Chapter II

A “rumours of worlds”¹: Intertextual Nets in C.S Lewis’s *The Chronicles of Narnia*.

“As a medievalist by training, Lewis was accustomed to reading authors who were highly syncretistic, blending classical elements with contemporary, Christian with pagan, and historical with fanciful. By temperament he was also something of an intellectual jackdaw, who took whatever ideas attracted him and ‘Lewisfied’ them” (Downing 26).

“a whole series of rooms that led into each other and were lined with books – most of them very old books and some bigger than a Bible in a church” (LWW 6).

2.1 Introduction

*Chronicles* produces a play of worlds which is at its most perceptible in the textual amalgamation of multiple sources. Lewis’s diverse compilation arguably manifests an equally diverse world system which is syncretic in character comprising of different mythologies (Norse, Irish, Celtic, Greek and Roman mythology) with Christian iconography, to which Lewis seems to have added allusions to the bestiary, animal fable, morality tale, adventure tale, chivalric and medieval tradition, motifs and figures from traditional fairy stories, popular children’s literature, romance and epic genres which collectively combine and “build” the story and world of *Chronicles*. Each of these sources constitute what this chapter understands as “world”; as representative of a different ontology as to its other counterparts, so that upon closer inspection, the Christian story of *Chronicles* may in fact be seen as composed of multiple ontologies. Irwin has commented of Lewis and his contemporaries that the British fantasists were, “as near as men can be to born syncreticists” (Irwin 168) and this tendency to mix from a variety of
sources is represented in the rooms lined with books, each leading into one another as an example of literary texts and their intertextual relation in *Chronicles.* Furthermore, Lewis as an erudite scholar, as a product of “endless books” (*SBJ* 10), illustrates the range from which the British author may have selected from. In the epistemological endeavour of Lewis’s Christian world, these multiple texts or worlds constitute thresholds which turn the reader’s attention to ontological questions so that the otherwise inherently Christian story diversifies into multiple stories and multiple ontologies. When all four children enter into Narnia, they are described as donning fur coats, “like royal robes than coats” (*LWW* 56) in order to communicate that the children will experience restoration to their rightful state in the world of Narnia which this chapter examines with reference to the significance of the multiple tropes, ontologies and intertextuality of Lewis’s series. This rightful state, as examined in the last chapter, is to return the characters and readers back to a reality that “disenchantment” narratives sought to remove. As part of Lewis’s endeavour to re-enchant through an experience of “otherness”, the unorthodox manner in which Lewis combines these various texts, may also be read as part of the design to remedy the divisive character with which he had once regarded in his own mental state: as Lewis the Rationalist and Lewis the Imaginative man (*SBJ* 170).

According to Lewis, the appeal of mixing various mythologies and assimilating additional texts is possibly that they offer “differing flavours, is a balancing thing, and makes for catholicity” (*SBJ* 114). Even in his Christian non-fiction, Lewis is generally inclusive in attitude which is tantamount to an ecumenical spirit which informs Lewis’s *Mere Christianity* (1952) which as the title suggests, is an approach that outlines the basic shared tenets of Christianity as opposed to privileging any one narrative of a particular denomination. Myers notes that, “The syncretism of the Chronicles is likewise a result of
Lewis’s life-affirming desire to find truth and virtue in various traditions” (122). It is also a feature of the Medieval Model which exhibits a syncretic world system (DI 12).

This chapter is particularly interested in the way in which Lewis’s Christian story is composed of an amalgamation of literary tropes, as this dissertation argues, especially in terms of creating credence, participation and re-enchantment. Each trope, which may take the form of the mythological figures or allusions to various literary texts which Lewis incorporates into his stories, may represent different “worlds” or distinct ontologies. In this light, this chapter examines how recognition of the composite world and story of *Chronicles* may account for why readers do not necessarily distinguish a Christian subtext. The “‘layered’ approach” (Keys 95) employed by Lewis in *Chronicles*, suggests a composite world of different texts so that the story and world of Narnia progresses and is enlarged with every layer of textual reference which Lewis grafts into his series. This is done in reference with Lewis’s valuation of “atmosphere” in his essay “On Stories” by turning to the possibility of the constituent parts or the individual literary tropes, literary reference, or allusion which Lewis incorporates, as retaining an “atmosphere.” If one were to apply Lewis’s own approach to a reading of a given text, one may propose that for each literary reference or literary trope that Lewis ultimately includes in his Fantasy Fictional series, each would first have had to constitute what Lewis would have first recognized as possessing an “atmosphere” of its own, particular to the story and world that that author creates, enjoyed for the particular quality it evokes in itself and thus for that value, incorporated into Lewis’s own fictional stories.

Lewis’s syncretic blend of sources is examined within the framework of Joy, a quality which is instrumental to Lewis’s conversion from Atheism to Christianity. One may see how his desire for Joy necessitates a greater inclusion of literary sources to facilitate in the experience of this elusive quality. This chapter also examines, briefly, the “Discourse
of Wonder”. The element of ‘wonder’ is what distinguishes Lewis’s Fantasy Fictional series from earlier imaginative works; it is poetic rather than prosaic (SBJ 15) and has its associations with the quality of Joy which Lewis characterizes as his desire for something other and outer. Literature may be a conduit that facilitates this experience and the Chronicles as a product of this discourse discusses the “disenchantment” or secularization at the level of language, which this chapter is indebted to Doris T. Myer’s concise summary of the language controversies in C.S. Lewis in Context (1994). Finally, this chapter will explore how the concept of Intertextuality may be applied to Lewis’s Chronicles and how the ‘intertext’ finds parallels with Farah Mendlesohn’s definition of a portal-quest fantasy; once again creating opportunities for the readers of Chronicles to read Lewis’s stories outside the prescribed Christian framework when readers progress via a recognition of these multiple ontologies.

While Lewis’s writing dynamic results in the religious syncretism apparent in the stories, the meaning of “syncretic” may also connote the different kinds of contexts particular to each individual source which Lewis incorporates. Thus, Mervyn Nicholson reading of E. Nesbit’s Fabian Socialism constitutes one type of world that Lewis alludes to. In this approach, the reading of Chronicles argues that the writing dynamic is inclusive of a wide array of different worlds via the ludic and ad hoc amalgamation of multiple tropes. This chapter explores Lewis’s play with literary tradition creating latitude for the reader through the associations that the text generates or the “intertexts” which facilitate entry into other stories. This also takes into account the multiple ontologies of Lewis’s combination of certain literary tropes in order to re-enchant and induct the reader into a full restoration of language and experience, otherwise denied by a positivist system. This is examined with reference to Lewis’s solempne as a form of re-enchantment with two
perceptible forces – stasis/hypostasis to wakefulness which is suggested through language and intertextuality.

2.2 On Originality

The ludic syncretism is, as Hinten reminds us, another feature of Lewis’s propensity for allusion, a word which derives from the Latin term *allusio* means a “playing with” and on a general note, Lewis’s *Chronicles* reflects his creative play with literary tradition via textual appropriation. One motive for Lewis’s textual play is a pursuit of an elusive quality, namely Joy, by which Lewis arrogates to himself the powers of creative freedom to play with other literary traditions and figures, resulting in the amalgamation of tropes as well as the syncretism of the *Chronicles*. This attitude of creative freedom characterizes Lewis’s oeuvre and more specifically *Chronicles* which *enacts* an intertextuality; one that indulges in a free-borrowing from numerous texts thus resulting in a “mishmash”⁶, as Tolkien observed, of literary traditions, multiple frameworks and an encyclopaedic sprawl.⁷

Other notable reasons for the underlying concept of the books as “built” or “layered” is rooted in Lewis’s Christian conception of originality as being the sole prerogative of God, by which we are only the derivatives (Hooper 596). Accordingly, this belief licenses an assembly or free-borrowing of existing material since as Hooper cites Lewis’s *Letters to Malcolm* (1964) “We . . . never in the ultimate sense, *make* . . . We only build. We always have materials to build from. All we can know about the act of creation must be derived from what we can gather about the relation of the creatures to their Creator” (qtd. in Hooper, 597). Another variation of this sentiment is articulated in J.R.R. Tolkien’s concept of an author’s creative act as “sub-creation” or as “mythropoesis” or myth-making, implying man’s creative act in relation to God as ultimate creator, discussed in the last chapter.⁸ This feature of Lewis’s thought acknowledges any charge of
unoriginality that may be levelled against him as Walter Hooper observes that Lewis’s disregard for originality “is one of the most original things about him. His sympathies were not against Originality as such, but the attempt to be ‘original’” (Hooper 596). Apart from the “Christian” component of Lewis’s thought, another component which speaks explicitly about literary property is a Medieval proclivity to fashion large inclusive systems of thought which Lewis elaborates in Discarded. Lewis evinces a tradition of medieval authorship which is comparable, in certain respects, to the concept embodied in intertextual theory. The compositional process characteristic to Medieval literature is made more intriguing due to the extremely “bookish” (DI 5) nature of their culture and knowledge systems. According to Lewis’s introduction, the Middle Ages is not only the ages of a single authority, such as the Church, but also “of authorities” and they, “responded most vigorously . . . [to] manuscripts” following, “an auctour: preferably a Latin one” (5).

The Medieval Model represents a harmonious system achieved by authors who consciously work towards building a system large enough to incorporate their theology, politics, and social sciences even when they should appear to contradict one another. In both components of Lewis’s thought, the concept of “literary property” is non-existent and both traditions are understandable grounds on which one may parallel Lewis’s enactment of intertextuality. Another source for Lewis’s textual play lies in the Fairy Tale itself and the genre of Fantasy Fiction which inherits a rich tradition and panoply of images wherein key motifs and figures are re-appropriated and recycled. In addition to this, the form of the Fairy Tale is likened to a pot or cauldron where numerous elements are recycled into the fairy stories that one may recognize (Tolkien 29). There is a noted paradox in this: in creating a fantastic “other world”, the author assimilates recognizable figures, themes and motifs which are “surprisingly limited” (Hunt 2) often in formulaic
plot. Lewis’s commentary on Story and its governing “atmosphere” or mood, allows for a recycling of different stories and generates a rereading in a network of texts that emphasise the potential associations governing a body of stories that Lewis admires, and one that the Fantasy Fictional series implicitly and explicitly presuppose.

The textual assimilation that these three models allow, is in agreement with Mikhail Bakhtin’s concept of the dialogic novel which is a “serious-truth seeking via a plurality of voices in a specific narrative context and in an ironic mode” (Still and Worton 3). This is done against monologism which is controlled by an overarching structure which presents “an artefact as the truth to be consumed whole” (3). However as both Catherine L. Elick and Julia Kristeva maintain, no text can be totally monologic or dialogic; one may argue that the greater incorporation of textual strains, as Fantasy Fiction accomplishes in a play of worlds, suggests an avenue for readers to receive the stories via the dialogism of the seemingly non-Christian elements that Lewis incorporates into his stories. Elick writes that in Lewis’s *Magician*, “heteroglottic language and carnivalized action create polyphonic exchanges in which power relations between characters are negotiated” (454).

As one may learn from Worton and Still, both Bakhtin and Kristeva argue that discourse is “inherently dialogical/intertextual, there are ‘monologues’ which on one level succeed in repressing dialogism” (5). Each speech is seen as a reference to a known social language type, which “is the very opposite of the atomic, autonomous self” (5). The most predominant voice in the *Chronicles* is undoubtedly a Christian voice however, the variety of sources and figures across which Lewis spreads his story suggest an inclusion of different and multiple voices and all the subtleties mediate what is otherwise an explicit Christian doctrine. This is again in line with Filmer’s observation that, “many of the issues with which Lewis is concerned, and which have been identified as ‘Christian’
actually formed part of his moral lexicon before his conversion” (3) thus is appealing to the literary scholar and non-Christian reader.

