

John Akotoye

Course code: SEN 62L

Autumn 2012

School of Education and Environment

Kristianstad University

Jane Mattisson

The Power of Self-Realization

in C.S. Lewis's *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* with special reference to
Edmund Pevensie.

The author, David C. Downing in his *Into the Wardrobe C.S. Lewis and The Narnia Chronicles* claims that “the most interesting psychological cases in the chronicles are those who do not remain fixed in character but are profoundly changed by their time in Narnia¹, and perhaps the best example is Edmund Pevensie” (Downing 92). Downing’s assertion is useful in demonstrating that Edmund’s behavior causes him to be disliked by his siblings. A review by Alison Waller makes known the development of children regarding the theme of the “problems inherent in a child recalling their development into adulthood” (Waller 313). Waller uses Edmund as an example to show how he develops from having a bad temper, being gluttonous, revealing his siblings to the White Witch² who wants to kill them, and changing his behavior to become a noble person.

This essay discusses how Edmund Pevensie’s growing self-awareness in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* comes as a result of his awareness that he must change his unacceptable behavior to become a respectable person. The essay argues that Edmund initially exhibits unseemly behavior, and that contributes to an unreceptive relationship with his siblings. However, he gradually realizes the need to become a noble person. The main areas of discussion include Edmund Pevensie’s initial bad temper, his gluttony, betrayal of his siblings, and his desire for wealth and power. These are compared with his later acts of compassion and courage, which are the direct result of his growing self-realization.

The analysis in this essay demonstrates the problems and temptations that Edmund undergoes as result of maturing from childhood into adulthood. In his maturity process, Edmund begins by disrespecting his siblings, which often results in tensions between the eldest, Peter, and him. His encounter with the Queen and the Turkish Delight nearly result in his death. Edmund’s behavior and his traits are important in the essay, and through a close reading, this literary work’s complexity is revealed (Lynn 18). Edmund’s self-realization results from his ability to change his behavior, and as such every part of the essay contributes to this unified theme. *The Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary* defines self-realization as having skills and abilities and achieving as much as a person is possible to achieve.

¹ Narnia is both a country and a world of its own.

² The White Witch is also the Queen of Narnia turns the country into winter, and capable of turning people into stones.

Other authors include Flexer, who writes about Edmund's self-awareness and explains that even though Edmund betrays his brother and sisters, his later self-awareness helps him to redeem himself from ill-tempered behavior (Flexer 26). He gains courage which helps him play a significant role in saving Narnia. The author Driggs, who also writes about Edmund's self-recognition, explains that through his self-understanding Edmund is able to unite with his siblings and helps free Narnia from the Witch's cruelty (Driggs 78). Flexer and Driggs summarize that Edmund's ability to become a noble person comes from his self-insight. This essay also shows that as a result of his self-awareness, Edmund realizes the cruel behavior of the White Witch, and that encourages him to play an active role in helping to destroy her.

Critics of the Narnia stories, for example Goetz, explain about the theme of pride and humility, revealing that Edmund's pride comes about through internal and external factors. Goetz explains further that his desire for power and superiority over his siblings contribute to his surrender to the queen's wishes (Goetz 230). Edmund's desire to rule and his quest for dominance are another manifestation of his self-centered pride. Goetz argues that Edmund's humility comes as a result of his need to redeem himself from his pride (Goetz 232). Another critic, Williams, explains Edmund's behavior from a Christian perspective and compares Edmund's temptation to the biblical temptation of Jesus when he faces the temptation of changing stones into bread. Williams explains that one of the reasons people commit crimes is because of their inability to withstand temptation (Williams 51). Towards the end of the novel, Edmund's pride leads him into temptation and his self-awareness helps him to change his behavior; this then demonstrates his intention to become humble.

From the beginning of the novel, Edmund's ill-tempered behavior establishes the fact that he hates his siblings. The narrator explains that Edmund wants his brother and sisters to be turned into stones (Lewis 99). Edmund even wants revenge when his elder brother Peter calls him a "poisonous little beast" (Lewis 65). Edmund thinks that he should not be called a beast, but ironically he is a 'beast' because he is dangerous and has malicious intentions to hurt others. *The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* defines "beast" as a person who is cruel and whose behavior is uncontrolled. Edmund is merciless towards his siblings and does not know the importance of relationships. Nodelman offers an explanation that some children are emotionally vulnerable and easily upset when they are exposed to painful matters (Nodelman

73). Peter's remarks make Edmund feel emotionally vulnerable as Nodelman explains, and as a result refuses to forgive him.

