

Marvellous Secondary Worlds: A Comparative Study
of C. S. Lewis's Narnia, J. R. R. Tolkien's Middle-earth,
and Ursula K. Le Guin's Earthsea.

By
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A dissertation
submitted in fulfilment of the
requirements for the degree
Master of Art
in the
Department of English
University of Cape Town,
South Africa.

March, 1986.

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ABSTRACT

In this thesis, the nature and function of Marvellous Secondary worlds are examined by means of a comparative study of three Marvellous Secondary worlds: C. S. Lewis's Narnia, J. R. R. Tolkien's Middle-earth, and Ursula K. Le Guin's Earthsea. We consider the way in which Marvellous Secondary worlds may be used in order to explore certain aspects of reality highly effectively through themes and images characteristic of Marvellous fantasy.

In the Introduction, the wide range of Secondary worlds in modern fantasy and the specific functions that Secondary worlds may fulfil is commented on. These analyses are then linked to a discussion of some of the central characteristics of Marvellous Secondary worlds.

In Chapter One, C. S. Lewis's Narnia is considered. The Chronicles of Narnia are ethical fantasies containing a Christian message, which Lewis seeks to convey through the nature and history of Narnia. We see that Narnia is frequently subordinated to the message it expresses, thereby losing its independent importance as a Secondary world, and Lewis often fails to combine the didactic and the fantastic elements of Narnia into a balanced, coherent whole. However, when Lewis does succeed in fusing the Christian message with the various other elements of Narnia, he does so very effectively and presents spiritual issues by means of striking images. Although not entirely

successful, his attempt to present the spiritual and the transcendental through Narnia is nonetheless memorable.

The second chapter deals with J. R. R. Tolkien's Middle-earth, a Secondary world of heroic romance that offers an escape from and an alternative to the modern world. Middle-earth is seen to contain much of value that is lacking in our modern world, for it offers glimpses of beauties, ideals and traditions that would otherwise remain inaccessible. This Secondary world is saved from appearing as a form of escapist wish-fulfilment because the importance of basic, natural things is emphasised, and events taking place in The Lord of the Rings are presented as a brief episode in history, while the transience and mortality of all things are emphasised throughout. In this way, Tolkien acknowledges the temporary, limited nature of his own creation.

In Chapter Three, Ursula K. Le Guin's Earthsea is discussed and here we are made aware of the way in which the human psyche can be explored through a Marvellous Secondary world. Earthsea expresses a parable about the nature of human life, within which the journeys of the trilogy's three central protagonists towards selfhood can take place. Earthsea complements and is enhanced by the message it expresses. The vision of life presented in Earthsea is considered and although its stark, austere, limited nature is acknowledged, it nonetheless offers something meaningful and viable to the reader. The value and beauty of life is affirmed, especially through an emphasis on the importance of fellowship and the community; through the focus on the importance of life lived in the

present and the individual self, the ideals aspired to in Earthsea can be confronted and accepted by the average reader.

Finally, the discussions contained in the preceding chapters are summed up as the relationship between Marvellous Secondary worlds and our own is commented on and the dual nature of Marvellous Secondary worlds--their ability to explore exotic and fabulous realms while retaining close links with the natural and familiar--is emphasised. This closeness between Marvellous Secondary worlds and our own is enhanced by the way in which they comment on our world, in terms of the contrasts and comparisons that they offer. However, it is suggested that the unpredictable, original nature of Marvellous Secondary worlds permits them to exist in their own right, so that ultimately they cannot simply be viewed as extensions of our reality.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my supervisor, Dr. John Cartwright, Pam Britt, who typed this thesis, and various of my fellow MA English students for their advice and encouragement. Finally, many thanks to my family for their support.

INTRODUCTION

East of moon and west of sun, behind a mirror or through a wardrobe door, far in the future or deep in the past, on another planet or within our world: these are just a few of the realms in which the Secondary worlds of modern fantasy are set.

Their multiplicity and variety can be seen in examples such as Frank Herbert's desert planet of Dune, Ursula K. Le Guin's snowbound planet of Winter, Mervyn Peake's castle of Gormenghast with its acres of crumbling towers and seemingly endless labyrinthine passages, the timeless loveliness of Lord Dunsany's Elfland separated by a border of twilight from the world we know, the futuristic nightmare landscape in William Hope Hodgson's The Night Land¹ and William Morris's pseudo-medieval worlds of gallant knights, perilous quests and enchantments.

According to C. S. Lewis, Secondary worlds represent "an imaginative impulse as old as the human race," for they minister to the desires of those "who wish to visit strange regions in search of such beauty, awe and terror as the actual world does not supply."²

Secondary worlds lift us out of our immediate everyday concerns, providing us with a broader, cosmic perspective on life. Lewis remarks:

It is sobering and cathartic to remember, now and then, our collective smallness, our apparent isolation, the apparent indifference of nature, the slow biological, geological, and astronomical processes which may, in the long run, make many of our hopes (and possibly some of our fears) ridiculous.³

Secondary worlds are also especially suited to exploring central human concerns. The complexity of modern Secondary worlds, for example Herbert's *Dune* and J. R. R. Tolkien's *Middle-earth*, both filled with a diversity of peoples and creatures and containing an extensive religious, historical and legendary background, indicate the extent and the variety of the ways in which our world can be explored through Secondary worlds.

As Lewis comments, the creation of a major change in environment makes it possible to focus highly effectively on specific issues of major importance.⁴ Various ideals and beliefs (psychological, religious or political, for instance) can be explored in an original way through the medium of Secondary worlds. One could consider the presentation of Christian ideals in the Secondary worlds of George MacDonald and Lewis, or the way in which socio-political ideals are examined in the twin planets of Urras and Anarres in Le Guin's *The Dispossessed*.⁵

Secondary worlds represent a specific aspect of the response offered by fantasy to all that is inexpressible, irrational and absurd. When the everyday world of the realistic novel becomes an inadequate means of exploring and reflecting the complexities of human existence, fantasy steps in. Doris Lessing comments:

It is by now commonplace to say that novelists everywhere are breaking the bonds of the realistic novel because what we all see around us becomes daily wilder, more fantastic, incredible. Once, and not so long ago, novelists might have been accused of exaggerating, or dealing overmuch in coincidence or the improbable: now novelists themselves can be heard complaining that fact can be counted on to match our wildest inventions.⁶

Similarly, Le Guin states:

Sophisticated readers are accepting the fact that an improbable and unmanageable world is going to produce an improbable and hypothetical art. At this point, realism is perhaps the least adequate means of understanding or portraying the incredible realities of our existence. . . . The fantasist, whether he used the ancient archetypes of myth and legend or the younger ones of science and technology, may be talking as seriously as any sociologist--and a great deal more directly--about human life as it is lived, and as it might be lived, and as it ought to be lived.⁷

The implications of the term "Secondary worlds" may be examined. Tolkien describes our world as the Primary world, and in relation to it, Secondary worlds of fantasy are created.

For creative Fantasy is founded upon the hard recognition that things are so in the world as it appears under the sun; on a recognition of fact, but not a slavery to it. So upon logic was founded the nonsense that displays itself in the tales and rhymes of Lewis Carroll.⁸

As Jules Zanger observes, the relationship between Secondary worlds and our own world is a symbiotic one: Secondary worlds are dependent on our world in terms of the way in which they draw from it, reflect it, or contrast with it, and at the same time, they comment on it, criticising and illuminating it.⁹ The images evoked in Secondary worlds can be carried over into our world, where they can serve as a means of contrast or comparison.

This can be illustrated by the pristine loveliness of Lewis's *Perelandra*,¹⁰ an unfallen paradise which contrasts sharply with our world, while in Jack Vance's futuristic vision of our world in *The Dying Earth*,

[a]ges of wind and rain have beaten and rounded the granite, and the sun is feeble and red. The continents have sunk and risen. A million cities have lifted towers, have fallen to dust. In the place of the old peoples, a few thousand strange souls live. There is evil on Earth, evil distilled by time.¹¹

Secondary worlds should be independent creations, important in themselves, otherwise they will be incomplete. The need for a complete, independent Secondary world is stressed by Le Guin as she discusses the construction of fantasy worlds:

[I]n fantasy there is nothing but the writer's vision of the world. There is no borrowed reality of history, or current events, or just plain folks at home in Peyton Place. There is no comfortable matrix of the commonplace to substitute for the imagination, to provide ready-made emotional response, and to disguise flaws and failures of creation. There is only a construct built in a void, with every joint and seam and nail exposed.

To create what Tolkien calls "a secondary universe" is to make a new world. A world where no voice has ever spoken before; where the act of speech is the act of creation. The only voice that speaks there is the creator's voice.¹²

The diverse nature of Secondary worlds has already been briefly commented on. They fulfil a variety of functions and they differ widely in the nature of their relationships to our world. Despite the fact that certain distinctions can be drawn between different types of Secondary worlds, it is extremely difficult to classify them, for the so-called boundaries that exist between them are extremely fluid. Indeed, as Jules Zanger comments, fantasy "invites and resists the most painstaking classifications."¹³

For example, Secondary worlds of horror can be presented through the medium of science fiction, while both science fiction and the "sword and sorcery"¹⁴ genre are combined in a certain type of science fiction known as space opera. Lewis's Perelandra, frequently classified as science fiction, could just as easily be viewed as Marvellous fantasy, as a result of the richness, colour and variety of the Secondary world that it presents and the celebration of the created order with which the work closes. Furthermore, many Secondary worlds are extremely difficult to categorize, for example Peake's Gormenghast and the England of T. H. White's The Once and Future King.¹⁵

While therefore, attempts to define different types of Secondary worlds can be regarded as useful insofar as they clarify some of their characteristic elements and functions, providing one with a useful basis from which to work, the limitations of such attempts must constantly be borne in mind.

Having taken into account the problems inherent in attempts to classify different types of Secondary worlds, some of the central characteristics associated with Marvellous Secondary worlds can be examined and related to Narnia, Middle-earth and Earthsea.

Marvellous fantasy extends to include fairy tale, romance, the epic and the supernatural. The worlds of Marvellous fantasy are varied and colourful, and often a sense of wonder and delight prevails. (Marion Lochhead's study of various Marvellous fantasies is entitled The Renaissance of Wonder.)¹⁶ The richness and complexity of Marvellous Secondary worlds such as Narnia and Middle-earth contrast sharply with a Secondary world such as Gormenghast, in which places tend to be nameless, while landscapes are often bleak and indefinite, pale or shadowy, and colours such as grey and black tend to predominate.¹⁷

And there where the White Mountains of Ered Nimrais came to their end he saw . . . the dark mass of Mount Mindolluin, the deep purple shadows of its high glens, and its tall face whitening in the rising day. . . .

[T]he Tower of Ecthelion, standing high within the topmost walls, shone out against the sky, glimmering like a spike of pearl and silver, tall and fair and shapely, and its pinnacle glittered as if it was wrought of crystals; and white banners broke and fluttered from the battlements in the morning breeze, and high and far he heard a clear ringing as of silver trumpets. (The Lord of the Rings, p. 781)

Gormenghast, that is, the main massing of the original stone, taken by itself would have displayed a certain ponderous architectural quality were it possible to have ignored the

circumfusion of those mean dwellings that swarmed like an epidemic around its outer walls. . . . These dwellings, by ancient law, were granted this chill intimacy with the stronghold that loomed above them. Over their irregular roofs would fall throughout the seasons, the shadows of time-eaten buttresses, of broken and lofty turrets, and, most enormous of all, the shadow of the Tower of Flints. This tower, patched unevenly with black ivy, arose like a mutilated finger from among the fists of knuckled masonry and pointed blasphemously at heaven.¹⁸

The complex, highly coloured nature of Marvellous Secondary worlds often involves the combination of different elements and states. In Lewis's The Voyage of the Dawn Treader, the voyagers discover the dark island, and sail across seas of liquid light and in the land of Bism in The Silver Chair, there are fields and groves of gemstones and rivers of fire.

As we shall see in the following chapters, Marvellous Secondary worlds tend to be characterised by a sense of wonder and delight. This takes different forms, from a joy in the simple, natural things in life to a sense of numinous wonder arising from the perils, the beauties and the magical qualities of these worlds.

Landscapes are highly important in Marvellous Secondary worlds and are closely related to the plot, which frequently consists of journeys, oftentaking the form of quests. The places through which the various protagonists pass--the desolate moors, barren deserts, magical islands, dark towers, corrupt cities, mysterious forests, shining citadels, sacred mountains and other such elements of the landscape--frequently attain an archetypal significance. Maps constitute

an integral part of the presentation of Marvellous Secondary worlds, helping to clarify and define, and illustrating various stages in the protagonists' journeys. This sense of definite movement, of place and purpose, contrasts with the arbitrary, aimless wanderings that we sometimes encounter in other types of Secondary worlds. Examples include the journeys of Lewis Carroll's Alice, and that of Maskull in David Lindsay's Voyage to Arcturus,¹⁹ while in Peake's Titus Alone, Titus's journeys across shadowy, nameless regions are described in these terms:

To north, south, east or west, turning at will,
 it was not long before his landmarks fled him. . . .
 From the gold shores to the cold shores:
 through regions thighbone-deep in sumptuous dust:
 through lands as harsh as metal, he made his
 way. Sometimes his footsteps were inaudible.
 Sometimes they clanged on stone. Sometimes an
 eagle watched him from a rock. Sometimes a lamb.²⁰

The functions of the journeys in Marvellous Secondary worlds illustrate the frequent movement towards harmony and integration in Marvellous fantasy. The forces of evil are associated with chaos, fragmentation and dislocation, while the forces of good seek to maintain order and preserve the status quo. In the Chronicles of Narnia, The Lord of the Rings and the Earthsea trilogy, unity and harmony are striven for and eventually attained, whereas in fantasies such as The Once and Future King and the Titus books, unity and the preservation of the status quo are challenged and proved untenable or maintainable only at the cost of individual growth and freedom. Rosemary Jackson comments

on this process:

Fantasy has always articulated a longing for imaginary unity, for unity in the realm of the imaginary. In this sense, it is inherently idealistic. It expresses a desire for an absolute, for an absolute signified, an absolute meaning. . . . Whereas fantasies produced from within a religious or magical thought mode depict the possibility of union of self and other, fantasies without these systems of belief cannot realize absolute 'truth' or 'unity'. Their longings for otherness are apprehended as impossible, except in parodic, travestied, horrific or tragic form.²¹

The movement towards wholeness, unity and harmony can be linked to consonance with the past, an important aspect of many Marvellous Secondary worlds. The desire to retain or restore the past takes various forms, such as attempts to recapture a Golden Age located in the past and references to the legendary exploits of ancient kings and heroes (for example Elendil and Gil-galad in The Lord of the Rings and Erreth-Akbe in the Earthsea trilogy), while the quest for the true king (embodied in the figures of the Pevensies in The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe, Caspian in Prince Caspian, Rilian in The Silver Chair, Aragorn in The Lord of the Rings and Arren in The Farthest Shore), a key theme in many Marvellous fantasies, can also be viewed as a form of consonance with the past.²²

Marvellous Secondary worlds tend to be pseudo-medieval and in some cases (for example Morris and Tolkien) this reflects the fantasist's desire to achieve consonance with the past. Narnia, Middle-earth and Earthsea are all essentially pseudo-medieval worlds, but while Narnia, with

its tournaments, pavilions, challenges issued in courtly speech and emphasis on concepts such as courtesy and chivalry represents the world of the High Middle Ages in many ways, Middle-earth is, as we shall see, strongly reminiscent of the early Middle Ages.

Such settings are complemented by the stylistic qualities that frequently occur in Marvellous fantasies. Marvellous fantasists often rely on stock-response or formulaic adjectives and elemental, archetypal images and stock similes. These stylistic techniques echo the language of the ancient epics:

He bade a seaworthy
wave-cutter be fitted out for him; the warrior king
he would seek, he said, over swan's riding,
that lord of great name, needing men. . . .
The prince had already picked his men
from the folk's flower, the fiercest among them
that might be found. With fourteen men
he sought sound-wood; sea-wise Beowulf
led them right down to the land's edge.²³

Slender and tall she was in her white robe girt
with silver; but strong she seemed and stern
as steel, a daughter of kings. Thus Aragorn
for the first time in the full light of day beheld
Éowyn, Lady of Rohan, and thought her fair, fair
and cold, like a morning of pale spring that is
not yet come to womanhood. And she now was
suddenly aware of him: tall heir of kings, wise
with many winters, greycloaked, hiding a power
that yet she felt. (LR, p. 537)

The extract from The Lord of the Rings illustrates the fact that descriptions in Marvellous fantasy are, as Robert Crossley observes, essentially abstract, impressionistic

and connotative, not denotative,²⁴ Tolkien comments:

However good in themselves, illustrations do little good to fairy-stories. . . . Literature works from mind to mind . . . It is at once more universal and more poignantly particular. If it speaks of bread or wine or stone or tree, it appeals to the whole of these things, to their ideas; yet each hearer will give them a peculiar personal embodiment in his own imagination.²⁵

The attitude of the fantasist and the reader towards Marvellous Secondary worlds can be further considered. According to Tolkien, fantasy aspires to the "elvish craft" of Enchantment, which "produces a Secondary world into which both designer and spectator can enter, to the satisfaction of their senses while they are inside."²⁶ A state of Secondary belief is an essential prerequisite for the success of any Marvellous Secondary world:

What really happens is that the story-maker proves a successful "sub-creator." He makes a Secondary world which your mind can enter. Inside it, what he relates is "true": it accords with the laws of that world. You therefore believe it, while you are, as it were, inside. The moment disbelief arises, the spell is broken; the magic, or rather art, has failed.²⁷

In a comparison of Peake's Titus Groan, E. R. Eddison's The Worm Ouroboros,²⁸ and The Lord of the Rings, Hugh Crago observes that, in contrast to Peake's detached, ironical tone, Eddison and Tolkien project themselves completely

into their Secondary worlds, holding nothing in reserve. As a result, many find the works of Marvellous fantasists such as Eddison or Tolkien naive, for their Secondary worlds either stand or fall depending on the extent to which they succeed in infusing them with a sense of reality.²⁹

In Marvellous Secondary worlds, the reader is not called upon to doubt or question. As Jackson remarks, he or she is a receiver of events "which are [usually] in the long distant past, contained and fixed by a long temporal perspective." As a result, the formulaic opening "once upon a time" frequently occurs.³⁰ In the Chronicles, the story told in The Horse and his Boy is retold by a minstrel at the beginning of The Silver Chair and in The Lord of the Rings the Quest, the War and the story of Aragorn and Arwen all become the subjects of songs and tales. Similarly, in A Wizard of Earthsea (p. 11), Le Guin states that Ged's exploits have been told of in The Deed of Ged and many other songs.

As a result of these above-mentioned qualities, Marvellous Secondary worlds have sometimes been regarded as offering a self-indulgent, nostalgic escape from reality. (This issue will be considered in more depth in the chapter on Middle-earth.) William Morris's The Well at the World's End can be commented on. It is a classic of Marvellous fantasy and, characteristically, strives to recapture an idealised vision of the past that frequently appears to be accompanied by a sense of wistful longing associated particularly by a number of memorable images: the faintly ambiguous figure of the Lady who appears in the earlier part of the book, the poison pool by the Dry Tree, and

the Well at the World's End itself, the meaning of which seems to extend no further than that which is demanded by the immediate narrative.³¹

However, this idealisation and sense of nostalgia present in Marvellous fantasy can be viewed as part of a longing or desire awakened by the sense of the numinous present in Marvellous Secondary worlds. Through this, various deep-seated parts of the human psyche can be touched. "Fantasy," observes Le Guin, "is the language of the inner self."³² In discussing a child's response to fantasy, Lewis states:

[F]airy land arouses a longing for he knows not what. It stirs and troubles him (to his life-long enrichment) with the dim sense of something beyond his reach and, far from dulling or emptying the actual world, gives it a new dimension of depth. He does not despise real woods because he has read of enchanted woods: the reading makes all real woods a little enchanted.³³

The world of Marvellous fantasy has been and always will be the perilous realm from which few can emerge untouched. According to Le Guin, fantasy is "a game played for very high stakes."

Seen thus, as art not spontaneous play, its affinity is not with daydream, but with dream. It is a different approach to reality, an alternative technique for apprehending and coping with existence. It is not anti-rational, but para-rational; not realistic, but surrealistic, super-realistic, a

heightening of reality. In Freud's terminology, it employs primary, not secondary process thinking. It employs archetypes, which, as Jung warned us, are dangerous things. . . . Fantasy is nearer to poetry, to mysticism, and to insanity than naturalistic fiction is. It is a real wilderness, and those who go there should not feel too safe.³⁴

In the course of the following three chapters, Narnia, Middle-earth and Earthsea will be examined. We will consider the "alternative technique for apprehending and coping with existence" that is offered by each of these Marvellous Secondary worlds. Their exploration of areas that cannot be adequately covered by realistic fiction will be discussed, as will the way in which they are especially suited to exploring such areas, as a result of their status as Marvellous Secondary worlds.

CHAPTER ONE

C. S. LEWIS'S NARNIA

Narnia is the country forming the focal point of the world in which C. S. Lewis's Chronicles of Narnia are set. A land inhabited largely by talking beasts and mythical beings, Narnia is ruled by humans and watched over by the great lion, Aslan. Outside Narnia, in a transcendental dimension, lies Aslan's country, and it is there that the "real" Narnia, as well as our world in its true form, exists. (At the end of the Chronicles, it is revealed that both our world and the Narnia of the Chronicles are shadows or reflections of the real worlds in Aslan's country.) The physical, temporal world of the Chronicles is destroyed at the end of The Last Battle, the final book in the series.

The Chronicles contain the entire history of Narnia, from its creation to its destruction. In The Magician's Nephew, in which Narnia's creation is dealt with, all the different elements of Narnia are sung into being by Aslan.¹ Some of the most important events in the history of Narnia are described: the Great Winter imposed by the White Witch, the Golden Age of Narnia under the four Pevensies, the freeing of Narnia from Telmarine bondage and the instating of Caspian as king, the voyage of the Dawn Treader to the end of the world, and the breaking of Prince Rilian's long enchantment. In The Last Battle, we read of the end of

Narnia as the giant figure of Father Time rises above the dying land, the stars are called home by Aslan, the inhabitants of Narnia stream towards the Door separating the physical, temporal Narnia from Aslan's country, giant lizards tear up all the trees, plants and grass, a great wave covers all of Narnia as the sun and moon are put out and finally the Door is closed and the revelation of Aslan's country begins.

In many ways, the Narnian landscape resembles an idealised version of that of the British Isles:

And you are riding . . . right across Narnia, in spring, down solemn avenues of beech and across sunny glades of oak, through wild orchards of snow-white cherry trees, past roaring waterfalls and mossy rocks and echoing caverns, up windy slopes alight with gorse bushes, and across the shoulders of heathery mountains and along giddy ridges and down, down, down again into wild valleys and out into acres of blue flowers.

(LWW, p. 150)

As is illustrated by Jill's first impression of Narnia in The Silver Chair, Narnia is reminiscent of the world of the High Middle Ages: "There [was] . . . a smooth, green lawn, a ship so brightly coloured that it looked like an enormous piece of jewellery, towers and battlements, banners fluttering in the air, a crowd, gay clothes, armour, gold, swords, a sound of music" (SC, p. 34). There are frequent references to minstrels, tournaments, castles, valiant knights and beautiful ladies, while ritual, pageantry, banquets and dances constitute an important

part of Narnian life. Qualities such as courtesy, chivalry and courage (epitomised, in a humorous touch, in the figure of the Talking Mouse, Reepicheep, in Prince Caspian and The Voyage of the Dawn Treader) are highly prized.

Narnia is more "magical" a Secondary world than either Middle-earth or Earthsea, more ephemeral and evocative, a land which people from our world can enter, in which they can make amazing discoveries and undergo personal changes, but cannot remain. Its magical nature is emphasised by the way in which it can be entered: through a wardrobe, through a picture frame, by the use of magic rings, or at the blowing of a magic horn.

Like the fairy worlds in MacDonald's Lilith and Phantastes,² Narnia possesses a quality of delicate loveliness, characteristic of the realms of fairy story and folklore. As in fairy stories, Narnia is a place that transforms:

The horse shied, just as it might have shied in the old, miserable days when it pulled a hansom. Then it reared. . . . And then, just as the beasts had burst out of the earth, there burst out from the shoulders of Fledge wings that spread and grew, larger than eagles', larger than swans', larger than angels' wings in church windows. The feathers shone chestnut colour and copper colour. He gave a great sweep with them and leaped into the air. Twenty feet above Aslan and Digory he snorted, neighed, and curvetted.

(MN, pp. 133-34)

A cab driver becomes High King, his cab horse becomes a winged steed, animals gain the power of human speech and people's personalities change for the better, as in the case of the selfish, vindictive Edmund and the sulky,

arrogant Eustace.

As in many fairy-tale realms, Narnia is a land that awakens a sense of desire in those who come into contact with it, for its beauty, the fascinating variety of its inhabitants, the sense of enchantment and adventure that hangs over it and above all, the presence of Aslan himself, make it a land that many wish to enter and, having once been there, long to return to. ("The happy land of Narnia--Narnia of the heathery mountains and the thymy downs, Narnia of the many rivers, the plashing glens, the mossy caverns and the deep forests ringing with the hammers of the Dwarfs. Oh the sweet air of Narnia!" [HHE, p. 17].)

Moreover, as we shall see, Narnia is also intended to awaken a sense of desire in the reader, and the aims that Lewis attempts to achieve through this awakening of desire will be considered later.

