NEW WORLD PHILOSOPHY OF NARNIA: RECOGNITION

AND RESOLUTION OF CRISIS

Thesis submitted to University of Calicut
for the award of the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy in English

by

M.P. HARIKRISHNAN

Ph.D Registration U.O No: 8821/2015/Admn

Under the Supervision of

DR. K.P. NANDA KUMAR

Research Guide

Research Department of English

St. Thomas' College (Autonomous), Thrissur

Centre for Research and Postgraduate Studies in English

St. Thomas' College (Autonomous)

Thrissur - 680001

Affiliated to University of Calicut

July 2021

Dr. Martin K. A.
Assistant Professor
In-charge of Principal
St. Thomas College (Autonomous)
Thrissur - 680 001

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the adjudicators of the PhD thesis of M. P. Harikrishnan, titled *"New World Philosophy of Narnia: Recognition and Resolution of Crisis"* have not given any directions for corrections or suggestions for change in their reports. The content of the CD is the same as in the hard copy.
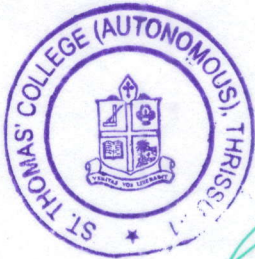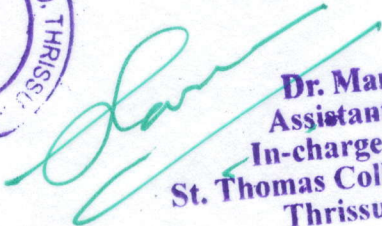
Thrissur

22. 07. 2021

Dr. C. S. Biju

Co-Supervising Teacher

C.S BIJU PhD
Associate Professor
Dept. of English
St. Thomas College Thrissur

Dr. K. P. Nanda Kumar

Supervising Teacher
Dr. K.P. Nanda Kumar M.A., M.Phil, Ph. D
Research Supervisor
English Research Centre
St. Thomas' College
Thrissur, Kerala
nandanvyasa@gmail.com
Ph: 9544644614

Dr. Martin K. A.
Assistant Professor
In-charge of Principal
St. Thomas College (Autonomous)
Thrissur - 680 001

Dr K. P. Nanda Kumar

Research Guide

Research Centre, Department of English

St. Thomas' College (Autonomous), Thrissur 680 001

Kerala, India

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the thesis entitled "New World Philosophy of Narnia: Recognition and Resolution of Crisis" is a Bonafede record of studies and research carried out by M. P. Harikrishnan under my guidance and submitted for the award of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in English. To the best of my knowledge, this research work has not been previously formed the basis of award for any degree, diploma, fellowship or any other similar titles. Its critical evaluation represents the independent work on the part of the candidate.

Place: Thrissur   Dr C. S. Biju   Dr K. P. Nanda Kumar

Date: 22-07-2021   (Research Co-Supervisor)

Dr. K. P. Nanda Kumar M.A. M.Phil, Ph. D
Research Supervisor
English Research Centre
St. Thomas' College
Thrissur, Kerala
nandanvyasa@gmail.com
Ph: 9544644614

M.P. Harikrishnan

'Sivalayam'

Veluthur Road

Cheroor P.O.

Thrissur 680008

Kerala, India

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the thesis entitled "New World Philosophy of Narnia: Recognition and Resolution of Crisis" is an authentic record of my studies and research carried out under the guidance of Dr K. P. Nanda Kumar, Research Guide at the Research Centre, Department of English, St. Thomas' College (Autonomous), Thrissur. I hereby certify that no part of this work has been submitted or published for the award of any other degree, diploma, title, fellowship or recognition.

Harikrishnan

M. P. Harikrishnan

Place: Thrissur

Date: 22-07-2021

Research Scholar

Research Department of English

St. Thomas' College (Autonomous)

Thrissur 680001

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I place on record my sincere gratitude to the Principal Dr Fr K. A. Martin and the former principals Dr P. O. Jenson, Dr Ignatius Antony and Dr Joy K. L. for the support they rendered during every stage of my research. I am thankful to Dr Joby Thomas K., the research co-ordinator for his support and co-operation provided during the tenure of my research. I am indeed grateful to the members of Doctoral Committee for their valuable suggestions and recommendations that helped me to set my focus clearly.

