Beverley Beddoes-Mills, "Entry on: The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe (The Chronicles of Narnia, 1) by Pauline Baynes, Clive Staples (C.S.) Lewis", peer-reviewed by Elizabeth Hale and Susan Deacy. Our Mythical Childhood Survey (Warsaw: University of Warsaw, 2022). Link: http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/myth-survey/item/1415. Entry version as of November 21, 2026.

Pauline Baynes , Clive Staples (C.S.) Lewis

The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe (The Chronicles of Narnia, 1)

United Kingdom (1950)

TAGS: Bacchus Centaur(s) Dragons Faun Nymphs Pegasus Satyr(s)





We are still trying to obtain permission for posting the original cover.

General information	
Title of the work	The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe (The Chronicles of Narnia, 1)
Country of the First Edition	United Kingdom
Country/countries of popularity	Worldwide
Original Language	English
First Edition Date	1950
First Edition Details	C. S. Lewis, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. UK: Geoffrey Bles, 1950, 173 pp., 43 illustrations.
ISBN	Not applicable for editio princeps
Genre	Children's novel*, Fantasy fiction
Target Audience	Children
Author of the Entry	Beverley Beddoes-Mills, University of New England, bbeddoes@myune.edu.au
Peer-reviewer of the Entry	Elizabeth Hale, University of New England, ehale@une.edu.au Susan Deacy, University of Roehampton, s.deacy@roehampton.ac.uk

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Creators



Pauline Baynes , 1922 - 2008
(Illustrator)

Pauline Baynes, who illustrated many works (over 200, mostly for children), is best known for her illustration of C.S. Lewis's *Chronicles of Narnia* and J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings.* Born in Sussex, England, UK most of her first five years were spent in India due to her father's appointment to the Indian Civil Service. As a result of her mother's illness, Baynes and her sister returned to England and were placed in a convent and then sent to a boarding school in Camberley in Surrey. At the age of fifteen, she studied design at Farnham School of Art and later won a place at the Slade School of Art. When the second World War broke out both sisters joined the Women's Voluntary Service and were sent to the Camouflage Development Training Centre in Farnham Castle where they were put to work making demonstration models. Later, the sisters worked as mapmakers for the Admiralty's Hydrographic Department. Powell Perry, whose family owned a company that published picture books for children was one of their colleagues and gave Baynes her first professional commissions.

In 1948 Baynes began to develop her career by writing a book of her own, *Victoria and the Golden Bird* which was published. Her portfolio was given to J.R.R, Tolkien who was *s*eeking an illustrator for his book *Farmer Giles of Ham,* a comedy about dragons and knights. Tolkien was delighted with her work and although his *The Lord of the Rings* was too large a project for her she produced coloured maps of Tolkien's middle-earth. She also created a triptych of Tolkien's characters and locales, which became the iconic cover art for a one-volume paperback edition in 1968 and a three-volume version in 1981. In 1967 Baynes illustrated Tolkien's final piece of fiction *Smith of Wooton Major.*

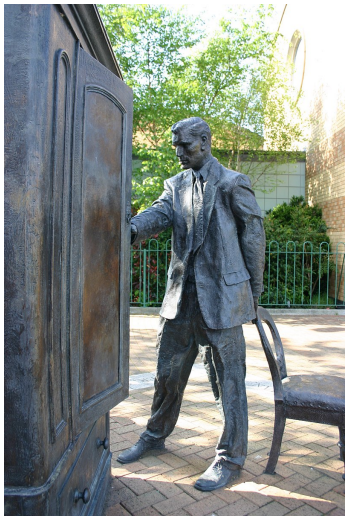
Tolkien introduced Baynes to C.S. Lewis. She signed a contract with Lewis's publisher and in 1949 sent drawings, and cover designs for *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe.*She went on to illustrate the six sequels, *Prince Caspian: The return to Narnia* (1951), *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* (1952), *The Silver Chair* (1953), *The Horse and*

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His Boy (1954), *The Magician's Nephew* (1955) and *The Last Battle* (1956).

