



- **JOHN RONALD REUEL TOLKIEN (1892-1973)**
THE HOBBIT (1937) THE LORD OF THE RINGS (1954-5)
- British scholar, lexicographer, Oxford don
- **Medievalist:** Beowulf, Norse/ Celtic mythology, Greco-Roman classics + **inspiration: Christian theology**, metaphysics
- **Philologist** (hist. of lggs) : **linguistic inspiration** of work → stories made to provide a world for the languages, „a name comes first, then the story follows” **invented lggs** Dwarvish, Sindarin, Quenya
WORDMAGIC → MYTHOPOESIS
- **literary clubs** : the TCBS (Tea Club and Barrovian Society), the Kolbitars society (close to the fire they ,bit the coals’), the Inklings. (w C. S. Lewis, Affinity Group, 20th c Christian fantasy)
- **World-making: The Silmarillion:** extensive, incomplete narrative of the universe of Eä: lands of Valinor, Beleriand, Númenor, Middle-earth, where *The Hobbit*, *LOTR* take place
- Eä: the Quenya name for the universe as a realization of the vision of the Ainur (immortal spirit)
- **Legendarium:** Tolkien’s mythopoetic writings elaborated and revised over 50 years, incl history, lgg, theology, cosmology
- Fantasy **landscape, w maps**, geography, illustrations
- **Fight/reconciliation** of Good & Evil, Spirit & Matter, Mortal & Immortal, Marvellous & Ordinary → **Transformative dramas** enacted

Chapter I

AN UNEXPECTED PARTY

In a hole in the ground there lived a hobbit. Not a nasty, dirty, wet hole, filled with the ends of worms and an oozy smell, nor yet a dry, bare, sandy hole with nothing in it to sit down on or to eat: it was a hobbit-hole, and that means comfort.

It had a perfectly round door like a porthole, painted green, with a shiny yellow brass knob in the exact middle. The door opened on to a tube-shaped hall like a tunnel: a very comfortable tunnel without smoke, with panelled walls, and floors tiled and carpeted, provided with polished chairs,



JRR TOLKIEN. THE HOBBIT, OR THERE AND BACK AGAIN (1937)

- *The Hobbit's* success (Tom Shippey):
- defies child lit practice: child protagonist, dream frame
- Bilbo Baggins: “a kind of surrogate child”, small folk, a recognizable character: „a flustered, nervous fussbudget who nonetheless has a hunch he might actually harbor a gallant heart and crave world-turning adventure. And discover his “moral courage” to do the thing that’s difficult, but right.”
- **"I will take the ring, though I do not know the way.,,"**
- Ordinary heroism: bw mundane+marvellous
- Appeals to child in adult reader (Jane Chance) --crossover
- Readers recognize the „true” nature of characters (BB matures into hero or has always been one?)
- Heroic journey, Fairy-tale quest to defeat the dragon
- Rural region → the sinister unknown (WW1)
- Irony → mythology, humour + Christian virtues: comraderie, solidarity, loyalty in pagan universe
- Fantastic creatures: dwarfs, wizard, elves, trolls, goblins, giant talking spiders, werewolves, dragon, hobbits
- Inspired by MacDonald, Jules Verne, Grimms, Edda, Beowulf
- Mythic archetypes: Jung, Campbell: shadow, underworld, initiation rite, just/sinful kingship
- Animism (tree roots, ravens...) -role of lgg—democratic intent



The Lord of the Rings (1954-5)

- 1. The Fellowship of the Ring 2. Two Towers 3. Return of the King
- FANTASY STRUCTURE

Thinning→ Wrongness demands Healing→ Quest→ Recognition→ Eucatastrophe

- Fantastic plot devices : Cook's Tour, Escape, Separation, Temptation, Walking
- Quest: Vol1: Companions, Vol 2: Night journeys, Vol 3: Last battle
- SECONDARY WORLD, mythopoesis, worldmaking, SUBCREATION
- Essentials: Fantasy, Recovery, Escape, Consolation (Enchantment/Eucatastrophe)
- Interspecies fellowship to defeat the ultimate evil: hobbits, an elf, a dwarf, humans



