand, has accepted the stories and images, not as

¹² This attempt to describe Heaven can be enlightened by Lewis's own comments that one should show one's reader the beauty or awe of a place, rather than telling him that the scene is 'beautiful' or 'awesome' (Hart 75).

metaphors for abstract concepts, but as reflections of the very real--as myths. God, he stresses, is "Eternal Fact; the Father of all other facthood" (44), while for the Ghost, he is "the Supreme Value", and therefore also an abstract(45).

Most interesting is the reaction of the Ghost to the idea that in Heaven, there will be no "free wind of inquiry" (43) because all possible questions have now been answered. This is similar to the Painter, who is shocked by the idea that he is no longer necessary for his painting. The words of the Solid Person almost entirely echo ~~those of St. Paul~~ in the lines which precede those quoted at the beginning of this chapter. The Episcopal Ghost, however, responds with a distorted quotation of Paul, taken entirely out of context.¹³ Says the Solid Person:

"Once you were a child. Once you knew what inquiry was for. There was a time when you asked questions because you wanted answers and were glad when you found them." (44)

In the Biblical passage, however, Paul is emphasising that as a child one can only comprehend in part; Lewis stresses here that, as a child, the Ghost at least used his questions for the right ends--that is, to get answers. Now, he has come to love the questions more than the answers, and no longer believes that such answers exist. The Ghost does not recognise that now he meets reality face to face; his stress on the 'mature' way of seeing things becomes his downfall, and he chooses popularity in Hell, rather than faith and servitude in Heaven.

¹³ Paul writes: "When I was a little child I talked and felt and thought like a little child. Now that I am a man my childish speech and feeling and thought have no further significance for me" (Phillips 59).

¹⁴ Which, according to 'MacDonald', refers once again to the Fall as depicted in Milton's Paradise Lost (69).

The Episcopal Ghost exemplifies another of Lewis's recurring characters: that of the man who blindly follows the trends of his contemporaries, only to discover that he has fallen into evil, and, ironically, has lost his true self. The Ghost does not truly believe that what he argues is the truth, instead, he bows in the face of 'progress'--walks away singing "City of God, how broad and far", when that City is right in front of him (46). In the face of concrete truth reflected in myth, the Ghost chooses the abstract, and thus chooses to remain a Ghost himself.

Other images from traditional and Biblical mythology appear in a new context in Chapter 6. For instance, the dreamer attempts at walking on water and succeeds, but with the twist that although firm, the water still has a swift-flowing current (47). The Ghost who attempts to steal apples from Heaven in order to improve the conditions of Hell also appears a significant figure; tormented by the concreteness of all Heavenly elements, he finds the apples too heavy to carry, and eventually has to abandon his spoil (50). Also significant is the same Ghost's attempt to overcome the bed of lilies which surrounds the apple-tree, and which pinches his thumb when the wind begins to blow (50-51). Once again, Lewis allows these symbols--used here in unique contexts--to speak with their own significance and does not attempt to explain them.

For these Ghosts, then, the reality of Heaven is indeed torturous--aesthetically beautiful, but also quite frightening; "Reality is harsh to the feet of shadows", as the Bishop's Solid Person says (42). The cynical Ghost, for instance, worries that when the rain comes (he is certain it will)

This feature is actually an interesting touch by Lewis, considering his own strong feelings against hymns in church worship.

the drops will act as machine-gun bullets (57); the female Ghost in the following chapter is unbearably ashamed of her nakedness--that the Spirits can actually see through her--which stands in contrast to the pure chastity of the Solid People, naked or clothed. For the latter Ghost, the only solution lies in forcing her attention away from herself; the Spirit uses a horn to call an army of unicorns, which stampedes onto the scene, driving the Ghost into the arms of the Solid Person (62-63). Once again, then, Lewis emphasises the self-submission necessary for salvation.

At this point, the dreamer finally meets up with his guide, 'George MacDonald', who, we are told, has "the far-seeing look of one who has lived long in open solitary places" (65); 'MacDonald' serves an important purpose in clarifying the 'system' which Lewis depicts in the book. Significantly, the dreamer (here, clearly Lewis) describes again his experience with Phantastes--which appears in Surprised by Joy--and how the book actually transformed his perception of the material world and 'baptised his imagination' before his conversion to Christianity:

I tried to tell how a certain frosty afternoon at Leatherhead Station when I first bought a copy of Phantastes (being then about sixteen years old) had been to me what the first sight of Beatrice had been to Dante: Here begins the New Life. I started to confess how long that Life had delayed in the region of imagination merely: how slowly and reluctantly I had come to admit that his Christendom had more than an accidental connexion with it, how hard I had tried not to see that the true name of the quality which first met me in his books is Holiness. (65)

Just as Beatrice was to Dante a vision of Paradise, Phantastes gave Lewis a similar glimpse of Heaven on earth, which actually transformed his life. The sense of Holiness, which met Lewis in the 'mythmaking' of MacDonald, is what he tries to recapture here in his depiction of Heaven. At the same time, 'MacDonald' stresses that the picture which Lewis can draw from the

dream--although a gleam of truth--is still only a transposition or a shadow, since "Ye cannot fully understand the relations of choice and Time until you are beyond both" (69).

Lewis thus clearly wants to emphasise that his picture-making does not represent a doctrinal position, or a literal vision, but a call to the reader to see with new eyes the workings of his own world--as MacDonald's work did for him. This, once again, is the nature of myth according to Lewis, which colours our perception of reality through the overshadowing of an even greater reality. Many readers, however, prefer to look at the book as presenting a particular 'theology' (Walsh 71)--an attempt to interpret which often proves disappointing or even disturbing, because of the constant failure of the Ghosts to enter Heaven, and the almost irritating cheerfulness of the Solid People.¹⁶

In the latter part of the book, 'MacDonald' takes the dreamer to other various scenes of encounter between Ghosts and Solid People, to teach him about the significance of earthly choices. Many instances of transposition appear in these scenes, especially, as I have noted, in the scenes concerning the transposition of divine love into natural love.¹⁷ Natural feelings, one Solid Person explains, are not high or holy in themselves, but only as reflections of the divine, who 'is love'; natural love, then,

¹⁶ In looking at The Great Divorce as a presentation of a 'theology', many readers become confused or even upset. Heaven and Hell, if they do exist, cannot look like this, they say. Many also object strongly to the presentation of Sarah Smith, who walks away quite undisturbed after her earthly husband is sent back to Hell. My emphasis on Lewis's intent may appear redundant, but I feel it must be made repeatedly.

More on this theme appears in Lewis's examination in The Four Loves, and its relation to Till We Have Faces, which I will discuss in the next chapter.

incorporates divine love. However, when natural love is worshipped for its own sake and not as a transposition of something greater, the result is another brand of idolatry. For instance, a Ghost mother terms 'love' that feeling which has led her to 'live for' her son, even after he has died (90-96); a Ghost wife, who has bullied and pestered her husband into 'getting ahead' claims that she loves and forgives him "as a Christian" (84). The Dwarf, Frank, has allowed his love to deteriorate into a possessive, devouring poison.

On the other hand, natural love also has the potential to be raised up to its divine level, after it has been slain. For instance, the Ghost whose lust appears as a lizard, sitting on his shoulder and whispering embarrassing things into his ear, is transposed into a stallion, and the Ghost then truly becomes 'a man' (98-103). Once part of himself which controlled his actions, the lizard now becomes a vehicle, under his rein. This appears similar to the discussion of originals and copies in The Pilgrim's Regress, which stressed that lust was only a copy for pure desire directed towards the divine; the lizard (lust) was only a copy for the stallion (charity).

The uneven weight between Hell and Heaven is another very important feature of Lewis's work, which sets it apart from Dante's. In The Divine Comedy, one senses that Heaven and Hell are of equal size, whereas in The Great Divorce, it gradually becomes clear that good--Heaven--will always be superior to Hell. Once again, Lewis plays with the telescope in the final chapters, as 'MacDonald' explains that Hell is not down an abyss at all, but down a tiny, almost invisible crack in the soil of Heaven (122). Therefore, the sorrows of Hell truly have no weight against the joys of Heaven. The notion of transposition of a higher medium into a lower thus becomes

significant as 'MacDonald' explains that "'All Hell is smaller than one pebble of your earthly world; but it is smaller than one atom of this world, the Real World'" (122).

Not only does Lewis play with perspectives in vision in these chapters, but he also plays with the notion of Time, and of eternity as outside Time. The passages explore the difficulty of expressing eternity through Time; the solution to the difficulty lies in stories like this one, and especially in the stories called myths. However, one must recognise that the telescope is inverted, and that while one can therefore see more of the picture than without the lens, that picture frames a multi-significant landscape, and still one sees things as much smaller than they actually are. Says 'MacDonald':

"But ye see it [Freedom] 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 have been otherwise...The picture is a symbol: but it's truer than any philosophical theorem (or, perhaps, any mystic's vision) that claims to go behind it." (125)

Thus, Lewis stresses, truth actually appears in these mythical stories, which display absolute freedom in terms of less concrete chronological choices.¹⁸

The 'symbol' of chronological pictures seen through the lens of Time will emerge again in Till We Have Faces.

The final powerful image which Lewis presents is that of a chessboard, upon which 'idola'--puppet representatives--"went to and fro doing this and that" (126). These 'idola' are, in fact, the figurae of the eternal souls who watch over their actions: "And these chessmen are men and women as they appear to themselves and to one another in this world. And the silver table is Time" (126). This image sounds similar to Screwtape's statement in

¹⁸ See the description of the predestination problem in Beyond Personality (22-23).

Screwtape Letters that "Humans are amphibians--half spirit and half animal...As spirits they belong to the eternal world, but as animals they inhabit time" (44).

The appearance of the chessboard and the 'idola' shows that all the choices which the dreamer has witnessed throughout the book have, in a sense, happened in a past, although we have witnessed them here both through the lens of Time in story, and as part of eternity; thus, the choices themselves have been transposed upwards--are depicted in their ultimate forms. The dream must also be regarded as a transposition of the gleam of truth downwards into the imagination; as 'MacDonald' stresses: "Ye saw the choices a bit more clearly than ye could see them on earth: the lens was clearer. But it was still seen through the lens" (127). The passage which describes the chessboard is perhaps the most allegorical in the book, since it presents a concrete image as a translation of an abstract idea, and then offers an explicit interpretation for the image. For myth, as we have seen, there is no explicit interpretation--only a strong sense of the significance which has transposed into language, image, and story.