Edmund's ill-tempered behavior alienates him from his siblings. Edmund complains bitterly, for example, about a rainy day (Lewis 11), causing Susan to rebuke him to "stop grumbling" (Lewis 10), which demonstrates that he does not respect his brother and sisters. The word "grumble" indicates his bad-temper. He is the only one of the Pevensie's children who is unhappy because he cannot go outdoors. In explaining children's behavior in relation to how they understand society, Nodelman concludes that children are not absolutely developed in their thoughts and therefore do not know the importance of showing respect (Nodelman 73). Edmund's bitterness demonstrates how he conducts his behavior towards his siblings.

Edmund's constant complaining is not only disrespectful towards Lucy, but he is even malicious, mean and spiteful towards her (Lewis 51). He keeps on asking her about new countries in other cupboards in the old Professor's house in order to belittle her. His malicious behavior makes him unable to accept the robin's story, because he thinks that trusting the robin will only lead them into a trap (Lewis 70). In demonstrating that Edmund is very wicked, Downing explains that Edmunds mockery of Lucy's imaginary world inside the wardrobe results from his intention to hurt her (Downing 93). Edmund's mockery shows that he does not fear his siblings and he is even ready to reveal their presence in Narnia to the Queen.

Edmund's bad temper is demonstrated again when he questions Susan's authority over him, as indicated in the following rhetorical question "who are you to say when I'm to go to bed?" (Lewis 10). His answer discloses that he strives to dominate his siblings and enforce respect from them. The author emphasizes Edmund's ability to enforce recognition when he tells Peter that "oughtn't we to be bearing a bit more to the left, that is, if we are aiming for the lamp-post?" (Lewis 64). Edmund's remark demonstrates that he wants his siblings to listen to whatever he says. Edmund's authoritative response to Susan also attests to his quest for identity. His quest for authority also shows that he wants his siblings to recognize him as an important person.

Edmund's bad temper makes him be disrespectful to his sister Susan, even though she is the elder, and he tells her to stop making unnecessary remarks (Lewis 10). His comment substantiates the argument that he wants to take advantage of his parent's absence in order to

enforce his authority over his siblings. Edmund demands respect from his brother and sisters, and he does not want the White Witch to recognize his siblings, or to give them the same respect as she accords him (Lewis 98). Edmund thinks that he should be regarded as being just as important as Aslan, who is the King and God of Narnia (Lewis 87) or Maugrim who is the Queen's Secret Police (Lewis 108). The author Waller, who writes about the *Chronicles of Narnia*, claims that the Narnia stories are full of distinguishable characters as mentioned above (Waller 312). Edmund's quest for being regarded as an esteemed person explains his want of being in control and his dominance over his siblings.

Edmund's belief in his own dominance over his brother and sisters clarifies that he wants to be the eldest of the Pevensie's children. He therefore sees his sister Lucy as weak and his subordinate. She is afraid to rebuke him, and he tells her she is silly (Lewis 11). Edmund's utterance and his reply to Lucy establish the fact that he is not ready yet to accept any atonement from his siblings (Lewis 36), and his derogatory remarks demonstrate that he is neither afraid nor remorseful. The word "silly" here suggests stupidity, and he thinks that his sister is such a person. Researchers have made assertions about the plight of female characters in relation to their male characters. They maintain that young female children have fewer confrontations with authority and thus have less need to demonstrate an ability to challenge that authority (Coleman and Hendry 185). As a result of Edmund's eagerness to dominate his siblings, his sister Lucy is not able to challenge him over what she thinks is right.

The author, in the *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* clarifies that changes in family structure affect a child's behavior. A notable example is when the Pevensie children are sent away from London to the house of the old Professor in the country (Lewis 9). The author, in revealing the old Professor's unconcerned behavior towards the Pevensie children, gives an example when Peter says "that old chap will let us do anything we like" (Lewis 10). Western tradition underscores that children should respect their elders. Here, Edmund does not even respect the old Professor, because he considers him an "old chap" and he even mocks his eccentric looks by pretending to blow his nose. The old Educator, who is unable to counsel Edmund about his behavior, contributes to the manner in which Edmund conducts himself. Therefore the absence of Edmund's parents and the Professor's inability to advise him creates an atmosphere where Edmund does whatever he wants.

The type of family and the social background children find themselves in are important. The essentiality of such social and family compositions plays a remarkable role in the upbringing of children. The sentence above shows that when a child for instance moves from his or her parents and lives with another family, such a change in parenting, is one of the factors that contribute to a child's poor behavior, for instance lack of showing respect and compassion to others. In showing that the social conditions in which children are brought up contribute to their behavior, Nodelman explains that the plight of children is related to the character of the social environment in which they find themselves (Nodelman 72). The Professor's inability to rebuke Edmund makes not only the latter disrespect the professor as stated above, it also makes Edmund disrespect his brother and sisters.

