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Abstract

This article explores the depiction of time in the works of C. S. Lewis, offering an analysis rooted in a reading of select passages that highlight issues of temporality in Lewis' works. The select passages are from the following books: *Mere Christianity*; *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*; *The Magician's Nephew*; and *The Last Battle*. The theoretical framework for this article is derived mainly from Aristotle's perennial contribution to rhetoric, adopting his definition of rhetoric as: "The faculty of discovering, in the particular case, the available means of persuasion." Moreover, this paper engages with published readership on Lewis' relationship with rhetoric, as explored by Gary Tandy in *The Rhetoric of Certitude*, and Don W. King's "The Rhetorical Similarities of C.S. Lewis and Bertrand Russel" among others. This study mainly aims to explore Lewis' employment of Pathos, Ethos, and Logos in his writings, demonstrating how these three modes manifest differently in his nonfiction and fantasy works yet remain equally compelling. Finally, this article aims to show how Lewis utilizes literary techniques that enhance the sense of *identification* between his voice and that of the reader, in order to increase the receptiveness of his audience toward the following three points which he postulates: Firstly, time has clear boundaries; specifically. This implies that created time, or time on earth is finite. Secondly, time is linear. Namely, it

has a continuous and sequential nature, where events follow each other in a straight line, regardless of how it is experienced on a subjective level. And thirdly, time is but a line encompassed by an infinite eternal being, the Creator of time. Meaning that as a finite being, God exists outside of time, and as thus is capable of creating time.

Additional Keywords

Rhetoric; Temporality; Ethos; Pathos; Logos; Aristotle; Kenneth Burke

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THE RHETORIC OF TEMPORALITY IN C.S. LEWIS'S WORKS: A STUDY OF TIME IN *MERE CHRISTIANITY* AND THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA

LORRAINE NASSER-SAKASS

LITERATURE IS REplete WITH ONTOLOGICAL explorations discussing the nature and philosophy of time, with authors communicating their beliefs regarding the nature of time in their writing. This article aims to offer an analysis of the depiction of temporality in C.S. Lewis's works. Does Lewis adopt a subjective or objective view of time? Is time in his works linear or circular? What is Lewis's take on eternalism and presentism? The discussion of time in this article will be confined to an exploration of Lewis's temporal imagination in four of his books: *Mere Christianity*, *The Magician's Nephew*, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, and *The Last Battle*. In his writing, Lewis employs several rhetorical devices to construct persuasive arguments about the nature of time. I argue that Lewis deliberately communicates his viewpoint regarding temporality which reflects his personal belief, a message that can be traced in both his nonfiction as well as fantasy books.

The origin of rhetoric has always been associated with the Pre-Socratic ancient Greek Sophists circa 600 B.C. (Balla 45). The most systematic account of the teachings of the Sophists on rhetoric survives in the works of their opponents, whereas their own accounts only survive in fragments (Toye 7). This fact is crucial to the early reception of rhetoric; by documenting their criticism of rhetoric, the picture about rhetoric was inevitably biased against it (7). The branch of knowledge known as rhetoric was initially perceived as problematic with the potential to be used for deception of the masses. Plato was one of the main figures who called for serious skepticism about rhetoric. On the other hand, Aristotle, Plato's student who often approached Plato's views with criticism, offered a strong account in defense of rhetoric in his *Rhetoric*. In his view, "not everyone was capable of following formal logic," and for that reason, it was necessary to use means that are available to all people. This attitude of making the art of persuasion more inclusive is found in many of Aristotle's teachings (Toye 8).

CLASSICAL AND MODERN RHETORICAL THEORY AND RECEPTION

Aristotle's treatise *Rhetoric* is regarded by nearly all rhetoricians as "the most important single work on persuasion ever written" (Golden et al. 47). As such, the definition that it offers of "rhetoric" will be the basis for the remainder of this article. Aristotle defines rhetoric as "[T]he faculty of discovering, in the particular case, the available means of persuasion" (Cunningham 18). Aristotle delineates three modes of persuasion that can be employed to persuade an audience: Pathos, Ethos, and Logos.

Pathos is "putting the hearer into an appropriate frame of mind" (qtd. in Cunningham 42). The focus in this mode is on the hearer of the argument, or in our case, the reader of the text, and more specifically, on their emotional reaction. Aristotle states that persuasion occurs "by means of the hearers [and readers], when they are aroused to emotion [Pathos] by the speech; for the judgments we deliver are not the same when we are influenced by joy or sorrow, love or hate" (qtd. in Cunningham 42).

