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**A psychological analysis of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*:**

How Lucy develops as a character through the  
realisation of repressed desires

*The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* is a classic children's fantasy novel published in 1950 by the English author C. S. Lewis. It portrays the lives and magical adventures of the four young siblings Peter, Susan, Edmund and Lucy during the World War II. Lucy is the character through whom the reader sees and experiences the major adventures of Narnia and she is therefore the protagonist of the story. Focusing on the character Lucy this essay discusses the world of Narnia from a psychological point of view. It argues that for Lucy, visiting Narnia takes the form of a psychological journey that represents the realisation of her repressed desires. It is through this realisation that Lucy develops as a character.

The psychological concept of repression is defined here as the mind's strategy for hiding desires and fears: the act of forgetting about whatever is troubling. In other words, the mind forces the hidden desires out of conscious awareness and into the realm of the sub-conscious (Lynn, 205, 211; Barry, 96-97). Examples of repression will be analysed to reveal the repressed desires and tensions hidden within Lucy and how these are eventually released and resolved during her adventures in Narnia. The purpose with close reading is to give attention to the work itself: to put it in the centre and to reveal its complexity by focusing on elements such as oppositions and tensions (Lynn, 18).

The adventures in Narnia can be seen from both an external and internal point of view: parallel with the struggle against evil forces there is also a struggle concerning inner, personal conflicts. "Narnia is not simply an unreal fantasy land created to entertain children; it is a meaningful visualization of the inner landscape of the psyche where the internal conflicts that lead to personality growth are acted out" (Adair Rigsbee, 11). Narnia is more than a magical adventure: it represents a psychological journey during which hidden emotions and desires are released and acted out.

Lucy is at the beginning of the novel a very shy and fearful character, as seen in the first meeting with the Professor. The Professor's "odd-looking" appearance (*The Lion*, 9<sup>1</sup>) and his "shaggy white hair" that grows over his head and face (*The Lion*, 9) frightens Lucy, who seems to be a very sensitive person. Another example of her frightening behaviour is seen when the children are in the girl's room and talk about their new home: "What's that noise? [...] the thought of all those long passages [...] leading into empty rooms was beginning to make her feel a little creepy" (*The Lion*, 10-11). The house's "long passages" and "empty rooms" frighten Lucy, who starts to feel "a little creepy" over the large house and the new situation far away from home.

One reason for why she is this sensitive, shy and fearful girl at the beginning is explained in her background: Lucy and her siblings are removed from home because of air raids over London and consequently the children are left on their own without their parents. The lack of parents means that the children have to manage the new situation on their own. The new life with new strange people is a huge contrast for Lucy, who is the youngest, compared with her previous urban life.

Apart from being shy and fearful, Lucy is also curious and wilful and these characteristics lead to the discovery of the wardrobe. When the children explore the house they enter a room with a big wardrobe in it, but almost immediately they leave the room, except Lucy, who stays behind (*The Lion*, 12). The quotation "[...] she thought it would be worthwhile trying the door of the wardrobe, even though she felt almost sure that it would be locked" (*The Lion*, 12-13) illustrates that she is a curious person who follows her instincts. The fact that Lucy decides to try the door, even if she is "almost sure" that it is locked, signals that she feels that there is something special about the wardrobe: that the wardrobe has a magical appeal to her. Lucy's discovery of the magical wardrobe demonstrates her spiritual

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<sup>1</sup> Abbreviation of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*

superiority, i.e. her gift of imagination, over her siblings, who discover Narnia only by following her (Adair Rigsbee, 10). This spiritual advantage is an important element for Lucy during the adventures in Narnia. In the novel the belief in the reality of the fantasy world is a crucial element in the developmental process of the character, because imagination leads to the acceptance of the fantasy realm as a valid reality. (Adair Rigsbee, 10).

The wardrobe functions as a catalyst for Lucy's development from a fearful character into a more self-secure and courageous character because it is through this passageway that the psychological journey starts for Lucy:

[...] it was almost completely dark in there and she kept her arms stretched out in front of her [...] pushing the soft folds of the coats aside [...] what was rubbing against her face and hands was no longer soft fur but something hard and rough and even prickly [...] then she saw that there was a light ahead of her [...] (*The Lion*, 13-14).