Considering the effects that different social conditions have, Coleman and Hendry discuss how a change in family set-ups can affect children. They argue that,

Changes in social compositions have two possible implications for young children. In the first place it is possible that values and beliefs about marriage, family and parenting are shifting as children grow up in family circumstances which are, relatively speaking, less stable than was the case for their own mothers and fathers (Coleman and Hendry 4).

Their research demonstrates that parents have an important role to play in their children's social and moral development. They maintain that it is important for parents to have frequent contact with their children by finding out what interests them, planning for their future, advising them, and acting as disciplinarians.

The Professor is incapable of understanding Edmund's ill-tempered and spiteful behavior (Lewis 53) since he seems to live in a world of his own. Also, he has not lived with Edmund for sufficiently long to discuss his weaknesses. As discussed above, the problems mentioned previously concerning the old Educator's attitude are clear indications of his inability to act as a parent to Edmund effectively. Edmund's ill-temper (Lewis 10) and his mockery of the Professor even shows Edmund's difficulty accepting the professor's view of Narnia, since he thinks he is only pretending with Lucy (Lewis 55). Another aspect of poor parenting is the reclusiveness of the old Professor, whose role is only seen at the beginning of the novel and at the end.

Edmund's lack of appropriate counseling contributes to his crafty behavior, and in choosing an animal that represents his character, he selects a fox (Lewis 11), which often refers to

someone who is sly, or deceives people. The word “fox” therefore suggests Edmund is clever at adopting a cunning behavior just to hurt his siblings (Lewis 52) without considering the consequences. Children’s unpleasant behavior towards one another is partly due to their absence of self-restraint. In showing the plight of youngsters, Nodelman explains that children are inherently savage and animal-like: they are not disciplined and therefore they need to be cajoled into understanding the need for self-discipline, and that helps to keep them safe and sane in dealings with each other (Nodelman 73). Edmund’s untruthfulness about Lucy’s story causes his siblings to distrust him, and he does not even know that his dishonesty plays a role in destroying the relationship with his siblings.

One of the consequences of the overwhelming desire for the Turkish Delight³ is Edmund’s betrayal of his brother and siblings by assuring the Queen that he will make the “best” effort to bring his siblings to her (Lewis 47). Edmund’s desire for the Delight shows that, even though he is aware of the Queen’s malicious intentions and recognizes that she is a dreadfully harmful person (Lewis 48), he is not worried about bringing his siblings to her. The word “best” shows that he is very willing to fulfill the Witch’s demand irrespective of the consequences. Brennan in discussing the *Chronicles of Narnia* explains the difficulty in resisting temptations, and shows the aftereffect of Edmund’s gluttony. In his article “The Lion, the Witch and the Allegory” Brennan clarifies Edmund’s continuous desire for the magic confectionery as follows: “Edmund’s significant sin is to succumb to the temptation of gluttony” (Brennan 6). The word “succumb” suggests that Edmund is weak which makes him obey whatever the Queen says.

Edmund’s obsession with the magic candy causes him to obey the Witch, and makes him even more eager to go to the Witch’s house for more of the Turkish Delight (Lewis 79). His gluttonous attitude renders him weak, and that makes him fall easily into temptation. In showing challenges people encounter during seduction, Vaus clarifies the difficulties in overcoming temptations, which is due to a person’s greediness (Vaus 27). Edmund asserts what he thinks has to be done in order to achieve his goal. He therefore forgets that his desire for magic candy causes him to reveal his siblings.

³ Turkish Delight is enchanted, and causes a person to want more until he or she dies.

Edmund cannot be held accountable for his frantic consumption of the enchanted candy. They are not ordinary, and have the ability to make him want more (Lewis 49). However, his continuous desire for the charmed candy occurs long after leaving the Witch. In relating a person's desires to the biblical lesson about covetousness, Apostle Paul clarifies that many live as enemies of the cross of Jesus, and their destiny is destruction because their life is their stomach and their minds are on earthy desires (Philippians 3:18-19). From a biblical perspective, gluttony is one of the seven deadly sins, but Edmund fails to realize the consequences of such greediness.

In addition to his gluttony, Edmund does not want to reveal his knowledge of the Witch to his siblings (Lewis 51). As a result, he ends up lying to them about his discovery of Narnia as he claims that in saying that "Lucy and I have been playing- pretending that all her story about a country in the wardrobe is true" (Lewis 52). Edmund is unwilling to confirm Lucy's story, and he uses words in the quotation such as "playing" and "pretending" to support his view about Narnia. From a Christian perspective, Apostle James shows the importance of being truthful. He explains that "every good gift and every perfect present comes from heaven; and that comes from God, the Creator of the heavenly lights, who does not change or cause darkness by turning. By his own will he brought us into being through the word of truth, so that we should have first place among his creatures" (James 1:17-18). Apostle James's biblical view shows that truthfulness plays a role in determining a person's upright behavior.

