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# Quality or Quantity? A Response to Justin Barrett's Quantitative Analysis of *Planet Narnia*

## *Introduction*

I am grateful to Dr Barrett for his thoughtful interaction with the main argument<sup>1</sup> of my book, *Planet Narnia*. It is encouraging to see one's work engender scholarly engagement and all the more pleasing when the scholar in question is as gracious as Dr Barrett, who not only showed me his findings before making them public, but even met me for lunch in the Oxford college where he then worked (which, as it happens, is my *alma mater*, Regent's Park College) to discuss them with me. I was further impressed by his willingness to revisit his analysis in light of our conversation and make certain adjustments to the operation of his method.

As a member of the Steering Committee of the Wade Center I suggested to Dr Barrett that the Wade might provide a suitable forum for publication of his essay and that I would be glad to provide a written response that could be published alongside his analysis. I thank him and the Wade Center for their willingness to act on this suggestion.

When I met Dr Barrett to discuss his article he jokingly introduced himself as "one of those perverse people who like 'sciencing up' the humanities". At that point I had made no comment on his essay, but he had effectively guessed the sort of line I would be likely to take in critiquing his analysis. His self-deprecating wisecrack was indeed a wise crack, because it wisely cracked open and articulated the fault-line that exists between the sort of *quantitative* analysis that his essay favours and the more *qualitative* approach which my argument in *Planet Narnia* adopts. Suitably disarmed, I proceeded to have a productive conversation with him that focussed more on the particular operations of his analytic method than on the appropriateness of the method itself.

Having now had about two years to reflect upon our conversation, I have concluded that the heart of the matter really is this disjunction between quality and quantity and that questions about the precise workings of his method need not be addressed. Though I believe that Dr Barrett's operationalization could be significantly refined and improved, I am not principally concerned with that here. I propose, in what follows, to demonstrate the severely limited utility of quantitative analysis both as a tool of literary criticism and, *a fortiori*, as a tool for testing literary criticism, looking first at the issue in principle and then at some of the particular practical inadequacies of the method.

**Background**

However, before I begin my remarks, perhaps it will be useful to sketch the history of *Planet Narnia* leading up to Dr Barrett's engagement with it. A book of this sort does not come out of nowhere, nor had it escaped critical scrutiny prior to Dr Barrett's quantitative assessment.

*Planet Narnia* was the work of about five years. It was in February 2003 that I first had the idea that Lewis used the seven heavens, those "spiritual symbols" of "permanent value" ("Alliterative" 24) as he called them, to give his seven Narnia Chronicles their peculiar qualities. I was, at the time, eighteen months into my doctoral research at the University of St Andrews on the subject of Lewis's theological imagination. When I explained my idea to my two supervisors, Dr Jeremy Begbie and Dr Trevor Hart, they both encouraged me to explore it fully. I published an article outlining the case in the *Times Literary Supplement* in April 2003, which prompted positive responses in the following week's edition from the Dante scholar, Dr Barbara Reynolds, and the author, Philip Pullman. Over the course of 2003, as I examined the evidence, the planetary idea became the core of the dissertation, and when it was time to submit the thesis, in the spring of 2005, both my supervisors were content to sign off on it. I then defended the argument before Dr Steven Holmes, the St Andrews examiner, and Dr Stephen Logan, the external examiner, from the University of Cambridge, in August 2005. The examiners encouraged me to publish, so I spent the next 2½ years revising it for publication. Oxford University Press issued the resulting volume, by then entitled *Planet Narnia: The Seven Heavens in the Imagination of C.S. Lewis*, in January 2008, having had the manuscript peer-reviewed in the normal way (by Dr Christopher Mitchell and Dr Andrew Cuneo), and having obtained endorsements from Dr Walter Hooper, Dr Alan Jacobs, Dr Armand Nicholi, and Professor Derek Brewer. In the autumn of 2008, the BBC commissioned an hour-long television documentary about it, which was broadcast on BBC1 at Easter 2009, and it was in December of 2009 that Dr Barrett kindly notified me of his work.

I give this thumbnail sketch of the development of *Planet Narnia*, and list the names of the figures who interacted with it prior to publication, not in an attempt to immunize my case from criticism. All scholarly works go through this kind of process, and it is only when the work is released upon the wider world that exposure to the full range of challenges can come about. The thumbnail sketch should also not be taken as an indication that all the people mentioned above concurred with every single statement in my argument; naturally, there was a variety of levels of support even from those who accepted its main contention. The reason I give this thumbnail sketch is to point out that nobody involved in the critical scrutiny of *Planet Narnia* before Dr Barrett (and there were many additional scholars whose names I have not included) ever advised that it be subjected to quantitative analysis. Nobody

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even raised the possibility. I think this is not unimportant. It shows a sharp methodological disjunction between disciplines. Dr Barrett, who is a distinguished psychologist and cognitive scientist, and who does not claim to be a literary scholar, still less a Lewis specialist, regards quantitative analysis as “critical” and “essential”<sup>2</sup> in evaluating a case of this kind. None of the figures listed above, most of whom are either literary or theological figures, including some of the world’s leading Lewis scholars, even mentioned it as something worth considering. It would appear that the sciences and the humanities, C.P. Snow’s “two cultures”, are as far apart as ever.

I myself, as it happens, *had* considered throwing a rope-bridge across that chasm and engaging in such a line of enquiry. The reasons I decided against it are largely what this essay is designed to bring out. I now turn to discuss some of the problems that I think quantitative analysis suffers from in principle.

#### *Quantitative Analysis in Principle*

Dr Barrett’s analysis, I note, is more supportive of the main argument of *Planet Narnia* than it is critical. Agreeing with four of my identifications, he writes: “Results suggest *The Voyage of the ‘Dawn Treader’* certainly was infused with Solar imagery”; “*The Silver Chair* is far-and-away the most Lunar of the books”; “The evidence is strong that Lewis used Mercurial concepts and imagery in the writing of *The Horse and His Boy*”; “As Ward argues, *The Magician’s Nephew* appears to be under the influence of Venus”. Regarding *Prince Caspian*, Dr Barrett’s agreement is less full-throated. He writes: “If any book was written with conscious or unconscious use of Martial imagery, it was *Prince Caspian*, consistent with Ward’s argument, but evidence from these analyses are [sic] only modestly supportive”. Regarding my claim that *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* is constructed out of the symbolism of Jupiter, Dr Barrett concludes: “It appears, then, that we have no evidence that any of the books show a decidedly Jovial influence on their writing”. Regarding the claim that *The Last Battle* is built out of the symbolism of Saturn, he concludes: “None of the books in the Narniad appears particularly Saturnine”.

In short, Dr Barrett gives *Planet Narnia* 4½ out of 7, a 64.3 per cent success rate. I am demonstrably right roughly two-thirds of the time and possibly right the rest of the time.<sup>3</sup> Given that he and I agree more than we disagree, it might be wondered why I should feel the need to respond to his findings.

Dr Barrett is a serious and fair-minded scholar who courteously shared his work in advance of publication and who even slightly modified his findings after conversation with me. I am extremely grateful to him for his consideration in these regards and he deserves to receive a formal response.