The transition to the new world is apparent in the words “dark” and “soft”, which contrast with “hard”, “rough”, “prickly” and “light” that characterise the entrance to Narnia. The physical change from soft coats to rough branches represents the emergence into a new world, but it also symbolises the start of Lucy's psychological journey because she leaves the comforting enclosure of the wardrobe that represents the old familiar world and enters the world of the unknown. The wardrobe as a passageway symbolises the transition from the consciousness to the unconsciousness (Adair Rigsbee, 10). Travelling through the wardrobe can be compared with a rebirth: a passage from one condition in England to a more vital one in Narnia (Brown, 39-40): the adventures in Narnia are vital components in Lucy's developmental process because during these quests Lucy is able to act out her hidden desires and emotions. The wardrobe's symbol as a psychological passageway together with its function as a catalyst is demonstrated in the first meeting with Mr Tumnus the faun.

When Lucy first meets Mr Tumnus she is not afraid of him or even shy, instead she greets him with “Good evening” (*The Lion*, 17) and seems to be comfortable in his company, despite the fact that Mr Tumnus is a fantasy creature. In comparing to the first meeting with the Professor a clear change has taken place in her character: instead of being shy and fearful she is open and confident, which is an evidence of the wardrobe’s function as a psychological passageway discussed above. In this meeting Lucy starts developing her self-confidence, which is also seen in the following description: “[...] Lucy found herself walking through the wood arm in arm with this strange creature as if they had known one another all their lives” (*The Lion*, 19). The fact that she walks with “this strange creature”, a creature that is both a stranger and a nonhuman being, demonstrates that she starts to open up herself: that she becomes less restricted around other people.

In the first meeting with the Professor she is shy and frightened, mentioned above, but it is also expressed that “[...] they liked him almost at once [...]” (*The Lion*, 9). This indicates that she actually, deep inside, do not find him scary. However, because of her insecurity and shyness she does not allow herself to be more open and thus represses this desire, which is released already at the beginning of her journey in Narnia.

The first meeting with Mr Tumnus illustrates how Lucy starts to develop as a character: she represses her insecure behaviour and as a result allows herself to come out of her shield: she starts to be courageous. The absence of parents leads to that the children have to face danger and difficulties on their own (Downing, 11). The fact that Lucy’s parents and siblings are absent from this first journey in Narnia is an important factor in her development because she is forced to face the unknown alone. She needs independence in order to be able to take the first steps in her developmental process.

Peter is portrayed as the natural leader of the family (Downing, 113), which is exemplified when the children start to explore the house (*The Lion*, 12). Susan is portrayed as a mother

figure who tries to keep the group together and give maternal instructions, e.g. when she suggests that they should go to bed (*The Lion*, 10). Consequently, even without their parents Lucy has guardians who take care of her, which is not the case in the first journey discussed above.

When Mr Tumnus confesses that he is kidnapping Lucy she turns “very white” (*The Lion*, 26), which signals that she is scared and worried about the situation. However, she does not fall back into her old shy and fearful self again: instead she tries to convince Mr Tumnus that he has to let her go. Besides, she is rather excited, and not scared, when she says goodbye to Mr Tumnus and forgives him for his behaviour: “Why, of course I can, said Lucy, shaking him heartily by the hand [...]” (*The Lion*, 29). The word “heartily” illustrates that she has not been affected by the situation: that she is cheerful and enthusiastic instead of horrified over the new experiences.

This behaviour clearly shows that Lucy has gained new self-confidence. An explanation to this newly gained condition is seen in the following statement: “[...] The elements of quest [...] lead to new levels of physical and psychological development” (Hunt, 1987, 11). This is also demonstrated when Lucy returns home and has to defend her story: “But it wasn’t a hoax at all [...] Honestly it was. I promise” (*The Lion*, 32). The words “honestly” and “promise” show that Lucy is really determined to defend her story. The whole statement also shows that she is more open because she expresses her feelings and beliefs and consequently represses her shyness in order to come out of her shield.

In the stories of Narnia, Lewis expresses an unconscious message that the world is full of evil destructive forces and that cowardice and reticence are weak aspects to possess (Hunt, 1994, 136). The importance of being brave and to do what you ought to do is illustrated when Lucy and her siblings find out that Mr Tumnus has been arrested by the White Witch’s Secret Police: “‘Oh, but we can’t, we can’t’, said Lucy suddenly [...] ‘It is all on my account that

the poor Faun has got into this trouble' [...] 'We simply must try to rescue him'" (*The Lion*, 68). Lucy rejects her sister's suggestion about going home and thus shows her new gained confident and courageous behaviour, which clearly is demonstrated with the expression that it is "all on my account that the poor Faun has got into this trouble". Lucy is willing to put herself in danger and even risk her own life to save Mr Tumnus, who in turn has risked his security in order to save her. The fact that she says this "suddenly" indicates that it is not her ordinary behaviour to act in this way, i.e. to take command and object her siblings' suggestions.

