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**Representation of the villain in  
C. S. Lewis's *The Magician's Nephew***



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## ABSTRACT

The present paper aims to observe the relevance of the role of the villain in the first book of C. S. Lewis *The Chronicles of Narnia*, entitled *The Magician's Nephew* (1955). To this end, I will first introduce Schäfer's definition of the literary villain and how to apply it in modern literature. I will then introduce C. S. Lewis and the relevance of his own historical context and personal experiences to the creation of the Narnia chronicles. The specific study of the presentation and representation of villains in *The Magician's Nephew* will be introduced by application of Schäfer's categorization in the analysis of the two villainous characters that we find in *The Magician's Nephew*: Queen Jadis of Charn—the White Witch—and Uncle Andrew. The paper will conclude with a presentation of the key points that have arisen from my analysis.

**Key words:** Villain, Schäfer, Jadis of Charn and Uncle Andrew

## CONTENT

1. Introduction.....	3
2. Theoretical framework.....	4
2.1. Schäfer’s categorization of the villain in literature.....	4
2.2. C.S. Lewis and his context.....	7
3. Representation of the villain on C. S Lewis’s <i>The Magician’s Nephew</i> .....	9
3.1. Queen Jadis of Charn—the White Witch.....	11
3.2. Uncle Andrew.....	15
4. Conclusion.....	17
5. Bibliography.....	19

## 1. Introduction

Fantasy—this literature, media, and arts genre of unlimited possibilities—is one of the most successful genres of the last 50 years (Weinreich 1). Anne-Kathrin Höfel suggests that fantasy literature describes different states of “space, time, nature, economy, religion and society”, as well as realms and situations that essentially fall outside of “normality” (29). By use of different fantastical elements, this genre aims to address or put into question new physical or psychological realities, giving new insights and points of view that allow new discussion and that reshapes reality (29).

Throughout history, the fluctuation of fantasy literature is closely linked to cultural or social circumstances, such as the political, economic or religious ideology of a respective society (Höfel 28). In fact, as Höfel affirms, in times of catastrophe or demolishing events, fantasy may reveal a comforting and liberating view that reality often fails to provide (28). Moreover, the use of exotic features, worlds, or whole universes, allows fantasy literature to temporarily liberate the reader from their present situation, allowing an escape from a potentially disturbing reality. Similarly, the fantastic realm offers the possibility of detached discussion of actual issues (28).

A clear example of this idea can be found in Clive Staples Lewis’s famous seven-book series *The Chronicles of Narnia* (1950-1956). During the Second World War (1939-1945), as bombs were destroying the city of London, four children stayed with C. S. Lewis at his country house (“Introducing *The Chronicles of Narnia*”). During their stay, he wrote them a story, which combined elements of fantasy—such as fantastic creatures and imaginary landscapes—with the representation of Good and Evil (“Introducing *The Chronicles of Narnia*”).

The present paper aims to observe the relevance of the role of the villain in the first book of *The Chronicles of Narnia*, entitled *The Magician’s Nephew* (1955). To this end, I will first introduce Schäfer’s definition of the literary villain and how to apply it in modern literature.

I will then introduce C. S. Lewis and the relevance of his own historical context and personal experiences to the creation of the Narnia chronicles. The specific study of the presentation and representation of villains in *The Magician's Nephew* will be introduced by application of Schäfer's categorization in the analysis of the two villainous characters that we find in *The Magician's Nephew*: Queen Jadis of Charn—the White Witch—and Uncle Andrew. The paper will conclude with a presentation of the key points that have arisen from my analysis. Throughout the present study, the 8<sup>th</sup> edition of the Modern Language Association's (MLA) citing style guide will be used, as is the case with the Bibliography.