His gluttonous behavior makes Edmund a captive of his own insatiable desire because after having "eaten his share of the dinner, [...] he hadn't really enjoyed it because he was thinking all the time about the Turkish Delight" (Lewis 98). Edmund thinks that eating a part of the food i.e., "share of the dinner" will not make him satisfied, and desires more of the charmed confectionery. He affirms that he is enslaved by his own overwhelming desire since the absence of the magic candy makes him ill (Lewis 50). Even after eating dinner he still wants more of the enchanted candy (Lewis 49). Edmund demonstrates that his gluttony causes him to focus his attention only on the candy.

Edmund's insatiable desire for the candy also makes him feel that he is being alienated from his siblings. As a result, he tries to find alternative sources of pleasure. He feels that his siblings are "taking no notice of him and trying to give him the cold shoulder" (Lewis 98). The expression "cold shoulder" testifies that Edmund feels his siblings do not recognize him

as a member of the family. He thinks that the enchanted candy has the ability to make him “quite warm and very comfortable” (Lewis 43). Edmund also feels that he has the magic candy as a friend and does not bother about his siblings. The words “warm” and “comfortable” demonstrate that Edmund has found companionship and happiness by being on the side of the White Witch (Lewis 50).

His alienation from his siblings also makes him believe that the latter does not accept his views. He does not understand the reason why his brother and sisters believe the robin’s idea (Lewis 70), and even trust what Mr. Beaver⁴ tells them (Lewis 75). He is therefore under the impression that his siblings are self content prigs (Lewis 65), which substantiates the fact that he thinks his siblings have no right to tell him what to do. Nodelman explains that in order to be happy, children always look for interesting events (Nodelman 83). Edmund’s alienation therefore causes him to focus on and to desire the candy as a means of attaining happiness.

Edmund’s desire for Delight causes him to forget one of the basic rules of eating, namely to avoid talking with your mouth full (Lewis 43). He also forgets to use the appropriate courtesy in addressing the Queen, forgetting to address her with appropriate title and politeness (Lewis 44). Edmund’s focus on the charmed candy makes him forget to ask himself the reason for the Queen’s curiosity (Lewis 43). Manlove explains that Edmund’s desire for the magic confectionery makes him drawn to the Witch by his own self conceit, and as a result he is disinclined to ask about the Queen’s intentions (Manlove 36). Edmund’s attraction to the Delight and his allegiance to the Witch show that he lacks the goodness of Aslan, who is the lord of the whole wood. Edmund’s longing for the Turkish Delight therefore means death, because the magic confectionery has the ability to charm a person by desiring it more and more until he or she dies.

Edmund’s gluttony makes him unable to distinguish between the White Witch and the Queen of Narnia, as evidenced in the following question “the White Witch? said Edmund, who’s she?” (Lewis 48). Edmund therefore thinks that the derogatory remarks made by Mrs. Beaver about the Queen being cruel and evil⁵ (Lewis 91) refers to another person called the “White Witch”. He also believes that the Witch is a different person because the Queen is friendly to

⁴ Mr Beaver is loyal to Aslan, the lord of the wood.

⁵ Has ability to cause harm.

him (Lewis, p. 99). Edmund's difficulty in telling the difference between the Queen and the Witch is due to her promises of making him a king (Lewis 45). With Edmund's uncertainty, Downing summarizes that Edmund falls prey to the Queen and her flattery appeals to his pride, just as the Turkish Delight appeals to his gluttony (Downing 93), showing that Edmund is very confused, and he does not know what to do with himself.

Though Edmund demonstrates a confused state of mind, his gluttonous behavior makes him think that he "owns" the enchanted candy. His feeling of owning the magic candy testifies that he is outstanding, and he says to the Queen that there is nothing special about his siblings (Lewis 46), since he thinks only people of higher status should have companionship with the Queen (Lewis, p. 49). Edmund's quest for higher status results in accepting the Witch's request to become a prince (Lewis 45). In showing how characters fight for higher positions in a society, Brennan argues that Edmund's quest for being highly regarded in status continues to fill his mind with earthly desires, and results in him continuously succumbing to the temptation of the magic candy (Brennan 6). Edmund's focus on the magic confectionery actually diverts his desire for the greater good, and his thoughts obstruct him from seeing the relevance of unity with his siblings.