Letters to Malcolm presents an even clearer picture of Lewis's interpretation of the doctrine of 'resurrection of the dead'. In this world, he explains, matter enters human experience only by becoming soul or sensation: "That element in the soul which it becomes will, in my view, be raised and glorified; the hills and valleys of Heaven will be to those you now experience not as a copy is to an original, nor as a substitute to the genuine article, but as the flower to the root, or the diamond to the coal" (157-158). In a sense, then, the world will be contained in the soul, rather than the soul in the world, just as the truth in mythopoeic literature is

concentrated in a kind of seed (see Appendix 3). That world in the soul will spring into its true eternal form after death.

The work ends with the approach of dawn, an image which becomes significant again in Till We Have Faces. The coming of dawn, as I mentioned earlier, as the coming of night for the Ghosts in Hell, implies a time at which all will be revealed, and the true forms will appear to human eyes. That can be interpreted as a glimpse towards the end of the material world--often expected during the air-raids of the Second World War--towards final judgement, and towards death. The vision, seen as it rapidly emerges from behind the glass into 'dawn', is almost chilling in its intensity:

The light, like solid blocks, intolerable of edge and weight, came thundering upon my head. Next moment the folds of my Teacher's garment were only the folds of the old ink-stained cloth on my study table...The blocks of light were only the books which I had pulled off with it, falling about my head. I awoke in a cold room, hunched on the floor beside a black and empty grate, the clock striking three, and the siren howling overhead. (128)

One reason why this image is so powerful, is that in it Lewis uses the material things of his room to reflect those eternal things which the reader has glimpsed in his dream. The tablecloth is the garment of 'MacDonald', and the books become blocks of light; the clock and siren are the horns which call the sleepers to awake. Thus, these natural things are given added significance because of their reflections of the things in the dream. The dreamer, and certainly the reader at this point, 'awakes' with a completely new perspective on these seemingly ordinary objects, and the seemingly-natural world appears under a new light.

Of that material world, Lewis writes in the Preface: "Earth, I think, will not be found by anyone to be in the end a very distinct place. I think earth, if chosen instead of Heaven, will turn out to have been...only a region in Hell: and earth, if put second to Heaven, to have been from the beginning a part of Heaven itself" (7). That sense of putting earth in its proper perspective--as not 'all there is', but as bearing great significance because of its reflection of the eternal--is what Lewis attempts in The Great Divorce, and what he sees as important, both in mythopoeic fictions, and in all literature in general. This is the notion of which he speaks when he writes that literature allows us to see with new eyes--with a new perspective which paradoxically makes us 'more ourselves'. However, his method of accomplishing this task, and of communicating this vision, is not completely successful in The Great Divorce, because he does attempt to reveal the eternal forms themselves, even if he hopes his readers will not take this revelation literally. In the next work, Till We Have Faces, Lewis actually retells an established myth in a new context, to show how the glimpse of truth which springs upon the imagination in myth can be successfully incarnated in language and story.

"You Also Shall Be Psyche"

Till We Have Faces

(4)

The time will come when we shall see reality whole and face to face!
(Phillips 59)

When Lewis's last literary work, Till We Have Faces, appeared in 1956, it received rather mixed reviews. Although Lewis himself believed it to be his best work (Kilby 64)--that he had at last succeeded in retelling the Cupid and Psyche myth which had fascinated him for most of his life--the book never became as popular as some of his other works. Chad Walsh gives an indication of the reasons for this lack of popularity from which the book suffered: "Perhaps Lewis's previous reputation for overwhelming clarity had left the public unprepared for a novel in which ambiguities abound" (159). Although Walsh seems to assume that this ambiguity is a defect of the work, I will argue that it actually helps to make the novel a successful incorporation of Lewis's notion of myth. Owen Barfield, for instance, writes in Light on C.S. Lewis that, "It is much more a myth in its own right than it is an allegory" (xx). Finally, Lewis had written a work which was virtually impossible to read allegorically; in which abstract explanations are not only not evident in the writing (as they are in

Lewis wrote of the work, originally titled Bareface (Griffin 365): "A complete flop, the worst flop I've ever had...I must admit it's my favorite of all my books, but I suppose that's because it's the last" (Griffin 407).

Pilgrim's Regress), but are difficult to establish in the reading (as they are not difficult in The Great Divorce).

Till We Have Faces bears all of the characteristics which Lewis describes in Experiment in Criticism as part of mythopoeic fiction, although, of course, critics have still attempted allegorical or psychoanalytical interpretations of the work.² This story, I will argue, is an almost complete incarnation of the gleam of myth into language. Here, instead of seeing what myth transposes as in The Great Divorce, Lewis gives the reader a transposition of myth in a retelling of a story, set in a particular historical time frame; myth, then, is not only transposed into language, but into the framework of chronology. This incarnation of myth explains why the resulting work is so dense and so difficult to interpret or explain. In the story, both the characters, and the reader, find their imaginations somehow baptised.

In this chapter, I will concentrate on the significance of language and image--how Orual finally glimpses her own 'true' story emerging in the ritual of Essur, in the stories of Glome, and in the pictures that she sees in a vision; how Orual, in some ways, becomes a writer or artist herself. Lewis also pulls in strands of other myths to build his own reframing of the story, and I will show how he uses these to lend significance to the final result. I will examine a particular example of transposition in the appearances of love--natural and divine. Finally, I will show how the dawning which appears at the end of the work is both similar to, and differs from, that which appears at the end of The Great Divorce. The

² For instance, that the three sisters are all aspects of one person: Orual=reason, Redival=body, Psyche=soul. (Chard).

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cult of Ungit, the earth-goddess, reveals a worship of earth, of earthly things, of natural love, or of the self, rather than a recognition that these are copies of some greater original. At the end, we glimpse a flash--a hint--of that other, ultimate Fact, 'father of all other facthood'.

In the Preface to the work, Lewis reiterates the important notion that literature begins with a picture which is immediately followed by a longing for form. This, as we saw in the first chapter, is similar to the notion that myth begins with a gleam which must still be incorporated in language and chronology. Lewis writes of this particular story that: "Recently, what seemed to be the right form presented itself and themes suddenly interlocked: the straight tale of barbarism, the mind of an ugly woman, dark idolatry and pale enlightenment at war with each other and with vision, and the havoc which a vocation, or even a faith, works on human life". This perhaps explains why the novel succeeds, not only as myth, but as mythopoeic fiction; Lewis finally recognised not only the nature of the original gleam, but the necessity of transposing it into a suitable 'form'. He no longer explains myth through allegory, or attempts to reveal the 'truth behind it'; instead, he simply presents it, and allows his readers to discern.

Till We Have Faces tells the story of a family which is shaken apart by the intervention of the gods. Psyche, the sister who has an experience of these gods which goes far beyond the religious rituals which are part of everyday life, thus becomes the object of jealousy for her sister, Orual, who has no such experience--or at least, that is what she assumes. The story, however, follows Orual along the difficult path leading to self-submission, and finally self-discovery, until she along with Psyche, finally

stands 'naked' before the gods and sees her own choices and words from a new perspective. As in The Great Divorce, she discovers the voice with which she had been speaking all along, but only through a vision in which she herself must deliver a speech. Through giving up herself, she finds that she, like Psyche, can become 'more herself'.

The work retells the story which appears in Apuleius' The Golden Ass, although Lewis maintains in the Preface that the latter was "a 'source', not an 'influence' nor a 'model'". Apuleius, he writes, was the myth's "transmitter" rather than its "inventor". For Lewis, the writer of myth can be no more than this, since the gleam of truth which is transposed into story in myth originally comes from a divine source. The writer cannot therefore be 'creative' in the literal sense, but only can reflect the creative force of the divine, and reflect the original gleam.

There are several differences between Lewis's version of the myth, and Apuleius'. First, Lewis concentrates, not on Psyche, but on her sister Orual; not on the 'easy convert', but on the difficult one, laden with a difficult personality--an 'ugly' woman. Second, while Apuleius works from an awareness of the workings of the gods--the reader knows that Aphrodite had become jealous of Psyche and has therefore set tasks for her, against the will of Cupid--Lewis keeps the gods frustratingly in the dark. This darkness allows the Fox and others to suppose natural explanations for a potentially supernatural event. At the same time, Lewis uses the approaching end of darkness and the coming dawn to foretell the

Lewis writes in "Miracles": "We can always say we have been the victims of an illusion; if we disbelieve in the supernatural this is what we shall always say" (Undeceptions 5).

— appearance of the god, incarnate not only in myth, but in history in the figure of Christ.

Another important difference between Apuleius and Lewis is that while in the former version the sisters also are able to see the palace of Cupid, and urge Psyche to disobey the command of the god because of their envy, in the latter version, Orual is unable (perhaps because of her deliberate refusal or lack of faith) to see the palace fully. This makes the nature of Orual's jealousy slightly different in Till We Have Faces; rather than being envious that Psyche lives in a beautiful palace, Orual is envious that Psyche can so easily communicate with gods who seem elusive to her, and is also envious of the gods for changing 'her' Psyche, and making Psyche no longer dependent on her.

The combination of various mythologies makes the resulting work much denser than if Lewis had followed Apuleius strictly as a 'model'. At the same time, these mythologies thus emerge, not as translations of each other, but as transpositions of a single concentrated truth—revealed throughout the world. The comparisons enlighten each other, and give the complete work an added significance, although they emerge almost strictly in the reading; whether Lewis included them intentionally is a matter for speculation, and, in fact, is not extremely important.

For instance, Psyche in the story is named Istra in her own native language, which, as J.M. Chard has pointed out, is very close to the Babylonian 'Ishtar'. The Fox comments on Ungit's appearance (later identified with Psyche) by saying, "Yes, she is undoubtedly Aphrodite, though more like the Babylonian than the Greek" (16). This turns out to be a glimpse of the eventual situation, although Psyche finally emerges, not

as Aphrodite, nor as Ishtar, but as a 'figura' of herself: a glimpse of herself in some greater dimension. According to Babylonian mythology, Ishtar is the goddess of life and fertility, valour and war, earth-mother of mankind, and love (Mendolsohn 155, xiii). Thus, she already bears some resemblance to Ungit (the earth-mother), to Orual (through her reign over war), and to Psyche (through her reflection of divine love). Ishtar is also the sister of Ereshkigal, the goddess of death and sterility, who thus resembles Orual through her barrenness. The lover of Ishtar is Tammuz, the shepherd-god, who has perhaps some connection with the Grey Mountain in Till We Have Faces as the palace of the gods, and the assumption of the Fox that Psyche has been kidnapped by some mountain-man.