After many love affairs, Baynes met and married Fritz Gasch, a German ex-prisoner of war. They moved to Surrey where he worked as a gardener and she continued her drawing. They were a close couple and after Fritz's sudden death in 1988 Baynes poured her energies into her work producing her most accomplished pieces. Two years after Fritz's death Baynes had a call from his daughter from his first marriage in Germany who was delighted to find the woman who had loved her father. In old age, Baynes found she had a family. Baynes worked up to her death in 2008 illustrating both the Koran and Aesop's Fables. She remains one of the twentieth century's most influential illustrators.

Bio prepared by Beverley Beddoes-Mills, University of New England
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Belfast, statue of C. S. Lewis looking into a wardrobe. Entitled *The Searcher* by Ross Wilson. Retrieved from Wikipedia (accessed: May 4, 2022), CC BY 2.0.

Clive Staples (C.S.) Lewis , 1898 - 1963 (Author)

Clive Staples Lewis was born in 1898 in Belfast, Ireland, the younger son of Albert Lewis, a soliciter, and Florence Lewis, a graduate of the Royal University of Ireland. In the Lewis household reading and education were considered of great importance and Lewis and his older brother Warren 'Warnie' (later a historian) were avid readers. Lewis loved tales about animals and was influenced by Beatrix Potter's books which encouraged him to write and illustrate his own. After his mother's death in 1908 Lewis attended several different schools in England and Belfast. During this time, Lewis became an atheist, abandoning his Christian faith and pursuing an interest in Norse mythology. As a teenager, became fascinated by ancient Scandinavian songs and legends preserved in the Icelandic sagas. Lewis was also influenced by his father's old tutor and former headmaster of Lurgan College, William T. Kirkpatrick, who instilled in him a love of Greek literature and mythology.

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In 1917 Lewis entered Oxford and studied at University College. That year he joined the Officers' Training Corps, at the university, and was drafted into a Cadet Battalion for training. He was commissioned into the British Army as a Second Lieutenant and shipped to France where on his19th birthday he fought in the front line, in the trenches at the Somme Valley. Following an incident in April of 1918, which Lewis was wounded, and two of his colleagues were killed by a shell, he was demobilized (in December of that year). He wrote in a letter that the horror of his wartime experiences were the basis of his pessimism and continuing atheism.

In 1920, Lewis returned to his studies at Oxford University, where he studied Greek and Latin Literature, Philosophy and Ancient History, and English. He achieved Firsts in all these subjects, and went on to tutor in Philosophy at University College. In 1925 he was appointed as a Fellow and Tutor in English Literature at Magdalen College, where he worked until 1954.

At Oxford, Lewis and J.R.R Tolkien, the Anglo-Saxon scholar, and writer of *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* were close friends. They were active in the informal Oxford literary group known as the Inklings, a group of scholars and storytellers interested in the writing of fantasy, and which included Roger Lancelyn-Green, the biographer and reteller of mythology for children.

Lewis eventually returned to Christianity due Tolkien's influence. He describes these changes in his autobiography *Surprised by Joy* which is an account of his spiritual and intellectual life through the 30s. He became known as one of the foremost British writers of Christian thought which he explored in his scholarship, and fiction. Lewis's first scholarly book was *The Allegory of Love: A Study in Medieval Tradition* (1936), an exploration of the treatment of love in Medieval and Renaissance English. Later he wrote *A Preface to Paradise Lost* (1942). Both are still cited today. He was commissioned to write *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century (Excluding Drama)*, for the Oxford History of English Literature (1954).

In 1956 he was appointed to the Chair of Medieval and Renaissance Literature, at Magdalene College, Cambridge University, where he worked until he died in 1963. In 1957, he married his friend Joy Davidson, an American divorcee, in a civil ceremony, in order to help her remain in the United Kingdom. Later, after she was diagnosed with bone cancer, their relationship developed and they had a

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Christian marriage. Davidson died in 1960 and Lewis wrote about this time of his life in *A Grief Observed* (1961) which was published under a pseudonym. His final book, *Letters to Malcolm*, was published in 1963, the same year in which he retired from his position at Cambridge. He died in November of 1963, following a period of ill health.