The second mode of persuasion, according to Aristotle, is Ethos. By moving from Pathos to Ethos we are essentially shifting from the character of the audience to the moral character of the speaker. Aristotle's definition of Ethos as a mode of persuasion is:

The [writer] persuades by moral character when the speech is delivered in such a manner as to render him worthy of confidence; for we trust such persons to a greater degree, and more readily. [...] But this confidence ought to be due to the speech itself, and not left up to some preconceived idea of the speaker's character. [...] [M]oral character may almost be called the most potent [...] means of persuasion. (qtd. in Cunningham 98)

According to Aristotle, Ethos can be regarded as the most potent means of persuasion, as the audience's perception of the speaker's character plays a significant role in their acceptance or rejection of the speaker's argument.

From focus on the readers, to focus on the writer, we move now to focus on the argument itself. Logos, the third mode of persuasion, is the appeal to logic, a way of attempting to persuade the readers by reason. The Aristotelian definition of Logos in persuasion is as follows: "Persuasion is produced by arguments themselves, when we establish the true or the apparently true by the means of persuasion applicable to each individual case" (qtd. in Cunningham 148). Logos as a mode of persuasion relies on logical reasoning and evidence to persuade readers. By employing a logical and coherent line of reasoning, the writer attempts to convince the audience of the validity and soundness of their argument.

While these three modes of persuasion can be traced in a myriad of literary works produced in the West over the many years since Aristotle, the discussion in this paper will be confined to their incorporation in Lewis's works as one example of their potency. One of Lewis's reasons behind his employment of Aristotle's three modes is to enhance his persuasiveness as he shares with his audience his views pertaining to questions of temporality. In his book *The Rhetoric of Certitude*, Gary L. Tandy notes that while Lewis made some generalizations regarding the modern audience, he also recognized that the rhetorician must be willing to adapt to a variety of audiences (53). This variety of audiences complexifies the job of a rhetorician who is trying to communicate and defend a worldview. Lewis was well aware of this diverse nature of audiences, thus noting in "God in the Dock" that the audience "may be of this or that nation, may be children or adults, learned or ignorant" (263). Perhaps this is the reason Lewis often chooses to focus on experiences that are typically shared by most people, making every endeavor to start his arguments from a mutual standpoint. In doing so, he uses *identification*, a device that enhances the potential for his audience to be receptive to his arguments, thus increasing his approachability. Kenneth Burke defines identification as a "deliberate device [...] when the politician seeks to identify himself with his audience" ("Rhetoric—Old and New" 203). This attitude is very much present in Aristotle's rhetoric, and in this remark, we see an echo of Aristotle's teaching on Ethos. Yet Burke goes on to suggest that identification can also be an end in itself, meaning that at times people might seek to identify for the sake of identifying and not necessarily for the sake of persuading. His reasoning for this stems from his understanding of the human condition: to his understanding, human beings are separate from one another, and they yearn to identify with some group or another to rid themselves of the state of being separate.

In Burkean thought we see a critique of pure logic. Burke, much like Aristotle, realizes the substantial role that creative expression has, insisting that an examination of aesthetics should not be reserved for the metaphysicians (Hansen 53). Burke argues that artistic form is not merely a cultural convention; form is actively produced by the use of language by both speaker and audience. (*Counter-statement* 31). Burke, a contemporary of Lewis, wrote his theories during Lewis's lifetime, which is one of the reasons I chose to include him in my discussion of Lewis's persuasive techniques. Another reason for including Burke is his shared approach with Lewis in identifying with the audience for rhetorical purposes. While we cannot say for certain whether Burke's identification inspired some of Lewis's rhetorical techniques, in the remainder of this article, I shall discuss ways in which Lewis chose to identify with his audience on various occasions in his writing, utilizing the same concept which was the focus on Burke's rhetorical works.

THE RHETORICAL NATURE OF LEWIS'S WRITING

C.S. Lewis was a literary historian during a time when rhetoric played a central role. He saw himself as "the servant of the reader, and, for the sake of the reader, as the servant of the author" (Williams 153). He once said of himself: "Like all us Celts I am a born rhetorician, one who finds pleasure in the expression of forcible emotions independently of their grounds and even to the extent to which they are felt at any time save the moment of speaking" (Lewis, *Collected Letters* I.713-714) Lewis's literary commentary and reviews frequently dealt with character, diction, and style. As Don King notes in his article "The Rhetorical Similarities of C.S. Lewis and Bertrand Russell," Lewis, in many of his essays, "adopts a persona that seems knowledgeable, friendly, cultured, unpretentious, and buoyed up by good humor" (28). Lewis makes careful use of this persona, or *ethos*, for his own rhetorical ends (29).