And the starting point for my response is this matter of principle. I think Dr Barrett’s method is, in principle, unable to achieve its aim of reliably testing the *Planet Narnia* thesis. Towards the end of his essay, Dr Barrett considers various reasons why his findings do not tally with mine, including

“poor operationalization” by me or by him or by Lewis. What he does not consider is whether his own quantitative method of analysis might be fatally hamstrung by its own frame of reference in the first place—not badly executed, but badly conceived. This I believe to be the case.

Dr Barrett’s quantitative method, by definition, recognises and values quantities. It is a method that uses numbers as a way of testing words. The words that I use in *Planet Narnia* are not reliable, in Dr Barrett’s view, unless they can be measured by the more trustworthy language of statistics. He writes: “Ward’s evidence, as impressive as it is, omits a critical type of data that is essential for drawing confident conclusions of this sort, namely baseline frequencies.” These are no small claims. The frequency with which key terms appears is a type of data that is critical; it is not just useful, but “essential”.

For a while, in the course of my work on *Planet Narnia*, as indicated above, I considered quantifying key terms and even began to do some counting along lines similar to those eventually followed by Dr Barrett. I soon realised, however, that enumerating key terms and establishing their statistical significance was an almost entirely useless procedure. I was arguing for what Lewis, in “On Stories”, called “a tone or a quality” (503),<sup>4</sup> a pervasive flavour or colour or atmosphere or taste, like the Londonness of London or the Donegality of Donegal.<sup>5</sup> “It is notoriously difficult to put these tastes into words,” Lewis wrote (*Spenser’s* 115).

What makes it difficult? Plainly put, Lewis’s high standards as an author. Many an inferior writer would not blanch at the task of expressing a tone or quality: they would slap on the adjectives and be done with it. But Lewis was of the view that the essence of good writing was suggestion, not statement. A skilful author will not tell us that such and such a thing is horrid or magnificent or lovely: he will describe so that we, the readers, respond by exclaiming inwardly, “How horrid!” or “How magnificent!” or “That’s lovely” (“Letter to Joan Lancaster” 766). As Lewis remarked, “What the reader is made to do for himself has a particular importance in literature” (“Dante’s *Comedy*” 81).

Put another way, when we try to analyse Lewis’s qualitative purpose we must not look only at the words of the story: we must look at the *effects* of the words of the story. An author’s effects will rely on a huge range of artistic techniques, including many that do not manifest themselves as particular, identifiable, quantifiable words on a page.

This is not to say that quantifiable terms have absolutely no part to play in an author’s creation of a quality. Lewis acknowledged that “the continual recurrence” of a word can be a significant component in establishing “the tone” of a passage (*Studies in Words* 180), and so I had reason to suppose that the author of the *Narniad* himself would not utterly have discounted what Dr Barrett calls “baseline frequencies”. I would, in fact, have assumed this in any case. Repetition, as I recognise in the first chapter of *Planet Narnia*, is a common enough artistic device (9). Lewis could be expected to practise such

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a technique whether or not he is on record as having explicitly approved it. Accordingly, I gave a certain amount of my attention to recurrences and repetitions. Some of my own brief forays into quantitative analysis even survived into the final version of *Planet Narnia*.<sup>6</sup>

But quantification, I soon realised, was an extremely blunt instrument. It could not cope, and could not be expected to cope, with the vast majority of ways in which Lewis expressed the planetary personalities in the Narniad. Let me give a specific example in order to introduce what I mean.

When discussing the Chronicles of Narnia in his biography of C.S. Lewis, A.N. Wilson observes that Lewis “frequently repeats epithets” and takes this as evidence that the seven stories are not “particularly well written” (225-226). As is par for the course in this highly unreliable biography, Wilson gives no examples, nor does he explain why repetition should be evidence of shoddy composition. What he is really objecting to, of course, is not repetition but *excessive* repetition. And I imagine that all readers would agree that excessive repetition is usually a sign of bad writing. Unless excess is the effect being aimed at, it is a mistake to “over-egg the pudding”.

The case that I wanted to make about Lewis’s use of planetary imagery was certainly not that he intended to take it to excess. My whole point was that Lewis deployed this imagery subtly and artistically, so that we, the readers, would inhabit the imagery: we would “enjoy” it, not “contemplate” it; we would “look along the beam”, not “at the beam” (*God in the Dock* 212). Lewis said that he was concerned with the “atmosphere” (Sayer 191) of the adventures in Narnia, and an atmosphere is something you breathe without usually noticing it. Any excessive use of planetary imagery on Lewis’s part would be contrary to the purpose he had in mind.

Nevertheless, Wilson’s point alerted me to the question: “What constitutes excess?” And so when I next read the Chronicles I went looking for places where Lewis “frequently repeats epithets”, asking myself whether the recurrences of particular terms were ever excessive.

I found only one example. It is the adjective “pale” in *The Silver Chair*. We read of pale hills, pale sunlight, pale Earthmen, pale sand, pale lanterns, pale beaches, pale lamps, pale light. Puddleglum’s face is “so pale that you could see the paleness under the natural muddiness of his complexion” (112). Eustace’s face is “pale and dirty” (188). Rilian’s face is “as pale as putty” (141). A lord “with a pale face” (199) welcomes home Caspian who is himself “very pale” (200). Aslan touches the “pale faces” (201) of Jill and Eustace, and everything else looks “pale and shadowy” (200) in comparison with his brightness and reality and strength.

The reason Lewis emphasises the word, so I argue in *Planet Narnia*, is that “pale” is part of his Lunar lexicon; it is a key term in the vocabulary he wished to draw upon in creating the atmosphere that conveyed the Moon’s qualities. Luna makes men “melancholy pale”, as Lewis wrote in his poem,

“The Planets” (line 6). She suffers from “an envious fever / Of pale and bloodless emulation,” in a passage Lewis praised from Shakespeare’s *Troilus and Cressida* (lines 133-134). And “pale” is how Lewis glosses Henryson’s “haw” in the latter’s description of Cynthia (that is, Luna) in *The Testament of Cresseid* (153).<sup>7</sup>

Though Lewis had good reason, I believe, to repeat the word “pale” in *The Silver Chair*, he overdoes it, in my estimation. It becomes monotonous. He needs more “elegant variation”.

But where does legitimate emphasis tip over into excessive use? This question is worth asking because it exposes a fundamental weakness of the quantitative method. The more often the word “pale” appears in *The Silver Chair*, the more Dr Barrett will be able to confirm my thesis. The less often the word “pale” appears in *The Silver Chair*, the less he will be able to confirm it.

Put another way, the less skilfully Lewis expresses planetary qualities, the more they will become identifiable as mere quantities.

But I am of the opinion that Lewis was an extremely skilful writer. “Pale” is the only epithet which he clearly over-uses in the Narniad, in my view. Typically, he is much more subtle. And subtlety, as has been acknowledged since time immemorial, is a hallmark of artistic success: *ars est celare artem* (the art is in concealing the art). A clear example of Lewis opting for the more subtle approach over the less subtle approach is to be found if we examine the one surviving typescript from the Narniad. Though Lewis mentioned “the god Saturn” in the draft, he changed this to “Father Time” for the published version in order to make his planetary purposes less obvious<sup>8</sup>. Obviousness is not usually a desirable feature of story-telling. Lewis faulted the poetry of Thomas Usk on just these grounds: “the mechanism by which the effects are obtained is too visible” (*Allegory* 229), he complained. He believed that good writing comes about by “secretly evoking powerful associations” (*Studies in Words* 317); that poetic expressions should “not merely state but suggest” (*Surprised by Joy* 63); that “an influence which cannot evade our [Contemplative] consciousness will not go very deep” (“Authorised Version” 142).