As this chapter will examine, the textual play or composite world of story that Lewis creates initiates the reader through a movement and recognition of individual ontologies via the mythological personages and references that Lewis makes. In terms of these individual ontologies, Tolkien proposes that one motive for indulging in the Fantasy world is that it satiates our wish to converse with living things which were separated from man since the Fall hence the “talking beasts and creatures in fairy-tales” and Tolkien observes that, “Other creatures are like other realms. . .” (Tolkien 58). Lewis also observes that, “it would seem to me a waste of the past if we were content to see in the literature of every bygone age only the reflexion of our faces” (SMRL 4). Ergo, as an extension of this thought, one may infer that a recognition and movement through these texts, create moments that disrupt the monologic imperative or teleological movement of the Christian voice via the incorporation of different realms or worlds, one which the disenchantment has severed us from. This is explored through the power of “atmosphere” as evoking powerful associations as well as a writing dynamic which is inclusive of other texts. Furthermore, the concept present in traditional source criticism stresses only on one movement of a dialectic – namely the author’s inclusion of various texts. The concept of intertextuality, however, creates an avenue wherein these “pre-texts” are also considered in a reciprocal movement, structuring the texts in some way and acting as entries into the series, as the reader moves between a series of texts.

2.3 Under the Cover of Romance

Lewis, at one point, professes that under the cover of Romance, one may smuggle any amount of theology. However, one may interpret moments in Lewis’s resolve which break away from the intentions of a Christian author. This perhaps may be read as self-
conscious acquittals that lie in an author’s recognition that language and its symbolic potential or “atmosphere” may not always conform to the intentions of the author. Lewis is either evasive regarding his textual practices or at least acknowledges the limitations of writing a story largely composed of “pictures” or metaphors (“Picture” 42). This element of ambiguity may test the limitations imposed by a strict Christian reading and creates, at least for the reader, an aperture wherein the series escapes a strict parallel with the Christ story. Elsewhere, Lewis states that “the imaginative man in me is older, more continuously operative, and in that sense more basic than either the religious writer or the critic” (Jacobs xxii), which suggests the prioritization of reading the imaginative potential rather than the religious component of the series. Elsewhere, Lewis outlines two reasons for writing an imaginative work dividing his person between the Author’s reason and the Man’s reason (“Sometimes” 35). The Author’s reason thinks of the materials for a story beginning “with mental pictures” soon accompanied by the longing for a Form: verse or prose, short story, novel play etc (35). The Man criticizes the proposed book and later imposes certain intentions. This is evident in Lewis’s own example of Chronicles, “Everything began with images. . . .At first there wasn’t even anything Christian about them; that element pushed itself in of its own accord” and then afterwards certain intentions were imposed on Lewis’s writing (36). The Man in Lewis began to see how stories of this kind could assist in an uninhibited reception of the Christ story (37).

The important distinction is that the stories do not begin with a moral or Christian intention; the constituent elements or images thus may continue to retain an “atmosphere” particular to its own context, apart from the Christian story into which they are incorporated in Lewis’s stories allowing the reader entry into a distant yet recognizable world made available in a larger discourse of Story. In another essay “On Criticism”, Lewis distinguishes between “meaning” and “intention” for the author is the one who
“intends” while the books “means” which inevitably gives way to different meanings with different readers. Lewis makes the provision that different readings, aside from the author’s intention, may evolve,

Of a book’s meaning, in this sense, its author is not necessarily the best, and is never a perfect judge. One of his intentions usually was that it should have a certain meaning: he cannot be sure that it has. He cannot even be sure that the meaning he intended it to have was in every way, or even at all, better than the meaning which readers find in it. (57)

In keeping with his project to re-enchant the reader’s imagination (PPL xxiii), one may read Chronicles as participating in a Discourse of Wonder, evocative of Joy through the amassing of various stories, mythologies and tropes. In this way, one may extend Elick’s reading of Bakhtin’s carnivals in Magician across the seven books. Bakhtin’s formulation of hierarchy which gives way to polyphony rather than an authoritative voice augurs democracy. In incorporating from a diverse range of sources which inevitably creates a syncretic system as well as a collaboration of “profane”/popular and “sacred”/authoritative texts, Lewis distinguishes his Christian voice by establishing dialogue in sacrosanct theology. By this reasoning, there is a more democratic representation of the Christian voice, which may have been why readers who perceived the series as the work of a Christian apologist, found the incorporation of the mythological personages and the doctrine of inclusivism in the case of Emeth (LB) in sharp contrast with the Christian orthodox spirit. 12

Heck describes how Lewis highly appreciates the classics since they provide “an infusion of the better elements of paganism” and valuable truth may be found in old books and a reverence for tradition (Heck Irrigating 68). In the creative re-appropriation of texts, one
may propose that the grand narrative of the Christian tradition can only survive in this way - through “contingent narratives” and thus may act as a mode of bringing in knowledge in a time when knowledge has a provisional character. Plett states that “The author who re-employs fragments from poetic (pre-)texts in his own poetic text does so with certain intentions” (13). The idiosyncrasies of the series, its deviation from a strict one-to-one parallel with the Biblical narrative, are on a structural level, purposeful and intended. In relation to the general focus of this thesis, Lewis’s self-conscious amalgamation of texts gives latitude to the reader to engage in intertextual speculations of their own. While Michael Riffaterre\(^{13}\) speaks on this explicitly and suggest how the repertoire of the reader is activated, this chapter does not pursue this at the level of the reader, but instead examines how Lewis, as author, initiates this.

2.4 Past and Present Tradition

One way of understanding Lewis’s inclination to include diverse materials into his stories is in examining how Lewis retrieves images from the past into the present establishing a co-presence, or what Owen Barfield in *Speaker’s Meaning* (1967) identifies as the “‘self-consciousness’ of the past in the present” (22). As Barfield’s text suggests and Lewis’s *Studies in Words* (1960) articulates, this is presented at the level of a word’s meaning which may mean more than any given author intends; at the thematic level of the Medieval ages and the significance to the Modern; at the intertextual level wherein texts exist simultaneously and last, historically wherein “periods” which Lewis regards with disdain, are joyously suspended as stated in his lecture “Descriptione” or “The Description of the Ages” (1955) or in the belief that, “Whatever we have been, in some sort we are still” (*AOL* 1). The greatest division in the history of the West, according to Lewis, is one that divides the twentieth century from the age of Jane Austen and Scott (“Descriptione” 7); it is characterized by the “change in technology or the ‘birth of the
machines’” (10) altering our place in nature. His statement and what it means for Chronicles is evident when one understand that Lewis saw himself as reading, “as native texts that you may read as foreigners” (12) and the “chasm” (7) between the ages suggests the disappearance of the “Old Western Order” (13) of which he considers himself a representative. Thus Lewis retrieves past narratives for the contemporary context.

Especially, the theory of intertextuality which proposes that a text is always in relation to other texts, helps one to see how the literary history of Medieval and Renaissance literature is itself implicated within an intertextual discursive space which implies a reciprocal relationship between Medievalism as an ideal and twentieth century popular fiction as its recreation. Lewis’s creative engagement with literary tradition involves an activity of recalling key writers and motifs which reconstruct one idea of the Medieval Age which is then transposed into his imaginative fiction especially as literary history is not an immutable reality but constructed by these authors.14 The ad hoc amalgamation of literary tropes and genres suggests that Fantasy Fiction is an innovative mode that allows for Lewis to stress the confluence of both past and present and how writers of the past, may infiltrate our present circumstances to instil codes and traditions that are still valuable.

2.5 Intertextuality

Lewis’s attitude towards creative textual assimilation is perhaps best enunciated in his preface which concedes his debt to Olaf Stapledon, “Mr. Stapledon is so rich in invention that he can well afford to lend, and I admire his invention (though not his philosophy) so much that I should feel no shame to borrow” (Lewis Strength 8). Lewis borrows from Stapledon’s work, divorces his philosophy from the invention, and adapts it for his own use. In proposing that Lewis’s enactment of intertextuality subsequently gives latitude to
the reader to indulge in further intertextual readings, this chapter stresses both sides in an understanding of intertextual theory: both the function of the writer as critical reader whose extensive reading complicates the selection, recycling and reiteration of textual material and the reader who rewrites the text at hand. Allen illustrates, “However it is used, the term intertextuality promotes a new vision of meaning, and thus of authorship and reading: a vision resistant to ingrained notions of originality, uniqueness, singularity and autonomy” (6) seen in the eclectic compilation of textual material in Chronicles. How does the series generate multiple readings or establish an intertextual network of relations to other texts which the author provokes in not only a self-conscious amalgamation of literary tropes but by aligning his text within a larger discourse that recirculates these themes and figures? In reading this against Lewis’s understanding of Joy and Wonder, one may explore how Lewis’s Chronicles is more expansive; testing the limits of a Christian fantasy or a microcosm of the medieval cosmological system, with a growing and expansive scaffolding that alters with a reader’s input. This is also understood within the freedom that language offers. One is reminded that Chronicles is distinguished from Lewis’s “Animal Land” written as a child, which had nothing in common except anthropomorphic beasts and had no “hint of wonder” (SBJ 15). Thus, as a critic who is keenly influenced by and critically aware of preceding authors, Lewis’s Chronicles reflects a broad range of sources that evoke “wonder” in an eclectic textual construction by different authors. Lewis relies on these authors some of which are Edmund Spenser, Alighieri Dante, John Milton and E. Nesbit in order to relocate meaning from an autonomous conception of the text with a palpable author to multiple frameworks and multiple authors that disburse these meanings, functioning as conduits to Lewis’s stories.
The term ‘intertextuality’ is a concept with broad implications, however it essentially formulates an understanding that no one text exists as an autonomous artefact but in relation to other texts, “Works of literature, after all, are built from systems, codes and traditions established by previous works of literature” (Allen 1), to which Allen adds art forms, culture, literary and non-literary texts. Originating in the linguist Ferdinand de Saussure’s proposition that meaning is non-referential in his work *Course in General Linguistics* (1915) the relation between a “signifier” or sound image and a “signified” or concept is arbitrary, finding meaning only “within a linguistic system as it exists at any one moment of time” (9) rather than directly referencing the world. Every communicative act is made within this system which “pre-exist a speaker” (9) and the linguistic sign is also “differential” in the system of language (la langue) as it positions itself with regard to sets of related sounds and words (10). Given this system, “No sign has a meaning of its own. Signs exist within a system and produce meaning through their similarity to and difference from other signs.” (10). Modelled on Saussure’s concept of the “differential sign” in a, “vast network of relations, of similarity and difference, which constitutes the synchronic system of language” (11). Allen notes that:

Authors of literary works do not just select words from a language system, they select plots, generic features, aspects of character, images, ways of narrating, even phrases and sentences from previous literary texts and from the literary tradition. If we imagine the literary tradition as itself a synchronic system, then the literary author becomes a figure working with at least two systems, those of language in general and of the literary system in particular. (11)

The assumption that a text is “the sole product of an author’s original thoughts” and as Allen continues, the assumption that a work, “as referential in function” is exchanged for a view that the literary work is no longer, “the container of meaning but as a space in
which a potentially vast number of relations coalesce” (12) allowing the reader to move from the apparent structure of the text to its relation with other works and linguistic structures. Intertextuality renounces the claim that the author has to the sole source of meaning such as in Roland Barthes’ “The Death of the Author” (1968) and raises the question of discourse, “the idea that within society at any one time there are many different ways of speaking or writing” (13) and it is the author who merely combines from this system.

The term is first used by Julia Kristeva in the mid 1960s in “The Bounded Text” and “Word, Dialogue, Novel” and is based on Mikhail Bakhtin who explains that, “Language is not abstract but is used by individuals in social contexts, the ‘utterance’ reflects the ‘human-centred and socially specific aspect of language’” (17). As Allen makes clear, Bakhtin suggests that Saussure erroneously focused on the system of language (langue) rather than parole, the act of utterance (17) and language must be understood in its “social specificity” (18) and all language responds to previous utterances. No utterance or work, is independent or what is termed as ‘monumental’” (18).

