The Strategy
CHAPTER - IV

THE STRATEGY

One of the most effective techniques that Lewis employs is the use of figurative language. The trilogy abounds in similes and metaphors that beautify the descriptive and narrative style of Lewis. But for his dexterous use of these literary techniques it would have been hard for the readers to understand the Malacandrian creatures and the different planets. His choice of comparative elements for the various aspects of the plot like the strange places, the alien creatures, the characters of the novel, outer space, and the heavenly beings are of immense help to the readers to picturise them. To make his comparison easier Lewis uses similes that are familiar to the reader.

In the novel Out of the Silent Planet, Lewis describes Ransom’s experience in the spaceship. He explains about the atmosphere of the spaceship. The heat and light that fills the spaceship is different from what he has seen on earth. The light inside is not very bright but of the palest colour of imaginable gold. It casts shadows ‘as sharp as flood light’ (25). The heat in the spaceship is free from moisture and does not lead to drowsiness but seem to knead and stroke the skin like ‘a gigantic masseur’ (25). Describing the unimaginable splendor of the stars of the sky Lewis writes that they are ‘as thick as daisies on an uncut lawn’ (28). Viewing the moon through the glass window of the spaceship he describes the moon to be ‘so white, so blinding and so large like a giant football just outside the glass. (18)
The Malacandrian landscape is a picturesque description. The soil of Malacandra is ‘pink, soft and faintly resilient like India rubber’. (38) Lewis describes the place through the viewpoint of Ransom. He says that the purple mass first appears ‘like a plump of organ pipes’ (41), and then ‘like a stock of rolls of cloth set up on end’. (41) He also compares it to ‘a forest of gigantic umbrellas blown inside out.’ (41) Lewis uses the simile of a ‘gigantic red cauliflower’ and ‘a huge bowl of red soapsuds’ (41) to describe the appearance of this land. The mountains of Malacandra are sharp and ‘needle like’. (63) They seem as if they leap into the sky ‘like solid-jets from some rock fountain’. (51)

Ransom journeys to the land of Meldilorn. Lewis compares it to an earthly landscape. It is a place of grey down land ridges that rise and fall ‘like waves of the sea’. (106) While describing the breath taking beauty of the handramit Lewis pictures a circular lake that is bordered by the purple forest. He uses the simile of ‘sapphire’ to explain the beauty of the lake. In the middle of the lake, there is an island of pale red. Lewis comments that it looks ‘like a low and gently slopping pyramid, or like a women’s breast’. (107) The tall trees of Meldilorn break into golden flowers bright ‘as tulip, still as rock and huge as summer cloud’. (107)

The use of similes promotes imaginative thinking and memory to the strange and unfamiliar names. The alien creatures of the trilogy play a vital part in claiming the novel as a science fiction. The sorn, one of the Malacandrian species is ‘long and spindle like creatures and looks like giants’. They look like the images seen in the comic mirrors. The hands of the sorns are fan shaped and seven fingered. A mere skin over the bone, it looks ‘like a bird’s leg’. The hross is
another species which has a coat of thick black hair, lucid ‘as seal skin’. It has very short legs with webbed feet, a broad ‘beaver-like or fish-like tail’. The hross has a ‘bell-like voice’. (80) It looks ‘like a penguin, like an otter, and like a seal’ (53). It also has thick black animal hair and whiskers ‘like a cat’. A pfifltriggi is ‘like a grasshopper’. Ransom humorously comments that this ‘frog-like animal’ looks ‘like a little old taxidermist’ that he has seen in London. (115)

The hross has a shell of an ‘oyster-like creature’ in it’s hand. A ‘pouch-like object’ hangs around it’s belly. Ransom notices that the creature adds a few drops of liquid into the water of the shell and drinks it. Commenting on the hross drinking water from the shell, Lewis writes, “the hross drank this water like a horse bending down, unlike man who throws his head back.” (55). Ransom’s first meeting with a hross called Hyoi is described as if it was ‘like courtship, like the meeting of the first man and the first woman in the world, it was like something beyond that.’

While describing Ransom’s journey to Meldilorn on Angray’s back Lewis writes,

‘Ransom was reminded alternately of a cat stalking, a strutting barn-door fowl a high-stepping carriage horse but the movement was not really like that of any terrestrial animals. It was like riding an elephant at the zoo in boyhood-like riding on his father’s back… The shadow of the sorn with Ransom’s shadow on its shoulder was like the shadow of a tree before the headlines of a car.’ (101)
When Ransom reaches Meldilorn his experience is compared to ‘a new boy at school, watching the arrival of the old hands’. (112)

Lewis’ remarkable creation of the trilogy is the eklilas or the angels. Ransom, the protagonist remarks, ‘The body of eldila is a movement swift as light. What we call light is for him a thing like water, what we call firm things is to him more like clouds’ (98). Narrating Ransom’s first encounter with the Oyarsa, the ruler of Malacandra Lewis writes,

‘Like a silence spreading over a room full of people, like an infinite...coolness on a sultry day, like a passing memory on some long forgotten sound are scent, like all that is stillest and smallest and most hard to seize in nature Oyarsa passed between his subject and drew nigh and came to rest, not ten yards away from Ransom, in the centre of Meldilorn’. (121)

The voice of an eldila is clear ‘like the chime of remote bells’. The Oyarsa of Perelandra and the Oyarsa of Malacandra are burning white ‘like white-hot iron’ the outline of their bodies are swiftly undulating ‘like that of a waterfall’. (374)

The use of similes while describing the characters of the novels presents an interesting portrayal. Ransom, Weston and Devine on reaching Malacandra settle down in a campment. He is just finishing his ‘protracted meat’ when he sees Devine stiffen ‘like a dog’ (42) at the sight of the Malacandrian creatures. Weston, who argues with the Oyarsa is taken out of the chamber to be punished for his behaviour. When he returns back his pale face under the bracing influence of cold water, looks ‘like the colour of the ripe tomato’ (139).
The novel *Perelandra* also abounds in the use of similes. Ransom reaches Perelandra in a ‘coffin-like chariot’ (320). On Perelandra Ransom’s experience is ‘like meeting pleasure’ itself for the first time. He studies the new planet sits on the central mountain peak of the whole island and looks down ‘like Robinson Crusoe on field and forest’. The landscape of Perelandra is also equally descriptive. The green valley of Perelandra is ‘like glass and marbled with streaks of scummy white’. (203) The water of the ocean as compared to earthly standards is ‘as warm as a shallow bog with sandy bottom in a subtropical climate’ and tastes ‘like freshwater’. The sky is pure and golden coloured ‘like the background of the medieval picture’. It looks very distant and far of ‘as a cirrus cloud looks from earth’ (203). Lewis compares the golden roof of Perelandra that quivers with rapid variation of paler lights ‘as a ceiling quivers at the reflected sunlight from the bath’. (204) The rays of the sun that falls on the land and sky which is a combination of green and blue compared to a ‘peacock’s tail’. (212)

Lewis uses the simile of ‘sea anemones’ for the feathery vegetation which is about the height of gooseberry bushes. There are strong trees with ‘tube like trunks of grey and purple’. (210) The yellow fruits that hang from the trees look ‘like the toy balloons that are clustered on the back of balloon man’. Fruits ‘like bilberries’ are also found on the upper slopes. The fruit named kernel has a toughly soft consistency rather ‘like cork or kidneys’. (270) There is a close thicket of stems that are ‘reed like’ in character but stout as those of birch trees. (279) The ground looks ‘like a carpet of saffron coloured vegetation’.
The dragon in Perelandra is a creature that looks like a lizard and is about the size of a ‘St. Bernard dog’. It has a tail like a ‘flying worm’ (220) and has two reptilian wings that are bluish gold and ‘bat-like’. (215) The other animals include ‘big pigeon coloured and flame coloured birds, dragons, beaver like creatures about the size of rats, creatures like very short legged and elongated pigs, the dachshunds of the pig world, animal like earthly dogs and many more. (224)

Tinidril, the Queen of Perelandra is also called the Green lady. When Ransom meets her for the first time he describes her appearance to be ‘like the beautifully coloured green beetle in an English garden’. (223) Later he notices that Weston the Un-man follows her everywhere, tempting her to disobey Maledil’s will. As she slowly starts yielding to temptation, Lewis comments that she looks ‘like a tragedy queen’. (299)

The arrival of the king and the queen is a picturesque description. The valley is filled with light which settles ‘like a lord upon his throne or like wire in a bowl’ and fills the whole ‘flowery cup’ of the mountain top with its purity. The king and the queen look ‘like Paradise walking hand in hand’, their bodies shining in the light ‘like emeralds’. Commenting on Mr. Bultitude, the bear, Lewis writes that his attitude is more ‘like a human egoist’ than like a ‘human altruist’. But with Ivy he is perfectly at home as ‘a savage who believes in the remote God’.

That Hideous Strength is a contemporary novel that expounds the idea of science being employed as a means to achieve man’s materialistic desire. Lewis contrasts the same idea with the submission of the human desire to the Divine will. The usage of apt similes enhances his style as a writer. Lewis’ descriptions of the
various places are well brought out with the help of similes. The beauty of the garden at St. Anne’s is compared to many places seen in literary books. As she travels to St. Anne’s, she sees a rabbit that stares at the moving train. The eyes of the animal are compared to ‘two dots’ and its ears look like ‘a double exclamatory mark’. Writing on the scenic beauty observed through the window, Lewis sketches the moon brightly shining. As the cloud passes her, it looks ‘like a ball’ that is rolling through them. The distant mountains as pictured by Filostrate are as follows.

‘The peaks of those mountains are real peaks: sharp as needles, they would go through your hand. Cliffs as high as Everest and as straight as the wall of a house. And cast by those cliffs, acres of shadow black as ebony, and in the shadow hundreds of degree of frost. And then, one step beyond the shadow, light that would pierce your eyeballs like steel and rock that would burn your feet’. (THS, 188)

Lewis uses the simile of ‘a ripe fruit’ when explaining the advantages of the sale of Bragdon Wood. The merits of the sale dawns on the College Committee ‘like a ripe fruit dropping into the hand’. (18) Mrs. Dimble disapproves the idea of Cure Hardy being owned by the NICE. The place that is invaded by police frightens her. She compares herself to the ‘frightened woman in Ibsen’. (75) The NICE experiments with animals cutting then like paper. (104). Commenting on the state of Belbury the headquarters of NICE, Merlin says that it will be destroyed like ‘straw in fire’ (220) The Deputy Director of NICE is always seen with looks
lost in thought. His evil intension is revealed through the ‘cat-like smile’ (123). Lord Feverstone is a man with a loud, unnatural laugh and the mouth ‘like a shark’. There is a cold ‘fish like quality’ (182) about Frost. Ms. Hardcastle’s behavior is not feminine but she behaves ‘as if she were a man’. (98) Steele’s face is long and ‘horse-like’. (54)

The Saracen’s Head is like ‘a man wearing a turban’ and its mouth works like an engine. The simile of ‘a cat walking on the top of a wall’ is used for the three men who walk towards the Saracen’s head. (195) Mac Phee, who disapproves Merlin stares at him like ‘an angry terrier that stares at a Newfoundland dog’ (307). Mr. Dimble’s words sound like ‘castles when he commands using the Old Solar Language. Lewis uses the simile of ‘two drops of quicksilver’ (306) to compare Merlin, the man who has been dug out of the earth and Ransom, the man who has been in outer space.

Ransom features as the Director of the Logres. Jane is filled with awe and wonder when she first meets him at St.Anne’s. Her description of Ransom is full of similes. To quote,

‘And the voice also seemed to be like sunlight and gold. Like gold not only as gold is beautiful but as it is heavy: like sunlight not only as it falls on English walls in autumn but as it beats down on the jungle or the desert to engender life or destroy it’. (THS, 151)

Lewis employs a number of similes to relate to the character of Mark and Jane who live a loveless relationship. Jane who waits for Mark to return from
work feels that the hours before her are ‘as empty as the flat’ (1). She lives a life of
dissatisfaction and emptiness. Her encounter with Ransom helps her to look within
herself for a new life. Ransom explains to her the importance of obedience and
humility between couples. At first Jane feels that Ransom is also expressing his
male superiority. Conversing with Ransom, she later understands the truth that he
is only trying to help her.