## **2. Theoretical framework**

### **2.1. Schäfer's categorization of the villain in literature**

The events that took place during the First and Second World Wars—1914-1918 and 1939-1945 respectively—proved how the cruelty of humans could turn continents into a “patchwork of burnt-out battlefields” or a “scorched landmass,” as they “gained the mythical power of gods to wipe all life from the Earth” (Martín Del Campo 1). During this period, the role of narrative was not only to show what is and is not acceptable in society, but also to present reality (Lyotard 19-20). According to Martín Del Campo, considering the human conditions of that time, the role of example and warning that tragic heroes had played in the past would no longer be able “to shine a light on the darker aspects of humanity” (1). Taking this into account, art needed a new type of character that would help understand the message of hope: a visceral evil (1-2).

Today's literary canon is filled with charming, charismatic villains that help to illuminate the morality of the main character (Martín del Campo 2). The protagonist is, more often than not, defined as the hero who incorporates “certain virtues the audience is expected to embrace, and they serve as surrogates that show the kind of behavior that is expected of someone who is good” (17). However, the modern villain is able to portray the dark aspects of the hero, or what this character could have become (4). Through pain, fear, or unwanted lesson, the evil is able to change the “modern hero”, often represented as a flawed character, who toes the

line between remaining good and “falling into darkness” (2). Thus, we could state that the absence of evil is what enables us to recognize the modern hero as good.

The function of the villain, Schäfer holds, is to act and work against the positive forces of the story to defeat their goals, which creates the conflict that allows the plot to advance (2). Moreover, the villain is generally presented as the powerful character, with features of an evil nature that may be perceived as Otherness (2), which renders them “more intriguing than the heroes themselves” (4).

According to Heit, the stories that presently prevail in Western culture form the basis for the conflict between good and evil personified by God and the Devil (qtd in Schäfer 2-3). It is, however, the individual’s interpretation that turns the character evil, which demonstrates the human being’s innate capacity to differentiate between what is good and what is evil. The role of the villain thus contributes to the meaning of the text; to the way a narrative is, or could be, interpreted (3).

The analysis of nine case studies, reported by Schäfer, led to the formulation of four categories through which villain characters could be analysed: The Emerging Villain, The Core Villain, The Philosophical Villain and The Repellent Villain (7).

Firstly, the function of the Emerging Villain involves that the character undergoes a change of character and of role. The main function of the Emerging Villain is to provide the reader with an understanding of his development; to make them witness the unusual external or psychological circumstances that come to shape his/her villainous characteristics, adding to the established perception of outsider that the character may already have (8). The Emerging Villain may be intriguing to the reader, due to the function and presentation changes that the character undergoes throughout the story (10). Moreover, the evolution of this type of villain’s may be compared to real life, since real-life people do constantly suffer troubling changes, which serves to establish a connection between the reader and the villain character (10).

The Core Villain, on the other hand, is—as the name indicates—evil in their essence, and proud of the fact. In contrast to the Emerging Villain, the motives and functions of the Core Villain are mysterious and inaccessible to the reader, with the aim to raise questions around

his/her behaviour. This type of villain, according to Schäfer, is presented as an accomplished character from the very beginning of the text<sup>1</sup> (10). S/he is a conscious character who, even aware of the moral standards of good and evil, mindfully chooses evil over good (10-12). By doing so, the villain is assuming all responsibility of their actions and persona, which challenges the reader's moral principles and forces them to reconsider their view of the world. This type of villain is, then, the classical representation and is always a force for evil (12).

The function of the Philosophical Villain is easy to define; however, Schäfer argues that it is hard to identify the specific characteristics that this type of villain has (11). In behaviour and statements, this character's main role is to explore social or human nature with the aim to transmit a certain message (12). This message could be of either a moral and/or social nature or in the form of an exploration of general philosophical subjects. This is what makes this type of villain most effective, even if they may also be intriguing in terms of plot building, appearance, or personality (12). However, and as Schäfer claims, the recipient is not always aware of the issue that has been raised by this villain, and sometimes it may only create interaction through an underlying questioning of the established constructions (12-13). Accordingly, the general function of the philosophical villain is to place emphasis on a certain point that provides a deeper and different view of human civilization and social dynamics (13). As Schäfer states, the aim of the Philosophical Villain is to create an intellectual connection with the reader, making him or her question a specific social or moral issue (14).