My special thanks and gratitude to the entire faculty members of the Department of English. I would like to express my deepest sense of gratitude and indebtedness to them for their help and support. Special mentions to Dr Syam Sudhakar and Mr Biju M. A. for sharing their valuable insights helpful in the research process. I am ever thankful to Mrs Christeena T. Jose for the care and moral support provided. I am fortunate to have company of my friends, the fellow research scholars especially from the Department of English. Their moral support and insights prove to be valuable experiences of life. Thanks to Dr Sheme Mary P.U., Dr Anu Paul, Dr Soya Joseph, Nimisha K. Jayan and Megha K. Jayadas for their help and support rendered in the submission of my thesis.

I happily acknowledge the untiring assistance extended by the library staff, office staff and other supporting staff of the college for their help during the period of research work. My heartfelt thanks to Mr Sanjo Jose, Librarian, St. Thomas' College for providing inspiration and information valuable for research. I am thankful to all the staff members of CHMK Library, University of Calicut; Public Library, Thrissur and Kerala Sahitya Academy, Thrissur for their co-operation and support.

Harikrishnan .

M. P. Harikrishnan

DEDICATION

To mother, father, preceptor.

To all of their lineages.

To all children of all ages,

Who encompass all creation.

ōṁvaikuṇṭhasamārambhāṁ

karuṇākaramadhyamām |

asmadguruvarasampūrṇṇāṁ

vandē guruparamparāṁ ||

harimutalāṁ paladēvapūja ceytō

ripujitarāyi nirīśvarattilāṇṭō |

kṛpaṇataviṭṭu kṛpāmṛtaṁ kuṭiccu

ṣṇanuśamiyātatu nēṭiyōr jayiykka ||

civamē civamē civamaṇiyē teyva mutalē citamparamē

tavamē tavamē tavakkoḻuntē tāṇṭavacaṅkāra tamiyē eṅkaḷuṭa

pavamē pavamē palanāḷuñ ceyta pavamaṟuttuṉ

akamēvait teṅkaḷai yāṭkoḷvāy

civa civa civa civa ara kara ara karā

A NOTE ON DOCUMENTATION

I, hereby, would like to acknowledge that the documentation in the thesis is prepared in accordance with the style format suggested by *MLA Handbook* (8th Edition).

CONTENTS

Acknowledgements

Dedication

A Note on Documentation

Chapter One

Introduction

"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea" (*REVELATION CHAPTER 21 KJV*).

New World has been a theme that has acquired universal significance since the birth of human history. From the time of explorations and invasions to the present scientific expeditions to the outer space have all been motivated by the attempts to assimilate New World in terms of space. Various movements, ideologies, philosophies and policies have been trying to invoke a New World in terms of time. Transformation of the present world and invention of a New World in its place is the conscious and unconscious attempt of the individual as well as communities. Intellectuals and thinkers emphasize the transformation of the human mind or that of the outside as the means to achieve an effective transformation of the world. Emphasis on either of these may vary according to individual ideologies, but the dissatisfaction with the present condition of the world is a common factor. There are also a few schools of thought that give equal emphasis on the intrinsic world and the extrinsic world. Transformation of the material world and that of the psychological process are mutually interconnected and inseparable. Therefore, the advent of the New World in its integral sense involves the transformation of the landscape along with the mindscape. This justifies the titular significance of this research work.

The concept of a renewed world of future has been visualized and idealized throughout history. Along with many religions, modern science and the various branches of modern knowledge incessantly thrive for reshaping the present and invoking the desired future world. Arts and literature are also constantly engaged in new

experiments of aesthetics which influence the present generation and modify the inclinations of the forthcoming ones. Political propaganda, social and economic welfare schemes and organizations all function on the anticipation of a better future world. The socialists too dream of and work for the establishment of communism which is characterized by an ideal world. *The Republic* by Plato, *New Atlantis* by Sir Francis Bacon and *Utopia* by Tomas Moore are all examples of literary works which describe ideal worlds envisioned by thinkers and writers. Ideal nature described in such works has been challenged by Samuel Butler through *Erewhon*, Aldous Huxley through *Brave New World* and George Orwell through *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. Both optimistic and pessimistic discourses find their place in the future worlds imagined and envisaged by writers and thinkers. Calamities and cataclysmic events serve as a common threshold for optimistic and utopian discourses as well as pessimistic and dystopian ones. The cataclysmic events are outlived in the case of utopian worlds whereas the dystopian worlds are products of irrevocable massive devastation. Children's Literature and Fantasy often foreground optimistic and hopeful endings. Such literary genres often portray themes and contexts where the solution is foregrounded instead of problems. Whatever may be the case, apocalypse or massive annihilation plays a pivotal role in determining the destiny of the future world. The post-apocalyptic world which exists after a dissolution process determines the success and failure of the present living generation on earth. Both the utopian and dystopian kinds of literature can affect the collective psyche to act wisely and avoid the impending devastative events. The former instils hope to work ahead and tackle the existing issues, while the latter warns the recipients of the hazardous results of impending issues.