Edmund's gluttony causes him to be treated dreadfully by the Witch. The Queen for instance, shouts at him to walk "faster! faster!" (Lewis 132). The Queen's commanding voice shouting at Edmund to walk "faster" demonstrates her evil intentions. The Witch thinks that by subjecting Edmund to walk "faster", she is punishing him by letting him walk more than his usual walking pace. The Queen's severe treatment frightens Edmund (Lewis 104), which makes him resentful and disappointed (Lewis 121). Another consequence of gluttony is made out when young creatures such as squirrels are killed by the White Witch (Lewis 126). The killing of the squirrels reaffirms that Edmund's overwhelming desire for the Turkish Delight is likely to have a similar consequence.

Edmund's innocence about the enchanted nature of the candy contributes to his deliverance before death by the Witch. The Queen even

knew quite well what he was thinking, for she knew, though Edmund did not, that this was enchanted Turkish Delight and that anyone who has once tasted it would want more and more of it, and would even, if they were allowed, go on eating it till they killed themselves (Lewis 44).

The negation “did not” shows that Edmund is not aware of the magic nature of the candy. The expression “if they were allowed to go on” shows that Edmund’s death is preventable. Aslan confirms that he has settled with the Queen about saving Edmund from death (Lewis 155). Manlove explains that Edmund, for example, is too young to differentiate between what is good as compared to what is evil (Manlove 39), demonstrating his unawareness about the Delight’s charm and that contributes to his rescue by Aslan.

Edmund’s rescue, as a result of his gluttony plays a significant role in freeing Narnia. The argument is that if Edmund had not fallen into his insatiable desire for the candy, he would not have been taken by the Queen, which then causes Aslan to eventually negotiate for his freedom (Lewis 155). Therefore Edmund’s gluttony plays a role in freeing Narnia, and fulfilling the prophecy; that when Aslan comes (Lewis 88), his blood will prevent Narnia from becoming “overturned and perish in fire and water” (Lewis 153). The prophecy confirms that Narnia is able to be saved from destruction. Edmund’s overwhelming desire makes him realize the Queen’s evil intentions, and eventually plays an active role in freeing Narnia.

In addition to helping fight the Queen of Narnia, Edmund is also able to find where the Queen lives. The Queen gives him directions that the next time he visits her, he only has to look for the lamppost, the two hills and then walk through the woods until he reaches her palace (Lewis 46). Edmund’s ability to find the location deepens his knowledge and experience to be able to find other locations in Narnia. Waller explains that children need information, such as getting new ideas and skills in order to enhance their knowledge. He explains further that children need to understand issues, as well as, having ability to remember in order to move to a new stage in their development, for example from childhood into adulthood (Waller 313). Children should therefore not be deprived of experiences that make them less limited in achieving their objectives.

Despite a number of Edmund’s achievements mentioned above, Edmund reveals the presence of his brother and sisters in Narnia to the Witch (Lewis 108). The narrator confirms that Edmund has gone to the White Witch to betray his siblings (Lewis 94). The Witch is fearfully aware of the prophecy that states that “when two sons of Adam and two Daughters of Eve sit on these four thrones then it will be the end not only of the White Witch’s reign but of her life” (Lewis 92), and knowing that Edmund is a “son of Adam” (Lewis 40), the Queen

decides to kill him and his siblings so that she can nullify the prophecy. Concerning betrayal in the novel, Brennan writes about Edmund's dishonesty from a Christian perspective. He explains that Edmund's betrayal of his siblings is an allegory of Judas⁶ (Brennan 6).

Edmund shows that he does not like his siblings, and he therefore betrays them (Lewis 51). His action suggests that he is not honest and cannot be trusted as a brother. He also betrays Lucy for calling the Witch a terrible person (Lewis 48). Edmund is already half on the Queen's side (Lewis 50), as she is helping him to become a king. He has therefore no other alternative but to lie about Narnia. His betrayal is also seen as a result of not trusting Aslan, and he thinks that the Witch is much nicer (Lewis 99).

The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe shows that Edmund feels unhappy as a result of his disloyalty. Edmund, after betraying his sister Lucy feels sick and looks awful (Lewis 50). His desire for the magic confectionery makes him forget that he must pretend to never have been in the wood before, and the moment the words are revealed, he realizes that he has betrayed himself (Lewis 64). In supporting how characters react emotionally after committing crimes, Vaus who writes about myth and religion, explains that Edmund feels very remorseful after betraying Lucy, and his emotional actions make him physically sick (Vaus 25). Edmund's attitude and unconscious physical reactions show that he is regretful of what he has done.

Though Edmund betrays his sister and feels remorse, he sees the need for an industrialized Narnia, and that makes him have thoughts about what he intends to do when he becomes king of Narnia. He reflects as follows,

When I'm King of Narnia the first thing I shall do will be to make some decent roads. And of course that set him off thinking about being a King and all the other things he would do and this cheered him up a good deal. He had just settled in his mind what sort of palace he would have and how many cars and all about his private cinema and where the principal railways would run and what laws he would make against beavers and dams and was putting the finishing touches to some schemes for keeping Peter in his place (Lewis. 100 & 101).