Lewis' writing covers many fields: he wrote important literary criticism such as *The Discarded Image: An Introduction to Medieval and Renaissance Literature* (1964), and *The Allegory of Love* (1936). He wrote works of personal reflection and novels for adults and children. Among his novels for adults, *Till We Have Faces: A Myth Retold* (1956) recasts the story of Cupid and Psyche from the point of view of her older sister, Orual. In general terms, Lewis' best known works are the seven children's books about the fantasy world of Narnia: *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (1950), *Prince Caspian* (1951), *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* (1952), *The Silver Chair* (1953), *The Horse and His Boy* (1954), *The Magician's Nephew* (1955), and *The Last Battle* (1956). These books reveal a fantasy world and include talking animals, mythical beasts, magic, and epic action as well as children from our (real) world, and cast the main drama of the series as a battle between good and evil in the context of the world of Narnia. Aslan, a noble lion, who can be identified as an allegory for the Son of God, brings unity to Narnia (the exception is *The Horse and His Boy*, which provides the prehistory of Narnia). The Narnia books have been translated into 47 languages and sold worldwide.

Sources:

Britannica (accessed: May 7, 2021),

Wikipedia (accessed: May 18, 2021).

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Additional information

Adaptations

The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe has been adapted in many formats, including TV, Theatre, and Film. Samples include the following:

Television

The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe has been adapted three times for television.

In 1967 as a ten-part serial by ABC Weekend Television for ITV.

1979 as animated TV movie directed by Bill Melendez.

1988 produced by the BBC using a combination of live actors, animatronic puppets and animation.

Theatre

1984 stage version at London's Westminster Theatre, produced by Vanessa Ford Productions.

1997 Trumpets Inc., A Filipino Christian theatre and musical company produced a musical rendition.

1998 The Royal Shakespeare Company did an adaptation by Adrian Mitchell.

2003 Australian commercial stage production by Malcolm C. Cook Productions.

2011 a two-actor stage adaptation opened Off-Broadway in New York.

2012 Michael Fentiman with Rupert Goold co-directed *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* at a 'tented production' in Kensington Gardens, London.

Film

2005 the story was adapted for a theatrical film co-produced by Walt Disney Pictures and Walden Media.

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Source: Wikipedia.org, (accessed: May 30, 2021).

Translation

The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe has been translated into 47 languages or scripts including Afrikaans, Chinese, French, German, Spanish, Japanese, Polish, Italian, Danish, and Swedish.

Source available here (accessed: May 30, 2021).

Sequels, Prequels and Spin-offs

1. *Prince Caspian: The return to Narnia* (1951),
2. *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* (1952),
3. *The Silver Chair* (1953),
4. *The Horse and His Boy* (1954),
5. *The Magician's Nephew* (1955) and
6. *The Last Battle* (1956).

Summary

The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe is the first of seven-fantasy tales in C.S. Lewis's *The Chronicles of Narnia*. The Pevensie children, Peter, Susan, Edmund, and Lucy are living with Professor Digory Kirke in his large house in the English countryside. They have been evacuated from London in 1940 to escape from the Blitz. The house is run by the strict housekeeper, Mrs. Macready.

During a game of hide and seek Lucy discovers a wardrobe in one of the rooms of the house. Finding that the door of the wardrobe is unlocked she enters, pushing her way through the coats she discovers the fantasy world of Narnia. The first thing that she sees is a lamppost after which she meets Mr. Tumnus, a faun who was carrying an umbrella. He invites her to his home which Lucy discovers is in a cave in the woods. Mr. Tumnus provides Lucy with food and tells about his life in the forest. These stories include nymphs, Dryads, Red Dwarfs, old Silenus, and the god Bacchus. He then begins to play a little flute and Lucy falls asleep. When she wakes, she tells Mr. Tumnus she must return home but finds that the little faun is grieving. He explains to her that Jadis, the White witch, has cursed Narnia 100 years ago condemning it to eternal winter. Mr. Tumnus also tells Lucy that the witches' orders are that all humans are to be brought to her but he cannot obey. Lucy returns to Professor Kirke's home but her siblings

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disbelieve her story.