- Genre fantasy:**Historical fantasy:**
World War (camaraderie) Fellowship of the Ring // Medieval times' dangers
- **Supernatural horror** Balrog, Sauron, Nazgûl
- **Sword & Sorcery fantasy** (but like Zeus, Gandalf isn't a magician, but a God of the fictional universe)
- Not a portal quest → **journey from known (Shire) to Unknown (quest)** w helper figures (FT)
- **Classical influence, Greco-Latin** sources, Virgil, Homer (descent to hell-Moria, quest, piety, duty)
- **Heroism, valiance** (Old English Beowulf Norse mythology/ German romanticism, Wagner)
- Question of **power, corruption**, ideology criticism, the other self manipulated by (hunger for) power (Gollam), panopticism=the all seeing eye of power
- **Biblical influence** (subcreation, secondary world, Eucatastrophe, death/resurrection, sacrifice)
- **Mythopoesis** (orality, metafictionality)

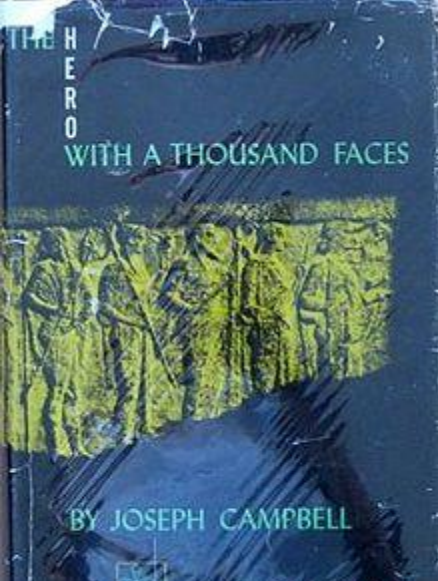






Common inspiration of Tolkien/ CS Lewis:

- Victorian fantasies
- Grimm brothers, Andrew Lang's fairy tales// Arthur Rackham's illustrations
- Medieval sagas, old English epic poems: Beowulf, Sir Gawain and the Green Knight
- Kalevala, Norse mythology / Greco-Roman mythology
- classics (Homer, Virgil, Plato)
- Medieval history, chivalric romances
- Biblical themes
- Campbell's The Hero with a 1000 Faces (1949)
- Jungian archetypes, anthropological structuring of rites of passage
- **Mythopoeia:** a fictional mythology is created by the writer



JOSEPH CAMPBELL. THE HERO WITH A 1000 FACES (1949)

comparative mythology, journey of archetypal hero, STRUCTURALISM

MONOMYTH: A hero ventures forth from the world of common day into a region of supernatural wonder: fabulous forces are there encountered and a decisive victory is won: the hero comes back from this mysterious adventure with the power to bestow boons on his fellow man

EG: stories of Osiris, Prometheus, Buddha, Moses, and Jesus

Silmarillion published in same year as Star Wars (1977)

1. SEPARATION call to adventure: quest

Hero refuses/accepts call

supernatural aid

crossing of threshold (rite of passage)

belly of Whale, passage into realm of the night

road of trials

meeting w Goddess

woman as temptress

atonement w Father

Apotheosis

the ultimate boon (Gift)