This is understandable, given the wide applicability that the term has and that this concept has more or less existed in our narrative practices. R.J. Schoeck cites Thomas Greene as describing intertextuality as “the itinerary or genealogy of a complex image, a conceit, or a text, and it may be itself defined as ‘the structural presence’ within a work of ‘elements from earlier works’; and as Greene rightly observes, ‘since a literary text that draws nothing from its predecessors is inconceivable, intertextuality is a universal constant’” (Schoeck 100). However Plett notes that, “Originally conceived and used by a critical avant-garde as a form of protest against established cultural and social values, it today serves even conservative literary scholars to exhibit their alleged modernity” (Plett 3-5), and is contemporary term for what may in retrospect be an existing feature prevalent in
traditional forms of composition. Other critics challenge this notion that one may associate the Renaissance concept of imitation with intertextuality. Against traditional literary studies as work and author oriented, Mai develops a better understanding of intertextuality with reference to Julia Kristeva’s original conception of the term, although, “At its least presumptuous, the word ‘intertextuality’ merely indicates that one text refers to or is present in another one” (51).

In this chapter, Intertextuality is understood as twofold: the theoretical underpinnings suggest a simple concept that a text does not exist in isolation or as an autonomous artefact, but is in a relation with other texts. John Frow’s concise summary in the beginning of his essay adds to this definition that, “Texts are shaped not by an immanent time but by the play of divergent temporalities” to which he adds “Texts are therefore not structures of presence but traces and tracings of otherness. They are shaped by the repetition and the transformation of other textual structures” (45). Texts are therefore constructed with respect to cultural conditions such as conventions generated by genre. Frow notes that rather than individual sources, the more “relevant” question is the, “general discursive structure (genre, discursive formation, ideology) to which it belongs” and the “cultural codes which are realised (and contested) in texts” (46).

One way of looking at this is through Jonathan Culler’s question of “Presupposition and Intertextuality”. Culler posits that a theory of intertextuality asks what a text may presuppose, “In the act of writing or speaking he [the writer] inevitably postulates an intersubjective body of knowledge . . . my discussion is intelligible only in terms of a prior body of discourse—other projects and thoughts which it implicitly or explicitly takes up, prolongs, cites, refutes, transforms” (112). He stresses that intertextuality may mean more than a text’s relation to other texts and is instead, “a designation of its participation in the discursive space of a culture: the relationship between a text and the
various languages or signifying practices of a culture and its relation to those texts which articulate for it the possibilities of that culture” (112). Lewis does this explicitly by establishing a dialogue with other texts such as parodying Geoffrey Chaucer’s *Parliament of the Fowles* with his own substitution “Parliament of the Owls”; alluding to William Morris’s *The Wood Beyond the World* in his description of the “wood between the worlds”, and in parodying humans via the bestiary or animal fable that Lewis refers to (Sammons 102). In borrowing from titles to well-known books, Lewis overcodes the text via this allusion. The supposed reality of the world of Digory and Polly are fictionalized by Lewis in describing Digory’s spinster Aunt and her “mad” (*MN* 6) brother Mr. Ketterley. This is the time when Sherlock Holmes was living in Baker Street (3) and the Bastables were “looking for treasure in the Lewisham Road” (3). After Digory tells Polly about the strange study that his uncle often locks himself up in, Polly quips, “Perhaps he keeps a mad wife shut up there” (6). This suggestion evokes images of Mr. Rochester’s mad wife locked away in Charlotte Bronte’s *Jane Eyre* (1847). Again, the children suggest that perhaps Uncle Andrew is a pirate, “like the man at the beginning of *Treasure Island* . . . always hiding from his old shipmates” (7). By introducing the archetypal mad woman (Rochester’s mad wife), the classic adventurous pirate (in *Treasure Island*), and the quintessential man of intellect (Holmes), one may infer that the children identify their own aberrations. These aberrations are legitimized by the dominant perspectives held by London society which identified these figures as fantastic, or violating some norm.

Hence, one may reason that these texts act as an illustration of society’s construction of reality or world-view. These texts or these elements of the texts are considered Fantastic by the children simply because they do not conform to, “consensus reality” (Hume 21). As a repercussion, what Polly and Digory experience is easily recognizable to the reader as well as to the children, as fantastic or marvellous, since there is a body of texts that
precede the reading of *Chronicles* and qualifies what is understood as fantastic and
normal. These texts might also act as an illustration of the reason, logic and methods of
deduction that was encouraged by scientific developments as depicted in Sherlock
Holmes. While the mention of *Treasure Island* could possibly be read as the synonym for
England’s Imperialism and colonialism, and *Jane Eyre* may depict the cooperation of
realism and supernaturalism as a new aesthetic adopted in the latter half of the nineteenth
century. For these parallels, one may examine the children’s exploration of the attic as
reminiscent of Sherlock Holmes; Uncle Andrew’s exploitations of Narnia for commercial
uses as per *Treasure Island* and the sinister qualities particular to the gothic romance that
are evoked for the description of Uncle Andrew and Mrs. Lefay, as per *Jane Eyre*.

Importantly, Victorian London society is characterized by Lewis’s literary references and
the children’s entry into an “other world” involves furthering a network of imaginative
texts.

Intertextuality, as understood in Culler’s definition, may either be the underlying
discourse or what this chapter understand as genre implying that certain codes and
conventions which are found in the given text are instituted by a pre-existing genre and
the text takes on a greater meaning in relation to the genre that is presupposed. The
structuralist thinker Todorov begins his study of the Fantastic in Literature by
acknowledging that each text in literature shares “properties” with other literary texts;
“Genres are precisely those relay-points that assume a relation with the universe of
literature” (8). Frye notes the same, “Hence in the criticism of romance we are led very
quickly from what the individual work says to what the entire convention it belongs to is
saying through the work. . . . would begin to give us some glimpse of still larger verbal
structures, eventually of the mythological universe itself” (*Secular* 60).
The most overt presupposition that the series makes is towards the genre of Fairy Tale which may provoke an intertextual or Gerard Genette’s archetextual adeptness in the reader to recognize that the series comprises of certain codes, themes and conventions instituted by the genre of Fairy Tale. Archetextuality as referring to a genre suggests for the reader, “a Jaussian horizon of expectations” (Still and Worton 23) which enables the reader to make sense of demands made by the text. The formula “Once upon a time” or “This is a story” thus forges a strong structural link with the body of Fairy Tale stories informing the reader that certain modes, plots and characters described in *Chronicles* recognizably belong to the genre, with clear ideas of good and evil and the archetypal movement of the quest trope. According to Allen, Gerard Genette is not interested in individual symbols or individual works, “but the ways in which signs and texts function within and are generated by describable systems, codes, cultural practices and rituals” (95). Furthermore, Genette’s conception of intertextuality as per the genre, “denies the existence of unitary objects and emphasizes their systematic and relational nature, be they literary texts or other art works” (96). Aside from the reading of the series within the framework of the genre, this chapter is particularly interested in examining how the various elements in the series is fashioned in such a way that it establishes dialogue in the Christian voice and gives latitude to reader’s outside the Christian framework to enjoy the text. Lewis himself characterizes Spenser’s writing as using, “a polyphonic technique, interweaving different narrative strands in an intricate way” (*Spenser’s 2*) so that an “interplay of stories” may also result in an enjoyment of a work.

In first asking what a text presupposes, Culler suggests that the conventions and codes that one finds in a given text is instituted by this discourse. According to Culler, the concept of intertextuality presupposes that an act of reading and writing comes from a position in a discursive space which relates it to other text and codes of that space. Culler
cites Kristeva for a text may, “presupposes the existence of other discourses. . . . so that in a poetic utterance can be read numerous other discourses” thus suggesting the importance of identifying these discourses (116-17). In Lewis’s objective to reflect a certain atmosphere in his texts, he absorbs various sources to facilitate this endeavour; each of his references in some ways form a discursive space that articulates a concern for truth to imaginative fiction, and thereby truth in the Marvellous or Christian stories via the truth inherent in myth. Stories and literary tropes as “contingent narratives” are particularly important in a changing reality, as examined in Chapter I. In recognizing that texts thus participate in various systems, some examples of which he gives as the conventions of genre, the logic of story, the various discourse of knowledge that circulate in a culture, “critics can move through texts towards an understanding of the systems and semiotic processes which make them possible” (13).

The binary that Fantasy is generally conceived of having with reality, allows the reader to perceive that an ‘other world’ constructed by the author, is both simultaneously ‘Fantastic’ and yet informed by a concrete and recognizable socio-historical context particular to the author and from which the author originates. The imagination and Fantasy becomes a medium calculated to respond to prevailing attitudes that challenged its importance. Essentially this means that the frame-world of the children, in becoming the first world that a reader is introduced to, is integral so that the subsequent recognition of the Fantastic, is shared by the readers through the participation of the characters. Stableford would call this the mundane narrative of the mimetic world of the text which is soon ruptured by secondary world into which the children enter into. As the children converse with the characters belonging to the imaginary world of Narnia, a repertoire is built between the two worlds which challenges the limitations that are imposed by reductive knowledge and reality belonging to an experiential world. The very structure of
the portal fantasy is about, “entry, transition, and negotiation” (Mendlesohn 2) while the quest fantasy is one that moves from the mundane to the fantastic, so that the author must adopt a transitional narrative to describe and explain from the point of view of the character as she negotiates the world (2), which may in turn result in an authoritative interpretation of the world. The importance of Fantasy is stressed by C.S. Lewis especially at it becomes increasingly engendered in discussions dominated by “disenchanted” narratives of language and positivist systems of thought. Understanding this discourse may also explain the importance of Culler’s questions of presupposition and intertextuality which reads it within a literary genre (128-9). Readers, like Culler explains, must relate a sentence to a greater system seen in genre, “to place it in a discursive or intertextual space which gives rise to the conventions that make this sentence intelligible and significant as a speech act” (129). The genre may allow us to interpret certain conventions that are constituents of Fantasy Fiction seen in the plot, theme or symbol (129). Taking from Culler’s idea of presupposition and how “it produces a pre-text” (130), Culler’s study is “how texts create presuppositions and hence pre-texts for themselves and how the ways of producing these presuppositions relate to ways of treating them” (130). One may say that in this way, the genre of Fantasy Fiction is based on conventions that explicitly borrow well known archetypes or tropes or more particularly in the use of a story being told.

2.6 Discourse of Wonder

Twentieth century Fantasy Fiction as discourse is built on an underlying system of conventions that counter or violate the realist convention (linguistic and literary) and becomes an important mode of perception in retaliation to a social and cultural milieu wherein ‘disenchantment’ of the world is rampant. Opponents to their use of Fantasy suggested that it was in detriment to Reason and thus Fantasy for these authors were
polemical in nature; seeking to not only validate the imaginative enterprise but to reinforce the power of language, especially via metaphor and thus the Fantasy world of *Chronicles* is produced as a possible result of this dialogue. One Lewis scholar writes, “In one sense, Lewis’s apologetic can be seen as commending and offering counter-narrations rather than counter-arguments against the naturalism and secularism of our age” (McGrath 73). Facilitating Wonder and providing a network of stories that may be seen under the rubric of Wonder narratives, is a decisive effort made by Lewis and his contemporaries against the changes made at the level of language. Doris T. Myers in her work *C.S. Lewis in Context* (1994) brings to the fore the controversies over language and the resultant evaluation of metaphor by both Oxford and Cambridge philosophers (xi-xii). The question of metaphor becomes important as this falls in line with Lewis’s “pictorial symbolism” (Lindskoog 3) and his belief that man relentlessly thinks in pictures and that, “all language about everything is analogical and that we think in a series of metaphors. We can explain nothing in terms of itself, but only in terms of other things” (3).