Narnia is a lighter, brighter, happier world than either Middle-earth or Earthsea, and its fairy-tale atmosphere contributes in part to this quality. It is essentially a world of idyllic innocence, reminiscent of the Peaceable Kingdom in Isaiah 11:

The wolf shall dwell with the lamb,
and the leopard shall lie down with the kid,
and the calf and the lion and the fatling together,
and a little child shall lead them. . . .
They shall not hurt or destroy
in all my holy mountain.³

The reference to the "holy mountain" reminds us of the conclusion of the Chronicles when all the good protagonists

are joined in a joyous reunion with Aslan on the mountain in Aslan's country.⁴ The sense of innocence in Narnia is emphasised by the nature of the relationship between Aslan and the Talking Beasts:

But all the Talking Beasts surged round the Lion, with purrs and grunts and squeaks and whinneys of delight, fawning on him with their tails, rubbing against him, touching him reverently with their noses and going to and fro under his body and between his legs. If you have ever seen a little cat loving a big dog whom it knows and trusts, you will have a pretty good picture of their behaviour. (PC, p. 175)

In some respects, the atmosphere evoked in Narnia is similar to that in Dylan Thomas's "Fern Hill":

Now as I was young and easy under the apple boughs
About the lilting house and happy as the grass was green
The night above the dingle starry,
Time let me hail and climb⁵
Golden in the heydays of his eyes.

The atmosphere of happiness and celebration that is characteristic of Narnia is epitomised in the image of the dance. Dancing is the chief means of celebration in Narnia and the dances that take place during Prince Caspian serve as an expression of the spirit of Narnia.

There is another side to Narnia, however. In Prince Caspian, Caspian discovers that Ogres, Hags and Werewolves exist alongside Talking Beasts, Fauns, Centaurs and Dwarves.

There is a continual conflict between good and evil in Narnia: shortly after the creation of Narnia and the arrival of the witch Jadis, Aslan tells the Narnians, "[b]efore the new, clean world I gave you is two hours old a force of evil has already entered it. . . . Evil will come of that evil" (MN, p. 126).

Lewis's love of mythology and his deep Christian faith are reflected in Narnia and, to a large extent, the Chronicles can be regarded as a Christian myth, containing a creation, a sacrificial death and resurrection, an apocalypse and a vision of a new heaven and earth. Through his presentation of the history of Narnia, Lewis is able to examine issues such as God's relationship with humankind and the way in which God works in the world.

Lewis always maintained that myths could be used to express certain essential truths. He claimed that pagan mythologies could be viewed as the "childhood of religion," a "prophetic dream" of Christianity, the latter being a fulfilment of the hints implicit in paganism.⁶ In Till We Have Faces, Lewis used the Cupid and Psyche myth in a Christian context.⁷

As Roger Lancelyn Green and Walter Hooper state, in Narnia a new myth is created, growing out of and embracing the old as elements from various mythologies are woven together into a new myth.⁸ Zanger points out that superficially at least, Marvellous Secondary worlds are usually presented as pagan, and in Narnia, Lewis combines various pagan elements with Christian ones.⁹ One is, for example, constantly aware of the presence of mythical figures: fauns, centaurs, Dryads, Naiads, Bacchus, Silenus,

Pomona, the Phoenix, a winged horse and unicorns. The evil creatures that inhabit Narnia tend to derive from Norse mythology--there are evil giants, dragons, witches, black dwarves and a great wolf, Fenris Ulf.¹⁰

Essentially, Narnia serves as a vehicle for the presentation of Christian beliefs. Aslan, for instance, is a symbol of Christ.¹¹ As a result, Narnia differs from both Tolkien's Middle-earth and Le Guin's Earthsea, for in Narnia the narrative comes first, controlling the nature of Lewis's Secondary world, whereas in both Middle-earth and Earthsea, we are encouraged to feel that the opposite takes place.

As in the case of Middle-earth and Earthsea, maps of Narnia and the surrounding countries are provided in the Chronicles. In each of the books, the physical journeys undertaken by Lewis's protagonists parallel their spiritual journeys towards a fuller understanding of the issues contained in Narnia. As the extent of Narnia and the lands around it is revealed, Lewis's protagonists discover more about the nature of Aslan and the way in which he works. (This is especially clearly evident in The Voyage of the Dawn Treader and The Horse and his Boy.)

The symbolic significance of the world of the Chronicles extends right down to its topography. In his earliest Christian work, The Pilgrim's Regress, Lewis devised a moral geography in which the centre of the world was "the country of man's soul." In the Chronicles, this is represented by Narnia. The forces of evil exist in the north and south, the latter containing the regions of hyper-sensuality and hedonism. Although Narnia is situated in the north, beyond

it lies the far north, home of the witches and the evil giants. In the south lies the land of Calormen. Its inhabitants tend to be a cruel, oppressive people, the wealthy ones leading a life of extravagant, opulent luxury. To the east and west lie the objects of human longing-- the land of the sunrise, "the landlord's country," in the east and the land of the sunset in the west. In The Voyage of the Dawn Treader, Caspian and his crew sail to the eastern rim of the world and in doing so, approach the borders of Aslan's country. In The Magician's Nephew, Polly and Digory's journey westward on Fledge's back eventually takes them to the same place. At the end of The Last Battle, Peter, Edmund and Lucy discover that the two extremes of east and west are incorporated into Aslan's country.¹²

In the Christian mind, the descent into death is inseparable from a rising again, and thus west and east, sunset and sunrise, represent these twin movements.¹³ Consequently, it is fitting that both west and east should lead to Aslan's country.

As in MacDonald's Secondary worlds, Narnia is essentially a means to an end. Narnia does not matter in itself in the way Middle-earth and Earthsea do. The total destruction of Narnia at the end of the Chronicles only results in brief sorrow that is soon forgotten as the wonders of Aslan's country are revealed, whereas the knowledge that Middle-earth is slowly changing and losing many of its most wondrous qualities is ultimately one of the most poignant and tragic aspects of The Lord of the Rings.

The conflict between good and evil that takes place in Narnia is a familiar notion in fairystories. However,

as a result of the Christian message that is presented through the Chronicles, this conflict takes place on a cosmic scale in Narnia. The cosmic conflict formed a highly important part of Lewis's Christian vision, as is very clearly illustrated in works such as The Screwtape Letters and his science fiction trilogy.¹⁴

This conflict affects the nature of Narnia, and is responsible for elements of fear, violence and cruelty in the Chronicles. As we shall see, Narnia takes on strange and frightening attributes as its inhabitants are pressed into a conflict that is cosmic in its implications, violence and intensity.

In the preceding discussions, the nature of Narnia has been commented on. In the light of the issues raised, Lewis's attitude to fantasy will now be considered in relation to his construction of Narnia.

Lewis claimed that because people would not write the kind of books that he wanted, he had to do so himself.¹⁵ Thus Narnia can be viewed as a Secondary world intended to give pleasure to its creator as well as to the reader. Lewis's delight in his Secondary world is reflected in the qualities of magical loveliness and joyous celebration that characterise Narnia.

Although the Chronicles are children's books, Lewis's respect for children's literature can be seen in the way in which he stresses that no book is really worth reading at ten which is not equally worth reading at fifty.¹⁶ This indicates that Lewis in no way intended the appeal of Narnia to be restricted to a specific audience.

In the Chronicles, Lewis consistently emphasises the

importance of a childlike, as opposed to a childish, point of view. Susan "grows up" in the false sense of the word, losing her ability to respond and react in a childlike manner, and thus comes to reject Narnia and all that it stands for. Lewis comments: "A tree grows because it adds rings: a train doesn't grow by leaving one station and puffing on to the next."¹⁷

Despite the fairy-tale characteristics that help convey a sense of attractiveness, innocence and playfulness to Narnia, Lewis does not intend his Secondary world to be taken lightly, and regards its fairy-tale structure as a suitable means for presenting transcendental Christian beliefs.¹⁸ (However, the fairy-tale structure of Narnia and the Christian message that the latter is intended to contain exist in a complex and sometimes uneasy balance, as will be discussed in greater depth below.)

According to Lewis, the construction of Narnia was initially a spontaneous process. It all began with a series of pictures--apparently Lewis would frequently begin his imaginative writing by seeing pictures.¹⁹ He describes the creation of Narnia thus:

Everything began with images; a faun carrying an umbrella, a queen on a sledge, a magnificent lion. At first there wasn't even anything Christian about them; that element pushed itself in of its own accord. It was part of the bubbling.²⁰

The sense of spontaneous delight in Narnia can, to a large extent, be related to this process.

Lewis, however, differentiates between two reasons behind his writing of stories which he calls the Author's reason and the Man's. While the Author is responsible for the initial imaginative impulse and the selection of the Form (in the case of the Chronicles, that of the fairy story) into which the events are cast, the Man critically evaluates this process and gives the story direction and purpose.²¹ Lewis describes how the latter part of this procedure took place in the writing of the Chronicles:

Then of course the Man in me began to have his turn. I thought I saw how stories of this kind could steal past a certain inhibition which had paralysed much of my own religion in childhood. . . . [S]upposing that by casting all these things into an imaginary world, stripping them of their stained-glass and Sunday school associations, one could make them for the first time appear in their real potency?²²

This illustrates Lewis's assertion that "[y]ou find out what the moral is by writing the story."²³ Similarly, in describing the way in which Perelandra came to be written, Lewis states that the work began with an image of floating islands, which evolved into a Secondary world from which a story developed.²⁴

Although Narnia serves as part of the initial inspiration for the Chronicles and is, as a result, partly responsible for the kind of message that the latter presents, Narnia's importance is overshadowed by other concerns. According to Lewis, "the plot, as we call it--is only really a net whereby to catch something else." Lewis does

not wish the story--and thus, in the case of the Chronicles, Narnia itself--to obscure "the idea that really matters."²⁵ He intends Narnia to serve simply as part of the "net," its importance dependent on the extent to which it succeeds in evoking the Christian message.

Lewis emphasises the difference between the author, who intends, and the book, which means.²⁵ As a result of the primary importance that Lewis attaches to the "message" in his writings, the didactic nature of the Chronicles is very marked and, as we shall see, the book's meaning and the author's intention are not always harmoniously combined.

In discussing the construction of works of fantasy, Lewis states that, to be effective, Secondary worlds need to draw on the world of the spirit, for that is the only real "other world" we know.²⁷ (This statement reflects the Christian Platonism that we encounter in the Chronicles.) Lewis states that the strangeness of Secondary worlds is sustained not so much by their physical as by their spiritual dimensions:

If some fatal progress of applied science ever enables us in fact to reach the Moon, that real journey will not at all satisfy the impulse which we now seek to gratify by writing such stories. The real Moon, if you could reach it and survive, would in a deep and deadly sense be just like anywhere else. . . . No man would find an abiding strangeness on the Moon unless he were the sort of man who could find it in his own back garden.²⁸

As a result of the way in which fantasy draws on the

world of the spirit, it is able to examine areas that our everyday experience does not cover. Lewis remarks: "If good novels are comments on life, good stories of this sort . . . are actual additions to life; they give, like certain rare dreams, sensations we never had before, and enlarge our conception of the range of possible experience."²⁹

Lewis's belief that fantasy provides us with sensations we never had before can be linked to his view, cited in the Introduction, that "fairy land arouses a longing" in the reader, and that it "stirs and troubles him (to his life-long enrichment)." Lewis regards this evocation of desire as one of the most important functions of fantasy. This desire can take various forms, but in the context of Narnia it can be specifically related to the way in which Lewis wished to awaken in his readers a sense of desire for the spiritual experience that Narnia offers. Franz Rottensteiner states: "The beauty of Narnia . . . is perhaps designed to awaken an unrecognized desire in the reader, which may be turned into a mystic awareness of the divine presence."³⁰

Having considered Lewis's attitude to fantasy and his construction of Narnia, we can now discuss the nature of the relationship between Narnia and our world, so that the functions that Lewis wishes Narnia to fulfil and the attitude that he wishes the reader to adopt towards Narnia can be examined in more depth.

The most important element determining the quality of the relationship between Narnia and our own world is Lewis's Christian Platonism. Narnia and our world are presented as co-existing Platonic shadowlands, and the

Chronicles conclude with the good protagonists moving eternally "[f]arther up and farther in" (LB, p. 151 ff.) into Aslan's country. There is no sense of any kind of "return" to the everyday world, which is, as we shall see, an important characteristic of many Marvellous Secondary worlds.

As a result, the focus in the Chronicles is ultimately away from our world, offering intimations of transcendental perspectives not attainable in the everyday world. In The Allegory of Love, Lewis describes this type of approach in these terms:

The allegorist leaves the given--his own passions--to talk of that which is confessedly less real, which is a fiction. The symbolist leaves the given to find that which is more real. To put the difference in another way, for the symbolist it is we who are the allegory.³¹

Lewis's emphasis on an ultimate, transcendental reality involves a stressing of the temporary, ephemeral nature of life in Narnia. Long stretches of time elapse in Narnia in contrast to the short spaces of time that elapse in our world between most of the books. The children are taught to regard their adventures in Narnia as something temporary: they are sent back home at the end of each book in the Chronicles except The Last Battle. Aslan tells Edmund and Lucy: "This was the very reason why you were brought to Narnia, that by knowing me here for a little, you may know me better there" (VDT, p. 209).

Furthermore, Lewis tends to emphasise the dull, dreary, unattractive, commonplace elements of our world, comparing them unfavourably to Narnia. ("He saw at a glance that they were wearing the same queer, dingy sort of clothes as the people in his dream" [LB, p. 46]. "They knew how to make things that felt beautiful as well as looking beautiful in Narnia: and there was no such thing as starch or flannel or elastic to be found from one end of the country to the other" [LB, p. 123

In a similar way, when Eustace, the product of "progressive" parents, views Narnia in the light of our world at the beginning of The Voyage of the Dawn Treader, he is presented as an object of scorn and ridicule, and when Uncle Andrew and Edmund dream of introducing various elements of the modern world into Narnia in The Magician's Nephew (p. 103) and The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe (p. 84), the ugliness and destructiveness of their fantasies are emphasised. In Prince Caspian and The Last Battle, the dislocating, disruptive effects of "progress" on Narnia are described.³²

These characteristics of Narnia can be related to Lewis's dislike of various elements of modern life. He was far more interested in all that the past had to offer, and in his inaugural lecture at Cambridge he referred to himself as a "dinosaur," a relic from an earlier age.³³

From the above discussions, we have seen that in order to attain the ultimate reality of Aslan's country, Lewis's protagonists are frequently called upon to turn away from various elements of Narnia and our own world and are encouraged to develop a longing for the transcendent. In Mere Christianity, Lewis states that if we experience longings that nothing on earth can satisfy, the most probable

explanation is that we were made for another world. Earthly pleasures are only a "copy" or an "echo," meant "to suggest the real thing." One must keep the desire for one's true country alive in oneself,³⁴ which is, as we have seen, one of the central aims that Lewis hopes to achieve through Narnia.

As a corollary to the above points, Lewis seeks to emphasise the ready availability of the spiritual experience offered by Narnia. Aslan's country contains Narnia, the countries that surround it and also England. All who accept Aslan/Christ are welcome, including the Calormene Emeth, member of a pagan nation. As can be seen in the description of the Narnian countryside, Narnia is less purely fantastic, less alien a Secondary world, than are Lewis's Malacandra and Perelandra.

In Malacandra and Perelandra, the strangeness of the landscape can be linked to the way in which the spiritual issues that these worlds contain can only be fully comprehended by a mystical figure such as Ransom. Narnia, on the other hand, represents not so much a different place as a different state, containing a quality of spiritual awareness that all can attain.

This is emphasised by the way in which the children enter Narnia: by means of various magic objects such as rings or Susan's horn, or through various portals--pools, a picture or a wardrobe. (One could compare this with the use of a mirror as a portal between worlds in MacDonald's Lilith and Carroll's Through the Looking Glass.) In this way, Narnia is brought even closer to our world, as if it might be waiting just behind a door or through a picture

frame, thus creating the sense that it might be possible to enter it at any moment.

The sense of desire that Lewis wishes to awaken in his readers is aided by the way in which the everyday is heightened and transformed in Narnia. On many occasions, things seem closer to their ideal form in Narnia than they do in our world. As is frequently the case in the fantasies of writers such as Hans Christian Anderson and MacDonald, the everyday is touched by the magical and homeliness is often turned to beauty.³⁵ The streams sparkle, the countryside is green and lovely, the air is fresh and pure and everyday physical activities--riding, eating, playing games and dancing--take on a special quality in Narnia.

Although these features are intended to increase a desire for the transcendental by the way in which they are irradiated by a sense of spiritual beauty and joy, they are also intended to increase our appreciation of our own world. The most important things in Aslan's country are the simplest, most natural things in life. In Mere Christianity, Lewis emphasises that the pleasant things in our world must not be despised insofar as they serve as intimations of the true things in the heavenly country.³⁶

Having considered the relationship between Narnia and our own world, Narnia can now be evaluated as a Marvellous Secondary world, bearing in mind the preceding comments on its nature and function.

In evaluating Narnia, it is important to examine whether or not Lewis's Christian beliefs are satisfactorily integrated into this Secondary world. As we have already seen, Lewis's

Christian Platonism affects the independent importance of Narnia as a Marvellous Secondary world. In The Last Battle, Digory says:

{The old Narnia} was only a shadow or a copy of the real Narnia which has always been here and always will be here. . . . All of the old Narnia that mattered, all the dear creatures, have been drawn into the real Narnia through the Door. And of course it is different; as different as a real thing is from a shadow or as waking life is from a dream. (LB, pp. 153-54)

Narnia's true importance is thus dependent on the extent to which it forms part of Aslan's country, and the reader discovers that the Narnia of the Chronicles, the Narnia that he or she has become familiar with, is "only a shadow or a copy." Aslan tells the protagonists at the end of the Chronicles, "The dream is ended: this is the morning" (LB, p. 165). As in MacDonald's works, Lewis's ideal vision is only attainable through death and it is doubtful whether the intimations and evocations of transcendental perspectives contained in the physical, temporal Narnia sufficiently prepare the reader to accept the revelation of the real Narnia in Aslan's country at the end of The Last Battle. Aslan's country is most effective when glimpsed behind a huge wave at the end of the world in The Voyage of the Dawn Treader (pp. 205-07). When it is presented as the Christian Platonic heaven in The Last Battle, the sense of magic and mystery that helped sustain the Christian message contained in the Chronicles disappears as "the primary level of belief falters . . . [and] the

deeper belief overpowers it, and we have at best a very entertaining homiletic."³⁷

In The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe, there are also instances when Lewis's Christian beliefs are unsatisfactorily integrated into his Secondary world, for Lewis does not succeed in avoiding dogmatism in his presentation of Aslan's sacrificial death and resurrection. In such passages, Lewis places heavy demands on his readers, particularly the average child, who would be reading the Chronicles for the story alone, not the ethical content.

As a fairy-tale world, nothing in Narnia should be too straightforward, easily definable and clear-cut. Ideally, Lewis's symbolism should transcend rational analysis if it is to convey the mythical, mystical qualities characteristic of a fairy-tale realm. Lewis himself cites fairy stories' "inflexible hostility to all analysis" as one reason for selecting the fairy story as a mode for the Chronicles.³⁸

Lewis's Christian beliefs, however, tended to spring from highly polemical, polarised, rigid ethics. As a result, these qualities undermine the sense of awe, wonder and numinous mystery that should be an essential part of Narnia, both as a symbolic Christian realm and a Marvellous Secondary world. In the Chronicles, Lewis is dealing with issues that are ultimate, eternal and inexplicable, yet Narnia is generally too clear-cut and straightforward a Secondary world to contain these concepts adequately. In contrast, the works of MacDonald and Lewis's friend, Charles Williams, tend to contain a quality of "shimmering ambiguity" and "tender vagueness," thus allowing for a far greater sense

of depth, complexity and mystery in their presentation of Christianity.³⁹

These attitudes of Lewis's can be linked to a disturbing sense of harshness and violence in Narnia, which is markedly at variance with its atmosphere of idyllic innocence.

In relation to this, the cosmic conflict taking place in Narnia can be considered. After Jadis's entry into Narnia shortly after its creation in The Magician's Nephew, Narnia loses its state of primeval innocence and becomes a fallen world, with the forces of evil ever ready to attack. ("[T]hose Northern Witches always mean the same thing, but in every age they have a different plan for getting it" [SC, p. 193].) The inhabitants of Narnia are called upon to be constantly on their guard against possible onslaughts from enemies.

Evil is a very palpable physical presence in Narnia. The Chronicles contain striking and vivid descriptions of the representatives of evil, such as Jadis in the dying city of Charn in The Magician's Nephew; the White Witch, with her scarlet lips and deathly white face, "proud and cold and stern" (LWW, p. 33); and the deathlike stench and cruel curved beak of Tash, gliding northwards with outstretched claws "as if it wanted to snatch all Narnia in its grip" (LB, p. 76).

Descriptions of the continual conflict between good and evil in Narnia are frequently filled with violence and a sense of fear.

When once Aslan had been tied (and tied so that he was really a mass of cords) on the flat stone, a hush fell on the crowd. Four Hags, holding

four torches, stood at the corners of the Table. The Witch bared her arms as she had bared them the previous night when it had been Edmund instead of Aslan. Then she began to whet her knife. It looked to the children, when the gleam of the torchlight fell on it, as if the knife was made of stone, not of steel, and it was of a strange and evil shape. (LWW, p. 140)

In "On Three Ways of Writing for Children," Lewis defends the presence of fear and violence in fairy stories:

Those who say that children must not be frightened may mean . . . that we must try to keep out of [their! mind[s] the knowledge that [they] are born into a world of death, violence, wounds, adventure, heroism and cowardice, good and evil. . . . [This] would indeed be to give children a false impression and feed them on escapism in the bad sense. . . . Since it is so likely that they will meet cruel enemies, let them at least have heard of brave knights and heroic courage. Otherwise you are making their destiny not brighter but darker. Nor do most of us find that violence and bloodshed, in a story, produce any haunting dread in the minds of children. As far as that goes, I side inpenitently with the human race against the modern reformer. Let there be wicked kings and beheadings, battles and dungeons, giants and dragons, and let villains be soundly killed at the end of the book. Nothing will persuade me that this causes an ordinary child any kind or degree of fear beyond what it wants, and needs, to feel. For, of course, it wants to be a little frightened.⁴⁰

Indeed, bowdlerised fairy stories are untrue to the spirit of fantasy. (One could consider, for example, the macabre wealth of gory detail in Grimm's fairy tales.) In discussing the nature of fairy stories, Bruno Bettelheim comments:

This is exactly the message that fairy tales get across to the child in manifold form: that a struggle against severe difficulties in life is unavoidable, is an intrinsic part of human existence--but that if one does not shy away, but steadfastly meets unexpected and often unjust hardships, one masters all obstacles and at the end emerges victorious.⁴¹

While, therefore, the presence of evil, sufferings, danger and violence needs to be accepted as an integral part of Narnia, the way in which these matters are presented in the Chronicles must be examined in more detail.

The quality of violence in Narnia is at times nightmarish in its intensity. This is especially the case in The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe and The Last Battle, during Lewis's descriptions of the acts of violence perpetrated by the White Witch, the killing of Aslan, the oppression of the Narnians by the Carlomenes and the last battle itself. At times we are conscious of a disturbing atmosphere of cruelty, when the sense of pain, horror and violence is combined with the innocent, childlike elements of Narnia:

But our side had its losses too. Three dogs were killed and a fourth was hobbling behind the lines on three legs and whimpering. The Bear lay on the ground, moving feebly. Then it mumbled in its throaty voice, bewildered to the last, 'I don't--understand,' laid its big head down on the grass as quietly as a child going to sleep, and never moved again. (LB, p. 109)

As we have seen, fear and violence are a necessary part of fairy stories but the horror and violence that occurs in the Chronicles clashes with, rather than complements,

the nature of Narnia. It is out of place in Lewis's Secondary world because it cannot be related to the vicissitudes of life, but instead to Lewis's personal vision of the cosmic conflict.

The ever-present threat of the forces of evil in Narnia gives rise to an emphasis on aggression and an insistence on the necessity of conflict. This is stressed in Mere Christianity:

What I cannot understand is this sort of semi-pacifism you get nowadays which gives people the idea that though you have to fight, you ought to do it with a long face and as if you were ashamed of it. It is that feeling that robs lots of magnificent young Christians in the Services of something they have a right to, something which is the natural accompaniment of courage--a kind of gaiety and whole-heartedness.⁴²

As David Holbrook remarks, in Lewis's terms aggression is commendable and fighting is fun. Holbrook cites Prince Caspian (p. 117): "You can't help feeling stronger when you look at a place where you won a glorious victory."⁴³ In Prince Caspian, it takes a demonstration of their skill with weapons for the Pevensies to convince Trumpkin of their true identities (pp. 93-95), and Lewis makes fun of Eustace's pacifism in The Voyage of the Dawn Treader (pp. 34-35).