Most significant, however, is the parallel between the end of Till We Have Faces and the descent of Ishtar into the Underworld to retrieve her shepherd lover, who is captive there:

As Ishtar forces her way into the nether world her robes and jewels are taken away from her piece by piece in successive stages, and when she is finally brought to the presence of Ereshkigal, she is stark naked and immediately put to death. (Mendelsohn 119)

After Ishtar dies, she is revived with 'water of life' by her sister. In both stories, then, the passage into the Underworld--death--leads towards the renewal of life symbolised by the water; in both stories, the love and faith involved in the stripping off of any disguises or 'clothing' are necessary for this salvation, and the goddess must stand naked before the god.

Orual's Greek name is 'Maia', the daughter of Atlas and mother of Hermes (Mercurius in Roman mythology). Maia is also an earth-goddess, although her connection with Hermes introduces an important element of communication and language which Orual enlightens in the story. Clyde

Kilby, in his "Interpretation" of Till We Have Faces (in the Longing for a Form collection), has also pointed out that in the Hindu religion 'Maia' means 'illusion'—significant if one considers that Orual's distinctive feature becomes her veil. The Hindu 'Maia' is connected with nature, and with natural love; it is Orual's adherence to the natural, and denial of the supernatural, which brings her sorrow and loss.

Another important connection is drawn by the Fox, between Psyche and Andromeda, also of Greek mythology. Andromeda was beloved of Perseus, the son of Zeus and Danaë; in one myth, she is rescued by Perseus from a rock to which she has been chained. Interestingly, one of Lewis's first attempted literary works was a tragedy based on Prometheus Bound, which he titled Loki Bound. The tragedy was intended to tell Lewis's own story, of a man who "found himself at tragedy's end bound to a rock and blaspheming the supreme god and creator" (Griffin 36-37).

These various threads from other mythologies are not important in themselves, except as they reaffirm the original gleam which emerges in Till We Have Faces. More important is the recurrence of particular images or 'themes' in these various mythologies, upon which Lewis has built in this work. For instance, all of these show the necessity of self-submission before the gods; they also depict, in some manner, the nature of divine love, and its relation to natural human loves. In Till We Have Faces, love becomes one of the targets of the story, as Lewis depicts how human love copies divine love, and yet can become corrupted if worshipped for its own sake. This, then, is all part of the notion explored in The Great Divorce, that the world, if supposed to be 'all there is', will become a hell, while if that world is recognised as a transposition of some other higher dimension,

even the natural things will be raised up. Ungit, as I have stated, is the goddess of the material, 'earthly', world, able to be beautiful only if put into a new eternal perspective.

In Lewis's work, The Four Loves, he discusses two kinds of loves: Need-love and Gift-love. Need-love, he explains, is most unlike the divine love, and yet is still love nevertheless. The highest love must stand on the lowest, and for that reason, both are necessary for the positions which they establish in the other; the lowest must be considered an incarnation of the highest--more significant for that reason, bearing all of the weight of the highest, but in concentrated form. Likewise, the highest can only be recognised through its transposition in the lower media; divine love can only be witnessed through its incarnation in human love. Lewis writes: "Every human love, at its height, has a tendency to claim for itself a divine authority. Its voice tends to sound as if it were the will of God Himself" (Four Loves 15).

That tendency of human love is what emerges in the character of Orual in Till We Have Faces. In her, we glimpse what Lewis terms 'Affection' or 'storge' (in Greek), primarily applied to the relations between parents and offspring. As Orual examines her own reaction to Psyche's redemption by the love-god, she recognises in herself a corruption of that Affection, caused by her establishing it as an end in itself. She says, "I learned then how one can hate those one loves" (136), and compares this to the "love deeper" which would demand a sacrifice of self, rather than a feeding of her self-centredness.

Orual thus emerges as the jealous lover of Psyche, especially in the complaint which she delivers to the gods at the end of the story, and

which she has, in fact, been living throughout the book. At the same time, she is also jealous of the vision which Psyche has been granted by the gods:

The girl was mine. What right had you to steal her away into your dreadful heights?...to hear a chit of a girl who had (or ought to have had) no thought in her head that I'd not put there, setting up for a seer and a prophetess and next thing to a goddess...how could anyone endure it? (302)

In a passage which echoes--in fact, repeats almost exactly--Orual's words, Lewis writes in Four Loves:

Someone or something has stolen "our" boy (or girl). He who was one of Us has become one of Them...Why him? Why was it never opened to us? "A chit of a girl--a whippersnapper of a boy--being shown things that are hidden from their elders?" (59)

Orual also displays the other two natural loves, 'Friendship' and 'Eros', in her relationship with Bardia. Once again, these become corruptions of something which could be used to reveal divine love. Lewis describes Friendship as a standing side-by-side rather than face-to-face; friends base their love on the sharing of common interests, values, and goals. Similarly, Orual's comfort in not appearing attractive to Bardia is in displaying the limitations of the romantic love between him and his wife: "For all the dove's eyes they've made at one another, was there ever such a glance between them as well-proved comrades exchange in farewell when they ride different ways and both into desperate danger?" (242)

However, Orual's feelings are also, as we later see, a corruption of Eros, since she devours Bardia's strength by keeping him working long after old age and its accompanying weakness have set in. The moment that Orual discovers the Ungit in her--her worship of Eros as a god--she discovers how she has hurt this man because of her 'love' for him. In that sense, his wife is correct in her accusations that Orual has become like the

Shadowbrute--"they say the loving and the devouring are all 'one" (275). Orual recognises that "My love for Bardia (not Bardia himself) had become to me a sickening thing" (277). Lewis's words in Four Loves echo this corruption of Eros: "But he [Eros] may live on...The lover's old hyperbole of 'eating' one another can come horribly near the truth" (132).

While Orual thus becomes a figure of Affection when worshipped as an end, Psyche emerges as the figure of the recent convert, who has recognised that the world--with its worldly loves--is only a transposition of something greater. Her main difficulty is maintaining that perspective despite the 'suggestions of the Devil' which spout from the mouths of characters like Orual. The journey into the Underworld which appears in Orual's final vision displays this difficulty to a certain extent; Orual's suffering and self-pity are harder for Psyche to resist than the pleas and flattery of her people. Even Orual recognises this when she glimpses the vision, saying, "But...Orual had only to suffer; Psyche had to keep on her way as well" (315).

Writes Lewis in Four Loves: "So, in the last resort, we must turn down our nearest and dearest when they come between us and our obedience to God...We must not act on the pity we feel; we must be blind to the tears and deaf to pleading" (141). Orual's cutting of her own arm, which initially leads Psyche to disobey her god/husband, reflects Lewis's emphasis on this perspective: of loving God before all men, and recognising all natural love as a transposition of divine love. Orual recognises, having seen her vision, that "I loved her [Psyche] as I would once have thought it impossible to love; would have died any death for her. And yet, it was not, not now, she that really counted. Or if she counted (and oh,

gloriously she did) it was for another's sake" (318). Thus, Orual's natural love is finally seen as an incarnation (and thus, a humiliation) of the original love form, and thus, as Lewis writes in Four Loves, "is taken up into, made the obedient instrument of, Love Himself" (152).

The worship of Ungit thus becomes part of these transpositions, and the fragmented gods which emerge through pagan mythology in the work finally come together under the rein of the one god, soon to be made incarnate in history. Because Ungit demonstrates the worship of the earth and of earthly things as ends in themselves shattered out of perspective, the religion which the people of Glome practice is quite sinister. Ungit emerges as a jealous goddess, who is constantly demanding sacrifice and blood; sometimes animal, but often human, both in literal terms, and in terms of their joy and spirit (24). Therefore, when the people shout out to Psyche that she is Ungit, one senses not only the danger of such a parallel, but that the parallel is not altogether complimentary. At the same time, we see that Psyche is not Ungit simply because of the extreme difference in her healing: she demonstrates self-sacrificing love, rather than love which demands sacrifice.

The most significant feature of the religion of Ungit is perhaps the predominance of veils and masks. For instance, one can compare the priest's wearing of the horrible bird mask to the Steward's mask in

Lewis also describes how his own love for his wife, Joy Davidman, was 'incarnated': "It began in Agape, proceeded to Philia, then became pity, and only after that, Eros. As if the highest of these, Agape, had successively undergone the sweet humiliations of an incarnation" (quoted in Griffin 389-390).

This runs parallel to Lewis's perception of Christ, who turned the traditional man/god relationship around, by giving his blood rather than demanding blood as recompense.

Pilgrim's Regress, which hid the benevolence (and unbelief) evident in his face, and replaced it with a stern facade. In The Last Battle, Tash is depicted as bearing the face of a bird. These images show that the religion of Ungit is one which conceals, rather than reveals, the truth. Orual herself later wears a veil, ostensibly to hide her ugliness, but also to identify herself as a worshipper of Ungit, the goddess of the material world.

On the other hand, Psyche reveals another perspective, and undergoes a similar baptism to that described in Pilgrim's Regress, and attempted in The Great Divorce. Reading of mythopoeic literature leads to a baptism of the imagination, Lewis emphasises; baptism, he stresses, can only be the result of a submission of self to literary text, or to the divine: a recognition that the material world bears all of the significance of the original, and that myth is an even clearer copy of the eternal. While Psyche can be regarded as representative of 'soul', as her name would appear to indicate, to approach her character solely on that allegorical basis would be a limited interpretation. Psyche is also a human being in her own right--not absolute perfection, but a copy or reflection of that perfect state. In a letter to Clyde Kilby, Lewis denies that Psyche represents Christ, although she is a 'good person', and resembles Christ because of that (ed. Lewis 273-274). Her beauty is directly contrasted to the golden curls and voluptuous figure of her sister Redival. The Fox describes her as "'according to nature'" (30); she is perhaps, then, a picture of Man as he was intended to look and act, without stain of sin. At the

See also the portrait of Orual's step-mother from the south. She is veiled, small and fragile, and her clothing is unravelled piece by piece until she stands naked before her lover (20).

same time, as we see, her process of 'becoming a goddess'--emerging in her true form--is quite long and painful.