One night, during another game of hide and seek, Edmund follows Lucy into the wardrobe and enters Narnia. He begins to search for her and meets the White Witch, who informs him she is a Queen. She entices Edmund, with Turkish Delight, promising he would be made a prince if he returns to Narnia with his siblings to her castle. Edmund tells the White Witch of Lucy's visit with Mr. Tumnus. After the White Witch leaves Edmund to find Lucy in the wood, and they return home. Lucy tells Peter and Susan what has occurred but Edmund denies Narnia's existence. Professor Kirke believes Lucy but Peter and Susan are not convinced.

The four siblings retreat into the wardrobe and enter Narnia to evade the housekeeper, Mrs. Macready. Peter and Susan on discovering Lucy had been right all along rebuke Edmund for lying and make him apologize to Lucy. They discover the White Witch has taken Mr. Tumnus and seeking to find him they follow a red robin. When the robin flies away they meet two beavers who inform them that they cannot do anything to save Mr. Tumnus. They also tell the children about Aslan who will take control of Narnia from the witch. Also, importantly the beavers inform them that they must help Aslan for it has been prophesied that when two sons of Adam and two daughters of Eve sit on the four thrones the White Witch's reign will end and so will her life. Aslam appears to be a powerful King or god in Narnia. Therefore, there is only one thing the children can do and that is to take the journey, with Mr. Beaver, to visit Aslan, a lion.

Edmund is horrified by the story of Aslan and sneaks off to visit the White Witch and warn her of the arrival of Aslan. The White Witch is enraged when she hears that Aslan is in Narnia and is furious with Edmond for not bringing his siblings to her. Wishing to avoid the threat of the prophecy of the destruction of her reign if two sons of Adam and two daughters of Eve sit on the four thrones the White Witch begins plotting to kill the children. She sends wolves to track them down as well as the beavers but they escape. Edmund is imprisoned and chained in the Witch's dungeon where he meets Mr. Tumnus. The White Witch turns Mr. Tumnus to stone.

The beavers realising that Edmund has gone take the children to meet Aslan at the Stone Table. The group on the journey notices that the snow is melting and accepts that the White Witch's magic is disappearing. The visit by Father Christmas confirms this as he has

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been kept out of Narnia by the Witch's magic and he provides the group with gifts and weapons.

The children and the Beavers meet Aslan and his army at the Stone table. Maugrim, the White Witch's captain, is killed by Peter when he comes into the camp and attacks Susan. The White Witch arrives and speaks with Aslan reminding him of the Deep Magic which gives her the authority to kill Edmund for his treason. Aslan speaks with the Witch alone and secretly offers to sacrifice himself to save Edmund. Susan and Lucy follow Aslan to the stone table and watch from a distance as the Witch puts him to death. However, the next morning Aslan is resurrected by the Deep Magic which has the power to reverse the death of a victim who has taken the place of a traitor. Aslan, accompanied by the girls, goes to the Witch's castle and frees the Narnians who have been turned into stone. Aslan kills the Witch and the children are crowned kings and queens of Narnia.

The adult Pevensies, after a long and happy reign, go hunting for a White Stag and arrive at the lamp-post which marks Narnia's entrance. Having no memory of their beginnings in Narnia they pass through the wardrobe, returning to their lives as children in England with the element of time having no impact. They tell their story to Kirke and he reassures them that they will one day return to Narnia.

Analysis

In *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* Lewis reveals an alternative imaginative world through various traditional and mythic structures to create its fantasy realm. These include Classical Greek and Roman mythology which is characterised through the quest of the Pevensie children in their journey of self-discovery. Also, there is the presence of mythical creatures such as fauns, red dwarfs, the Greek satyr Silenus, and Dionysus or Bacchus, the Greek God of wine. Also, of major significance is the Christian imagery presented as the Christ-like figure of Aslan, the lion, who is the main figure in the major scene involving his sacrifice. It is this juxtaposition of these different elements that bring to the surface the major issues underlying the story. These can be identified as good and evil, innocence, betrayal, fear, sacrifice, death, and rebirth.