In addition to this emphasis on the importance of aggressive violence, the Chronicles contain a sense of evil that sometimes verges on the obsessive. These elements occur in many of Lewis's writings: for example, in That

Hideous Strength, the sense of ever-present evil bestows a near-paranoic atmosphere on the narrative, and the bloody horror of the destruction of the N.I.C.E. towards the end of the book has an almost apocalyptic quality and is reminiscent in many ways of the last battle in The Last Battle. J. B. S. Haldane describes the cosmic conflict in Lewis's writings in the following terms:

This world is largely run by the Devil. "The shadow of one dark wing is over all Tellus," and the best we can do is work out our own salvation in fear and trembling. Revealed religion tells us how to do this. . . . Some time in the future Jesus and the good angels will take our planet over from him. Meanwhile the Church is a resistance movement, but liberation must await a celestial D-Day.⁴⁴

On various occasions in the Chronicles, we feel that Lewis is attempting to force on his readers his own sense of the horror of evil and his personal vision of all the pain, suffering and cruelty that life in a fallen world entails, to such an extent that the narrative becomes overshadowed by an atmosphere of hatred and violence. This is especially the case in The Last Battle, in which a sense of violence constitutes the dominant tone in the narrative. W. W. Robson remarks that The Screwtape Letters and The Problem of Pain exhibit a mixture of horrified fascination and superstitious fright in relation to devils and hell, and this comment could be applied equally well to the Chronicles.⁴⁵

The constant emphasis on the presence of evil and

the sense of violence is, however, only one of the ways in which the rigid, polarised nature of Lewis's beliefs affects the Chronicles. When expressing his dislikes, Lewis tends to become shrill and polemical. The anger and sometimes the hatred implicit in some of Lewis's descriptions tends to make one feel uneasy. In the following passage, Lewis describes Experiment House, Jill and Eustace's school:

[The school] was 'Co-educational,' a school for both boys and girls, what used to be called a 'mixed' school; some said it was not nearly so mixed as the minds of the people who ran it. These people had the idea that boys and girls should be allowed to do what they liked. . . . All sorts of things, horrid things, went on which at an ordinary school would have been found out and stopped in half a term; but at this school they weren't. Or even if they were, the people who did them were not expelled or punished. The Head said they were interesting psychological cases and sent for them and talked to them for hours. (SC, p. 11)

Lewis's polarised, polemical attitudes also result in a great deal of sexism in the Chronicles. While there are times when Lewis's female protagonists are called upon to play roles as active as those of their male counterparts (for example, Jill in The Silver Chair and The Last Battle and Aravis in The Horse and his Boy), these instances can perhaps be ascribed to fairy-tale tradition, in which females are frequently equal (or sometimes superior) to the male characters, rather than to any change of direction on Lewis's part.

In Mere Christianity, Lewis extols the virtues of

wifely obedience, claiming that it is both fitting and natural for the man to be head of the family and that women actually prefer it that way.⁴⁶ This attitude is reflected in Narnia, for throughout the Chronicles, the importance of sex roles is stressed. In The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe (p. 100), we read that "battles are ugly when women fight." In The Silver Chair (p. 138), Jill remarks: "Where I come from . . . they don't think much of men who are bossed about by their wives." When Lucy meets Aravis in The Horse and his Boy (p. 179), Lewis states: "They liked each other at once and soon went away together to talk about Aravis's bedroom and Aravis's boudoir and about getting clothes for her, and all the sorts of things girls do talk about on such an occasion." As Stella Gibbons remarks, the domesticated, kind, fussy woman such as Mrs. Beaver in The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe is a type that meets with Lewis's approval. (Ivy Maggs in That Hideous Strength is a similar figure.)⁴⁷

Lewis's sexism is also evident in his presentation of the Witch/Queen figures in Narnia, who are intended to represent the dangers of femininity and female sexuality when they do not conform to the codes instituted by the religious and patriarchal authorities.

Lewis and other Christian fantasists like him--MacDonald, Williams, Tolkien, and Dorothy Sayers--used the Lilith figure in their work on various occasions.⁴⁸ According to Hebrew mythology, Lilith was the first wife of Adam, created like him from the dust of the earth. She rejected the submissive role that had been ordained for her and was cast into Hell, where she became a demon and roamed the world seducing and

destroying men and murdering children.⁴⁹

In The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe (p. 76), Mr. Beaver states that the White Witch--and thus presumably all the other witches in Narnia--was descended from Lilith. In addition, their destructive qualities and their desire to dominate all those around them, including their male consorts, indicate their status as Lilith figures. Lilith was also believed to roam the wilderness in search of children and like her, the White Witch captures a child (Edmund) while travelling through the frozen Narnia in The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe and plans to kill him and his brother and sisters.⁵⁰ Like Lilith, the Witches possess cruel, destructive qualities instead of traditional feminine life-giving and nurturing qualities. Examples of these are the Deplorable Word spoken by Jadis in The Magician's Nephew, which destroys everything except the speaker, and the sterile, freezing cold of the Great Winter which the White Witch casts over Narnia in The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe.

As we have seen, a childlike innocence tends to prevail in Narnia. Where sexuality is recognized, it serves as an indication of evil. The witches, true to their status as Lilith figures, are all exceptionally beautiful, exerting a sexual attraction which serves in part to indicate that they are evil. In The Magician's Nephew, Uncle Andrew and Digory are fascinated by the fierce wild beauty of Jadis and in The Silver Chair, Rilian is enchanted by the loveliness of the Green Witch. This sense of destructive sexuality is emphasised by the fact that the witches' weapons are all phallic symbols: Jadis's lamp-post in The Magician's

Nephew, the White Witch's wand and knife in The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe, while in The Silver Chair, the Green Witch is capable of changing into a serpent.

Despite the pleasure that Lewis appears to take in the childlike innocence of the Narnians, the limitations of such a state of innocence are clearly apparent. Although they live in a fallen world, the Narnians' understanding of evil does not seem very highly developed. They are sometimes unable to discern evil, as is the case in The Last Battle and The Horse and his Boy. ("For the truth was that in that golden age . . . the smaller woodland people of Narnia were so safe and happy that they were getting a little careless" [HHB, p. 145].) Furthermore, the Narnians seem unable to overcome their enemies or even defend themselves properly against the forces of evil without the help of Aslan and the children.

The idyllic innocence of Narnia can be related to an emphasis on cosiness, familiarity, neatness and order in the Chronicles. This can be seen in the descriptions of many of the Narnians' homes, for example the Dwarfs' house in The Horse and his Boy (p. 147). At times, this gives rise to the impression that there is something a little too smug and snug about Narnia, for its atmosphere of innocence is not always sufficiently tempered by a sense of wildness such as we find in MacDonald's fantasies. This lack of "wildness" and sometimes excessive sense of domesticity can be linked in part to the prominence accorded to the Talking Beasts--essentially "tame" animals--in the Chronicles. (In The Problem of Pain, Lewis states that the only natural animals are tame animals, for animals

should be understood in terms of their relationship to humans, for it is through humans that they are related to God.)⁵¹

Narnia is sometimes presented in terms that seem shallow, incongruous or even embarrassing. "Peter leaned forward, put his arms around the beast and kissed the furry head: it wasn't a girlish thing for him to do, because he was the High King" (PC, pp. 148-49).

And they made good laws and kept the peace and saved good trees from being unnecessarily cut down, and liberated young dwarfs and young satyrs from being sent to school, and generally stopped busybodies and interferers and encouraged ordinary people who wanted to live and let live. (LWW, p. 166)

The descriptions, dialogue and characterisation in the Chronicles often reflect the influence of Edith Nesbit, which, in the context of all that Narnia represents, can seem very inappropriate. This is very frequently evident in the case of the children, who, as John Rowe Townsend observes, sometimes seem unconvincing when transformed from ordinary children into powerful, majestic figures. Edmund, for instance, is far more believable as an unpleasant, greedy little boy than as a king of Narnia.⁵²

That evening after tea the four children all managed to get down to the beach again and get their shoes and stockings off and feel the sand between their toes. But the next day was more solemn. For then, in the Great Hall of Cair Paravel . . . Aslan solemnly crowned them and led them to the four thrones.⁵³ (LWW, pp. 164-65)

Holbrook remarks that at times Narnia appears to be presented through the mode of "the world of the rather stylised nursery childhood of a middle-class story."⁵⁴ Perhaps this could be linked in part to a nostalgia for a safe, suburban Edwardian middle class life.⁵⁵ Certain prejudices that appear in the Chronicles can be related to this attitude, for example, xenophobia, which is manifested in Lewis's presentation of the Calormenes, the enemies of Narnia. (Like many Englishmen of his era, Lewis was antipathetic to people and things from the Middle East.)⁵⁶ There is also a great deal of anti-modernism--for instance, in The Voyage of the Dawn Treader Lewis is highly scornful of Eustace and his parents' "progressive" lifestyle,⁵⁷ and his dislike for "alternative" co-educational schools has already been commented on.

In the above analyses, various deficiencies in Lewis's presentation of Narnia have been examined. Nonetheless, it is important to bear in mind that despite the presence of dogmatic, polemical, unsuitable and incongruous elements, there are many moving, memorable, and extremely beautiful passages in the Chronicles.

At those times in the Chronicles when Lewis is in control of his material, he succeeds in fusing the different aspects of Narnia into a balanced, coherent whole, integrating the Christian and fantastic elements in such a way that the reader is led to feel that Narnia's Christian elements reside in its mythopoeic qualities and vice versa.

The spiritual is very effectively suggested through sensuous detail, particularly where the use of colour is concerned. (This is a characteristic feature of MacDonald's

fantasies, which, as we have seen, exerted a strong influence on Lewis's fiction.)⁵⁸

The eastern sky changed from white to pink and from pink to gold. The Voice rose and rose, till all the air was shaking with it. And just as it swelled to the mightiest and most glorious sound it had yet produced, the sun arose. (MN, p. 95)

Whiteness, shot with faintest colour of gold, spread round them on every side, except just astern where their passage had thrust the lilies apart and left an open lane of water that shone like dark green glass. . . . There seemed no end to the lilies. Day after day from all those miles and leagues of flowers there rose a smell which Lucy found it very hard to describe; sweet--yes, but not at all sleepy or overpowering, a fresh, wild, lonely smell that seemed to get into your brain and make you feel that you could go up mountains at a run or wrestle with an elephant. (VDT, pp. 200-01)

The physical and the spiritual are very well blended at the end of The Voyage of the Dawn Treader, for as the voyagers approach the place "[w]here sky and water meet" (VDT, p. 24), where the physical and the spiritual become one, the material things around them become filled with light.

According to Rosemary Dinnage, "the impact of the books is really dependent on their sequence of visual images."⁵⁹ Indeed, the effectiveness of the Chronicles can be closely related to the striking nature of the images used by Lewis. One may mention the wood between the worlds and the description of animals rising out of the earth during the creation

of Narnia in The Magician's Nephew,⁶⁰ the figure of Father Christmas and the way in which the icy monotony of the frozen winter world is suddenly broken by spring in The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe, Aslan's awakening of the water nymphs, the river god and the spirits of the trees in Prince Caspian, the caverns in Underland containing the sleeping monsters and the giant, Father Time in The Silver Chair, and throughout the Chronicles, the figure of Aslan himself. The Voyage of the Dawn Treader, The Magician's Nephew and The Last Battle, with their descriptions of a voyage to the world's end through regions where the physical and the spiritual become increasingly intertwined, and the creation and the destruction of Narnia, are perhaps the books in which Lewis's imagery is most powerful.

The light from behind them (and a little to their right) was so strong that it lit up even the slopes of the Northern Moors. Something was moving there. Enormous animals were crawling and sliding down into Narnia: great dragons and giant lizards and featherless birds with wings like bat's wings.

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 The Dragons and Giant Lizards now had Narnia to themselves. They went to and fro tearing up the trees by the roots and crunching them up as if they were sticks of rhubarb. Minute by minute the forests disappeared. The whole country became bare and you could see all sorts of things about its shape--all the little lumps and hollows--which you had never noticed before. The grass died. Soon Tirian found he was looking at a world of bare rock and earth. You could hardly believe that anything had ever lived there. The monsters themselves grew old and lay down and died. Their flesh shrivelled up and the bones appeared: soon they were only huge skeletons that lay here and there on the dead rock, looking as if they had died thousands of years ago. For a long time everything was still.

(LB, p. 138, p. 141)

In "De Descriptione Temporum," Lewis cites the "un-Christening" process as one of the central characteristics of our modern world.⁶¹ Townsend states that one of the most important characteristics of the Chronicles is that they contain a sense of faith, which is no common quality in our time.⁶² Similarly, for Lochhead, "holiness in the magic" is an element that would be a pity to lose from modern Marvellous fantasy.⁶³

The Christian message, when successfully blended with the other elements of Narnia, adds a dimension of holiness and numinous wonder, which remains effective whatever the individual reader's personal beliefs. It is then not a system of belief thrust upon the reader: instead it is integrated into Narnia, enhancing it. On such occasions, Lewis's writing tends to take on a more suggestive quality, which allows the Christian message to operate on a more subliminal level.

Examples of this sense of "holiness" arising naturally from an effective fusion of the spiritual, the mythopoeic, and the sensuous occur in Lewis's description of the last stage of the Dawn Treader's journey in The Voyage of the Dawn Treader, at certain stages during the procession at the end of The Last Battle, and during the creation of Narnia in The Magician's Nephew.

The Lion opened his mouth, but no sound came from it; he was breathing out, a long, warm breath; it seemed to sway all the beasts as the wind sways a line of trees. Far overhead from beyond the veil of blue sky which hid them the stars sang again: a pure, cold, difficult music. Then there came a swift flash like fire (but it burnt

nobody) either from the sky or from the Lion itself, and every drop of blood tingled in the children's bodies, and the deepest, wildest voice they had ever heard was saying:

'Narnia, Narnia, Narnia, awake. Love. Think. Speak. Be walking trees. Be talking beasts. Be divine waters.' . . .

Out of the trees wild people stepped forth, gods and goddesses of the wood; with them came Fauns and Satyrs and Dwarfs. Out of the river rose the river god with his Naiad daughters. And all these and all the beasts and birds in their different voices, low or high or thick or clear, replied:

'Hail, Aslan. We hear and obey. We are awake. We love. We think. We speak. We know.'

(MN, pp. 108-09)

It is in passages such as this that Lewis's desire to create a Christian myth in the Chronicles is most successfully accomplished. Furthermore, this passage provides an illustration of one of the occasions in the Chronicles in which childlike innocence is combined with a sense of wildness, in the manner of the best fairy stories. (MacDonald's Lilith and Phantastes contain many examples of this: one can consider, for instance, Anodos's account of the magic forest in Phantastes.)

The dance and all that it represents is perhaps one of the most effective ways in which fairy-tale qualities and Christian symbolism are combined in Narnia. In visual terms, the dance provides a suitable means for suggesting a sense of community and cosmic hierarchy, as is borne out by the symbolism with which Lewis invests the dance.

In Lewis's terms, the dance serves to represent the place of humankind in the universe, the relationship between the earth and its creatures, relationships between people, peoples' relationship with God, and the inner life of God.

(This can be compared to the Dance of the Heavens in the medieval world view and also W. B. Yeats's vision of the dance as a means of preserving pattern and order in a disordered world.)⁶⁴ The dance that takes place at the end of Perelandra (pp. 229-35) provides perhaps the best example of the different levels of meaning Lewis ascribes to the dance, and during the course of the dance, Lewis's most essential beliefs are expressed.⁶⁵

In a similar way, Lewis is capable on various occasions of successfully combining the homely elements of Narnia with its fantastic, spiritual dimensions. Father Christmas in The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe (p. 99), "so big, and so glad, and so real, that they all became quite still" is a good example of this.⁶⁶ Apart from the magical gifts that he gives to the children, he also produces a pot of tea, teacups and saucers and sugar and cream. The best things in Narnia are the most simple, natural things, which are frequently contrasted with more exotic evil things. ("[T]here's nothing that spoils the taste of good ordinary food half so much as the memory of bad magic food" [LWW, p. 82].) In The Horse and his Boy, the good homeliness of Narnia and Archenland is contrasted with the exotic, unnatural and corrupt way of life in Calormen. In The Last Battle, we see that everyday, familiar things form an essential part of Aslan's country, and are irradiated with the heavenly nature of that place.

Through the way in which simple, natural things in Narnia are touched with a sense of magic and beauty, Lewis attempts to awaken in the reader a fresh appreciation for the simplest, most basic things in life. In "The Dethronement

of Power," he observes that by dipping things in myth, we see them more clearly.⁶⁷ In the following passage, he describes the functions that can be fulfilled by familiar, everyday things in a story:

The happiness which it presents to us is in fact full of the simplest and most attainable things-- food, sleep, exercise, friendship, the face of nature, even (in a sense) religion. . . . [T]he whole story, paradoxically enough, strengthens our relish for real life. This excursion into the preposterous sends us back with renewed pleasure to the actual.⁶⁸

As we shall see, this delight in everyday life is an important feature in all three of the Marvellous Secondary worlds discussed in this thesis, but it is in Narnia that this quality is most marked. Narnia is infused with a sense of wonder and delight that frequently springs from pleasure in simple, natural things such as eating, drinking, running, riding, and dancing. Lewis's emphasis on the wonder and the joy of life is most clearly expressed in The Magician's Nephew, during the descriptions of the creation of Narnia, the beauty of the newly created world, and the joyous excitement felt by the newly created Narnians. This sense of celebration is epitomised by the fact that jokes and laughter are some of the first events to occur after the creation of Narnia.

This element of Narnia can be regarded as one of the most important features of the Chronicles. Through it, the value and beauty of life is affirmed in the face of the hatred, paranoia, and violence that arises from Lewis's

vision of the cosmic conflict. In addition, Narnia can be seen to offer something meaningful to those readers who find the emphasis on an ultimate transcendental reality in the Chronicles unacceptable. This is borne out by the way in which most of the books in the Chronicles conclude, for the songs, dancing, feasting and other festivities that take place celebrate life as well as the revelations of spiritual dimensions that are expressed through each tale.

In the preceding pages, we have seen that Narnia represents a meeting point of the physical and spiritual worlds. Although it is a physical, temporal world that we see created and destroyed, it contains intimations of transcendental realms and leads into and forms part of Aslan's country. Through the way in which the Christian message is presented through Narnia, a vision of the relationship between the natural and the supernatural, the physical and the spiritual and the earthly and the heavenly is expressed.

In relation to this, Lewis's treatment of death and the afterlife in the Chronicles can be considered. The descriptions of death and what lies beyond it constitute some of the most memorable passages in the Chronicles. In The Last Battle, death is represented by the Stable door, a source of fear and horror to Tirian and his friends, as they are gradually drawn nearer and nearer to it during the course of the last battle and eventually pass through it one by one. It is "a grim door . . . like a mouth" (LB, p. 118), yet behind it are the glories of Aslan's country. The heavenly Narnia contains some highly original

and beautiful images: the worlds within worlds, each one more perfect than the world that encircles it, the series of many coloured cliffs like a giant staircase down which Aslan leaps "like a living cataract of power and beauty" (LB, p. 164), and the walled garden on top of a high green hill, within which characters from all the books in the Chronicles are reunited.

Another description of death and the afterlife occurs in The Silver Chair (pp. 199-203), when Caspian dies and is later restored to life and youth on the mountain in Aslan's country. The grief and desolation caused by death is not avoided, but Lewis's belief in a fuller, more joyous life beyond the confines of the physical world is affirmed in a manner that is perhaps more effective than that of The Last Battle, for here Lewis deals with death and the afterlife in a simpler, more personal way, thus enabling readers to relate to these matters more closely.

In Lewis's vision, death is to be confronted and come to terms with, for it leads on into heavenly realms that are more real and more wonderful than anything the physical world can offer. Through the Chronicles, the reader is encouraged to view death not as an end, but as a means of access to a higher, more meaningful way of life. As we have seen, Lewis believes that fantasy is able to "enlarge our conception of the range of possible experience," and some of the ways in which this is achieved in Narnia have already been considered. The presentation of death and heaven in the Chronicles provides a further illustration of this process, for the reader is able to consider issues that cannot be covered fully in realistic fiction. The

deficiencies of the final part of the Chronicles have been discussed, but nonetheless, the fact that Lewis has constructed a Secondary world that extends beyond death constitutes one of the most striking and remarkable aspects of the Chronicles.

In some ways, the Chronicles can be compared to the medieval poem, The Pearl, for the latter contains a vision of death and heaven, presented in terms of a highly didactic Christian message that a modern audience might find difficult to accept. Yet nonetheless, in both The Pearl and the Chronicles, the writers' Christian beliefs provide a structure in terms of which the ultimate, the transcendental, and the unknown can be presented and explored.⁶⁹

The light in which history is regarded in Narnia can also be commented on. In "De Descriptione Temporum," Lewis emphasises the inter-connected, inter-related nature of historical events,⁷⁰ and in the seven Chronicles, the entire history of Narnia is spanned, allowing the reader to see the history of Narnia as a whole and making him or her aware of the way in which the events taking place and the lives of individual Narnians form part of the broad historical pattern. History is given a sense of coherence and unity through its teleological structure, for all the events in Narnia point towards an ultimate goal: the revelations contained in Aslan's country. Life contains a sense of direction and purpose. In Lewis's terms, "Aslan . . . seems to be at the back of all the stories" (HHB, p. 174).

Narnia represents a mixture of contrasting and frequently conflicting elements. On the one hand, it expresses a dissatisfaction with the real and strives for an ultimate

heavenly realm only possible through death, while on the other, it emphasises the importance of the most simple, homely elements of the physical world. Fantastic splendours and transcendental dimensions are often combined with the natural and the familiar, or are less happily presented in incongruously everyday terms. Narnia is presented as a Marvellous Secondary world of delicate, essentially innocent loveliness, yet there are times "[w]hen the green field comes off like a lid/ Revealing what was much better hid/ Unpleasant,"⁷¹ and we become aware of disturbing undertones. In attempting to convey a sense of the ultimate and the numinous, Lewis frequently couches these concepts in narrow, hard, polemical terms. Finally, although intended to be evocative, awakening a sense of spiritual desire, Narnia is at times in peril of collapsing into over-explicit allegory.

Given all these factors, it is impossible to expect that Narnia should constantly remain a balanced, unified whole, with the reader maintaining unwaveringly the response that Lewis intends to evoke in him or her. To create a Secondary world with the spiritual implications of Narnia is not easy. Even MacDonald, a Christian fantasist with greater stylistic ability and a deeper sense of the mystical, does not entirely succeed in this. Yet despite all this, the Chronicles contain descriptions of great delicacy and beauty, fraught with a sense of the magical and the spiritual. The daring of Lewis's attempt to create a Marvellous Secondary world through which the spiritual and the transcendental can be suggested and the nature of death and heaven explored, and the power of many of the images with which these issues

are presented, give Narnia its status as one of the more interesting and memorable modern Marvellous Secondary worlds.

CHAPTER TWO

J. R. R. TOLKIEN'S MIDDLE-EARTH

The depth, detail and variety of Middle-earth make it one of the most striking Secondary worlds in modern Marvellous fantasy. Tolkien states that The Lord of the Rings was written in order to restore an epic tradition to the English and to provide them with a mythology of their own.¹ He defines the work as a heroic romance,² which indicates that through it he is attempting to restore specific aspects of the past to the modern world. However, The Lord of the Rings is not simply a restoration of the past, but a re-creation of a specific vision of it. Northrop Frye comments:

Thus the recreation of romance brings us to a present where past and future are gathered, in Eliot's phrase. It is also Eliot who shows us that the starting point of creation is the impinging of wish-thinking on the memory, the intrusion of "it might have been" into "it was" that we encounter at the opening of "Burnt Norton."³

Middle-earth is characterised by a sense of expansiveness, for it is a vast, only partially explored world. Tolkien describes the writing of The Lord of the Rings thus:

It was written slowly and with great care for detail, & finally emerged as a Frameless Picture: a searchlight, as it were, on a brief episode in History, and on a small part of our Middle-earth, surrounded by the glimmer of limitless extensions in time and space.⁴

To the west of Middle-earth lies the ocean, to the east, little-known lands stretch away into unexplored regions, and in the north and south, the map of Middle-earth ends in uncharted wastelands. Our perception of Middle-earth is extended by the glimpses that Tolkien permits us of peoples and places existing on the periphery of The Lord of the Rings; for example, the Variags of Khand, the Kingdom of Dáin in Erebor, the lost realms of Arnor and the Ice Bay of Forochel, reminiscent of dim landscapes fading into the background of a painting.

During the writing of The Lord of the Rings, the influence of earlier legends that Tolkien had composed as a "historical" background to the private languages that he had invented exerted an increasingly important influence on the work. (This process is described in the Foreword to The Lord of the Rings [p. 9].) This "historical" background was later revised and incorporated into The Silmarillion. In the Foreword to The Lord of the Rings, Tolkien comments: "This tale grew in the telling, until it became a history of the Great War of the Ring and included many glimpses of the yet more ancient history that preceded it" (p. 9).

The sense that The Lord of the Rings provides us with only a brief glimpse into Middle-earth is heightened by Tolkien's use of languages. In Appendices E and F, Tolkien discusses the languages of Middle-earth, and through this

the extensiveness of his Secondary world is indicated. Within the narrative itself we attain partial, fragmented impressions of the wealth of languages in Middle-earth through, for example, the Elves' songs, the Dwarves' war-cries, the slow, sonorous phrases of the Ents, the Black Speech of Mordor engraved on the Ring, and through the way in which languages in The Lord of the Rings are used to signify unique elements of Middle-earth. We read of metals such as mithril and ithildin, flowers such as elanor and simbelmynë, an éored, which denotes a division in the army of the Rohirrim, the lebethron trees on the White Mountains in Gondor, the mallorns of Lothlórien, and the palantíri of Arnor and Gondor.