Yet, as King reminds us in his article, for an argument to be effective, a writer must be aware of who their audience is (this is, employ *pathos*). However, this desire to produce an effective argument must be balanced with an honest desire to avoid manipulation. One can trace signs of this balance in Lewis's writings, particularly in his *A Grief Observed* where he chose to transparently include rather than conceal echoes of his frustration with God following the death of his wife. The third kind of appeal, which Lewis applies amply, is *logos*, the most important appeal according to Aristotle. These arguments are based on "definition, comparison, contrast, cause and effect, contradictions, paradox, irony, and analogy" (King 30) of which I shall show in the next section many examples in Lewis's writing.

Throughout his life, Lewis's perspective on rhetoric shifted significantly. Though he practiced rhetoric in most of his writing, Lewis expressed reservations about it at various points. Gary L. Tandy offers a nuanced analysis of Lewis's journey with rhetoric in his 2018 article "C.S. Lewis's Ambivalence toward Rhetoric and Style." One of the major concerns that arise when discussing rhetoric is the possibility of manipulating the audience. In his discussion of John Milton, Lewis writes:

I do not think (and no great civilization has ever thought) that the art of the rhetorician is necessarily vile. It is in itself noble, though of course, like most arts can be wickedly used. [...] [This art] aim[s] at doing something to an audience [...] using language to control what already exists in our minds. (qtd. in Tandy, "Ambivalence" 2)

Here we see a distinctly positive attitude toward rhetoric, which Lewis argues is noble in itself. However, the potential for manipulation remains a concern. Tandy quotes Lewis in a letter that he wrote in 1940 to Eliza Marian Butler in an

effort to demonstrate the reservation which he held toward rhetoric: "I am also an Irishman and a congenital rhetorician: that is why I assume in speaking to you the melancholy privileges of a fellow-patient" (1). By concluding that Lewis here refers to rhetoric like a disease, Tandy seems to miss the sarcastic and humorous tone that Lewis adopts at various points in his letter. Nevertheless, Tandy demonstrates a deep understanding of Lewis's concerns regarding rhetoric by categorizing them into four types of concerns: concerns about the connection between rhetoric and truth; concerns about the connection between rhetoric and style; spiritual concerns; and literary concerns (2). For length purposes, I shall restrict the discussion to Lewis's concerns with truth. In his letters, he acknowledges the role that rhetoric played in the success of Mussolini and Hitler, while also recognizing the role of gullibility in enabling their success (3), thus implying that both the speaker and the audience carry a mutual responsibility toward truth.

By exhibiting a comprehensive understanding of rhetoric's potential and pitfalls, Lewis opens himself to examination regarding his sincerity as a rhetorician. As Tandy notes in *The Rhetoric of Certitude*, "Lewis's basic approach to language, rhetoric, and style is functional and practical. He offers a balanced view of rhetoric that considers audience, occasion, and stylistic embellishment" (31). In his balanced manner, Lewis discusses issues of morality, human suffering, joy, and meaning. One recurring theme that spanned multiple of his books and genres in Lewis's books was his exploration of time.

TEMPORAL EXPLORATION IN LEWIS'S NONFICTION

Lewis addresses the topic of time on multiple occasions in his writings, touching on it overtly both and subtly. Perhaps one of the most obvious examples of his direct examination of questions of time can be found in his popular book *Mere Christianity*, in which Lewis dedicates an entire subchapter to explorations of the nature of time: "Time and Beyond Time." He uses rhetorical devices in his language as he begins to address his understanding of the nature of time, particularly, Pathos, Ethos, and Logos, making his case for time and the experience of time in our world in light of eternity. He uses his interpretation of the nature of time as a counterargument to claims against the Christian faith on the basis of time.

Lewis opens this chapter by reminding his readers that they have the freedom to skip over any chapters of which they have no use, reminding us that "all sensible people skip freely when they come to a chapter which they find is going to be of no use to them" (166). This is one of the many instances of Lewis employing a conversational writing style, which enhances his ethos and the readers' trust in him. Lewis is effectively engaging his readers, which not only draws them closer to him but also creates an approachable tone. He addresses

the reader directly saying “I am going to talk about something which may be helpful to some readers, but which may seem to others merely an unnecessary complication. If *you* are one of the second sort of readers, then I advise *you* not to bother about this chapter at all but to turn on to the next” (166, emphasis mine). The use of informal language, the reminder to readers that they have agency and the option to skip, and the implementation of second person pronouns collectively contribute to establishing a sense of approachability and identification with his audience.