The meaning of the word obedience comes over her, in Ransom’s room
‘like a strange oriental perfume, perilous, seductive and ambiguous’. He also
quotes that ‘obedience and rule’ are more ‘like a dance’ than a drill especially
between man and woman where the roles always keep changing. (158). Later,
returning back to her house she sees the beams of sunlight pouring over the woods
and feels that they are ‘like the notes of a trumpet’.

Once the change comes over her she is able to appreciate life around her.
On her return back in the local train she feels that the speech of the sunny old man
in her compartment is ‘as sweet as a nut’. She considers her own beauty growing
and expanding ‘like a magic flower’ (161). Later, she even sheds off the little idea
of herself called ‘me’ into the bottomless distance, ‘like a bird in a space without
air’. (353)

Mark, Jane’s husband is an ambitious man who takes up a job at NICE, but
is treated ‘as a mouse’ by Wither, the Deputy Director. Only after he makes Mark
suffer a state of dejection does he throw him the suggestion of an appointment for
a probationary period at six hundred rupees per year. Lewis uses the simile of the
‘bone’ and the ‘dog’ to explain this. (353) Picturing the transformation in the
character of Mark, Lewis writes that Mark who is seen towards the end of the novel possess, ‘a donkey like determination to plant hoofs and stay still at all cost’ though he is ‘as helpless as the wooden cross’ seen at Belbury.

In solitude Mark is able to introspect within himself. He realizes that desire for materialism is the root cause of his captivity. He feels that his desire has been shaking him like ‘a dog shaking a rat’. (294) He also realizes the value of his wife. He feels light at heart as soon as he accepts his mistake. His mind feels emptied ‘like a sky after rain’ at the same time he feels exhausted ‘like a child after weeping’.

In the chapter, ‘The Descent of the Gods’ Lewis graphically narrates the visitation of the rulers of the other planets. Ransom’s house at St. Anne’s seems to be tilting and plunging ‘like a ship in a Bay of Biscay Gale’. The presence of Lurga or Saturn is compared to a mountain whose summit never comes into sight.

The climax of the trilogy is the final battle between the Logres and the people of Belbury. In the havoc that is caused by the animals, the elephant is seen thrusting its way into the room with its eyes enigmatic, its ears standing stiffly and ‘like the devils’ wings on each side of its head’. It tramples on the human beings and the fruits that are scattered around ‘like a girl treading grapes’. (390) The women at St. Anne’s who prepare to meet their husbands, select their own costumes. Camila’s costume is a long slender dress which looks ‘like steel in colour’ though it is soft ‘as foam’ to touch. Jane compares her to ‘the mermaid’ and she looks like ‘starlight’. (405)
Lewis also makes immense use of metaphors which contribute to the brilliant design of the trilogy. His use of metaphorical language alerts us to the possibility of a larger thematic meaning. In the novel Out of the Silent Planet, Lewis metaphorically calls the spaceship as a ‘strange chariot’, the ‘vast steel football’ and as the ‘little iron egg shell’. The metaphor occurs in relation to the shape of the spaceship. The metaphor of the ‘cold satellite’ refers to the moon. The eldil are denoted by a number of metaphors. It is called as the ‘sky-born’ owing to its heavenly abode. It is also called as the ‘footsteps of light’ and as ‘the homogeneous cylinder of light’.

In the novel Perelandra, Lewis uses the metaphor of the ‘golden roof’ and celestial mirror’ to the Perelandrian sky. The fixed land as seen by Ransom from a place of higher elevation is called as ‘big mats’ or ‘carpets’. The metaphor of the ‘greeny-gold hog’s back’ is an apt description for the landscape of the fixed land. The green lady, Tinidril in all her innocence, and calmness is called as a ‘Madonna’ before she begins to give heed to the ‘Tempter’, who is none other than Satan. Later she is described by the metaphor of the ‘tragedy queen’ (299) when she slowly yields to temptation but is miraculously saved by Ransom. Describing Satan standing beside the sleeping Tinidril, Lewis calls him the ‘Standing Death’. Weston the Un-man, an agent of devil is the ‘Tempter’ denoting the great Tempter the Devil. The King Tor and the Queen Tinidril walking together after the trial is described as ‘Paradise’ walking hand in hand.

In the novel That Hideous Strength, the metaphor of the ‘chocolate box’ is used to explain that Jane is a serious and intelligent woman and not a soft natured
girl. She preferred to wear clothes that would indicate that ‘she was an intelligent adult and not a woman of the chocolate box variety.’ Mark and Jane are referred as ‘the male and female birds’. Talking to Dimble, Mark questions if he is a ‘leper’ or ‘criminal’ (238) which means that he is treated as an outcast with ill reputation. The metaphor of ‘pawns’ explains that Feverstone is a man who does not like being an inactive person but would rather appreciate active involvement. The metaphor of ‘an army’ is used to indicate the strength of the NICE. It also means that they are a big group of people committed to a common cause.

The tramp is called as ‘a diabolist’ who means that he is a worker of infernal miracles. The metaphor of ‘an animal’ is used for the tramp’s eating habit which is noisy and uncivilized like that of an animal. (293) Merlin’s statement, ‘A daw that lives in a hermits cell’, the metaphor of the ‘daw’ refers to Mac Phee as he is viewed with low esteem and the ‘hermit’ refers to Ransom. ‘Gallows birds’ is a metaphor used by Merlin for Mac Phee. Merlin the magician is metaphorically referred as the ‘last vestige of an old order’. (315) The metaphor of ‘flower’ refers to Mark’s sister and the ‘tin can’ refers to his career. In retrospection, he traces how he has slowly become a materialistic person. He recalls his former days with sister which is now completely changed. To quote the lines, “The flower once safely planted among the tin cans, had turned into a tin can itself.”(270)

The strategical use of figurative language adds beauty and variety to the science fiction. It also assists the reader to comprehend the unfamiliar words through the simple examples used in the similes and metaphors. The trilogy is also a witness to the imaginative and descriptive style of Lewis. There are numerous
descriptive passages that add variety and beauty to the novels. The rich and brilliantly imagined alien landscape with the alien creatures is so refreshing and enjoyable. Lewis also employs the descriptive technique to expound the psychological conflicts, the combat between the good and evil and the ultimate triumph of the Good.

In the novel Out of the Silent Planet, Lewis describes the English countryside as witnessed by Ransom the protagonist, during his walking tour. The mysterious observatory and the damp woods give the novel a good start as a science fiction. The novel begins with the descriptive lines of a typical English countryside on a rainy day. He pictures the violet yellow sunset and the rain clouds that resemble a dark slate. Drops of rain water trickle down the trees and blades of grass. The wet metal road shines like a river. To quote.

"The last drops of the thundershower had hardly ceased falling when the Pedestrian stuffed his map into his pocket, settled his pack more comfortably on his tired shoulders, and stepped out from the shelter of a large chestnut tree into the middle of the road. A violent yellow sunset was pouring through a rift in the clouds to westward, but straight ahead over the hills the sky was the colour of dark slate. Every tree and blade of grass was dripping, and the road shone like a river." (OSP, 1)
In the midst of this desolate and cloudy place is situated 'The Rise', the place where Ransom meets Weston and Devine, the turning point of his life. The Rise as described by Lewis,

"... is a large stone house divided from him by a width of untidy and neglected lawn. The drive branched into two a little way ahead of him - the right-hand path leading in a gentle sweep to the front door, while the left ran straight ahead. The dark house looks inhospitable and lifeless with some of the windows shuttered and some gaped blank without shutter or curtain. The only sign of occupation is a column of smoke that rises from behind the house with a density which suggests a chimney of a factory, or at least of a laundry rather than that of a kitchen. (OSP,5)

Lewis describes the observatory that is situated on the backyard of the house. A path full of deep ruts that leads to the back portion of the house. There is a tall chimney with a low door filled with red firelight. A huge round shaped doom is seen behind. Ransom assumes that this should be the observatory. Lewis description of this mysterious house kick starts the suspense of the novel. He puts his readers on the track of a science thriller initiating the plot from an observatory, an apt place to begin a science fiction. .

Following the description of an English countryside and a mysterious 'observatory', Lewis takes his readers into a celestial journey bringing before their eyes the splendor of the night sky. The dazzling stars that are embedded on the
dark sky, the unbelievable majesty of the planets, the undreamt constellations, the tiny, remote comet picturesquely arranged on the enigmatic blackness are all samples of Lewis’ imaginative and creative power.

“There was an endless night on one side of the ship and an endless day on the other: each was marvellous and he moved from the one to the other at his will, delighted.... The Earth’s disk was nowhere to be seen, the stars, thick as daisies on an uncut lawn, reigned perpetually with no cloud, no moon, no sunrise, to dispute their sway. There were planets of unbelievable majesty, and constellations undreamed of: there were celestial sapphires, rubies, emeralds and pin pricks of burning gold; far out on the left of the picture hung a comet, tiny and remote: and between all and behind all, far more emphatic and palatable than it showed on Earth, the undimensioned, enigmatic blackness. The lights trembled: they seemed to grow brighter as he looked. All was silence but for the irregular tinkling noises.” (OSP, 28)

The detailed description of the spaceship and its functioning displays Lewis’ depth in scientific knowledge.

“The ship is roughly spherical, and now that we are outside the gravitational field of the Earth “down” means – and feels – towards the centre of our own little metal world. This, of course, was foreseen and we built her accordingly. The core
of the ship is a hollow globe – we keep our stores inside it – and the surface of that globe is the floor we are walking on.

The cabins are arranged all round this, their walls supporting an outer globe which from our point of view is the roof.”

(OSP, 25)

Lewis’ realistic description of the celestial beauty, the Malacandrian landscape and its inhabitants are few descriptions that linger in the minds of the readers. Malacandra is described as a land of breathtaking beauty. The earth is covered by soft, pink vegetation, the sky is pale blue and ‘the water is not merely blue’, in earthly sense but ‘really blue’. The landscape in full of different shades of colours and proves to be a treat to one’s imagination. To quote Lewis,

“A mass of something purple, so huge that he took it for a heather-covered mountain, was his first impression: on the other side, beyond the larger water, there was something of the same kind. But there, he could see over the top of it. Beyond were strange upright shapes of whitish green; too jagged and irregular for buildings, too thin and steep for mountains. Beyond and above these again was the rose-coloured cloud-like mass. It might really be a cloud but it was very solid looking and did not seem to have moved since he first set eyes on it from the manhole. It looked like the top of a gigantic red cauliflower – or like a huge bowl of red
Lewis describes Malacandra as a land of tall creatures. The trees and other creatures are also extra ordinarily tall. His specialty lies in his strategic method of employing known things while describing an unknown land. Capturing the beauty of Malacandrian vegetation, Lewis writes,

"The purple mass looked for a moment like a plump of organ-pipes, then like a stack of rolls of cloth set up on end, then like a forest of gigantic umbrellas blown inside out. It was in faint motion. Suddenly his eyes mastered the object. The purple stuff was vegetation: more precisely it was vegetables, vegetables about twice the height of English elms, but apparently soft and filmy. The stalks – one could hardly call them trunks-rose smooth and round and surprisingly thin, for about forty feet: above that, the huge plants opened into a sheaf-like development, not of branches but of leaves, leaves large as lifeboats but nearly transparent. The whole thing corresponded roughly to his idea of a submarine forest: the plants, at once so large and so frail, seemed to need water to support them, and he wondered that they could hang in the air. Lower down, between the stems, he saw the vivid purple twilight, mottled with paler sunshine, which made up the internal scenery of the wood." (OSP 41)
Describing the Malacandrian regions Lewis paints a beautiful scenery of the glittering lake, studded with islands and the sun shines from the pale blue sky. At the end, the lake vanishes into complicated groupings of land and water, embossed in the purple giant weed. This marshy land is bordered on each side with jagged walls of the pale green mountains that are tall, sharp and seemingly unbalanced. Behind and sometimes above the mountain peaks are great billowy piles of rose-red sunstones. The mountains seem to have no fall of ground behind them, rather of immeasurable table lands, higher in many places than themselves, which mark the Malacandrian horizon on either side.

Accounting for the Malacandrian creatures, Lewis' first description is a pale furry creature called the sorn that looks more like a giraffe. They are able to raise themselves on their hind legs and even progress several paces in that position. These yellow animals are slender and possess big liquid eyes. A hross another Malacandrian species is the black creature which is six or seven feet high. It has a coat of thick black hair, lucid as sealskin with short legs and webbed feet, a broad beaver - like or fishlike tail, strong fore-limbs with webbed claws or fingers. The sorn are seen with the giant stature, the cadaverous leaves, the long drooping wizard - like profile. The head is narrower and conical, the hands or paws are thin, mobile, spidery and almost transparent.