I realised then that to try to prove my case by counting quantities would be going against the grain of Lewis’s whole endeavour. And not just his endeavour in Narnia, either. Throughout his work, he celebrates “quality”, “quiddity”, “Donegality”, and has a hostility towards that calculating, Gradgrindian tendency of mind that would neutralise, depersonalise, or homogenise. The modern habit of treating peculiar individual men and women as “counters or identical machines”, mere “hands” or “voters”, like ants in an anthill or bees in a hive, is a mistake: we should rather consider them in their fullest contexts and respect each as a “concrete entirety” (“Priestesses” 401). In a similar vein, he objects to the equalising, regularising mentality of those “to whom pebbles laid in a row are more beautiful than an arch” (“Equality” 668). He has Ransom observe in *Perelandra* that “the size of a thing is the least

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important characteristic" (151). Nature "stripped of its qualitative properties and reduced to mere quantity" is not wholly real, so Lewis argues in *The Abolition of Man* (42 f.). Indeed, a major reason behind his love of the Ptolemaic cosmos and his hesitations about post-Copernican models was that he thought the former retained an awareness of quality, whereas the latter evacuated the cosmos of such spiritual significances, "reducing Nature to her mathematical elements" (English Literature 3-4).<sup>9</sup> This concentration upon, even exaltation of, mathematics as the Rosetta Stone which decrypts the secrets of the universe is what Lewis was referring to when he talked about the "mythology that follows in the wake of science" (*Silent Planet* 35). Pure mathematics, he concedes, is "the type of successful thought" ("Myth Became Fact" 140), but its success in unlocking the mysteries of physics has led some of its practitioners, and not a few of those practitioners' followers, to suppose that it has also unlocked the mysteries of metaphysics.

The mathematics are now the nearest to the reality we can get. Anything imaginable, even anything that can be manipulated by ordinary (that is, non-mathematical) conceptions, far from being a further truth to which mathematics were the avenue, is a mere analogy, a concession to our weakness. Without a parable modern physics speaks not to the multitudes. (*Discarded Image* 218)

Alluding here to St Matthew's description of Christ's teaching method (Matt. 13:34), Lewis implies his own view of the present situation: modern science—or rather, "scientism"—has supplanted ordinary (i.e., non-mathematically expressed) wisdom and substituted a pseudo-dominical language of numbers.

In delineating Lewis's thought on this matter, I do not mean to imply that Dr Barrett's quantitative analysis itself has even come close to participating in such errors. Still less should the foregoing remarks be understood as any kind of comment upon Dr Barrett's own motivations: I believe him to be a man of sincere Christian faith. No conclusions of a moral or spiritual kind whatsoever are implied, nor are they to be inferred, about either him or his choice of method. His is a particular case; Lewis is speaking in generalities. Let that be understood. However, it is, I think, fair to point up the irony, the very great irony, of Dr Barrett's desire to assess the donegalitarian case by recourse to mathematics. The *Planet Narnia* thesis attempts to describe the qualitative literary strategies of a writer whose overarching aim, across the whole range of his corpus, is avowedly anti-quantitative. Everywhere one looks in Lewis works, be it his academic writings, his poetry, his essays, or his Ransom Trilogy, one sees this recurrent aim: to re-enchant the universe, to replace "space" with "the heavens", to reignite a sacramental view of

nature and indeed of man, and to question the conceptual paradigm that would “ignore [Nature’s] final cause (if any) and treat it in terms of quantity” (*Abolition* 42).

Quantities are useful, without a doubt, but the universe we live in, so Lewis believes, is a universe of liberality, not one of mere functionality. Numbers, though extremely handy when we are treating the cosmos as a machine to be measured, weighed, manipulated, and so on, cannot take us into the realm of the spirit. They are too univocal: reality is richer than that. Statistics, like cynics, keep us in the world of price, not value. The most valuable things are more than the sum of their parts.<sup>10</sup> These beliefs, so central to Lewis’s output as a writer, had to be factored into my approach as a critic of his works.

What the example of the word “pale” revealed to me, then, was the inappropriateness, even the impropriety, of trying to analyse the *Chronicles* simply by atomising them and converting them into numerical units. Such a procedure would be alien to Lewis’s whole cast of mind. To take an image from his classic sermon, “Transposition”, it would be tantamount to rendering an orchestral score as a piano reduction (271). What would be the point?

According to Dr Barrett, the point would be to disinfect my eyes from the tendency to see what I wanted to see. Only by introducing the hard and neutral measuring-rod of numbers can we be sure that the planetary scheme is objectively real. I absolutely share Dr Barrett’s desire to test the authenticity of my case, but I do not share his faith in figures. How can figures capture all the wealth of meaning that is to be found in words—either Lewis’s words in the *Chronicles* or my words about those words in *Planet Narnia*?

Because, of course, I am not arguing that Lewis worked by definable quotas and that here, with the word “pale”, he just accidentally happened to exceed his quota. I am not suggesting that the *Narniad* is the literary equivalent of “painting by numbers”. What I am trying to do is to get inside Lewis’s imagination and understand how he artistically expressed quality.

When writing about the expression of quality in stories, Lewis often chose to use analogies drawn from music. He thought that literary images, like musical motifs, should be richly expressive of mood, existing in “every possible relation of contrast, mutual support, development, variation, half-echo, and the like” (*Spenser’s* 116). How does one evaluate such vital, versatile, fugitive things? Quantitatively? If we take just two very simple examples from the realm of music, we will see how inappropriate such a method would be.

Compare, for instance, a C major scale with an A harmonic minor scale. We find that the key signatures are identical and that, seven times out of eight, the notes are also identical. From this we might conclude that C major and A minor are much more alike than different. Actually, however, the raised seventh tone in the minor scale makes all the difference, colouring the music through and through with a melancholic or serious mood.

Or compare C major with C sharp major. Here we would observe that the key signature of the former has no accidentals while the key signature of the latter has seven sharps. We would further observe that they had no notes in common (despite E sharp and B sharp from the latter appearing under the guise of F and C in the former). From these observations we might conclude that C major and C sharp major are far more different from each other than the two scales in our first example, C major and A minor, are different from each other. As any musically trained person will know, however, two major keys sound much more alike than do a major key and a minor key, however many notes or accidentals they may lack in common.

Examples could be multiplied as to how quantities are largely irrelevant when it comes to understanding the tone or flavour or atmosphere of a piece of music. The key thing is the key! And the quantitative approach, so evidently unsuitable in a concert hall, is just as unsuitable in literary criticism, or at any rate unsuitable in literary criticism relating to great literary works.<sup>11</sup> The more balanced and nuanced and skilful the expression of mood, the less it can be captured in the wide, rough meshes of the quantifying net. A poor example of genre fiction could perhaps be put through a number-cruncher without much loss, but a work of real story-telling artistry will not be so easily sifted. Lewis maintains that “a story of this kind [a fairy-tale or romance] is in a way more like a symphony than a novel... [I]t is always the symphonic treatment of the images that counts, the combination that makes out of them a poetic whole” (*Spenser's* 117).