Having enhanced the receptiveness of his audience, Lewis proceeds to lay down his arguments. Firstly, he begins by presenting a challenge that he often faces where a person cannot believe in God because he or she cannot accept the idea that God can tend to millions of human beings who are all praying to him at the same moment. Lewis’s counterargument to this statement begins with challenging the logic behind the wording of the sentence: “at the same moment.” According to Lewis, our inability to comprehend God’s ability to tend to everyone is due to our tendency to project our understanding of time on Earth, which has a clear beginning and end, onto an eternal being. This used to be an unpopular opinion until scientists found observational evidence in the twentieth century that the world had a beginning (Siegel). This can be viewed as a direct example of Lewis asserting that time has a starting point. Yet Lewis avoids any hint of condescension in his writing here. Instead, he acknowledges that our grasp of time is inherently limited, shaped by our limited personal experiences: “Our life comes to us moment by moment. One moment disappears before the next comes along” (*Mere Christianity* 167). Therefore, the approach Lewis argues for the linearity of a logical point of view: Logos. His depiction of this challenge is addressed using Pathos in his book *The Last Battle* where past, present, and future all merge together toward the end of the book. I discuss this more thoroughly in the section dedicated to *The Chronicles of Narnia*.

In Lewis’s discussion of time in *Mere Christianity*, he mainly relies on Logos to make his case for the linearity of time in the first few paragraphs of this chapter, he writes: “Almost certainly God is not in Time. His life does not consist of moments following one another.” Explaining that as the Creator of Time, God exists outside of it. He adds that God exists in a constant state of Present, explaining that every moment since the beginning of the world is Present for Him.

Immediately after, Lewis shifts the focus onto Ethos by postulating that he is not introducing a novel idea of his own regarding time. He emphasizes that theologians introduced the idea that some things exist outside of time; after the philosophers “took it over: and now some of the scientists are doing the same” (167). Lewis is demonstrating that the strength of his argument lies in its ability to align with experts from a variety of disciplines, including those who often

hold opposing viewpoints, and by questioning his credibility the reader would need to also question the validity of similar claims made by philosophers and scientists. He cites the fact that even individuals from the fields of theology, philosophy, and science have engaged in serious discussions regarding the potential existence of entities beyond the constraints of time. By drawing upon a diverse range of expert opinions and ideas, Lewis is able to construct a more comprehensive argument that accounts for a wider breadth of perspectives.

As for Lewis's view on time in Christianity, he asserts that it is almost certain that God is not in Time, emphasizing that time is but a line encompassed by an infinite, eternal being. His life, if we may call it so, unlike the human life, does not consist of one moment after another. He first supports this argument using Logos: "Ten-thirty—and every other moment from the beginning of the world—is always the Present for Him" (167). Yet, just as Lewis does with other complex matters, Logos is immediately followed by Pathos in order to make the argument less opaque. In this instance, Pathos is present in the form of examples, which Lewis uses to supplement the logic of his argument. These various examples that the audience finds familiar in everyday life make the argument both more understandable and more approachable. He asks the reader to imagine him writing a novel:

I write "Mary laid down her work; next moment came a knock at the door!" For Mary who has to live in the imaginary time of my story there is no interval between putting down the work and hearing the knock. But I, who am Mary's maker, do not live in that imaginary time at all. Between writing the first half of that sentence and the second, I might sit down for three hours and think steadily about Mary. I could think about Mary as if she were the only character in the book and for as long as I pleased, and the hours I spent in doing so would not appear in Mary's time (the time inside the story) at all. (168)

This illustration, though Lewis admits is not perfect, serves as Lewis's attempt at explaining how God has infinite attention to spare for each individual in our world. Lewis's primary theological argument here is that God as our maker does not live within the constraints of His creation which He made. Lewis's approachability continues to manifest itself in his direct address to the reader: "If *you* picture" that time is a straight line on a page, moving from A to B to C, *you* must leave A in order to get to B and then to C (169). God, Lewis insists, from outside this line, or around it, contains the whole line and sees at all at once. This is the crux of Lewis's argument regarding the concept of time in Christianity, and how God can accommodate all the prayers coming from all the millions of people at a given moment. God does not need to move from person A to person B's prayer; He rather encompasses all praying individuals who have

existed at any point in time. This appeal to the reader also demonstrates Lewis's use of Pathos and Logos intertwined, appealing to the imagination of the reader in order to address a logical challenge.