In Narnia the protagonist has to put away his or her fears in order to do what has to be done, which is an act of moral courage (Downing, 103). The previous situation mentioned above illustrates that Lucy shows moral courage in the sense of doing the right thing. It also shows that she represses her reserved behaviour and instead takes the role as a leader, who demands that others follow her desires with expressions such as "we can't, we can't" and "we simply must", stated above.

The desire to be all-powerful is also released in the situation discussed above. At the beginning of the novel Lucy feels powerless and miserable because no one believes in her adventures in Narnia (*The Lion*, 32) and when Edmund betrays her she avoids her problems for a time because the wardrobe "had become a rather alarming subject" (*The Lion*, 58), which signals that she is not prepared to discuss the issue for the moment. However, in Narnia Lucy does not repress her feelings; instead she expresses clearly what they have to do. The fact that Peter thinks that she ought to be the leader (*The Lion*, 65) demonstrates that her siblings now trust her and the expression that she "proved a good leader" (*The Lion*, 65), i.e. a trustful one, illustrates Lucy's future role in Narnia, which is seen in the prophecy that reveals the children's future.

The prophecy reveals the reason for the children's arrival in Narnia (*The Lion*, 90). A result of this newly gained knowledge, Lucy finds out about her destiny and also fulfils it because she and her siblings save Narnia and become the proper Kings and Queens. In the novels about Narnia a child is chosen to become the coming messiah, which is illustrated in the prophecy about the child's mission (Nikolajeva, 2010, 18). The prophecy is an important element in Lucy's development because through this she gets to know her role and future in the new world. The knowledge that she and her siblings are needed in the new country leads to her becoming very eager to fulfil her mission, and save Edmund and Mr Tumnus, before it is too late: "'Oh, do please come on', said Lucy [...]" (*The Lion*, 111). The eagerness that is expressed in "please come on" signals that she is ready to face dangerous forces. Consequently, she continues to develop into a courageous and brave character because she represses her frightened behaviour in order to be able to fulfil her mission.

The situation in Narnia evokes earlier memories from the primary world, i.e. the real or familiar world of the characters (Nikolajeva, 1988, 68): parallel with the war in the primary world there is an ongoing war in the fantasy world of Narnia. In England, Lucy is powerless to do anything about the war-situation. However, in Narnia she has the power and ability to save and restore the world from destruction with the help of specific objects and other characters, including the cordial, Father Christmas and Aslan. These will be discussed later in the essay.

The novel opens with an isolated setting that establishes the fact of the children's separation from their ordinary reality (Adair Rigsbee, 10), i.e. their life in England. The isolated setting is illustrated in the following description of the Professor's house: "[...] who lived in the heart of the country [...]" (*The Lion*, 9). The Professor lives in "the heart of the country", which leads to that the children have no contact with their parents or their previous life and the frustration over this situation is demonstrated during the long rainy days when



they are forced to stay inside and are thus restricted to the interior of the house. They are powerless to do anything about the weather or the war-situation and therefore start to explore the house as a way to release their inner frustrations and stress.

The rain prevents the children from exploring the external world, but it also forces them to turn inward themselves and explore the unconsciousness of the mind (Adair Rigsbee, 10). The function of the wardrobe has already been discussed above, but one of its important attributes is that it has a looking-glass in the door (*The Lion*, 12), which means that Lucy is able to see herself before she enters the wardrobe. The wardrobe's function as a psychological passageway together with the fact that Lucy is the one who discovers the wardrobe, suggests that the looking-glass represents the window of Lucy's soul and thus her innermost desires. When Lucy peers into the wardrobe she looks "[...] into the inside [...]" of it (*The Lion*, 13), where the word "inside" has both a literal and figurative meaning: it illustrates not only the interior of the wardrobe but also that Lucy starts to "look" into herself. This action, together with the wardrobe's function as a catalyst, mentioned above, is the starting point of her developmental process or, as one critic has described it, the development "out of an old awareness into a new" (Brown, 40).

The lamp-post that Lucy finds is the first light she sees after the dark journey through the wardrobe. Its position represents Lucy's and her sibling's new life-situation: "[...] a lamp-post in the middle of the wood [...]" (*The Lion*, 15). The lamp-post is situated in "the middle of the wood", i.e. in the heart of the wood, just as the Professor's house is situated in the heart of the country where the children have been forced to move. One critic has suggested the following allegorical reading of the novel, on the basis of the historical context, i.e. the World War II, where Narnia illustrates Europe, the White Witch Hitler and the four children the four Allied Forces (Britain, France, the United States and the Soviet Union) (Nikolajeva, 2002, 34). Consequently, the lamp-post and the situation in Narnia are reminders of Lucy's reality

back home in England, but they also evoke her inner frustrations about her inability to do something about the ongoing war in the primary world. Therefore in Narnia, Lucy acts out the desire to save the civilisation, which has been repressed in England.