The pfifltriggi is a hairless creature that is long and pointed like a shrew, yellow and shabby - looking. It is more insect-like and looks like a reptilian. A part of its fore-limbs that is broad and padded is used for walking. Above it, at an
angle of about forty five degrees, is the true fore-arms that are thin yet strong which end in enormous and sensitive many fingered hands.

Lewis presents a variety of picturesque descriptions, each of them quite different from the other. He presents a bird’s eye view through Ransom who journeys to Meldilorn carried by Augray, the sorn.

“On each side of the shallow gully in which they were walking, a world of naked, paintly greenish rock, interrupted with wide patches of red, extended to the horizon. The heaven, darkest blue where the rock met it, was almost black at the zenith, and looking in any direction where sunlight did not blind him, he could see the stars.” (OSP, 101)

The place is almost near the limits of the ‘breathable’. The brightness is almost that of heaven, celestial light that is hardly at all tempered with an atmospheric veil. The threshold of Meldilorn, the seat of Oyarsa is a breath taking description. The brightly coloured valley is a classic portrayal of Lewis. The description that is viewed through Ransom’s eyes brings before one’s imagination a typical celestial city.

“The beauty of this new handramit as it opened before him took his breath away. It was wider than that in which he had hitherto lived and right below him laid an almost circular lake- a sapphire twelve miles in diameter set in a border of purple forest. Amidst the lake there rose like a low and gently sloping pyramid, or like a woman’s breast, an island of
pale red, smooth to the summit, and on the summit, a grove of such trees as man had never seen. Their smooth columns had the gentle swell of the noblest beech trees: but these were taller than a cathedral spire on earth, and at their tops they broke rather into flower than foliage; into golden flower bright as tulip, still as rock, and huge as summer cloud. Flowers indeed they were, not trees, and far down among their roots he caught a pale hint of slab-like architecture. He knew before his guide told him that this was Meldilorn.”

(OSP, 107)

Lewis adds a celestial touch to the sense of awe that he has already created, by the presence of the eldila, the heavenly beings. His descriptive style creates a serene atmosphere to meet the Oyarsa of Malacandra. Succeeding the descriptions of the red landscape of Malacandra, Lewis presents another feast of green and gold landscape in the novel Perelandra. Once again Lewis displays his unique descriptive style through Perelandra which is also full of descriptions of the Perelandrian creatures and its landscape.

The first description of Perelandra is the huge valley that shines green like glass and marbles with streaks of scummy white. The sky in the words of Lewis is pure, flat gold like the background of a medieval picture. The water is also golden and green. It first looks like emerald, lower down it is a lustrous bottle green, and then deepens to blue. Lewis keeps alternating his descriptions through the variations of the scenic backgrounds. The unusual ‘tinkling thunder’, ‘unendurable
lightening’ and the sudden downpour of the rain are so realistically brought forth. His strategy of creating Perelandra as a planet of fixed and floating lands is apt to distinguish the landscape of the two planets. The floating land is not only a new adventure to Ransom but an equally interesting discovery to his readers.

“IT was not flat. From its tawny surface a whole series of feathery and billowy shapes arose, very unequal in height; they looked darkish against the dim glow of the golden roof. Then they all titled one way as the thing which carried them curled over the crown of the water and dipped out of sight.” (PERE, 207)

The floating land is full of vegetable matter consisting of tubes and strings and bladders. These floating lands keep rushing through the water at a high speed and seem to be a kind of mattress. The valley on the dry land is a ‘long lonely valley with a copper – coloured floor. Gentle slopes clothed in a kind of many – coloured forest borders the valley. Lewis’ description of the sky after the showers is so beautiful that it lingers in a person’s memory for a long time.

“The orb itself remained invisible, but on the rim of the sea rested an arc of green so luminous that he could not look at it, and beyond that, spreading almost to the zenith, a great fan of colour like a peacock’s tail. Looking over his shoulder he saw the whole island ablaze with blue, and across it and beyond it, even to the ends of the world, his own enormous shadow. The sea, far calmer now than he had yet seen it,
smoked towards heaven in huge dolomites and elephants of blue and purple vapour, and a light wind, full of sweetness, lifted the hair on his forehead” (PERE, 212).

Another striking description of Lewis that stays alive in the readers mind is that of the ‘bubble trees’ found in the midst of the dark foliage of a greenish–grey thicket. The place reflects the light of the surrounding and is like a rainbow. The air is unusually cool and a fresh quality of fragrance fills the air. The description of the breaking of the bubbles is so impressive and uniquely creative.

“The tube or branch that is deprived of its pendent globe, ends in a little quivering orifice from which there hung a bead of crystal moisture. He looked round in some bewilderment. The grove was still full of its iridescent fruit but now he perceived that there was a slow continual movement. A second later he had mastered the phenomenon. Each of the bright spheres was very gradually increasing in size, and each, on reaching a certain, dimension, vanished with a faint noise, and in its place there was a momentary dampness on the soil and a soon-fading, delicious fragrance and coolness in the air. In fact, the things were not fruit at all but bubbles. The trees (he christened them at that moment) were bubble trees.”(PERE, 217)

Among the Perelandrian creatures the most predominant animal is the dragon with scales of red gold. It has two shining reptilian wings—bluish gold
and bat-like. Large, obese, dolphin-like fishes, coloured birds, heraldic-looking fishes and the singing stork are a few other creatures. The crown of the Perelandrian creations is the Green Lady. Lewis follows his own descriptive style to introduce the Green lady Tinidril, the mother of Perelandra. Lewis compares her to a green beetle in an English Garden. The Perelandrian landscape of the orange field and the green figure running across is a marvellous imagination.

"Ransom, from the valley in which he now stood, saw the orange-coloured land pouring itself like a moving hillside down the slightly convex slope of a wave far above him. The creature was still running. The width of water between the two islands was about thirty feet, and the creature was less than a hundred yards away from him. He knew now that it was not merely man-like, but a man - a green man on an orange field, green like the beautifully coloured green beetle in an English garden, running downhill towards him with easy strides and very swiftly. Then the seas lifted his own land and the green man became a foreshortened figure far below him, like an action seen from the gallery at Convent Garden."

(PerE, 223)

The descriptive style of Lewis that is so far mild and soothing, spreading a canvass of a variety of beautiful scenes and creatures now undergoes a radical change. Lewis lashes out a hideous and terror striking picture of the evil forces in the novel That Hideous Strength. He also presents a peaceful and serene
atmosphere among the people who trust God. He proves himself to be an expert in painting contrasting pictures of beauty and evil.

Weston, the Un-man is an incarnation of the evil force. Lewis’ symbolic description of Weston, who is possessed by the devil, is a frightening presentation. Following the sudden convulsions that affect him, his face twists out of recognition. Lewis also intensifies the deadly description by adding that Weston’s teeth closes on the neck of the bottle of brandy that Ransom offers and bites it thoroughly and no glass is spit out. This description hints that Weston is not a normal human being but an evil incarnation.

"Then horrible things began happening. A spasm like that preceding a deadly vomit twisted Weston’s face out of recognition. As it passed, for one second something like the old Weston reappeared the old Weston, staring with eyes of horror and howling, ‘Ransom, Ransom! For Christ’s sake don’t let them _’ and instantly his whole body spun round as if had been hit by a revolver bullet and he fell to the earth, and was there rolling at Ransom’s feet, slavering and chattering and tearing up the moss by handfuls. Gradually the convulsions decreased. He lay still, breathing heavily his eyes open but without expression. Ransom was kneeling beside him now. It was obvious that the body was alive, and Ransom wondered whether this was a stroke or an epileptic fit, for he had never seen either. He rummaged among the
packages and found a bottle of brandy which he uncorked and applied to the patient’s mouth. To his consternation the teeth opened, closed on the neck of the bottle and bit it through. No glass was spat out. ‘O God, I’ve killed him,’ said Ransom. But Beyond a spurt of blood at the lips there was no change in his appearance. The face suggested that either he was in no pain or in a pain beyond all human comprehension.” (PERE, 267)

Lewis’ second description of Weston, the Unman is further intensified. His forefingers have long sharp nails with which he tears the Perelandrian creature. Possessing features that are unrecognizable, ‘he did not look like a sick man: but he looked very much like a dead one’. His mouth is expressionless and his eyes have an unwinking stare. Lewis in his narration of the Un-man who is seated near Tinidril writes,

“But it looked, as before, dead rather than mad, sitting there with the head bowed and the mouth a little open, and some yellow dust from the moss settled on the creases of its cheeks, and the legs crossed tailor-wise, and the hands, with their lay metallic – looking nails, pressed flat together on the ground before it.” (PERE, 294)

The Un-man’s combat with Ransom is a similar description that acclaims the success of Lewis as a writer of science fiction. His choice of words and his
descriptions of the Un-man instill a sense of fear in the readers. Lewis’ description of the dual between Ransom and the Un-man is commendable.

“The Un-man was upon him, howling like a gale, with eyes so wide opened that they seemed to have no lids, and with all its hair rising on its scalp. It had him caught tightly to its chest, with its arms about him, and its nails were ripping great strips off his back. His own arms were inside its embrace and, pummelling wildly, he could get no blow at it. He turned his head and bit deeply into the muscle of its right arm, at first without success, then deeper. It gave a howl, tried to hold on, and then suddenly he was free. Its defense was for an instant unready and he found himself raining punches about the region of its heart, faster and harder than he had supposed possible. He could hear through its open mouth the great gusts of breath that he was knocking out of it. Then its hands come up again, fingers arched like claws. It was not trying to box. It wanted to grapple. He knocked its right arm aside with a horrible shock of bone against bone and caught it a jab on the fleshy part of the chin: at the same moment its nails tore his right.” (PERE, 327)

However, Lewis concludes *Perelandra* with a divine consolation after the hideous encounter with the demonic forces. The descriptions of the Oyarsa, the king and the queen again focus on Lewis’ subtle descriptive style. Portraying the
final appearance of the eldila, he describes them to be taller than the sorn of Malacandra and is almost thirty feet high. They are burning white like white-hot iron.

"Their bodies were white. But a flush of diverse colours began at about the shoulders and streamed up the necks and flickered over face and head and stood out around the head like plumage or a halo...The 'plumage' or halo of one eldil was extremely different from that of the other. The Oyarsa of Mars shone with cold and morning colours, a little metallic-pure, hard and bracing. The Oyarsa of Venus glowed with a warm splendour, full of the suggestion of teeming vegetable life". (PERE, 375)

The arrival of the King Tor and the Queen Tinidril in the grand finale of the novel Perelandra is also an interesting scene. The style employed here pictures the dramatic arrival of the King and the Queen.

"As the light reached it's perfection and settled itself, as it were, like a lord upon his throne or like wine in a bowl, and filled the whole flowery cup of the mountain top, every cranny, with its purity, the holy thing, Paradise itself in its two Persons, Paradise walking hand in hand, its two bodies shining in the light like emeralds yet not themselves too bright to look at, came in sight in the cleft between two peaks,
and stood a moment with its male right hand lifted in regal
and pontifical benediction.” (PERE, 381)

Thus, Lewis displays his excellent descriptive style throughout the trilogy. In *That Hideous Strength* Lewis’ love for nature and his ardent interest to preserve nature is revealed through his descriptions of the Bragdon Wood, a treasured possession of Bracton College. The focus of the trilogy is the war between the good and evil forces. One of the aspects that he highlights is the conservation of Nature, God’s choicest creation and the desire of the opposing forces to destroy it. The use of the descriptive style to expound this concept is a splendid strategy of Lewis. Lewis succeeds in giving the pleasure of enjoying a pastoral setting at the same time he also maintains the gothic style of a science fiction. The sixteenth century buildings, the ancient monuments, the ‘awful silence’ and the eerie sensation of the deserted place add to the thrill of the scientific novel.