Also, in tandem with the Christian imagery and message in *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* is Lewis's classical view of ethics as grounded in moral principles. Defenders of the classical model of

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moral education, such as Plato, considered the stories played a vital role in moral development (Bassham 5–6). The children are frequently directed to morally correct actions by wise teachers such as the professor and Aslan and they learn from role models such as Mr. and Mrs. Beaver. As the story unfolds it shows the children undergoing a series of trials and adventures which test their moral fortitude. It is these moral qualities that provide the children with the ability to recognise the evil of the White Witch and to learn of the power of good through the actions of Aslan.

One of the most powerful Christian motifs in *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* is the sacrifice of self for the good of others. This can be seen in Lucy's first encounter with a mythic creature: the faun, Mr. Tumnus. He takes her to his home and provides her with food and comfort. Under the control of the White Witch, Mr. Tumnus should ensnare Lucy and bring her to the Witch. But instead, he allows Lucy to return home and therefore sacrifices himself for her protection. The punishment for disobedience to the White Witch's commands is death by being turned into stone. Lewis, in the mythic character of Mr. Tumnus, introduces the reader to one of the major symbols of Christianity, the Christian image of self-sacrifice. Therefore, it could be accepted that Lewis is revealing there is a union between classical mythology and Christianity which underpins the imaginary fantasy realm.

Lewis identifies the opposite quality, the evil of selfishness, through the actions of Edmund, the brother of Lucy, Peter, and Susan. Presentation of good and evil is a major theme throughout The Lion, The Witch, and the Wardrobe and is identifiable in the contrast between the actions of Lucy and Edmund. In following Lucy through the wardrobe and into Narnia Edmund meets the White Witch which is in contrast to Lucy's meeting with the gentle and good faun, Mr. Tumnus. The presence of good and evil is also shown in the food given to the children when they enter Narnia. Lucy enjoys her tea of eggs, sardines on toast and toast, and honey and cake. Edmund on the other hand asks for Turkish Delight which allows the White Witch to seduce him into a form of addiction so that he will obey her command to return with his brother and sisters to her castle. Edmund feels sick after eating the Turkish Delight but the desire to eat more of the sweet governs his thoughts and actions. He is unable to identify the White Witch's evil intentions and thinking only of his desires he is morally corrupted. In contrast, Mr. Tumnus's action in confessing to Lucy that he is in the pay of the White Witch indicates the fauns'

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goodness and morality. He knows that in disobeying the White Witches' orders he will be punished but he cannot bring himself to give up Lucy and returns her safely back to her own world. Lewis in the character of Mr. Tumnus reveals the moral quality of self-sacrifice.

It is through the symbol of the noble lion, Aslan that Lewis brings to the fore his major character underpinning the concept of sacrifice in The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe. Aslan is portrayed as a Christ-figure willingly sacrificing his life, at the Stone Table, to save the treacherous Edmund. Aslan's self-sacrifice, not only saved the sons of Adam and the daughters of Eve as well as the Narnian creatures but brought about the destruction of the wicked reign of the evil, White Witch. Lewis continues the Christian imagery when Aslan is miraculously restored to life. In creating the magical Aslan, King of Narnia, Lewis brings to the reader a new and fresh way of understanding the divine. He transports the readers into a fantasy world and reveals the destruction of the evil of selfishness by the self-sacrificing actions of the Christ figure of Aslan. Through the mythical figure of the faun, as well as satyrs, nymphs, dwarfs and the statues of a centaur, winged horse, and dragon, the Christian story is linked to the world of fantasy. Lewis believed that literary fantasy could influence religious concerns enabling the reader to catch glimpses of truths and bring the understanding of good overcoming evil (Bassham 11). In other words, myths and fairy tales contain fragments of truth that have the power to bring joy and delight as well as knowledge and understanding.

Classical, Mythological, Traditional Motifs, Characters, and Concepts	Bacchus Centaur(s) Dragons Faun Nymphs Pegasus Satyr(s)
Other Motifs, Figures, and Concepts Relevant for Children and Youth Culture	Adversity Coming of age Humanity Love Nature Religious beliefs Siblings

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Further Reading

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