The acting out of this desire is seen in her eagerness to save Mr Tumnus, discussed above, but it is also illustrated when the children meet Father Christmas and receive their presents: “[...] they are tools, not toys [...] And the dagger is to defend yourself at great need. For you also are not to be in the battle” (*The Lion*, 118-119). The statement that the presents are “tools, not toys” emphasises the children’s important roles in Narnia as heroes who have come to save the world, but at the same time it is clear that Lucy, as well as Susan, will not take part in the battle and that their tools are only required in times of “great need”. However, Lucy’s answer to Father Christmas’s demand exemplifies her readiness to face the evil forces: “Why, sir? [...] I think – I don’t know – I could be brave enough” (*The Lion*, 119). The expressions “I think” and “I don’t know” show that Lucy still is unsure about her role and ability to save Narnia, but the utterance in its entirety demonstrates that she starts to believe more and more in herself and thus she continues to develop into a stronger person.

The evil characters in the novel mirror what Lucy has to fight against both in the external world, i.e. the battle between good and evil, and in the sub-conscious mind, i.e. the battle within herself. The White Witch spreads herself over Narnia like a dead white frost, allowing no independent life, and in doing so she converts Narnia into her own mirror image (Brown, 53). This is seen in the everlasting winter because “a winter without spring is without hope” (Brown, 53). The White Witch’s army also embodies the most ghastly creatures of dreams and nightmares (Ford, 336); nightmares that Lucy has to fight against because they are a threat against her newly won self-confidence and self-development. However, the White Witch’s army does not succeed to scare Lucy, which is demonstrated when Aslan sacrifices himself on the Stone Table.

When Aslan is killed on the Stone Table is the first time that Lucy actually witnesses the White Witch's true power and strength (*The Lion*, 163-168). The situation resembles a nightmare for Lucy and Susan, where the hopes and wishes about an independent Narnia are destroyed, temporarily, by the killing of Aslan. However, the situation also illustrates an important part of Lucy's developmental process, which is seen in the following quotation: "[...] At any other time they would have trembled with fear; but now the sadness and shame and horror of Aslan's death so filled their minds that they hardly thought of it" (*The Lion*, 169-170). They are in great danger when the traitors pass their hiding-place. Before the adventures in Narnia they "would have trembled with fear", but now their fears and worries are instead turned into hate against the evil crowd of creatures.

This hate is illustrated when Lucy says: "[...] The brutes, the brutes! [...]" (*The Lion*, 165). The word "brutes" together with the exclamation mark clearly signals her hate against these evil creatures, who remove by this killing, if only temporarily, a security refuge in her journey. Consequently, the encounter with this horrible crowd of creatures is an important contributory factor to Lucy's development into a braver and stronger character. A noteworthy remark regarding the previous quotation is that it resembles the famous one that appears in *Heart of Darkness*: "Exterminate all the brutes!" (Conrad, 72). Here Kurtz uses the expression "the brutes" when he refers to the natives of Africa.

The fulfilment of the desire to save the civilization of Narnia is illustrated when the children and Aslan liberate those turned to stone at the White Witch's castle, because they are Aslan's army and thus without this rescue there would be no opposition against the White Witch's army. Even if the castle is quite terrifying with its narrowness, silence and isolation, Lucy does not express any fear or horror. Instead she is rather excited as she cries out "What an extraordinary place!" [...] (*The Lion*, 180) and the word "extraordinary" indicates that she is very fascinated by the house. The White Witch's act of turning anyone who will not obey

her into stone is the ultimate act of domination, because once the Narnians are turned into statues they have no free will (Brown, 141). The act of saving these people and consequently to give them their freedom back, with the help and support of Aslan, is one way for Lucy to save the world of Narnia from the harmful forces.

Father Christmas functions as a supplier and supporter in the story (Nikolajeva, 2002, 11), just like Aslan, of which more shortly. He brings joy and hope to Narnia when he provides the children with presents, which changes the balance in the battle between the White Witch's army and Aslan's army in favour of the "good" forces. The appearance of Father Christmas is the first sign that the White Witch's power is declining: "[...] She *has* (my emphasis) kept me out for a long time, but I have got in at last. Aslan is on the move. The Witch's magic is weakening" (*The Lion*, 117). The fact that the White Witch "has" kept him out of Narnia signals that she does not have the power to do so anymore and thus that the evil forces are no longer able to hold back the joy and hope that he brings to the country.