Edmund thinks that in order to achieve his aim, he must accept whatever the Queen says about being a king (Lewis 79). He thinks that just as the Queen has the power and authority to make Narnia become winter, and never Christmas (Lewis 67), he must also have a similar power to do what he intends. In showing the need to rule a country, Don W. King reveals the importance of unity and development towards a country's success. He explains that a

⁶ See Mathew chapter 26 verses 14-15.

disintegrated society such as Narnia, makes rulers achieve their objectives through their effort of unifying the country (King 4). Edmund's eagerness to become a ruler supports the notion that he does not want to be made a king by Aslan, since he thinks that the Queen is better than Aslan (Lewis 99).

Edmund's first consideration, if he were king, is to have good roads. He realizes that the absence of roads "kept him slipping into deep drifts of snow, and skidding on frozen puddles, and tripping over fallen tree trunks, and sliding down steep banks, and barking his shins against rocks, till he was wet and cold and bruised all over" (Lewis 100). His thoughts about constructing good roads only contribute to his imagination about being a king. The expression "bruised all over" makes him realize the problems involved with road transport in Narnia. Nodelman explains that it is inappropriate to underestimate what children are capable of doing (Nodelman 17). Edmund's intention to construct roads shows that even though he is a child, nothing prevents him from thinking as a ruler, hence Edmund's thoughts about developing Narnia, and even improving the quality of the roads.

Edmund also thinks about constructing railways as a means of making Narnia become industrialized. He believes that rail transport plays an important role in facilitating his journey from London during air-raids (Lewis 9). He thinks that such a development is a sign of good governance (Lewis 197). In showing the importance of the railway construction, Downing summarizes that such a development contributes to the success of Narnia. He claims that the manufacturing of railway engines would play a significant role in commercial activities in Narnia (Downing 93). Edmund is therefore anxiously waiting for the Queen to make him a king in order to achieve his objectives.

Even though Edmund thinks to improve Narnia through the construction of railways, he also thinks to enact laws against Mr. Beaver. He says that "if it comes to talking about sides, how do we know you're a friend?" (Lewis 75) demonstrating his support for the Queen because he does not trust Mr. Beaver. He thinks that the laws will benefit every citizen of Narnia, and his prevention of Mr. Beaver from making a dam close to the Queen's palace (Lewis 78-79) is a means of improving the country. By enacting laws in Narnia, Downing explains that such laws are meant to make the country better, since some rulers try to abuse power by making laws to suit their purposes (Downing 111). Edmund's quest for power therefore shows that he wants to betray his siblings in order to achieve his aim, and to rule over them as well.

In addition to Edmund's vision for an industrialized Narnia, he also realizes the need to show compassion to others, and that shows a change from unacceptable behavior to an upright manner of conducting himself. His compassion is firstly due to his regret for the role he plays in betraying the others, and as such he experiences choking feelings (Lewis 154). Secondly, his compassion is explained by the narrator's assertion that Edmund for the first time feels sorry for someone besides himself (Lewis 127), demonstrating that Edmund has great empathy for others. In supporting the significance of compassion, Downing summarizes that recognizing other people's problems and showing feelings give joy and gratitude (Downing 101). His claim serves as a good reference in explaining Edmund's feelings and his compassion for others.

Sympathizing with others implies that Edmund has acquired experience associated with psychological emotions, for example when the Queen whips him (Lewis 130), and when he has to travel in cold conditions (Lewis 123). His treatment causes the narrator to confirm that Edmund is undergoing immense suffering (Lewis 121), demonstrating that Edmund's ability to show compassion results from the torments he suffers from the Witch. Downing summarizes that after having undergone such suffering and having endured the painful consequences of his own choice of becoming friends with the Witch, Edmund finally discovers the need to care for others (Downing 100). Edmund's compassion for others and the pains he encounters indicate his realization of the need for unity by the people of Narnia against injustice.

Edmund's suffering and compassion make him change his behavior, and that also gives him the courage to help destroy the Queen (Lewis 148). The narrator comments on Edmund's effort in the battle (Lewis 192), demonstrating that the unrevealed conversation between Aslan and Edmund contributes to the latter's nobility and bravery (Lewis 121). In addition to Edmund's fearlessness, he takes the risk to smash the Queen's magic wand, a valorous action that helps turn the tide of the battle. Commendations and encouragements give inspiration to people. In giving further clarification, Vaus shows that in motivating a person, appropriate advice and helpful comments are important to consider as they help improve a person's abilities towards his or her achievements (Vaus 31). Aslan's motivation contributes in helping Edmund to be brave and to destroy the Queen's magic wand.