3. RETURN HOME w powers acquired on journey

refusal of return

magic flight

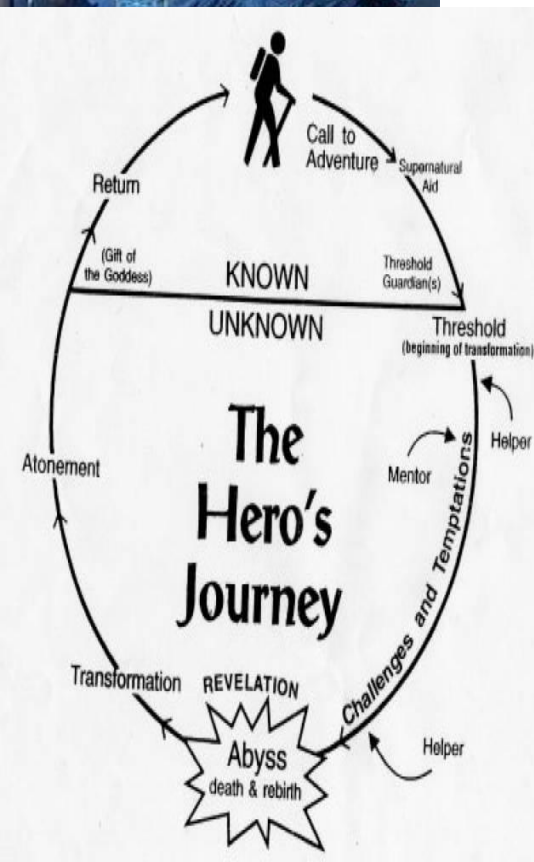
rescue from without

crossing of return threshold

master of two worlds

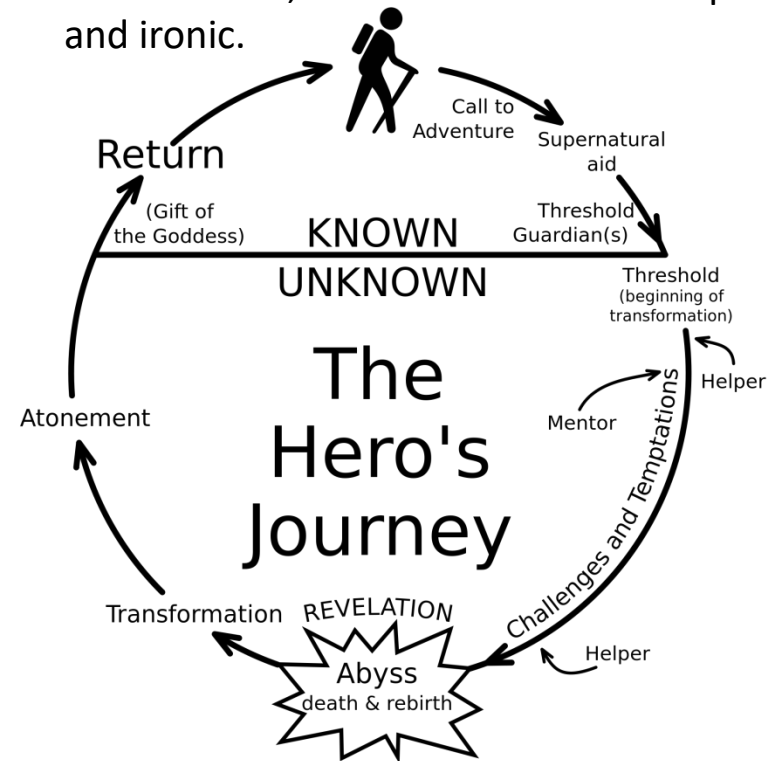
freedom to live

2. INITIATION

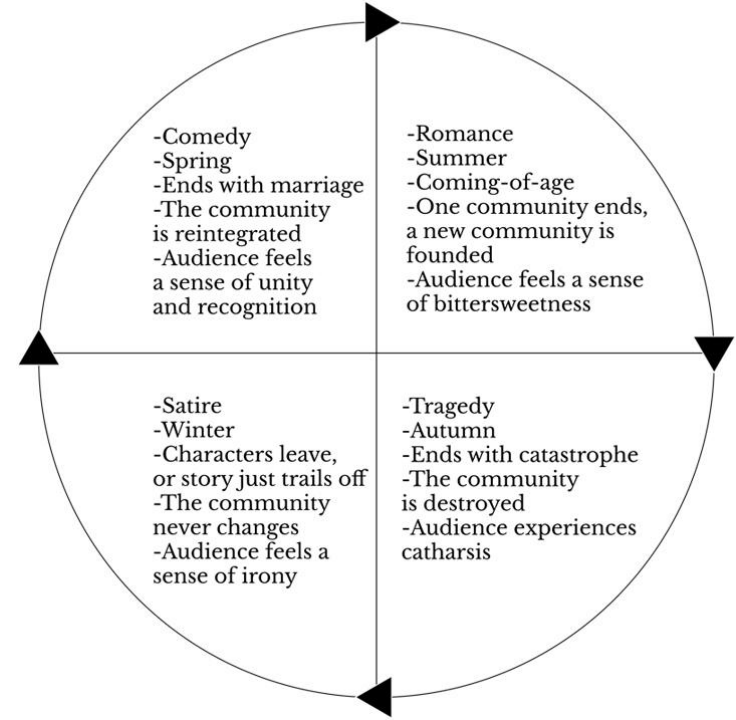


ARCHETYPAL CRITICISM:

- study of grand overarching myths, sacred practices (rituals, ordeals, sacrifices, initiations) times exp.
- Greek mythology
- **Gustav Jung**: collective unconscious, archetypes, animus/anima, mother, child, trickster, flood, old man
- **Sir James Frazer. *The Golden Bough. A Study in Magic and Religion* (1900)** religion as a cultural phenomenon not from theological perspective, fertility rite, cyclicity of season, death of old King Winter and advent of Spring, resurrection of Christ – Freud: *Totem and Taboo*)
- **Otto Rank. *The Myth of the Birth of the Hero* (1914)** (Greek dramas, Jungian archetypes, early traumas)
- **Joseph Campbell *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (1949)** (Osiris, Prometheus, Buddha, Moses, Christ, Harry Potter, Star Wars) **MONOMYTH** 1. separation, 2. initiation 3. return home (recurring plotline and patterns)
- **Claude-Lévi Strauss. *The Elementary Structures of Kinship*** (binary oppositions: evil dark vs good light)
- **Northrop Frye. *Anatomy of Criticism* (1957)** study of tragic, comic, and thematic literature divided into five "modes", each identified with a specific literary epoch: mythic, romantic, high mimetic, low mimetic, and ironic.



Northrop Frye's Literary Modes from *The Anatomy of Criticism*



„ON FAIRY STORIES” (1939 LECTURE PUBLISHED IN 1947)

“Faerie is a perilous land, and in it are pitfalls for the unwary and dungeons for the overbold...The realm of fairy-story is wide and deep and high and filled with many things: all manner of beasts and birds are found there; shoreless seas and stars uncounted; beauty that is an enchantment, and an ever-present peril; both joy and sorrow as sharp as swords. In that realm a man may, perhaps, count himself fortunate to have wandered, but its very richness and strangeness tie the tongue of a traveller who would report them. And while he is there it is dangerous for him to ask too many questions, lest the gates should be shut and the keys be lost.”

Stories about Faerie → adventures of humans in perilous realm of fairies

NOT Magic, NOT Satire, NOT for children only, to be taken seriously, NOT to be explained away

Wonder of language, adjectives: We may put a deadly green upon a man’s face and produce a horror; we may make the rare and terrible blue moon to shine; or we may cause woods to spring with silver leaves and rams to wear fleeces of gold, and put hot fire into the belly of the cold worm. But in such “fantasy,” as it is called, new form is made; Faerie begins; Man becomes a sub-creator.

“Creative fantasy, because it is mainly trying to do something else ... may open your hoard and let all the locked things fly away like cage-birds.”

Invented languages: *Quenya, Elvish –based on Latin& Greek, play w historical charge of words, evoke past stories*