The importance of names in Middle-earth can be related to the way in which languages formed the basis for Tolkien's construction of Middle-earth. Tolkien was deeply interested in philology and he once stated: "Give me a name and I'll produce a story--not the other way about."⁵ As a result, languages and nomenclature play a vital role in the presentation of Middle-earth, for they help define the nature of the place, person or thing that they denote. Evocative and connotative, names like Númënor, Mordor, Galadriel, Aragorn, Ithilien and the Nazgûl create a specific impression in the reader's mind. The languages of Middle-earth reflect the different attributes of the peoples who speak them; from the harsh, guttural speech of Mordor to the clear, almost unearthly purity of the High-Elven tongue.

Throughout our reading of The Lord of the Rings we are made aware of the fact that, as Lewis would put it,

the plot serves as a net to catch Middle-earth in. The narrative is leisurely and rambling, with frequent breaks in the action (the chapters set in Rivendell and Lothlórien, for example) that enable us to discover aspects of Middle-earth that would otherwise have remained unknown to us. New dimensions are constantly being revealed to us in the same way that they are to the protagonists in The Lord of the Rings, and, as a result of the way in which Middle-earth continually unfolds before us, we tend to feel that we are explorers, rather than simply passive spectators.

The story itself takes a long time to get going (the Quest proper only begins in Book II) and various seemingly extraneous episodes take place along the way, for example the encounter with Tom Bombadil and the adventure on the Barrow-Downs. As the plot proceeds, Tolkien's protagonists travel from the Shire in the north to Rivendell and then on to Lothlórien, then down the river Anduin, after which they separate, travelling to Mordor in the east, or to Rohan and Gondor in the south. At the close of the narrative, Merry, Pippin, and Sam stand on the shores of Middle-earth bidding farewell to Frodo and his companions as they prepare to sail into the West.

The landscape of Middle-earth is closely woven into the narrative. Together, they tell us more about the nature, history, and inhabitants of Middle-earth. During the Company's sojourn in Lothlórien, we discover more about the Elves' way of life and their inevitable fate. While journeying down the Anduin, the Company pass the pillars of the Argonath, upon which statues of Aragorn's ancestors rest. During the crossing of the Dead Marshes, Sam and

Frodo see faces in the pools, a reminder of a famous, long-ago battle. In Drúadan forest, we are made aware of the primeval elements of Middle-earth, when Merry and the Rohirrim encounter the Woses, who are to guide them to Minas Tirith.

Tolkien frequently makes use of contrasts, comparisons, and juxtapositions in his presentation of Middle-earth. For example, different manifestations of one basic feature of the landscape act as contrasts to and serve to illuminate one another. This is illustrated by the way in which the tower of Orthanc, the Moon Tower at Minas Morgul, the White Tower of Minas Tirith, and the Dark Tower of Barad-dûr are all interrelated. Orthanc serves as a reflection, on a smaller scale, of the Dark Tower, while the White Tower contrasts with both Orthanc and Barad-dûr. The Moon Tower, on the other hand, contrasts with the White Tower in a different way, for it illustrates the fate of all the lovely places in Middle-earth should evil prove victorious. In Frodo and Sam's journey to Mordor, the regions they travel through are highlighted by this sense of contrast and comparison. They pass through the foetid, phantasmagoric Dead Marshes, the desolate, poisoned waste land around Mordor, the fresh, fragrant loveliness of Ithilien, and the ghastly terror of Morgul Vale and the stairs of Cirith Ungol. Merry and Pippin's experiences in Rohan and Gondor indicate, by contrast, the differing natures of the two realms to which they swear allegiance.

The sense of a broad expanse of history extending far beyond the events contained in The Lord of the Rings is conveyed in several ways. We are never quite sure where The Lord of the Rings should begin or end, as a result of the presence of a Prologue and lengthy Appendices, dealing

with matters such as the history, peoples and languages of Middle-earth. In addition, sometimes things referred to in the narrative possess sub-creational reality outside the pages of The Lord of the Rings. For example, the giant spider Ungoliant, and Grond, the Hammer of the Underworld, mentioned briefly in The Lord of the Rings (p. 750 and p. 860 respectively), are dealt with in more depth in The Silmarillion. Furthermore, within the narrative there are constant references to the past and the future.

Middle-earth is dominated by a sense of the past. The places we encounter all possess historical importance in their context: for example, Weathertop, Moria, Lothlórien, the Dead Marshes, Minas Morgul, and Minas Tirith. Articles from the past--Aragorn's sword, the palantíri, the White Tree, and, most important of all, the Ring itself--play a vital part in the narrative. Figures from the past such as Elendil, Gil-galad, Beren, and Lúthien are constantly recalled. A sense of the past is also conveyed through figures like Gandalf, Tom Bombadil, Elrond, Galadriel, and Treebeard, whose memories stretch far back, in some cases to the earliest days in Middle-earth.⁶ (This emphasis on historical background is characteristic of various other romances, for example Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, which begins and ends with a description of the origins of Arthur's realm.)⁷

According to Lewis, this sense of the past helps establish an atmosphere of Secondary belief in Middle-earth:

{O]ne has, in fact, an uneasy feeling that the worlds of the Furioso or The Water of the Wondrous Isles weren't there at all before the curtain

rose. But in the Tolkenian world you can hardly put your foot down anywhere . . . without stirring the dust of history.⁸

We are made aware of the future through the way in which the narrative is set at the end of the Third Age of Middle-earth. At the close of the book, the Fourth Age, the Age of Men, implicitly our age, begins, and throughout the narrative, we are made aware of the irrevocable changes that will take place in Middle-earth as a result of this.

Although the transience of all things is emphasised, there is no entropy, for the narrative ends with a sense of life continuing, as Sam returns home and his wife and children gather around him. This continuity is further stressed by the way in which the struggle depicted in The Lord of the Rings forms only one small part of an ongoing chain of events. We can compare this with Eddison's The Worm Ouroboros, in which the narrative pattern is circular, with the conflict it describes beginning all over again at the end of the book. Similarly, according to Tolkien, the forces of good and evil in Beowulf are locked in a conflict that cannot be resolved while the world lasts. In an essay entitled "Beowulf: the Monsters and the Critics," Tolkien states:

{W}ithin Time the monsters would win. . . .
Now the heroic figures, the men of old . . .
remained and still fought on until defeat. For
the monsters do not depart, whether the gods
go or come.⁹

The inhabitants of Middle-earth have, throughout history, "fought the long defeat" (LR, p. 376) against the forces of evil. Gandalf emphasises this continual struggle during the last debate:

"Other evils there are that may come; for Sauron is himself but a servant or emissary. Yet it is not our part to master all the tides of the world, but to do what is in us for the succour of those years wherein we are set, uprooting the evil in the fields that we know, so that those who live after may have clean earth to till. What weather they shall have is not ours to rule." (LR, p. 913)

Related to this continuity is an awareness of the passage of time: of transience, mutability, and ultimate mortality. This is characteristic of various other epics and romances: Tolkien commented that in Beowulf, one is made strongly aware of the inevitability of death.¹⁰ (He once stated that this constituted the most important theme in The Lord of the Rings.)¹¹ In Gawain, the passage of time and the cycles of growth and decay are emphasised. ("[A]ll ripes and rotes.")¹²

As a result of the emphasis on mutability, transience, and mortality, a sense of fading and loss hangs over Middle-earth. This quality is perhaps most poignantly conveyed in Tolkien's descriptions of the Elves, immortals in a physical, temporal world, with everything that they love constantly fading and dying around them.¹³ Throughout The Lord of the Rings, Tolkien makes us aware of the effects of time on Middle-earth; from the haunted barrows on the

desolate North Downs to Lothlórien, faded and forlorn at the end of the Third Age.

The importance of the past in Middle-earth can be viewed in relation to this sense of transience and loss, for everything in Middle-earth seems to have seen better days¹⁴ and as a result, the past becomes an ideal against which everything that is best in the present can be measured. (This can be compared to Lewis's use of the transcendental dimension as an ultimate ideal in Narnia.) Faramir's words in The Lord of the Rings (p. 698) illustrate this aspect of Middle-earth: "I would see the White Tree in flower again in the courts of the kings, and the Silver Crown return, and Minas Tirith in peace: Minas Arnor again as of old."

This nostalgia for the past can be compared to the nostalgia that occurs in various other modern heroic romances, such as those of Morris and Eddison. As in their romances, the nostalgia that is felt in Middle-earth can be regarded as an expression of Tolkien's own longing for the past. Like Lewis, he was a "dinosaur," disliking many elements of modern life and deeply interested in that which the past could offer.

As in many works of heroic fantasy, Middle-earth is a "frontier world," consisting of relatively small centres of civilisation surrounded by danger and darkness.¹⁵ As in Beowulf, in which Grendel lurks just outside Hrothgar's mead-hall, or Gawain, in which the Green Knight strides into Arthur's hall out of the surrounding wilderness, the innkeeper at Bree "lives within a day's march of foes that would freeze his heart, or lay his little town in ruin,

if he were not guarded ceaselessly" (LR, p. 266). Minas Tirith is situated within view of the mountains surrounding Mordor. In their battle against the forces of evil, the inhabitants of Middle-earth can be viewed as attempting to instil order into a confusing, often frightening, world. (In contrast, Narnia is essentially an idyllic world, and the struggle taking place there can be seen as an attempt to restore it to its original Eden-like state.)¹⁶

The wildness, peril, and darkness that exist in Middle-earth reflect characteristic qualities of Northern legend and saga, a literary realm that Tolkien was exceptionally drawn to. The closeness between Middle-earth and the world of Northern literature is reflected in the fact that the word "Middle-earth" is a translation of the Old English middangeard, while Beowulf is perhaps the work that can be most closely related to The Lord of the Rings in terms of atmosphere and theme.¹⁷ Tolkien's description of the world of the Beowulf-poet reminds us very strongly of the atmosphere of Middle-earth:

[H]e and his hearers were thinking of the eormengrund, the great earth, ringed with garsecg, the shoreless sea, beneath the sky's inaccessible roof; whereon, as in a little circle of light about their halls, men with courage as their stay went forward to that battle with the hostile world and the offspring of the dark which ends for all, even the kings and champions, in defeat.¹⁸

This sense of a frontier world, with towns and villages surrounded by a dangerous, mysterious wilderness is also conveyed through Tolkien's presentation of the natural

world in Middle-earth, for nature is infused with a sentient, intelligent quality. Mountains hurl rocks at travellers, trees march to battle, and Gimli refers to "the night-speech of plant and stone" (LR, pp. 355-56). Nature is thereby established as a complex, powerful, and potentially dangerous force, and its essential ambiguity is emphasised throughout. Treebeard comments, "I am not altogether on anybody's side, because nobody is altogether on my side, if you understand me" (LR, p. 493).¹⁹

In the above discussions, we have examined the nature of Middle-earth, and the way in which it is presented to the reader. Tolkien's attitude towards fantasy can now be considered in relation to Middle-earth. In the course of Tolkien's essay, "On Fairy-Stories," Tolkien discusses fantasy, citing its central functions, thereby enabling us to define some of the characteristics that form an integral part of Middle-earth and obtain a clearer conception of the functions that Middle-earth can exercise.

For Tolkien, sub-creation, the making of a Secondary world, represented the root idea of narrative art, and as a result, he accords central importance to Secondary worlds in fantasy.²⁰ According to Tolkien, fairy stories are not so much tales about elves and fairies as about Faërie itself, the Perilous Realm where they have their being.²¹ In The Lord of the Rings, Middle-earth forms the centre of the narrative that contains it in a way that Narnia and Earthsea do not. As we have seen, the narrative serves principally as a means of presenting Middle-earth to the reader and furthermore, we are made continually aware of Middle-earth as a world extending far beyond the

areas covered in the narrative.

Tolkien defines three central functions of fantasy: Recovery, Escape, and Consolation. Recovery he describes as the "regaining of a clear view," "seeing things as we are (or were) meant to see them."²² Through Recovery, basic, everyday things are freed from triteness, drabness, or ordinariness. Tolkien states:

Creative fantasy . . . may open your hoard and let all the locked things fly away like cage-birds. The gems all turn into flowers or flames, and you will be warned that all you had (or knew) was dangerous and potent, not really effectively chained, free and wild; no more yours than they were you.²³

As we have seen in the previous chapter, Recovery takes place in Narnia when natural, homely things are irradiated with the atmosphere of the place and become wonderful. We recall Lewis's statement that by dipping things in myth, we see them more clearly.

Tolkien emphasizes that fairy stories deal mainly with simple, natural things made luminous by their setting. He comments, "It was in fairy-stories that I first discovered the potency of the words, and the wonder of the things, such as stone, and wood, and iron; tree and grass; house and fire; bread and wine."²⁴

This is reflected in Middle-earth, for, as in Narnia, we are made very aware of the simple, the basic, and the natural (as opposed to the alien and the surreal). Through this, as we shall see, the process of Recovery takes place.

Tolkien then discusses Escape, an important motivating force behind the construction of Middle-earth. Escape is, and is not, related to Recovery. On the one hand, it can be regarded as a corollary of Recovery. In Tolkien's terms, fairy stories offer an escape from the insignificant, ugly, shoddy, and inferior elements of modern life. He stresses that Escape represents the Escape of the Prisoner, not the Flight of the Deserter.²⁵ Middle-earth, as we have seen, contains many legendary and fantastic qualities, yet it is grounded in basic realities. As has been stated, fairy stories deal primarily with natural, familiar things: lightning as opposed to electric lights, horses as opposed to cars, and trees as opposed to factory chimneys.²⁶ Tolkien observes, "Fairy-stories may invent monsters that fly in the air or dwell in the deep, but at least they do not try to escape from heaven or the sea."²⁷

On the other hand, there is the escape of archaism, which Tolkien defends. A retreat into the realms of kings and knights, sailing ships and castles, bows and arrows and swords is, according to Tolkien, an understandable, defensible reaction to the drab, destructive qualities of modern life.²⁸ As far as Tolkien is concerned, fantasy offers something more meaningful, attractive, and ultimately more real than the general ugliness and inferiority that he regards as characteristic of modern life. "The maddest castle that ever came out of a giant's bag in a wild Gaelic story is not only much less ugly than a robot-factory, it is also . . . 'in a very real sense' a great deal more real."²⁹

Like the Marvellous Secondary worlds of Morris, Dunsany,

and Eddison, Middle-earth offers an escape from and an alternative to the modern world and can be regarded as an expression of all that is lacking (in the fantasist's terms).³⁰ Tolkien's construction of Middle-earth as a realm of heroic romance and his desire to restore an epic tradition to the English are indicative of this.

Escape and Consolation are closely related, for Tolkien views the latter as a more profound form of the former. He states that fantasy offers an escape from human limitations and ministers to old, deep desires such as the desire to fly, to converse with other creatures, or to travel through time and space, thereby offering satisfaction and consolation to the reader. The Escape from death is the oldest and deepest of these desires, and thus forms an ancient theme in fairy stories. Tolkien stresses, however, that fairy stories frequently deal with the way in which immortality can prove a burden.³¹ (In The Lord of the Rings [Appendix A, p. 1100], death is referred to as "the gift of the One to Men." In addition, we recall the plight of the immortal Elves, who feel the burden of their immortality particularly sharply in a world dominated by an awareness of the transience of all things and the inevitability of mortality.)

In discussing the way in which fairy stories minister to human desires, Tolkien acknowledges the distinction between the actual desire and its embodiment in reality: "Fairy-stories were plainly not primarily concerned with possibility, but with desirability."³²

I desired dragons with a profound desire. Of course, I in my timid body did not wish to have them in my neighbourhood, intruding into my relatively safe world. . . . The dweller on the quiet and fertile plains may hear of the tormented hills and the unharvested sea and long for them in his heart. For the heart is hard though the body be soft.³³

This indicates the way in which fantasies such as The Lord of the Rings minister to our desires, fulfilling something in our natures that would otherwise be left incomplete.

Tolkien states that the most important aspect of Consolation is the Consolation of the Happy Ending. He regards this as the highest function of fantasy, and refers to it as the eucaastrophe, "the sudden joyous 'turn,'" which does not rule out the possibility of sorrow or failure, but does deny ultimate defeat, thus constituting evangelium, providing a glimpse of transcendent joy--"Joy beyond the walls of the world, poignant as grief."³⁴ This attitude contrasts sharply with the vision expressed in Tolkien's essay on Beowulf, in which the inevitability of defeat is emphasised. However, Tolkien views the eucaastrophe as a brief illumination, not as an institution, and this is emphasised in The Lord of the Rings, for the scenes on the field of Cormallen, the victory song of the Eagles, and Aragorn's coronation and subsequent wedding need to be viewed in the context of the vast sweep of history that

dominates the events in the narrative. We can contrast this with Narnia, in which the final eucatastrophe attained in The Last Battle is a permanent state, and the importance of Narnia is undermined as the emphasis shifts to Aslan's country and the transcendental revelations that it contains.

In the above commentary, the central motivating factors behind the creation of Middle-earth and its principal functions have been pointed out. In the light of these comments, and bearing in mind the nature of the Secondary world that Tolkien has created, the relationship between Middle-earth and our world can be commented on.

As we have seen, Middle-earth stands in a pseudo-historical relationship to our own world, and events taking place in The Lord of the Rings are presented as only a brief episode in the history "of our Middle-earth." A sense of historical continuity prevails, and through this, the inter-connectedness of past and future is stressed. During the course of the narrative, the connection between Middle-earth and our world is emphasised as various ways in which Middle-earth will gradually alter and come to resemble the world we know are hinted at. (Examples include the references to the Fourth Age as the Age of Men, the Elves' imminent departure from Middle-earth, and Treebeard's words to Galadriel and Celeborn: "[T]he world is changing. . . . I do not think we shall meet again" [LR, p. 1017].)

The principal way in which a "historical" relationship between Middle-earth and our own world is established is through the Prologue and the Appendices. Through the descriptions of the history of Middle-earth that they contain, a sense that we are discovering a lost historical era,

rather than reading a work of fantasy, is created. In the Prologue (p. 26), Tolkien cites the Red Book of Westmarch, kept among the Shire records, as the main source for the events contained in the narrative.

On another level, the relationship between Middle-earth and our own world can be examined in the context of Recovery, Escape, and Consolation. Middle-earth offers Consolation to the reader through the way in which he or she is able to journey through time and space, communicate with animals and even plants, encounter legendary and mythical creatures, and experience the workings of the numinous and the magical during his or her reading of The Lord of the Rings.

Middle-earth does not correspond with or complement our world, but instead it exists as an alternative reality, providing a means of escape into the realm of heroic romance. In commenting on the way in which Marvellous fantasy provides an escape from the modern world, Zanger observes:

Since fantasy springs (but not very far) from the denial of aspects of the real world, the distance between the real world and the worlds created by the fantasist reveals those stress points at which the real world chafes the writer and reader, and chafing, generates the imaginative alternative, as the grain of sand generates the baroque pearl.³⁵

The escape of archaism embodied in The Lord of the Rings is accompanied by an incorporation into Middle-earth of some of the ugliest and most destructive aspects of

modern life, which Tolkien associates with the forces of evil. In contrast, the forces of good belong to a feudal, proto-medieval order, which is characterised by its closeness to the natural world. The forces of evil appear to have various mechanical devices and forms of high technology at their disposal: Isengard is surrounded by machines, explosives are used during the battle at Helm's Deep and at the siege of Gondor, while Mordor, with its prisons, slave labour and vast armies "ready at a signal to issue forth like black ants going to war" (LR, p. 662) is reminiscent of modern totalitarian bureaucracies at their most dehumanising.

In the Prologue (pp. 11-12), Tolkien comments that although the devastation of the Shire by Saruman and his henchmen does not directly reflect the contemporary situation in England it has, nonetheless, some basis in his own experience. The blasted landscapes in and around Mordor recall contemporary scenes of industrial and mechanical despoliation of the environment:

Here nothing lived, not even the leprous growths that feed on rottenness. The gasping pools were choked with ash and crawling muds, sickly white and grey, as if the mountains had vomited the filth of their entrails upon the lands about. High mounds of crushed and powdered rock, great cones of earth fire-blasted and poison-stained, stood like an obscene graveyard in endless rows, slowly revealed in the reluctant light. (LR, p. 657)

Later in this chapter, the implications of Tolkien's vindication of a proto-medieval order in the face of forces

associated with many of the most negative aspects of modern society will be discussed.

Tolkien may deplore various elements of modern society, but he never disengages himself from our world itself. As we have seen in the discussions of *Escape and Recovery*, he emphasises the importance of natural, familiar things in fantasy. In *The Lord of the Rings*, the characters travel mainly on foot (or occasionally on horseback) and there are constant descriptions of natural surroundings and climatic conditions, thus providing "an unbroken running account of familiar things"³⁶ and contributing to a sense of physical reality. We can consider the following passage:

They had been a fortnight on the way when the weather changed. The wind suddenly fell and then veered round to the south. The swift-flowing clouds lifted and melted away, and the sun came out, pale and bright. There came a cold clear dawn at the end of a long stumbling night-march. The travellers reached a low ridge crowned with ancient holly-trees whose grey-green trunks seemed to have been built out of the very stone of the hills. Their dark leaves shone and their berries glowed red in the light of the rising sun.

Away in the south Frodo could see the dim shapes of lofty mountains that seemed now to stand across the path that the Company was taking. At the left of this high range rose three peaks; the tallest and nearest stood up like a tooth tipped with snow; its great, bare, northern precipice was still largely in the shadow, but where the sunlight slanted upon it, it glowed red.

(LR, p. 299)

Tolkien combines these basic, familiar elements of the natural world with the fantastic in such a way as to accommodate the reader to Middle-earth. In terms of such

things as topography, climate, flora and fauna, Middle-earth is a world very close to our own. Despite its mysterious nature, Fangorn contains trees like beeches, oaks, and rowans, flocks of crows act as spies for the Enemy, and many of the stars that hang over Middle-earth are stars that we know. As a result, the atmosphere of Middle-earth is, as Paul Kocher puts it, "strange, but not too strange."³⁷

Through the way in which the fantastic is anchored in the familiar, Recovery can take place. Various simple, natural things that can be closely related to our everyday experience are heightened and made marvellous by their setting in a world of heroic romance. We can consider Tolkien's description of Frodo's first moments in Lothlórien: "He saw no colour but those he knew, gold and white and blue and green, but they were fresh and poignant, as if he had at that moment first perceived them and made for them names new and wonderful." (LR, p. 369).

Tolkien sums up the relationship between the fantastic and the familiar and the way in which Recovery takes place within it in these terms:

Fantasy is made out of the Primary World, but a good craftsman loves his material, and has a knowledge and feeling for clay, stone and wood which only the art of making can give. By the forging of Gram cold iron was revealed; by the making of Pegasus horses were ennobled; in the Trees of Sun and Moon root and stock, flower and fruit are manifested in glory.³⁸

Having considered the central elements of Middle-earth, the way in which it is presented to us through the Lord of the Rings, the functions that it is able to exercise, and its relationship with our world, we can now turn to the final part of this chapter: a critical analysis of the presentation of Middle-earth.

Through his creation of Middle-earth, a world of heroic romance, Tolkien wishes to emphasise the values contained in such a world to a society in which those ideals and traditions are lacking. As Roger Sale observes, Tolkien is thereby attempting to prove that the taproot to the past is not withered.³⁹ The extent to which Tolkien achieves his aims will be considered during the remainder of this chapter.

One of the most immediately striking things about The Lord of the Rings is the wide variety of critical responses that it has evoked. One extreme can be illustrated by Edmund Wilson's dismissal of The Lord of the Rings as "juvenile trash" and Catherine Stimpson's claim that "Tolkien is bogus; bogus, prolix and sentimental. His popularization of the past is a comic strip for grown-ups. The Lord of the Rings is almost as colourful and easy as Captain Marvel."⁴⁰ On the other hand, Lewis states:

This book is like lightning from a clear sky. . . . To say that in it heroic romance, gorgeous, eloquent, and unashamed, has suddenly returned at a period almost pathological in its anti-romanticism, is inadequate. . . . But in the history of Romance itself . . . it makes not a return but an advance or revolution: the conquest of new territory.⁴¹

Tolkien regarded readers' contempt for The Lord of the Rings and all that it represents as a sort of blindness, comparable to Gollum's loathing of the Elves' lembas⁴²--an inability to respond to the ideals and values of heroic romance. (Tolkien once commented that dislike for The Lord of the Rings represented part of an ancient antipathy, for works such as Beowulf, The Pearl, and Gawain had been similarly disliked.)⁴³

In evaluating Middle-earth as a recreation of the world of heroic romance, we will consider the way in which Tolkien treats traditional elements and the extent to which he relates them to the present.

Many works of modern fantasy that recreate the past, for example John Gardner's Grendel and White's The Once and Future King, contain a strong sense of irony or cynicism, thereby enabling the modern reader to relate to them more easily.⁴⁴ As we have seen, Tolkien's attitude to the past is one of reverence and high seriousness, yet he adapts the heroic romance contained in The Lord of the Rings in various ways in order to make it more acceptable to the modern reader.

The most striking way in which Middle-earth differs from other worlds of heroic romance is in Tolkien's introduction of the hobbits. By no stretch of the imagination could we visualise them in Morris's or Eddison's Secondary worlds. Zanger comments that, in general, heroic fantasy creates a world in which the middle class had never emerged as an important force,⁴⁵ yet Middle-earth is different, for the hobbits are solidly middle-class and are thus far closer to the average reader than any of the other protagonists

in The Lord of the Rings. The hobbits become the ones upon whom the salvation of Middle-earth depends, as the traditional figures of heroic romance--the kings, the princes, the warriors, and the Wise--all acknowledge that they are afraid to take the Ring, and it is the ordinary, bewildered hobbits who carry the Ring to Mordor. As we can see, a whole new dimension of heroism, one more readily understandable by the modern reader, is being presented in Middle-earth. As a result, a specific type of courage, the proud, reckless bravado that is frequently celebrated in heroic romances (for example, Eddison's The Worm Ouroboros), is condemned. In the case of Boromir, these qualities make him more vulnerable to the lure of the Ring, while in The Lord of the Rings (pp. 877-81), Éomer's reckless battle-fury nearly costs him his life and nearly loses him the battle.