After presenting his theistic perspective on time, Lewis makes a deliberate effort to engage his secular audience by including their views in the discussion, thereby creating a sense of inclusivity. By doing so, he seeks to bridge the gap between different belief systems and foster a more collaborative dialogue. Lewis employs *identification* here once again by reminiscing to his days as a non-Christian. There is a noticeable shift in the choice of words as Lewis begins to identify with his non-Christian audience. As a result, he now refers to Christians as "the other" or "they." This shift in perspective demonstrates his deliberate attempt to create a more relatable and empathetic discussion. It also depicts an example of Lewis identifying with his secular audience reminding them that he once used to be in their shoes and share their views, and so he has experiential understanding of their skepticism toward Christian thought. One of Lewis's argument against Christianity used to be as follows: "The Christians said that the eternal God who is everywhere," became human and came to our world. If so, how did the whole universe continue to exist while he was a baby or while he slept? (169). Lewis aims to address concerns of his non-Christian audience by articulating their thoughts, thus actively helping remind his hostile audience that he is not preaching at them; he has been in their place and understands that it is difficult to relate to a completely different perspective, which in this case is the Christian perspective.

The response Lewis offers, which he probably found to be a satisfying response during his atheist years, is that "we cannot fit Christ's earthly life in Palestine into any time-relations with His life as God beyond all space and time" (169). By doing so, we are projecting our human perception of earthly time onto a timeless, eternal God. Lewis's tone continues to depict his genuine interest in explaining the idea of time clearly and in a relatable manner to his diverse audience. He concludes this chapter with a statement acknowledging the potential limitations of his arguments and their applicability to his audience. He notes that while these ideas have proven useful to him personally, their relevance may not extend to others.

In his final remarks, Lewis emphasizes that the subject matter of this chapter is subordinate to other, more pressing concerns in the realm of Christianity, and thus, he posits that individuals are free to either reject or disregard his arguments. This recognition of the inherent variability in the reception of his ideas demonstrates Lewis's nuanced and thoughtful approach to the subject matter. Moreover, Lewis reminds his audience that disagreements over our beliefs about the nature of time are not to be viewed as a determining factor regarding the rest of the book. By including this disclaimer, Lewis is

allowing the possibility of having his views on time be rejected without allowing it to invalidate his perspective on other, more critical issues.

The portrayal of time in *The Chronicles* is remarkably intriguing. Time in Narnia (the other world) takes on a different nature than time in England (the world of the narrator and the children in the books), which raises many questions, such as: Is the nature of time in the books linear or circular? Is it different in the different worlds of Narnia? These questions lead us to delve into Bakhtin's theory on chronotope. Bakhtin defines chronotope as follows:

We will give the name *chronotope* (literally, timespace) to the intrinsic connectedness of temporal and special relationships that are artistically expressed in literature. [...] Time, as it were, thickens, takes on flesh, becomes artistically visible; likewise, space becomes charged and responsive to the movements of time, plot and history. (84)

In other words, Bakhtin is referring to the constructed time and space of a literary piece, the fusion of time and space inherent to the narrative, and the reasons behind and consequences of the ordering of time in a narrative.

In the case of *The Chronicles*, the seven works can be read in at least three different ways: the first option would be to read them according to the order in which Lewis wrote them; the second option would be to read them in the order in which they were published; and the third option would be to read them according to the internal chronology of the events in the books. Each one of these readings offers a different experience and understanding of time in Narnia.

The Magician's Nephew, published in 1955, was the sixth of the seven books of *The Chronicles* that Lewis wrote. However, it is really the first book in terms of the internal timeline of the story, telling the story of the creation of Narnia and time in Narnia. The book opens with the narrator introducing the story in a classical tone: "This is a story about something that happened long ago when your grandfather was a child" (1.3). In this line, we encounter second-person narration, which serves to create an intimate experience with the text. It offers a literary technique of creating *identification* in fiction.