FANCY – IMAGINATION – SUB-CREATION – FANTASY

RECOVERY-ESCAPE, CONSOLATION

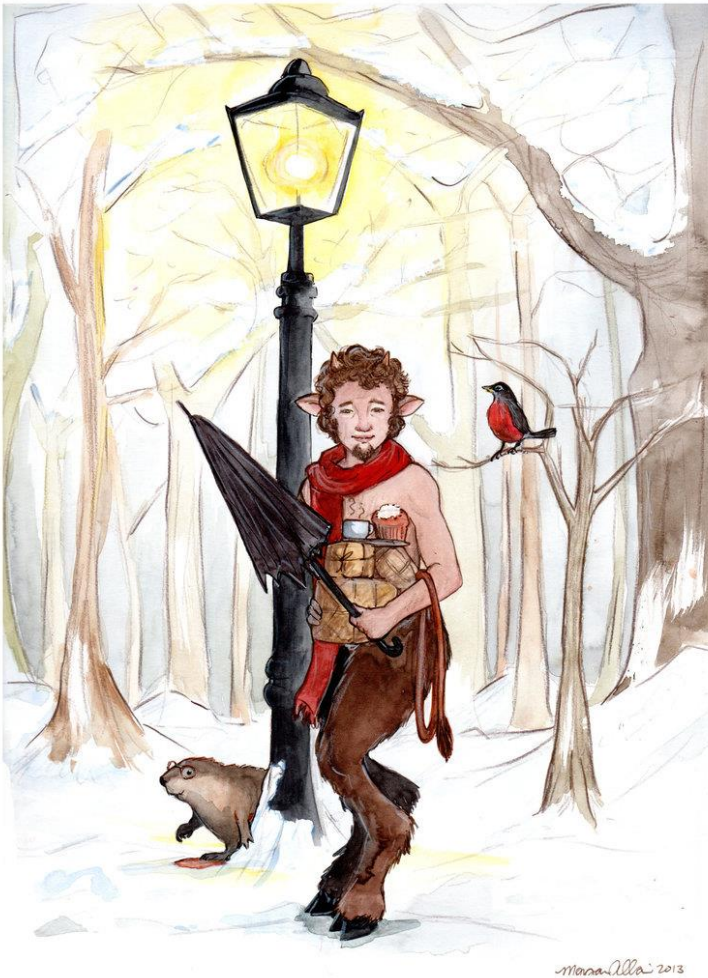
MOOREFFOC

Reveal new sight, potency of words, wonder of things

EUCATASTROPHE: Christian Joy: Gloria: "a catch of breath, a beat and lifting of the heart, near to (or indeed accompanied by) tears, a piercing glimpse of joy and heart's desire."



„The *Lion* all began with a picture of a Faun carrying an umbrella and parcels in a snowy wood. This picture had been in my mind since I was about sixteen. Then one day, when I was about forty, I said to myself: 'Let's try to make a story about it.' --- visual epiphany at origin of chronicles vö. Tolkien's linguistic inspiration at root of fantasy world



CS Lewis

The Chronicles of Narnia

series of 7 high fantasy novels
(1949-54)

(in publication order)

The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe

Prince Caspian

The Voyage of the Dawn Treader

The Silver Chair

The Horse and His Boy

The Magician's Nephew

The Last Battle

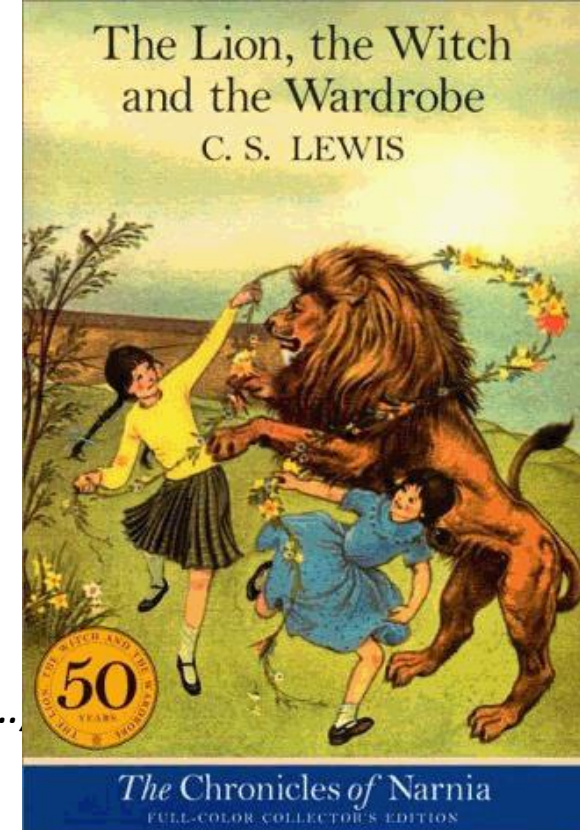
- **CS Lewis: *The Chronicles of Narnia***
- ***mixed inspiration***: a multiverse of countless worlds
Greco-Roman mythology+
British, Irish fairy tales+
Turkish legends+
pop folk lore +
Aesop's fables +
pagan beliefs+
Christian allegory
 ≡ *a mythological mishmash*

(*Santa Claus, Faun, Snow Queen, Medusa, centaurs, witches, Christ...*)