This thought may be deduced from the pictorial imagery of Lewis’s somewhat haphazard amalgamation of images as he explains the creative process behind his first book *Lion* in his short essay “It All Began with a Picture” (*Of Other Worlds* 42) where he claims that the story “began with seeing pictures in my head” (42). Myer’s chapter on “The Context of Metaphor” (1-26) distinguishes between the high and low evaluation of language; “The high evaluation involves a belief in the reality of universals and connects the word closely with the thing it designates. It identifies reason with the Word, the Logos, and is therefore closely connected with the Greek-Christian tradition. The low evaluation involves some form of nominalism and detaches the word from the thing. It is the characteristic underlying assumption of all periods of empiricism” (1) which dominated the post-war
period (2), most notably in the works of C.K. Ogden and I.A. Richards *The Meaning of Meaning* (1923). They worked towards challenging the view that, “that words . . . always imply things corresponding to them” (5). Both authors, according to Myers, modelled their approach on behaviourism and in doing so, nullify, “the primitive idea that Word and Thing are related by some magic bond” so that as Myer’s observes, “the use of symbols that have no referent” (5). Myer’s observes that their theory of metaphor, “is an extension of this behaviourist formulation” (5). In contrast to these developments, Myers notes how Owen Barfield’s *Poetic Diction* based in the writer’s anthroposophy may have had a certain influence in the writing of C.S. Lewis. Barfield, according to Myers, represents the high evaluation of language (8) and stands in opposition to Ogden and Richard’s formulations, “Instead of viewing the human being as a passive recipient of sensory stimuli, he sees the mind as an active participant in the very nature of the universe. And instead of regarding metaphor as an abstraction, something added on to more precise, more basic expressions, he regards it as the source of both language and knowledge” (7).

According to Myers, Barfield “explicitly criticizes the Ogden-Richards theory, arguing that the distinction between emotive and referential language is fallacious because the very nature of language is metaphorical” (8). Our understanding of concepts and our use of analogies in order to express these concepts are all examples of metaphor (8), “And since human intelligence is a participation in the cosmic Intelligence, the knowledge that human beings gain through metaphor corresponds with the way the universe really is” (8). Barfield’s conception of language is intrinsically metaphorical and he maintains that poetic diction comes nearest to the original meaning of language; only later did language become abstract, but initially it was figurative (9). Thus, original concrete language appears to us as metaphorical through the abstraction of language. Even scientific
language is characterized by metaphor, “The unity of metaphor, and concept, of language
and experience, of poetry and science is possible, Barfield says, because language is
related to nature. Language is metaphorical and mythical because it reflects the true
character of the universe” (10), which Myer’s comments is related to Jungian archetypes.
Lewis develops this idea in “Bluspels and Flalansferes: A Semantic Nightmare” (SLE ),
as mentioned in Chapter I, especially in our inevitability to rely on metaphors when
thinking or explaining even in the most non-metaphorical discourses such as the sciences.
Importantly, these metaphors can, “expand the reader’s consciousness, thus providing
new knowledge about the world” (Sammons 38). Barfield writes, “it is the language of
poets, in so far as they create true metaphors, which must restore this unity conceptually,
after it has been lost from perception (Barfield 86-7).

Poetic metaphors were capable of restoring, “to humanity the intuitive sense of
‘conscious participation in the world-process’” (Harrold 189). According to Barfield,
poetic language may allow one to perceive, “particulars in relation to wholes, disclosing
truth not in themselves, but in their relations to what was outside them. . . . In doing so,
metaphors and other tools of the imagination restored the ‘connective tissue,” the
relationality or mutuality of things. This is what it meant to see the world that was
“actually out there” more spiritually—“more really” (Harold 189). The world of myth
presents to the reader what Walsh observes in Lewis’s fiction Till We Have Faces “a
prelogical world in which consciousness has not yet split into separate compartments”
(174) so that the full meaning of any given word, for example, pneuma or spirit may
retain its original multiple meanings. Since, Lewis’s Chronicles may be read as working
against these two oppositional forces, Lewis enlists a number of texts to support his
position of imaginative literature as conveying truth; and establishes his series as
analogous to a great body of stories, each intersecting and breaching into one another,
which the reader may access and move between and restore the unity found in poetic language. Critics have read the series as Lewis’s withdrawal from apologetics after suffering a devastating loss to Elizabeth G. Anscombe regarding his work *Miracles: A Preliminary Study* (1947) and the existence of miracles and the laws of Nature.  

Particularly important to the discourse of Wonder is Lewis’s view of the relationship between myth, fact, and history. Lewis was convinced by friends J.R.R. Tolkien and Hugo Dyson of the truth inherent in myth, one that particularly led him to believe that the Christian story was the true myth. Lewis’s understanding of how Fantasy may assist in challenging assumptions of a relation between fiction and reality; is not only in the literature that acts as a conduit for something other and outer but the shared relation that the Christ story has with other mythology. For Lewis, the historical validity of the Gospel story is maintained by understanding how pagan mythology is a precursor to the Christ story, “We cannot, therefore, turn down Theology, simply because it does not avoid being poetical. . . .This is what we should expect. Man is a poetical animal and touches nothing which he does not adorn” (“Theology” 126). Similarly, “We can make our language duller; we cannot make it less metaphorical. We can pictures more prosaic; we cannot be less pictorial” (133).

Stephen D. McConnell explores the relationship between myth in human consciousness and history, which Lewis perceived which, “led him to a begrudging openness to the relationship between myth and truth” (14). Lewis makes his case that the incarnation is, “myth become fact” and that simply because the story is historically true does not diminish its mythic character” (16). Lewis proposes that when one receives myth, “we come nearest to experiencing as a concrete what can otherwise only be understood as an abstraction” (15). Similarly, Lewis describes how theology may be less poetical than other poetry, in the movement from Old to New Testament for example, “stories become
less mythical . . . and more historical” (“Theology” 129) recalling Frye’s diachronic movement of literature. God becomes man and in coming, “down from the ‘heaven of myth to the ‘earth’ of history. In so doing, it partly emptied itself of its glory, as Christ emptied Himself of His glory to be Man” (130). Lewis reasons that this, “is the humiliation of myth into fact, of God into Man; what is everywhere and always, imageless and ineffable, only to be glimpsed in dream and symbol and the acted poetry of ritual become small, solid” (130).

A Platonic view that Lewis develops is his theory of transposition, “a philosophical and theological concept of Lewis that described how a higher metaphysical reality can be adapted into a lower medium” (McConnell 24) or how the supernatural reality or supernature may be translated or in Lewis’s terminology, “transposed” into the natural instances or “terrestrial experience” (“Transposition” 94). Or in terms of language: a translation of a richer language with a greater vocabulary into a language that possesses a smaller vocabulary, “then you must be allowed to use several words in more than one sense” (99). Another possible term he offers is ‘sacramentalism’ such as pictures which, “are part of the visible world themselves and represent it only by being part of it. Their visibility has the same source. The suns and lamps in pictures seems to shine only because real suns or lamps shine on them; that is, they seem to shine a great deal because they really shine a little in reflecting their archetypes” (102). Lewis learned from Tolkien that myth, “though they contain error, will also reflect a splintered fragment of the true light, the eternal truth that is with God” (Carpenter 147). Elsewhere, Lewis writes that for his conversion to Christianity, pagan mythology prefigured the story of Christ, “The question was no longer to find the one simply true religion among thousand religions simply false. It was rather, ‘Where has religion reached its true maturity?’” (SBJ 235) repeated again with a comparison between monotheism and polytheism (AOL 57).
Lewis explains this in another form, “The stories of the Landlord in our own time are but a picture-writing which show to the people as much of the truth as they can understand” (PR 147). As Lewis’s Fantasy retaliates against the challenges made towards metaphorical language and stresses on the importance of myth to reality, Lewis formulates what he sees as an additive contribution to the appreciation of stories, as outlined by Aristotle’s poetics and Jung’s archetypes. One may interpret that Story, for Lewis, licenses a textual play. Myth, story and reality are reassessed and challenged within this context so that the “chronological snobbery” (SBJ 106) of our age will not discount the importance of the past. Similarly reading stories or literary tropes that by the process of transposition may convey a glimmer of a higher reality suggests how stories may re-enchant the experiential world of the reader (“Three Ways” 30).

Lewis observes, “The advance of knowledge gradually empties this rich and genial universe” (“Empty” 81) once “packed with will, life and positive qualities; every tree is a nymph and every planet a god” (81). He notes how this has increased the subjective part of our being, “classified as our sensations, thoughts, images or emotions. The Subject becomes gorged, inflated, at the expense of the Object” (81). This same tendency is soon turned onto Man as we “empty ourselves” (81) so that we are mistaken in having “attributed ‘souls’, or ‘selves’, or ‘minds’ to human organisms, as when we attributed Dryads to the trees” (81) furthered by the linguistic damage that thinkers such as Max Müller encouraged in The Science of Language (1864) who presented Mythology as “a disease of language” (82). There is a great deal of “truth” in the anthropomorphic world that is conceived but our subjections have altogether disposed of that element. Miraz represents an enforcement of the “single-plane, this-worldly ontology” (qtd. in McHale, 34) by rubbishing the historical accounts of Narnian – stories about magical creatures – as “only fit for babies” (PC 42) imposing a totalizing logic. Thus, as Lewis has suggested,
belief in an ultimate truth or reality may be transposed into several different narratives, adopting a series of texts as portals in order to do so to initiate this re-enchantment or as a, “real praeparatio evangelica for people who do not yet know wither they are being led” (Glover 28). The longaeivi or “long livers” are also in keeping with the metaphors of dance and music because they enact the free-play of tropes and the possible resistance to one imposed meaning as per the possibilities of a metaphor. These moments of play or dance are also transposed moments that suggest joy (Huttar 121). Tixier reminds us of this in her citation of Lewis’s Letters to Malcolm, “certain qualities that must belong to the celestial condition have no chance to get through, can project no images of themselves, except in activities which, for us here and now, are frivolous” (qtd. in Tixier, 93), hence the isolated moments of dance and play may reflect the divine. This attitude is especially important as Lewis’s tutor, Dr. Cornelius, is described as having such a manner that one couldn’t tell whether he was being serious or joking (PC 45-46). Dr. Cornelius, according to Lewis’s illustration, is both serious and ‘playful’ and uses this demeanour to reintroduce “knowledge” in the Narnian history and is a pivotal character, for without his tutelage, Caspian would not have allied himself with the Narnian fight for freedom. This is seen first in the figure of the “Professor” in Lion, and is a go-to authority in terms of navigating the fantastic.

Coriakin and Ramandu become stand-in dialecticians in Silver when they reason with the children regarding the reality of their worlds. In “The Phenomenology of Spirit in Fairytales”, Jung defines these characters as variations of the “spiritual archetype . . . possessing authority” who always appear when “insight, understanding, good advice, determination, planning, etc., are needed but cannot be mustered on one’s own resources” (Jung 216). The Professor’s questioning of what is actually taught in their schools (50) takes on a nuanced understanding of leisure and the kind of lessons that the children learn
when Eustace regards their evacuation as a holiday. Huizinga identifies school as sharing connotation of leisure and play (36) and these dialecticians represent a form of the “philosophical dialogue’, the formal conversation on a philosophical or theological subject” (Evans xxix) as, “the kind of thinking” (xxix) or genre that Lewis chose to write in. These dialecticians become important in facilitating the crossing from one ontology to the next.

2.7 Joy

*Chronicles* is read as functioning within a greater discourse of Wonder; this introduces a writing dynamic in Lewis’s series which brings in words or images that are highly allusive and possess a great evocative power which draws people into the story. Previous research does not explore the potential for dialogue and versatility which Joy inevitably instigates, as apparent in the phrase “the dialectic of desire” (*SBJ* 219) which characterizes Lewis’s profound longing or *sehnsucht* for something other and outer; as symbolized in his illustration of becoming a votary of Novalis’s Blue Flower (7). It is never the images which you desire “but something other and outer” (168). The longing for Joy is an integral feature of his conversion from Atheism to Christianity and is articulated in *The Pilgrim’s Regress* (*Regress*) with protagonist John’s yearning for an elusive island. Lewis’s autobiography *Surprised By Joy* (*Surprised*) and his diary posthumously published as *All My Roads Before Me: The Diary of C.S Lewis, 1922-1927* narrate his conversion to Christianity via a network or medium of often disparate and unrelated texts.