And a poetic whole is just that: poetic and whole. A great writer establishes the “tone” or “key” of a story not only by creating each and every part with great care, but by creating all the *relationships* between those parts with great care. In other words, the writer will simultaneously be paying attention both to the text and to the context. And the context is the total work and everything in it. Only as we, the readers, receive the work holistically, understanding the parts and the whole and the way the whole interrelates the parts, will we be able properly to appreciate the story in hand. “What it ‘says’,” as Lewis remarked, “is the total, concrete experience it gives to the right reader – the *πεπαιδευμένος* [*pepaideumenos*, meaning, in Lewis’s usage, the correctly disposed respondent, the person who knows how to read aright because he is the properly cultured, or cultivated, citizen.]” (*Personal Heresy* 114).<sup>12</sup> The relative frequency with which certain terms in a given story appear in another story is unimportant: all that matters is their organisation, pacing, and patterning in the given story.

But who dare claim to be “the right reader”? If by “right reader” we mean “perfect reader” then certainly I do not claim to be such, and in *Planet Narnia* I frankly acknowledge my own “ignorance and imperceptiveness” (233). At the same time, I do believe that the planetary reading is right in principle, despite certain new difficulties that it introduces,<sup>13</sup>

because its level of explanatory power is so high:

This reading, I venture to suggest, addresses the problem of composition so effectively that it may be considered “definitive” – not in the sense of being beyond interrogation, still less in the sense that it forecloses all further discussion of the septet, but in the sense of establishing a new and more than probable interpretative paradigm within which the books may be assessed. (223)

And it is this paradigmatic claim which is the final point of principle that I wish to address before we turn to look at some of the problems which I think quantitative analysis suffers from in practice.

Dr Barrett’s method, in principle, so he states, “does not favour one interpretation over another and thus is not biased to find what we seek whether or not it is there”. In responding to a draft of this paper, Dr Barrett wrote to me that, in order “to give your thesis a fair evaluation (in either direction), once you have pointed out what are the things we should be looking for, we should look for them equally in each of the books and not selectively attend to features in one.”

This neutral, unbiased, approach seems very reasonable from one point of view, but it overlooks the paradigmatic method deployed in *Planet Narnia* which is not neutral and does not claim to be unbiased. My thesis does not address seven putative planetary texts, each of which might in theory have an equal title to being described as, say, “Jovial”. My thesis operates rather by adopting seven discrete paradigms. When we interpret *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* within a Jovial paradigm we get, I believe, very illuminating results. And when we interpret *Prince Caspian* within a Martial paradigm, we again get very illuminating results. And so on, seven times over.

I don’t start with a *neutral* reading of *The Lion* and progress to a Jovial reading only after comparing images with other Chronicles. I start with a Jovial reading of *The Lion* and make no apologies for doing so. To be sure, I adopt that starting point not without reasons, but my reasons are holistic, not cumulative. This is how new paradigms establish themselves. They require an intellectual leap, and once that leap has been made one can choose either to stay in that position or to leap back to the old position. But the leap is a leap: it is what, within the realm of scientific progress, Thomas Kuhn calls “revolutionary” rather than “normal” science. Normal science works on the accretion of data—“development-by-accumulation”. Revolutions are something else. They require their adherents to abandon the steady application of an old method and to assume a whole new worldview. The new worldview “cannot be made logically or even probabilistically compelling for those who refuse to step into the circle”, says Kuhn. “[T]his issue of paradigm choice can never be unequivocally settled by logic and experiment alone” (94).

*Planet Narnia*, within the realm of literary criticism, asks its readers to “step into the circle” and assume, for the moment at least, that the seven new paradigms it offers are correct. It *does* favour certain interpretations over others—unashamedly so—because it believes those interpretations to be correct. And this, as Thomas Kuhn points out, is what always happens in such cases:

The choice [between paradigms] is not and cannot be determined merely by the evaluative procedures characteristic of normal science, for these depend in part upon a particular paradigm, and that paradigm is at issue. When paradigms enter, as they must, into a debate about paradigm choice, their role is necessarily circular. Each group uses its own paradigm to argue in that paradigm’s defense.

The resulting circularity does not, of course, make the arguments wrong or even ineffectual. (94)

Dr Barrett—quite rightly—wants to establish whether the literary critical vision I advance is real or imaginary. I want to establish that point too, and all the evidences I adduce in the course of *Planet Narnia* and the counter-arguments I consider are my attempt to do that very thing. The biographical, literary critical, literary historical, theological, philosophical, and inter-textual arguments that I advance, including a few brief forays into quantitative analysis, are sufficient, I believe, to make the case beyond reasonable doubt. But these arguments and evidences would never have been mounted if I hadn’t already perceived, above the clouds of doubt, as it were, the summit to which they led. In other words, the thesis presupposes (necessarily, not illogically) its conclusion: it is “circular”, in Kuhn’s terms. And that is unavoidable. I seized the paradigm in a gestalt embrace: I did not arrive at that paradigm through “development-by-accumulation”. And when I have lectured on my thesis, I have often seen other people seize it too: I have noticed “the penny drop” with various listeners: the light of understanding is switched on; there have even occasionally been audible gasps. And numerous readers of *Planet Narnia* have informed me that the thesis has made them say, “Of course, it makes sense now! Everything comes into focus!” These people step into the circle of the new paradigm.<sup>14</sup> But I am not sure that Dr Barrett does so even when he “confirms” my findings with regard to, say, the Solar symbolism of *The “Dawn Treader”*. He has not, I think, confirmed the Solar paradigm within which I am operating in my analysis of that text; he has merely demonstrated that my Solar reading is not contrary to his own non-planetary paradigm, a paradigm that operates according to one-way linear thinking in which the conclusion does not react upon the premises. He has shown that a Solar reading does not offend the “hermeneutic of suspicion”, but he has not accepted the “hermeneutic of donegality”. I do not fault him

for this: it was not his intention so to argue. I am pleased that, even under his hermeneutical paradigm, he is able to validate my approach two-thirds of the time. I draw the reader's notice to this point merely in order to highlight the fact that Dr Barrett's approach and mine are in principle different, even incommensurable, and that even where he agrees with me his agreement makes him only a non-belligerent, not an ally.

The mentions I have made of Kuhn's celebrated work, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, are apposite, I think, because, as I wrote in *Planet Narnia*, the donegalitarian interpretation came to me as something of a "eureka moment" (240), "as something analogous to a scientific breakthrough" (249-252). It revealed itself to be qualitatively different from all my previous attempts at understanding the Chronicles, and this qualitative difference was in turn apposite because, if this new notion was correct, I was seeing Lewis's own attempt to express a series of qualitative realities, the seven "spiritual symbols" of the medieval heavens. He believed that the "planetary characters need to be seized in an intuition... we need to know them, not to know about them, *connaitre*, not *savoir*" (*Discarded Image* 109); they "need to be lived with imaginatively, not merely learned as concepts" (173). Imparting an intuition of these qualities, communicating non-conceptually, is a very delicate task for an author to accomplish, and for the critic to tease apart the fine tissues of such a communication is a similarly delicate task, requiring a huge array of analytical instruments.