Psyche's reflection of Christ also appears in the many echoes of verses from the New Testament which appear throughout the book. For instance, Psyche's father echoes the words of the High Priest who rationalised the Crucifixion when he stresses that, "It's only sense that one should die for many", and Orual repeats this in her own words, saying that "It is fit that one should die for the people", and then offers herself as the sacrifice. Likewise, Psyche echoes one of the Seven Last Words, by forgiving Redival for her betrayal: "No, no. She also does what she doesn't know" (77).⁸ For Lewis, all of these echoes are inevitable, since every myth echoes the same great universal truths. As he writes in his letter, "What else could they [good people like Psyche] be like?" (273).

Psyche's longing for the mountain, for the god, and even for 'death' (82), appears similar to the longing which Lewis describes in Pilgrim's Regress and in his autobiography, Surprised by Joy. Her only fear is that no gods exist, and that she will simply die naturally on the Mountain, her sacrifice having been in vain. She does not, however, make the mistake of John in Pilgrim's Regress, who does not recognise his sense of longing as a longing for the divine, incited by the appearance of Pictures--myths. Psyche also recognises that obedience and submission to the gods is necessary above all else. Her last words with Orual are filled with

"Now Caiaphas was he, which gave counsel to the Jews, that it was expedient that one man should die for the people" (John 18, 14).

"Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Luke 23, 34).

references to death, the sense that the gods have somehow chosen her, and once again the notion of 'regress': of going back, or of longing for home.

Orual, of course, has many opportunities for the same happiness that Psyche wins, although her personality and physical appearance causes many drawbacks. For instance, while she initially denies being able to see the god's palace, she does catch a glimpse of it, and then deliberately rejects that as a hallucination. Psyche's ability to see the mountain as a god's palace indicates the baptism of her imagination; because of her submission to the eternal, she sees all the material world in the light of a greater world. Orual, on the other hand, because of her refusal to submit, sees only the meadow and the river, and a very ill and emotionally disturbed Psyche. Psyche's new eternal perspective is reflected in her words that "There is all the time there is", while Orual insists that "There's no time" for Psyche to tell the story of her rescue by the god of love (117).

The irony is made clearer when Orual returns to the Fox and conveniently leaves out the part of her story which depicts her own glimpse of the palace. Like the characters in The Great Divorce, her inability to see the 'city of God' right in front of her is truly her own choice. The Fox says to Orual, "But, your eyes being open, you saw no such thing" (150), while we know that Orual has deliberately closed her eyes to the truth. Psyche, on the other hand, recognises that she is the one whose eyes are open, and who is really awake. She insists, in fact, that her past life was all a dream, and that Orual is "nearly awake now...I must wake you more" (115).

Orual's own baptism--incomplete as it is--comes later, after she has asked Psyche to disobey the god, and she hears the god's voice herself.

The voice says, "You, woman, shall know yourself and your work. You also shall be Psyche" (182). Thus, she too has now been 'chosen', and cannot escape the clutches of the gods. After this, Orual explains, "I looked on the things about me with a new eye" (184). At the same time, while her imagination has been baptised by her encounter with the god, and she now knows that the material world is not all that there is, she has not yet submitted her will to that god. She is certain that 'the gods are', and that they are malevolent. What the book thus depicts is not man's search for god, but god's search for man; the knock on the door which can be answered or rejected, but cannot be ignored. Writes Lewis of his own conversion in Surprised by Joy, "Amiable agnostics will talk cheerfully about 'man's search for God'. To me, as I then was, they might as well have talked about the mouse's search for the cat" (214).

Orual significantly decides to wear her veil after this episode; her refusal to submit her will to the gods causes her true self to shrink within her--as Frank shrinks in The Great Divorce: "I now determined that I would go always veiled" (189). At the same time, Orual recognises that the veil actually reveals her, since everyone begins to identify her as 'the queen with the veil'. However, Orual discovers that she cannot hide from her father. In his dying days he recognises her as Ungit, the goddess who has tormented him for so many years. He says, repeatedly, for instance, "I

In making this point, I argue particularly against the thesis of J.M. Chard, who writes that Till We Have Faces is about man's search for god (115), and that Orual discovers at the end that "the soul and the god for whom she had hungered are to be found at the centre of her own being" (137). Orual's main complaint, in fact, is that the gods exist at all; she finally discovers that the only way to find herself is to submit--lose--herself to the divine nature. See Lewis's Miracles for more refutation of the 'man searching for god' idea (140).

know who she is. "I know" (194). Thus, although Orual the Queen wants Orual the Human to "vanish altogether" (210), she cannot seem to escape from her true inner nature, or "kill" herself (234).¹ Instead, she must await and undergo some kind of purging of Ungit, some submission of self, so that she too can become Psyche. As Orual attempts to block out her true self in favour of the stoic Queen--burning everything of Psyche's and locking a door in her mind (192)--she is even more haunted by the sound of chains in the well, which sound distinctly like a woman weeping, and she finally walls up the well in order to block out the sound. This echoes Lewis's words in Letters to Malcolm that "'No, noise is so emphatic as one you are trying not to listen to'" (36).

All of these things emerge in Orual's first vision, in which she travels deep underground, through the Pillar Rooms. Each, significantly, is smaller than the one above it--a contrast to the Platonic vision which Psyche expresses, in which rooms open out upon larger rooms. In the Rooms, Orual discovers a final incarnation of herself; the concentration of all that she truly is inside. Significantly, it is only by submitting herself to some greater authority that Orual can find herself. She must cast herself down into the deep Pillar Room, and must not attempt to save herself, an experience similar to John's baptismal plunge in Pilgrim's Regress. Like Vertue in Pilgrim's Regress, however, Orual still cannot let go of her own will, and her response to despair is not acceptance but suicide.

Orual discovers the core which she believed was buried forever, and that core (she discovers in a mirror) wears the face of Ungit. The mirror,

¹ Orual explains, for instance, that her Self is becoming increasingly smaller within her, "like being with child, but reversed" (235)

then, reflects not what is visible material fact, but the inner truth transposed into Orual's natural body; she is ugly outside because of her inner bitterness and refusal to accept the gods. It is interesting that she immediately recognises the face of Ungit in the mirror, since Ungit actually wears a thousand faces; however, that face becomes Orual's own self-perception.

In examining how Orual's story becomes myth in Till We Have Faces, it is important to look at the various views of myth which emerge once again in the work, and at the ideas concerning language and image which are central to the conclusion of the story. As I have said, the work is interesting in that it first presents the story as a 'fact', and then demonstrates either how myth springs from it, or how Orual discovers that she has experienced as history what emerges eternally through various mythologies. Therefore, there are two ways of approaching the work: either Orual's story emerges first, and that becomes myth, or the myth precedes the fact, and thus we witness in Till We Have Faces an incarnation of that myth into history.

The Fox and Bardia are representative of the two main viewpoints concerning myth, which are opposites and yet quite alike in their blind dogmatism. These two viewpoints regard myth as either 'blood' or 'water'--they hold fast either to image or to language. Lewis, of course, still believes that Pictures are the most direct way of experiencing the divine; however, those Pictures must still be incorporated in language--building a kind of 'map' based on that real experience. Thus, both of these viewpoints in their extremity are shown to be faulty.

The Fox is the representative of the Greek Rationalist, although not an Empiricist; he believes that the gods are only within people rather than beings outside the material world, or outside of time. Thus the gods, according to the Fox, are simply metaphorical or allegorical personifications of certain inner qualities such as Reason and Judgement. For instance, when Orual questions him about whether he believes invisible things really exist, he says, "Certainly I do. Such things as Justice, Equality, the Soul, or musical notes" (150). Therefore, he believes in the known abstracts, but not in the unknown, supernatural concrete.

At the same time, the Fox is also like the literary critic (for instance, Frye) who still enjoys the stories of myths, but finds no significant 'meaning' in them. He makes constant references to the gods, tells Orual the tales he has learnt in Greece, and yet always adds "not that this ever really happened" (16). Like an ancient anthropologist, the Fox has a deep curiosity in the customs and rituals of Glome, and compares these to the traditional customs of his own people (15). He trusts philosophy, rather than poetry, and cites "natural causes" for the miracles in Glome (18).

Thus, the Fox appears both similar to Wisdom in Pilgrim's Regress, who was limited by his lack of faith, and like Vertue, who emphasised always the exercise of his own will; like Orual, the Fox's response to suffering, for instance, is to commit suicide (25). However, his portrait of the gods is truer in some ways than that of the priest of Ungit, as we discover later. He insists repeatedly, for instance, that the real gods are without jealousy, and, most important--like Wisdom--the aspect of the

Universal in Mankind: that "'We're all limbs and parts of one Whole'" (312).¹¹

In contrast to this, Bardia is a steadfast believer in Ungit, who refuses to follow the King's commands because of his conflicting duties to his goddess (60-61). The loyalty is perhaps undeserved, of course. Although Bardia's belief often emerges in this kind of expression, he is also filled with a fear which prevents his vision and misleads him into thinking that he is not worthy to glimpse either Psyche or the god's palace; however, his response to Psyche's appearance on the mountain also displays his unshakable faith and wonder concerning the supernatural (111-112).

Ironically, although the Fox calls Bardia 'barbarian, fool', and Bardia calls the Fox 'word-weaver, Greekling', both react to Orual's problem in a similar manner: Bardia claims that the Shadowbeast has obviously captured Psyche, and the Fox that she has been carried off by a mountain beggar (205). Thus, although neither would admit it, they do manage to reach some agreement by following opposite ends of the same scale, and both of these influences arise in Orual, who is "a child of Glome and the pupil of the Fox" (160).

A conflict, then, emerges between 'thick' and 'thin' religion--as between a literal interpretation of myth and a complete rejection of its truth which Wisdom describes in Pilgrim's Regress. The priest of Ungit likewise emphasises:

They [the Greeks] demand to see such things clearly, as if the gods were no more than letters written in a book...Holy places are dark places. It is life and strength, not knowledge and words, that we get

¹¹ He expresses the Hegelian perspective by saying that "They and it are all part of the same web, which is called Nature, or the Whole" (93).

in them. Holy wisdom is not clear and thin like water, but thick and dark like blood. (58)

The barbarian myth of Ungit is blood-thick, and the priests take it at face value, while the Fox rejects it completely. As Psyche says, neither of them has the entire truth (78). The Fox's Greek wisdom, for instance, has decided to overlook the more Platonic Greek teachings; the "'masters who have taught that death opens a door out of a little dark room (that's all the life we have known before it) into a great, real place where the true sun shines and we shall meet--'" (81). Thus, the barbarians, like the pagans in Pilgrim's Regress, have received Pictures, which have led them along the wrong road, although the literacy of the Greeks has led them equally astray. The urge to explain--to give abstract interpretations of concrete truths--is almost impossible to resist, so that with the Greek influence, even the religion of Ungit is increasingly de-mythologised. Language, then, becomes a concealer, rather than a medium of incarnation of the original forms, which is one of the only ways we can glimpse these forms.