The story begins with two children called Polly and Digory, who were playing outside in the summer of 1900 in London. The novel proceeds to recount the way in which they met, followed by their exploration of an abandoned attic behind Digory's house, which leads them to being used by Digory's uncle, Uncle Andrew, in his science experiment. Polly and Digory, Uncle Andrew, Jadis (the queen of the dead world of Charn), and several other characters all witness the creation of Narnia, which is described as nothing being transformed into something just as "a voice had begun to sing" (8.106). We can draw some similarities between this scene and the story of creation as documented in the

Book of Genesis. Similar to Nothing, in Genesis the earth is described as “formless and empty” (Genesis 1:2). God then starts speaking things into existence, and the narrator of Genesis describes how things begin to form out of nothing and fill the earth. In both stories, the Creator uses sounds as part of creation.

Yet, in *The Magician’s Nephew* the narrator documents that “there were no words,” which could either mean there were no voices that would qualify as words known to the narrator or that the voice was more like a wordless melody. In *The Magician’s Nephew*, “[s]ometimes [the voice] seemed to come from all directions at once. Sometimes [Digory] almost thought it was coming out of the earth beneath them” (8.106). Shortly after, we see two developments: the voice is joined by countless other voices, which leads darkness to be replaced with a “thousand points of light” (8.107). The narrator reminds us that although there were many voices, it was the First Voice that made things appear. Once again, we see some parallels with the story in Genesis. In Genesis, “God said, ‘let there be light,’ and there was light. God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness” (Genesis 1:3). This moment mirrors the lines in Job 38:4-7: the scene here is set at the “foundation of the earth” and “the morning stars sang together.” The reaction that the characters have to hearing the voice is telling of their character. The Cabby and the children were “drinking in the sound [...] as if it reminded them of something” (*The Magician’s Nephew* 8.108). They were completely mesmerized and receptive of the voice, with a childlike reaction. This scene in the book is a beautiful depiction of the start of matter and time in the world of Narnia.

One last passage I would like to include in my reading of *The Magician’s Nephew* is found toward the end of the book. After meeting so many new beings and witnessing wonders and creation, the children, the Cabby, and Uncle Andrew are sent back by Aslan to London, to the world that resembles ours most. They find themselves back exactly in the same spot and at the same time as they had left their world: “I believe the whole adventure’s taken no time at all” (15.198) thought Digory. Each of the fictional worlds of Narnia seems to have its own time. First of all, it is different from time in our world. This is evidenced when Lucy enters Narnia for the first time: she spends a long time with the faun and then goes back home through the path next to the lamppost. When she is back, frantically looking for her siblings to reassure them that she is fine despite disappearing for a while, she and the readers learn that time did not pass in the “real” world of England in *The Chronicles*. However, the pattern which time passage follows in *The Lion* is not the case for all of the books.

Time seems to run inconsistently in the different books. As Mary Frances Zambreno summarizes the inconsistent nature of time in *The Chronicles* in her article “A Reconstructed Image: Medieval Time and Space in *The*

Chronicles of Narnia": "In *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, Narnian time flies; between *Lion* and *Prince Caspian*, centuries pass in Narnia while only a year goes by in England" (255). If we would stop our reading of Narnian time here, we might conclude that a day in England might be a thousand days in Narnia. However, this is not the case. Zambreno continues the summary saying that

between *Prince Caspian* and *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*, the difference between Narnian time and English time seems minimal, while between *Voyage* and *the Silver Chair* a man's lifetime passes in Narnia and in England less than a school term. Finally, in *The Last Battle*, Tirian wakes from a dream of England to find that Eustace and Jill have come to Narnia to free him, while in England nearly a week has gone by. (255)

It seems that time in Narnia is meant to be inconsistent; its patterns change and cannot be studied or analyzed in the same way as time in the real world. Rather, the passage of time in Narnia can only be experienced by those who find themselves within its borders. In Lewis's words in *The Voyage of the "Dawn Treader"*:

If you spend a hundred years in Narnia, you would still come back to our world at the very same hour of the very same day on which you left. And then, if you went back to Narnia after spending a week here, you might find that a thousand Narnia years had passed, or only a day, or no time at all. You never know until you get there. (1.10)

Thus, we may conclude that time does not pass in England while one is in Narnia, whereas time passes in different patterns or does not pass at all on Narnia while one is in England. This makes time in Narnia interesting, and it is especially interesting in the seventh and final book of *The Chronicles*, *The Last Battle*. In this specific book, time is given more attention than in any of the other books. Yet a specific aspect of time is not discussed in the other books and is included as a central theme in *The Last Battle*, and that is the concept of the end of time. The second chapter opens with the following sentence: "About *three weeks later* the last of the Kings of Narnia sat under the great oak which *grew* beside the door of his little hunting lodge, where he *often* stayed for *ten days* or so in the pleasant *spring* weather" (2.16, emphasis added). Through this use of Pathos, the emphasis on temporal language is elevated in this opening sentence, exhibiting another use of foreshadowing which indicates that time in Narnia is nearing its end. The choice of including "grew," "spring," and "ten days" further emphasizes the passage of time, and reminds the reader that with each passing sentence, we are nearing the end of time in Narnia. This king was called King Tirian. The origin of the name Tirian could refer to the Welsh word for

“land” or “ground.” The use of this name could be seen as a reminder to the reader that Tirian is an earthly king, reigning over the physical land of Narnia, whereas Aslan is the divine King over space and time in the books.