These two types of heroism can be seen in relation to a contrast between Tolkien's essay on Beowulf and his short essay on The Battle of Maldon.⁴⁶ Randel Helms discusses these two essays, commenting on the way in which they reflect Tolkien's changing attitude towards heroism. In the first essay, Tolkien stresses the dignity of a heroism that engages in conflict with the forces of evil, despite the fact that such a conflict is doomed to ultimate defeat, while in the latter essay, he expresses the belief that this sort of heroism can partly represent pointless, dangerous bravado, resulting in the unnecessary sacrifice of the lives of others. Helms cites Tolkien's affirmation that it "is the heroism of obedience and love not of pride or wilfulness that is the most heroic and most moving."

This type of heroism, Helms adds, is displayed by the hobbits.⁴⁷ For instance, Merry, although 'crawling on the ground and sick with terror, stabs the Lord of the Nazgûl, motivated by a sense of love and duty, rather than by any desire for personal renown. As we see throughout The Lord of the Rings, this is regarded as the most valuable form of heroism in Middle-earth. On the field of Cormallen, Aragorn acknowledges the extent of Sam's achievement when he tells him, "It is a long way . . . for us all, but yours has been the darkest road" (LR, p. 990).

In this way, heroism as an end in itself--a characteristic ideal in heroic romance--is replaced by a deeper, more realistic type of heroism.

We are accommodated to Middle-earth as a world of heroic romance through the way in which it is presented to us through the hobbits' eyes. Small, ordinary folk, initially virtually ignorant of the nature of the world in which they live, they can easily be identified with by the reader, and it is through them that we perceive the extent of Middle-earth with its beauties, terrors, and mysteries. As the hobbits gradually adapt to the situations in which they find themselves, it becomes easier for the reader to adjust him or herself to the world of heroic romance. Despite the grand, epic dimensions in The Lord of the Rings, we never lose sight of the private, personal side of events. Through the hobbits, especially Frodo and Sam, we are continually reminded of the ordinary people and their personal struggles, sufferings, and sacrifices.

The conflict taking place in modern heroic romances can appear at times to have a predetermined outcome. In

some of Morris's romances, for example, the victory of good over evil seems an effortless foregone conclusion, while the ease with which many of Morris's and Eddison's heroes sail through their adventures reduces the extent to which we can identify with them. Tolkien, however, is careful to avoid making things appear too easy. We recall his insistence that the eucatastrophe taking place in fantasy should appear to be a "sudden joyous 'turn,'" never to be counted on again. In The Lord of the Rings, the apparent hopelessness of the conflict highlights the miraculous nature of the brief eucatastrophe that takes place. Furthermore, after the war has been won, Middle-earth is seen to be irrevocably affected by the events that have taken place and Frodo, one of the principal figures responsible for the defeat of Sauron, is unable to find peace or healing in Middle-earth. In this way, Tolkien attempts to make the conflict in The Lord of the Rings appear more realistic to the modern reader, thus enabling him or her to relate more closely to his protagonists' struggle and their eventual victory.

Morris's and Eddison's presentation of heroic romance to readers of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century provides a revealing contrast. Like Tolkien, they wished to recapture an idealised vision of the past. Morris, however, does not attempt to relate his Secondary worlds to the readers of his time in any way. They remain beautiful, stylised, dreamlike evocations of a pseudo-medieval never-never land, existing primarily as an exercise in nostalgia. (It was through Utopian fantasies such as News From Nowhere, and artistic designs, that Morris succeeded in artistically

integrating the past and the present.) Eddison's The Worm Ouroboros is in no way concerned with ordinary events or ordinary people. Eddison's heroes are superhuman, exhibiting limitless bravado, and are seemingly invincible: Brandoch Daha falls a hundred feet from a cliff but survives to continue the adventure, and after attaining victory, the Lords of Demonland become bored, so time turns back for them and the conflict begins all over again. We are not called upon to relate to Eddison's protagonists: we can only remain at a distance, viewing The Worm Ouroboros as sheer spectacle, unconnected with our experience in any direct way.

Middle-earth, on the other hand, is accessible to the modern reader in a way that many other modern heroic romances such as Morris's and Eddison's are not. As we have seen, Middle-earth is not simply a recreation of the traditional worlds of heroic romance: it also involves a reconstruction of various elements that characterise such a world.

As a result, the importance of Middle-earth lies not so much in the way in which it restores the past, but rather in the way in which it recreates it. The Lord of the Rings may resemble works such as Beowulf or Gawain in various ways, but elements such as the nature of Mordor and its surroundings, the implications of the Ents' destruction of Isengard (representatives of the natural world conquering the industrial, mechanical devices that threaten to destroy them), and the figures of the hobbits illustrate the way in which Tolkien reworks traditional material from a modern perspective.

This can be related to Tolkien's description in "On

Fairy-Stories" of "the Cauldron of Story, [which] has always been boiling, and to it have continually been added new bits, dainty and undainty." Through the addition of new material to material already present, new variations of old tales continually emerge.⁴⁸

In considering the way in which Tolkien presents the world of heroic romance to the modern reader, we become, however, aware of various flaws. Differences in tone suspend The Lord of the Rings rather awkwardly between the heroic and the colloquial on several occasions, undermining the atmosphere that Tolkien is attempting to evoke. The Lord of the Rings was planned as a sequel to The Hobbit⁴⁹ and begins in a similar tone: light, jocular, and whimsical. However, as deeper, darker, grander elements gradually begin to take over, there are awkward, incongruous episodes. For example, the chapter entitled "The Shadow of the Past" contrasts sharply with the lighter tone of the surrounding chapters. The way in which the Nazgûl are first presented as dark bundles perched on top of their horses, sniffing, evokes mixed reactions: they seem very far removed from the figures of numinous terror that they become later in the book.

Book I thus tends to suffer from a lack of balance, and it is only really from Book II onwards that The Lord of the Rings begins to form a satisfactorily integrated whole. (J. R. Watson has pointed out that the power of the idea of the Ring, the pursuit of the Quest, and the character of Aragorn, the king waiting to come into his own, are specific factors that help strengthen the narrative.)⁵⁰

One of the central obstacles in relating to Middle-

earth is that Tolkien's style sometimes falls short of the world of heroic romance that he attempts to evoke. The stylistic quality in The Lord of the Rings is uneven, at times possessing solemnity, but no dignity, as Sale points out.⁵¹ Examples of this occur most frequently during The Return of the King, in which the presence of forced, stilted archaisms tends to have a distancing effect. (The account of the journey on the Paths of the Dead has a particularly wooden quality, for instance.) Frye comments on the dangers of the use of a special language, containing a good deal of the antiquated in it, in romances. In his terms, it helps enclose the work in question like a glass case in a verbal museum.⁵²

On the other hand, Tolkien is capable of grand moments that capture the quality of heroic romance very clearly indeed. The Company's journey through Moria, the episode that takes place beside the mirror of Galadriel, the scene outside the city of the Ringwraiths, the siege of Gondor which culminates in the sound of the horns of the Rohirrim, the climactic moments at the Crack of Doom and the subsequent destruction of Sauron's realm represent some of the most memorable descriptions in modern Marvellous fantasy. One striking illustration of the successful recreation of the heroic is the song of the Mounds of Mundburg, which describes the battle of the Pelennor fields:⁵³

We heard of the horns in the hills ringing,
 the swords shining in the South-kingdom.
 Steeds went striding to the Stoningland
 as wind in the morning. War was kindled. . . .
 Death in the morning and at day's ending
 lords took and lowly. Long now they sleep

under grass in Gondor by the Great River.
 Grey now as tears, gleaming silver,
 red then it rolled, roaring water:
 foam dyed with blood flamed at sunset;
 as beacons mountains burned at evening;
 red fell the dew in Rammas Echor. (LR, pp. 882-83)

A sense of artificiality and unreality prevails with respect to Tolkien's treatment of women and sexuality in the context of heroic romance. Sexuality tends to be ignored, and on the rare occasions when it does appear, it is usually stylised almost completely out of existence. Éowyn's attraction for Aragorn and Faramir's subsequent wooing of her are presented in self-consciously archaic, artificial terms. Tolkien's ladies seem, on the whole, little more than set-pieces, depicted in a remote, formal way, in contrast to the individuality of many of Morris's heroines. As in Narnia, the only real glimpse of sexual attractiveness is connected to the Lilith-figure; in this case, Galadriel, when she is briefly but sorely tempted to take the Ring. She visualises herself as a Queen: "'beautiful and terrible as the Morning and the Night! Fair as the Sea and the Sun and the Snow upon the Mountain! Dreadful as the Storm and the Lightning! Stronger than the foundations of the earth. All shall love me and despair!'" (LR, p. 385)⁵⁴

Jackson has observed that The Lord of the Rings provides an illustration of a romance tradition that supports a ruling ideology.⁵⁵ Zanger states that in heroic fantasy "the reader's sympathy is won to support an aristocratic, pastoral world." In such a world, he continues, the forces of evil tend to be dark, deformed, subterranean dwellers,

frequently associated with mechanical and high-technological devices. This can be illustrated by MacDonald's Goblins in The Princess and the Goblin, Alan Garner's bodachs in The Moon of Gomrath, and of course Tolkien's orcs.⁵⁶ Tolkien emphasises the latter's lower-class characteristics very clearly indeed.

"Not much use are you, you little snufflers?" said the big orc. "I reckon eyes are better than your snotty noses."

"Then what have you seen with them?" snarled the other. "Garn! You don't even know what you're looking for." (LR, p. 960)

According to Zanger, this trend in heroic fantasy reflects the unease of the fantasist in the presence of social change.⁵⁷

Emerging as it did following half a century of economic unrest and class violence, heroic fantasy offered the images of evil in shapes that resonated with the nightmares of the middle-class audience for which it was written as well as of its middle-class creators.⁵⁸

(This trend is, of course, by no means confined to heroic fantasy. Other modern fantasies, for example H. G. Wells's The Time Machine and Kenneth Grahame's The Wind in the Willows also exhibit it.)⁵⁹

Bearing in mind Tolkien's dislike of many aspects of modern progress, we see that in Middle-earth the world

is "reduced to a conceivable dimension," so that it could be confronted by individuals, and traditional ideals and values could be maintained in it. As Zanger points out, this is a central characteristic of heroic fantasy, and it can be viewed as a response to the increasing industrialisation and mechanisation of the modern world in which individuality seemed threatened and human centrality lost as scientific discoveries revealed the infinite nature of the universe.⁶⁰

Tolkien's recreation of the world of heroic romance in Middle-earth may be considered in relation to this statement of Zanger:

The creators of high fantasy offered to their readers a mundus alter that resolutely denied the most pressing and problematical aspects of their real world, but never forgot any of them. These denials of reality were rooted in an acute sensitivity to that world's failure to provide beauty, order, and community. This disappointment generated fantasies that at their worst were sentimental escapism combined with a strong absence of any democratic feeling; at their best they offered imaginative alternatives to reality that embody ideal solutions to problems that are otherwise uncontrollable.⁶¹

One illustration of this can be seen in the way in which some of the ugliest, most destructive elements of our modern world are incorporated into Middle-earth and then confronted and overcome. The Ents march on Isengard and destroy it, but in our modern world Tolkien could only deeply mourn the destruction of forests by men and machines.⁶²

In relation to the above discussions, we need to consider

whether or not Tolkien is guilty of self-indulgent escapism in his construction of Middle-earth. We have examined the way in which Tolkien defends the escape of archaism, and in addition, the importance that he attaches to the concept of sub-creation has been stressed. As a result, Middle-earth runs the risk of appearing as a form of wish-fulfilment and as a self-enclosed Secondary universe distanced from the realities of our world.

Jackson accuses Tolkien of creating a Secondary world "free from the demands of historical time, or of mortality."⁶³ Such a statement, however, illustrates the basic flaw in the criticisms cited above, for they all fail to take into account some of the most essential aspects of Middle-earth. As we have seen, the events contained in The Lord of the Rings are depicted as a brief episode in history, and throughout the work, Middle-earth is dominated by an awareness of the passage of time and the consequent transience, mutability and inevitability of mortality.

Tolkien's central achievement lies in the fact that although he creates a Secondary world in which many of his ideals are realised, he recognises the limitations of those ideals. Time cannot be suspended in Middle-earth. The Elves may be immortal, but the kingdoms they create for themselves are ultimately fated to fade. In Lothlórien, for instance, time can be slowed down, but it cannot be halted altogether.⁶⁴ The only thing capable of freezing time in Middle-earth is the Ring, and as we are aware, this takes place at a terrible price.

Like Malory's Camelot,⁶⁵ Middle-earth contains much of great beauty and value, and like Camelot, it is inevitably

fated to pass away; not so much as the result of any twist within the narrative itself, but simply because it is subject to the process of time and change. Despite the regret that he feels in doing so, Tolkien acknowledges the effects of life in a temporal, physical world as surely as does Yeats's protagonist in "Sailing to Byzantium," who seeks to escape from the "dying generations" around him and be gathered "into the artifice of eternity," only to encounter a golden bird that sings "[o]f what is past, or passing, or to come."⁶⁶

In a similar way in Gawain the poet stresses that Arthur's court will inevitably pass away, and the passage of time is highlighted throughout. As in Middle-earth, we see in both Gawain and Malory that the ideals represented by Arthur's court cannot be maintained because the society that contains them is, like all human societies, a flawed one. In The Lord of the Rings, we are made very aware of the fact that Middle-earth is a fallen world. Even the High Elves have sinned in forging the Silmarills and pursuing Morgoth to Middle-earth after his theft of the jewels, in defiance of the ban of the Valar.⁶⁷ One of the most important illustrations of the inevitable limitations to which all Tolkien's protagonists are subject occurs on Mount Doom, when Frodo is unable to surrender the Ring.

As a result, criticisms of Middle-earth on the grounds that it expresses "a longing to transcend or escape the human"⁶⁸ are fundamentally wrong. We have seen also that Middle-earth is rooted in basic, natural things and is thus linked to the natural cycles of growth and decay.

J. S. Ryan observes that this aspect of Middle-earth is

summed up in a comment made by Lewis when writing on MacDonald:

All romantics are vividly aware of mutability, but most of them are content to bewail it: for MacDonald (and, we might add, for Tolkien) this nostalgia is merely the starting point--he goes on and discovers what it was made for.⁶⁹

In the above analyses, we have seen that the Escape offered by Middle-earth is only something temporary and limited. (The inability to perceive this is apparent in many aspects of the Tolkien cult, in which Middle-earth is all too frequently regarded as a fixed, unchanging Secondary world, offering easy and seemingly endless vistas of Escape.)

Consequently, we need to consider whether an escape to the realms of heroic romance has any lasting value for the twentieth-century reader. The way in which Recovery takes place in Middle-earth provides part of the answer to this question.

As we have seen, the world of heroic romance in The Lord of the Rings provides a medium through which Recovery can take place. The hobbits' delight in simple, familiar things is highlighted by the nature of the world through which they move. The Elves' love of nature makes the natural things around them--trees, plants, flowers, stars, and rivers--wonderful and through the episodes that take place in the Old Forest, Lothlórien, and Fangorn, and the encounter with the Ents, Tolkien's characters are made aware of trees in a new and deeper way:

(H)e laid his hand upon the tree beside the ladder: never before had he been so suddenly and so keenly aware of the feel and texture of a tree's skin and of the life within it. He felt a delight in wood and the touch of it, neither as forester nor as carpenter; it was the delight of the living tree itself. (LR, p. 370)

According to Clyde S. Kilby, The Lord of the Rings is unique in modern literature for the way in which it evokes a poignant feeling for the essential quality of indoor and outdoor experiences.⁷⁰ Food is enjoyed and pipes are smoked in quiet after great battles have taken place, and deep in the Old Forest, the hobbits eat "yellow cream, honeycomb, and white bread and butter" (LR, p. 136) in the house of Tom Bombadil. The light, friendship, and music in the security of Rivendell contrasts with the perils and dangers of the surrounding wilderness and, amid the dangers of the Quest and the War, the sense of fellowship experienced by Tolkien's central protagonists and the pleasure that they take in one another's company is emphasised.

In this way, the dimension of heroic romance in The Lord of the Rings does not only provide an escape, but also a means of return. As Recovery takes place through it, our attention is redirected to our own world, enabling us to appreciate more fully the simple, natural, familiar things that it contains.

The ideals and beauties contained in Middle-earth are hedged with limitations and are only partially attainable. But as Raymond H. Thompson affirms, "fantasy teaches us to keep trying. 'A man's reach should exceed his grasp, or what's a heaven for?'"⁷¹

Escape into the realms of heroic romance is, as we have seen, only something temporary. The narrative closes in the everyday, familiar world of the Shire, as the Third Age, with all its wonder and beauty, passes away. However, something remains: Aragorn's kingdom "preserve[s] the memory and the glory of the years that were gone" (LR, p. 1004), while a mallorn tree is planted in the Shire and Sam calls his daughter Elanor after the flowers in Lothlórien. The world contained in The Lord of the Rings may be transient, yet the memory of it serves to enrich the Fourth Age, in the same way that we, the readers, can be enriched by the Escape that takes place in Middle-earth.

As has been stated, through his construction of Middle-earth as a world of heroic romance, Tolkien evokes qualities that he feels are lacking in our world. In this way, a gap is filled and something is added to our experience, as we are presented with a vision of life containing ideals and beauties that would otherwise remain inaccessible to us. In relation to this, we can consider the following statement by Frye:

[T]o recreate the past and bring it into the present is only half the operation. The other half consists of bringing something into the present which is potential or possible, and in that sense belongs to the future. This recreation of the possible or future or ideal constitutes the wish-fulfilment element in romance, which is the normal containing form, as archaism or the presentation of the past is the normal content. ⁷²

In concluding this chapter, we can link the above

discussion to the way in which myth and legend become reality in Middle-earth. During the course of The Lord of the Rings, Tolkien's protagonists are confronted with peoples and things that they had previously regarded as mythic or legendary, such as Elves, Ents and hobbits, the Ring and the palantíri. "Dreams and legends spring to life out of the grass" (LR, p. 454) as the Riders of Rohan encounter Aragorn, Isildur's heir, carrying Isildur's sword reforged.⁷³ The past becomes meaningful to Tolkien's protagonists as they become conscious of dimensions of experience and ways of perceiving the world that they had previously ignored or been unaware of.

This serves as a parallel for the way in which Tolkien wishes his readers to respond to Middle-earth. His use of the hobbits in The Lord of the Rings can be seen as a reflection of his belief that although hemmed in by the modern world, humankind has not lost the ability to respond to the ideals contained in a world of heroic romance. Aragorn's words on p. 455 of The Lord of the Rings are of central significance in this regard: "The green earth, say you? That is a mighty matter of legend, though you tread it under the light of day!"

CHAPTER THREE

URSULA K. LE GUIN'S EARTHSEA

Ursula K. Le Guin's Secondary world of Earthsea contrasts sharply with the delicate loveliness of Narnia and the rich, complex detail of Middle-earth. It is a stark, austere world, consisting of an archipelago of relatively small islands surrounded by vast reaches of empty sea stretching on into the unknown:

West of Roke in a crowd between the two great lands Hosk and Ensmar lie the Ninety Isles. The nearest to Roke is Serd, and the farthest is Seppish, which lies almost in the Pelnish Sea; and whether the sum of them is ninety is a question never settled, for if you count only isles with freshwater springs you might have seventy, while if you count every rock you might have a hundred and still not be done; and then the tide would change. . . . Every islet is thick with farms and fishermen's houses, and these are gathered into townships each of ten or twenty islets. One such was Low Torning, the westernmost, looking not on the Inmost Sea but outward to empty ocean. (WE, pp. 89-90)

In Narnia and Middle-earth, we are constantly confronted with the fabulous, the exotic, and the mythical. Both worlds contain a wealth of fantastic beings: unicorns, centaurs, Dryads and Naiads, Talking Beasts, Dwarves, Elves, Ents and hobbits. Similarly, the places in Narnia and

Middle-earth are fraught with a sense of the legendary, the numinous, and the mystical. There are mysterious forests, haunted marshes, magical gardens, sacred mountains, and enchanted islands. Both Narnia and Middle-earth are Secondary worlds in which an aristocratic order prevails, and consequently there are castles, palaces, knights and ladies, sailing-ships, pavilions, banquets, minstrels, specially wrought suits of armour--in short, all the wealth, pageantry, and ritual of a pseudo-medieval aristocratic way of life.¹

In Earthsea, however, Le Guin is not concerned with the trappings of heroic romance, nor with transcendental splendours and fairy-tale delights. Instead, she deliberately plays down the marvellous and the heroic. For example, there is irony in A Wizard of Earthsea (p. 179), when Vetch's brother envies Ged his scars, imagining them to be the mark of an heroic encounter with a dragon, not knowing they were caused by his shadow. In The Tombs of Atuan, Tenar's attaining of complete selfhood forms the central theme of the book, not the quest for the missing half of the ring of Erreth-Akbe,² while in The Farthest Shore, Arren's sword remains sheathed until almost the end of the book.

Unlike Narnia and Middle-earth, Earthsea is presented very much in terms of the everyday and the down-to-earth. The school for wizards on Roke is, in many ways, very much like any school or university in our world. In The Tombs of Atuan, we are made strongly aware of the most mundane aspects of the lives of the priestesses, the novices, and the eunuchs: the boredom, the jealousies, and their everyday duties. The lifestyle of Le Guin's protagonists tends

to be a simple, austere and often harsh one. This can be illustrated by her descriptions of the ways of life of the peasants and fishermen in islands such as Gont or Low Torning, the wizards on Roke, the priestesses and eunuchs in the Place of the Tombs in Atuan, and the Children of the Open Sea. (The world of the aristocracy rests on the periphery of the trilogy, and the mages, the most powerful people in Earthsea, often have humble origins. Ged, who eventually becomes archmage, starts off life as a village goatherd.)

Earthsea is not an anthropocentric world, but the focus of the trilogy is on individual human beings, who move in a world inhabited largely by the same creatures that inhabit our world. There are exceptions--the dragons, the otak, and the dark forces such as Ged's shadow and the gebbeth in The Wizard of Earthsea and the Nameless Ones in the Tombs of Atuan--but these are isolated cases and once again the colourful, the exotic, and the wondrous are deliberately toned down.

Le Guin's style is very stark, simple, and unadorned, thus emphasising the spareness and austerity of Earthsea.

And Tenar listened to the sea, a few yards below the cave mouth, crashing and sucking and booming on the rocks, and the thunder of it down the beach eastward for miles. Over and over and over it made the same sounds, yet never quite the same. It never rested. On all the shores of all the lands in all the world, it heaved itself in these unresting waves, and never ceased, never was still. The desert, the mountains: they stood still. They did not cry out forever in a great, dull voice. (TA, p. 145)

This starkness and simplicity can be related to the way in which life in Earthsea takes place within very strictly defined physical and temporal limits. T. A. Shippey comments that Earthsea is bounded by the dry land of the dead in time, just as it is bounded by the ocean in space.³ The land of the dead resembles the world of the living in many ways, for it contains streets, houses, and people, but it is cold, dark, dry, silent, and void of any emotion.

It seemed that they walked down that hill-slope for a long way, but perhaps it was a short way; for there was no passing of time there, where no wind blew and the stars did not move. They came then into the streets of one of the cities that are there, and Arren saw the houses with windows that are never lit, and in certain doorways standing, with quiet faces and empty hands, the dead. . . .

[H]e saw the mother and child who had died together, and they were in the dark land together; but the child did not run, nor did it cry, and the mother did not hold it, nor even look at it. And those who had died for love passed each other in the streets. (FS, pp. 189-90)

The underlying presence of the land of the dead forms an integral part of life in Earthsea. The coming of age--the attaining of self-knowledge and maturity--that takes place in the cases of Ged, Tenar and Arren in each book in the trilogy involves a coming to terms with the limited, transient nature of their lives, despite their status as mage, priestess, or prince.

This constitutes a central concern of The Farthest Shore, while in A Wizard of Earthsea, Ged's shadow is partly the shadow of his own mortality. In The Tombs of Atuan,

Tenar's personal liberation and attaining of complete selfhood can only take place after she accepts the fact that she is mortal.

This can be contrasted with Tolkien's treatment of the transient nature of life in The Lord of the Rings. We recall that the events that take place are presented as a brief episode in the history of Middle-earth, and an awareness of the past and the effects of time and change constitute central elements in The Lord of the Rings. As a result, mortality tends to be regarded from a historical perspective in Middle-earth, while in Earthsea, we are made aware of it in a personal context.

Each book in the trilogy deals with the coming of age of its central protagonist. In A Wizard of Earthsea, this takes place in the case of Ged, in The Tombs of Atuan, Tenar undergoes what Le Guin describes as a feminine coming of age, which involves an acceptance of her own sexuality, while in The Farthest Shore, Arren's coming of age entails a coming to terms with his inevitable mortality.⁴

The essential realities of life--growing up and acquiring self-knowledge, sexuality, old age, and death--that form the focal point of the trilogy are highlighted by the starkness and simplicity of Earthsea. This, combined with the emphasis on the brief, limited nature of life, leads us to view Earthsea as a world stripped down to personal dimensions, with the focus on the immediate present. (We can contrast this with the focus on the transcendental in Narnia and the focus on the past in Middle-earth.)