Ironically, after the original priest of Ungit dies, Arnom, who replaces him, adopts a great deal from the teachings of the Fox. The old faceless (or many-faced) idol of Ungit is replaced by a single-faced representation in the Greek tradition. This echoes what Lewis felt to be an incorrect assumption: that eliminating ambiguities would lead one closer to the truth. In Lewis's opinion, the opposite is true, which is why he insists that mythopoeic literature must be ambiguous--must be multi-significant. The attempt to de-mythologise is a narrowing which takes one further from the expansive and multiple meanings which emerge in myth, and which allow us to see through new eyes. On the other hand, the image of Ungit with one

face is more likely to encourage idolatry, since the worshippers will assume that the image is not only a created copy of Ungit but is a literal interpretation of Ungit.

Arnom's de-mythologisation is evident in his use of abstract language to explain the myth. He says, for instance, that Ungit "'signifies the earth, which is the womb and mother of all living things'", and that she is the mother of the mountain-god because "'He is the air and the sky; for we see the clouds coming up from the earth in mists and exhalations'" (281-282).

The gods have at last, for Arnorn, become mere poetic explanations of natural phenomena, as so many 'mythologists' (including Frye and Frazer) consider them today. By the end of the book, the gods have been disintegrated even further, as now Arnorn becomes priest of Aphrodite, and she is completely interchangeable with Ungit.

On the road to Essur, Orual discovers the newly born religion of Istra, and recognises both her own story, and that the story has emerged incorrectly. At the end, the reader realises that first, man has corrupted the vision (the gods have not), and second, Orual's motivation was, in fact, jealousy and not love:

That much of the truth they had dropped into someone's mind, in a dream, or an oracle, or however they do such things. That much; and wiped clean out the very meaning, the pith, the central knot, of the whole tale. (252)

The occurrence in Essur casts a new light on the story of Psychē, presents an interesting twist, and certainly supports Lewis's notion of myth as reflections or fragments of truth, divinely inspired. Because the myth has appeared here as ritual, Psyche's tale seems more credible--has a clearer 'explanation'. At the same time, the story also has been distorted, because of the emphasis of the priest upon the story and the ritual for

their own sakes. He recites it by heart, almost without thinking about it, and yet does not truly 'believe' it. Therefore, when Orual interrupts him to ask him about the meaning of the story, he protests "'But stranger, the sacred story...'" (255). Thus, the myth, although apparently new, is actually dead for him--no more than an interesting story which explains what he does in the temple, but not something which hits him with eternal truth. He is, in fact, lulled from his belief by the recitation of the words; "'The story and the worship were all one in his mind'" (256).

Language is, then, shown to be dangerous--a potential concealer, which draws one away from the truth in myth, while, paradoxically, it is one of the few ways we can experience it. Orual thus discovers the difference between the use of language by the Fox--and in the story in Essur--and the words which can express her true voice. Once again, when the words of man are in control, they become concealers; when used to incorporate or incarnate the gleam of truth in myth, they are powerful tools of revelation. Orual realises, for instance, that the "divine surgeons" are using "my own pen to probe my wound" (263); through writing the book, she begins to understand the source of her pain. At the same time, once her pen is in control, it manages to transform the story as it appears on paper, so that Orual finally realises that the story she has written is not the story she has been repeating throughout the book: "The past which I wrote down was not the past that I thought I had (all these years) been remembering. I did not, even when I had finished the book, see clearly many things that I see now" (263). This is similar to Lewis's note in Personal Heresy that "the attempt to tell or report is partly making the

thing to be told" (148). The attempt to sort out the confusion of feeling and to make it objective actually creates something unique on paper.

At the same time, then, the other unfragmented deity is emerging from the ashes of this ancient barbarian mythology, and that appears in Orual's gradual discoveries, concerning her own use of language, and her visions in Pictures. Her direct experience with the divine allows her to see that the words she has used to express herself thus far have been "babble" and "water" (306); the "words, words; to be led out in battle against other words" which ultimately keep her from union with Psyche and with the divine nature (319-320). This points to an important emphasis concerning Lewis's notion of myth; the original gleam must come first, and then must be incorporated in a linguistic form. Similarly, it is not until Orual has had these visions that she is able to communicate them in language.

Before the actual Pictures, however--before Orual is allowed to see the other, non-Essurian myth which has emerged from her story--she must somehow go through a submission and self-recognition. She must discover the voice with which she been complaining, and listen to the words which express her true inner self. That voice, she discovers, speaks a kind of "poison" of hatred, anger, and bitterness. However, once that poison has been transposed in language, she is able to meet the gods, both unveiled:

Lightly men talk of saying what they mean...When the time comes to you at which you will be forced at last to utter the speech which has lain at the centre of your soul for years, which you have, all that time, idiot-like, been saying over and over, you'll not talk about the joy of words. I saw well why the gods do not speak to us openly, nor let us answer. Till that word can be dug out of us, why should they hear the babble that we think we mean? How can they meet us face to face till we have faces? (305)

Till We Have Faces thus expresses similar ideas to those concerning prayer in Letters to Malcolm. True prayer, according to Lewis, must be a

kind of "unveiling", which occurs only once one accepts God's complete knowledge of our inner selves, and once one "assent[s] with all our will to be so known" (33). Thus, one must not attempt to hide any of the ugliness which lurks within, but lay it before the divine--"what is in us, not what ought to be in us" (35). The element of open verbal expression is also quite important to Lewis's notion of prayer. For instance, he writes on April 6, 1953: "...most of us have never really faced the facts about ourselves until we uttered them aloud in plain words, calling a spade a spade. I certainly feel that I have profited enormously by the practice" (Griffin 341). Orual thus undergoes a similar kind of unveiling--this finding of her true voice to make a kind of confession--and discovers that the confession has answered itself.

After Orual has made her complaint, she is able to see the Pictures, the true living myths, which the Fox shows her, and which come to life as she watches. These, then, are the eternal expressions of her own story, made universal. Orual recognises that her visions are somehow more 'true' than her perception of material reality; like myth, then, they give her a new eternal perspective on the events which she has just experienced. Once again, this is the experience of reading mythopoeic fiction which Lewis connects with George MacDonald:

Of the things that followed I cannot at all say whether they were what men call real or what men call dream...things that many see may have no taste or moment in them at all, and things that are shown only to one may be spears and waterspouts of truth from the very depth of truth. (288-289)

The Pictures, then, not only tell the story of one person--putting that story in an eternal perspective--but tell the story of all men, and thus become universal. They communicate the assurance of the Fox that men

are interdependent, and must bear one another's burdens. All aspects of man are evident in Mankind as a whole, and all aspects of the gods are evident in the final, unfragmented God which emerges in the dawning, but is never quite seen. This, once again, reveals the transposition of the eternal into the temporal, and of the immaterial, yet more concrete, forms, into the material world. The interdependence of all Mankind allows Orual to bear some of Psyche's pain, while Psyche herself completes the tasks set before her. More important, perhaps, the Pictures do not only reveal Orual's story as it becomes myth, but show the process of transposing mythological truths into language and story; Lewis thus not only builds a mythopoeic fiction, but allows the reader to witness the writing of that fiction.

The first Picture, for instance, is that of Psyche's/Orual's attempted suicide; while Orual had heard the god's voice saying "Do not do it...Die before you die", Orual discovers herself saying the same words, and thus managing to save Psyche's life. Her voice is able to communicate some of the divine truth which emerged in her own vision at her suicide attempt. In the second Picture, Orual sees Psyche attempting to separate different kinds of seeds into piles and being helped by ants. Orual knows that it is she who helps Psyche, since she had an earlier vision in which the writing of her book--sifting through various memories and details--appeared to her like a sorting of seeds (266-267). Writing the book has helped Psyche work through one of her most difficult tasks. The third Picture tells the story of Psyche's attempt to get golden fleece from the divine rams. In Orual's earlier vision, in which she sees the rams attack her, they appear to be in great joy (295); from Psyche's perspective, which is the only perspective

the reader of myth would see, the rams sense the intruder and charge. Thus, by communicating the myth through these Pictures, the writer manages to express the original gleam of truth in language and story.

Most interesting, however, are the final two Pictures. In the first of these, Orual seems almost completely integrated into Psyche; she feels that she also is a servant of Ungit, who must somehow break free from her. Psyche's task--to carry the water of death to Ungit--is also significant, because it is by killing Ungit that both Psyche and Orual may live. As the Fox later explains, all people are initially servants of Ungit and must get free of her, or bear her son and die in childbirth; all people must get free of the demands of self and the material world, so that these things may be raised up in eternity and be transformed.¹² In the vision, Orual sees herself from the perspective of another--or, more accurately perhaps, from a universal perspective. Throughout their lives, Orual and Psyche have made choices which have now brought them to this place; like the Ghosts in The Great Divorce, they have witnessed these choices through the glass of Time, but here, the choices can be seen from still another viewpoint: as one long struggling journey through a desert, and down towards the heart of the Underworld. Most moving is Orual's shocking self-revelation as she witnesses the temptation of Psyche by a pitiful female figure, and then suddenly recognises it as an image of herself, immortalised in these Pictures:

¹² The poem "Posturing" clearly presents the image of the mirror, which emerges in the Pillar Room scene in Till We Have Faces. Lewis emphasises that rather than gazing into the mirror (like Narcissus), and hoping to make the resulting image fair, one must recognise the maker of the mirror: "That Self-Love, brought to bed of Love, may die and bear/Her sweet son in despair" (Poems 89).

When I looked at it I felt a pity that nearly killed my heart. It was not weeping, but you could see from its eyes that it had already wept them dry. Despair, humiliation, entreaty, endless reproach: all these were in it...