Quantitative analysis, as I have indicated, will be one such instrument, but one among many and one which cannot lead to the planetary paradigm but which results from it and partially supports it. To claim that quantitative analysis is an instrument that can reliably test the paradigm and even that it is the *measure* of all other literary critical instruments, as Dr Barrett appears to do, is to overstate the case. It would be like a professional golfer dispensing with his woods, irons, putters, tees, studded shoes, left-hand glove, peaked cap, and caddy, and announcing to the world that henceforth he will play the game using only a sand-wedge. This is not a sensible way to proceed.

I have considered some of the problems in principle that I believe quantitative analysis to suffer from. These considerations informed my decision not to rest the *Planet Narnia* thesis on such a footing. I will now address some of the particular inadequacies of the method as it relates to Dr Barrett's assessment of the main argument of *Planet Narnia*.

#### *Quantitative analysis in practice*

Dr Barrett concedes that his "strategy may be blind to rhetorical subtleties". For "may be", we should read "is". Quantitative analysis simply cannot consider certain subtleties. And to give Dr Barrett credit, he admits as much: "Using only word frequencies may also fail to count moods created through more complex linguistic arrangements. This

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decision was made for practical reasons—it is easier to count words than images”.

Yes, indeed! But what if the author has used highly complex linguistic arrangements in order to convey his message? In serious literary criticism, one should pay as much attention to complex linguistic arrangements as possible and not ignore them because it is “easier to count words”.

Actually, however, even counting words is not particularly easy for the quantitative analyst. Dr Barrett writes: “One Martial concept identified by Ward, ‘hard’, was not included because of its varied use and the ambiguity with which it might map onto the Martial sense of ‘hard’”. But “varied use” and “ambiguity” are parts of any author’s total arsenal (or orchestra), and when the author concerned is C.S. Lewis and the matter in hand is the planetary intelligences, variety and ambiguity are especially relevant. For, as Lewis wrote, “in a certain juncture of the planets each may play the other’s part” (Letter to A.K. Hamilton Jenkin 653) and “all the planets are represented in each” (*Hideous Strength* 316). The gods “flow in and out of one another like eddies on a river, and nothing that is said clearly can be said truly about them” (*Faces* 58). If I am right and “hard” is a key Martial term in Lewis’s planetary thinking (“the hard virtue of Mars”, as he calls it in one of his poems), then it is our duty as responsible critics to include it in our thinking. It may not be easy to insert the term into an algorithm, but fortunately the human mind can think in more complex ways than algorithms, if we will let it.

Dr Barrett attempts to justify his actions by claiming that, though his method is blind to rhetorical subtleties, “it is blind in a fair way”. He argues as follows: “if this under-counting (or even over-counting) was comparable across stories, it would not adversely impact the results of the analysis as it is relative frequencies and not absolute frequencies that are important”. I would argue that it is open eyes that are important. Deliberate self-blinding, even if it is uniform across stories, is surely not something to be recommended. Dr Barrett’s chutzpah here reminds me of the man who murdered his parents and then asked the court to have mercy on him because he was an orphan. How can it help our understanding of Lewis’s works wilfully to render certain modes of artistic expression undetectable?

But this is not the only charge that can be brought against Dr Barrett here. His defence on this point rests on the assumption that his blindness will be “comparable across stories”. In other words, he assumes that Lewis’s level of rhetorical subtlety is uniform across the seven Chronicles. This is a major assumption. It takes no account of the differences between planets nor of the differences Lewis himself identified between planets.

For instance, the Sun and the Moon differ from the other five. Everyone can identify the Sun and the Moon: the Sun “rules” the day, and the Moon “rules” the night. Stories usually recount adventures that happen during the day, when the Sun is up. Lewis can therefore afford to bring the Sun much

more obviously into his Solar story, *The Voyage of the "Dawn Treader"* than he can afford to bring, say, Mercury into *The Horse and His Boy*. A single explicit mention of "Mercury" in *The Horse and His Boy* would be egregious. Scores of explicit mentions of the Sun can appear in *The "Dawn Treader"* without readers noticing even one of them. The levels of rhetorical subtlety required to communicate qualities of Mercury, Mars, Venus, Jupiter, and Saturn will be higher than the levels required to communicate Sol and Luna.

Lewis himself identified further differences between the planets. He characterised Venus and Saturn, for instance, as possessing an ongoing archetypal life in the modern imagination. Jupiter and Mercury, on the other hand, almost evade us (*Discarded Image* 109). Their qualities need to be rehabilitated for modern readers. The qualities of Mercury are especially hard to express: "it is difficult to see the unity in all [Mercury's] characteristics", Lewis says (108). Given the different perspectives Lewis had upon the planets, and their various relationships to modern audiences, it is not safe to assume that he would write about them in uniform ways. He himself said that he had got better at the books as he went on ("Letter to Pauline Baynes" 611). He had a special personal affiliation with Jupiter (*Planet Narnia* 42-44). He seems to have had a particular difficulty writing *The Magician's Nephew*, in part, I argue, because of complications associated with Venereal imagery (156, 179). And he in any case valued quiddity and peculiarity, which may have led him away from regular or uniform treatments of their qualities. In this regard it is interesting to note what he says in *Mere Christianity*:

Besides being complicated, reality, in my experience, is usually odd. It is not neat, not obvious, not what you expect. For instance, when you have grasped that the earth and the other planets all go round the sun, you would naturally expect that all the planets were made to match—all at equal distances from each other, say, or distances that regularly increased, or all the same size, or else getting bigger or smaller as you go further from the sun. In fact, you find no rhyme or reason (that we can see) about either the sizes or the distances; and some of them have one moon, one has four, one has two, some have none, and one has a ring.

Reality, in fact, is usually something you could not have guessed. That is one of the reasons I believe Christianity. It is a religion you could not have guessed. If it offered us just the kind of universe we had always expected, I should feel we were making it up. But, in fact, it is not the sort of thing anyone would have made up. It has just that queer twist about it that real things have. So let us leave behind all these boys' philosophies—these oversimple answers. (43-44)

Dr Barrett expects regularity in Lewis's treatment of the planets, but this expectation is, as Lewis writes in another context, "the merest prejudice".

Dr Barrett claims that his method “does not favour one interpretation over another”, when in fact he favours a uniform interpretation, as though predictability and probability were a necessary component of literature and as though idiosyncrasies were not part of an author’s prerogative.