The appearance of Father Christmas also has biblical connotations because Father Christmas arrives before the spring and therefore symbolizes the birth and celebration of Christ (Google Books: Hands of A Child). In the Narnia stories, this religious aspect is represented by Aslan, who is the Narnian embodiment of Christ (Schakel, 66). Consequently, there is a connection between the arrival of Father Christmas and Aslan, which is seen in the above statement that "Aslan is on the move": they both come with the spring and thus symbolize hope for new life and change.

The fulfilment of the desire to save the people of Narnia is also seen when Lucy gives Edmund the cordial on the battlefield, because without Edmund the thrones of Cair Paravel are incomplete, of which more shortly. Lucy's development is complete when she uses the cordial to save Edmund because she gets the role as a healer and thus is the *one* (my emphasis) to heal him: she receives the cordial from Father Christmas and therefore is the one

meant to save him. It is also in this moment that she transforms from Lucy Pevensie to Lucy the Valiant because she becomes empowered to act with courage and power: “[...] Her hands trembled [...] but she managed it in the end [...] And for the next half-hour they were busy – she attending to the wounded [...]” (*The Lion*, 193-194). The fact that her hands tremble indicates that she is still unsure about her ability, but she handles it in the end and saves her brother and the other wounded because of her faith in herself.

Father Christmas provides the children with gifts that are suited to their roles and personalities in Narnia. The situation when Father Christmas gives the children presents illustrates the Christian message that God gives us different skills and talents depending on our nature (Google Books: Hands of A Child). Lucy’s foremost moral qualities are trustworthiness and loyalty (Nikolajeva, 2002, 77), which is demonstrated when she explains to the others that they must rescue Mr Tumnus because, as already demonstrated, it is her fault that he is punished (*The Lion*, 68). Lucy does not abandon him; instead she is loyal to her new gained friend. She never tells lies and always gives the true facts, which is stated explicitly: “[...] Lucy was a very truthful girl [...]” (*The Lion*, 32), where the word “very” emphasizes this fact. These moral characteristics, i.e. trustworthiness and loyalty, clearly show Lucy’s caring personality.

The moral qualities mentioned above show that Lucy has a pure heart because from the beginning to the end she is concerned about other people (Ford, 204). This is demonstrated in the situation when she insists on saving Mr Tumnus and in the first meeting with Aslan: “Please – Aslan, said Lucy, can nothing be done to save Edmund?” (*The Lion*, 140). This utterance clearly shows the close relationship between the siblings and even if Edmund betrays her she continues to be loyal towards him, which obviously illustrates her moral behaviour.

The moral qualities that Lucy possesses suit her role as a hero and healer because of her sensitivity and compassion towards others. The gift that Lucy receives from Father Christmas is in one way the greatest gift of them all because with the cordial, she has the power to save people, a power that resembles that of Aslan's. When Lucy and Aslan walk side by side on the battlefield they save the wounded together, but in different ways: he restores those who are turned into stone, she those who are mortally injured (*The Lion*, 193-194). This parallel feature between Lucy and Aslan, i.e. the ability to help people, demonstrates their close relationship to each other because they work together and thus complement each other.

When Lucy saves Edmund she also fulfils her destiny because she saves Narnia by restoring the thrones of Cair Paravel as mentioned above. Without Edmund, the fulfilment of the prophecy is incomplete, since it is only when "Adam's flesh and Adam's bone" (*The Lion*, 90), i.e. the children, sit in the four thrones that evil will be defeated. The fact that all the four children are important components regarding this issue is also seen when Aslan notices that Edmund is absent on their first meeting: "But where is the fourth? [...]" (*The Lion*, 139), which signals that he expects Edmund's presence. Consequently, without Lucy's healing power, which saves Edmund, the completion of the prophecy is impossible. Lucy's story is one of growth from fear to courage so that she during her reign becomes known as Lucy the Valiant (Ford, 204). It is clear that Lucy has an important role as a healer who saves the wounded from certain death and because of this role she fulfils her developmental process, mentioned above, since she is now powerful and confident enough to be able to completely transform into this new self.