Edmund demonstrates that he is fearless in all of the battles. He approaches the Queen's castle that has been built with pointy spines and sharp needles (Lewis 102), and even ventures nearer a lion (Lewis 104). He also confronts the Queen and tries to stop her from killing some citizens of Narnia (Lewis 126). In showing the importance of bravery, Walter Hooper sees the need to encourage children by exposing them to stories concerning heroism. He thinks that in educating children they should at least hear of brave knights, brave feats, and heroic deeds that serve as inspiration and motivation for them (Hooper 13). Edmund's courageous actions all show that he cares about the welfare of the citizens of Narnia.

Edmund's bravery and his outstanding role in the fight against the Queen result in being made a king by Aslan (Lewis 194). With Aslan's goodness, Edmund sees the importance of noble qualities as opposed to mere riches and jewels in Narnia (Lewis 201). His view suggests that he does not want to remember his acquaintance with the Queen, since such unpleasant happenings make him sad (Lewis 200). Downing shows the importance of encouraging children towards heroic ambitions. He writes that children must be strengthened and guided to enable them to discover the very essence of bravery (Downing 105). Children's stories should contain positive role models such as Edmund, who is fearless and ready to show mercy for others.

Edmund's self-realization results from his need for justice since the Queen is cruel towards him and the citizens of Narnia (Lewis 91). The fact that she is willing to turn everything into stone or kill whatever stands in her way, even a defenseless animal such as a squirrel (Lewis 123) motivates Edmund's decision to change sides. Edmund is human and he reflects about all that he has gone through with the Witch (Lewis 152). Once Edmund realizes the Queen's malicious intentions, not even the promise of becoming the King of Narnia (Lewis 124) convinces Edmund to be with her. Edmund's self-insight shows an immense change of his behavior.

Edmund's self-awareness comes not only from his inner ability to change his behavior but also from his awareness about changes in the season. The narrator explains that Edmund "realized that the frost was over" (Lewis 129), where the approaching end of winter is a metaphor for the end of the White Witch's cruel acts (Lewis 90). Further, Edmund realizes the Witch's evil intentions (Lewis 99), and that result in Edmund not wanting to be on her side. The disappearance of snow makes Edmund recognize the need to change his uncompromising

behavior to become a better person again (Lewis 194). Manlove shows the importance of acceptable behavior and cooperation among the characters in Narnia (Manlove 37). Edmund's decision to change his behavior makes him improve his deplorable relationship with his brother and sisters.

Continuing with the change in the season, i.e. the sudden presence of spring, Edmund realizes the importance of nature, and that plays a role in inspiring him to change his behavior. The narrator expresses that,

Then the mist turned from white to gold and presently cleared away altogether. Shafts of delicious sunlight struck down to the forest floor and overhead you could see a blue sky between the tree tops. Soon there were more wonderful things happening. Coming suddenly round a corner into a glade of silver birch trees Edmund saw the ground covered in all directions with little yellow flowers – celandines (Lewis 131).

Even if Edmund does not learn logic at school (Lewis 36), he is able to recognize the changes in the season and the appearance of flowers. He thinks that the “celandine” as defined by *The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* as a small wild plant with yellow flowers that grows in the spring is enough evidence that shows that the Queen's enchantment and the winter season is over. The result of such an event is also what contributes to his realization that he must also become a better person.

A great number of changes in Edmund's behavior contribute to his development. Edmund's efforts to help destroy the Witch make him recognize the importance of cooperating with other characters. Aslan and Edmund's conversation is important, which “Edmund never forgot... and said to each of them in turn I am sorry” (Lewis 150). The conversation does not give adequate information about what happens between Aslan and Edmund; their communication suggests though that Edmund realizes his mistakes and therefore is ready to unite with his siblings. In emphasizing the need for teamwork, Downing explains that Edmund is carried away to meet Aslan and also to be united with his siblings (Downing 102). Edmund's realization and compromise with his siblings reaffirm his intention to help destroy the Queen of Narnia.

Edmund's change of behavior shows that he is a dynamic character. The author Lukens, who writes about children's literature, explains that such a person “changes in the course of the action and he or she may change from being shy to being poised or even domineering or from cowardly to brave” (Lukens 89). With reference to Lukens's definition, Edmund is initially ill-tempered and a traitor. However, he gradually transforms himself into a courageous

teenager, who stands up for himself, his siblings and the land of Narnia. Edmund is also a round character, as he is one of the main characters known throughout the novel. As Lukens explains, such a character is prominent in the novel because of his actions, pronouncements and opinions (Lukens 88). This essay shows many aspects of Edmund's tensions, such as his disagreements with his siblings and the tension between him and the Queen, which are all important in unifying the essay.