Post-apocalyptic Vision

The manifestation of a New World is often associated with massive destruction and cataclysmic events which is referred to as the apocalyptic phenomenon. Usually, the birth of a New World is anticipated after the occurrence of turmoil which is associated with class conflicts in Marxism and apocalypse in the biblical context. Both the secular and the religious are carried away by the notion of apocalypse and the ideal world in both cases is a post-apocalyptic one. Scientific studies also confirm the facts of impending destructive phenomena which in the present context are reflected in the form of global warming, exhaustion of natural resources and global climatic change. The scientific community cannot guarantee that there will be a better world but predicts massive destructions as an aftereffect of environmental exploitation. John Leslie at *The End of the World: The Science and Ethics of Human Extinction* highlights the role of destructions caused by man-made systems and those of unpredictable natural phenomena. Chemical warfare, biological warfare, nuclear bombs, chemical pollution, nuclear radiation, population explosion, man-made diseases, artificial intelligence, natural epidemics and cosmic phenomena like the black hole, galactic expansion, falling of asteroids and comets, are all varieties of these destructive phenomena. Among them, the impact of human-centred disasters holds humanity as responsible for their annihilation. Overpopulation, overcrowding cities, pollution, global warming, wide-spreading diseases and various forms of warfare are often found to be interconnected and mutually complementing factors of annihilation (25-132). The future world is expected to be an inescapable dark one, where human suffering is inevitable. Preparing human perspective to deal with these critical issues and enabling individuals to adapt to changes can be seen as preparatory steps for the future world. In the contemporary world characterized by globalization the individual

identity is often contested with a global identity. Hence the entire humanity can be addressed as a single entity which faces common threats.

The idea of apocalypse and the human role in triggering the phenomenon are also utilized by individuals to spread fear and insecurity among the public. Many religious institutions and environmental organizations are found out to hyperbolize the hazardous effects of economic ventures and scientific innovations. The misuse of religious beliefs and blind activism have created a culture of fear among the public, through propaganda. Such trends have been questioned by scholars and critics. *Apocalypse Not: Science, Economics, and Environmentalism* by Ben W. Bolch and Harold Lyons examine such cases in America, which continue to stagnate social progress and public life. They question the unfulfilled and impractical political statements which claim to offer cost-effective eradication of pollution. It is equally an irony that certain animals are stamped as endangered, while the others are subjected to extensive commercialization. With the example of cattle farms, it is substantiated that the conservation of any type of animal can be made possible only through commercializing them. Religions too emphasize the role of the human being in summoning apocalypse through the exploitation of the environment. Bolch and Lyons point out that religions are interested in increasing the number of their followers instead of eradicating the threat imposed on humanity. They affirm that contemporary environmentalism indirectly aspires for the death of humanity by opposing technology, emphasizing on communal farming and dissuading international trade (1-3). Though the aforementioned formulations are anti-environmentalist, many dimensions of misusing conservation are foregrounded. Manipulating the concept of apocalypse to stagnate human life, is a serious issue which has to be checked by policymakers and individuals. This also reveals that religious and secular institutions are interested in the phenomenon of

apocalypse, though many of them fail to create inspiration to work for a post-apoca-lyptic New World.

Familiarizing the Globalized World

The contemporary world is characterized by globalization which introduces the concept of an interconnected world. Digital explosion and the technological boom were seen as factors which provide interactive space between the nations. Trade, tourism, commerce and education are all made interactive and accessible to people all around the globe through globalization. The rise of a new global culture and the vision of a global citizen envisages a New World different from the previous era. Interconnectivity of various cultures and common platforms of interaction provided by a globalized world, conceptualize the emergence of an egalitarian society.