Finally, a villain is considered "repellent" when the narrative framework s/he is involved in deals with a troubling social issue that most spectators will feel strongly about (Schäfer, 14). Despite the fact that the definition of the Repellent Villain is similar to the Philosophical Villain, the former just acts within the framework, without necessarily making any statement about the issue (14). Moreover, due to the social issue he or she is involved in, this category of villain is unable to perform as a philosophical one (14). An example of a Repellent Villain might be George Harvey from *The Lovely Bones* (2002) (14). This character is universally considered repulsive due to being characterized both as a paedophile and a serial killer (15), which is a current global issue (16). Another example could be Amon Göth from *Schindler's List* (1982) (14). However, we might state that this character is less repellent than Harvey,

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<sup>1</sup> Previous developments may be hinted at, but we do not obtain elaborated information about the character.

since the Holocaust, even if it is considered a concerning issue, is not perceived as a part of current society (14-15). Moreover, this issue affected some cultures more than others, whereas child abuse is a current issue in many countries (16). For that reason, Schäfer states that the undergoing framework of a story and the cultural and geographical closeness may also influence whether or not the villain is perceived as repellent, blocking the emotional or cognitive connection with the reader (16).

## **2.2. C. S. Lewis and his context**

Clive Staples Lewis, best known as C. S. Lewis, was born to a Protestant family in Belfast, Northern Ireland, on 29 November 1898. His childhood and early life highly influenced his theological reflections and famous literary and fantastic works (Wilson 19-20).

In 1917, after several scholarship examinations, Lewis became an undergraduate at University College, Oxford, where he went on to spend most of his life (Wilson 65-67). Shortly after his initiation at college, his academic life was interrupted by the First World War, and he was sent to France, to a village near Arras, where he experienced life in the front-line trenches first-hand (71).

In January 1919, when the War was over, Lewis returned to University College (79). During his life at Oxford, he developed close relationships with different authors, for example with the writer of *The Lord of the Rings* (1954-1955), J.R.R Tolkien (Duriez 48). This friendship was of “colossal importance” to Lewis. Indeed, several commentators have compared their friendship to that of Wordsworth and Coleridge (49). Tolkien not only influenced Lewis’s desire for learning languages and writing fantasy, but he also influenced his decision to accept Christianity (48-49), based on Tolkien’s view of how, in Christianity, myth becomes fact, as well as his view “that the highest function of art is the creation of convincing secondary or other worlds” (50). Lewis and Tolkien, and their friends Hugo Dyson and Owen Barfield, formed the basis for the Inklings (48): an all-male group of talented friends who met weekly to discuss ideas, read to each other, criticize works-in-progress, and to enjoy a good evening (96).



With the devastation of the Second World War, Christian sermons seemed less faithful and hope seemed lost in English society (Wilson 186). Lewis's aim, during this period, was to restore Christian faith in the population through holding lectures at Oxford's English Faculty, as well as through written books (187-188), such as, *The Problem of Pain* (1940), which he dedicated to the Inklings (Lewis, *The Problem* 1). Moreover, it is also believed that it was during this war period that Lewis, inspired by four children that stayed in his country house throughout WWII ("Narnia news and extras-history of Narnia"), wrote his most famous series of children's fantasy books: *The Chronicles of Narnia* (Duriez 236). However, this seven-book series was not published until the 1950s, with intervals of less than a year between the publication of each book. *The Chronicles of Narnia* narrate, through talking animals and fauna of classical mythology, the adventures of four children, who, while staying in an old professor's house, find a wardrobe that leads to the magical world of Narnia. With this series, Lewis aims to introduce the idea of redemption and religious confrontation to children, through the image of a lion called Aslan, who will give himself up for the sins of the protagonists and rise from the dead, as well as the image of the witch, which will allow children to "witness 'deeper magic from before the dawn of time'" (237).