In contrast to Narnia and Middle-earth (and many other Marvellous Secondary worlds) in which the present is closely

bound up with the past, there are relatively few references to past events in the Earthsea trilogy. The dislike of various aspects of modern life and the nostalgia for the past that feature so prominently in the works of Morris, Eddison, Lewis, Tolkien and many other Marvellous fantasists are not found in Earthsea.

As in Narnia and Middle-earth, Earthsea is presented to us through the journeys made by the central protagonists during the course of the trilogy. In A Wizard of Earthsea, Ged travels from Gont, in the Northeast Sea, to Roke, in the Inmost Sea, then to Low Torning, west of Roke, then north to Osskil, and finally far out into the East Reach, beyond all known lands. In The Tombs of Atuan, he journeys to Atuan, in the north-east of Earthsea, while in The Farthest Shore, Ged and Arren travel to the South Reach and into the open sea, then up through the West Reach to Selidor, the farthest of all known lands in Earthsea, and then into the land of the dead.

In the Earthsea trilogy, as in many of Le Guin's works (Rocannon's World, The Planet of Exile, The City of Illusions, The Left Hand of Darkness, and The Dispossessed),⁵ the motif of the journey is of central importance, and the physical journey that takes place is bound up with the psychological journey towards self-knowledge and self-integration. Integration also takes place in a social sense: for in A Wizard of Earthsea, Ged's shadow represents a threat to society before it is finally controlled; in The Tombs of Atuan, the recovery of the missing half of the ring of Erreth-Akbe brings greater social harmony to Earthsea; and in The Farthest Shore, wholeness is restored to Earthsea

when Ged succeeds in closing the breach made between the lands of the living and the dead.

The journeys in the Earthsea trilogy can be compared to the journeys that take place in the Chronicles and The Lord of the Rings. Through these journeys, the nature of these Secondary worlds and the principal aims of their creators are highlighted. Through the journeys made in the Chronicles, Lewis's protagonists discover more about Narnia and the way in which Aslan works, while during the journeys made through Middle-earth, different parts of its history are revealed, and through this, the relationship between past and present can be explored. The physical-cum-psychological journeys taking place in Earthsea indicate that knowledge of Earthsea is bound up with knowledge of self.

As a result of the way in which the physical and the psychological are intertwined in Earthsea, various beings, objects, and forces can be linked to the inner lives of Le Guin's protagonists. For example, in A Wizard of Earthsea, Ged's shadow is an expression of the dark side of his nature that he will have to acknowledge before he can attain adulthood, and the gebbeth indicates the threat that Ged, who risks being overwhelmed by his shadow, represents to society.⁶ In The Tombs of Atuan, the Place of the Tombs, with the tombs, the labyrinth, the surrounding desert, and the priestesses and the eunuchs, constitutes a sterile, life-denying environment, within which Tenar is trapped, unable to attain maturity and acknowledge her own sexuality. In The Farthest Shore, Cob, the Anti-King, offering life and epitomising the fear of death, is present both within a physical place and in each individual's mind.⁷ Arren,

for instance, is aware of Cob's presence in his mind and dreams of him in The Farthest Shore (p. 65).

The simplicity, spareness, and austerity of Earthsea can be related to its structure. Throughout the trilogy, we are made aware of basic, polarized elements: light and dark, good and evil, life and death. Instead of conflicting with one another, as they do in Narnia and Middle-earth, they complement one another, forming part of the great balance, the Equilibrium, within which all things are inter-related and inter-dependent. As C. N. Manlove comments, the Equilibrium is reflected in the dialectical relationship of land and water that comprises Earthsea.³

The theme of balance is expressed in Ged's journeys, as Manlove points out. In A Wizard of Earthsea, Ged travels out into the East Reach, while in The Tombs of Atuan, he remains in one place in the north-east of Earthsea, while in The Farthest Shore, he journeys far out into the West Reach.⁹

Short, aphoristic statements illustrate the nature of the Equilibrium. In A Wizard of Earthsea (p. 56), the Master Hand at Roke states: "To light a candle is to cast a shadow." In The Farthest Shore (pp. 134-35), Ged tells Arren, "The word must be heard in silence. There must be darkness to see the stars. The dance is always danced above the hollow place."¹⁰

The limitations that constitute an inevitable part of life on Earthsea arise from the Equilibrium. "Once in that court he had felt himself to be a word spoken by the sunlight. Now the darkness also had spoken: a word that

could not be unsaid" (WE, p. 80).

Darkness and death have just as much of a place in Earthsea as light and life, and if they are tampered with, the Equilibrium is upset and disaster results. In The Farthest Shore, Cob seeks to overcome death and in doing so, causes life to lose its meaning and a blight to fall upon Earthsea.

Consequently, in contrast to Marvellous Secondary worlds such as Narnia and Middle-earth, in which the importance of action against opposing forces is stressed, the emphasis in Earthsea is on acceptance and integration into the balance:

"Do you see, Arren, how an act is not, as young men think, like a rock that one picks up and throws, and it hits or misses, and that's the end of it. When that rock is lifted the earth is lighter, and the hand that bears it heavier. When it is thrown the circuits of the stars respond, and where it strikes or falls the universe is changed."
(FS, pp. 76-77)

This is reflected in the general lack of pace and action in the trilogy. Events taking place tend to have a slow, measured, deliberate quality. (This is borne out by Ged's statement "do only that which you must do, and which you cannot do in any other way" [FS, p. 77].) This contrasts with the impulsiveness and impetuosity that frequently characterise the actions of Lewis's and Tolkien's protagonists.

Le Guin's use of an Equilibrium of inter-balanced

opposites can be compared to various elements of Taoism and the I-Ching. Her interest in these philosophies is also reflected in some of her other works, such as The City of Illusions, The Left Hand of Darkness, and The Dispossessed. In these works, as in Earthsea, the emphasis is on the balance of opposites and integration. The concept of Equilibrium can be compared to the yin-yang symbol of the I-Ching, for both need to be viewed as a whole, not in terms of one or the other part. Similarly, the Tao te Ching states:

Everybody in the world recognizes beauty as beauty,
and thus ugliness (is known).

Everybody recognizes the good as good, and
thus what is not good (is known).

For indeed:

Being and Non-being produce one another,
Hard and easy complete one another,
Long and short are relative to one another,
High and low are dependent on one another,
Tones and voice harmonize with one another,
First and last succeed one another.¹¹

The importance of doing only that which is absolutely necessary in Earthsea can be related to the Taoist concept of actionless activity or wu-wei. In Taoism, the Sage must not act in order to support, and thereby reinforce, one particular part of a whole. What is beneficial in one sense may have negative results in one sense, in terms of the way in which the opposite side is affected.¹²

Because of the way in which opposites in Earthsea are related within the Equilibrium, evil is not an external force, but is instead "[a] web we men weave" (FS, p. 19).

Ged's shadow is part of himself, something that he has to acknowledge and embrace. Le Guin's view of the position of good and evil in fairy tales reflects the position she accords to good and evil in Earthsea:

Evil, then, appears in the fairytale not as something diametrically opposed to good, but as inextricably involved with it, as in the yang-yin symbol. Neither is greater than the other, nor can human reason and virtue separate one from the other and choose between them. The hero or heroine is the one who sees what is appropriate to be done, because he or she sees the whole, which is greater than either evil or good. Their heroism, is, in fact, their certainty. They do not act by rules; they simply know the way to go.¹³

This ambivalence is reflected in the dragons, one of the most striking elements of Earthsea. They possess the typical dragonish characteristics that we encounter in Lewis's The Voyage of the Dawn Treader (pp. 78-81), and in the case of Smaug in Tolkien's The Hobbit, for they are greedy, treacherous, and a source of terror and destruction. Yet, on the other hand, they appear to be beings set apart from the rest of Earthsea, transcending in many ways the starkness and the limitations of the world they inhabit. They are the wisest, most ancient creatures in Earthsea, full of beauty and splendour. Their ambiguity is expressed in Ged's description of them:

"The dragons! The dragons are avaricious, insatiable, treacherous; without pity, without remorse. But are they evil? Who am I to judge the acts of

dragons? . . . They are wiser than men are. It is with them as with dreams, Arren. We men dream dreams, we work magic, we do good, we do evil. The dragons do not dream. They are dreams. They do not work magic: it is their substance, their being. They do not do: they are." (ES, p. 45)

The focus on the personal in Earthsea can also be seen in the importance accorded to true names within the trilogy. Le Guin comments: "For me, as for the wizards, to know the name of an island or a character is to know the island or the person."¹⁴ The true name is the secret name of someone or something, representing the essential being of the person or object denoted. This is illustrated in A Wizard of Earthsea, when Ged discovers that his shadow shares his true name and is thus part of himself. In The Tombs of Atuan, Arha, "the eaten one," whose essential self has been subsumed into her role as Priestess of the Nameless Ones, attains selfhood with the discovery of her true name, Tenar, and in the Farthest Shore, when true names are lost, the essential spirit of things gradually begins to drain away and life becomes increasingly meaningless.

In discussing the nature of fantasy, Manlove remarks that at the core of the genre there is a delight in being.¹⁵ In Earthsea, this is particularly evident in the way in which we are made aware of the importance of true names and all that they represent. (In Narnia and Middle-earth, we are primarily made aware of this sense of delight through Lewis's and Tolkien's love of natural things.)

The concept of true names indicates the independent importance of all things in Earthsea. At the same time, however, they each form an integral part of the Equilibrium.

"My name, and yours, and the true name of the sun, or a spring of water, or an unborn child, are all syllables of the great word that is very slowly spoken by the shining of the stars. There is no other power. No other name." (WE, p. 182)

An example of this inter-relationship can be found in A Wizard of Earthsea (p. 25), in the description of Ged's Naming. This involves the most personal aspect of Ged's life, his true name, but it is a communal ceremony, and while it takes place, the natural surroundings--the rocks, the cliffs, the water, the sunlight, and the shadows--are described, thus emphasising the inter-relationship of the individual, the community, and the natural world.¹⁶ Furthermore, true names are used to convey a sense of fellowship and trust, and to relate the self to the community. When Ged and Vetch exchange true names in A Wizard of Earthsea (p. 82), Ged is lifted out of his sense of isolation, and when Ged restores Tenar's true name to her in The Tombs of Atuan (p. 102), she is able to abandon her empty, lonely role as Priestess of the Nameless Ones and eventually assume her rightful place in society.

The magic that is practised in Earthsea is based on a knowledge of true names. In The Tombs of Atuan (p. 114), Ged tells Tenar, "Knowing names is my job. My art. To weave the magic of a thing, you see, one must find its true name out." On Roke, apprentice mages are sent to Kurremkarmerruk, the Master Namer, who teaches them that "[a] mage can control only what is near him, what he can name exactly and wholly" (WE, p. 60).

This indicates two basic tenets of magic in Earthsea:

first, that if it is to harmonize with the rest of the balance, it should be based on a respect for and an appreciation of the individuality of things. Ideally, a mage should be in sympathy with nature, as Ged discovers in A Wizard of Earthsea:

From that time forth he believed that the wise man is one who never sets himself apart from other living things, whether they have speech or not, and in later years he strove long to learn what can be learned, in silence, from the eyes of animals, the flight of birds, the great slow gestures of trees. (WE, p. 97)

Secondly, we see that magic contains in-built limitations, for all the true names can never be learned. This can be viewed as part of a frequently-occurring aspect of Marvellous fantasy, as Zanger observes:

"Good" magic rarely defeats "bad" magic. Good magicians are frequently--like Gandalf imprisoned in Moria, or Merlin under Nimue's spell, or Schmendrick in Peter Beagle's The Last Unicorn (and even, most memorably, the Wizard of Oz)--unavailable, preoccupied, or simply inept. Evil magic is defeated finally by human virtues: courage, skill, innocence, or love.¹⁷

Magic should be practised in terms of the Equilibrium, and should thus be regarded as existing within a framework of laws. (See, for example, A Wizard of Earthsea [p. 67]: "Rain on Roke may be drouth in Osskil.") When magic is

practised without proper regard for the balance, disaster results, as we see in A Wizard of Earthsea when Ged releases the evil shadow-beast on the world, and in The Farthest Shore, when Cob's lust for immortality destroys the balance between life and death.

When correctly practised, magic is part of the natural order. This is stressed by Ged's statement: "We must learn to keep the balance. Having intelligence, we must not act in ignorance. Having choice, we must not act without responsibility" (FS, p. 77).

As a result of this emphasis on harmony and integration, magic should not seek to impose or manipulate. In The Tombs of Atuan (pp. 136-37), Ged calls a rabbit by its true name. Both he and Tenar are hungry, but Ged refuses to harm the rabbit, saying that to do so would be a breach of trust. Similarly, while trapped in the Tombs and at the mercy of Tenar, he could presumably have compelled her to act against her will, but he does not do this.¹⁸

Magic is an integral part of life in Earthsea. It is as natural a part of the lives of its inhabitants as are occupations such as sailing, herding goats, growing crops, fishing, or trading. However, despite the fact that the presentation of magic in Earthsea can be linked to the way in which the fabulous is played down, this does not diminish the sense of wonder and delight contained in Le Guin's descriptions of the different forms of magic practised in Earthsea, whether they are the arts of illusion, shape-changing, spells of summoning birds and beasts, weather-working, healing, or mending. (In A Wizard of Earthsea (p. 55), Le Guin states that the Master Hand "had endless

delight in the wit and beauty of the crafts he taught.")

Similarly, notwithstanding the simplicity, austerity, and starkness of Earthsea, the trilogy contains much that is striking, memorable, and unique. Examples of this include Le Guin's descriptions of wide reaches of uncharted seas, Roke, the seat of all wisdom and wizardry, the frozen deathlike atmosphere in the court of the Terrenon, the Tombs and the temples in the desert of Atuan, the silk isle of Lobanery, the Children of the Open Sea, the Dragon's Run, and perhaps most striking of all, the dry land of the dead. In this way, the fantasist's power to capture the imagination, to move the emotions, and to create, parallels that of magic. In an essay dealing with her writing of the Earthsea trilogy, Le Guin comments:

The trilogy is, in one aspect, about the artist.
The artist as magician. . . .
Wizardry is artistry. The trilogy is then,
in this sense, about art, the creative experience,
the creative process.¹⁹

In the above discussions, the nature of Earthsea has been commented on. In relation to this, Le Guin's approach to writing and her attitude towards fantasy can now be examined.

In the following passage, Le Guin describes her attitude during the construction of Earthsea. As in the trilogy itself, she emphasises the importance of harmony and non-manipulation, and we see that as in the cases of Narnia and Middle-earth, her construction of Earthsea was a process

of gradual discovery, rather than one of deliberate invention.

This attitude towards action, creation, is evidently a basic one, the same root from which the interest in the I Ching and Taoist philosophy evident in most of my books arises. The Taoist world is orderly, not chaotic, but its order is not one imposed by man or by a person or humane deity. The true laws--ethical and aesthetic, as surely as scientific--are not imposed from above by any authority, but exist in things and are to be found--discovered.²⁰

In another essay, Le Guin affirms the importance of integration and harmony, explaining why she accords it a central place in her writings:

Our curse is alienation, the separation of yang from yin. Instead of a search for balance and integration, there is a struggle for dominance. Divisions are insisted upon, interdependence is denied. The dualism of value that destroys us, the dualism of superior/inferior, ruler/ruled, owner/owned, user/used, might give way to what seems to me, from here, a much healthier, sounder, more promising modality of integration and integrity.²¹

These beliefs are reflected in the independent importance accorded to everything in Earthsea, and in the way in which all things are presented as relative, interdependent parts of the Equilibrium. In addition, we recall that Le Guin avoids presenting Earthsea in terms of an aristocratic way of life. We can contrast this with the way in which Tolkien emphasises opposites in Middle-earth, playing

them off against one another, and with the continual conflict between opposing forces that takes place in Narnia.

In contrasting Le Guin with fantasists such as Lewis and Tolkien, it can be borne in mind that Lewis and Tolkien are Christian fantasists who draw very strong from typically Western principles of division, conflict, and evolution in their works.²²

Le Guin's emphasis on harmony and integration is linked to the importance she accords to the human perspective in literature.

What good are all the objects in the universe, if there is no subject? . . . All I know is that we are here, and that we are aware of the fact, and that it behoves us to be aware--to pay heed. . . . We are subjects. . . . And with us, nature, the great Object, its tirelessly burning suns, its turning galaxies and planets, its rocks, seas, fish and ferns and fir-trees and little furry animals, all have become, also, subjects. As we are part of them, so they are part of us. Bone of our bone, flesh of our flesh. We are their consciousness. If we stop looking, the world goes blind. If we cease to speak and listen, the world goes deaf and dumb. If we stop thinking, there is no thought. If we destroy ourselves, we destroy consciousness.²³

Once again, the vision of all things forming part of an inter-related whole is emphasised.

It is important to bear in mind that although the human perspective is stressed, Le Guin states that she does not believe that humankind is the centre or the culmination or the end of anything.²⁴ We recall that although Le Guin's protagonists form the focal point of the Earthsea trilogy,

they do not dominate the world in which they move.

Le Guin states: "The only way to the truly collective, to the image that is alive and meaningful in all of us, seems to be through the truly personal,"²⁵ and her vision of the personal nature of art can be linked to her views on the nature and function of fantasy. Le Guin believes that fantasy, like psychoanalysis, is a journey into the subconscious mind. "Like psychoanalysis, it can be dangerous; and it will change you."²⁶

According to Le Guin, fantasy provides the best possible medium for a description of a voyage into the subconscious, and most of the great works in this genre are about this journey.²⁷ (In *Earthsea*, this is reflected in the motif of the physical-cum-psychological journey.)

Le Guin states that on a psychological level, fantasy deals with the individual's coming to terms with his or her "shadow." The shadow does not simply represent evil, but it also needs to be viewed as "the other side of our psyche, the dark brother of the conscious mind. . . . It is all we don't want to, can't, admit into our conscious self, all the qualities and tendencies within us which have been repressed, denied, or not used." However, the individual must acknowledge his or her own shadow before he or she can attain self-knowledge, maturity, and creative potential. "The person who denies his own profound relationship with evil denies his own reality."²⁸

When Ged acknowledges his shadow in *A Wizard of Earthse* (p. 199), he "[makes] himself whole: a man:: who, knowing his whole true self, cannot be used or possessed by any

power other than himself, and whose life therefore is lived for life's sake and never in the service of ruin, or pain, or hatred, or the dark."

Le Guin believes that the journey into the unconscious also takes place on a moral level, presenting a vision of "the spiritual journey and the struggle of good and evil in the soul." She emphasises that evil is not simply a problem that can be solved: instead it is something that has to be faced up to throughout one's life. According to Le Guin, the best way to present good and evil to the child (or to the adult) is to talk about it in terms of the self, for that is something that individuals are able to cope with. Their job in growing up is to become themselves.²⁹ She stresses that the coming-of-age process is not restricted to children alone: "Coming of age is a process that took me many years; I finished it, so far as I ever will, at about age 31."³⁰

Le Guin regards fantasy as something that can be used to guide the reader, enabling him or her to come to terms with the nature of life:

[A child] needs knowledge; he needs self-knowledge. He needs to see himself and the shadow he casts. That is something he can face, his own shadow; and he can learn to control it and to be guided by it. So that, when he grows up into his strength and responsibility as an adult in society, he will be less inclined, perhaps, either to give up in despair or to deny what he sees, when he must face the evil that is done in the world, and the injustices and grief and suffering that we all must bear, and the final shadow at the end of all.³¹

As we have seen, knowledge of self and knowledge of the surrounding world are inter-connected. Consequently, the psychological journey of the individual in the Earthsea trilogy is the key to a fuller understanding of the nature of Earthsea. Le Guin's attitude to fantasy can be compared to Bettelheim's study of the nature and function of fairy stories, The Uses of Enchantment, in which he examines the means whereby fairy stories enable a child to attain self-knowledge and through that, knowledge of the surrounding world.³²

In discussing the nature of Earthsea and Le Guin's attitude towards fantasy, Eastern philosophies and the Jungian concept of the shadow have been referred to. However, we need to note that the abovementioned concepts are not principles upon which Le Guin structures her fantasy. As Susan Wood points out, these concepts "did not 'influence' Le Guin in her writing of fiction." Instead, they "[helped] her to articulate her own intuitive processes in creating fantasy."³³ We recall Le Guin's statement that the true laws are not imposed on things but are instead inherent within them.

We have considered--in relation to the preceding commentary on the nature of Earthsea--Le Guin's attitude towards writing and her view of the nature and function of fantasy, and can now examine the relationship between Earthsea and our own world.

As we have seen, life in Earthsea can be regarded as coexisting, rather than contrasting, with life in our own world. Earthsea is neither (like Narnia) a Secondary world existing on another

plane of being, nor (like Middle-earth) a world standing in a deliberately vague and distant "historical" relation to our own. Le Guin's concern is with life as we experience it now, not as it is experienced in relation to transcendental spiritual dimensions or in terms of the past.

In contrast to Narnia and Middle-earth, no portals, magical objects, or "historical" accounts are necessary to link Earthsea with our world. We make the connection in our own minds, through the way in which the Earthsea trilogy focuses on the essential elements of life that we all have to deal with: coming of age, sexuality, and death, all taking place within clearly defined physical and temporal restrictions that parallel those in our world. Earthsea is thus presented to the reader in his or her terms, in contrast to Narnia and Middle-earth, which are presented in terms of Christianity in the case of Narnia, and heroic romance in the case of Middle-earth.

Earthsea should consequently not be viewed as either an escape from or an alternative to our world. It is neither better nor worse than our world; there are episodes of beauty, warmth and delight, contained for example, in the descriptions of the fierce, bright glory of the dragons, the wondrous powers possessed by the mages and the pleasure they take in their craft, the sense of companionship and community on the small islands in Earthsea, and the innocence and peace of the summer life of the Children of the Open Sea; but there is also poverty, degradation, hardship, cruelty, sterility, and pathos. The castaways encountered by Ged in A Wizard of Earthsea, the Kargish religion in The Tombs of Atuan, and Hort Town in The Farthest Shore

all illustrate these qualities.

As a result of the way in which it expresses truths about the nature of our lives and the world in which we live, the Earthsea trilogy has the qualities of a parable. This bears out Le Guin's view that psychological and moral issues can be dealt with through fantasy, which is the language of the inner self.

In contrast to Middle-earth, in which we are conscious of the vast distance that exists between it and our world, Earthsea is, like Narnia, very close to our world. In Marion Lochhead's terms, Earthsea resembles our world transmuted by magic.³⁴

In the light of the above discussions on the nature of Earthsea, the aims that Le Guin seeks to accomplish through it and its relationship to our world, we can now consider Earthsea in more depth, evaluating it as a Marvellous Secondary world.

In the chapter on Narnia, the potential danger implicit in the expressing of moral messages through Secondary worlds has been commented on. Bearing this in mind, the effectiveness of Earthsea as an autonomous Secondary world can be considered.

When examining the Chronicles and the Earthsea trilogy, we see that Earthsea offers several important points of contrast to Narnia. In the preceding discussions, we have seen that, unlike Narnia, Earthsea consistently complements and is enhanced by the ideas that it expresses. Its independent importance is indicated by the fact that it is a Secondary world that the reader is able to appreciate for its own sake. This is borne out by Le Guin's vivid descriptions of people, places, and things, and the activities

characteristic of life in Earthsea, from the weaving of spells to the sailing of a boat. In contrast to the Chronicles, the ideas expressed never distract the reader's attention from Earthsea itself.

Although Earthsea contains many elements that are very close to our world, it does not represent our world. (As we have already seen, it is far too different for that.) Instead, it can only be related to our world, insofar as it expresses certain shared concerns. Ged, Tenar, and Arren may resemble Everyman and Everywoman, but they are first and foremost individuals, undergoing deeply personal experiences.

Another contrast between the Chronicles and the Earthsea trilogy lies in the different ways in which Lewis and Le Guin control their narratives. Lewis frequently attempts to coerce his readers by overt statements of intent, and in addition, he often drops highly subjective or dogmatic comments into his narrative. In contrast, Le Guin relies solely on the nature of her Secondary world and the experience of her characters to convey her ideas. In The Farthest Shore, when dealing with death, a highly difficult subject to present, she uses various exchanges between Ged and Arren (pp. 44-45, 76-77, 133-35, 150-52) to convey different aspects of life and death in Earthsea.³⁵

The way in which Le Guin succeeds in presenting a complete, believable Secondary world, harmoniously incorporating a clear-cut moral message, can be described in the following terms:

Fantasy authors who are most successful at creating this kind of belief attempt neither to allegorize their own systems of belief nor to subordinate those systems to sensation. Instead, they achieve a balanced tension--perhaps more properly a dialectic--between cognition and affect, between moralism and passion, between the impossible and the inevitable. They do not merely construct metaphors for a preconceived reality, or if they do, the power of the metaphors is apt to transform the nature of those preconceptions into something new.³⁶

As we have already seen, Le Guin's style is very simple, stark, and austere. In addition, her style contains a "dauntingly high-minded"³⁷ element, which is especially marked in The Farthest Shore.

"I was born to power, even as you were. But you are young. You stand on the borders of possibility, in the shadowland, in the realm of dream, and you hear the voice saying Come. As I did once. But I am old. I have made my choices, I have done what I must do. I stand in daylight facing my own death. And I know there is only one power worth having. And that is the power, not to take, but to accept. Not to have, but to give." (ES, p. 152)

This quality can be related to a general lack of humour in the Earthsea trilogy. This contrasts sharply with the gentle, childlike merriment that is a characteristic element of Narnia, and the hobbits' jokes and humorous colloquialisms. Although there is, for instance, a sense of playfulness and fun in the descriptions of the antics of the apprentice mages in A Wizard of Earthsea, the overall tone of the trilogy is deeply serious.