The woman held out her hands to Psyche and I saw that her left arm dripped with blood. (314-315)

The cask of beauty which Psyche brings from the Underworld is the transformer of the inner ugliness. Through the passage into death, Ungit can indeed be made beautiful, but only if one is strong enough to resist the temptation to doubt, fear, or even pity. The Pictures are truer than the books or rituals, because they are extra-literary and extra-linguistic; Lewis, through Orual, has here incorporated them into language and Picture by writing his/her book. At the same time, as the Fox stipulates, "Nothing is yet in its true form"; the book which results is still only a copy.

The final passage of the work echoes once again the coming of the dawn in The Great Divorce; a sense that something wonderful is coming, that former things are passing away, and that eternal things will soon be met face-to-face. Here, the tone is somewhat gentler than in The Great Divorce; the revelation of the original forms is not terrifying but wonderful. Once again, that new vision--seen without the lens--never actually appears, and Orual awakes in her garden. However, there is a sense that when she does die at the end of the work, she dies peacefully, finally reconciled with the gods. Witnessing these gleams, and incorporating them in language and story, has helped her to a new perspective on her natural life and love.

As in The Great Divorce, the emergence of the original from behind the glass is revealed mainly through contrasts between it and the copies in the material world. For instance, while standing in the god's palace, Psyche tries to explain what one feels like standing next to a god, by

saying that she is "Ashamed of looking like a mortal"---"we, beside the gods, are like a leper beside us"---like the female Ghost who is ashamed of her ghostly appearance among the solid things of Heaven. Says Psyche: "Don't you think a dream would feel shy if it were seen walking about in the waking world?" (124). In contrast to this, Psyche appears before Orual as her final vision as the waking correspondent of the dream which she once knew as her sister; she has become 'more herself' through her submission, and unveiling before the god:

And yet...she was the same old Psyche still; a thousand times more her very self than she had been before the Offering. For all that had then but flashed out in a glance or a gesture, all that one meant most when one spoke her name, was now wholly present, not to be gathered up from hints and shreds, not some of it in one moment and some in another. Goddess? I had never seen a real woman before. (317)

Thus, Psyche has been transposed--lifted up to her fullest in eternity, while what she appeared before was an 'idola' of all that she could be, seen in gleams through the glass of Time.

Thus, Orual catches a glimpse of the eternal Psyche--although that picture must be built through language, and therefore must rely mainly on comparisons with the 'old' Psyche. She also catches a glimpse of the eternal deity, 'coming' or 'becoming' Man, lifting up humanity to incorporate the Divine Nature in humans like Psyche, but also humiliating itself to become Man. Here, that god must emerge only in pieces, barely visible through the blinding light:

And he was coming. The most dreadful, the most beautiful, the only dread and beauty there is, was coming. The pillars on the far side of the pool flushed with his approach. (318-319)

Thus, the work ends with one last tremendous vision incarnated in language and story. This kind of incarnation is expressed in Lewis's poem "The Birth of Language", when he explains how "supernal things" and

"intelligible virtues" are transformed into gods of speech: "their meaning [becomes] more/Their being less. Fact shrinks to truth". Thus, as the gleam of mythical truth is incorporated in words--in a longing for form--these words 'mean' more, by bearing all of the significance of the original gleam; at the same time, the gleam is humiliated--becomes less 'fact'. Mythopoeic stories thus can only give a sense of the original gleam, by hitting the imagination of the reader with their significance: "So dim below these symbols show,/Bony and abstract every one./Yet if true verse but lift the curse,/They feel in dreams their native Sun" (Poems 10-11).

Till We Have Faces is the most successful development of Lewis's notion of mythopoeic fiction, although allegorical elements do exist, and as in The Great Divorce, Lewis does (only at the end) attempt to reveal the forms incorporated in his story. However, the story depicts the process of transposition of myth into language and literature, by showing how Orual's true experience is written down in words. Through the moving Pictures which present the story in a new manner, Lewis demonstrates how experiences can have universal relevance, when presented from a new perspective. Finally, the language which the story uses, and the way in which the tale is built, makes interpretation quite difficult; words are quite 'ambiguous' in their variety of references--one can never exhaust all of their 'meaning'. Thus, rather than showing the truths revealed in myth, Lewis finally works in the right direction, by presenting the myth already made incarnate, and then by communicating that process of incarnation.

EPILOGUE

The Last Battle

(5)

All their life in this world and all their adventures in Narnia had only been the cover and the title page: now at last they were beginning Chapter One of the Great Story which no one on earth has read: which goes on for ever: in which every chapter is better than the one before. (Last Battle 165)

I have argued throughout this thesis that C.S. Lewis's literary works display a gradual development in his notion of myth and its connection with literature. The works I have examined depict a movement whereby myth--once clinging to the borders of the text, as one of many concepts--becomes the very principle upon which that text is built. As we saw in the last chapter, then, in Till We Have Faces, Lewis finally reaches his goal of incorporating myth in literature, to produce a mythopoeic fiction according to his own definition. Myth does not only emerge as one feature of Till We Have Faces; the work also retells myth in story and language, and interpretation by the reader can never be complete because of the multiplicity of meanings concentrated in that story. It also shows how myth develops--how an extra-literary Picture, or a factual story can be incorporated into language.

In The Pilgrim's Regress, the concept of myth as an extra-literary gleam of truth shining on the imagination stands to one side of the text; in that work, Lewis examines how two different transpositions of such gleams--myth and law--emerge in the human psyche. All else, Lewis argues, is 'a

See Lewis's discussion of the 'tao' of moral behaviour as an argument for God, in Mere Christianity (3-7).

copy of those gleams; thus, experience of romantic love, art, music, or sexual desire, are regarded as lower media than that of myth. Myth, he emphasises, only copies the eternal, and the only way one can know that eternal is through myth and law. Both of these gleams draw man towards the divine.

Thus, his early work is an attempt to approach the notion of myth as a concept, especially as myth appears in allegorical form as the Island-Picture. Therefore, Lewis argues that myth is an extra-literary gleam of truth, which must somehow be incorporated in these other 'copies'. The fact that the work has a quite argumentative, bitter, and sarcastic tone indicates also that Lewis was not perhaps confident with his own ideas, and still felt it necessary to 'apologise' for these. Lewis himself thus does not transpose the gleam into the story effectively in The Pilgrim's Regress. He still discusses and defines what myth is, rather than building it into his writing.

In The Great Divorce, myth does not emerge strongly as a concept; however, the work is beset with other difficulties. Arguing for the greater and more concrete reality of the original forms, Lewis depicts the world of the original--Heaven--by contrasting it to the less real world of the copy--Hell or earth. His attempt to depict the original forms outside of their transposition in Time, but still within their transposition into language, presents him with many problems, which is perhaps one reason why he must repeatedly emphasise that he is not building a complete or literal vision.

At the same time, other aspects of myth do emerge in the book, particularly in its point that myth allows us to see with new eyes, or with a new perspective. As in The Pilgrim's Regress, in which John's

imagination is baptised and he returns to Puritania, the whole of The Great Divorce attempts a similar baptism of the imagination of the reader, after which the reader (like the dreamer) must return to his own material world. However, since readers are explicitly told that they see these originals 'more clearly', they are more likely to be skeptical. This, once again, is not myth incarnate in language and story, but an attempt to depict the original gleam, and with that gleam, to send a distinct moral and spiritual message.

However, in Till We Have Faces, Lewis finally does display a myth incarnate in literature, by retelling the Cupid and Psyche story of Apuleius, interwoven with images and characters from other mythologies. Moreover, myth emerges in other forms in the work; for instance, while Lewis sets the story in a historical period--thereby incarnating his myth into a kind of history--Orual is allowed at the various points in the story to glimpse the formation of the myth from her own experiences: in the storytelling of the Essurian priest, and in the pictures on the wall which she sees in a vision.

The resulting work is so dense that one can barely extract all of the appearances of myth, much less attempt a 'translation' or interpretation of the story. Till We Have Faces contains all of the kernels which Lewis defines as part of mythopoeic fiction in Experiment in Criticism, and which he upholds in literature in general: first, it gives a sense of significance without the possibility of exhausting the meaning; it allows one to see, not with one new pair of eyes, but with a 'myriad'; one does not identify with any of the characters, but one sees certain universal features in those

characters; the plot, as we well know from reading The Golden Ass, is inevitable, although complex and spanning several decades.

The coming of dawn, which appears as an image both in The Great Divorce and Till We Have Faces, gives one a sense of the true forms being revealed, without the myth.² In The Great Divorce, the dawn is frightening and chilling--signifying either the end of the world, or death. In Till We Have Faces, it suggests the 'coming' of the god of love; his incarnation in history, and the revelation of his own face, both in that Incarnation and after Orual's death. Thus, the dawn is a event which excites and frightens Orual, but which she also anticipates with wonder; she is, most important, at peace with the certainty of her own death, whereas the dreamer in The Great Divorce has not quite resigned himself to this ineluctable journey to the other side.

In The Last Battle, the last in the seven-volume Narnia series, Lewis takes both The Great Divorce and Till We Have Faces, and draws them together--depicting, not only the coming of the dawn, but that dawn itself. I have chosen to look at the final scene of The Last Battle briefly, since it ties together many of the threads which I have emphasised in the earlier works. Not only does Lewis transpose myth into literature in the Narnia series--in story patterns such as Creation, Fall, Redemption, and in the very nature of the work itself, which once again fulfills his Experiment in

² See, for instance, Lewis's statement in Beyond Personality that once humans are drawn into the divine "a great many other things in Nature will begin to come right. The bad dream will be over: it will be morning" (44). Later in the same book he writes of the dawn in more frightening and awesome terms: "What will all the chatter and hearsay count...when the anaesthetic fog which we call 'nature' or 'the real world' fades away and the Presence in which you have always stood becomes palpable, immediate, and unavoidable?" (57).

Criticism criteria--but he goes on to reveal the original forms in his depiction of a greater Narnia at the end of The Last Battle. This final novel is the most significant and dense in the series in its use of myth.

The Last Battle also displays further focusing of Lewis's vision. In Pilgrim's Regress, for instance, the Pictures emerge as one method of drawing the soul to the divine, while in The Great Divorce, the dreamer envisions eternity and thus acquires a clearer vision of his life on earth; in Till We Have Faces, Orual watches as her own personal story becomes myth. In The Last Battle, however, Lewis presents a fantasy world which stands parallel to our own world, and unfolds a story which sheds light on our own stories--a 'model', as Dabney Hart argues (132-134). He then demonstrates the significance of the parallel more explicitly by revealing the eternal dimension in Narnia, which also stands parallel to that of earth. In eternity, both worlds meet, and appear in their absolute forms.