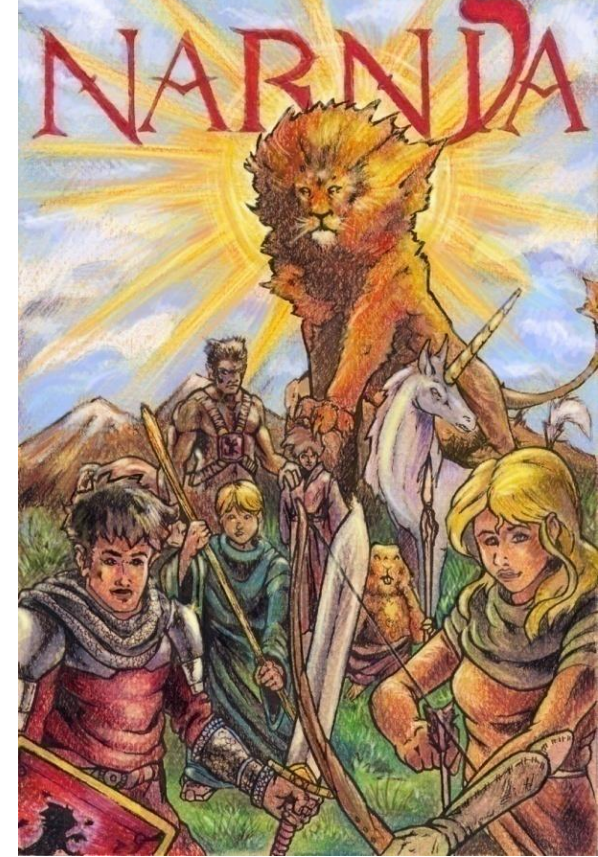
- ***Biblical themes***
**(Aslan the mighty Lion as Christ ↔ White Witch as Satan,*
sin, redemption, self-sacrifice, crucifixion, resurrection, daughters of Eve, sons of Adam)

- **Christian apologist**

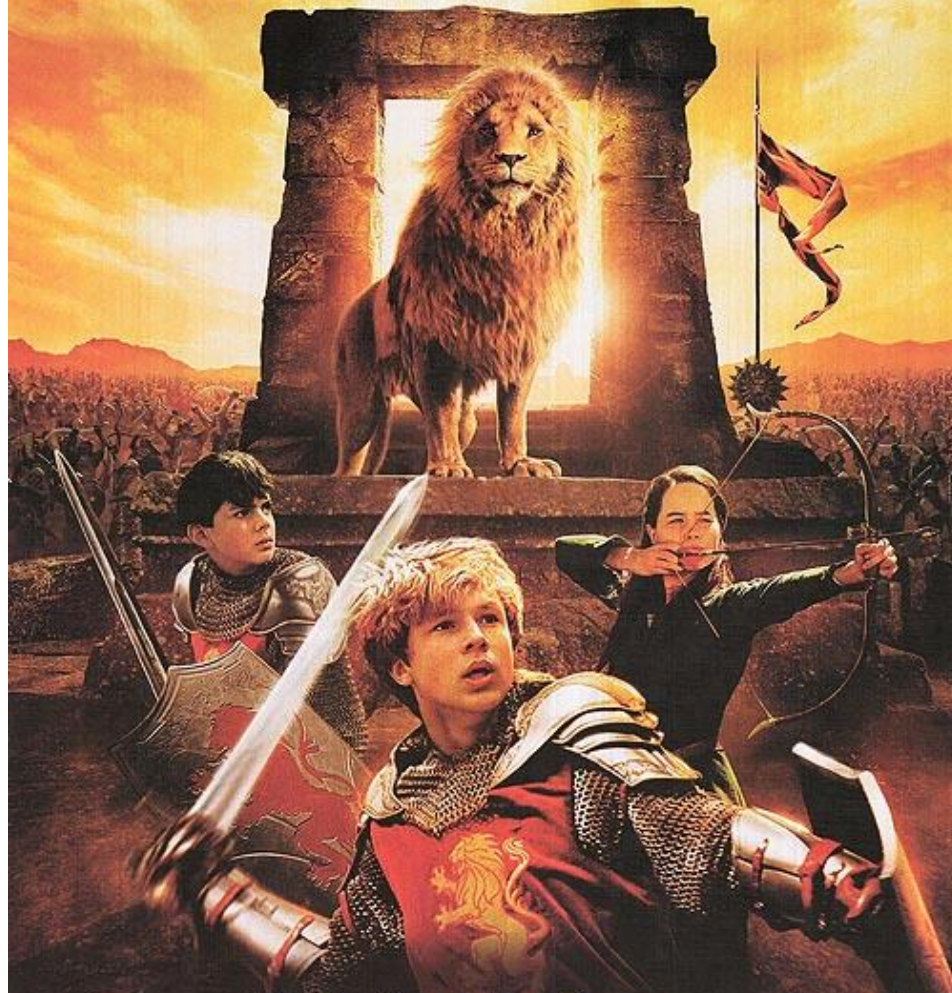
- rational logical explanation for the existence of miracles of Christian faith
- *commentary on dis/belief*
- (implied author Professor says: Lucy is neither mad, nor a liar, therefore if she claims so, Narnia must exist, siblings should believe her)
- 7 books: 7 virtues, 7 deadly sins, 7 sacraments, 7 heavenly bodies of medieval cosmology
- Christian teachings: forgiveness, sacrifice, temptation, courage



