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Iconology

4 August 2005

### **The Mythos of Narnia**

In The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe and The Last Battle C.S. Lewis paints a world that is steeped in Celtic, Greek, and Christian mythos and imagery. He mixes and melds allegory and characters in a way that is lightweight, readable, and believable. The Chronicles of Narnia is a far lighter than Lewis's contemporary, J.R.R. Tolkien's, The Lord of the Rings, but are no less steeped in a mythology that has depth, and history—a world based on mythology, but has also created its own mythos.

Lewis draws from several mythological sources, but the books rely heavily on creatures from Greek, and Celtic mythology. In The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe, the characters battle against the White Witch, a character who resembles the Snow Queen from of Celtic mythology. In the Hans Christian Anderson story of the Snow Queen, she takes a young boy into her sledge, and wraps him in fur until he is warm. The boy, bewitched by the Queen forgets his grandmother and sister and joins her (snow\_quee.html). In Lewis's story, Edmund finds the White Witch on a sledge, and she invites him to join her. She feeds him enchanted Turkish Delight, which bewitches Edmund into betraying his siblings in favor of the queen.

The characters that inhabit Narnia are derived from Greek and Germanic mythology. From Greek mythology the characters in the stories include Tumnus the faun—a half man half goat (Hamilton 52), Centaurs, who have the body of a horse, and the upper half of a man (48), Cyclops, which are one-eyed creatures of mixed reputation in mythology (80) and Minotaurs,

unpleasant creatures who were half man, and half bull (120). From Germanic and English folklore, Lewis took the images of the Dwarves, selfish creatures who only look out for themselves, Goblins, who are mischief makers, Dryads, and Naiads, and Giants, who are large men who are sometimes good and sometimes evil. From Christian mythology, Lewis borrowed the idea of talking animals from the Garden of Eden. In the stories the children encounter several animals that are able to talk, including apes, donkeys, beavers and, Aslan, the lion.

Lewis relies heavily on Christian allegory for the books. Although the characters are derived from Pagan mythologies, the stories are derived from the Bible. The Lion, The Witch, and the Wardrobe, is another way of telling the story of Jesus's crucifixion and the salvation of man. Aslan the Lion, serves the Emperor-over-the-Sea, a leader who is all-powerful, but not seen in the story. Aslan sacrifices his life, to save Edmund from destruction by the White Witch. When the White Witch killed the innocent Aslan, he is resurrected. The result is the defeat of the White Witch, and the children who followed Aslan are placed on the throne at Cair Paravel. Noticeably, the oldest child, Peter, is listed as the "High King of Narnia," as St. Peter was the first Pope.

The Last Battle, is a retelling of Revelations. In the story, a cunning ape dresses a good-hearted, but simple-minded donkey in a lion's outfit. He convinces people this lion is Aslan returned. People bow and worship this false God—an anti-Christ of sorts—and the end result is the return of the great kings and queens of Narnia, and the return of the true Aslan, who passes judgment on Narnia and decides to end the existence of that world. The description of the stars fallings from the sky, and the animals struck dumb is astounding. In the end Narnia is destroyed, and Aslan judges its inhabitants. Those that love Aslan, keep the ability to speak, and are moved into a new Narnia. Those that rejected the true Aslan are struck dumb, and must live as animals

that cannot speak. Finally, we discover that the children have returned because they have been killed in a train accident, and this is their paradise—their heaven.

Aslan tells the children that true Narnia, and England, are places where evil cannot exist. This Narnia is the paradise promised to the faithful in Revelations. It is here that the children are reunited with all the characters that died in the books. It is here where the Pagan and Christian myths meld into a new mythos.

**Works Cited**

Hamilton, Edith. Mythology. New York: Little, Brown and Company. 1949.

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[http://hca.gilead.org.il/snow\\_que.html](http://hca.gilead.org.il/snow_que.html)

Lewis, C.S. The Chronicles of Narnia. New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2005

There are numerous similarities and differences between the Narnia story, The Magician's Nephew, and the Genesis narrative. This fact relates them in a unique and creative way. It is clear that Lewis drew on the Genesis narrative to craft his creation and establishment of Narnia, but the way in which he set the characters and events taking place in the beginnings of Narnia can be remarkable, due precisely, many times, to the contrasting ways in which he brings them together. It is from that background platform that this analysis is approached. Narniya I bibliya. Istoki knigi hroniki charodeya V knige bytiya [the genesis of narnia and the bible. The magician's nephew and the book of genesis]. Mythos is the capital city of Tiris. The city is large, it has over 20000 inhabitants. It resides at the base of a massive mountain which supplies massive amounts of iron for military use. The city is carved out of the living rock and has rolling plains in front of it. Categories: SPARTAN-08BLAM! Community content is available under CC-BY-SA unless otherwise noted. In the Narnia controlled by the usurper Miraz, who wants to crush all knowledge of everything to do with Old Narnia, history lessons in schools and with tutors only allow coverage of the time period after the Telmarine invasion of Narnia in 1998 NT. Everything about the Old Narnia country lives covered up, denied, and forbidden. The stories come alive in this hostile environment by children's nurses, such as Caspian's nurse, secretly telling their young charges the stories at bedtime. Not everyone learns of Old Narnia, but the ones who do seem to know of it learn about it this way. Caspian's n