Bracton College is a medieval college situated in the City of Edgestow with the river Wynd flowing across. Lewis first describes Bracton College before he proceeds to describe Bragdon wood. He leads the readers through the Newton quadrangle which is ‘dry and gravelly, florid yet beautiful with Gregorian buildings looking down upon it’. This leads into a cool tunnel-like passage that is nearly dark at midday. There is no light in it unless light penetrates through the open door. Emerging from the tunnel the reader is lead into the medieval college in the cloister of the much smaller quadrangle called Republic. The slow yet vivid pictures brought before the eyes is the handiwork of Lewis’ exquisite descriptive style.
“The grass here looks very green after the aridity of Newton and the very stone of the buttresses that rise from it gives the impression of being soft and alive. Chapel is not far off: the hoarse, heavy noise of the works of a great and old clock comes to you from somewhere overhead. You went along this cloister, past slabs and urns and busts that commemorate dead Bractonians, and then down shallow steps into the full daylight of the quadrangle called Lady Alice. The buildings to your left and right were seventeenth-century work: humble, almost domestic in character, with dormer windows, mossy and grey-tiled. You were in a sweet, Protestant world.”

(BHS, 9)

Beyond the building Lady Alice there are no buildings but only a row of elms and a wall. The place is full of serenity and quietness except for the melody of the running water and the cooing of wood pigeons. Beyond this wall is a covered gallery. The gallery is a sort of bridge on the dark brown Wynd flowing beneath. The wicket gate at the far end of the bridge opens into the ‘fellow’s bowling green’ from where one can see the high wall of the wood and its Indigo Jones gate.

Bragdon Wood and its lovely surroundings are so soothing that it brings in a spirit of tranquility in the hearts of the readers. The uninterrupted foliage in the distance and the warmth of the trees fills one with pleasant sensation. The beautiful description of being ‘surrounded by a world of shadows and walking in
mild sunshine is an evidence of his imaginative power. The sheep that graze around contribute to keep the grass short and well maintained. The serine atmosphere creates a sense of pleasure mixed with loneliness. Lewis remarks, “This is the sort of place which, as a child, one would have been rather afraid of or else would have liked very much indeed”. (THS, 10) Half a mile walk leads into the centre of the wood where lies the famous ‘Merlin’s Well’. There are steps that go down to it with the remains of an ancient pavement about it. Lewis brings in an antique feeling by his mention that the masonry is of late British Roman work, done on the eve of the Anglo-Saxon invasion. The air around is so still and the foliage is very dense.

Lewis makes the Bragdon Wood and Merlin’s Well the centre of the novel That Hideous Strength. There is one group that fights to preserve the ancient treasures for its scenic beauty. At the same time another group that works to destroy the wood and construct a new model village that might be completely free from organic matter. The two opposing forces are the NICE and the Logres.

The Logres live at St.Anne’s, which is similar to the environment of Bragdon Wood. It is also situated in the midst of a beautiful garden. The entrance is through a brick path beside a wall where fruit trees grow. On the left is another path with gooseberry bushes on either side of it. This path leads to a little lawn with a see-saw in the middle of it and beyond that is a greenhouse. A barn, a stable, a pig sty, a potting shed and another green-house are a few other places that are seen here. Further away there is a vegetable garden and rose bushes on a steep
hillside. Plantations of 'rhododendron and laurel' lead to a small side door of a large house.

The garden of St. Anne’s is artistically and meticulously planned. It leads into a large house. From the description of the landscape Lewis shifts to a domestic living room describing the room in detail. It is “a large sparsely furnished room with a shut stove to warm it. Most of the floor is bare, and the walls, above the waist – high wainscoting, were of greyish white plaster, so that the whole effect is faintly austere and conventual.” (THS, 59).

Lewis very artistically contrasts the beauty of St. Anne’s with that of the Blood Transfusion office at Belbury, the headquarters of NICE. Belbury is an enclosure of about twenty acres surrounded by a low brick wall surmounted by an iron railing. The entire space is laid out in what is called an ‘Ornamental Pleasure Ground’.

“There are trees dotted about and winding paths that are covered with round white pebbles that makes walking very difficult on it. Immense flowers of oblong, lozenge shaped and crescents are seen everywhere. A plantation of laurel that looks as if it is made of cleverly painted and varnished metal. Massive summer seats of bright green stands at regular intervals along the paths. Inspite of the presence of the variety of flowers the whole place is unattractive and has the effect of a municipal cemetery.” (THS, 104)
Lewis’ descriptions of the two Heads are graphic portrayals. The two different heads that Jane sees in her dream belong to Alcasan the radiologist, which is later referred to as the Saracen’s Head and the other belongs to Merlin, the magician. The description of the Saracen’s Head is a hideous and gripping presentation. Lewis’ imagination in describing the functioning of the Saracen’s Head is terror striking.

“The face has a beard, nose and eyes that is hidden by coloured glasses. The face is a kind of a balloon thing looking like a man wearing a sort of turban. The skull is removed and a great big mass bulges out of the head. A rhythmic huff, huff, comes out of it as it tries to breath and the mouth begins to dribble over the beard that is stiff and dead looking.” (THS, 159)

The chapter entitled Banquet at Belbury is a horrifying depiction of the destruction of Belbury. The vivid descriptions of the chaos among the animals, the riot between the members present and finally the human sacrifice compliment to expound the theme of the trilogy. It focuses on the destructions that befall the people whose belief is in their own efficiency and not on their Creator God. On the other hand, in the chapter entitled Venus at St.Anne’s there is peace and tranquility that fills the inhabitants of St. Anne’s who trust God and give Him the due respect. There is a spirit of oneness, happiness and contentment in the dining-room.

“Dinner was over at St Anne’s and they sat at their wine in a circle about the dining – room fire. As Mrs. Dimble had
prophesied, the men had cooked it very well: only after their serving was over and the board cleared had they put on their festal garments. Now all sat at their ease and all diversely splendid: Ransom crowned, at the right of the hearth; Grace Ironwood, in black and silver, opposite to him. It was so warm that they had let the fire burn low, and in the candlelight the court dresses seemed to glow of themselves.”(THS, 410)

Thus, descriptive passages are a striking feature of the trilogy. They help in picturising various scenic backgrounds, the wonderful creatures and the awesome celestial beauty. Lewis also uses the descriptive technique to assist in bringing out the theme of the trilogy. He proves his craftsmanship in employing the descriptive technique to juxtaposing both the pleasant and refreshing descriptions with the fearful and hideous descriptions of the evil agents.

Lewis descriptions are impressive. They abound in realism and fantasy. The trilogy grips the attention of the readers from the very beginning because they are rich in variety and vividness. His easy flow of words, interesting narration, unsurpassed expression and the elegance of the descriptions place him undoubtedly as a brilliant artist.

The trilogy is a storehouse of collective themes based on theology, science, technology, ethical and moral values. The use of the technique of flash back in the trilogy is noteworthy as it helps to sustain the interest of the readers throughout the novels. It functions as a device to interconnect the three novels and to review the
events of the previous novels. Critics comment that in the commonest form of flashback, the author makes the character reminiscence about events that happened in the past. This takes us backwards in time without disturbing the flow of the narrative. It is of immense importance to the trilogy as ‘time-shift’ is an integral feature of a science fiction. Accordingly, Lewis employs the technique of flashback to transport the readers backwards in time as the novel proceeds.

In the novel Out of the Silent Planet, the first visit of Weston and Devine to Malacandra occurs as a flash back of the Oyarsa, the spirit king. The episodes like the rising of Jupiter and the hross funeral are flash backs of Ransom. In the novel Perelandra, Lucifer’s fall and the death of Christ at Calvary are reminisces of the Un-man, an evil agent. In the novel That Hideous Strength, the childhood recollections of Jane and Mark throw light on their character.

The flashback of Oyarsa in Out of the Silent Planet reveals the purpose of Weston and Devine’s visit to Malacandra. The plot begins with their second visit to the planet Malacandra. The reason for this space journey is unknown to Ransom and to the readers as well. Recalling the first encounter between the inhabitants from earth and the Malacandrians in the flash back helps to maintain the suspense in the novel. Had Lewis opted to begin the novel with the first visit to Malacandra the already long novel would be still longer and dreary. Besides this, the suspense also gives the readers the thrill of reading a science fiction.

The Oyarsa of Malacandra recollects the first visit of Weston and Devine to Malacandra when he converses with Ransom. According to him, the event dates back to two years as per the Malcandrian standards. The same is related to four
earthly years. The Oyarsa recalls the incident and narrates it to Ransom. He pictures the airship’s first entry and its landing on the Malacandrian soil. It is monitored by the eldila as soon as it enters the ‘heavens from the earth’. The eldila also follow the airship as it sails over the harandra to finally land on the handramit.

The Oyarsa also recalls how more than half his servants have been standing around to witness the strangers come out from the spaceship. He gives the men some time to get accustomed to the new world and then sends a sorn to talk to them before the Oyarsa sends for them. But Weston and Devine never show signs of friendliness. Instead they are interested only in collecting gold called ‘Sun’s blood’ in the Malacandrian language. The Oyarsa tries to get more information through the eldila. Unable to understand the motives of the Thulcandrians he expresses his desire to talk to them. The flashback of the Qyarsa is as follows.

“Two years ago – and that is about four of your years – this ship entered the heavens from your world. We followed its journey all the way hither and the eldila were with it as it sailed over the harandra, and when at last it came to rest in the handramit more than half my servants were standing round it to see the strangers come out. All beasts were kept back from the place and no hnau yet knew of it. When the strangers had walked to and fro on Malacandra and made themselves a hut and their fear of a new world ought to have worn off, I sent certain sorns to show themselves and to teach the strangers our languages. I choose sorns because they are
most like your people in form. The Thulcandrians feared the sorns and were very unteachable. The sorns went to them many times and taught them a little. They reported to me that the Thulcandrians were taking sun’s blood wherever they could find it in the streams.” (OSP.124)

As the Oyarsa is the Ruler of Malacandra he expects the Thulcandrians to meet him and feels insulted when they do not listen to his word. But Weston and Devine avoid meeting the Oyarsa because they believe that the Oyarsa want them as a human sacrifice. Overcome by fear they leave the planet Malacandra and return back after two years with Ransom whom they have kidnapped. The Oyarsa finds the action of Weston and Devine mysterious. Expressing this to Ransom he remarks,

“When I could make nothing of them by report, I told the sorns to bring them to me, not by force but courteously. They would not come. It would have been easy to take them; but though we saw they were stupid we did not know yet how bent they were, and I did not wish to stretch my authority beyond the creatures of my own world. I told the sorns to treat them like cubs, to tell them that they would be allowed to pick up no more of the sun’s blood until one of their race came to me. When they were told this they stuffed as much as they could into the skyship and went back to their own world.” (OSP.125)
Weston and Devine are ignorant of the Malacandrian life and the Oyarsa. So when the Oyarsa wants to meet them, they hurriedly leave the planet out of fear. They assume that Oyarsa wants to eat one of them and so travel millions of miles to fetch Ransom as a sacrifice.

The flash back of Oyarsa serves to maintain the suspense of the novel. It also distinguishes the nature of the Thulcandrians from the Malacandrian creatures. The Malacandrians treat the Thulcandrians with respect and love whereas the men from earth are selfish and corrupt reflecting on their fallen state.

Ransom’s adventures on Malacandra are brought out through his flashback in the postscript of Out of the Silent Planet. His reminiscence of the solemn occasion of the ‘hross funeral’ and the dazzling scene of the ‘raising Jupiter’ is an interesting narration. The rising of Jupiter is a splendid portrayal. Ransom describes this to Lewis who features as his friend. The effect of the scene is so great that it has ‘worked into’ him and is always before him when he closes his eyes. To quote his words,

“In one of them I see the Malacandrian sky at morning: pale blue, so pale, that now, when I have grown once more accustomed to terrestrial skies, I think of it as almost white. Against it the nearer tops of the giant weeds – the ‘trees’ as you call them – show black, but far away, across miles of that blinding blue water, the remoter woods are water-colour purple. The shadows all around me on the pale forest floor are like shadows on snow. There are figures walking before
Accounting for the hross funeral, Ransom states that in Malacandra except a few no one dies before his time. All of them live their full span and death is predicted and is made known to everyone. Before they die, they meet the Oyarsa to get his last counsel and then he is ‘unbodied’ by Oyarsa. Ransom recalls the procession of the soms with dim organ like music that fills the wood. Three grey creatures are helped into a boat which is to sail to Meldilom where they are supposed to die. Though the entire village is solemn at the departure, there is no sign of passionate grief and they do not doubt their immortality. Ransom also mentions that death is a fearless and meaningful incident. ‘It is not preceded by dread nor followed by corruption’.