There are several theories formulated regarding the concept of globalization, which either exposes its foibles or exalts its positive aspects. Whether it be positive or negative, globalization has become popular among the masses and has laid influence even on the private lives of people. Being an inescapable reality of the present age, globalization is manipulated and utilized for fulfilling different intentions. The concept of an egalitarian society is relevant in the global context which tends to culturally unite different geographical locations. Douglas Kellner in "Globalization and New Social Movements" analyses the inherent possibility of globalization to upgrade the existing society. The corporate world and the governments cannot be looked upon to provide progressive facilities based on the standards of globalization. The activists and the common people should work for subverting the unfavourable social trends to create an egalitarian society by foregrounding democratic values. Globalization has given birth to many technologies which have been instrumentalized by corporate

institutions to maintain power over common people. Instead of opposing globalization, Kellner suggests that people should utilize new possibilities of globalization and employ suitable strategies to achieve social justice and uphold democratic values. The present society can move towards an egalitarian society only by making changes in the current strategies of the education system and by incorporating traditional streams of knowledge (315-316). This gives a picture of subjugation unknowingly accepted by people in the contemporary world, who fail to recognize the hegemonic strategies employed upon them. Both government and private agencies equally assert their control over people through the technologies inherent in the process of globalization. The common motifs of these hegemonic powers and their magnitude over nations may vary.

The third world nations who were once occupied by colonial rule, experience the continuation of the colonial rule even in the post-independent period. Unconscious submission to euro-centric culture in the present global context is a reiteration of the past slavery in a new form. The native cultural tropes and myths play a significant role in the collective consciousness of colonized nations. The case of India is a fine example of this. Elleke Boehemer observes in *Colonial and Postcolonial Literature* that the British colonial process primarily manipulated the mythical notions and belief systems of India to establish their rule over the nation. Indians believed that the present age is the dark and degrading aeon of *Kaliyuga*, which was incorporated into history by the colonizer (22). This challenged the fundamental integrity of the natives to resist the onslaught of colonialism and made the Indians unconsciously submissive to the British rule. The hangover of this pessimistic notion can be observed in the post-colonial era, which has been pointed out and remediated by intellectuals and critics. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak in *Other Asias* highlights the necessity to come out of the

cultural corruptions created by the colonial rule. She states that the concept of common Human Rights on a global level is an arbitrary one, but emphasizes on constant effort to achieve it. Along with this, Spivak calls for a study of the present corrupted culture from the grass-root level, which will result in the rectification of the culture of responsibility. The present education system which is a remnant of the corrupt colonial model has to be undone through constant endeavour by reinstating democratic habits in people in a responsible way. She contrasts such a method of teaching with, nationalism imposed upon children and speeches that stunt individual identity (56). These statements give ample proof that the post-colonial scenario of third world nations like India reflects the reminiscence of colonial culture. The role of belief systems and myths in shaping individuals and collective psyche has a prominent place in addressing oppressive discourses. Globalization paves the way to address the issues of subaltern communities on a global level and lead to their cultural resurgence.

Children's Fantasy and The Chronicles of Narnia

Literary works written by adult writers intended for the readership of children are categorized as the genre of Children's Literature. Children's Literature is distinct from the mainstream adult literature as it has children has its central characters and the narrative depicts the perspective of the child characters. Beginning from the earliest forms of storytelling and folklore this genre extends up to digital forms like movies and graphic novels. Children's Literature includes a variety of writings ranging from toddler tales and picture books to young adult novels. These books are published and marketed according to the age group of children. The nineteenth-century marked the proliferation of this genre through writers, translation of works and their wide circulation. This included the compilations of Norwegian folk tales by Peter Asbjornsen and Jorgen Moe, the collection of tales by Brothers Grimm and narratives by E.T.A.

Hoffmann in German, similar compilations and creations of fairy tales by Hans Christen Andersen in Danish, and didactic publications by Johann David Wyss from Switzerland. The middle of the nineteenth century is often referred to as the Golden Age of Children's Literature which extended the genre beyond the constrains of didacticism and foregrounded the aspirations of child protagonists. *The Adventures of Pinocchio* by the Italian writer Carlo Collodi, *Peter and Wendy* by J.M. Barrie, *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* by Mark Twain, *The Jungle Book* by Rudyard Kipling, *The Water Babies* by Charles Kingsley and *The Treasure Island* by R.L. Stevenson; introduced child protagonists who invoked a renewed aesthetics among the masses. This is evident from the numerous translations and adaptations which were later popularized and has been doing so in the form of cartoons, comics and movies. Following the tradition of George McDonald in Children's Fantasy Literature, several writers created timeless works in this genre like *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll, *The Lord of the Rings* by J.R.R. Tolkien and *The Chronicles of Narnia* by C.S. Lewis. Children's Fantasy became popular through later writers like Ursula K. Le Guin, Dianna Wynne Jones, Philip Pullman and J.K. Rowling who authored several bestsellers.