If the quantitative method finds even the single word “hard” too hard to cope with, it will, perforce, fail properly to assess other, more complex linguistic arrangements. And it is every kind of complexity that we must consider, because Lewis himself considered every kind. Discussing with Arthur C. Clarke works of fiction that are set on other planets, Lewis mentions certain works that in his view are fundamentally unrelated to their setting. One particularly grievous example causes him to expostulate, “[W]hat, in heaven’s name, is the point of locating it on Mars!” He goes on:

Surely in a work of art all the material should be used. If a theme is introduced into a symphony, something must be made of that theme. If a poem is written in a certain metre, the particular qualities of that metre must be exploited. If you write a historical novel, the *period* must be essential to the effect. For whatever in art is not doing good is doing harm: no room for passengers. (In a good black and white drawing the areas of white paper are essential to the whole design, just as much as the lines. It is only in a child’s drawing that they’re merely blank paper). What’s the excuse for locating one’s story on Mars unless “Martianity” is through and through *used*. (“Letter to Arthur C. Clarke” 412)

We can see, then, that Lewis had a holistic view of art. Every single aspect ought to be contributing to the total effect, though of course not every aspect will be contributing the same kind or degree of significance.

One particular aspect is the story’s *telos*, the goal of the plot. The “character and influence of the planets are worked into the *Knight’s Tale*”, so Lewis contended in *The Discarded Image* (198). One of the ways Chaucer did this was by having his knight tell a tale about a combat between two warriors that occurs, climactically, on a Tuesday, Mars’s day. In the Narnia Chronicles, Lewis does something similar in constructing each plot’s *telos*. A plot in which the characters journey towards the place of the rising sun, as we find in *The Voyage of the “Dawn Treader”*, is not just a convenient thread upon which to hang a series of Solar adjectives—the thread is itself suitably Solar. A plot in which the life of a mother is saved with a magic apple from a western garden, namely the plot of *The Magician’s Nephew*, is more than just a setting for a number of decorative Venereal jewels; the plot is hard-wired so as to work out to a conclusion which will demonstrate Venus’s life-giving, maternal, laughter-loving qualities. Everything leads to that end. But how can quantitative analysis recognise a story’s “direction of travel” unless that

direction should happen also to be traceable through the statistically significant use of certain terms?

To take another example, the plot of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* climaxes with the grand coronation scene in Cair Paravel. This is where the tale eventuates. The children *become* kings and queens: Aslan crowns them; they sit on thrones and sceptres are put in their hands; they are hailed by the crowds; they feast in a castle under an ivory roof, with peacock feathers on the walls; "and gold flashed and wine flowed" (165). This climactic event and all the one-off terms used to describe it are what the qualitative analyst considers. The quantitative analyst, on the other hand, looks for repetitions of the word "king". The word "king" may appear more numerous in another story, as indeed it does in *The Horse and His Boy*, but there the word is used mostly as a title (we hear a great deal about King Lune for instance) and not as a descriptor that focuses a central part of the action. Its role is therefore altered: what was a Jovial G sharp in the *The Lion*, so to speak, becomes a Mercurial A flat in *The Horse*. Quantitative analysis, however, cannot distinguish these "enharmonic equivalents". In this counting-house, a king is a king is a king. In reality, however, as communication theorists like to say, "context is king", and when it comes to understanding the actual meaning or meanings of a word, we need literary critical instruments that are sensitive enough to differentiate contexts and to understand their "insulating" power.<sup>15</sup>

A story's teleological context is of course not confined to its climax: it is to be discerned in various ways throughout the whole story. The coronation of the four children in *The Lion* is a destiny prefigured from their first donning of the coats in the wardrobe because "the coats... looked more like royal robes than coats when they had put them on" (54). The royal premise leads to the royal conclusion. Likewise with the meteorological strand to the Jovial imagery, namely the passing of winter and the coming of summer. Winter is introduced in the opening chapter, it melts away in the middle of the book, and summer is enjoyed at the end: the totality of this Narnian "climate change" is what helps convey the Jovial atmosphere.

In order to test out my claim about the significance of "winter passed," as Lewis calls it in the Jupiter section of "The Planets" (line 88), Dr Barrett proceeds to count the words "May", "spring" and "summer". This is a reasonable undertaking as far as it goes, and would have been yet more profitable, in my view, if the words "winter", "Christmas", "melting", "slush", "crocuses", and other relevant terms from that memorable passage in chapters 11 and 12, had been included in the calculation. But mere counting misses the point. What Dr Barrett should ask himself is not, "How many appearances are there of key terms?" but "Does winter pass in *The Lion* and if so, why and how; and does winter pass in any of the other tales, and if not, why not?" These larger questions yield answers that are admittedly hard to quantify on a spreadsheet, but they are much more relevant to the central issue of quality as conveyed by kinds of action.

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To “kinds of action” we may add “kinds of actors” amongst those things which quantitative analysis cannot easily recognise. Aslan is a more important member of the *dramatis personae* than anyone else. He is, after all, the only character who appears in all seven books and is the divine centre of the septet. Therefore what Aslan does and says will have a special significance in establishing the tone of each story. We should attach a great deal more weight to things he says and does than to what any other character says and does—the fact that he is “swift of foot” in *The Horse and His Boy*, for instance (139); the fact that he appears “shining as if he were in bright sunlight though the sun had in fact gone in”, in *The Voyage of the “Dawn Treader”* (100). But Dr Barrett does not rank characters according to importance. If he were to attempt such a ranking, the analysis would soon become so complicated as to be impractical. He would have to start adding so many explanations and qualifications and exceptions, in order for the resulting statistics to mean anything, that he would be much better off writing normal prose and using his ordinary judgement. For although it is hard to see how the ranking of characters according to importance could be made to appear numerically, it can certainly be sensed and understood imaginatively by the alert and sympathetic reader, “the πεπαιδευμένος”.

Speaking of characters, it is worth noting that Aslan, for all his logical and theological centrality, does not actually appear or speak very often in the course of the septet. Lewis manages his appearances very carefully. Indeed, I argue in *Planet Narnia* that Aslan’s absence from the middle section of *The Silver Chair* and from the first three-quarters of *The Last Battle* is a key aspect of the Lunar and Saturnine qualities of those tales. But how can Dr Barrett count something that isn’t there? Zero will not register on his scale. A good author, on the other hand, will be able to make use of absence, and a good reader will be able to recognise it.

And there are other kinds of absence that are also relevant. The absence of a quest, I believe, is an aspect of the Saturnine quality (introducing a sense of aimlessness) in *The Last Battle*, as is the absence of the narrator at the start of the same story (removing the comforting avuncular presence so evident on the first page of all the other stories). How would quantitative analysis be able to record such things given that they have no verbal, and therefore no enumerable, manifestations?

But even if the planetary manifestation is enumerable it may still be missed by analysis which is concerned only with quantity and not with quality. Dr Barrett states, in his analysis of *The Last Battle*, that the Saturnine concepts he wishes to count need to be “readily detectable”. Having searched for readily detectable images, he then makes the astonishing statement that “None of the books in the Narniad appears particularly Saturnine”. By the marshlights of the quantitative method this may not be an unreasonable a thing to say, for I trust him when he reports that the words “death” and “dying”

appear as many times in *The Silver Chair* as they do in *The Last Battle*. But how many characters actually die in *The Silver Chair*? If Dr Barrett were to lift his head from his calculator for a moment and ask himself, "In which story do *all* the mortal characters die?" he would know instantly where Saturn's influence is on display. His imperceptiveness on this score is a consequence of his looking for words, rather than for the things words refer to.<sup>16</sup>

Saturn, under the guise of Father Time, appears in two Chronicles, *The Silver Chair* and *The Last Battle*. I have not counted the number of times this character is mentioned in each book, but I suspect it is roughly the same amount. Would that therefore mean that *The Silver Chair* and *The Last Battle* are roughly equally Saturnine in this regard? Not at all. We need to look not just at the occurrences of a character's name, but whether that character actually does or says anything significant. In *The Silver Chair* Father Time appears inert and sleeping, but in *The Last Battle* he awakens in order to do something rather important by bringing Narnia to its apocalyptic conclusion. The reason he appears in *The Silver Chair* is to *set up* his later and much more significant appearance in the final book. But if one is only counting "frequencies", how can one distinguish between these different sorts of appearance?