“For in that world, except for some few whom the hnakra gets, no one dies before his time. All live out the full span allotted to their kind, and death with them is as predictable as a birth with us. The whole village has known that these three will die this year, this month; it was an easy guess that they would die even this week. And now they are off; to receive the last counsel of Oyarsa, to die, and to be by him ‘unbodied’. The corpses, as corpses, will exist only for a few minutes: there are no coffins in Malacandra, no sextons,
churchyards, or undertakers. The valley is solemn at their departure, but I see no signs of passionate grief. They do not doubt their immortality, and friends of the same generation are not torn apart. You leave the world, as you entered it, with the ‘men of your own year’. Death is not preceded by dread nor followed by corruption.” (OSP, 165)

The second scene that occurs as a flash back in the same chapter is a brilliant celestial portrayal. Ransom sees himself bathing and swimming clumsily with Hyoi in the warm lake. As he swims he enjoys the sight of the dark night sky and the bright stars. Then suddenly, yet very slowly he sees a ‘dazzling necklace of lights brilliant as planets’, rising like a constellation behind the mountain top. This radiance is followed by yet something more, ‘a glow like noon light’. The bright rays fill the whole handramit with a ‘colourless light’. Ransom compares this to the Milky Way that is seen through the largest telescope on earth.

‘And now I guess what it is that I have seen – Jupiter rising beyond the Asteroids and forty million miles nearer than he has ever been to earthly eyes. But the Malacandrians would say ‘within the Asteriods’, for they have an odd habit, sometimes of turning the solar system inside out. They call the Asteriods the ‘dancers before the threshold of the Great Worlds’. The Great Worlds are the planets, as we should say, ‘beyond’ or ‘outside’ the Asteroids’. (OSP, 166)
The flashbacks of Ransom comprise of beautiful and picturesque description of God's awesome creation. Lewis presents the unimaginable heavenly wonders in his striking portrayal of Ransom's life in Malacandra. In the second novel 'Perelandra' Ransom's brief references to the Malacandrian life helps to link the second novel with the first. But the two important flashbacks are that of Weston, the Un-man. Lewis brilliantly leads the plot of Perelandra from the scientific perspective to the biblical perspective. Weston who reaches Perelandra is possessed by the evil force. Lewis refers to him as the Un-man whose mission to Perelandra is to destroy it by making Tinidril fall into temptation. Ransom is sent to Perelandra to save Tinidril and Perelandra from the evil power. But, the Un-man persuades her to live on the fixed land, while it is Maleldil's command to Tinidril that she should not sleep on the fixed land.

Tinidril is tempted to leave the floating land and live on the fixed land which is an act of disobedience to the Great Maleldil. Ransom as an agent of God tries to warn the lady against the Un-man's wicked ways. But the Un-man strives to prove to the lady, that it is wiser than Ransom and recalls its own days with Maleldil in heaven. It recollects its glorious time when he reigned as an angel of the highest order.

'I am older than he is', it said, 'and he dare not deny it. Before the mothers of his mothers were conceived, I was already older than he could reckon. I have been with Maleldil in Deep Heaven where he never came and heard the eternal
councils. And in the order of creation I am greater than he, and before me he is no account. Is it not so?" (290)

Thus Lewis refers to the fall of the rebellious angels through the flash back of the Un-man. Following this is another reminiscence of the Un-man, when he is defeated by Christ on the cross of Calvary. This occurs when Ransom indulges with a physical combat with the Un-man to save the fallen queen of Perelandra as he is commissioned to save Perelandra from the hands of the evil power.

Ransom witnesses the Un-man’s ceaseless attempts to allure Tinidril to fall into temptation. He notices that her integrity keeps fading day by day. He also realizes that he has been brought to Perelandra for this very hour, to redeem the Eve of Perelandra. If he fails to encounter the Un-man now, Tinidril will become a prey to the Un-man’s temptation like Eve in the Garden of Eden. So Ransom resolves to destroy the Un-man. The Un-man in its attempt to dissuade Ransom from executing his mission begins to mock him. It recalls the great incident two thousand years back when Christ offered Himself as a ‘ransom’ to redeem mankind. Christ, the Son of God suffered on the cross and laid down his life for the sins of mankind. While Christ, the Son of God suffers on the cross, God, the Father hides Himself as He could not see His only son suffering. Christ looks up to heaven and cries out to His father in Aramaic ‘Eloi, Eloi, lama Sabachthani’ which means ‘My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?’ The Un-man quotes the very words to Ransom that Christ Himself was helpless on the cross and so Ransom also will be left helpless in his bold venture to encounter the Un-man.
“And you think, little one’, it answered, ‘that you can fight with me? You think He will help you, perhaps? Many thought that. I’ve known Him longer than you, little one. They all think He’s going to help them – till they come to their senses screaming recantations too late in the middle of the fire, moulding in concentration camps, writhing under saws, jibbering in mad-houses, or nailed on to crosses. Could He help himself? – and the creature suddenly threw back its head and cried in a voice so loud that it seemed the golden sky – roof must break, ‘Eloi, Eloi, lama Sabachthani’. And the moment it had done so, Ransom felt certain that the sounds it had made were perfect Aramaic of the First Century. The Un-man was not quoting, it was remembering. These were the very words spoken from the cross, treasured through all those years in the burning memory of the outcast creature which had heard them, and now brought forward in hideous parody; the horror made him momentarily sick”.

(PERE, 327)

Lewis through the flashback of the Un-man voices forth the burning hatred and the unquenchable desire of Satan to take revenge on God and his creations. But Christ’s final victory on the cross however forces him to face his defeat. A defeated angel, he can only take pleasure in the momentary cry of Christ to His Father when the sin of the world is unbearable on Him. Lewis highlights a realistic
picture of Satan’s attitude and also the struggle experienced by Ransom in his war against the Un-man.

In the novel *That Hideous Strength*, the flash back of Jane and Mark give a psychological insight into their childhood. Focusing on the relationship between spouses, Lewis depicts the psychological crises experienced by them. They are typical examples of a contemporary couple who are career oriented and loose their love for each other.

Jane reflects on her childhood days with her mother. From her childhood she has always been reserved. She recalls that she has always kept away from sentiments and emotional outpour. She has even resisted her Mother’s embrace thinking that it is a sign of immaturity. She has never approved the idea of being petted by anyone. ‘When she thought of her childhood Jane usually remembered those occasions on which the voluminous embrace of the nurse or Mother had been unwelcome and resisted as an insult to one’s maturity.’ (THS, 21) This attitude reflects later in her relationship with Mark. She is too proud to admit her fears and affection to him. Lewis thus traces the childhood attitude that later dominates between Mark and Jane ruining their marital relationship.

The flashback of Mark retraces his life when he is imprisoned in the NICE. He remembers the various incidents in his life right from his childhood to his imprisonment at Belbury. He now understands that he has foolishly trusted Feverstone who has lured him into a ‘big money job’. He wonders at his lack of discretion. He slowly realizes that he has always been ambitious and his aim is always to be successful in whatever he did. He now realizes that in the name of
success he has been ignoring the things that would bring him joy. He visualizes himself as a little boy overhearing his sister Myrtle’s conversation with her friend Pamela. He recalls the incidents when he went after things that do not offer real joy. One such is the time he spent trying to join the ‘athletic heroes of the Grip, in the process of which he loses his friend Pearson. To quote Mark’s flashback,

‘Was there no beginning to his folly? Had he been utter fool all through from the very day of his birth? Even as a school boy, when he had ruined his work and half broken his heart trying to get into the society called grip, and lost his only real friend in doing so? Even as a child, fighting Myrtle because she would go and talk secrets with Pamela next door?’ (THS, 268)

Mark introspects his life as a teenager and feels disgusted at himself. As a teenager, his real enjoyment lay in reading books by John Buchan and drinking stone ginger whereas he read grown-up novels and drank beer to show himself as a grown-up boy.

“He looked back on his life not with shame, but with a kind of disgust at its dreariness. He saw himself as a little boy in short trousers, hidden in the shrubbery besides the paling, to overhear Myrtle’s conversation with Pamela, and trying to ignore the fact that it was not at all interesting when overheard. He saw himself making believe that he enjoyed those Sunday afternoons with the athletic heroes of Grip
while all the time (as he now saw) he was almost homesick for one of the old walks with Pearson – Pearson whom he had taken such pains to leave behind. He saw himself in his teens laboriously reading rubbish grown-up novels and drinking beer when he really enjoyed John Buchan and stone ginger.”

(THS,269)

The flash back leads Mark to realize his mistakes and helps him to take the right decision. He regrets for sacrificing the people who mattered the most to him. Myrtle, his twin sister, Pearson his friend at school, Denniston his college mate, and finally Jane, his wife are the people whom he takes for granted. He realizes that he has been miserably attempting to pretend that he could enjoy his career and his success but true happiness lies not just in professional achievements but living in loving fellowship with family and friends. Down in the cell, the memories of his life fills him with self pity.

Every marked attitude of a man can be traced back to an origin in childhood. Lewis retraces the life of Mark and Jane from their early childhood and also comments on their cold relationship. Mark makes up his mind to come out of this falsehood and live for himself and his interest. Lewis’ use of the technique of flashback thus serves to maintain the suspense of the novel, expound theological truths and to provide psychological insights into the characters of Mark and Jane. The reminiscences of the events that happened in the past are skillfully linked with the present. The use of the technique of flashback by the characters also adds variety to the novels.
Featuring alongside the technique of flash back, is the use of stories that are narrated by the different characters of the novels. These narrations are in accordance with the characteristic features of a short story. They are also instrumental in bringing out the important themes of the trilogy.

The stories that occur within the trilogy make the novels more readable and enjoyable. It is one of the many methods that Lewis employs to add variety to the science fiction. His skill as a storyteller is revealed through these stories.

The story of the war in heaven, the story of Adam and Eve, the story of Ransom, the story of Merlin and finally the episode of Mr. Bultitude are various stories that are narrated within the main story. The actions, thought and interactions between the characters of the trilogy are carefully organized into the artful pattern of the plot. It has a beginning and develops to middle and proceeds to some sort of denouncement at the end. It is also interesting to note that Lewis uses the traditional phrases, 'once' and 'long ago' to begin the stories.

Lewis presents the story of the ‘War in Heaven’ through the Oyarsa of Malacandra in Out of the Silent Planet which is a short narration yet complete by itself. The Oyarsa while conversing with Ransom tells him about the angelic war in heaven and about Lucifer’s fall to Thulcandra. Lewis explains the most vital aspect of his theme through the story of the War in Heaven. He borrows the material from the angelic rebellion that is recorded in the Bible.

The fall of the angels is the greatest catastrophe in the history of the universal creation. It begins mysteriously with Lucifer’s defiance of God and the consequent fall of perhaps one third of the angels who joined him in his
wickedness. Before this tragic fall, he was the most brilliant and the most beautiful of all created beings in heaven. The result of his rebellion is the insurrection and the War in Heaven. This war leads to the isolation of Lucifer, the angel of light and his host of followers from God, (referred as Maleldil by Lewis) and the other angels. Oyarsa says that these fallen angels rule the earth or Thulcandra. The narration is as follows.

‘Once we knew the Oyarsa of your world – he was brighter and greater than I – and then we did not call it Thulcandra. It is the longest of all stories and the bitterest. He became bent. That was before any life came on your world. Those were the Bent Years of which we will speak in the heavens, when he was not yet bound to Thulcandra, but free like us. It was in his mind to spoil other world’s besides his own. He smote your moon with his left hand and with his right he brought the cold death on my Handra before its time... we did not leave him so at large for long. There was great war, and we drove him back out of the heavens and bound him in the air of his own world as Maleldil taught us. There doubtless he lies to this hour, and we know no more of the planet. It is silent. We think that Maleldil would not give it up utterly to the Bent One, and there are stories among us that he has taken strange council and dared terrible things wrestling with the Bent one in Thulcandra”. (OSP, 123)
The narration also reflects on the birth of Christ on earth. Maleldil ‘dared to do terrible things’ refer to God Almighty taking the form of man, and sacrificing His life for mankind. He battles with Satan to redeem mankind from the bondage of sin, and makes them heirs to the eternal kingdom restoring unto them the joy that was lost at Eden. Ransom is imparted with the knowledge of this truth through the Oyarsa’s narrative which Lewis presents in the form of the story.