*The Chronicles of Narnia* is composed of seven tales for children that "cover almost half of this century and over two and a half millennia of Narnia years, from its creation to its final days" (Duriez 140). The books were originally published in the following order: *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (1949), *The Horse and His Boy* (1951), *Prince Caspian* (1952), *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* (1953), *The Silver Chair* (1954), *The Magician's Nephew* (1955) and *The Last Battle* (1956). In 1956, a young boy called Laurence suggested to Lewis that the series should be read in chronological order in accordance with Narnia time rather than in the order the books were published, to which Lewis agrees ("Narnia Timeline-Learn the History of Narnia."). Thus, his reading and publishing reference became the following: *The Magician's Nephew*, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, *The Horse and His Boy*, *Prince Caspian*, *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*, *The Silver Chair*, and *The Last Battle*.

Due to the sociocultural changes provoked by the First World War, the post-war period became a physical and mental turning point for Western civilization; for many it symbolized the end of civilization as they knew it (Martín del Campo 9-10). This is the reason why I

select a novel written by a man such as C.S. Lewis, who fought during the First World War and experienced the Second World War, as an example of the particularities of villains presented in a novel written by someone who belongs to that period, and how, by extension, those events may have affected Lewis's literary construction of villains.

### **3. Representation of the villain in C. S. Lewis's *The Magician's Nephew***

*The Chronicles of Narnia* aim to convey to children the story of the Gospel, by mixing both the fairy-tale genre, created by the supposition of another world peopled by mostly animals, and the promise of heaven suggested in the Bible (Bruner and Ware xiv-xv). In addition, the world of Narnia presents the image of the lion Aslan as a mythical Christ, to bring children closer to the God of the Bible (xv). As Bruner and Ware state in *Finding God in the Land of Narnia* (2005), presumably C. S. Lewis may have wanted his Narnia tales to help people create deeper connections with Jesus (xvi). Indeed, this idea is represented by the character of Aslan in *Voyage of the Dawn Treader*, when Lucy realizes she is too old to return to the world of Narnia and she feels sorrowful at the thought of not meeting the magical Lion again if she goes back to her own world. Aslan reassures her: "But you shall meet me, dear one [...] But there I have another name. you must learn to know me by that other name. this was the very reason why you were brought to Narnia, that by knowing me here for a little, you may know me better there" (246-247). Through this appearance, we could assert that Lewis's goal was to emphasize that his world of magic was created so that children would experience Christ through a magical Lion and bring that knowledge to their own personal life (Bruner and Ware xvii).

Moreover, *The Magician's Nephew*—the novel that is the topic of this study—narrates the story of the book of Genesis for children through elements of magic and fantasy. To show how this is the case, I shall now turn to analyse two chapters where this idea can be clearly perceived. On the one hand, Chapter 8, "The fight at the lamp-post", gives us reason to think that C. S. Lewis acquired inspiration from the Scriptures to create the world of Narnia (Bruner and Ware 4). Similar to the description of the earth that we find in the book of Genesis—"The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep (Gen. 1:2)" (qtd. In Bruner and Ware 4)—Narnia also began as an unformed world of silence and

oppressive nothingness to which Digory, Polly, and other characters arrive by the magic power of a ring (Lewis, *The Magician's Nephew* 31). However, then the Lion starts to sing, and we may claim that the song of the great Lion represents the voice of God, through which He created the earth, bringing light, water for the dry land, forth grass and living creatures:

The blackness overhead, all at once, was blazing with stars. [...]. One moment there had been nothing but darkness; next moment a thousand points of light leaped out—single stars, constellations, and planets [...]

Far away, and down near the horizon, the sky began to turn grey. A light wind, very fresh, began to stir. The sky, in that one place, grew slowly and steady paler. You could see shapes of hills standing up dark against it. All the time the Voice went on singing. [...]

The eastern sky changed from white to pink and from pink to gold. The Voice rose and rose, till all the air was shaking with it. And just as it swelled to the mightiest and most glorious sound it had yet produced, the sun rise. (Lewis, *The Magician's Nephew* 93-95)

Chapter 11, on the other hand—“Digory and his uncle are both in trouble”—narrates the story of how the “good world” was invaded by the evil, to corrupt and to spoil it (Bruner and Ware 10). This chapter aims to explain the invasion of Lucifer into a heavenly realm created to serve and honour God. Lucifer decided to rebel against his creator and seek to rule the garden of Eden. In the world of Narnia, the White Witch, self-proclaimed Queen Jadis of Charn, mirrors the story of Lucifer by wanting to enslave the world created by Aslan, after bringing death to her own (10-11).