- **Tolkien's criticism:** too explicitly allegorical, too obviously religious?
- **BUT Realistic frame:** World War 2, Air Raids
- **PORTAL QUEST FANTASY** (wardrobe, painting, book, etc)
- **the power of storytelling** (Faun charming Lucy w his tale)
- **humourous elements** (Mrs Beaver wants to take her sewing machine to the war)
- **moralizing Bildungsroman** (how kids become Kings & Queens)
- **strange ending, happily ever after** (all child protagonists die, go to Heaven)
- **Sense of wonder: perceptual distortion: Faerial time/ Time Abyss** (Kings/queens in Narnia, children on Earth)
- **Versions of enchantment:** Black magic - Christian miracles - wizard's misuse of wonder
- **Creation myth** in final book: Aslan sings the world to being vs. Logos, the word of God, „fiat lux”



...AND NOW THE BATTLE FOR NARNIA BEGINS.



WALT DISNEY PICTURES and WALDEN MEDIA PRESENT

-THE CHRONICLES OF-

NARNIA

THE LION, THE WITCH AND THE WARDROBE

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C S Lewis: On Three ways of writing for children (1952)

1. Write for children as a separate audience
2. Write for a specific , particular child
3. Write chidlit because it is the best form for sg you have to say, treat childrean as equals

Fight criticism that fairy tales evoke fear –praise pleasurable fear, possibility to teach without didacticism, celebrate the child-like (even in adulthood) and not the despised childish

A refusal of charges of escapism –longing aroused by fairy tale: a longing for the “I know not what”

*Almost the same answer serves for the popular image of escapism, though here the question is not so simple. Do fairy tales teach children to retreat into a world of wish-fulfilment 'fantasy' in the technical psychological sense of the word—instead of facing the problems of the real world? Now it is here that the problem becomes subtle. Let us again lay the fairy tale side by side with the school story or any other story which is labelled a 'Boy's Book' or a 'Girl's Book', as distinct from a 'Children's Book'. There is no doubt that both arouse, and imaginatively satisfy, wishes. We long to go through the looking glass, to reach fairy land. We also long to be the immensely popular and successful schoolboy or schoolgirl, or the lucky boy or girl who discovers the spy's plot or rides the horse that none of the cowboys can manage. But the two longings are very different. The second, especially when directed on something so close as school life, is ravenous and deadly serious. Its fulfilment on the level of imagination is in very truth compensatory: we run to it from the disappointments and humiliations of the real world: it sends us back to the real world undivinely discontented. For it is all flattery to the ego. The pleasure consists in picturing oneself the object of admiration. The other longing, that for fairy land, is very different. In a sense a child does not long for fairy land as a boy longs to be the hero of the first eleven. Does anyone suppose that he really and prosaically longs for all the dangers and discomforts of a fairy tale?—really wants dragons in contemporary England? It is not so. It would be much truer to say that **fairy land arouses a longing for he knows not what. It stirs and troubles him (to his life-long enrichment) with the dim sense of something beyond his reach and, far from dulling or emptying the actual world, gives it a new dimension of depth.** He does not despise real woods because he has read of enchanted woods: the reading makes all real woods a little enchanted. This is a special kind of longing. The boy reading the school story of the type I have in mind desires success and is unhappy (once the book is over) because he can't get it: the boy reading the fairy tale desires and is happy in the very fact of desiring. For his mind has not been concentrated on himself, as it often is in the more realistic story.*