The fantasy world of Narnia, like the extra-terrestrial worlds in the interplanetary trilogy, is therefore also mythical, in that it does not claim to be the original, and yet it presents a clearer focus for the natural world. That is not, of course, to say that fantasy is the only genre in which myth can emerge; however, according to Lewis, myth must have some element of the supernatural, and must bring the material world into a new perspective--allowing the reader to see with new eyes. Fantasies, in which some secondary 'other' world stands either parallel to earth, in place of earth, or intruding in some supernatural manner upon earth, are an effective method of meeting Lewis's criteria for literary myth as expressed in An Experiment in Criticism. However, as we have seen from Till We Have Faces, it is quite possible to incorporate myth into the familiar world,

and into history, while still presenting that familiar world under a new significance.

The position of the reader in all of these works is also important in studying Lewis's use of myth. As I explained in Chapter One, Lewis's notion of the ideal reader or ideal reading of literature is that a work must be absorbed, must have direct impact on the imagination, and must not encourage the reader to 'use' the work, or attempt to seek identification with it; instead, the work must encourage the reader to force his horizons outward, to see from a new perspective, and then in doing so perhaps experience a side of himself of which he might not have been previously aware. It is clear that the earlier works which I have examined are more inclined to be read the 'wrong' way; both The Pilgrim's Regress and The Great Divorce encourage not only identification with the plight of the dreamer, but encourage some kind of deliberate translation or search for a moral key. At the same time, Lewis was also clearly frustrated by the continued allegorical interpretations of his novels; even in The Pilgrim's Regress, which appears to invite that sort of reading, he emphasises that the message should not be very simple to extract. The Last Battle, then, perhaps demonstrates Lewis's turning to an audience which would not read his works allegorically--would not seek a 'meaning' or a translation--would not look at the work through 'highbrow' eyes, or read it psychoanalytically: children.

Peter Schakel's critical work, Reading with the Heart: The Way into Narnia, explores Lewis's strong statement that his works, especially his

For Lewis's argument on the importance of fantasy as a literary form, see "Sometimes Fairy Stories May Say Best What's to Be Said" (On Stories 45-48).

Narnia Chronicles, and all literature in general, should be 'read with the heart'; that is, should be received rather than used. Schakel argues that the Chronicles at their best do not convey 'Christian' meanings intellectually, but speak directly to the imagination: from our particular study, the receptor of myth. He writes: "The use of myth allows other meanings to ray out from the stories, enables the stories to say what the author 'does not yet know and could not come by in any other way'" (17). This is also, then, connected to the idea that Narnia 'began with a picture', accompanied by a longing for form. That same picture perhaps began all of the works we have studied; however, not until Till We Have Faces and Narnia does Lewis finally find the 'right form', or leave the picture--transposed into language--intact, without the messages, so that what he wanted 'to say' could emerge implicitly.

Of course, many adult readers of Narnia, and particularly of The Last Battle, have attempted to read the works allegorically, although Lewis repeatedly warned against such attempts. For instance, the figure of Aslan, by many critics translated into the figure of Christ, Lewis emphasised to be a "supposal" of what "Christ [might] 'become like, if there really were a world like Narnia and He chose to be incarnate and die and rise again in that world as he actually has done in ours" (Letters of C.S. Lewis 283). From Lewis's viewpoint, Christ in the Gospels is myth incarnate, and all of the 'dying and rising god myths' which reflect that one 'fact' --- myth emerging in material reality and historical time --- are therefore 'true'. Therefore, Aslan is more a parallel to pagan gods like Adonis, than he is to Christ, because he stands as part of the myth, but is never incarnated into

history as Christ was. Aslan simply exists, the son of an unseen Father who lives far away.

Similarly, the figure of Tash in The Last Battle is a representation of evil, but is not an allegorical figure of Satan. Interestingly, Tash's physical description echoes the description of the priests of Ungit in Till We Have Faces: "It [Tash] was roughly the shape of a man but it had the head of a bird; some bird of prey with a cruel, curved beak" (76).⁴ Although Tash does not appear to have the power of an Anti-Christ, he does work in the manner of the devil: converting souls, but having no power over the saved. Tash, for instance, can be sent away in the name of Aslan, but is also allowed to take his "lawful prey", the Tarkaan. (121). Thus, evil is once again depicted as smaller and less powerful than good; for instance, the damned creatures at the end of the novel disappear into the shadow of Aslan, which is not even a two-dimensional representation, but a one-dimensional transposition. Also, as in the contrast between Ungit and the 'god of love' in Till We Have Faces, Tash and Aslan differ in that while Tash feeds on the blood of his people, Aslan has saved the people with his own blood (36).

Language, Lewis's idea of a lower medium which must incorporate the transposition of a higher, is shown in The Last Battle to be dependent upon Aslan. For instance, after Ginger the Cat is frightened by the vision of Tash in the barn, and after the animals reveal their hatred of Aslan during their self-judgement, they also lose their power of speech. This is similar

⁴ This also sounds familiar to the mask worn by the Puritanian Steward in Pilgrim's Regress; see, later, the reference to the 'black hole' cited by the Dwarfs as another echo of Pilgrim's Regress. The black hole, Aslan explains, is all in their own minds.

to the chaos which occurs in That Hideous Strength, in which 'the word of man' is taken away from those who mock 'the word of God'; also, the Tower of Babel which appears in Genesis depicts the dependence of man's language on the original 'word' which began and created the world. This ultimate Word, the expression of the divine creative force, is what emerges as myth in the Old Testament, and which becomes incarnate in the New Testament.

The scene in the stable in The Last Battle is quite significant, especially in its parallel to other scenes we have examined in earlier works. The stable can be regarded as similar to the notion of 'purgatory' in The Great Divorce and to the well and the Pillar Rooms in Till We Have Faces. For the children, Digory, and Polly, the stable is not all that there is; inside that stable, in fact, is not only Aslan himself, but a glimpse of the original forms waiting to be discovered: "the Stable seen from within and the Stable seen from without are two different places" (128). For the dwarfs, on the other hand, they are indeed in a stable, and cannot see any of these other things; in fact, they are given the opportunity to experience them, but their perspective is limited by their self-concern and lack of faith. These dwarfs reflect, once again, the ultimate self-centeredness. As Aslan says, "Their prison is only in their minds, yet they are in that prison; and so afraid of being taken in that they cannot be taken out" (135). The dwarfs have become so much 'for the dwarfs' that their state of mind--as 'George MacDonald' explained in The Great Divorce--has become their own hell.

The stable, then, is an example of transposition in itself--another image similar to the picture in the inverted telescope described in The

Great Divorce. The stable seen from within is actually a larger place, because it has concentrated all of the original forms inside its walls. Like a single word, then, which according to Lewis is a concentration of a multitude of meanings, the stable's 'meaning' radiates out from it: "in reality...grass, the deep blue sky...overhead" (124). This echoes Psyche's expression of the Platonic notion that life is a small room which opens out upon a larger one, or which actually contains that larger room. Lucy's words that "In our world too, a Stable once had something inside it that was bigger than our whole world", refers almost definitely to the Christ Child, and demonstrates how the transposition images are related: Christ was a transposition of the divine--the highest medium outside of time--into mankind and history; this stable is a concentration of eternity, and of the eternal forms, into a tiny room.

After this point in the work, the original forms begin to be revealed to the characters and the reader, and the glimpses of dawn in The Great Divorce and Till We Have Faces culminate in this final vision of the end of Narnia and the appearance of the eternal Narnia. Aslan shouts out "'Now it is time!...Time!...TIME!'", and Time himself emerges as a dreamer, finally awakening the animals and children into eternity. Aslan says later on "The term is over: the holidays have begun. The dream is ended: this is morning" (165), expressing once again the notion that life on earth is a kind of dream in which the only gleams of truth shine through myths. In the American version of Voyage of the Dawn Treader, Lewis suggests that life is a kind of dream, out of which we will each be woken at death, or at the end of the world:

And just as there are moments when simply to lie in bed and see the daylight pouring in through your window...and to realise that it was

only a dream; it wasn't real, is so heavenly that it was very nearly worth having the nightmare in order to have the joy of waking... (quoted in Ford, 148-149)

As in The Great Divorce, the vision in The Last Battle makes strong use of light and darkness; the light which shines behind Aslan is almost blinding as the stars fall from the skies in Narnia, and the moon is pulled in by the claws of the sun.

The judgement of the animals is, as in The Great Divorce, actually an act of their own will, although they must look into Aslan's face, and cannot choose not to do so. Aslan's eyes serve as a mirror of the true inner selves of the animals. Like Orual, then, the animals finally meet Aslan face to face, and wear their own true faces, unveiled to reveal either their love or their hatred for him. The animals do not see Aslan for the first time, but, like the humans in The Great Divorce, have made those choices all their lives, and have seen glimpses of him in various animal acquaintances and situations.

The images which appear at the end of Narnia are powerful and numinous, as night falls in that world, and the dawn begins in the eternal Narnia. Paul Ford points out in his Companion to Narnia that the images which emerge at this point are "allusion[s] to Ragnarok, translated variously as the last battle of the gods, the twilight of the gods, or the 'destruction of the powers', in which the monsters slay the gods and destroy earth and heaven" (266). However, as we see, the story does not end here in The Last Battle, and the gods are alive and well:

Then Aslan said, "Now make an end."

The giant threw his horn into the sea....He took the Sun and squeezed it in his hand as you would squeeze an orange. And instantly there was total darkness...

"Peter, High King of Narnia," said Aslan. "Shut the Door." (143)

After this end, the more real Narnia begins to emerge, as the characters become younger and stronger in their journey further up and further in towards Deep Heaven. The characters then discover that each has resurrected the Narnia which he or she has contained in memory; these memory copies are reflections of the true original Narnia. The landscape, for instance, is described as 'like' Narnia, but still not Narnia; Digory even goes as far as to say that this other world is "More like the real thing" (153), and leaves this statement uninterpreted and mysterious. Thus, the truth which we glimpsed in The Great Divorce is at last unfolded: the Narnia which the characters visited was not the real Narnia, "That had a beginning and an end. It was only a shadow or a copy of the real Narnia" (153). At the same time, its purpose was to entice them towards the real Narnia, to 'baptise their imaginations'; and, for readers of the Narnia Chronicles, the glimpses in the stories were to give a sense of the depth of existence in the material world--to reveal the hidden levels in natural reality.