Lewis’s desire for Joy is understood, “as an unsatisfied desire which is itself more desirable than any other satisfaction” (*SBJ* 17-8) is distinct from Happiness and Pleasure in the characteristic that “anyone who has experienced it will want it again” (18). For Lewis, it is more akin to a “kind of unhappiness or grief” (18). The elusiveness of Joy is
seen in the way Lewis describes the feeling of, “to have is to want and to want is to have. Thus, the very moment when I longed to be so stabbed again, was itself such a stabbing” (166). Oury explains that is not an object (5) but instead Joy points to an object. Joy, “was bound to the qualities of things, yet distinctly itself” (5).

This Lewis further realised in his reading of Alexander’s *Space, Time and Deity* (1920) and Lewis’s reading of how one cannot experience enjoyment (or desire) and contemplate what is enjoyed at the same time, “That the longing for Joy was the main thing, the true significance of the emotion. He learned that Joy was merely an indication that ‘you want—I myself [Joy] am your want of—something other, outside, not you nor any state of you’” (Harrold 269). Harrold includes Lewis’s observation that, “You cannot hope and also think about hoping at the same moment; for in hope we look to hope’s object and we interrupt this by (so to speak) turning round to look at the hope itself” (qtd. in Harrold, 188).

Joy attests to Lewis’s desire for something other and outer and greater than the aesthetic experience. Eventually, his desire for Joy leads him to his faith in God where Lewis explains this intense desiring as our yearning for being reunited with God, with the Absolute, with “utter reality” (188). McGrath explores this regarding the “epiphanic aspects of Joy” (McGrath 111), since for Lewis reading literature can be, “epiphanic triggering off such moments of insight, illumination, and transformation” (111).

Importantly, Joy may be described as a certain “atmosphere” or the “quiddity” of each thing, “the very quality of life” (Oury 4), which he felt could be best approached by the form of myth. Myth for Lewis had, “a value in itself” or the capability to introduce us, “to a permanent object of contemplation – more like a thing than a narration – which works upon us by its peculiar flavour or quality, rather as a smell or a chord does” (*AEC* 43). Moreover, myth suggested a pattern that had a “profound relevance”(44) to our lives and
is “fantastic”, “grave” and “awe inspiring” (44). As Lewis says, “What flows into you from the myth is . . . reality” (Lewis Dock 66).

2.8 Quality

This is more clearly understood in his essay “On Stories” wherein Lewis proposes that there is pleasure in a story which is distinct from mere excitement and suspense. It consists of entire worlds that are evoked, for example, the “Redskinnery” of Fenimore Cooper’s series or what he later terms as the “atmosphere”. It is this “‘something else’” (8) the “whole world” of that excitement, “It is the quality of unexpectedness, not the fact that delights us” (17). More importantly, imaginative literature in conveying this quality meant that imaginative literature or particularly Fantasy and myth is a mode which could add to life by giving us experiences (“Sometimes” 38) otherwise denied to us. One way of adding to it, as a contingent narrative, is through his attempts at conveying Wonder or Joy and is best articulated in how he conceives of story,

To be stories at all they must be series of events: but it must be understood that this series – the plot, as we call it – is only really a net whereby to catch something else. The real theme may be, and perhaps usually is, something that has no sequence in it, something other than a process and much more like a state or quality (“On Stories” 18).

Both Lewis and Tolkien opine that dissecting a fairy tale or fantasy into its constitutive elements may often be a diverting activity, which draws away from the overall story or “atmosphere” that these elements produce collectively. Furthermore, both authors favour the overall picture that is produced, rather than the various threads that produce it (Tolkien 23). This however is said with particular reference to the complex history and origin of the Fairy Tale, which complicates the search for individual sources and
materials. More specifically, towards the end of his essay, Lewis moves from describing the quality of a story to an explanation of how a given story may be built of component tropes, or in our understanding, component atmospheres; Lewis illustrates how the net or the general plot sequence is composed of particular threads such as metaphors, images, allusions and references as in his example the insertion of the word Atlantis “to work on its own” (“On Stories” 19) or evoke a certain atmosphere particular to it, which is more effective than trying to fashion an entire story about Atlantis, “And I must confess that the net very seldom does succeed in catching the bird” (18-9). Lewis continues by saying that “In life and art both, as it seems to me, we are always trying to catch in our successive moments something that is not successive” (20-1).

Lewis exercises this principle in his reference to the Atlantean box in Magician, when the sinister Uncle Andrew explains the origins of the box which is older than “Greek, or Old Egyptian, or Babylonian, or Hittite, or Chinese” (22). Instead, Uncle Andrew discovers that, “it came from the lost island of Atlantis. That meant it was centuries older than any of the stone-age things they dig up in Europe. . . .For in the very dawn of time Atlantis was already a great city with palaces and temples and learned men” (MN 22). As per the atmosphere particular to the Atlantis story, the reader is already made aware of the allusion to the fallen city of Atlantis that Plato records in Timaeus and Critias where this island is referenced in an allegory to “contemporary hubris” (Stableford 28) and the eventual submersion of this famed city into the ocean. As another example, Lewis maintains that the “state or quality” (“On Stories” 18) in William Morris’s novel The Well at the World’s End (1896) is effectively communicated in the title itself rather than any story that an author may contrive for that title (18). These individual images or allusions may “sort[ed] themselves into events (i.e., became a story)” (“Sometimes” 36). One may find numerous references to Morris’s “world’s end” in Voyage but is especially overt
when the travellers arrive at an island which they learn some call “the World’s End, for
though you can sail further, this is the beginning of the end” (VDT 183-4) and again in the
last chapter of the book entitled “The Very End of the World” (209). Reasonably, each reference in Lewis’ stories is thus especially selected and contrived to evoke a certain ‘atmosphere’ that may collectively be combined to create a net large enough to catch or evoke a quality. The “atmosphere” of individual literary tropes, therefore, stress that the original objective of Lewis’s text is no longer sustained and that in writing, one does not have the objective autonomy held earlier. This is also communicated in the potential of language and metaphor to mean more than what is intended by the author and the dynamics of writing exacts a counter influence in the compositional process of the stories, so that, as argued in the last chapter, what appears to be a story unified under the Christian rubric is in fact composed of composite ontologies that facilitate in the narration of the story. This is communicated in Manlove’s observation that, “fantasy often looks back to and draws on the great literature of the past . . . the fantasists tries to recreate, the science-fiction writer to make the wholly new” (“Nature” 31).

This is also in agreement with Lewis’s central principle as a writer to suggest and evoke rather than explicitly state as per the freedom of literary tropes which possessed signature “atmospheres” that could achieve a work of “suggestion”\(^\text{20}\), a synthesis of literary tropes that, by virtue of its own “atmosphere”, help structure the story of Chronicles and realised through the ludic possibilities of a Fantasy world. In the example given above and as per this principle, one may begin to see how the allusion to Atlantis, not only brings the structure of myth but also the structure of Plato’s allegory into the stories. Plato’s documentation locates Atlantis as “beyond the Pillars of Hercules” and more importantly, in later adaptations the lost city represents the antediluvian world as in Ignatius L. Donnelly’s Atlantis: The Antediluvian World (Stableford 28). As an allegory, the allusion
to Atlantis becomes a subtle way of informing the reader of the underlying motif associated with the beginning and end of worlds, a structure we see underlying Lewis’s *Magician* which describes both the end of one world Charn and the genesis of the Narnian world. It is also important to mention that the Pillars in Dante’s *Inferno* XXVI, refers to a journey to “gain knowledge of the unknown”21 which is an undercurrent in *Magician* with the spirit of exploration in Digory who is willing to journey into the unknown pools (*MN* 39), continuing the Odyssean trope from *Voyage* and *Silver*. The concept of “atmosphere” or “quality” as elusive is also tangential to his longing for Joy which is as equally elusive.

It is in this context, that one may understand why a reading of Lewis within the Discourse of Wonder would presuppose a network of texts that allows the reader to experience Joy by way of assimilating as much material that would either collectively communicate a quality of Joy or individually act as avenues that may lead to the greater experience of Joy or may, “open a door on Other Time, and if we pass through, though only for a moment, we stand outside our own time, outside Time itself, maybe” (Tolkien 32-3). Elements within the Fairy Tale are preserved “precisely because of the literary effect” (33) and “retained (or inserted) because the oral narrators, instinctively or consciously, felt their literary ‘significance’” (33). Although Tolkien discusses the complex amalgamation of stories within the fairy-story itself, one may borrow the same attitude in a reading of Lewis’s *Chronicles* especially as to the significance of literary tropes and textual materials. In life, catching this bird is incredibly difficult but Art is a close attempt, albeit often an unsuccessful capture of this quality.

As per the theory of transposition, and Lewis’s expansive net in search for Joy, one may reread the many literary tropes and textual references as facilitating the longing and desire that Lewis saw as its object which is God, “Now, if we are made for heaven, the desire
for our proper place will be already in us, but not yet attached to the true object, and will even appear as the rival of that object” (“Weight” 29). The images, books, music which provoke this desire may be understood as having only “a symbolical relation to what will truly satisfy” (29) and must not be confused for containing in themselves this Joy, “it was not in them, it only came through them, and what came through them was longing” (30). Lewis proposes that our longing for, “something else which can hardly be put into words – to be united with the beauty we see” (42) is why “we have peopled air and earth and water with gods and goddesses and nymphs and elves – that, though we cannot, yet these projections can enjoy in themselves that beauty, grace, and power of which Nature is the image. That is why the poets tell us such lovely falsehoods” (42-3). Reading Fantasy in these terms, as opposed to allegory, is described by Timmerman as, “anagogic insight – an immediate apprehension of spiritual patterns which has been stimulated by certain literary figures, symbols or devices” (8) reinforcing Lewis’s theory of Joy apprehended through different imaginative texts.

2.9 Narrative Nets and Allusions

As aforementioned, Lewis uses allusions, such as to individual title and images, which individually possess an “atmosphere” generated by not only its evocative power but its original context from which it is derived. One may read this as instrumental in Lewis’s strategy to avoid wholly adopting a medieval archaic worldview. Instead these small scale usages are inserted for their highly evocative power. Micro-level usages and devices can work toward evoking a whole ambience such as the name of Caspian’s Horse “Destrier” meaning “War Horse” or that Peter and Miraz engage in a “monomachy” a sixteenth century word for “duel”. Much like the Modernists, Lewis illustrates unity in his works but with a focus on the particular as with the Medievalists who, “attains a unity of the highest order, because it embraces the greatest diversity of detail” (Cantor 215). Lewis
recognizes not only “system building” (216) but, “a love of the particular, a propensity to
concentrate on small facts and distinctive experience and to relish the individual and the
concrete” (216) which Cantor finds lies in common with modernism and, “inextricably
intertwined with donnish Oxbridge mentality” (216). In particular, the power of an
allusion suggests that it requires a context of other stories and legends beyond the given
text to “fill in its substance and meaning” (Lee 122). Lee’s reading explores how a story
may refer to other stories, either explicitly or by pointing to a wider context or area of
significance or, “a narrative art of suggestion” (122). The author specifically discusses
*Beowulf* as a product of formulas, themes, and tales and since it is a gathering and
combination of traditional materials from several places and times, it is an important
discussion as it demonstrates how stories may rely on the participation of the audience in
order for the allusions to be recognized. Lee states, “Even as one word finds another, and
then others, to provide variations and incremental meanings, so the main story finds other
stories” (115) adding a certain depth to the text so that the actual text is composed of
multiple stories as seen in Lewis’s polyphonic narrative.

There is a certain similarity with Lewis’s story and method of composition, “Some of
these pictures have a common flavour, almost a common smell, which groups them
together. Keep quiet and watch and they will begin joining themselves up. If you were
lucky . . . a whole set might join themselves so consistently that there you had a complete
story” (“Three Ways” 32). The micro-level usage of an allusion, like the evocative power
of the metaphor, challenges a reductive attitude towards language forging conceptual
linking and encouraging the readers to read *Chronicles* within the greater tradition and
body of wonder stories. Allusions are an, “evocative manifestation of intertextual
relationships” (Hebel 135) that first function as a “marker” (qtd. in Hebel, 136) which
may be “identifiable as an element or pattern belonging to another independent text” and
ends with, “the formation of intertextual patterns” (136). Allusions are particularly important in *Chronicles* as it creates moments of interruption in the story to follow the “associations and connotations” or “associative paradigm” (137) of an allusion. From the above, one may see how Lewis’s allusions in the text establishes intertextual relations that do not end with just pointing the reader to another text but enriches the alluding text and when successful, opens up the text to unlimited associations.