In Perelandra, Lewis narrates the story of Adam and Eve and their fall through Ransom, the protagonist. The evil spirit in the form of Weston, the Unman is vigorously indulged in tempting Tinidril, the mother of Perelandra. The story of Adam and Eve and the tragic fall of man is brought out in the form of a short story.

“Long ago, when the world began, there was only one man and one woman in it, as you and the king are in this. And there once before he stood, as he stands now, talking to the woman. He had found her alone as he has found you alone. And she listened and did the thing that Maleldil had forbidden her to do. But no joy and splendour came of it. What came of it I cannot tell you because you have no image of it in your mind. But all love was troubled and made cold, and Maleldil’s voice became hard to hear so that wisdom grew little among them; and the woman was against the man and the mother against the child; and when they looked to eat there was no fruit on their trees, and hunting for food took all
their time, so that their life became narrower, not wider.”

(PERE, 291)

The subject of this short narration is taken from the book of Genesis chapter one. The plot of this story is set in the Garden of Eden. The characters are Adam, Eve, Satan and God. They refer to Tor, Tinidril, Un-man and Maleldil respectively. God forbids them to eat the fruit of the particular tree. But Satan, in his zeal to take revenge on God and his creations, tempts Eve and succeeds in making her disobey God’s commands. Satan finds Eve alone and therefore uses it for his advantage. The result of this action is the loss of real joy and happiness. The unity of Adam and Eve is broken as they accused each other for the sin committed. Death enters the earth and there arises a breach in their relationship with God.

In the novel, That Hideous Strength the story of the Fisher-King or Ransom is narrated by Denniston and later the same story is narrated by Mac Phee. The narration of the story of Ransom serves to recapitulate the happenings of the previous two novels. The narration of the Arthurian Legend is interwoven with the plot of the third novel. It is narrated by Dr. Dimble and again by Denniston. Merlin the magician of the legend becomes the most important character in the novel.

Lewis, who has been transporting his readers to the scriptural episodes in the first two novels, now presents an ancient story of the east in That Hideous Strength. Ransom is given a fictitious past in the name of Fisher-King. His identity as a great traveller and the wound in his foot that does not heal are
identifications to prove that the Fisher King is none other than Ransom. To Quote Denniston’s narration to Jane,

“He had a married sister in India, a Mrs. Fisher-King” narrates Denniston, “She has just died and left him a large fortune on condition that he took the name. She was a remarkable woman in her way; a friend of the great native Christian mystic whom you may have heard of – the Sura. And that’s the point. The Sura had reason to believe, or thought he had reason to believe, that a great danger was hanging over the human race. And just before the end – just before he disappeared – he became convinced that it would actually come to a head in this island. And after he’d gone ..... some people think he’s alive, others not. At any rate he disappeared. And Mrs. Fisher King more or less handed over the problem to her brother, to our chief. That in fact was why she gave him the money. He was to collect a company round him to watch for the danger and to strike when it came.” (THS, 118)

Lewis’ imagination of the Fisher-King, his sister and the Sura is highly imaginative. The old story of Ransom is again presented in a new form. This narration is also instrumental in blending the plot with the theme of the trilogy. The theme of the trilogy is the ‘great danger that hangs over the human race.’ The ‘danger’ is inter related to the theme of the previous story of Adam and Eve and
Satan's mission to destroy the human race, God's supreme creation. He is still at work very consciously and swiftly as he is aware that the end times have come. The story also says that a seer – a person with a second sight would arise. Jane is the seer who plays a prominent role in the unwinding of the plot. Ransom or the Fisher-King's mission is to watch out for the evil one and to fight against him. Thus the story of the Fisher King in *That Hideous Strength* functions as a link to the previous novels and also aids to bring out the theme.

The life and experience of Ransom in Malacandra and Perelandra which plays a significant role in the trilogy is again recapitulated by Mac Phee. Mac Phee who appears as a colleague of Ransom in the novel *Out of the Silent Planet*, narrates his story once again. "Make what you can of it; that's his story" is his foreword for the Ransom Story. As mentioned earlier *That Hideous Strength* is the concluding novel of the trilogy where Lewis presents a plot that is independent of the first two novels. The Ransom story is of immense importance as it summarizes the life of Ransom to the readers.

The story of Ransom narrated by Mac Phee reveals that the Director of St. Anne, who is none other that Ransom, is a Philologist popularly known for his 'Dialects and Semantics'. In his conversation with Mrs. Jane Studdock, Mac Phee narrates the story of Ransom. He says that six years ago Ransom was suddenly found missing. After nine months, he appearance at Cambridge. He becomes sick and stays in the hospital for more than three months. When he recovers he reveals that he was kidnapped to the planet Mars by Prof. Weston and Mr. Devine who features in *That Hideous Strength* as Lord Feverstone. Escaping from the
kidnappers he wanders alone on Malacandra, befriends the alien creatures and the eldila. Reporting on the eldila Mac Phee says, ‘I’m telling you his story. He says that they don’t breathe. He said also that they don’t reproduce their species and don’t die’. (THS, 205)

Mac Phee also narrates about Ransom’s disappearance for the second time. This time he is away for more than a year. His visit this time is to the planet Venus, taken there by the eldila. The eldila always accompany him and instruct him as to what he should do next. Lewis also explains the theme of the trilogy along with Ransom’s story.

“The long and short of it is”, said Mac Phee, “that this house is dominated either by the creatures I’m talking about, or by a sheer delusion. It is by advises he thinks he has received from eldila that the Director has discovered the conspiracy against the human race; and what’s more, it’s on instructions from eldila that he is conducting the campaign – if you can call it conducting!” (THS, 206)

The story of Ransom once again serves to bring about a unity among the three different novels of the trilogy. It also helps to delineate the theme of the trilogy which has already been highlighted in the first two novels. The ‘dark eldila’ or the evil agents that are defeated in the war in heaven continue their battle with the inhabitants of Thulcandra. Ransom with the help of special insight received from the heavenly eldila encounter the dark eldila and is victorious.
The most significant story in the novel *That Hideous Strength* is the retelling of the story of Merlin, the magician of the Authurian Legend. Merlin who reawakens from a long slumber is instrumental in destroying the evil force. The narration of the story of Merlin is witness to Lewis’ trilogy as a splendid fusion of science, theology and medieval myth. His excellent imaginative power is seen in his creation of a historical story that is incorporated with the science fiction.

According to the Legend of King Authur, Merlin is the court magician, a seer and teacher at the court of King Vortigern and later at the Court of King Authur. He is a bard and culture hero in early Celtic folklore. In the Authurian Legend he is a famous magician and the councilor of King Authur. The ancient legend states that Merlin is not dead but is in a long slumber.

Lewis picks up the story from this point, stirring Merlin back into action. Merlin’s entry into the trilogy is through the description of Merlin’s Well in Bracton College. This College is in the midst of Bragdon Wood which is believed to be the resting place of Merlin. Lewis begins his narration of the historical story with Warden Shovel, who is instrumental in building a wall around Bragdon Wood. An attempt to destroy this wall in the later years amounts to nothing and hence to celebrate this victory, it becomes a custom to drink from Merlin’s Well as soon as he is elected as a warden of Bracton College. Bragdon Wood and Merlin’s Well have thus become an integral part of Bracton College. To quote,

“Old Dr. Shovel lives nearly for a hundred but as soon as he dies one of Cromwell’s major generals sends a few troops to destroy the groups and the high places of Bragdon Wood.
The fabulously learned and saintly Richard Crowe is killed by a Musket Ball on the very steps of the Well. His last works before his death is, 'Mary, sirs, if Merlin who was the Devil's son was a true King's man as ever ate bread, is it not a shame that you, being but the sons of bitches, must be rebels and regicides?' Ever since it has become a custom that every warden of Bracton, on the day of his election, drinks a ceremonial drought of water from Merlin's Well in the great cup. This great cup has become the greatest of the Bracton's treasures both for its antiquity and beauty." (THS, 11)

Dr. Dimble who works in Bracton College who is a witness to the significance of Bragdon Wood and Merlin's Well narrates the story of Merlin to Jane Studdock. In the words of Dr. Dimble,

"...Has it ever struck you what an odd creation Merlin is? He's not evil; yet he's a magician. He is obviously a druid; yet he knows all about the Grail. He's the devil's son; but then Layamon goes out of his way to tell you that the kind of being who fathered Merlin needn't have been bad after all. You remember, 'There dwell in the sky many kinds of wights. Some of them are good and some work evil.' (THS, 23)"

The story of Merlin is interwoven with the plot of That Hideous Strength. In the later part of the novel, he awakens from his slumber and joins the Logres in their mission against the NICE, a representation of the evil agent. According to the
Authurian Legend, Merlin is not dead but buried alive. He dies as a ‘druid’. Druidism is one of the earliest pre historic religions practiced by the Celts. The Druids carry out the ritual of human sacrifice to a ruthless pitch. In the novel *That Hideous Strength* Merlin accepts Maleldil in his life and is empowered by the eldilic powers to fight the evil force. Thus Lewis brilliantly connects the ancient legend with the plot of the novel. The buried man coming to life in the dream vision of Jane is none other than Merlin of the Authurian Legend. The retelling of the Legend marks Lewis’ amazing power of imagination and his knowledge in medieval literature.

A very interesting and amusing episode that Lewis creates is that of Mr. Bultitude, the bear and his mate. Mr. Bultitude plays a vital role in the Banquet of Belbury. He is also instrumental for the confusion at the Banquet and the deliverance of the prisoners at Belbury. Encouraged and influenced by his life on Malacandra and Perelandra, Ransom lives with animals in his mansion at St. Anne’s. He has been a witness to the cordial attitude of all the creatures on the other planets. Hence, his house is full of animals like mice, jackdaw and many more. Ransom also knows how to rear them in a friendly way. In the words of Ivy Maggs, ‘if the Director wants to have a tiger about the house it would be safe. That’s the way he is with animals. There isn’t a creature in the place that would go for another or for us once he’s had his little talk with them.’ (THS 175).

The chief among all these animals in Mr. Bultitude, the bear who is privileged to live as the member of the house. Bultitude comes to the Manor House at St. Anne’s after his escape from a provincial zoo during a fire. His
snarling and ferocious nature slowly turns to love and trust. Lewis introduces him after a tense situation in which Jane encounters Miss. Hardcastle, escapes from her and reaches St. Anne’s. Bultitude is first pictured, ‘Sitting up on its hunkers beside the bath’. He is a ‘great, snuffly, wheezy, beady-eyed, loose-skinned, gorbellied brown bear.’ Yet ‘he’s as tame as tame’. He is often seen at the kitchen or at the common rooms perfectly at ease with the members of the house especially with Ivy Maggs. As Ivy Maggs has gone to meet her husband, Bultitude in his own way begins to miss her. An unusual unrest is upon him and he begins to walk into the garden and towards the garden wall. He climbs up the chestnut tree and then over the wall to the grassy bank on the very edge of the road. He is kidnapped to Belbury by Len and Sid who come there in a motor van.

Mr. Bultitude regains his senses and finds himself imprisoned in a room. But he is curious to discover the food in the neighbourhood and is more excited about the presence of a female of his own species. But realizing his imprisonment, he lifts up his voice and weeps in his own fashion until he is rescued by Merlin. He reaches Manor House and is warmly welcomed by its inmates. But to everyone’s surprise Mr. Bultitude arrives with another female bear and helps her feel ‘at home’ in the dining room. They make a feast of the goose, the ham and the junket. Ivy reports to the Director that his behaviour is very strange. To quote,

‘First of all he just stood lifting up his legs in a funny way as if he thought he could dance, which we all know he can’t. But now he’s got onto the dresser on his hind legs and there he’s kind of bobbing up and down, making the awfulest noise –
squeaking like – and he’s put one foot into the plum pudding already and he’s got his head all mixed up in the string of onions and I can’t do nothing with him, really I can’t’.(THS,419)

The other animals at St. Anne’s also behave in a rather strange manner. Ransom says that ‘Venus herself is over St. Anne’s’. Venus the symbol of love descends on the animals and the couples. Ransom blesses them and sends them into the world. Mr. Bultitude himself walks up to Ransom with his mate. He blesses them in the Old Solar words ‘Urendi Maleldil’ which means ‘God bless you’. Bultitude walks out through the French door along with his mate.