The one fault Lucy makes in this situation is her desire to stay and see the result of the cordial on Edmund (Brown, 238; Ford, 205) because after the battle Lucy is supposed to use the cordial on all the wounded and not only on her brother: "There are other people wounded, said Aslan" [...] Yes I know, said Lucy crossly. Wait a minute" (*The Lion*, 193). In this

situation Lucy shows a minor defect in her otherwise unflawed character, which makes her a more realistic figure (Brown, 238). One explanation for her behaviour is seen in the statement “Wait a minute”, because it signals that she never has seen the true power of the cordial and therefore stays to see what effect it has on her brother. The fact that she dares to oppose Aslan’s demand and speak to him in a “crossly” way are clear examples of her development into a courageous and confident character.

In the stories of Narnia there are immemorial comforters and protectors who protect the heroes from the evil forces (Schakel, 177). Aslan’s function is to be a supporter who provides Lucy with comfort and support through her difficulties in Narnia. One example of this support is illustrated when Lucy hears his name for the first time: “[...] Lucy got the feeling you have when you wake up in the morning and realize that it is the beginning of the holidays or the beginning of the summer” (*The Lion*, 77). The words “holidays” and “summer” evoke happy and warm feelings and the fact that these expressions are linked with Aslan clearly demonstrates that he symbolises a security for Lucy during her time in Narnia. In fantasy novels the characters often receive help that is either natural or supernatural because the protagonist should not be left alone without assistance, since it is only then that life lessons can be taught (Nikolajeva, 2002, 29). Aslan’s guidance is one aspect that leads to the growth of Lucy as a character because it is through him that Lucy and her siblings learn to believe in themselves and do things on their own.

One example of Aslan’s guidance is illustrated when Lucy sees Edmund mortally wounded on the battlefield. Lucy first forgets about the cordial, but Aslan knows about it and tells her to use it: “Quickly Lucy, said Aslan. And then almost for the first time, Lucy remembered the precious cordial [...]” (*The Lion*, 193). Aslan has to remind Lucy to use her present; without his presence she might have forgotten the “precious cordial”. When she tries to undo the

stopper her hands tremble very much, mentioned above, but she handle it on her own and continues her “healing” role by following Aslan around the battlefield (*The Lion*, 193).

Through the encounters with Aslan, the children learn to believe in themselves (Brown, 250) and what they learn reinforces their strength and selfhood (Fisher, 52), which is seen when the children are kings and queens of Narnia. When the children are crowned Aslan leaves them and slips quietly away (*The Lion*, 196), but the children do not stop him or say anything because Mr Beaver warns them that “He’ll be coming and going [...] He doesn’t like to be tied down [...]” (*The Lion*, 196-197). This statement signals that the children are supposed to gradually be able to do things on their own without his constant presence and assistance (Brown, 186), because he will “be coming and going” and thus in one moment be absent then reappearing when least expected. The statement that he “doesn’t like to be tied down” illustrates that he will come and go as he pleases and therefore expects and believes that the children are able to rule and govern Narnia on their own.

Evidence that they are able to look after the country on their own is stated explicitly: “[...] These two Kings and Queens governed Narnia well, and long and happy was their reign [...]” (*The Lion*, 197). The words “well”, “long” and “happy” signal that Narnia flourishes during their reign and thus that they have control over the evil forces that desire their power and position as the rulers over Narnia. Consequently, during Lucy’s adventures in Narnia she has transformed into an independent and confident character who is brave enough to protect the country. This is also illustrated in the following example: “[...] At first much of their time was spent in seeking [...] the White Witch’s army [...] a haunting there and a killing there [...] But in the end all that foul brood was stamped out [...]” (*The Lion*, 197). The expression “a haunting there and a killing there” demonstrates that the responsibility to govern Narnia and face danger is not a huge burden for Lucy or her siblings: she has learned to put aside her fears in order to be able to do what has to be done.



At the coronation Lucy receives the title that reflects her developed character: Lucy the Valiant. The fact that she is awarded this epithet signals that she continues to demonstrate courageous behaviour during her reign in Narnia (Brown, 243). This is illustrated during the hunting of the White Stag: “[...] it will not go out of my mind that if we pass this post and lantern either we shall find strange adventures or else some great change of our fortunes” (*The Lion*, 200). The expression “it will not go out of my mind” signals that Lucy is curious about what they will find beyond the lamp-post. Consequently, she does not hesitate to continue hunting because of her curiosity. The adjectives “strange” and “great” together with the words “adventures” and “change” demonstrate that Lucy has high expectations about the hunting: that it will lead to great adventures.