Closely related to this example of Father Time is the issue of cross-reference. Some references in the Narnia stories are to the planetary influences in *other* Narnia stories: for example, the "War of Deliverance" mentioned in the Saturnine *Last Battle* refers to the events of the Martial *Prince Caspian*. Jupiter is "quite close" in the Venereal *Magician's Nephew*, but that is the point, – "close", not actually present: his full presence is in *The Lion*. The spray of heather in *The Voyage of the "Dawn Treader"*, though golden, is "as heavy... as lead" (100), its leaden quality suggesting Saturn and thereby serving as a nod in the direction of the coming *Last Battle* (hence the island is named Deathwater), but within a Solar context.

It should now be clear, I hope, that quantitative analysis overlooks vast tracts of the qualitative material assessed within *Planet Narnia*, and we have not even mentioned literary techniques such as order,<sup>17</sup> placing,<sup>18</sup> perspective,<sup>19</sup> tense,<sup>20</sup> irony,<sup>21</sup> allusion,<sup>22</sup> connotation,<sup>23</sup> contrast,<sup>24</sup> or the many other things that were factored into my judgements in the course of constructing the donegalitarian argument.

Having considered this (albeit far too limited) array of different aspects of context and how they determine the *emphasis* and *meaningfulness* that we as readers attribute to particular words, characters, actions, and episodes, we can now see the irrelevancy of Dr Barrett's assertion that we would expect to see references to redness "at a relatively higher rate" in *The Lion* than in the other books, supposing it to be a Jovial story. What constitutes "higher"? More frequently? "Frequently" is the only adverb that quantitative analysis can properly employ. Qualitative analysis, on the other hand, can use such adverbs as "aptly", "oddly", "gently", "resonantly", "centrally", "climactically",

“proleptically”, “suggestively”, “silently”. Mere frequency reveals little or nothing. What matters is quality, the ability to weigh and describe different kinds, not just different degrees.

Dr Barrett acknowledges the difficulty involved in differentially weighing concepts, and he has tried to avoid the most obvious traps: “Words were examined in their original context to determine whether they represented the concept at stake instead of an alternative meaning (including metaphorical meanings, negations, or homonyms)”. I hope I have shown that the “original context” of the few terms he has selected from the great many considered in *Planet Narnia* is much more complex than he allows and, furthermore, that Lewis’s planetary atmospherics are in large part communicated through implicit means. Often there are no explicit, countable words and yet, nonetheless, the author is saying something, and we can see what he means, if we keep our eyes open.

For example, what does it mean to call a character “Prunaprismia”, as in *Prince Caspian* (but in no other story)?<sup>25</sup> What does it mean to give an unnamed Narnian lord a cap with wings, as in *The Horse* (but in no other story)?<sup>26</sup> What does it mean for Lewis to use such words as “tingle” and “air” and “influence”<sup>27</sup> and “consideration”<sup>28</sup>? To discern the meanings of these terms requires literary, mythological, historical, biographical, and etymological knowledge of a highly educated, attentive, mature kind. Yet these subtleties count for nothing in Dr Barrett’s analysis because they cannot be placed alongside a numerical yardstick. He is unable, or at any rate has not chosen, to factor large tranches of Lewis’s sophisticated artistry into his critical arithmetic.

Given that so many important things fail to appear in the mathematical equations that this example of quantitative analysis requires us to work with, we should instead adopt more fully rounded, more verbal, less numerical kinds of equations—in short, ordinary literary criticism conducted in continuous prose, the language of the humanities.

Dr Barrett’s language is the language of the laboratory: “Mean deviation from expected for LWW was 35.6% (SD = 143.2%),  $t(27) = 1.315$ ,  $p = .199$ , against a test value of 0.” This is indeed a perverse “sciencing up” of the humanities! It is honest and it succeeds as far as it goes, but it does not go far enough. It is too reminiscent of J. Evans Pritchard, PhD.<sup>29</sup>

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, quantitative analysis has a part to play in literary criticism, but a small part only. And therefore I am not troubled by the 64% approval rating that Dr Barrett gives my argument. I would not expect such a method on its own to be able either to prove or disprove the donegalitarian case. Quantification can be deployed productively only in consort with all the other kinds of analyses that are available to the literary critic.

I respect Dr Barrett's attempt to scrutinize and adjudicate, as if from neutral, objective territory, the question at issue. As a psychologist he quite naturally wants to stand outside the mind that finds planetary imagery in Narnia and subject it to a test under laboratory conditions. But how if quantifying a qualitative vision renders it less visible? How if the outside view is less rich than the inside view? How if "looking at" reveals less than "looking along"?<sup>30</sup> Qualitative things are qualitatively discerned.

MICHAEL WARD

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> Dr Barrett evaluates my answer to what I call "the problem of composition", which occupies chapters 3-9 of *Planet Narnia*. Dr Barrett does not consider the context provided for this answer (chapters 1, 2, and 12), nor my discussion of two related issues, which I call "the problem of occasion" (chapter 10) and "the problem of reception" (chapter 11).

<sup>2</sup> Ed. note: Direct quotes from Dr Barrett are from his online *SEVEN* article: "Some Planets in Narnia: A Quantitative Investigation of the *Planet Narnia* Thesis", found on this website, or from personal conversations between Dr Barrett and Dr Ward.

<sup>3</sup> Commenting on a draft of this essay, Dr Barrett tells me: "[M]y analyses do not rule out that you are correct 7 of 7, but only give support 4 or 5 of 7 times. It is a subtle but important difference that I probably didn't make clear enough in the paper".

<sup>4</sup> For more on Lewis's interest in quality, see Jerry L. Daniels's essay "The Taste of the Pineapple: A Basis for Literary Criticism". *The Taste of the Pineapple: Essays on C.S. Lewis as Reader, Critic, and Imaginative Writer*. Ed. Bruce L. Edwards. Bowling Green, Ohio: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1988. 9-27.