Thus, when the created time in Narnia, which started in *The Magician’s Nephew*, ends, the next phase marks a move to a state of eternalism or a constant present; the merging of all tenses. As for the description the narrator includes of this King of the Land of Narnia, Tirian is “between twenty and twenty-five years old; his shoulders were already broad and strong and his limbs, full of hard muscle, but his beard was still scanty. He had blue eyes and a fearless, honest face” (*Last Battle* 2.16). By introducing King Tirian in a positive light and emphasizing only his positive characteristics the narrator is leading the reader to develop a liking or affinity for his character. He is described as young, honest, and fearless. All traits of a great king. Thus, this earthly King and earthly time do not have a negative connotation in this book.

Lewis continues his poetic commentary on the passage from Matthew on false prophets by further relying on Pathos through the employment of more figurative language devices. In the narrative, Shift continues to use Puzzle to manipulate the other Narnians into thinking that Aslan is back. However, the Narnians who were paying attention to the signs of which Aslan warned them, and thus were able to tell that Aslan was not in Narnia yet.¹ And Tirian, though confused at first, can tell Shift after some examination: “Ape [...] You lie damnably. You lie like a Calormene. You lie like an Ape” (3.40). This topic of warning his readers of false prophets is also addressed in his essay “The World’s Last Night.” In his essay, Lewis examines the Second Coming of Christ and the end of the world. He discusses false prophets and the spread of chaos and destruction that, to his understanding, shall happen to our physical world. Lewis argues that these events are not to be interpreted literally, but rather in a metaphorical sense. The last battle at the end of times will be between good and evil. This thought-provoking essay also offers Lewis’s raw thoughts on the role and responsibility of Christians at the end of times, which he postulates are to continue to live a Christian life despite all the hindrances.

Toward the end of *The Last Battle* the narrator announces that “the last battle of the last King of Narnia began” (12.147). Once again, Lewis employs temporal language and devices to emphasize the concept of time and its progression throughout the book. The readers are reminded that the end is near and that this moment is the beginning of the end. In this last battle, King Tirian

¹ For example, the centaur Roonwit tells King Tirian that “Never in all [his] days [has he] seen such terrible things written in the skies as there have been nightly since this year began. The stars say nothing of the coming of Aslan, nor of peace, nor of joy” (*The Last Battle* 2.19).

is fighting for his life against Tash when seven Kings and Queens suddenly appear behind him: Jill, Eustace, Peter, Polly, Digory, Edmund, and Lucy (12.152-154). As we have previously noted, the passage of time in the world of Narnia differs from that of our world. We are now presented with another distinctive dissimilarity between time in Narnia and our world: namely, the phenomenon of time travel. These Kings and Queens come to Tirian's rescue from the deep past (166). And right after they are reintroduced to the narrative, Aslan's second coming is depicted as a "brightness [that] flashed behind them" (13.167). This particular moment in the narrative holds significant importance, as it symbolically unites the deep past (represented by the Kings and Queens of Narnia), the present (King Tirian), and the eternal King of Narnia (Aslan). This moment also signifies the beginning of the end of earthy Narnia, with the reminder that it is not the end of Aslan or eternity. The characters enter a realm where the past, present, and future blend together in a sort of eternal experience. Time loses its linearity and subjectivity, and it becomes rather a continuous present, which is a reiteration of the rhetoric of time in *Mere Christianity*. Therefore, the depiction of time and eternalism in *The Last Battle* can be read as the Pathos reiteration of Lewis's Logos-based arguments in *Mere Christianity*.