In order to summarize what contributes to Edmund Pevensie's realization of the need to change his behavior, a revisit to his former behavior is important. His behavior makes him come into contact with White Witch and Turkish Delight, which prompts him to betray his siblings. A vital lesson drawn from Edmund's former attitude is that characters are not flawless. In showing that characters make errors, Kaufmann summarizes that a person whose progress is thwarted as a result of their mistakes are capable of redeeming themselves and becoming respectable people (Kaufmann 58). Even though Edmund tries to kill his siblings he makes frantic efforts to redeem himself and to become the King of Narnia.

His courageous actions play a crucial role in the novel in two particular respects. Firstly, through his bravery, Narnia has once again gained freedom through Edmund's destruction of the Witch's magic wand (Lewis 192). Secondly, his act of heroism contributes to his title "King Edmund the Just" (Lewis 198), demonstrating that he has gained knowledge about the importance of acceptable behavior and to accord everyone with respect. In explaining what bravery means, Downing claims that to be courageous does not only mean that a person is fearless, but rather his or her abilities to save a dangerous situation (Downing 103). Edmund shows his commitment and determination to oust the Witch even at the peril of his own death.

Edmund's courageous fight and his self-insight shows that he understands what it means to be an adult, and to experience the process of maturing. As a result of the disappearance of winter, Edmund realizes the importance of an acceptable behavior compared to being ill-tempered. He shows great determination and heroism to fight against the Witch (Lewis 193). Edmund's fight is thus not only a simple matter of showing great courage, but also demonstrates that it is a situation with potentially fatal consequences. Edmund's selfless contribution also exposes the fact that he has learnt to fight against injustice and recognize that people differ in their ability to face danger, pain and uncertainty. Therefore his nobility, which results from his bravery and compassion, comes from his growing self-realization.

Works Cited

- Brennan, Matt. "The Lion, the Witch and the Allegory: An Analysis of Selected Narnia Chronicles." Date of access: 2012-11-07
<<http://cslewis.drzeus.net/papers/lionwitchallegory.html>>.
- Coleman, John C., and Hendry, Leo B. *The Nature of Adolescence*. England: Routledge Limited, 1999.
- Downing, David C. *Into the Wardrobe C.S. Lewis, and The Narnia Chronicles*. San Francisco: Jossey- Bass, 2005.
- Driggs, Scout. *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe: Edmund and the White Witch*. London: Harper Collins Incorporation, 2005.
- Flexer, Michael. *Edmund's struggle under the spell of the White Witch*. New York: Harper Collins Incorporation, 2006.
- Goetz, Kayla. "Recovering Vision: C.S. Lewis and Augustine on pride and Humility"
Volume 2, Spring 2011, pp. 228-232.
- Hooper, Walter. "Narnia: The Author, The Critics, and The Tale" *Children's Literature*
Volume 3, 1974, pp. 12-22.
- Jones, Katharine. "Getting Rid of Children's Literature" *The Lion and the Unicorn*
Volume 30: Number 3, September 2006, pp. 287-315.
- Kauffmann, U. Milo. "The Wardrobe, the Witch and the Lion: C.S. Lewis and Three Mysteries of the Christian Faith" *The Dulia et Latria Journal 1* (2008), pp. 47-62.
- King, Don W. "Narnia and the Seven Deadly Sins" *Mythlore* 10, Spring 1984, pp 2-19
- Lewis, C.S. *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. London: clays Limited, 2001
- Lukens, Rebecca J. *A Critical Handbook of Children's Literature*. New York: Addison

- Wesley Longman Incorporation, 1999.
- Lynn, Steven. *Texts and Contexts*. London: Pearson Education Incorporation, 2011.
- Manlove, Colin. *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Pattering of a Fantastic World*. New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1993).
- Nodelman, Perry. "The pleasures of Children's Literature." U.S.A: Longman Publishers, 1996.
- The Oxford Advance Learners Dictionary*. Oxford: The Oxford University Press, 1992.
- United Bible Societies. *Good News Bible, Today's English Version*. New Zealand: The Bible Society, 1976.
- Vaus, Will. *The Hidden Story of Narnia. A Book-by-Book Guide to C.S. Lewis' Spiritual Themes*. Cheshire: Winged Lion Press, 2010.
- Waller, Allison. "Revisiting Children Landscapes: Revenants of Druid's Grove and Narnia" *The Lion and the Unicorn*, Volume 34, Number 3, September 2010, pp. 303-319.
- Williams, Thomas M. *The Heart of the Chronicles of Narnia: Knowing God there*. U.S.A: W. Publishing Group, 2005.