### 2.10 Portal-Quest Fantasy

The second understanding of Intertextuality, adopted in this chapter, is the particular relation between texts. Lewis’s stories are replete with literary tropes, images and allusions both perceptible and hidden. His allusion to Pan, Bacchus, Pomona, Santa Claus, Poseidon, Father Time, Maugrim are representative of different mythologies and texts and are only a minute example of the various literary tropes that Lewis incorporates. On one level this illustrates the syncretism of the world system that he fashions: 22 Lewis self-consciously builds his *Chronicles* from existing materials which inducts the reader into the familiar yet distant world of Story; the power of each reference to collectively build the story of Narnia and to direct the reader into a greater recognition of Wonder both in story and in our lives. This is most notably seen in the various encounters that the children have with different mythological figures and a parallel movement that reader’s make between these literary tropes and texts. Stableford comments that texts are products of strings of information, “The literary image has to be assembled in such a way that readers can be eased into its detail and complexities” (li). In this respect, the construction of this literary information is seen in the multiple transitions from one world to the next; from the recognizable world of the British school children to the fantastic world of Narnia described as a portal-quest fantasy by Farah Mendlesohn.
Portals, such as the wardrobe and the painting, are important devices that transition the characters and the readers from the recognizable world of the children to the Fantastic world of Narnia. What is most pertinent is the understanding of a portal as a liminal threshold between two worlds. The movement between two worlds by the character is also seen as duplicated in a movement between two texts made by the reader which may be understood as a portal in *potentia*. This is borrowed from Mendlesohn’s description of a liminal fantasy which operates on a “liminal moment”, or as an in-between space. This is understood as heightening the hesitation of a character and reader between accepting the Fantastic other which is a concept which she borrows from Tzvetan Todorov who defines the Fantastic as occupying the duration of a reader’s hesitation between two genres, the marvellous and the uncanny (Todorov 25). In a portal-quest Fantasy, Mendlesohn recognizes that a character must leave their familiar surroundings and pass through a portal into an unknown space and the reader may vicariously through the character, complete a similar movement into the Fantasy world.

The portal Fantasy is about “entry, transition and negotiation” (xix), it is also indicative of the moment of hesitation to which the reader may be exposed to when entering into an “other world” and marks the moment of, “transition between this world and another, from our time to another time; from youth to adulthood” (1). The principle underlying the portal-quest fantasy may be extrapolated in order to suggest how readers make a similar movement in a transition between textual references, literary tropes and allusions, both perceptible and hidden, in accordance with the definition of Intertextuality as a reading *between* texts. This movement between texts is analogous to one’s entry into an “other-world” that the children experience on the large-scale level. Allen explains that no one text is an autonomous creation existing in a vacuum or possessing an independent meaning. Instead in order to “interpret a text, to discover its meaning, or meanings, is to
trace those relations. Reading thus becomes a process of moving between texts. Meaning becomes something which exists between a text and all the other texts to which it refers and relates, moving out from the independent text into a network of textual relations. The text becomes the intertext” (Allen 1). There is a linearity in the building of images or literary tropes that Lewis undertakes in his series, and thus one sees how the readers move forward into a greater understanding of the story via the recognition of these “intertexts”.

The construction of the Narnian world thrives off of the concept of other-worlds or a network of worlds which are interrelated. Professor Kirke in Lion does not deny the possibility of the existence beings worlds just around the corner; and as a young boy, the Professor repeats the same notion in Magician with the possibility of there being multiple worlds. As the leonine creator Aslan says, there exists “chinks or chasms” between these worlds, or more specifically between our world and Narnia, however “they have grown rarer” (PC 217). The mobility of the children who travel through these worlds; as well as the mobility of the reader through various texts are in danger of arriving at a stasis – one in which Lewis felt that imaginative literature had the potential to bring a reader outside of; to remedy solipsism and realise the encountering of the Other. The children begin to assess their experiences in Narnia according to the stories that they have read. This “in-between-ness” of both how meaning is constructed through a network of intertexts, or in reading between texts, as well as how the Fantasy world is navigated through portals, allows us to extrapolate from this concept and propose that each figure, citation, reference, allusion, thus acts as portals that facilitate a different meaning of the Narnia world, and realises its allusive potential in the playful activities of the literary reader who recognizes these signals in a movement between text and its intertext to derive meaning; for each transition to a reference and allusion is characteristic of the liminal or ‘inter’-
textuality of a reading. Allen reminds us that Roland Barthes conceives of the “text” as, “a tissue, a woven fabric’ . . . The idea of the text, and thus of intertextuality, depends, as Barthes argues, on the figure of the web, the weave, the garment (text) woven from the threads of the ‘already written’ and the ‘already read’. Every text has its meaning, therefore, in relation to other texts” (6). Intertextuality, thus, can be described as a continuous interaction between multiple texts in a network of relations, expectations, and conventions, a “family of similar stories” (Secular 60) or as Frye discusses on genres that poetry being made out of other poems, cannot be created ex nihilo (Anatomy 97). Any reader outside the Christian readership may respond to these tropes or texts which bear greater associations as an “intertext” or a “text between other texts” (Plett 5) as in Mendlesohn’s portal-quest Fantasy.

Plett distinguishes a, “twofold coherence: an intratextual one which guarantees the immanent integrity of the text, and an intertextual one which creates structural relations between itself and other texts” (5). And the “hermeneutic act” (17) in reading similarly cannot, “consider a single text in isolation” (17). The appearance of a seamless assimilation of various texts, wherein one is in relation to others; suggest also the allusive potential of the ‘intertext’ to subvert a totalizing Christian glare. A Story may be formed with the intention of reflecting a certain “atmosphere” and in an attempt to do so, assimilates into itself a number of sources and textual references that may collectively produce this ‘atmosphere’. Readers are thus encouraged to recognize that these intertexts or sources elaborate on the given text; moreover it is establishes a network that refers to a larger discourse or genre. The interpretation of Lewis’s “atmosphere” is made with the freedom of realising that each source that Lewis, as reader and writers, eventually incorporates into Chronicles first constitutes an “atmosphere”, powerful, evocative and distinct with its original context interrupting the monologic tendency. 23
The importance of a liminal space in the character’s movement between two worlds is articulated in the chapter “The Wood Between the World”. Digory Kirke conjectures, “Supposing there was a world at the bottom of every pool?” (MN 37). Entertaining the possibility or the “supposal” that there are worlds at the bottom of each pool, the children have dramatically moved from one experiential world to possible worlds; from Abbott’s Flatland to an encountering of the Sphere. One may read this liminal space between multiple worlds, as the potential for establishing a number of intertexts from the given text. The title of this chapter illustrates a play of worlds, seen not only in the spatial juxtaposition of the pools and their worlds, but that they exist simultaneously. Lewis’s use of liminal spaces is extensive in Magician as the children crawl along the rafters in between the rooms of the house. The greatest potential to breach a new world or text seems to be implicated in a movement or progression between two worlds, two rooms within a house and the macro-level of two texts. Therefore, Lewis’s choice of the Fairytale to “seriously” and creatively engage with tradition may be perceived as an elaboration of a sustained dialogue with multiple texts, each of which is re-appropriated and refashioned into his Christian mythology, however maintaining the possibility of each text acting as a independent portal for the reader to enter into the series.

This interaction between the literary tropes of the beast fable, myth, epic and romance illustrates separate communities that furthers an intertextual dynamic, “In this context Christianity is most meaningful when most syncretic, most open to inclusive, expansive, and determinedly paradoxical expressions of faith and meaning as opposed to reasoned, manicheistic, or exclusionary ones” (Wood 2). The theory of intertextuality as building a syncretic system does not necessarily elide the Christian objective behind Lewis’s narrative world. It is part of a realisation of the importance of “contingent narratives” and syncretism may, “make sense of or at least accept all aspects of human experience” (2).
Sarah K. Cantrell describes how Fantasy and their “multiple parallel world spaces provide the reader and protagonist with the opportunity to understand ‘reality’ as plural rather than singular” (5). Mendlesohn’s concept of the portal as a reading “between” two texts falls in line with Lewis’s view on reading as enlarging one’s perception of reality as imposed by the Leibnitzian monad, “We demand windows. Literature as Logos is a series of windows, even of doors” (AEC 138) which Chronicles actualizes in the play of worlds.

_Lion_ is replete with intertextual allusions as it sets the tone for the rest of the series; arbitrating a sense of reality or credibility via the multiple transitions and negotiations made between two worlds. Upon entering Narnia, the children encounter a number of strange beasts and figures. In fact, as a more overt example of this, the children are themselves constantly compelled to refer to their own knowledge of Fairy stories that might help to navigate the Narnia world into which they enter suggesting that one must resort to a rich literary tradition to understand the newly fashioned world; strengthening the intertextual ties that the series has with other texts and re-enchanting reality. When all four children are led by a robin to meet the Beavers, Edmund, who has already consorted with the White Witch, or the “Queen” as Edmund knows her, raises the possibility that the robin is leading them into a trap. Peter replies,

“That’s a nasty idea. Still – a robin, you know. They’re good birds in all the stories I’ve ever read, I’m sure a robin wouldn’t be on the wrong side’.

‘If it comes to that, which is the right side? How do we know that the Fauns are in the right and the Queen (yes, I know we’ve been told she’s a witch) is in the wrong? We don’t really know anything about either.” (LWW 61-2)

Eustace upsets the notions such as “right” and “wrong” and questions the authority from which it is derived while Lewis depicts the more reasonable character of Peter as relying
on his knowledge of stories as a guide in this unfamiliar world and thereby legitimizes a
system or network of texts that underlie the composition of the stories. The intertextuality
of the series is also one that Lewis was careful to engineer; ensuring that the imaginative
texts that he cites and alludes may act as a door to an “other world”. This is effectively
achieved in the description of the books that Eustace reads. The characterization of
Eustace Clarence Scrubb is unfavourable, “He liked books if they were books of
information and had pictures of grain elevators or of fat foreign children doing exercise in
model schools” (VDT 12). In contrast, a better story is an imaginative one which Lewis
describes in the chapter entitled “The Magician’s Book”. Lucy, when entreated by the
magical monopods to enter the house of the Magician to reverse a spell which made them
invisible, comes upon the Magician’s book containing all the spells. One such spell is
described as “‘for the refreshment of the spirit’. The pictures were fewer here but very
beautiful. And what Lucy found herself reading was more like a story then a spell . . . She
was living in the story as if it was real, and all the pictures were real too” (144-5). Lucy
upon completing the story finds that she is unable to turn back the pages to reread the
story and soon she finds that she forgets the story itself, “This is a very queer book. How
can I have forgotten? It was about a cup and a sword and a tree and a green hill, I know
that much . . .” (145). Lewis’s allusion to the cup, sword, tree and a green hill is itself an
intertextual allusion to either Christ’s crucifixion or the Arthurian holy grail however in
Lucy’s memory of these literary tropes, one may read this as a noticeable commentary on
the intertextuality or interrelatedness of texts in recycling these images. Aslan who
appears in the room with her reassures her that, “Indeed, yes, I will tell it to you for years
and years” (147). It is a commentary on the recycling of this story into the various
narratives that are constituted in the genre of Fantasy Fiction which reuse these popular
images, motifs and quest-like structures for intertextuality stresses that a text must be understood as not existing in a, “closed system” (Still and Worton 1).