There is less dialogue in the trilogy than in the Chronicles and The Lord of the Rings, and a great deal of it is brief, purposeful, and frequently didactic. Unlike the inhabitants of Narnia and Middle-earth, the inhabitants of Earthsea do not seem to engage in much casual conversation.

In other respects, however, this starkness, austerity, and simplicity is suited to the trilogy's status as parable. This is particularly clearly illustrated in the short statements describing the nature of the Equilibrium that have been cited on p. 100.³⁸ Furthermore, Le Guin's restrained, uncluttered style complements the emphasis on acceptance and harmony in Earthsea and the slow, deliberate movement of the plot.

Finally, although Earthsea contains none of the colour and the range of description present in Narnia and Middle-earth, Le Guin's descriptions do not fall short of the mark in the way that those of Lewis and Tolkien sometimes do. In contrast to both these writers, Le Guin's style is consistently sufficient to her vision.

In considering the Earthsea trilogy as parable, the vision of life presented in Earthsea can be examined in more depth. A parable cannot afford to contain any false notions about life. Furthermore, the vision it contains needs to be one that readers will be able to accept as a viable perspective on life.

We have seen that Le Guin emphasises that evil cannot be simplistically presented and easily dealt with and resolved, because it is too complex an issue for such an approach and is, besides, an inevitable part of human life. The relative, inter-related positions of good and evil

are very clearly illustrated in *Earthsea* and in this way, their uncertainty is indicated. By allowing the reader room for doubts and ambiguities, Le Guin offers a far more flexible vision than does Lewis, for example. (Here we may recall Keats's Negative Capability: the ability to remain "in uncertainties, mysteries, doubts, without any irritable reaching after fact and reason.")³⁹ Le Guin thus provides the reader with space in which to acknowledge the potential for good and evil in all things, including him or herself.

Because evil in *Earthsea* is part of the balance, there is no way of knowing whether good is stronger than evil or not. In *The Farthest Shore* (p. 151), when Arren says that surely the disastrous effects of evil must ultimately be checked; Ged responds: "Who allows? Who forbids?" Similarly, in *The Farthest Shore* (p. 45), Ged states that one can only hope that wizardry used for good ends will prove stronger than wizardry used for evil ones. This contrasts with the sense of certainty that prevails in various other fantasies--for example, in the Christian fantasies of MacDonald, Lewis, and Williams, and, as we have seen in the previous chapter, with the sense of a "fixed fight" between the forces of good and evil, in which the reader is never in any doubt that the forces of good will ultimately emerge victorious that we find, for example, in some of Morris's fantasies and in Eddison's *The Worm Ouroboros*.

Tolkien's attitude towards good and evil is fairly close to Le Guin's in various ways. Although Tolkien stresses the importance of consolation and the eucatastrophe,

we have seen that in his essay on Beowulf and in Middle-earth, the forces of good and evil are engaged in a conflict that can never be resolved in this world. In addition, in both the essay and The Lord of the Rings, the limited, transient nature of human life is emphasised. Throughout the latter work, there is a sense of uncertainty, as the forces of good acknowledge their weakness and vulnerability. We also recall that all Tolkien's protagonists are subject to very clearly defined limitations, and the positions of Frodo and Gollum epitomise the inter-relationship of good and evil very clearly. As Le Guin points out, although Frodo is essentially good and Gollum is essentially evil, they experience pulls towards evil and good respectively, and in the end it is Gollum, the evil, who destroys the Ring, while Frodo, the good, is unable to do so.⁴⁰

When discussing the relationship between the self and the shadow, Le Guin comments on the danger of externalising the shadow, for by doing so it becomes stronger, blacker, denser, more intolerable, more of a threat to the soul.⁴¹ She is highly critical of fantasies that draw an absolute, simplistic division between good and evil, and then pit the two sides against each other. "In such fantasies I believe the author has tried to force reason to lead him where reason cannot go, and has abandoned the faithful and frightening guide he should have followed, the shadow."⁴²

As we have seen, Earthsea is not an easy world to approach or feel at home in. According to Lochhead, the Earthsea trilogy, when compared with The Lord of the Rings, lacks the unique homeliness and good earthiness of hobbitry.⁴³ Despite the elements of violence and hatred that tend to

cloud Narnia at times, and the wild, dark, frightening atmosphere in Middle-earth, in both cases there is a sense of warmth and pleasure in life which is lacking in Earthsea.

Shippey has commented that the movement in the Earthsea trilogy is towards an increasing sense of gloom. As the trilogy proceeds, there is less and less warmth and brightness.⁴⁴

In A Wizard of Earthsea, there is Ged's constant awareness of his shadow, his loneliness and despair, and the bleakness of the wild winter seas across which he journeys. In The Tombs of Atuan, we are made very strongly aware of the dreariness of the lives of the priestesses and the eunuchs in the Place of the Tombs and of the darkness and evil of the Tombs themselves. In The Farthest Shore, a deathlike atmosphere hangs over all Earthsea, which culminates in Ged and Arren's journey through the land of the dead.

However, as a corollary to the above aspects, there are elements in the trilogy that serve to lighten the otherwise stark, austere nature of Earthsea.

The sense of beauty and delight that the magic practised in the trilogy imparts to Earthsea has already been commented on. In addition, the magic can be related to the parable in the trilogy, for through it, the importance of reverence and appreciation for all things and the necessity for harmony on all levels is emphasised. As practised by Ged, Ogion and the mages on Roke, the magic in Earthsea helps point the way towards Le Guin's vision of "a much healthier, sounder, more promising modality of integration and integrity."

Another important feature of the trilogy is the descriptions of community life in Earthsea. In the following passage, the everyday life of the Children of the Open

Sea is described:

Many babies crept and toddled about the rafts, tied by long leashes to the four posts of the central shelter, all crawling into it in the heat of the day and sleeping in wriggling heaps. The older children tended the younger, and men and women shared in all the work. All took their turn at gathering the great brown-leaved seaweeds, the nilgu of the Roads, fringed like fern and eighty or a hundred feet long. All worked together at pounding the nilgu into cloth and braiding the coarse fibres for ropes and nets; at fishing, and drying the fish, and shaping whale-ivory into tools, and all the other tasks of the rafts. But there was always time for swimming, and for talking, and never a time by which a task must be finished. (FS, pp. 132-33)

Equally important is the sense of fellowship, which forms a crucial part of each of the books in the trilogy. Ged is only able to accomplish his quests with the help of a companion; Vetch in A Wizard of Earthsea, Tenar in The Tombs of Atuan, and Arren in The Farthest Shore. Magic, as we are aware, has its limits--the most important things in life cannot be achieved by magic alone.

In A Wizard of Earthsea (p. 54), we are told:

Vetch had been three years at the School, and soon would be made Sorcerer; he thought no more of performing the lesser arts of magic than a bird thinks of flying. Yet a greater, unlearned skill he possessed, which was the art of kindness. That night, and always from then on, he offered and gave Ged friendship.

In A Wizard of Earthsea, the importance of Ged's relationship with Ogion, his mentor, and Vetch, his friend, is stressed, while the development of the relationship between Ged and Tenar in The Tombs of Atuan, and Ged and Arren in The Farthest Shore constitutes a key theme in each book.

Around these descriptions of community life and fellowship hangs a sense of warmth, trust, and joy. Le Guin comments:

One by one we live, soul by soul. The person, the single person. Community is the best we can hope for, and community for most people means touch: the touch of your hand against the other's hand, the job done together, the sledge hauled together, the dance danced together, the child conceived together. We have only one body apiece, and two hands. We can form a circle, but we cannot be a circle.⁴⁵

Although these abovementioned elements add a sense of light and warmth to Earthsea, in no way can they alleviate the limited, transient nature of life that is emphasised throughout the trilogy. The quiet desolation of the dry land of the dead lies before each inhabitant of Earthsea and thus they have ultimately nothing to look forward to (in contrast to the joyous expectation of the inhabitants of Narnia). The inalienable rights of darkness and death are stressed in each book in the trilogy.

A severe morality⁴⁶ prevails in Earthsea: losses are not recovered and the endings of each book in the trilogy contain a mixture of sorrow and joy.⁴⁷ At the end of A

Wizard of Earthsea, Ged's shadow may be controlled, but he neither wins nor loses, for he has to acknowledge that it is part of himself. Tenar is liberated in The Tombs of Atuan, but her liberation does not result in the defeat of the Nameless Ones, who epitomise evil and darkness-- they remain an integral part of the universe, and she can only escape from her role as their priestess. At the end of the book, she weeps because she has wasted part of her life in the service of evil, and because she acknowledges the potential hardships and the uncertainties that her new-found freedom will entail. In The Farthest Shore, health is restored to Earthsea, but the land of the dead remains as it is, dry, barren, and lifeless. One of the final images in the trilogy is very telling: having returned to the world of the living, Arren stands on the shore of Selidor, clasping a stone from the Mountains of Pain in the land of the dead in his hand, accepting life and the suffering and ultimate mortality that it entails.

Bearing in mind the issues raised in the above discussion, we need to consider if any sort of hope is possible in Earthsea, or whether the readers and the protagonists are left with a sense of despair. In "On Fairy-Stories," Tolkien stresses the importance of the eucatastrophe, "the sudden joyous 'turn'" in fantasy, while Bettelheim emphasises the importance of consolation in fairystories, which serves "to strengthen the child for meeting the vagaries of his life. Without such encouraging conclusions, the child, after listening to the story, would feel that there is indeed no hope of extricating himself from the despairs of his life."⁴⁸

In discussing the Earthsea trilogy in the light of these factors, Le Guin's treatment of the relationship between life and death can be considered. She concedes that "death is terrible, and must be feared" (FS, p. 180), but nonetheless, she makes the reader aware that death needs to be viewed in terms of the Equilibrium of which it forms part. This is illustrated by The Creation of Éa, which occurs at the beginning and end of A Wizard of Earthsea.

Only in silence the word,
 only in dark the light,
 only in dying life:
 bright the hawk's flight
 on the empty sky. (WE, p. 7, pp.199-200)

Death and life have their specific places in the balance and, as we see in The Farthest Shore, without one, the other becomes meaningless. As Shippey comments, it is the emptiness framing the mortality that also enhances it.⁴⁹ (We can also consider Le Guin's reference to "the glory of mortality" in the flight of the dragons in The Farthest Shore [p. 161].)

Le Guin's treatment of the relationship between life and death in Earthsea can be compared to the attitudes of writers such as MacDonald and Lewis, who emphasise the beauties of the afterlife in contrast to the limitations of the present world. A passage from MacDonald's Phantastes may be considered:

The hot fever of life had gone by, and I breathed the clear mountain-air of the land of Death. I had never dreamed of such blessedness. . . . If my passions were dead, the souls of the passions, those essential mysteries of the spirit which had imbodyed themselves in the passions, and had given to them all their glory and wonderment, yet lived, yet glowed, with a pure, undying fire. They rose above their vanishing earthly garments, and disclosed themselves angels of light. But oh, how beautiful beyond the old form! I lay thus for a time, and lived as it were an unradiating existence; my soul a motionless lake, that received all things and gave nothing back; satisfied in still contemplation and spiritual consciousness.

Ere long, they bore me to my grave. Never tired child lay down in his white bed, and heard the sound of his playthings being laid aside for the night, with a more luxurious satisfaction of repose than I knew, when I felt the coffin settle on the firm earth, and heard the sound of the falling mould upon the lid.⁵⁰

As we can see in the above passage, the beauties of death are intended to transcend those of life to such an extent that they detract from the latter, heightening their deficiencies. Anodos's rapturous embracing of death has a disturbing, even grotesque quality, and his rebirth into life, a few pages later, is described in deathlike terms, with a sense of revulsion. Jackson comments as follows:

MacDonald's fantasies betray dissatisfaction with the real and seek something other. They fill emptiness with a magical, divine plenitude. Yet a strange melancholy remains, as his hollow characters arrive at their ideal visions. Their ideals lie beyond the mirror, or through the north wind, in a landscape of death.⁵¹

In contrast, Le Guin emphasises the importance of life as it is lived in the present. Throughout the trilogy,

her protagonists are made aware of the position of the self in relation to the surrounding world.

"For only that is ours which we are willing to lose. Our selfhood, our torment and our glory, our humanity, does not endure. It changes and it goes, a wave on the sea. Would you have the sea grow still and the tides cease to save one wave, to save yourself?" (FS, p. 135)

As previously stressed, the coming of age that takes place in each book in the trilogy can only happen when Le Guin's protagonists acknowledge the limited nature of their lives. Seeking to transcend the balance in order to attain eternal life affects the quality of life, and the unnatural, destructive consequences of attempting to defy the natural order are emphasised. As we see in The Farthest Shore, the desire for endless life is based on fear and the inability to accept life for what it is. As Margaret P. Esmonde observes, by lusting after immortality, the gift of the present is lost.⁵² In The Farthest Shore (p. 98), while staying on Lobanery, Arren notices that its inhabitants lack a sense of joy in life.

In discussing Consolation, Tolkien states that although the escape from death may be the oldest and deepest human desire, fairy stories are especially suited to teach us about "the burden of that kind of immortality, or rather endless serial living."⁵³ (We recall the plight of the Elves in Middle-earth, whose immortality restricts the extent to which they can take pleasure in the present.)

As we have seen, the conclusions in each of the books

in the Earthsea trilogy are harsh, austere, and unsentimental, yet despite the inevitable suffering and limitations that they acknowledge, they affirm that our destinies lie within our own hands, and that life contains a sense of joyousness and purpose, for, as Ged states in The Farthest Shore (p. 180), although life is something to be feared, it must also be praised.

In discussing Le Guin's work as a whole, George Edgar Slusser emphasises the importance of the Earthsea trilogy in relation to the other works written during the same period: The Left Hand of Darkness, The Lathe of Heaven, and The Word for World is Forest. In these works--especially the last--a sense of pessimism tends to prevail, and evil seems to be more closely associated with the collective than with the individual. As a result, the protagonists in these books tend to appear largely ineffectual against the destructive forces in the societies in which they live. In Earthsea, on the other hand, the potential for effective individual action is affirmed through the way in which Ged, Tenar, and Arren are able to attain self-knowledge and self-integration and succeed in restoring harmony where there was previously disruption, disease, and an imbalance.⁵⁴

In the most essential sense, Earthsea is a world containing the same obstacles and limitations as our own world, and the journeys of Ged, Tenar, and Arren towards an understanding of themselves and the world in which they live parallel those that we make in our world. Earthsea should thus be viewed as offering a goal rather than an escape,⁵⁵ as a result of the way in which the trilogy deals

with the attaining of personal integration, and explores the means whereby life can be lived positively and meaningfully in a transient physical world.

The vision of life in Earthsea may be hard and uncompromising, but the ideals aspired to in Earthsea are ones that lie within the reach of every reader, in terms of their relation to his or her journey towards selfhood and integration. Ultimately, Le Guin's vision is easier for the average reader to confront and accept than is that of Lewis, and, in a different way, the ideals contained in The Lord of the Rings, for as we have seen, Tolkien's vision is one that cannot last and can never be fully attained. Le Guin's focus is on the present reality, something that we understand, and upon the self, which, as she observes, is something that we can cope with and control. Earthsea does not offer us any more or less than the life we know, but it shows us what can be achieved within its limitations.

AFTERWORD

During the course of this study, three of the most original and memorable Secondary worlds in modern Marvellous fantasy have been examined. We have moved through three widely diverse Secondary worlds, from the fairy-tale world of Narnia to the epic and legendary splendours of Middle-earth and the austerity and simplicity of Earthsea, and in doing so, have examined the way in which these Marvellous Secondary worlds are specially equipped to explore and illuminate various aspects of our own world. Through Lewis's presentation of Christianity in Narnia, we are shown a vision of the relationship between the transcendental the earthly, the workings of spiritual forces in the universe and of the religious life of the individual. By creating Middle-earth as a world of heroic romance, Tolkien attempts to recover qualities that are missing from our modern society, and at the same time, offers the reader an escape from and an alternative to the world we know. In Earthsea, Le Guin is able to construct a parable about the nature of human life, and we see the way in which fantasy can be used as a means of expressing different stages in the human psyche's journey through life.

In addition, we have observed that the marvellous nature of each of the Secondary worlds studied does not preclude the maintaining of a close relationship with our world. The importance of basic, natural, homely things

is stressed throughout each of the worlds in question, and in The Lord of the Rings and the Earthsea trilogy, the narratives are "there and back again,"¹ concluding with a return to the everyday world. At the end of The Lord of the Rings, the hobbits return to the Shire, while at the close of the Earthsea trilogy, his wizardry spent, Ged returns to his old home on Gont and to his master, Ogion.

This closeness to the things of our world is, as we have seen, an important element of Marvellous fantasy. According to Joseph Campbell, the journey of the archetypal hero in myth is a circular one; beginning with departure and culminating in return.² Le Guin emphasises the necessity of focussing on the ordinary person in fantasy, while as far as both Lewis and Tolkien are concerned, fantasy enables us to attain a clearer view of the simple, natural things around us. This dual aspect of Marvellous Secondary worlds--the escape that they offer the reader, their constant exploration of exotic, fabulous realms, and the way in which they are linked to our world and focus on the natural, the familiar, and the everyday--can be summed up in Eliot's words:

We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time.
Through the unknown, remembered gate
When the last of earth left to discover
Is that which was the beginning.³

Tzvetan Todorov views the relationship between fantasy

and our world as central to Marvellous fantasy and he cites Pierre Malville:

Beyond entertainment, beyond curiosity, beyond all the emotions such narratives and legends afford, beyond the need to divert, to forget, or to achieve delightful or terrifying sensations, the real goal of the marvellous journey is the total exploration of universal reality.⁴

The above statement is, however, not entirely correct, for ultimately it reduces Marvellous Secondary worlds to extensions of our world, and regards their fantastic qualities as a means to an end. The ephemeral, elusive, magical nature of Marvellous Secondary worlds is not taken sufficiently into account: as Manlove points out, their unpredictable, original qualities enable them to exist in their own right. "[A]t a general level one would even go so far as to say that the very 'supernatural or impossible' character of fantasy is a way of freeing it from possession as an extension of our reality."⁵ We can also recall Tolkien's description of the way in which Recovery operates in fantasy, making the ordinary and the everyday appear new, unique, and wondrous.

The otherness and independent importance of Marvellous Secondary worlds can be illustrated by the Talking Beasts of Narnia, the sea of lilies and the bird flying from the rising sun in The Voyage of the Dawn Treader, the wood between the worlds in The Magician's Nephew, the sentient mountains, the Dead Marshes, the glittering caves, the Ents, the hobbits and the Elven-kingdoms of Lothlórien

and Rivendell in Middle-earth, and the magic that surrounds everything in Earthsea. Although Marvellous Secondary worlds explore, comment on and illuminate various aspects of reality, they transcend our world in the same way that the dragons transcend the rest of Earthsea.

Tolkien describes the realms of the Marvellous in these terms:

The realm of fairy-story is wide and deep and high and filled with many things: all manner of beasts and birds are found there; shoreless seas and stars uncounted; beauty that is an enchantment, and an ever-present peril; both joy and sorrow as sharp as swords. In that realm a man may, perhaps, count himself fortunate to have wandered, but its very richness and strangeness tie the tongue of a traveller who would report them. And while he is there it is dangerous for him to ask too many questions, lest the gates be shut and the keys be lost.⁶

We have seen that the fantasist's delight in creativity is a central motivating force behind the construction of each of the Secondary worlds that we have studied, and the importance that Tolkien attaches to the art of sub-creation has already been commented on. According to Tolkien, through fantasy one "may actually assist in the effoliation and multiple enrichment of creation."⁷ Similarly, Le Guin states that the creation of Secondary worlds "is a participation in the inexhaustibility of Creation."⁸ Through Marvellous Secondary worlds such as Narnia, Middle-earth, and Earthsea, the power and the range of the imagination and its ability to extend and enrich our perceptions is affirmed.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

INTRODUCTION

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² C. S. Lewis, "On Science Fiction," in Of Other Worlds (London: Bles, 1966), p. 68.

³ Ibid., p. 66.

⁴ C. S. Lewis, "Unreal Estates," in Of Other Worlds, p. 91.

⁵ Ursula K. Le Guin, The Dispossessed (1974; rpt. London: Granada, 1975).

⁶ Doris Lessing, Prefatory remarks to Shikasta (London: Cape, 1979), p. ix.

⁷ Ursula K. Le Guin, "National Book Award Acceptance Speech," in Dreams Must Explain Themselves (New York: Algor Press, 1975), p. 29.

⁸ J. R. R. Tolkien, "On Fairy-Stories," in The Tolkien Reader (New York: Ballantine, 1966), p. 55.

⁹ Jules Zanger, "Heroic Fantasy and Social Reality: ex nihilo nihil fit," in Schlobin, p. 227.

¹⁰ C. S. Lewis, Perelandra (1943; rpt. New York: Macmillan, 1946)

¹¹ Jack Vance, The Dying Earth (London: Mayflower, 1972), pp. 38-39.

¹² Ursula K. Le Guin, From Elfland to Poughkeesie (Portland, Oregon: Pendragon Press, 1975), p. 27.

¹³ Zanger, p. 229.

¹⁴ L. Sprague de Camp describes the "sword and sorcery" school of fantasy in these terms:

The tales collected under this name are adventure fantasies, laid in imaginary prehistoric or medieval worlds, when (it's fun to imagine) all men were mighty, all women were beautiful, all problems were simple, and all life was adventurous. In such a world, gleaming cities raise their shining spires against the stars; sorcerers cast sinister spells from subterranean lairs; baleful spirits stalk crumbled ruins; primeval monsters crash through jungle thickets; and the fate of kingdoms is balanced on the bloody blades of broadswords brandished by heroes of preternatural might and valour.

Cited by Franz Rottensteiner in The Fantasy Book (London: Thames and Hudson, 1978), p. 92.

¹⁵ T. H. White, The Once and Future King (1958; rpt. Glasgow: Collins-Fontana, 1962).

¹⁶ Marion Lochhead, The Renaissance of Wonder in Children's Literature (Edinburgh: Canongate, 1977).

¹⁷ Rosemary Jackson, Fantasy: The Literature of Subversion (London: Methuen, 1981), p. 42.

¹⁸ Peake, Titus Groan, p. 15.

¹⁹ Lewis Carroll, Alice in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass (1865, 1871; rpt. London and Glasgow: Blackie and Son). David Lindsay, A Voyage to Arcturus (1920; rpt. New York: Ballantine, 1968).

²⁰ Peake, Titus Alone, p.9.

²¹ Jackson, p. 179.

²² Zanger, p. 232.

²³ Beowulf, trans. Michael Alexander (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1973), p. 57.

²⁴ Robert Crossley, "Pure and Applied Fantasy, or From Faerie to Utopia," in Schlobin, p. 186.

²⁵ Tolkien, "On Fairy-Stories," p. 80.

²⁶ Ibid., pp. 52-53.

²⁷ Ibid., p. 37. According to Tolkien, the fantasist can be regarded as a sub-creator of Secondary worlds, because "we make in our measure and in our derivative mode, because we are made" by God, the Creator of the Primary world.

Ibid., p. 55.

²⁸ E. R. Eddison, The Worm Ouroboros (1926; rpt. New York: Ballantine, 1967).

²⁹ Hugh Crago, "The Way Word-Magic Works: Style and Archetype in The Lord of the Rings," in J. S. Ryan, J. R. R. Tolkien: Cult or Culture? (University of New England, Armidale, New South Wales, 1969), pp. 221-22.

³⁰ Jackson, p. 33.

³¹ William Morris, The Well at the World's End (1896; rpt. New York: Ballantine, 1970). The sense of nostalgia and the idealisation of the past that frequently occurs in Marvellous fantasy can also be found in a great deal of Pre-Raphaelite art. One can consider, for example, the works of artists such as Dante Gabriel Rossetti and Edward Burne-Jones.

³² Ursula K. Le Guin, "The Child and the Shadow," in The Quarterly Journal of the Library of Congress, 32 April 1975, 148.

³³ C. S. Lewis, "On Three Ways of Writing for Children," in Of Other Worlds, pp. 29-30.

³⁴ Le Guin, Elfland, p. 5.

CHAPTER ONE: C. S. LEWIS'S NARNIA

¹ Aslan's song can be compared with the Music of the Ainur, through which the universe is created, in Tolkien's The Silmarillion (1977; rpt. London: Unwin Paperbacks, 1979), pp. 15-19.

² George MacDonald, Lilith (1895; rpt. Grand Rapids, Michigan: W. B. Erdman's Publishing Company, 1981) and Phantastes (1915; rpt. London: Dent, Everyman Paperbacks, 1983). In Surprised by Joy: The Shape of My Early Life (1955; rpt. Glasgow: Collins-Fount Paperbacks, 1977), pp. 144-46, Lewis describes the deep and lasting impression that MacDonald's Phantastes made on him. According to

Roger Lancelyn Green and Walter Hooper, he later came to regard MacDonald as his master (C. S. Lewis: A Biography [London: Collins, 1974], p. 44).

³ Isaiah, 11 vs. 6, 9. (Revised Standard Version.)

⁴ Descriptions of a heavenly realm containing mountains towards which the protagonists travel occur in Lewis's The Great Divorce: A Dream (London: Bles, 1946) and Tolkien's short story, "Leaf by Niggle," pp. 85-112, in The Tolkien Reader.