In the quotation above Lucy does not express any fears or worries about the unknown areas of the country and when Susan suggests that they should return home, she does not agree with her: “Sister [...] we should be shamed if for any fearing or foreboding we turned back from following so noble a beast as now we have in chase” (*The Lion*, 201). Lucy thinks that it would “be a shame” if they stopped the hunting because of fear or uncertainty now that they are so close to their goal. This standpoint shows that Lucy has developed since her first visit to Narnia, but also that she continues to be a brave and adventurous character who expresses her thoughts and does not fear new quests. Consequently, she clearly lives up to her new name and continues to repress her frightened behaviour, which leads to that she continues to act out the desires to be open, confident and all-powerful.

The examples above also illustrate that Lucy and her siblings, who have lived for some time in Narnia, converse in a sort of formal, courteous speech (Downing, 118). This speech expresses politeness and respect for other people, which is demonstrated when Lucy answers Susan’s suggestion above. She uses the word “sister” before she declares her disagreement, which signals respect towards her sister because Lucy, through this mark, is careful not to

harm or treat Susan rudely. This formal speech is also a courteous speech of chivalry that embodies the ideal of medieval knighthood (Downing, 117-118) and chivalry signifies the behaviour of being honourable, kind and brave (Longman, 259), which is illustrated in the example mentioned previously. This manner of speaking also indicates that Lucy has become more mature in her behaviour because of the formal use of words and expressions such as “foreboding” and “so noble a beast”. However, these expressions are also old-fashioned and strict, which is a sign of her royalty and thus illustrates her new role in Narnia.

One interesting aspect about Lucy is that she is called “Lucy the *Valiant*” (my emphasis) (*The Lion*, 198). Comparing to Lucy at the beginning of the story this epithet clearly illustrates the completion of her developmental process and thus that she has undergone a major change: from being fearful and insecure she has developed into a brave, self-secure and open character. This is exemplified, for example, during the hunting of the White Stag discussed above, as well as in the fact that the people of Narnia call her by this name (*The Lion*, 198). This indicates that she has become a strong and trusted leader of her people. Lucy has to be brave because of her destiny and therefore it is not a natural attribute that she possesses from the beginning, i.e. before the adventures in Narnia. Consequently, it is something that gradually emerges during her time in Narnia.

The hunting of the White Stag ties together the novel’s beginning and end: the animal is earlier mentioned by Mr Tumnus and then reappears during the hunting at the end of the novel (Brown, 244). At the beginning of the novel when Mr Tumnus tells Lucy about the hunting parties he also mentions that this animal “could give you wishes if you caught him [...]” (*The Lion*, 22). The fact that this animal gives wishes *only* (my emphasis) if you catch him leads to the idea that the reason for why Lucy is so eager to fulfil the hunting is because she has an unconscious wish to return home to England. The Stag’s connection to granting wishes suggests that the children have an unspoken desire to return to their own world and the

appearance of the White Stag at the end is a way of indicating that Narnia is finally back to its normal self, i.e. as it was before the White Witch (Brown, 245). Consequently, Lucy and her siblings have completed their task. As a result, she wishes to return to England in order to act out “Lucy the Valiant”, thereby demonstrating her new character.

The hunting leads to the discovery of the lamp-post, which functions as a reminder that reminds Lucy (and the others) about their previous life which she has forgotten during her reign in Narnia. The lamp-post is introduced when Lucy enters Narnia for the first time and she wonders why it is standing there in the middle of the wood (*The Lion*, 15). During the hunting, when the company arrive at the lamp-post they all “stood looking upon it” (*The Lion*, 200), which indicates that they recognise it but they do not understand why. As mentioned above, Lucy says during the hunting that “it will not go out of my mind” that they will find either strange adventures or great change of their fortunes if they pass the lamp-post (*The Lion*, 200). The statement “it will not go out of my mind”, signals not only speculation but also that Lucy has unconscious knowledge, i.e. unaware knowledge without realising it, about what will happen if they continue the process. The Lamp-post’s function as a reminder indicates that it is not only the White Stag that ties the story together but also the lamp-post.

The return to home and security enables a satisfying psychological closure (Nikolajeva, 2002, 168; Hunt, 1987, 11), i.e. a conclusion to an event in a person’s life (Nikolajeva, 2002, 168). When Lucy and her siblings have saved and restored Narnia, her destiny as a hero and governor is fulfilled and a result of these experiences is that her developmental process has been brought to an end. Lucy’s development starts during the journey through the wardrobe, mentioned above, but it also ends in the wardrobe: “[...] they noticed that they were making their way not through branches but through coats [...]” (*The Lion*, 202). As already demonstrated, the transition to Narnia is seen in the physical change from soft coats to rough branches, but in the entrance to England it is the other way around: “not through branches but

through coats”. Consequently, just as the hunting of the White Stag and the lamp-post tie together the story, the wardrobe ties together the beginning and end of Lucy’s developmental process.