Previous readings acknowledge this concept of intertextuality in the multiple sources from which Lewis borrows from to construct his Fantasy Fictional series however these readings inevitably follow traditional source criticism and thus do not explore how these sources generate a dynamic or a dialogical component to the stories, which is seen in the representation of multiple frameworks generated in the network of associations, resemblances, discourse and texts to which the series refers to. The multiple worlds and associations are particularly important as it strengthens the transposition or relation between story and reality and facilitates an entry into Narnia for those who subscribe to “disenchanted” narratives such as Eustace and the common reader. Caspian is overjoyed to hear “that there were other things. . .like in the stories” (47) inhabiting Narnia. Dr. Cornelius informs Caspian that Old Narnia is, “is the country of Aslan, the country of the Waking Trees and Visible Naiads, of Fauns and Satyrs, of Dwarfs and Giants, of the gods and the Centaurs, of Talking Beasts” (54) which Miraz has tried to smother and “cover up even the memory of” (51).

One way in which these mythological tropes facilitate a different ontological experience is through the representation of the “festal” with the ideas of the solemn or solemptne. This is evident in the first half of the series and is noticeably absent in the third book Voyage but reappears briefly only in the form of ritual and the festal in Silver, in the form of stories in Horse, a brief reference in Magician and a greater reference in Battle. These tropes are also associated with the movement from stasis “repression of festivity and fantasy” (qtd. in Schlobin, xiv) which denies “‘renewal’” (xiv) to wakefulness. Manlove recognizes that, “Many of the ‘Narnia’ books have as a theme the awakening of something” (91) but this view is generalized and the potency of the mythological tropes is
lost since one learns from Lewis that the inclusion of the “long-livers” is often done with a specific “poetic purpose” (DI 124); the Greek literary tropes, namely the mythological personages, supplement the ethos of the festive. Here the concept of the longaevi adopted from Martinaus Capella, are important figures of the Ptolemaic Model which Lewis discusses in Discarded. Heather Herrick Jennings recognizes these creatures as lending Chronicles, “a unique and other-worldly flavour” (Jennings 28), but does not examine how in Lewis’s usage they may become emblems of the ceremonial and manifest the ritual aspects of the divine, facilitating encounters with the Other. Lewis describes a quality inherent in the Epic Poetry, “a quality which survives, with strange transformations and enrichments, down to Milton’s own time” (PPL 15) known as the Middle English word solempe (15) which differs in degree from our understanding of the English word solemn, “Like solemn it implies the opposite of what is familiar, free and easy, or ordinary. But unlike solemn it does not suggest gloom, oppression or austerity” (15-6). For Lewis then, “Solempne is the festal which is also the stately and the ceremonial, the proper occasion for pomp” likened to a coronation or court ball for those “who enjoy them” and represents a certain “dignity” attached in surrendering to the “rite” and the “proper pleasure of ritual” (16). Moreover, “You are to ‘assist’, as the French say, at a great festal action” (16).

The longaevi or “long livers” occupy an important position in the cosmological heaven; one that is important purely because of its imaginative potential rather than their actual importance, for, “their place of residence is ambiguous between air and Earth” (122). Their imaginative appeal lies in “their unimportance. . . .They are marginal, fugitive creatures” (122) without any “official status” in the Model. But these “long livers” are precisely important for this reason, “They soften the classical severity of the huge design. They intrude a welcome hint of wildness and uncertainty into a universe that is in danger
of being a little too self-explanatory, too luminous” (122). Of these longaevi Lewis records various figures such as Nymphs, Satyrs, Pans, Silvans, Fauns who are characterized as dancing and inhabiting glades, groves, woods (122). To this we have other terms such as faerie, lamia, Lilith, centaurs, dwarfs, giants, tritons, hags, witches, spirits, incubus, elves, urchins, sylens, bull-beggars (125). These species inhabit the, “Tetrarchs of Fire, Air, Flood, and on the Earth” (135) and vary from the Nymphae who dwell in water, Sylphi who dwell in air, Gnomi who reside on earth and Salamadrae who dwell in fire (135) the inclusion of which in Lewis’s Chronicles introduces a note of ambiguity based on their inhabitation of the marginal areas of the Model. In doing so, they noticeably expand what McHale has drawn our attention to as the “ontological landscape” of Lewis’s Narnia world. This is arguably to expand upon a reductionist and thus limited worldview produced by Modernity but also to demonstrate how these stories function as a “contingent narrative” thus strengthening the relation between fiction and reality in Lewis’s thinking.

The longaevi because of their wildness and ambiguity also facilitate in encountering the “otherness” (129). In Lion, Lucy meets a Faun Mr. Tumnus, who informs her of the reign of the White Witch and this story is perhaps the most emblematic of the solempe as it welcomes back the rightful reign of Aslan the Lion, the bringer of spring and summer. The trope of solemnity is found throughout the books and is associated with the festal as the figure of Father Christmas (107) who differs from the pictures in our world. The solemnity is also attached to Aslan, who is both “good and terrible at the same time” as well as “royal, solemn” (129) and again with Shasta’s meeting of Aslan (HHB) the “solemn perfume” with the only proof of his encounter after the Lion disappears in a “swirling glory” leaving a large footprint much like Arthur’s search for Gloriana. After Aslan’s resurrection and a playful romp with him, they ride on his back down “solemn”
(165) greenery and “into acres of blue flowers” (165) alluding to the desire for Joy or Novalis’s Blue Flower as mentioned in Lewis’s autobiography.

The ambiguity of the *longaevi* also allows for an intertextuality of genres. The most evident is taken from the Fairy Tale genre with the instance of Hans Christian Andersen *The Snow Queen*, but even within the character of the White Witch, there is an amalgam of characters that draw on the tradition of Lilith or the Jinn (81). Blount divides the characters into classical origin which are generally perceived of as ‘good’, while those creatures which are “northern” display Lewis as being “more flexible” (18). The *longaevi* that Lewis uses and the animals from the beast-fable form separate world ontologies that counter the White Witch’s imposed stasis seen not only in the winter but in her ability to change all the animals into stone. Aslan in *Lion* fulfils the “Dionysiac” mode of a divine figure (Frye, *Anatomy* 35) presenting, “stories of dying gods . . . Balder murdered by the treachery of Loki, Christ dying on the cross. . .” (36). Importantly, Frye’s conception of the tragic mode which applies to this kind of event is indicative of the “solemn” or, “the ‘solemn sympathy’ of nature, the word solemn having here some of its etymological connections with ritual” (36).

Every instance of the *longaevi* and with the other genres initiate ontological foregrounding. *Horse* is the most distinct of all the books in the series as it echoes *The Arabian Nights* with the overwhelming ethos of storytelling, and the imagery of a dark, swarthy, hot world of Calormen as opposed to the fair, temperate and cold climate of the Narnian North. But this book becomes particularly important as it narrates Shasta’s journey and longing for the North, which is constantly characterized by the Calormenes as “demons”, “barbarians” and wild creatures seen in the mythological tropes. Here, Shasta also experiences Aslan as fulfilling a “traditional symbolic role” (Marotti 71) from *The Faerie Queene*, as a vigilant watcher who keeps, “both watch and ward” (71). Aslan
watches over Shasta in the desert in a Spenserian adaptation of the lion as a, “symbol of watchfulness” (72) and educates the boy who has never read any books. Shasta’s longing for the North and his lack of acquaintance with any story suggests the power of the literary tropes that he does meet. Shasta comments on the Centaur as not feeling quite “at home” (221) with them but that is only Lewis’s nod to the awakened metaphor. Importantly, this story also reinforces Elick’s reading of Magician which can be extended in Horse, for the power-structure of this story is overturned by the two horses who can finally stop “pretending to be dumb and witless like their Calormen] horses” (20). With their power of speech, comes a renewed sense of authority otherwise stifled and suppressed in the Calormen land which deny the independence otherwise attributed to animals and sentient beings. Lewis, in this way, through the ontologically different world of Calormen, ascribes agency to animals that would otherwise have no voice to be considered. The Horse Bree, in fact refers to Shasta as “only a foal” (22) so one finds that the horse’s labelling of Shasta serves as an ad hoc term for a young boy. The ontological world of the beast fable assumes a greater importance when one learns that the Narnian horse is equal to the children. When addressing Aravis the Tarkheena, Bree insists that, “At least, if there’s been any stealing, you might just as well say I stole him” (41).

Shasta’s meeting of the Narnian’s further initiates him into the new world. Meeting Tumnus for the first time, the reader is repeatedly told that Shasta has no point of reference for he never read any books, “He was in fact a Faun, which is a creature Shasta had never seen a picture of or even heard of” (73). But Tumnus soon educates him on the Summer Festival and the dances of Fauns, Dryads and possible meeting of Aslan (87). Horse is particularly important for Lewis describes the triune figure of God in the repetition of the Lion who when asked who he is replies “Myself” thrice (179). And Bree is another important character who does not believe in Aslan being a real lion or a “Beast
just like the rest of us” (215), but refers to him as a dead metaphor, “when they speak of him as a Lion they only mean he’s as strong as a lion or (to our enemies, of course) as fierce as a lion. Or something of that kind” (215)

The initiation into an encounter with the Other and an experience of the solempne is seen in the curiosity of the young Lucy in Lion whose entry parallels the entry of Alice into Wonderland by Lewis Carroll especially with Lewis’s emphasis of the wardrobe which has a “looking glass” an allusion to Carroll’s Through the Looking Glass; and the chapter “What Lucy Found There” which bears a striking similarity with Carroll’s “What Alice Found There”. Alice learns a number of things in her wonderland, namely the relative meaning of words, and by extension what it means to be Alice. This is a recurrent theme in Lion especially as the faun evokes the biblical language of “Son of Adam” or “Daughter of Eve” in identifying Lucy, which she is unsure of and calls herself a girl instead; and later “Human” (110). The faun actually has quite a sordid history in mythology and thus to include this version of the faun, albeit a desexualized one, might seem a tame or strange practice by Lewis yet this is to re-enchant, open textual possibilities and demonstrate the power of language as metaphorical.

The Faun introduces himself as Mr.Tumnus or as Hinten identifies is Vertumnus, the Roman god of the seasons and of growth (10). He is also the god of revelry and wine seen in variations especially in Caspian, first when the young prince chances upon the Faun dancing in the woods under the moonlight and as part of the solempne suggests a return to the coronation and the ceremonial made possible by the rightful ruler of Aslan. Caspian and his companions soon join in the dance but the various names that Lewis gives to his Fauns have their etymological roots in characteristics that are both wily, wild, deceitful, and full of ecstasy (Ford 142). Their wild play is hypostasised by the winter like, “fimbulvetr, of Norse myth” (Davidson 202) enforced by the Witch who is part Jinn,
“supernatural creatures of Arabic legend with the power to taken on human and animal shapes” (Hinten 14) or, “A female demon of both Babylonian and Hebrew mythology, who murders newborn babies, harms women in childbirth, and haunts wildernesses on the lookout for children” (Brown 127). The opposing forces is vividly illustrated, “It was the oddest thing to see those two faces – the golden face and the dead-white face – so close together” (141). The figure of the Jinn and Lilith based White Witch effectively attempts to smother the action or wakefulness of the Greek literary tropes such as the Faun and the animals from the beast fable who are awakened by the Lion.

Another reference to the deep seated nature in us that mythic discourse or older literature somehow has “indelible” traces in our mind is found in Lucy’s transition, “And so Lucy found herself walking through the wood arm in arm with this strange creature as if they had known one another all their lives” (14). The reversal of ground rules or the inversion of fiction to reality is evident when Lucy surveys the assortment of books on Mr. Tumnus’ shelf “They had titles like The Life and Letters of Silenus or Nymphs and Their Ways or Men, Monks, and Gamekeepers; a Study in Popular Legend or Is Man a Myth?” (15) or in the wonderful tales he tells about the dances, feasts, festivity and wild revelry of the mythic figures (16). Tumnus reveals that he is actually in the pay of the White Witch, lamenting, “I don’t suppose there ever was worse Faun since the beginning of the world” (18). Here Lewis tries to indicate that there has been a faun who would have done the exact same thing of luring a little child into the woods in order to harm it for that is one aspect of its metaphor, as deceitful.