Children's Literature and especially Children's Fantasy occupies the position of a popular literary genre relevant in the contemporary world. From the popularity of the novel series, Walt Disney movies, comics and graphic novels have proliferated the genre. Themes related to fantasy can be faithfully represented through the use of graphics and animation in movies and video games. Globalization has made a direct impact on the culture of childhood and altered aesthetics of Children's Literature as a Euro-centric one. Emer O'Sullivan in *Comparative Children's Literature* examines the changes in children's culture, which expanded internationally. Western centred

and American centred commercialization foreground the concept of the child as a consumer in the contemporary globalized world. The United States with the aid of media and agencies monopolises marketing and distribution of cultural goods for children (123). This gives the picture of Euro-centric culture overpowering the entire world especially the third world nations. The latter cultures along with their own Children's Literature seldom create a fandom in the globalized world. In such a situation the ethnic culture of marginalized communities and previously colonized nations can be highlighted by re-reading the mainstream literary texts in the light of their culture.

Children's Fantasy is itself a marginalized form of literature which is characterized by a wide range of popularity among the people of different age groups. Despite its popularity among the common masses, Children's Fantasy has not secured a prominent place in academic and intellectual circles. Textual interpretations of this genre are mostly made by literary and critical theories, whereas fantasy theories are less utilized for analytical purposes. Being a popular literary and cultural genre re-readings and interpretations made on Children's Fantasy can influence a large group of people. The solutions to the critical issues faced by marginalized communities over the globe can be effectively undertaken by the selection, reading and analysis of specific texts. As Boehemer had pointed out about the myths concerning the nature of the present world, similar ones regarding the future world can equally influence the mindset of humanity. If oppression can be invoked through confirmation to myths and belief systems, so can subversion and resistance. If understanding the present world and aeon as a dark one can create subjugation, the anticipation of a New World can result in liberation from oppressive rule. Conceptualizing such a world of emancipation should also be able to provide solutions to practical issues concerning the contemporary world. Else the whole attempt will remain unfulfilled as an impractical utopian

one. Reiterating the idea of Spivak, the attempt to correct the corrupted culture should not be confined within the practice of indoctrinating nationalism or restrictions imposed on the development of individual identity.

The aforementioned facts point towards reading and analysing texts of Children's Fantasy that reflect the theme of a New World. Fantasy Literature by its innate nature can break up existing boundaries and expand beyond the restrictions imposed by reason and logic. The texts that concern with Human Rights and work out solutions in terms of Human Values can be identified only through attempts of close reading. *The Chronicles of Narnia* in this context becomes a relevant text of research which can influence recipients all around the world. This fantasy work written by C. S. Lewis consists of seven novels which are set in Britain during World War II. *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, *Prince Caspian*, *The Voyage of the 'Dawn Treader'*, *The Silver Chair*, *The Horse and His Boy*, *The Magician's Nephew* and *The Last Battle*; are the seven novels which together are referred to as *The Chronicles of Narnia*. Among the books of Children's Fantasy, *The Chronicles of Narnia* by C. S. Lewis stands out with its unique narrative and unending popularity. This series of novels by a British author has found a place in movies, stage performances, videogames, radio and television adaptations. The uniqueness of the Narnian narratives is that it sustains a huge fan following, even amidst several other publications and bestsellers belonging to this genre were launched. The influential nature of this work often points to the instigative forces behind its creation. Lewis and Tolkien founded a group called Inklings where writers read and discussed their writings. Moreover, the influence of writers like Beatrix Potter and George McDonald can be seen as inspirational forces on Lewis in the creation of Narnian novels. Spiritual discourses and social upgradation are finely interwoven in these narratives. These novels follow the notion of

"Eucatastrophe" where, even the most devastative events connote a hopeful ending. The setting of the story is in an imaginary fantasy world named Narnia which has anthropomorphic characters as its inhabitants. The child protagonists from the real world are transported to Narnia where they go through a series of adventures. The key figure which runs through all the novels is Aslan the lion who is an epitome of Divinity. Along with the transcendental, social concerns addressed in the text enable the juvenile protagonists to find solutions to issues faced. Aslan acts as a leader and a source of inspiration for the children who overcome hazards and take appropriate decisions. Different shades between the ideal and the real worlds are represented through the societies of Narnia, Telmarines, Archenlanders and Calormenes. Critical and analytical studies reveal different levels of interpretations and many possible readings of the Narnian series. Such approaches on the novels open up concerns of humanity inherent in the text but unnoticed by readers or even scholars. Uncomplicated themes and narratives with the vividness of imagination make Narnia evergreen in the minds of readers, even in the fast pacing contemporary age.