As one critic has argued, the return to England means that the children are stripped not only of the power, but also of the wisdom they gained in Narnia (Nikolajeva, 2010, 44). The children lose their power and control when they leave Narnia and enter England. However, they do not lose the power completely because the Professor says that: “[...] Once a King in Narnia, always a King in Narnia [...]” (*The Lion*, 203). The word “always” signals that they will never lose their power and position in the other country even if their visits are infrequent.

The claim that the children are stripped of their wisdom cannot be verified in the novel because nothing in the text confirms this statement: when the children come out of the wardrobe it only says that: “[...] they were no longer Kings and Queens [...] but just Peter, Susan, Edmund and Lucy in their old clothes” (*The Lion*, 202). The quotation shows that they have regressed into their child shapes, but not that they have lost the wisdom or knowledge from their time in Narnia. This is also something that some critics have argued, namely that the journey is often a metaphor for exploration and education: the characters go “there and back again” in a circle that enable them to gain knowledge and experience (Hunt, 1987, 11) but also new stages in development and new perspectives on life (Adair Rigsbee, 10).

“Fantasy heroes [...] lack complexity; they know no nuances, being one hundred percent heroic [...] they possess a standard set of traits: strong, brave, clever, kind, or beautiful. Their moral qualities are impeccable [...]”, said by Frye (Nikolajeva, 2010, 18). This statement cannot be applied to Lucy as a character because she changes during her adventures in Narnia and consequently does not “lack complexity”. The statement that their moral qualities are faultless or perfect does not apply to Lucy either because she makes a mistake on the battlefield when she stays with Edmund to see the result of the cordial, mentioned above.

Lucy makes a moral mistake when she favours Edmund and thus risks the lives of the other wounded. Consequently, the different attributes that Lucy possesses make her a more realistic figure.

In summary, this essay demonstrates that Lucy's adventures in Narnia take the form of a psychological journey that represents the realisation of her repressed desires. It is through this realisation that Lucy develops as a character. Her curiosity and wilfulness are the ultimate reasons for why she is able to undergo change and development, because these characteristics lead to the discovery of the magical world of Narnia. By challenging herself and repressing her insecure behaviour, Lucy is able to release the hidden desires to be more open and confident, to be all-powerful and to save the civilization of Narnia. A result of this release is that she develops from a fearful and shy character into a more self-secure and brave one.

An interesting area for future research would be, by looking at the later novels in the series, to study the degree to which Lucy as a character changes and develops as she becomes older and experiences new quests and adventures in her life. In *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* Lucy's development is one of growth from fear to courage (Ford, 204) and it would be of interest to study if this development continues in the later novels. The novels *Prince Caspian* and *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* would be of particular interest, because Lucy plays a major role in these stories.

The prophecy, Father Christmas and Aslan are important factors in Lucy's developmental process: the prophecy leads to her becoming very eager to fulfil her mission, which demonstrates her readiness to face dangerous forces and Father Christmas and Aslan both function as important supporters, since they provide her with guidance and assistance. With the cordial Lucy receives from Father Christmas, she has the power to save people and therefore it helps her to fulfil her destiny as a hero. Although Father Christmas provides Lucy with assistance, Aslan is the one who has the greatest impact on Lucy's development: it is

through him that Lucy learns to believe in herself and do things on her own. Consequently, the encounters with Aslan lead to that Lucy learns to reinforce her strength and selfhood. Because of Aslan's important role as a guide in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, another interesting aspect to study in the later novels would be the impact of his future guidance for Lucy and how this is offered as the stories progress.

The completion of Lucy's developmental process is illustrated when she uses the cordial on Edmund and thus gets the role as a healer. This role leads to the fulfilment of her development, since she becomes powerful and confident enough to be able to completely transform into her new self: Lucy the Valiant. The fact that she is awarded this epithet signals that she continues to demonstrate courageous behaviour during her reign in Narnia. The statement that fantasy heroes lack complexity because they have a standard set of traits and their moral qualities are faultless (Nikolajeva, 2010, 18) cannot be applied to Lucy since she changes and commits a moral mistake when she favours Edmund on the battlefield. Consequently, these characteristics make her a more realistic figure, i.e. one that possesses both positive and negative personal qualities, which leads to that she does not lack "complexity", i.e. different sets of traits.

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