Science-fiction writer, Stephen Donaldson, emphasises that the Chronicles did exactly that for him as a child. In a special article in the Ottawa Citizen, titled "Books that Changed Five Authors' Lives", Donaldson writes how Narnia actually shaped his own perceptions of reality, and influenced his own writing:

I loved magic because it was hope. It told me that there was more to life than I could see on the surface; that there was more to me than I could see on the surface...Narnia showed me that magic and adventure are ways of talking--maybe the best ways of talking--about the questions which matter most to everybody. (Sept 26, 1987 C2)

See Ford's explanation of the significance of memory in Lewis's works and how "memory of an experience actually improves that experience, and might, indeed, be better than the original" (288).

Digory correctly identifies the notion of the copy-Narnia and original-Narnia as 'Platonic', although, as I have argued, it is closer to the neo-Platonism which Lewis describes in English Literature in the Sixteenth Century, and its ideal of art and literature. Mythopoeic literature is like a reflection of an outer scene in a mirror: the mirror image is somehow "deeper country: every rock and flower and blade of grass looked as if it meant more" (154-155). Thus, the image in the looking-glass is intended to place the material world in its proper perspective, by revealing it as a reflection or copy of a greater, more concrete reality. The writer, as does the painter in The Great Divorce, sees that glimpse of the eternal in the natural more clearly, and his job is to communicate it to the reader, rather than simply copying the natural world which he can see outside the window. Thus, when we each come to the eternal Narnia, the original, we can say--like Jewel the Unicorn in The Last Battle--that "'I have come home at last! This is my real country!...The reason why we loved the old Narnia is that it sometimes looked a little like this'" (155).

The pilgrims discover that the further into the eternal Narnia which they travel, the larger and more beautiful everything becomes (162). The girls, for instance, find their own perspectives altered in this other world. While visiting the natural Narnia, Jill had a vision of the past "thousands" of years as "a rich, lovely plain full of woods and waters and cornfields, which spread away and away till it got thin and misty from distance" (82). In the eternal Narnia, Lucy discovers that "Whatever she looked at...however far away it might be, once she had fixed her eyes steadily on it, became quite clear and close as if she were looking through a telescope"

(163). In fact, she can also see into the eternal England which stands parallel to the eternal Narnia.

Thus, the end of The Last Battle is rather like The Great Divorce; but it goes further in depicting the eternal world transposed into myth. Its purpose, once again, is to show that the material world is not everything--to cast a 'bright shadow' over our own worlds, and to fascinate the reader with the wonder and beauty concentrated into material reality. Lewis probably could have done this without revealing those original forms at the end of The Last Battle, simply by building the sense of another, multi-significant, fantasy world which stands parallel to ours. Most children, in fact, are very much puzzled by the ending of the series, although they do intuitively grasp the significance of the rest of the series.

In conclusion, Lewis regards myth as a 'gleam of unfocused truth shining on human imagination', and 'mythopoeic literature' is a further transposition of the original gleam, from the imagination into language and story. Thus, mythopoeic fictions communicate a piece of eternity within time: through image, which is two-dimensional; through story, which is chronological; and through language, which involves speech and statement. The myth itself--that original gleam--is unchanging and eternal, although the context, as we have seen in Till We Have Faces can be altered.

Christianity, an important transforming and motivating force for Lewis, can be regarded as perhaps the most important instance of such transposition. Lewis's conversion was partly a recognition of the gleam of truth eternally present in myth; however, that gleam of truth was at the same time confirmed through Christianity's assurance of its incarnation in

history. The myth was also incarnated into language in Scripture, as we see in the New Testament. However, the myth is that which is timeless, while the actual Incarnation of the Word is bound by Time--a historical event. That is why the search for the 'historical Jesus' is not likely to convert many individuals; that event is part of the past, but it is forever concentrated into the mythical story incorporated in the Bible.

Reading mythopoeic fiction, then, gives us a similar experience of the eternal, which is just as likely to 'baptise' us imaginatively; Lewis himself admitted that he preferred pagan--Celtic, Norse, and Greek--mythology to 'Christian' mythology. That experience of eternity alters our very perceptions of the material world. As Hart explains, reading myth is often connected with a yearning, "not merely to look out but to move out...through the arch of experience to new worlds" (143). Hart writes, "This yearning explains...the appeal of myth--the master key, which each can use to open the door of his choice. The key is used not to secure but to release" (143). At the same time, this goes beyond Eliade's notion that by repeating certain rituals from mythology one can experience once again a 'primordial time'--a time of beginnings. Myth, according to Lewis, does not belong to primordial time, or to Time at all; it stands entirely on a different scale of reality, outside of Time (see Appendix 2).

Lewis's notion of myth as 'falling on the imagination' echoes his insistence that good literature begins with a picture, and that the reader must submit his own imagination to the literary text. The child who grows up in the dungeon must recognise that the dungeon world is not all that

See Ford's explanation and summary of Lewis's notion of myth and its connection with history in Christianity (294-296).

there is, and also that the pictures his mother draws are actual concentrations of the world outside. Likewise, the image in myth must be recognised as a clearer picture of the more concrete world of the forms, but not a literal representation of the same. Throughout the works I have examined in this thesis, Lewis gradually develops that picture in his own writing, until his works finally become mythopoeic themselves. Thus, I have argued that Lewis's notion of good literature is inextricable from this central notion of 'good' literature, and from his own perspective on the world, built from the works of George MacDonald, from familiar mythology, and especially from his religious faith.

Language, for Lewis, must be sacramental--must somehow concentrate all of the significance of the higher forms in mere words. That is perhaps one reason why his own prose writing style is almost deceptively lucid, concise, and yet speaks the complex ideas with which many of us have struggled, so that each line we read incites a surprised response of recognition. The truth transposed in myth in the imagination must be made smaller to be incorporated in language; yet that language in its simplicity must radiate all of the 'meaning' in the original mythical gleam. Not until these notions of myth, language, and imagination emerge in Lewis's own literary works do these writings wield a power and significance which resists interpretation.

One can relate this to Lewis's quotation of Charles Williams, on recognition of the truth in image, without idolatry: "Neither is this thou", but "This also is Thou" (Arthurian Torso 151).

See Hart on Lewis's fascination with the "mythic power of language", and his prediction (with Barfield, Tolkien, and others) that "mythonomy" would become an important subject in the second half of the 20th century (46-47).

APPENDIX 1

Overlapping of Lewis's articles in collections of his writings.

*Since many of Lewis's articles, reviews, and sermons appear in several collections, I have compiled a list of the overlaps. This should put my own bibliography, which includes many of these collections, in its proper perspective. Also note that I have --for the sake of consistency and clarity--attempted to cite only one reference for a particular quotation, even if that passage appears in another collection.

"The Alliterative Metre": Rehabilitations and Other Essays, Selected Literary Essays.

"Bluspels and Flalansferes": Rehabilitations and Other Essays, Selected Literary Essays.

"Broadcast Talks", "Christian Behaviour", "The Case for Christianity", and "Beyond Personality": Mere Christianity.

"Christianity and Literature": Rehabilitations and Other Essays, Christian Reflections.

"De Descriptione Temporum": They Asked For a Paper, Selected Literary Essays.

"Efficacy in Prayer": The World's Last Night, Fern-Seed and Elephants.

"Good Works and Good Work: The World's Last Night, Screwtape Proposes a Toast and other pieces.

"Hamlet: The Prince or the Poem": They Asked For a Paper, Selected Literary Essays.

"High and Low Brows": Rehabilitations and Other Essays, Selected Literary Essays.

"Historicism": Christian Reflections, Fern-Seed and Elephants.

"The Inner Ring": Transposition and Other Addresses, Screwtape Proposes a Toast and other pieces.

"Is Theology Poetry?": They Asked For a Paper, Screwtape Proposes a Toast and other pieces.

"Kipling's World" and "Sir Walter Scott": They Asked For a Paper, Selected Literary Essays.

"Learning in War-Time": Transposition and Other Addresses, Fern-Seed and Elephants.

"Lilies that Fester": The World's Last Night, They Asked For a Paper?

"Literary Impact of the Authorised Version": They Asked For a Paper, Selected Literary Essays.

"Membership": Transposition and Other Addresses, Fern-Seed and Elephants.

"On Obstinacy in Belief": The World's Last Night, They Asked For a Paper, Screwtape Proposes a Toast and other pieces.

"Psychoanalysis and Literary Criticism": They Asked For a Paper, Selected Literary Essays.

"Religion and Rocketry": The World's Last Night, Fern-Seed and Elephants.

"Screwtape Proposes a Toast": The World's Last Night, Screwtape Proposes a Toast and other pieces.

"Shelley, Dryden, and Mr. Eliot": Rehabilitations and Other Essays, Selected Literary Essays.

"Transposition": Transposition and Other Addresses, They Asked For a Paper (expanded version).

"Variation in Shakespeare and Others": Rehabilitations and Other Essays, Selected Literary Essays.

"The Weight of Glory": Transposition and Other Addresses, Screwtape Proposes a Toast and other pieces, They Asked For a Paper.

"William Morris": Rehabilitations and Other Essays, Selected Literary Essays

"The World's Last Night": The World's Last Night, Fern-Seed and Elephants.

APPENDIX 2

Diagram A

For Eliade: Repetitions of ritual allow one to re-enter a kind of 'primordial time', even while residing in 'real time'.

'Primordial
Time'

'Real Time', but with repetitions of ritual.

Diagram B

For Lewis: Transposition of the 'gleam of truth' into the imagination, and then into language and story, makes the result a concentration of that gleam.

Gleam

Imagination

Language and Story

APPENDIX 3

The epitaph which Lewis wrote for his wife reflects his notion that at the 'resurrection of the dead', the world within her spirit would be raised to life.

"Remember Helen Joy Davidman, died July 1960,
loved wife of C.S. Lewis"

Here the whole world (stars, water, air ,
And field, and forest, as they were
Reflected in' a single mind)
Like cast off clothes was left behind
In ashes, yet with hope that she
Reborn from holy poverty
In lenten lands, hereafter may
Resume them on her Easter Day.

(Headington Crematorium)
(quoted in Griffin 441)

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