Thus through the fable of Mr. Bultitude and the other animals, Lewis affirms that love is a common experience for all creations and in God’s kingdom equality and love reigns supreme. He contrasts the treatment rendered to the animals at Belbury, a place devoid of God’s love with St. Anne’s, the place where God reigns supreme. The former uses animals to experiment their ideas and mercilessly destroy them whereas the latter protects and takes care of them with love and kindness, considering them as God’s creation.

To conclude, the use of various stories in the trilogy is a brilliant strategy of Lewis. It is important to note that all the stories are beautifully blended and incorporated within the main plot of the trilogy. The war in heaven, the story of Adam and Eve, the story of Ransom, the story of Merlin and finally the episode of Mr. Bultitude are all instrumental in making the trilogy very interesting. Lewis also employs them to expound the serious
theological concepts in a light and easy note thereby making it easy for the readers to comprehend.

The carefully constructed dialogues of the trilogy stand as evidence for Lewis' expertise. His method of incorporating conversational passages is yet another strategical device. The important themes in the trilogy are brought out through the various characters of the novels. The use of dialogues is significant as it is instrumental in kindling the interest of the readers and for keeping the trilogy lively. The dramatic continuity of the theme gives its credit to the impressive dialogues. The three different novels of the trilogy are dramatically knit together giving a continuous flow of thought. Lewis not only develops the plot but also gives clues to the unnarrated information through the use of dialogues. The dialogues between the various characters reveal their temperament, motivation and dispositional qualities. Commenting on the importance of dialogues in fiction writing Agnihotri opines,

"Dialogues serve a three-fold purpose in a novel. In the first place they serve as a clue to some hidden information that the author has not conveyed so far to the reader. Secondly, they help in the development of the plot of the novel. Thirdly, they throw light on the characters of the speaker or any other person in the novel."

In the novel, Out of the Silent Planet, the dialogues between the kidnappers and Ransom in chapter one is significant as the characters get introduced to each other and they are also introduced to the readers. The dialogues are compressed,
crisp and orderly written by Lewis so much so that the story becomes lucid and exciting as it proceeds. They give a glimpse of the plot yet consciously maintain the suspense of the novel. Lewis introduces the characters in the novel by casually written dialogues.

‘My name is Ransom, if that is what you mean. And—’

‘By Jove,’ said the slender man, ‘not Ransom who used to be at Wedenshaw?’

‘I was at school at Wedenshaw,’ said Ransom.

‘I thought I knew you as soon as you spoke,’ said the slender man. ‘I’m Devine. Don’t you remember me?’

‘Of course. I should think I do!’ (OSP, 7)

Introducing Weston, Devine says, ‘You don’t know Weston, perhaps?’ Devine indicated his massive and ‘loud-voice’ companion. ‘The Weston’, he added, ‘You know. The great physicist. Has Einstein on toast and drinks a pint of Schrodinger’s blood for breakfast’. Weston’s talk reveals that he is arrogant, business minded and haughty. His impolite words to Harry, the young boy, create a negative picture of him right from the beginning. On the other hand Devine is pictured as an innocent and cordial person in Out of the Silent Planet whose only aim is to make money, much different than Devine who later features as Lord Feverstone in That Hideous Strength.

The purpose of the unusual space journey is expressed through the discourse between Ransom and Weston. It is also a vague forecast of the plot, since Lewis intentionally maintains the suspense of the space voyage. Talbot
remarks that it is the mark of an artist to write ‘spontaneous dialogue which informs without striving to be informative’ (308) Lewis proves his skill in writing through the well written dialogue that foretell Ransom’s visit to Malacandra.

“As to why we are here, we are on our way to Malacandra...

‘Do you mean a star called Malacandra?’

‘Even you can hardly suppose we are going out of the solar system. Malacandra is much nearer than that: we shall make it in about twenty-eight days.’

‘There isn’t a planet called Malacandra,’ objected Ransom.

‘I am giving it its real name, not the name invented by terrestrial astronomers,’ said Weston.

‘But surely this is nonsense,’ said Ransom. ‘How the deuce did you find out its real name, as you call it?’

‘From the inhabitants.’

It took Ransom some time to digest the statement. ‘Do you mean to tell me you claim to have been to this star before, or this planet, or whatever it is?’

‘Yes.’

‘You can’t really ask me to believe that,’ said Ransom.

‘Damn it all, it’s not an everyday affair. Why has no one heard of it? Why has it not been in all the papers?’

‘Because we are not perfect idiots,’ said Weston gruffly.
After a few moments’ silence Ransom began again. “Which planet is it in our terminology?” he asked.

‘Once and for all,’ said Weston, ‘I am not going to tell you. If you know how to find out when we get there, you are welcome to do so: I don’t think we have much to fear from your scientific attainments. In the meantime, there is no reason for you to know.” (OSP,22)

Lewis’ timely use of dialogues is instrumental in breaking the monotony of the long descriptive passages of space and the Malacandrian landscape. Ransom’s conversation with the Malacandrian creatures is innovative and lively. His learning the Malacandrian language from Hyoi is explained through brief and simple sentences. Lewis introduces the concept of the heavenly creatures called eldil through the dialogues between Ransom and a little she – hross. The eldil are invisible to the Thulcandrians whereas the Malacandrians are able to see them.

‘Who do you speak to, Hriikki?’ said Ransom.

‘To the eldil.’

‘Where?’

‘Did you not see him?’

‘I saw nothing.’

‘There! There!’ she cried suddenly. ‘Ah! He is gone. Did you not see him?’

‘I saw no one.’
‘Hyoi,’ said the cub. The hman cannot see the eldil!’

(OSP 71)

The conversation between Ransom and Hyoi throws light on the peaceful and contented life of a hross and the part played by Maleldil as the Lord and Creator. Beginning with the querry about the ‘war-like nature’, the dialogue reveals Maleldil as the ‘Provider and Protector’ of His creatures. The hross is contended to live where Maleldil has placed him and is not ambitious or inquisitive like man. They are happy to submit to the Seroni and are not bothered about the things that they don’t understand. He cheerfully acknowledges that the ‘Seroni’ would know more than what he knows. Ransom knows no word for war but he manages to make Hyoi understand what he means. He enquires if the Malcandrians ever go out with weapons against each other

‘What for?’ asked Hyoi.

It was difficult to explain. ‘If both wanted one thing and neither would give it,’ said Ransom, ‘would the other at last come with force? Would they say, give it or we kill you?’

‘What sort of thing?’

‘Well – food, perhaps.’

‘If the other hnau wanted food, why should we not give it to them? We often do.’

‘But how if we had not enough for ourselves?’

‘But Maleldil will not stop the plants growing.’
‘Hyoi, if you had more and more young, would Maleldil broaden the handramit and make enough plants for them all?’

‘The seroni know that sort of thing. But why should we have more young?’ (OSP, 73)

Through the dialogues that follow, Lewis proceeds to give an account of the concept of begetting children. He distinguishes from the earthly conception giving it a more refined outlook as God perhaps intended it to be in an unfallen world. To quote the lines,

‘But why should we have more young?’

Ransom found this difficult. At least he said:

‘Is the begetting of young not a pleasure among the hrossa?’

‘A very great one, Hman. This is what we call love.’

‘If a thing is a pleasure, a hman wants it again. He might want the pleasure more often than the number of young that could be fed.’

It took Hyoi a long time to get the point.

You mean,’ he said slowly, ‘that he might do it not only in one or two years of his life but again?’

‘Yes.’

‘But why? Would he want his dinner all day or want to sleep after he had slept? I do not understand.’

‘But a dinner comes every day. This love you say, comes only once while the hross lives?’
‘But it takes his whole life. When he is young he has to look for his mate; and then he has to court her; then he begets young; then he rears them; then he remembers all this, and boils it inside him and makes it into poems and wisdom.’

‘But the pleasure he must be content only to remember?’

‘That is like saying, “My food I must be content only to eat.”’

‘I do not understand.’

‘A pleasure is full grown only when it is remembered. You are speaking, Hman, as if the pleasure were one thing and the memory another. It is all one thing.” (OSP,74)

Lewis’ use of the relationship between Ransom and Hyoi to explain love is remarkable. Meeting he says, is only the beginning which gets over quickly and becomes nothing but it grows with fond remembrances and continuous to grow as long as the relationship lives. This is the real meaning of love. Lewis reveals his mastery in writing, in his casual and aptly arranged sentences while explaining the earthly terms unknown to the Malacandrians. He skillfully handles the dialogues between Ransom and Hyoi that reveals the carefree life style of the hross revealing its trust in Maleldil.

The dialogues between Oyarsa and Ransom explain the war in heaven and its consequences which is the highlight of Out of the Silent Planet. Lewis displays his craft as a writer by alternating the dialogue that deals with serious topics with light and humourous conversations. For example, following the serious passage of Lucifer’s revolt in heaven and the hross funeral, he alternates it with light and
humorous exchanges through the character of Weston and Devine. Weston whose knowledge of the Malacandrian language is elementary expresses his views and tries to prove himself greater than the Malacandrian creatures.

‘Why you take our puff – bangs away? We very angry with you. We not afraid.’

‘You let us go, then we no power, think you do all you like.
You no can. Great big headman in sky he send us. You no do what I say, he come, blow you all up – Pouff! Bang!’

(OSP, 130)

The broken language that Lewis uses for these dialogues is effective in adding humour to his narration. The dialogue between Weston and Oyarsa is also instrumental in bringing forth the theme of the novel. Man’s ambition to plant civilization on other planets and his use of science to fulfill his desire is the thrust of the trilogy. Weston’s lines also reveals that he is being sent by somebody ‘great’ and ‘big’. It refers to Lucifer and his mission to conquer the Universe.

Perelandra proves to be a rare power of inventive imagination and much of its success owes to the use of dialogues. The novel begins with Ransom preparing himself to be transported to Perelandra. Lewis’ mastery as a novelist is revealed in the adequate spacing of the conversational passages. The long descriptive passages are always followed by simple conversations. These meticulously written dialogues also bring out the important theme of the novels. For instance, the detailed description of the woods, the moonless night, the dark and eerie house is followed by the lively and spirit filled dialogues between Ransom and Lewis, who
features in the novel *Perelandra* as Ransom’s friend. It explains the important aspects like the eldila, the depraved Oyarsa of Tellus, Ransom’s trip to Malacandra and his present commission to Perelandra. Ransom also explains that his mission to Perelandra is because ‘the black archon’ or the ‘Bent Oyarsa’ is meditating some sort of attack on Perelandra.

‘And where do you come in?’

‘Well – simply I’ve been ordered there.’

‘By the – by Oyarsa, you mean?’

‘No. The order comes from much higher up. They all do, you know, in the long run.’

‘Dr, Elwin Ransom setting out single handed to combat powers and principalities.’ (PERE, 190)

The dialogues indicate that Ransom is being used as an instrument to execute the command of a Superior authority. It is also a vivid portrayal of the theme of *Perelandra*. Ransom who is chosen to execute the Divine plan is also commissioned to redeem and save the perishing souls. He is being sent to Perelandra to save Tinidril, the first woman of Perelandra who slowly succumbs to the temptations of the evil agent. In Perelandra, Ransom first meets Tinidril, the first woman of Perelandra before he encounters the evil power. Ransom’s dialogues with her reveal her as an innocent and sinless creature who lives in total submission to her Lord Tor and her Creator Maleldil. Lewis contrasts the difference in the understanding of
Ransom, who comes from Thulcandra, the fallen world and Tinidril, who lives in an unfallen world. Words that are related to sin are unknown to her. She is ignorant of many earthly words like peace, rubbish, alone, home and dead. Ransom's curiosity to learn about Perelandra is answered quietly by the lady. Ransom's impatience and Tinidril's controlled spirit is well brought out through the dialogues between them.

"But can you take me to some other of your kind? The King cannot be the only one."

"He is the only one. Did you not know?"

"But there must be others of your kind – your brothers and sisters, your kindred, your friends."

"I do not know what these words mean."

"Who is this King?" said Ransom in desperation.

"He is himself, he is the King," said she. "How can one answer such a question?"

"Look here," said Ransom. "You must have had a mother. Is she alive? Where is she? When did you see her last?"

"I have a mother?" said the Green Lady, looking full at him with eyes of untroubled wonder. "What do you mean? I am the Mother".(PERE,223)

Lewis proceeds to further clarify the same line of thinking. He explains that Tor and Tinidril are the first man and woman of Perelandra like Adam and Eve on earth.

"If you are a mother, where are your children?"
‘Not yet,’ she answered.