This novel, written during the Second World War, follows the role of narrative of the period, that not only showed what was and was not acceptable in society, but also the reality of the time. In Lewis's case, he wanted to restore his “religious” reality due to the lack of hope and faith in English society during the War. To this aim, and considering the role of example, played by tragic heroes was unable “to shine a light on the darker aspects of humanity” anymore (Martín Del Campo, 1), I will try to demonstrate how, through the character of

Jadis, Lewis introduced the role of visceral evil that would help the reader understand the message of hope.

It is clear that a story like this, so interlinked with the Bible, offers the possibility of exploring the existing dichotomy between good and evil. This construction of evil through the figure of a villain opens the opportunity for a detailed analytic focus on the two figures which epitomize that idea of evil in *The Magician's Nephew*: Queen Jadis of Charn and Uncle Andrew. By following Schäfer's division of villains, my analysis will be devoted to the exposition of Queen Jadis and Uncle Andrew under the scope of the four categories mentioned above.

### **3.1. Queen Jadis of Charn—the White Witch**

*The Magician's Nephew* constitutes the Genesis of Narnia, and it is important to underline the fact that through Queen Jadis of Charn, Narnia will from the very beginning of its creation experience the presence of evil through the character of Queen Jadis—the White Witch (149).

First of all, it is relevant to mention that there are not many statements in this novel that support the idea of Jadis as an Emerging Villain. She is, from the very beginning, presented as an accomplished character, and we do not see her evolve through the story. From the beginning, she is presented as an evil queen able to harm “ordinary people”—children, women, or animal—who do not obey her will (Lewis, *The Magician's Nephew* 61). As the story goes on, there is no change in her personality, and by the end of the book she is still equally inclined to harm the lion or Digory and to invade the World of Narnia created by Aslan (96).

However, Jadis does present some characteristics of the Emerging Villain. First of all, even if the reader is unable to witness unusual mental circumstances, she is described as an “abnormal” character, due to her physical features. She stands out in a huge crowd of men and women who, according to Polly and Digory, seemed “kind and wise” (48) or “people (...) [who] had done dreadful things and also suffered dreadful things” (48), whereas Jadis is described as the most interesting figure of all, dressed in more wealthy, rich clothing than the rest. She is also described as taller and had a look “with (...) such fierceness and pride that it

took your breath away” (48). Thus, it is possible to state that this initial portrayal of the witch makes the reader perceive her as an outsider in a large group of people.

In addition, the character of Jadis provides the reader with an understanding of the story that shaped her villainous personality—a common feature among Emerging Villains. To do so, the White Witch narrates the battle of the kingdom of Charn, to which she put an end with the use of magic (59-60). The tale relates how Jadis was at war with her sister to obtain the throne of Charn, a battle that ended when she used a strong spell on the Hall, through which all *her* people became petrified (60-61). Queen Jadis won and became “the only living thing beneath the sun” (60). She thus decided to force the spell onto herself too, hoping that someone would have “struck the bell and awoke [her]” (61), e.g., breaking the spell, which is what Digory also did (61).

In contrast, it is possible to say that, from her first appearance, Queen Jadis is represented as a Core Villain. As Polly describes her, just after the children wake her up from the spell that had her and her whole kingdom petrified for thousands of years, she is simply “a terrible woman” (55). We can thus assert that Jadis is portrayed as a complete character from her first appearance onward.

An additional feature of the Core Villain, also present in the character of Jadis, is the mystery and inaccessibility of the motives of her actions. Even though the reader is able to receive background information about her terrible story, as mentioned above, neither the main characters of the novel nor the reader will manage to understand the motives behind her actions. This idea can also be seen in Chapter 13, “An unexpected visit”, where the witch tries to convince Digory to disobey the rule imposed by Aslan, and steal an apple from the special tree (150-151). The aim behind this characteristic, is to raise questions about her behaviour, which requires the reader to ponder over what is good or bad.