⁵ Dylan Thomas, "Fern Hill," in The Poems (London: Dent, 1971), p. 195.

⁶ Lewis, Surprised by Joy, p. 188. In Romans, 15 v. 4, St. Paul states that "whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning."

⁷ C. S. Lewis, Till We Have Faces: A Myth Retold (1956; rpt. Glasgow: Collins-Fount Paperbacks, 1978).

⁸ Green and Hooper, p. 251.

⁹ Zanger, p. 230.

¹⁰ Paul F. Ford, A Companion to Narnia (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1980), p. 130. Fenris Ulf is the name of the huge grey wolf who is the head of the White Witch's Secret Police in the American editions of The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe; in the British editions he is known as Maugrim.

¹¹ When Aslan first appears in the Chronicles in The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe, p. 115, he is seen in a heraldic setting, surrounded by creatures that are traditional symbols of Christ: a unicorn, a pelican, and an eagle. Ford, p. 14.

¹² C. S. Lewis, The Pilgrim's Regress: An Allegorical

Apology for Christianity, Reason and Romanticism (London: Dent, 1933). Ford, pp. 136-37.

¹³ Charles A. Huttar, "Hell and the City: Tolkien and the Traditions of Western Literature," in A Tolkien Compass, ed. Jarred Lobdell (La Salle, Illinois: Open Court, 1975), p. 117.

¹⁴ C. S. Lewis, The Screwtape Letters (London: Bles, 1942); Out of the Silent Planet (London: Lane, 1938); Perelandra; That Hideous Strength (1945; rpt. London: Pan, 1955).

¹⁵ Green and Hooper, pp. 253-54.

¹⁶ C. S. Lewis, "On Stories," in Of Other Worlds, p. 15.

¹⁷ Lewis, "Writing for Children," p. 26.

¹⁸ C. S. Lewis, "Sometimes Fairy Stories May Say Best What's to be Said," in Of Other Worlds, pp. 36-37.

¹⁹ Green and Hooper, p. 221.

²⁰ Lewis, "Fairy Stories," p. 36.

²¹ Ibid., pp. 35-36.

²² Ibid., p. 37.

²³ Lewis, "Unreal Estates," p. 88.

²⁴ Ibid., p. 87.

²⁵ Lewis, "On Stories," p. 18.

²⁶ C. S. Lewis, "On Criticism," in Of Other Worlds, p. 56.

²⁷ Lewis, "On Stories," p. 12.

²⁸ Ibid., pp. 12-13.

²⁹ Lewis, "On Science Fiction," p. 70.

³⁰ Rottensteiner, p. 126.

³¹ C. S. Lewis, The Allegory of Love: A Study in Medieval Tradition (1936; rpt. London: Oxford University

Press, 1938), p. 45.

³² In this regard Narnia can be compared to the world that is presented in Morris's News From Nowhere (in Three Works [New York: International Publishers, 1968]), pp. 179-401. Both Lewis and Morris express distaste for much in the modern world, and in some respects, Narnia can be regarded as a utopian vision, as is the society in News From Nowhere. As in Narnia, the society presented by Morris resembles that of an earlier age, and in both cases, there is a sense of nostalgia. Unlike Morris, however, Lewis's utopianism is not socio-political; instead it takes place in a religious context.

³³ C. S. Lewis, "De Descriptione Temporum," in They Asked For a Paper: Papers and Addresses (London: Bles, 1962), pp. 24-25.

³⁴ C. S. Lewis, Mere Christianity (1952; rpt. Glasgow: Collins-Fount Paperbacks, 1977), pp. 118-19.

³⁵ Lochhead, p. 2.

³⁶ Lewis, Mere Christianity, pp. 118-19.

³⁷ Gary K. Wolfe, "The Encounter with Fantasy." in Schlobin, p. 12.

³⁸ Lewis, "Fairy Stories," pp. 36-37.

³⁹ Chad Walsh, "C. S. Lewis: The Man and the Mystery," in Shadows of Imagination: The Fantasies of C. S. Lewis, J. R. R. Tolkien and Charles Williams, ed. Mark R. Hillegas (Carbondale, Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press; London and Amsterdam: Feffer and Simons, 1969), p. 11. In Lewis's later works, such as The Four Loves (London: Bles, 1960) and Till We Have Faces, one can detect a softening in tone, which can perhaps be related

in part to the effect that Lewis's relationship with his wife, Joy, had upon his outlook. Walsh, pp. 11-12.

⁴⁰ Lewis, "Writing for Children," pp. 30-31.

⁴¹ Bruno Bettelheim, The Uses of Enchantment: The Meaning and Importance of Fairy Tales (1976; rpt. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1978), p. 8.

⁴² Lewis, Mere Christianity, pp. 104-05.

⁴³ David Holbrook, "The Problem of C. S. Lewis," in Children's Literature in Education, No. 10, March 1973, p. 5, p. 14.

⁴⁴ J. B. S. Haldane, "Auld Hornie, F. R. S.," in Hillegas, p. 18.

⁴⁵ Cited by Ryan, p. 83. C. S. Lewis, The Problem of Pain (London: Bles, 1940).

⁴⁶ Lewis, Mere Christianity, pp. 99-101.

⁴⁷ Stella Gibbons, "Imaginative Writing," in Light on C. S. Lewis ed. Jocelyn Gibb (London: Bles, 1965), p. 93. Orual in Till We Have Faces goes further beyond the traditional female role than any of Lewis's other heroines. Orual is the daughter of a king, whose country borders on ancient Greece, and she assumes the "masculine" roles of ruler and warrior in her society. The book is dedicated to Joy Davidman, whom Lewis later married, and Green and Hooper suggest that Lewis possibly modelled Orual's character partly on that of Joy. Green and Hooper, p. 263.

⁴⁸ Lilith is one of the central figures in MacDonald's work of the same name. In Williams's Descent into Hell, Lily Sannile exhibits many of the characteristics of the Lilith-figure and in Sayers's novel The Devil to Pay, the Lilith-figure is represented by Helen of Troy. Meredith

Price, "'All Shall Love Me and Despair': The Figure of Lilith in Tolkien, Lewis, Williams and Sayers," in Mythlore, 31 (Spring 1982), 3.

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 3. Ford, p. 189.

⁵⁰ Ford, p. 189.

⁵¹ Lewis, The Problem of Pain, p. 126.

⁵² John Rowe Townsend, Written for Children: An Outline of English Children's Literature (London: Garnet Miller, 1965), p. 123.

⁵³ A village with ancient Roman roots, Caer Parvulorum (the camp of the children), forms the setting for Williams's War in Heaven (1930). Kenneth J. Zahorski and Robert H. Boyer, "The Secondary Worlds of High Fantasy," in Schlobin, p. 79. It is possible that Cair Paravel is derived from the name of this village.

⁵⁴ Holbrook, p. 8.

⁵⁵ "Hard, Polemical, Black-or-White, Them-or-Us," rev. of Narrative Poems and Selected Literary Essays, by C. S. Lewis in Times Literary Supplement, 31 July 1970, p. 853.

⁵⁶ Ford, p. 64.

⁵⁷ It is important to bear in mind that Lewis is hereby attempting to satirise the kind of lifestyle that makes no allowance for the existence of faith, fantasy and the irrational. Eustace, the product of such a lifestyle, "liked animals, especially beetles, if they were dead and pinned on a card. He liked books if they were books of information" (VDT, p. 9). John Gough, "C. S. Lewis and the Problem of David Holbrook," in Children's Literature in Education, 8, No. 2 (1977), 57.

⁵⁸ Hugh Crago, "Remarks on the Nature and Development of Fantasy," in Ryan, p. 217.

⁵⁹ Rosemary Dinnage, "Allegories of Childhood," rev. of The Secret Country of C. S. Lewis, by Anne Arnott, Times Literary Supplement, April 4, 1975, p. 363.

⁶⁰ Lewis probably derived this part of the creation of Narnia (MN, pp. 104-06) from the description of the Creation in John Milton's Paradise Lost (Indianapolis: Odyssey Press, 1962), pp. 177-78, Book VII, ll. 449-56, 463-72:

The Sixt, and of Creation last arose
 With Ev'ning Harps and Matin, when God said,
 Let th' Earth bring forth Soul living in her kind,
 Cattle and Creeping things, and Beast of the Earth,
 Each in their kind. The Earth obey'd and straight
 Op'ning her fertile Womb teem'd at a Birth
 Innumerable living Creatures, perfet forms,
 Lim'd and full grown: out of the ground up rose. . .
 The grassy Clods now Calv'd, now half appear'd
 The tawny Lion, pawing to get free
 His hinder parts, then springs as broke from Bonds,
 And Rampant shakes his Brindled mane; the Ounce,
 The Libbard, and the Tiger, as the Mole
 Rising, the crumbl'd Earth above them threw
 In Hillocks; the swift Stag from under ground
 Bore up his branching head: scarce from his mould
Behemoth biggest born of Earth upheav'd
 His vastness.

⁶¹ Lewis, "De Descriptione Temporum," p. 19.

⁶² Townsend, p. 123.

⁶³ Lochhead, p. 164.

⁶⁴ Ford, p. 85. In "Byzantium," Yeats states: "Marbles of the dancing floor/Break bitter furies of complexity." Selected Poetry (1962; rpt. London: Pan-Macmillan, 1974), p. 154.

- 65 Ford, p. 84.
- 66 Gibbons, p. 99.
- 67 C. S. Lewis, "The Dethronement of Power," in Tolkien and the Critics, ed. Neil D. Isaacs and Rose A. Zimbardo (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1981), p. 16.
- 68 Lewis, "On Stories," pp. 14-15.
- 69 The Pearl, trans. Stanley Perkins Chase (New York: Oxford University Press, 1932).
- 70 Lewis, "De Descriptione Temporum," pp. 10-11.
- 71 W. H. Auden, "The Witnesses," in Collected Poems (London: Faber, 1976), p. 173.

CHAPTER TWO: J. R. R. TOLKIEN'S MIDDLE-EARTH

- ¹ "To 'Mr Thompson,'" (draft) 14 January 1956, Letter 180, in The Letters of J. R. R. Tolkien, ed. Humphrey Carpenter and Christopher Tolkien (London: Allen and Unwin, 1983), pp. 230-31.
- ² "From a Letter to Peter Szabó Szentmihályi," (draft) October 1971, Letter 329, in Letters, p. 414.
- ³ Northrop Frye, The Secular Scripture: A Study of the Structure of Romance (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1976), p. 179.
- ⁴ "To Carole Batten-Phelps," (draft) Autumn 1971, Letter 328, in Letters, p. 412.
- ⁵ Daniel Grotta-Kurska, J. R. R. Tolkien: Architect of Middle-Earth (Philadelphia: Running Press, 1976), p. 81.

⁶ C. N. Manlove, Modern Fantasy: Five Studies (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), p. 172.

⁷ Sir Gawayne and the Grene Knight in The Age of Chaucer, Vol. I of A Guide to English Literature, ed. Boris Ford (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1954), pp. 351-52, ll. 1-26 and p. 430, ll. 2524-25.

⁸ C. S. Lewis, "The Gods Return to Earth," rev. of The Fellowship of the Ring, by J. R. R. Tolkien, Time and Tide, 14 Aug. 1954, p. 1083.

⁹ J. R. R. Tolkien, "Beowulf: The Monsters and the Critics," in The Monsters and the Critics and Other Essays, ed. Christopher Tolkien (London: Allen and Unwin, 1983), p. 22.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 23, p. 30.

¹¹ Grotta-Kurska, p. 100.

¹² Gawain, p. 368, l. 528.

¹³ Paul Kocher, Master of Middle-earth: The Achievement of J. R. R. Tolkien (U.S.A., 1972; rpt. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1974), pp. 89-90.

¹⁴ W. H. Auden, "The Quest Hero," in Isaacs and Zimbardo, p. 53.

¹⁵ Zanger, p. 230.

¹⁶ Charles Moorman, "'Now Entertain Conjecture of a Time'--The Fictive Worlds of C. S. Lewis and J. R. R. Tolkien," in Hillegas, p. 67.

¹⁷ In 1925, Tolkien was elected to the Bosworth and Rawlinson chair of Anglo-Saxon at Oxford. Grotta-Kurska, p. 66.

¹⁸ Tolkien, "Beowulf," p. 18.

¹⁹ The ambiguity with which Tolkien presents nature in Middle-earth can be compared to the ambiguity of the

Green Knight, who is associated with the forces of nature, in Gawain.

²⁰ Grotta-Kurska, p. 96.

²¹ Tolkien, "On Fairy-Stories," p. 9.

²² Ibid., p. 57.

²³ Ibid., p. 58-59.

²⁴ Ibid., p. 59.

²⁵ Ibid., p. 60.

²⁶ Ibid., pp. 61-62.

²⁷ Ibid., p. 63.

²⁸ Ibid., p. 63.

²⁹ Ibid., pp. 63-64.

³⁰ Various horror fantasies (for example, those of H. P. Lovecraft and William Hope Hodgson), although very different from Marvellous fantasies in appearance and aim, spring from a similar sense of cultural anxiety: a nostalgia for the past, a dissatisfaction with the present and pessimism--or even fear--as far as the future is concerned.

³¹ Tolkien, "On Fairy-Stories," pp. 67-68.

³² Ibid., p. 40.

³³ Ibid., p. 41. In "Writing for Children," p. 29, Lewis draws a similar distinction between the escape offered by fantasy and wish-fulfilment. He contrasts fairy stories with certain kinds of realistic children's fiction, and states:

There is no doubt that both arouse, and imaginatively satisfy, wishes. . . . But the two longings are very different. The second . . . is ravenous and deadly serious. . . . [I]t is all flattery to the ego. The pleasure consists in picturing

oneself the object of admiration. The other longing, that for fairy land, is very different. . . . Does anyone suppose that [a child] really and prosaically longs for the dangers and discomforts of a fairy tale?--really wants dragons in contemporary England?"

- 34 Tolkien, "On Fairy-Stories," p. 68.
- 35 Zanger, p. 227.
- 36 Kocher, pp. 13-14.
- 37 Ibid., pp. 12-13.
- 38 Tolkien, "On Fairy Stories," p. 59.
- 39 Roger Sale, "Tolkien and Frodo Baggins," in Isaacs and Zimbardo, p. 284.
- 40 Edmund Wilson, "Oo, Those Awful Orcs!" in The Bit Between My Teeth (London: Allen, 1965), p. 331. Catherine Stimpson's comment is cited by Neil D. Isaacs in "On Writing Tolkien Criticism," in Tolkien: New Critical Perspectives, ed. Neil D. Isaacs and Rose A. Zimbardo (Kentucky University Press, 1981), p. 5.
- 41 Lewis, "The Gods," p. 1082.
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- 46 Tolkien's essay on The Battle of Maldon is discussed by Randel Helms in Tolkien's World (London: Thames and Hudson, 1974), pp. 69-74, and is published in Tolkien's Essays and Studies (1953).

- 47 Helms, pp. 69-74.
- 48 Tolkien, "On Fairy Stories," pp. 26-29.
- 49 J. R. R. Tolkien, The Hobbit (London: Unwin, 1937).
- 50 J. R. Watson, "The Hobbits and the Critics," rev. of Tolkien and the Critics, ed. Neil D. Isaacs and Rose A. Zimbardo, in Critical Quarterly, 13, No. 3 (Autumn 1971), 256.
- 51 Sale, p. 267.
- 52 Frye, p. 110.
- 53 Daniel Hughes, "Pieties and Giant Forms in 'The Lord of the Rings'," in Isaacs and Zimbardo, p. 84.
- 54 Price, pp. 3-6.
- 55 Jackson, p. 155.
- 56 George MacDonald, The Princess and the Goblin (1882; rpt. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1966). Alan Garner, The Moon of Gomrath (1963; rpt. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1965). Zanger, p. 234.
- 57 Ibid., p. 234.
- 58 Ibid., p. 235.
- 59 Ibid., p. 234. H. G. Wells, The Time Machine in Seven Science Fiction Novels of H. G. Wells (1895; rpt. New York: Dover, 1950), pp. 1-76. Kenneth Grahame, The Wind in the Willows (1908; rpt. London: Methuen, 1950).
- 60 Zanger, p. 232.
- 61 Ibid., p. 235.
- 62 Tolkien's son, Michael, inherited his father's almost obsessive love of trees. Deeply saddened and angered by the felling of trees for the sake of the internal combustion engine, he asked his father to make up a story in which the trees took a terrible revenge on the machine lovers. Grotta-Kurska, p. 101.

- 63 Jackson, p. 154.
- 64 Kocher, p. 90.
- 65 Sir Thomas Malory, The Morte D'Arthur (1485; rpt. London: Dent, 1906).
- 66 Yeats, "Sailing to Byzantium," in Selected Poetry, pp. 104-05.
- 67 Tolkien describes this episode in The Silmarillion, pp. 78-106.
- 68 Jackson, p. 156.
- 69 Cited by J. S. Ryan in "Folktale, Fairy Tale, and the Creation of a Story," in Isaacs and Zimbardo, New Critical Perspectives, pp. 29-30.
- 70 Clyde S. Kilby, "Meaning in The Lord of the Rings," in Hillegas, p. 74.
- 71 Raymond H. Thompson, "Modern Fantasy and Medieval Romance: A Comparative Study," in Schlobin, p. 224.
- 72 Frye, p. 179.
- 73 Lionel Basney, "Myth, History, and Time in 'The Lord of the Rings'," in Isaacs and Zimbardo, New Critical Perspectives, pp. 12-13.

CHAPTER THREE: URSULA K. LE GUIN'S EARTHSEA

¹ In Rocannon's World (New York: Ace Double, 1966), Le Guin's first novel, a feudalistic order prevails in the Secondary world, and most of the central characters are aristocrats. However, in later novels, Le Guin moves completely away from an emphasis

of this sort.

² Margaret P. Esmonde, "The Master Pattern: The Psychological Journey in the Earthsea Trilogy," in Ursula K. Le Guin, Writers of the 21st Century Series, ed. Joseph D. Olander and Martin Harry Greenberg (New York: Taplinger Publishing Company, 1979), pp. 20-21.

³ T. A. Shippey, "The Magic Art and Evolution of Words in Ursula K. Le Guin's Earthsea Trilogy," in Mosaic, 2 (Winter 1977), 155.

⁴ Ursula K. Le Guin, "Dreams Must Explain Themselves," in Dreams, pp. 12-13.

⁵ Ursula K. Le Guin, The Planet of Exile (New York: Ace Double, 1966); The City of Illusions (1967; rpt. London: Granada - Panther, 1973).

⁶ Jeanne Murray Walker, "Rites of Passage Today: The Cultural Significance of A Wizard of Earthsea," in Mosaic, 13, Nos. 3-4 (1980), 187.

⁷ George Edgar Slusser, The Farthest Shores of Ursula K. Le Guin (San Bernardino, California: Borgo Press, 1976), p. 43.

⁸ C. N. Manlove, "Conservatism in the Fantasy of Le Guin," in Extrapolation, 12, No. 3 (1979), 288.

⁹ Ibid., p. 289.

¹⁰ These statements can be compared to Tormer's Lay in The Left Hand of Darkness, p. 159. Of all Le Guin's works, this book is closest to the Earthsea trilogy in terms of underlying thematic principles:

Light is the left hand of darkness
and darkness the right hand of light.
Two are one, life and death, lying

together like lovers in kemmer,
like hands joined together,
like the end and the way.

¹¹ Lao te Tzu, Tao Te Ching, trans. J. J. L. Duyvendak (London: Murray, 1954), Book One, Chapter 2, p. 22.

¹² Dena C. Bain, "The Tao Te Ching as Background to the Novels of Ursula K. Le Guin," in Extrapolation, 12, No. 3 (1980), 210-11.

¹³ Le Guin, "The Child," p. 145.

¹⁴ Le Guin, "Dreams," p. 9. Le Guin's construction of Earthsea began with two short stories, "The Word of Unbinding," and "The Rule of Names," in The Wind's Twelve Quarters, Vol. 1 (1976; rpt. London: Granada-Panther, 1978), pp. 78-81 and pp. 82-93. The stories were originally published in Fantastic, 1964. In both stories, true names are of key importance. The association of one's being with one's name can also be seen in the case of the Mouth of Sauron in The Lord of the Rings, p. 922, who has been so consumed by evil that he has forgotten his own name.

¹⁵ C. N. Manlove, "On the Nature of Fantasy," in Schlobin, p. 32.

¹⁶ Walker, p. 184.

¹⁷ Zanger, p. 231.

¹⁸ Shippey, "The Magic Art," p. 158.

¹⁹ Le Guin, "Dreams," pp. 10-11.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 7.

²¹ Ursula K. Le Guin, "Is Gender Necessary?" in The Language of the Night: Essays on Fantasy and Science Fiction, ed. Susan Wood (New York: Putnam, 1979), p. 169.

²² The difference between Le Guin's stance and that of Christian fantasists such as Lewis and Tolkien can be illustrated by the contrast Jung draws between the goddess Kali, who contains both good and evil and typifies the paradoxical morality of the East, and the figure of the Madonna in the West. (C. G. Jung, The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious, trans. R. F. C. Hull [London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1959], p. 103.) The relationship between Anodos and his shadow in MacDonald's Phantastes can be contrasted with Ged's relationship with his shadow. Like Ged, Anodos is followed by a shadow, which he regards with fear and revulsion. However, unlike Ged, Anodos eventually succeeds in ridding himself of his shadow.

²³ Ursula K. Le Guin, "Science Fiction and Mrs Brown," in Science Fiction at Large, ed. Peter Nicholls (London: Gollancz, 1976), p. 30.

²⁴ Ibid., p. 30.

²⁵ Ursula K. Le Guin, "Myth and Archetype in Science Fiction," in Wood, p. 78.

²⁶ Le Guin, Elfland, p. 24.

²⁷ Le Guin, "The Child," p. 148.

²⁸ Ibid., p. 143. According to Jung, "[t]he shadow personifies everything that the subject refuses to acknowledge about himself and yet is always thrusting itself upon him directly or indirectly" (The Archetypes, pp. 284-85).

Jung discusses the relationship between the individual and his or her shadow:

[T]he meeting with ourselves belongs to the more unpleasant things that can be avoided so long as we can project everything negative into the environment. But if we are able to see our own shadow and can bear knowing it, then a small part of the problem has already been solved: we have at last brought up the personal unconscious. The shadow is a living part of the personality and therefore wants to live with it in some form. It cannot be argued out of existence or rationalised into harmlessness. (The Archetypes, p. 20)

29 Le Guin, "The Child," p.147.

30 Le Guin, "Dreams," p. 12.

31 Le Guin, "The Child," p. 148.

32 An illustration of the way in which fantasy can serve as a means of presenting the psychological condition of the individual is the film The Company of Wolves (dir. Neil Jordan, prod. Steve Wooley, 1984), in which a young girl's coming to terms with her sexual nature is conveyed through fairy-tale images. We can also consider Alan Garner's reworking of myths in fantasies such as The Owl Service (1967; rpt. London: Collins, 1973), and Red Shift (London: Collins, 1973), in order to explore the inner lives of his protagonists. Jessica Kemball-Cooke, "Earthsea and Others," New Society, 11 Nov. 1976, p. 315.

33 Wood, Introd., The Language of the Night, p. 34.

34 Lochhead, p. 148.

35 Esmonde, p. 29.

36 Wolfe, p. 11.

37 Fred Inglis, The Promise of Happiness: Value and Meaning in Children's Literature (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), p. 245.

38 Shippey, "The Magic Art," p. 162.

39 "From Letter to George and Thomas Keats," 21 December

1817, in English Critical Texts, ed. D. J. Enright and Ernst de Chickera (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1962), p. 257.

40 Le Guin, "The Child," p. 145, p. 147.

41 Ibid., p. 143.

42 Ibid., p. 145.

43 Lochhead, p. 151.

44 Shippey, "The Magic Art," p. 152.

45 Le Guin, "Science Fiction," pp. 30-31.

46 Shippey, "The Magic Art," pp. 158-59.

47 Ibid., p. 158.

48 Bettelheim, p. 144.

49 Shippey, "The Magic Art," p. 154.

50 MacDonald, Phantastes, pp. 230-31.

51 Jackson, p. 150.

52 Esmonde, p. 33.

53 Tolkien, "On Fairy-Stories," pp. 67-68.

54 Ursula K. Le Guin, The Lathe of Heaven (1971; rpt.

London: Gollancz, 1972); The Word for World is Forest

(New York: Berkley, 1976). Slusser, pp. 31-33.

55 Shippey, "The Magic Art," p. 155.

AFTERWORD

¹ The Hobbit is subtitled There and Back Again, and this is also one of the titles that Bilbo gives to his book that contains an account of his adventures. (The Lord of the Rings, p. 1065.)

² Joseph Campbell, The Hero with a Thousand Faces (New York: Meridian, 1956). Campbell's description of the various stages in the journey of the archetypal hero can be found on pp. 47-251.

³ T. S. Eliot, "Little Gidding," in Collected Poems (1963; rpt. London: Faber, 1974), p. 222.

⁴ Tzvetan Todorov, The Fantastic: A Structural Approach to a Literary Genre (New York: Cornell University Press, 1975), p. 57.

⁵ M a n l o v e, "On the Nature of Fantasy," p. 33.

⁶ Tolkien, "On Fairy-Stories," p. 3.

⁷ Ibid., p. 73.

⁸ Ursula K. Le Guin, "The View In," in A Multitude of Visions: Essays on Science Fiction, ed. Cy Chauvin (Baltimore, T-K Graphics, 1975), p. 6.

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