<sup>5</sup> "Donegality", Lewis's coinage for the *genius loci* of Donegal, one of his favourite places, is the term I deploy in *Planet Narnia* to denote the literary effect that I believe he was attempting to achieve in the way he structured the Narnia Chronicles. Donegality, in this sense, means the deliberate encapsulation (or, at any rate, the deliberate attempt at encapsulation) of a planet's symbolic quality along with the presentation of an individual, Christological incarnation of that quality (namely, Aslan). Donegality was chosen to denote this meaning for the following reasons: biographically, because Lewis loved Donegal all his life and holidayed there frequently; semantically, because of the imagined etymology, "don" (as presiding intelligence) + égalité (equality), yielding a word meaning "something equal to a presiding intelligence"; and symbolically, because of Donegal's connection, in Lewis's imagination, with Jupiter, the best of the planets. According to "The Planets", Jupiter gives rise to "the waves' joy and jubilee" (lines 82-83), and Donegal, that Irish county whose craggy coast-line fronts the Atlantic, was the place which Lewis especially associated with the joy of waves. In *Surprised by Joy* he writes of enjoying "glorious hours of bathing in Donegal . . . in which the waves, the monstrous, emerald, deafening waves, are always the winner, and it is at once a joke, a terror and a joy to look over your shoulder and see (too late) one breaker of such sublime proportions that you

would have avoided him had you known he was coming. But they gather themselves up, pre-eminent above their fellows, as suddenly and unpredictably as a revolution" (147).

Donegality then serves very aptly as a technical term. By donegality is meant the spiritual essence or quiddity of a work of art as intended by the artist and inhabited unconsciously by the reader. The donegality of a story is its peculiar and deliberated atmosphere or quality; its pervasive and purposed integral tone or flavour; and its tutelary but tacit spirit, a spirit that the author consciously sought to conjure, but which was designed to remain implicit in the matter of the text, despite being also concentrated and consummated in a Christologically representative character, the more influentially to inform the work and so affect the reader.

<sup>6</sup> For example, I point out that the words "royal" and "jollification" (the latter term is one, incidentally, that Dr Barrett excludes from his analysis) appear in LWW, but not in any of the other Chronicles (*Planet Narnia* 60, 271n); I also count the appearances of "gold" and "sun" and their cognates in VDT (*Planet Narnia* 278n).

<sup>7</sup> Lewis underlined the word *haw* and wrote "pale" in the margin of his copy of Henryson's poetry, now in the Wade Center. See *The Poems of Robert Henryson*, line 257, page 153. Hence his mention of a hawthorn bush, "milky white", that is mistaken for a giant's head in a long lunar passage in his narrative poem, "The Queen of Drum" (see *Planet Narnia* 126).

<sup>8</sup> For more on this, see *Planet Narnia* 200.

<sup>9</sup> See *Planet Narnia* 240-243.

<sup>10</sup> Lewis uses the symbolism of Mercury to express many of his thoughts about the importance of multifariousness and equivocation, as opposed to the unitary and reductionist habits of the modern mind. See *Planet Narnia* 148ff.

<sup>11</sup> I understand, of course, that Dr Barrett's method relates to the *Planet Narnia* thesis, not the Chronicles themselves. I am here giving reasons why I myself chose not to rest my case on quantitative analysis and why I doubt that any literary critic, let alone an assessor of a literary critic, would find it ultimately profitable to do so.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. 144.

<sup>13</sup> I admit that it introduces certain "difficulties" (so to call them) concerning Lewis's secretiveness, for example, and it is these problems which I attempt to address in *Planet Narnia* on pages 8-9 and 13-22. However, these new difficulties are more than offset, I believe, by the resolution of other problems. I am reminded of what Lewis says about finding a central chapter to a novel or a main theme to a symphony: "Even though the new central chapter or main theme contained great difficulties in itself, we should still think it genuine provided that it continually removed difficulties elsewhere" (*Miracles*, 113).

<sup>14</sup> For more on the importance of seizing this vision in a gestalt embrace, see *Planet Narnia* 22, 67.

<sup>15</sup> The "insulating power of context" is a subject discussed by Lewis in his *Studies in Words* 11-12; see also *Planet Narnia* 232.

<sup>16</sup> Let me give three further instances of this error: 1) Dr Barrett argues that "no derivative or synonyms [of Jovial *magnanimity*] were found in any of the books". This is true, but he overlooks the fact that "magnificent" (as in "King Peter the Magnificent") is almost certainly Lewis's way of expressing the word "magnanimous" (see *Planet Narnia* 64), and he fails (owing to the absence of a countable term) to recognise the presence of magnanimity in *The Lion* when Peter magnanimously confesses that his behaviour had helped Edmund go wrong. 2) A central aspect of Luna is her as-

sociation with “boundary status”. *The Silver Chair* never mentions “boundary status”, though there is a clear description of that very thing in the opening two chapters; but because the desired terms are not on show, Dr Barrett ignores this important architectural feature of the tale. 3) Alchemy is a key component of Solar influence. The word “alchemy” does not appear in “*Dawn Treader*”, but the thing itself does, memorably so, in the episode on Goldwater Island.

<sup>17</sup> The order in which things are listed is suggestive: see, e.g., *Planet Narnia* 88.

<sup>18</sup> For instance, the placing of the word “slowly” at the very end of chapter 9 of *The Horse* (see *Planet Narnia* 155) in order to make us feel that something is going seriously wrong.

<sup>19</sup> Lewis uses different vantage-points throughout the Narniad, but I think the use of varying perspectives in “*Dawn Treader*” (Caspian, Eustace, Lucy, the narrator, etc.) is particularly noticeable and may well be connected to the Solar imagery in that tale and the difference between “looking at” and “looking along”.

<sup>20</sup> The long scene of remembering near the start of *Prince Caspian* and then the deeply immersive back story told by Trumpkin help express a sense of the passing of generations, a depth of history, even antiquity, apt for the ancientness of Mars. See *Planet Narnia* 92.

<sup>21</sup> As with Shift in *The Last Battle*; see *Planet Narnia* 199.

<sup>22</sup> As to Hamlet in *The Silver Chair*; see *Planet Narnia* 134.

<sup>23</sup> As to the wise and merciful alchemist, Prospero, via the words “rough magic” in “*Dawn Treader*”; see *Planet Narnia* 112.

<sup>24</sup> The capricious popinjays of the Telmarine army contrast with Caspian’s disciplined and knightly forces in *Prince Caspian*; the loquaciously dull Calormenes contrast with the poetic and pithy Narnians in *The Horse and His Boy*; the silly duffers contrast with the increasingly wise seafarers in “*Dawn Treader*”.

<sup>25</sup> See *The Narnia Code* 60.

<sup>26</sup> See *Planet Narnia* 155.

<sup>27</sup> See *Planet Narnia* 24, 26, 115.

<sup>28</sup> See *Planet Narnia* (paperback edn.), xiii-xiv.

<sup>29</sup> The English textbook author satirised in the film *Dead Poets Society* (1989). J. Evans Pritchard, PhD, believes that the value of a poem can be established by drawing a graph with the poem’s “score for perfection” plotted on the horizontal axis and its “importance” plotted on the vertical axis. Having rated the poem according to these criteria, “determining the poem’s greatness becomes a relatively simple matter”. One sees where the horizontal measure meets the vertical measure and then calculates the total area within that boundary. Pritchard is a fictional character, but based upon Laurence Perrine (1915-1995), an English professor at Southern Methodist University, whose book, *Sound and Sense: An Introduction to Poetry*, suggests evaluating the greatness of a poem in a way analogous to the way one would calculate the area of a rectangle.

<sup>30</sup> For an interesting exploration of this theme, see David Rozema, “Inside-out or Outside-in? Lewis and Dostoevsky on the ‘New Man’” in *Christian Scholar’s Review*, XL:2, Winter 2011.

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