Jadis, even aware of the moral standards of what is good and what evil, mindfully still chooses evil over good. A clear example of this can be found in Chapter 5, “The deplorable World”. When Digory and Polly require an explanation on why she bewitched harmless people, she answers: “You must learn, child, that what would be wrong for you or for any of the common people is not wrong in a great Queen such as I” (61). Moreover, she is proud of the fact of choosing evil, since she does not show any sorrow for all the harm she has caused

her own people (62). Similarly, in Chapter 13, “An unexpected meeting”, Digory finds the witch, who, choosing to disobey Aslan’s rules of not stealing or climbing the wall of the garden, instead of feeling shame looks “prouder than ever, and even, in a way triumphant” (149), demonstrating that she is proud of what she has done and for choosing evil over goodness once again.

Taking all of this into account, we may deduce that the character of Jadis is presented as a Core Villain, who is aware of the moral standards but chooses evil and proudly assumes all the responsibility of her actions and its consequences. The reason why C. S. Lewis may have wanted to introduce the common features of the Core Villain might be that he wished to challenge the reader’s moral principles and force them to reconsider their view of both the world and the heavenly reality s/he believes in, since, as already mentioned, Jadis’s evil is connected to the story of Lucifer, who, like Jadis, wanted to take over someone else’s creation and become the ruler of everything: “I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God; I will sit enthroned on the mount of assembly, on the utmost heights of the sacred mountain. I will ascend above the tops of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High” (Isaiah 14:13).

On another note, there are some fragments in *The Magician’s Nephew* that allow us to analyse Jadis, the Queen of Charn, as a Repellent Villain, since some of her actions may invoke troubling social issues that most spectators will reject. Queen Jadis, instead of making a statement on the issue, acts within the set framework. At the beginning of the novel, when the reader is familiarizing themselves with the setting and the different characters, the witch provides a description of the castle in ruins, introducing a torture chamber, or the old banqueting hall where her great-grandfather killed hundreds of noblemen for having rebellious thoughts (57). She states that even she herself would be able to use her powerful magic against anyone that stands in her way (57). These issues, even if they are not so present in time, provoke repulsion in the reader, since they address terrible issues rejected by society, such as torture, use of power-privilege, and serial killers. Even Polly, one of the main characters, verbally rebukes her actions by calling her “Beast!” (60).

Moreover, the Queen also makes reference to a concerning matter that has caused many struggles in many different countries of the world: slavery. This can be spotted in Chapter 6,

“The beginning of Uncle Andrew’s troubles”. Once the witch arrives in the real world, with the help of Digory and Polly, to meet Digory’s magician uncle Andrew, she treats Uncle Andrew as if he were her slave (70). She demands that he follows her orders, threatens him with a spell if he disobeys her, and she even makes reference to using a whip (70-71).

As we stated when analysing Schäfer’s division of villains, the underlying framework of a novel and the cultural and geographical closeness plays an important part in whether or not a villain is perceived as repellent (16). Taking this into account, we could state that, due to the strong current awareness of questions concerning nature and hunting, or protection of animals, 21<sup>st</sup> century readers will be more aware of this issue, and will find Jadis’s attitude towards animals repellent. A clear example of this can be found in Chapter 7, “What happened at the front door”, where the witch, on top of a hansom, flogged the horse “without mercy” (82). This action alludes to the issue of animal abuse, a really sensitive topic nowadays.

Therefore, even though it is not Jadis’s goal to be a Repellent Villain to the audience, her different attitudes touch on distinct social issues that are rejected by present and past society. Finally, we could state that Jadis’s main role is to explore social and human nature with the aim to transmit the message of the Bible, since the evil character plays an important part in making children understand the consequences of being evil or being good. This is why the witch also presents many features that coincide with the Philosophical Villain.

The message that Queen Jadis’s character aims to transmit is strongly related to morality. However, the recipient is not always aware of this issue, which is why we will now analyse the different features of the Philosophical Villain present in the White Witch, Jadis, Queen of Charn. As mentioned above, this character portrays the story of Lucifer, who decided to invade God’s garden and take over His creation. Her role in the story of *The Magician’s Nephew* is of great importance, because through her actions, she is able to show Digory the consequences of being evil, making him realize that he should follow Aslan, and seek to be good (152).