Edmund meets a different longaevi namely the witch but his first encounter with the variety of mythical tropes is in their stasis form in the courtyard of petrified or frozen statues in the Witch’s Castle (95-6). The eventual “thawing” (167-8) of the statues is identified by Ward as, “drawing on Shakespeare’s Winter’s Tale and the revivication of
the statue of Hermione” (“Christology” 93) and describes Aslan as the epitome of life and
dance. Edmund’s meeting with the White Witch begins with hearing a jingling of bells
and the sled of reindeers, “Their harness was of scarlet leather and covered with bells” (31) and Edmund comes face to face with the ethereally white witch. One of the longaevi
that is mentioned by Lewis as “fairy” (DI 124) has various uses but, “In Thomas the
Rymer the Fairy wears green silk and a velvet mantle, and her horse’s mane jingles with
fifty-nine silver bells” (131). This association is found both in Jadis’s sled as well as in
the Queen of Underland’s green kirtle (SC), “they are ‘supernatural’ “more ‘natural’ -
stronger, more reckless, less inhibited more triumphantly and impenitently passionate -
than ours” (DI 33) and possibly freed from death. Converging around the White Witch
are giants, werewolves, spirits of trees, Ghouls, Boggles, Ogres, Minotaurs, Cruels, Hags,
Specters, the race of the Toadstools (136) representing variants from Islamic stories such
as the “afreet” (Ford 129), derivates of the giant “eten” (134), Ogre which may have its
roots in “Orcus, the Latin name for the god of the underworld” (Ford 230). Against this
is the “Deep Magic from the Dawn of Time” (LWW 134) which necessitates that the Lion
is sacrificed on the Stone Table. Consort to the Witch is Maugrim the Wolf and “Captain
of the Secret Police” (58) but originally in the British edition, Lewis had written the
wolf’s name as Fenris Ulf, “As for the witch’s captain, ‘ulf’ is Old Norse for wolf, and
Fenris is clearly a form of Fenrir (the wolf-son of the evil god Loki in Norse mythology),
who bit off the head of Tyr, god of victory” (Hinten 13). The queen’s destructive stasis is
evident when she turns a “merry party” (115) of animals in a festive celebration into
statues.

The coming of Aslan leads to the eventual thaw of winter and the coming of spring and
with it the movement, and life of entire surroundings (118-22). And around Aslan stand
an assortment of mythological tropes, “There were Tree-Women there and Well-Women
(Dryads and Naiads as they used to be called in our world)” (121), centaurs, unicorn, minotaur, and various animals. The Deep Magic (141) which one hears of when the Witch demands Edmund after his betrayal as per the writings on the “Table of Stone” (141) is authorized by “the Emperor-beyond-the Sea” (141). Here, one may see the strong parallels that Lewis draws with Christ’s redemptive act of sacrifice, perhaps one of the most poignant and beautiful moments in the series. In this act, Aslan is described as moaning and sad, comforted by the two girls Susan and Lucy (109) and he leaves them to be shaved, shorn, and reduced to just a “Cat” by the Witch’s demonic party (150-1). But after his death, the stone table cracks and Aslan rises up and indulges in a “romp” (164) of joyful interplay with the girls. The children re-enter their world of England when they begin their hunt of the White Stag which purportedly grants one wishes if you caught it and has parallels with the quest of a searching spirit (184). Their language has also significantly changed demonstrating a full acceptance of the Fantastic world.

*Caspian* has strong overtones of memory and remembrance as the children, after many years, finally return to Narnia. From the land, the ruins, and even the small “chess-knight” (19) they find which draws on a scene from the *Prose Edda* in a discussion of the past (Hinten 22). The children comment, “And now we’re coming back to Narnia just as if we were Crusaders or Anglo-Saxons or Ancient Britons or someone coming back to modern England!” (32). In *Caspian* their return is important in order to revive the “Old Narnians” (39) and Caspian’s first encounter is with the two Dwarfs and the Badger who consistently remembers the old ways of Aslan and the rightful place of the Kings and Queens of Narnia. Caspian also meets all “The people that lived in Hiding” (74) bringing to light different tropes of the Greek mythology and animal fable in order to illustrate the new ontological realm that Caspian learns of as well as the darker tropes of the Hag and Werewolf that still linger (164-66) who wish to resurrect the revenant trope White Witch.
They represent the profane aspects of magic. Caspian is yet to meet the Wood spirits, “Since the Humans came into the land, felling forests and defiling streams, the Dryads and Naiads have sunk into a deep sleep. Who knows if ever they will stir again” (80). Lucy almost succeeds in waking the trees and their speech, in restoring conceptual unity of the metaphor that has since become abstract and subjective. She calls them to wake and remember (117-8) and it almost appears that they are “rustling” (118) into life but feels that she has used the wrong words (118). The Trees do finally awake and help the children win against the Telmarines (193).

The freedom to read the series as per all these literary sources is especially suggested in the convergence of the various mythological tropes in a carnivalesque meeting, “Bacchus and the Maenads—his fierce, mad-cap girls—and Silenus were still with them” (196) with laughing, flutes, and, “cymbals clashing. Animals, not Talking Animals, were crowding in upon them from every direction” (196) and with Aslan, there is a great dance and freeing the chains of the “river-god” (197) whom Aslan instructs Bacchus to carry out with the entire bridge being wrapped in vegetation and ivy. During the course of their ongoing revelry, the crowd becomes bigger and bigger, “off they went again. And so at last, with leaping and dancing and singing, with music and laughter and roaring and barking and neighing” (204) they come to Miraz’s surrendered army. The metaphoric power of the tropes is understood when Lewis, acknowledging that one cannot impose blanket intentions on language which is evocative and more meaningful and may resist one meaning, illustrates the cavorting and wild dancing of the wine gods and his companions.

2.11 Conclusion

This chapter attempts to show how and why Lewis’s *Chronicles* is composed of a variety of literary tropes, allusions or sources, in support of his lack of originality and his
admiration of the Medieval Model which built syncretic models composed of heterogeneous materials. This chapter has tried to reason this within the parameters of Intertextual theory by suggesting that Lewis opts for this style in order to facilitate a wider acceptance of what is otherwise seen as a Christian story. His evaluation of “atmosphere” in reading a story suggests that in Lewis’s composition of the *Chronicles*, Lewis draws on various tropes to collectively combine to produce this one atmosphere. However, by his reasoning, each trope represents a signature quality or atmosphere which may entail or account for the way in which readers may not pursue the Christian teleological movement of the stories, but are instead invited to explore the stories via these other avenues. Again this falls in line with a possible reasoning that Lewis transfers the focus from his personality as a Christian apologist by eliciting other writers in the Western literary tradition and popular literature. The notion of intertexts are also helpful in support of Mendlesohn’s concept of the portal-quest fantasy, and by this reasoning, each intertext, each mythological figure such as the Greek and Roman deities, the allusions to the fairytale, the epic and romance tropes and the animal fables among others, represent a different realm as Tolkien has suggested. Thus while the characters may experience macro-level portal movements from one world to another, the character’s encounters with these various tropes facilitate a similar movement between worlds that belong to myth, fairytale, epic, romance, chivalric tradition and facilitate a greater entry into the world of the imagination and metaphor for the readers which Lewis’s fantasy, understood as the discourse of wonder, is trying to facilitate in a re-enchantment in a changing reality.
Notes

1. Walter Hooper in his “Preface” records that Lewis encouraged students to read Spenser’s *Faerie Queene* in its entirety rather than its “show-pieces” and experience, “rumour of worlds they have not yet broken into” (*SMRL* viii-ix).

2. James Stockton examines the different libraries in *Chronicles* as representative of important types of stories that are presupposed. His distinction between “established” or physically apparent and “unestablished” as indirectly mentioned, corresponds with this dissertation’s understanding of perceptible and imperceptible allusions or what Elizabeth Scala terms as “absent narratives” in her study. See his article for more details on how this sets up the moral framework of the stories.

3. For more on the Ecumenism of Lewis’s apologetics, see Victor Reppert’s article.

4. For those readers who are unaware of *Chronicles* as possessing a Christian theme, see Alan Jacobs especially for his record of British fantasists J.K. Rowling’s later recognition that the subliminal message are not subliminal at all and Neil Gaiman’s disappointment in finding a “hidden agenda” (ix).

5. For more on the definition of “atmosphere” and its centrality in Lewis’s appreciation of stories see, Michael Ward’s essay.

6. Alan Jacob’s records Tolkien’s annoyance at the mix of mythologies 198. Elsewhere, Tolkien is described as commenting that the *Narnia* books are, “worthless, that it seemed like a jumble of unrelated mythologies” (Sayer 187).

7. I borrow the term “enactment” from an “Introduction” by Judith Still and Michael Worton. In one passage, they focus on the Renaissance writer Montaigne as distinct from other Renaissance writers in representing “one paradigm of the enactment of intertextuality” (8).
8. For more on this concept of Man as sub-creator, one may read Dorothy L. Sayers’s study which depicts a comparison of God as the Creator and the activities of writing a book 148.

9. For more on the sense of “literary property” in the tradition of the Medieval authorship see G.R. Evans study which details this tradition as lacking any notion of plagiarism and relying on authorities through quotation and citations.


11. Peter J. Schakel records that, “In a letter to a friend discussing Out of the Silent Planet, Lewis concludes, ‘Any amount of theology can now be smuggled into people’s minds under the cover of romance without their knowing it’” (Schakel, Way 45).

12. For more on the doctrine of inclusivism see Elissa McCormack’s article.

13. See Michael Riffaterre’s essay which focuses on the role of the reader who notices these gaps in the utterance in the text.

14. See, Anneli Mihkelev in his article and his distinction that literary history may not only elucidate a text but authors may also be involved in fulfilling Nietzsche’s reading of critical, monumental, and antiquarian literary histories by “misreading the past” (43) and recall certain texts of the past that serve the present writers.

15. For more on the diverse terms that have accompanied the discussion of intertextuality, refer to Hans-Peter Mai’s article.

16. For more on the nature of fantasy as being both subject to genre and transcending it, see Armit’s first chapter “Structuralism, Genre, and (the) Beyond” where she observes that “fantasy forms” may be “genre-led” but also, “an individual tale simultaneously flirts with while overreaching this limiting, straitjacket that we know as genre. As Propp has shown, even the generic resists over-exact classification” (20).
17. For Myer’s reading of Chronicles as a reaction to The Control of Language (1944) which “ridicule the sense of wonder, disorganize the stock responses” (116) see her chapter “The Context of Christian Humanism” 112-181.

18. See Roger Lancelyn Green and Walter Hooper’s work biography on Lewis for the general impression that the Socratic debate with Elizabeth Anscombe had a devastating impact on C.S Lewis 227-8.

19. See Humphrey Carpenter’s record of this exchange 147.

20. Michael Ward paraphrases Lewis’s ideas when he states that, “suggestion, not statement, is the essence of good writing” (20). See Michael Ward’s Ph.D. dissertation for a full development on how Lewis uses the evocative power of the medieval planetary system.

21. See information taken from Wikipedia.

22. For more models of Lewis’s syncretism, one may read Nicholson’s examination of the allusions and structures of James Stephens The Crock of Gold (1912).

23. One such effort to read Lewis’s series within an intertextual domain is carried out by Catherine L. Elick who sees Magician as benefiting from Bakhtin’s theory especially as it brings, “together heterogeneous collections of characters from all orders of being” (455). In reading Elick’s article, one begins to see the more dialogic qualities of Lewis’s text,. She paraphrases Robyn McCallum’s thoughts that an author may not entirely succeed in such a repression of the dialogic forces in the novel genre. Literary tropes as portals may do this by directing the reader outside the given story and literary tropes as metaphors may do this by having multiple meanings.
Works Cited


---. “Modern Man and His Categories of Thought.” 61-6.


---. “It All Began With a Picture.” 42.


---. “On Three Ways of Writing for Children.” 22-34.


---. “De Audiendis Poetis.” 1-17.


---. “Is Theology Poetry?” 116-140.


Hebel, Udo J. “Towards a Descriptive Poetics of Allusion.” Plett 135-64.


Oury, Scott. “‘The Thing Itself’: C.S. Lewis and the Value of the Something Other.” Schakel 1-19.