‘Who will be their father?’

‘The King – who else?’

‘But the King – had he no father?’

‘He is the Father.’ (PERE, 236)

Tinidril’s discourse with Weston who is possessed by the evil power slowly puts her on the path of destruction. The conversational passages with Weston reveal the gradual change in her attitude. The transformation in Tinidril’s character is well brought out through the use of striking dialogues. The Un-man’s craftiness is also brilliantly reflected through these dialogues. Trying to first strike her on her strong belief that ‘the king is always older than her’ and that Maleldil Himself is directing her steps he says,

‘And if you refused to learn things from me and keep on saying you would wait and ask the king, would that not be like turning away the fruit you had found to the fruit you had expected?’

‘These are deep questions, Stranger. Maleldil is not putting much into my mind about them.’

‘Do you not see why?’

‘No’.

‘Since Piebald and I have come to your world we have put many things into your mind which Maleldil has not. Do you not see that He is letting go of your hand a little?’
'How could He? He is wherever we go.'

'Yes, but in another way. He is making you older – making you to learn things not straight from Him but by your own meetings with other people and your own questions and thoughts.'

'He is certainly doing that.'

'Yes. He is making you a full woman, for up till now you were only half made – like the beasts who do nothing of themselves. This time, when you meet the King again, it is you who will have things to tell him. It is you who will be older than he and who will make him older.' (PERE, 276)

Lewis brings to light Satan's diplomatic nature through his artistically planned dialogues. The Un-man motivates the woman to become knowledgeable than the king himself. Its attitude of gaining authority and power is revealed in its speech. The lady debates with the Un-man about Maleldil’s instruction forbidding her to live on the fixed land and to accept the headship of the king, living under Maleldil’s authority.

The fall of Tinidril and its consequences are explained in the form of dialogues. In his attempt to succeed in the mission the Un-man justifies the separation of the King and the Queen. Its craftiness is revealed in putting forth that Maleldil ‘secretly longs for a real disobeying, a real branching out’. Ransom intervenes and tries to make the lady understand that ‘We cannot walk out of Maleldil’s will.’
The dialogue that explains the first experience of Tinidril when she looks at her own reflection in the mirror also explains the consequence of disobedience. The Un-man holds the mirror to her face. She stares at it and gives out a cry and covers her face. This is the first time she experiences a strange feeling. The Un-man’s perseverance to accomplish its mission and Tinidril’s perplexity is revealed in the following lines.

‘Oh – Oh,’ she cried. ‘What is it? I saw a face.’

‘Only your own face, beautiful one,’ said the Un-man.

‘I know,’ said the lady, still averting her eyes from the mirror.

‘My face – out there – looking at me. Am I growing older or is it something else? I feel ... I feel ... my heart is beating too hard. ‘I am not warm. What is it?’

‘What is it?’ she repeated.

‘It is called Fear,’ said Weston’s mouth. Then the creature turned its face full on Ransom and grinned.

‘Fear,’ she said. ‘This is Fear,’ pondering the discovery; then, with abrupt finality, ‘I do not like it.’

‘It will go away,’ said the Un-man, when Ransom interrupted.

‘It will never go away if you do what he wishes. It is into more and more fear that he is leading you.’ (PERE, 309)

The Un-man convinces her that she has tasted fear on behalf of her race. It presents it as something to be joyous about. Lewis thus elucidates the subtle and
wicked ways of the devil and his innumerable efforts to lead Maleldil’s creations into temptation. The novel *Perelandra* closes with catching dialogues between Ransom, Tor the king, Tinidril the queen and Oyarsa of Perelandra and Malacandra. The king foretells that after Perelandra goes about the ‘Arbol’ or the sun ten thousand times they will be judged. The people of Perelandra will make a great place to the splendour of Maleldil. Afterwards they would tear the sky’s curtain and Maleldil would make them free of deep heaven. Their bodies would change like that of eldil. There will be a war on earth at the end times which will be the final war. The light of the moon and the sun will be cut off from Thulcandra and the land will be filled with plagues. But in the end all shall be cleansed, the memory of the Black Oyarsa would be blotted out and Thulcandra would be reunited to the field of Arbol. He wonders about the ignorance of the Thulcandrians and questions Ransom about it.

‘Friend, that no rumour of this is heard in Thulcandra? Do your people think that their Dark Lord will hold his prey for ever?’

‘Most of them,’ said Ransom, ‘have ceased to think of such things at all. Some of us still have the knowledge: but I did not at once see what you were talking of, because what you call the beginning we are accustomed to call the Last Thing.

‘I do not call it the beginning’, said Tor the king. It is but the wiping out of a false start in order that the world may then begin.’ (PERE, 390)
Lewis brings before the eyes of the readers a vivid picture of the end times. Besides reflecting on the majesty of Maleldil the dialogues also emphasizes the promise of an eternal life with God. The Oyarsa narrates the greatness of Maleldil and His great sacrifice on Thulcandra. Lewis’ strategy of employing the technique of dialogue to conclude the novel is a striking feature as the reader closes the book with the theme of the novel lingering in his mind.

That Hideous Strength deals with the conflict between good and evil or in other words God and Satan. Lewis makes use of gripping dialogues to delineate the various themes. The four categories of people and the varied perspectives of their life and mission are well depicted through the use of powerful dialogues. The Logres - with their strong faith in the power of Maleldil, Mac Phee - a member of the Logres but a doubtful person, NICE - which stands for a completely scientific oriented rule and Straik - who is deceived in his understanding of the truth are the people groups in the novel. Lewis employs the dialogues between these characters to expound the important themes of the trilogy.

The casual dialogues between Dr. Dimble, Mrs. Dimble and Jane are a forecast on the plot of the novel. Beginning with Jane’s admiration of the Dimble’s garden, the focus shifts to the sale of Bragdon Wood. The significance of Bragdon Wood and the story of Merlin are explained by Dr. Dimble. The search for Merlin, the magician becomes a thrilling experience for the readers owing to the use of brilliant dialogues. Dr. Dimble’s mention about the old man coming back to life is linked with Jane’s dream about the two heads, one of them being Alcasan whom Satan uses for his purpose.
‘Stop!’ whispered Jane suddenly.

‘What is it?’

‘There’s something moving.’

‘Where?’

‘In there. Quite close.’

‘I heard nothing.’

‘There’s nothing now.’

‘Let’s go on.’

‘Do you still think there’s something, Jane?’

‘It’s quiet now. There was something.’

They made a few paces more. (THS, 256)

Another important aspect that Lewis deals with, in the same conversation is Jane’s attitude towards marriage. He very subtly brings out God’s Divine Plan in the institution of marriage. Lewis begins his focus on the concept with Jane being depressed and lonely in her apartment. Her husband Mark shows interest in his career, rather than on the family. The ‘strictly feminine conversation’ between Mrs. Dimble and Jane leads to Jane’s reflection on her life from childhood.

‘There’s nothing wrong, is there?’

‘Wrong?’ said Jane. ‘Why? what should there be?’

‘You’re not looking yourself.’

‘Oh, I’m all right,’ said Jane aloud. Mentally she added,

‘She’s dying to know whether I’m going to have a baby. That sort of woman always is.’
‘Do you hate being kissed?’ said Mrs. Dimble unexpectedly.

‘Do I hate being kissed?’ thought Jane to herself. ‘That indeed is the question. Do I hate being kissed? Hope not for mind in women -’She had intended to reply, ‘Of course not,’ but inexplicably, and to her great annoyance, found herself crying instead. (THS, 21)

Jane recollects that from childhood she has always preferred to keep away from people when they show their love and affection. Later, the feeling develops into ‘pride’ and ‘self consciousness.’ The conversation between the Director of the Logres and Jane reveals to her that she has been suppressing something. Lewis identifies this as pride which has to be shed off completely for her happy reunion with Mark. Finally the novel concludes with the couple being brought together again.

The discussion between Lord Feverstone and Mark is a thrilling conversation which brings out the principles on which the NICE functions. Mark’s questions to Feverstone are just a reflection of the reader’s mind. As Feverstone explains about the unbelievable principles involving science and humanity, Mark’s reactions voiced out by Lewis is admirable.

The conference between Filostrato, Mark and Straik is a fearful and gripping presentation. Lewis focuses on another group of people who are completely oriented on science and technology. Their attempt to create man is evident for their ambition to supercede God, the real Creator of heaven and earth. Filostrato explains to Mark about the blooming of a great race that will be more
advanced than man. According to his views, this New Man will not be born, nor can he die. The emerging race can keep themselves artificially alive even after the organic body is dispensed. The mission of the Institute called NICE is to create such organic being under the authority of the Head. Filostrato explains that it is for the conquest of death, that the Head himself survives death. Lewis' construction of the dialogues reveals the horrifying yet ridiculous principles of the NICE.

‘There is no turning back once you set your hand on the plough. And there are no reservations. The Head has sent for you. Do you understand – the Head? You will look upon one who was killed and still alive. The resurrection of Jesus in the Bible was a symbol: tonight you shall see what it symbolised. This is real Man at last and it claims all are allegiance.’

‘What the Devil are you talking about?’ said Mark. The tension of his nerves distorted his voice into a hoarse blustering cry.

‘My friend is quite right,’ said Filostrato. ‘Our Head is the first of the New Man – the first that lives beyond animal life. As far as Nature is concerned he is already dead: if Nature had her way his brain would now be mouldering in the grave. But he will speak to you within this hour, and – a word in your ear, my friend – you will obey his orders?’
‘But who is it?’ said Mark.

‘It is Francois Alcasan,’ said Filostrato.

‘You mean the man who was guillotine?’ gasped Mark.

Both the heads nodded. Both faces were close to him; in that disastrous light they look like masks hanging in their air.

(THS, 190)

Reverend Straik, ‘the mad parson’ is a typical example of a skeptic, whose conversation with Mark brings out the disillusionment in religion. Lewis uses him as a representation of the segment of the people who do not see the Word of God in its true meaning. According to Straik, ‘the kingdom of God is to be realized here— in this world.’ His belief is rather a deception and he uses the Word of God for his convenience. A lengthy dialogue between Mark and Straik refers to the people who are led into deceptions as they are unable to draw the line between science and religion.

‘Theology!’ said Mr. Straik with profound contempt.

‘If they think that Theology is a sort of cotton which will keep them safe in the great and terrible day, they’ll find their mistake. For, mark my words, this thing is going to happen. The Kingdom is going to arrive: in this world: in this country. The powers of science are an instrument. An irresistible instrument, as all of us in the NICE know. And why are they an irresistible instrument?’

‘Because science is based on observation’ suggested Mark.
‘They are an irresistible instrument,’ shouted Straik, ‘because they are an instrument in His hand. An instrument of judgment as well as of healing...I knew that He was coming in power. And therefore, where we see power, we see the sign of His coming. And that’s why I find myself joining with communists and materialists and anyone else who is really ready to expedite the coming.’ (THS, 78)

Filostrato’s scientific views and Straik’s religious views are both deceptive and the Dark Powers make use of their beliefs to execute their own plans. Straik misquotes the prophecy of the return of Christ as a King. The King according to him is the New Man. ‘A king cometh’, said Straik, ‘Who shall rule the Universe with righteousness and the heavens with judgement’. Christ, the Son of God, is also called the Son of Man owing to his birth as man. Straik implies the phrase ‘Son of Man’ to mean that ‘Man would have a son who would yield all power.’

Thus, Lewis highlights that understanding and interpreting the Word of God as God intends it to be is of foremost importance. Straik’s belief of Christ and the Kingdom of God is deceptive. Science is the study that should expose the awesome majesty of God and his wonders to mankind. It cannot become an instrument to bring judgment and healing to humanity taking the place of God Himself. Lewis very strongly emphasizes that scientific advancement and knowledge is no substitute for the Divine power of God. He highlights that science is being misused as a weapon for destruction by the Dark Powers.
On the other hand the discussions of the Logres reveal that they belong to the group of people who wait on God to receive orders and execute their mission based on the Word.

The technique of dialogues also functions to bring out the link between the three novels. Lewis advances the plot of the novels with the help of dialogues. Though the plot is described through the narration, but for the effective use of dialogues, the science fiction would not have achieved the place it has got for itself. The dialogues are dexterously used by the author. This contributes to make the theme thrilling, absorbing and gripping following a natural course of development. Each set of dialogue in the novels is indispensable from the point of view of either colouring the story with interest and information or developing its action.