Even if Jadis presents features of the Philosophical Villain throughout the whole story, it is possible to state that it is not until Chapter 13, “An unexpected meeting”, that the reader is able to understand the message that this character aims to transmit. Throughout this chapter,

the witch tries to convince Digory of disobeying the rules he obtains from the great Aslan, who has given the child a second opportunity after bringing Jadis to the world of Narnia. As Lucifer, who in the form of a serpent tried to tempt Adam and Eve to commit sin by eating an apple from the forbidden Tree of Knowledge in the Garden of Eden (Gen. 3), Jadis tries to convince Digory to steal an apple, by assuring him that the power of the fruit would be able to save his mother (Lewis, *The Magician's Nephew* 150). Moreover, Jadis tries to persuade Digory by saying that, once he returns to the real world, the Lion will not care about him or his family and friends (150-151). However, differently to Eve and Adam who did not know what evil really was, since they were the original sinners, and saw the apple as “good for food and delightful to look at, and that it was desirable for obtaining wisdom” (Genesis 3:6), Digory is conscious of the consequences of stealing the apple and disobeying Aslan's rules. He is able to obtain that knowledge by reason, from witnessing Jadis eating it and how doing so caused her to look “stronger and prouder than ever [...]; but her face was deadly white, white as salt” (Lewis, *The Magician's Nephew* 149). In addition, Digory is able to observe that even if the apple seemed delicious, “the juice was darker than you would expect” (149). Therefore, due to Digory's interaction with the evil actions of the Witch, the reader is able to understand the difference between good and evil, and the consequences that evil can cause. That is why the character of Jadis is able to connect with the reader and make them question the differences of what is good and what is evil, rendering her, in this sense, a Philosophical Villain, who is not only intriguing in terms of plot-building, appearance, or personality (Schäfer 12), but is also able to explore the moral issue of good against evil.

### **3.2. Uncle Andrew**

On a different note, even if Jadis is the main villain in *The Magician's Nephew*, it is important to mention that Digory's magician uncle Andrew also plays an important role as an Emerging Villain. Even if, at the beginning of the story, Uncle Andrew is presented as a Core Villain—as a crazy man with abnormal physical features, such as, “very long [...] fingers” (19), who wants to use the children to prove his own magic—Lewis soon provides the reader with several features that land Andrew more in the category of the Emerging Villain. To start with, Uncle Andrew allows the reader to understand the reason behind his actions, by expressing



his feelings, or psychological circumstances. This idea can be found in Chapter 1, “The wrong door”. Here, Digory’s uncle exposed his feelings to the children by telling his story: “you’ve no idea how lonely I sometimes am. But no matter [...]. It’s not every day that I see a little girl in my dingy old study” (19-20). This allows the reader to better understand the reason behind Uncle Andrew’s craziness, and makes it possible for the reader to empathize with his feelings of loneliness. Moreover, the reader is able to obtain information about his past, which has shaped his villainous personality and actions. In the form of a conversation, Uncle Andrew narrates to Digory the story on how his godmother Mrs. Lefay, who had fairy blood, entrusted him a little box, against the promise that Uncle Andrew would “burn it, unopened, with certain ceremonies” (23): a promise he did not keep. For years, he studied the box without daring to open it. To do so he “had to get to know some [...] devilish queer people, and go through some very disagreeable experiences” (25), which made his head “turn grey” and after which his “health broke down” (25). This tale allows the reader to witness the psychological circumstances that, so to speak, justify his villainous attitudes. Indeed, this evolution suffered by Uncle Andrew during his early life, may create a connection with the reader, since people are constantly suffering changes, caused by different moments they have experienced in real life.