At this point, I would like to remind the reader of Lewis's direct remarks about time in his book *Mere Christianity* in which he states that he believes that time in our world has a starting point and an end. Logos is employed in *Mere Christianity* through the use of logical argumentation to support Lewis's stance on time. In *The Last Battle*, the narrative employs Logos by creating a world that has consistent and coherent internal rules and principles regarding time. Ethos in *Mere Christianity* is employed through the genuine and honest attitude Lewis adopts which enhances his credibility as well as the examples of the different philosophers, scientists, and theologians who share his views on time. In *The Last Battle*, Ethos is employed in the credibility of the narrative voice, and the consistency between their description of the character's inner motives with the conduct of the characters. As for Pathos, in *Mere Christianity* Pathos is employed through the use of examples to appeal to the emotions of the readers, the descriptive language, and the sense of empathy and *identification* that Lewis depicts in his writing specifically when he discusses his previous doubts regarding the Christian view of time. In *The Last Battle*, Pathos is evident in the narrator's description of the characters' intense emotions, the portrayal of evil and good in a very polarized manner, as well as the depiction of character development in the narrative.

One example of the employment of Pathos that relates to time in Narnia is through the depiction of the beginning of time in *The Magician's Nephew* and the end of time in *The Last Battle*. Time in Narnia began at the moment the characters marveled at the sounds that wove Narnia into existence in *The*

Magician's Nephew. Here, Lewis makes the idea of the end of time more comprehensible by including it as an event in *The Last Battle*. Aslan announces that the end is here by using this phrase which has a double meaning: "Now it is time!" (13.170). This proclamation means that the end is here. It also means that the character called Time is here. Aslan calls upon Father Time to awake from his deep slumber by repeating again and again: "TIME." Jill and Eustace remembered at this instance that Father Time would wake on the day the world ended. The sun is darkening, the stars are falling from the sky, and everything is winding down to its inevitable conclusion. Aslan proceeds to read and respond to Jill and Eustace's thoughts, proclaiming that "Yes [...]. While he lay dreaming his name was Time. Now that he is awake he will have a new one" (14.172). The book ends in a climactic moment where the forces of evil and good fight until the world is destroyed.

It is crucial to discuss the penultimate chapter of the book, for it reflects on Lewis's own theology. Here, Lewis reflects not only on the nature of time itself but also on the concept of life after time. Through his vivid imagery and powerful prose, he offers readers a glimpse into the promise of eternity and the hope that lies beyond the temporal world. For Lewis, the concept of life after time is central to his theology, and he explores this theme throughout his works. In the second-to-last chapter of the book, this theme is brought to the forefront, as the characters are transported to a new and mysterious land, symbolizing the promise of a new and better life beyond the end of the world. When the world gets destroyed, the characters who were with Aslan remain untouched. They, instead, find themselves in a different and better world: the real Narnia. Digory remembers that Aslan said you could never go back to Narnia, referring to the old Narnia, which

was not real Narnia. That had a beginning and an end. It was a shadow or a copy of the real Narnia, which has always been here and always will be: just as our own world, England and all, in only a shadow or copy of something in Aslan's real world. (15.195)

This explanation which Digory offers to the other characters is a restatement of the explanation Lewis is trying to offer to his readers in *Mere Christianity*. The readers ought to think beyond the realms of the books of Narnia, as the lessons Lewis includes in the books extend beyond the fantastic worlds of the Chronicles.

One of the greatest strengths of Lewis's writing, especially in *The Chronicles of Narnia*, is that it is able to speak to a diverse audience. Readers from different educational and religious backgrounds are able to enjoy the books and learn different lessons from them. One point I would like to emphasize is that

the books are also accessible to readers of different ages. Narnia is often regarded as a children's series and is mostly found in the children's literature section in bookstores and libraries. However, my interpretation, if successful, shows how it is not only young readers who can benefit from the lessons taught in the books. Lewis's writing is also rich in wisdom and insight for adult readers, offering a nuanced and thoughtful exploration of the human condition and the nature of faith.

CONCLUSION

The connection between ideology and literature has been a subject of scholarly interest and inquiry for decades, underscoring the great significance of the implications inherent in the intersection of personal viewpoints and literary creations: the reader is constantly consuming a message that is influenced by the worldview of the author. C.S. Lewis was a Christian when he wrote *The Chronicles of Narnia*. In this masterpiece of fiction, Lewis brings to life through vivid characters and a captivating plot his personal view of time. In *The Chronicles*, we see an echo of Lewis's remarks on time in his *Mere Christianity*: time has a start and an end, and though it is experienced differently by different people, or in different worlds in Narnia, time is subject to the authority of its Creator. Through discussing the rhetoric of time in C.S. Lewis, I aim to inspire readers to delve into the rhetoric of time and other thematic elements in the literature with which we engage.

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