We could thus state that Uncle Andrew becomes a symbol of the vile part of humans, by contrast with Digory’s virtuous attitude, as Uncle Andrew’s desire to obtain magic turned him into a selfish and heatless person (Putranti and Putranti 99). This attitude makes him unable to see or hear the goodness of Narnia and perceive Aslan as a Dreadful thing (99). However, Aslan does not force him see his beauty and decides to set him free (Lewis, *The Magician’s Nephew* 157). With this, as Putranti and Putranti state, C. S. Lewis emphasizes the concept of free will presented in the Bible (99). According to this concept, all humans have the opportunity to freely choose, even though God wants “his children to be obedient toward him” (99). This idea is presented by Aslan in *The Magician’s Nephew* when the Great Lion says:

This world is bursting with life for these days because the song with which I called it into life still hangs in the air and rumbles in the ground. It will not be so for lon. But I cannot tell that to this old sinner, and I cannot comfort him either; he has made

himself unable to hear my voice. [...] “Oh Adam’s sons, how cleverly you defend yourselves against all that might do you good!” (158)

This means that God wants humans to choose virtue over viciousness, Aslan also wants Uncle Andrew to be able to hear Him, but he cannot force him to (100). However, it remains the case that the freely choosing Man is nevertheless bound by the consequences of his actions, as presented in the Psalmist “Mark the blameless, and behold the upright, for there is posterity for the peaceable. But transgressors shall be altogether destroyed; the posterity of the wicked shall be cut off (37:37-38)” (Qtd. in Putranti and Putranti 100).

It is thus possible to claim that C. S. Lewis’s religious understanding of free will have an important influence on the character of Uncle Andrew (Lewis, *The Magician’s Nephew* 100). Indeed, Uncle Andrew becomes the symbol of the consequences that human beings can achieve through their free will, since his vicious personality leads him to bad consequences (100). That is why we could state that Uncle Andrew present characteristics of the Emerging Villain, not only because he becomes a symbol of the vicious part of human beings (100), but also because his personality, storyline, and evolution can be compared to real life, making the reader feel connected with this villain character’s different phases and evolution.

## **Conclusion**

The charming and charismatic character of Queen Jadis, together with the untruthful character of Uncle Andrew, help to illuminate Digory’s morality. The character of the Witch and Uncle Andrew portrays what Digory—who embodies certain virtues that the audience will expect from someone “good”—could have become if he decided not to listen to the Great Lion. Through the characters of Queen Jadis and Uncle Andrew, Digory is able to become a “modern hero”, who, as we have already learnt, can represent human flaws, as well as toe the line between good and evil.

To do so, and taking into account Schäfer’s division of villains, Jadis represents the main features of the Philosophical Villain. The role of this type of character is to explore human nature to transmit a moral message. Due to her evil actions and interactions with Digory, C. S. Lewis aimed to demonstrate to the reader the difference between good and evil, and

the consequences of not following the rules of the God Lewis believed in. Therefore, it is possible to say that Jadis, as philosophical villains do, is able to create an intellectual connection with the reader, making them question the difference between good and evil actions.

However, Jadis is not the only evil character that provides the reader with this understanding. It is also important to mention the relevance of Digory's Uncle Andrew's role as an Emerging Villain. As Jadis stands in contrast with Digory's virtues, Uncle Andrew becomes symbol of the vile part of humans. Through his actions, the author wants to introduce God's desire for humans to choose virtue over viciousness with the use of their own free will. Moreover, the character of Uncle Andrew also presents the consequences that vicious and evil actions could lead to.

Taking all this information into account, I believe both villains—Queen Jadis and Uncle Andrew—play a relevant role in C. S. Lewis's novel *The Magician's Nephew*. Often overshadowed by the breath-taking emergence of the Lion, or more flawed characters such as Digory, the task of these types of villains, constructed to provoke anxiety in the reader, is to teach life-long lessons through their mistakes. Even if time passes and we forget Jadis's name, only remembering her as the evil witch who wanted to destroy the perfect magical world of Narnia, or Uncle Andrew betraying his own nephew for the sake of satisfying his own delirious and selfish desires, is justification of how crucial such characters are to teach us the importance of recognizing what is good and what is evil, and realizing that the consequences of our decisions can easily transform us into either heroes or villains.

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