Like a typical Children's Fantasy, the work deals with the journey of protagonists who are British children, into the parallel world of Narnia. Along with adventures in Narnia the seven novels sort out several issues governing the human world. The work written during the 1950s has anticipated critical issues of the globalized and digitalized 21st century like exploitation of the environment, domestic violence, gender discrimination, human trafficking and terrorism. Spiritual and transcendental discourses of the text are often interrelated with concerns of society. The protagonists are instigated to resolve the impending problems through self-imitativeness with minimal interference of divine providence. Narnia depicts a replica of a unified society which fosters diverse cultures and communities. It is depicted as a "Free Land" that gives

space for refugees and maintains peace with other nations. The Egalitarian nature of Narnia often tends to interpret it as a representation of Utopian fantasy. This idea is confuted by Alice Jenkins in "Getting into Utopia", where Narnia is termed as different from Utopia and Faery. The only reference of Utopia in Narnia is described as the land visited by the protagonists in the final novel of Narnian series, *The Last Battle*. Alice in the context highlights the concept of Heterotopia formulated by Kevin Hetherington. Heterotopia defies the pessimistic impossibility of Dystopia and blind optimistic confidence of Utopia, by providing a fluctuating space in between them. It defies the existing methods of hermeneutics and defies the definitions of realism, fantasy, utopian or dystopian genres. Heterotopia allows the recipients and writers to maintain their attempts to reach utopia while continuing to fluctuate between utopian and dystopian possibilities (26-35). Such an effect can be achieved in the case of fantasy works only by re-reading them from different perspectives. This also provides a practical space to enliven the concept of the New World, without being deluded by hyperbolic optimism and degrading pessimism. Heterotopic representation of the real world can be seen as reflected in this fantasy work, which is subjected to further analytical study.

Addressing and Solving Critical Issues

Ayya Vaikundar was a social reformer and spiritual leader who influenced and inspired the later reformers and movements of South India. He was born on March 12, 1809, to Veyilal Ammaiyar and Ponnumadan in Poovandanthope of Kanyakumari which belonged to the State of Travancore. The parents were forced to rename him as Muthukutty, instead of the superior nomenclature Mudichoodum Perumal [Crowned King], which the high caste lords forbid them to use. Since childhood, he was well aware of social evils like caste discrimination, unethical taxation, forced labour and

gender inequality; and raised voice against such injustices. He created awareness among the masses, especially the downtrodden segment of society to resist injustices imposed by the local government and their colonial masters. Following a sudden epiphanic revelation on March 1, 1833, Muthukutty emerged from the sea of Thiruchendur as Ayya Vaikundar to dissolve the evil that has dawned upon humanity. The following eighteen years of social activities lead by Ayya Vaikundar stands as a testimony of his efficiency as a social reformer. His teachings united all the people of all castes and instilled self-respect in them. This enabled the marginalized sections of society to resist the exploitative measures and laws of authorities. Following the complaints from the local authorities, Vaikundar was imprisoned by the King of Travancore but was forced to release him after 112 days. Ayya Vaikundar refined the traditional concept of *Dharmam* as uplifting the downtrodden and practically succeeded in evoking a socio-cultural revolution based on this value. Common meal system, Upper Cloth Revolt, right of worship, education and healthcare for the marginalized sections, empowered them to procure the basic rights denied by the exploiters. Ayya Vaikundar left his mortal body on June 2, 1851, and his birthplace began to be addressed as reverentially as Swamithope [Grove of the Lord]. Despite being an illiterate person emerging from the lower section of society he was able to initiate reform movement of South India and successfully implement social changes from the grass-root level. Thus, Vaikundar stands as a role model to activists, governments and people in general.

The reform movement initiated by Ayya Vaikundar is known as Ayyavazhi. Ayyavazhi means the path of *Ayya*, where the Tamil word *Ayya* connotes many meanings like Divinity, lord, father, a common reverential address and even used as an abbreviated form of Ayya Vaikundar. Ayyavazhi is based on the teachings of

Vaikundar, which can be traced from textual resources like *Akhilathirattu Ammanai* and *Arul Nool*. The movement synthesizes spirituality and social wellbeing as mutually and interconnected entities. It functions on the cardinal value of *Dharmam*, which is interpreted as "uplifting the downtrodden". *Anpu* [Love and Compassion] is foregrounded as the cornerstone for establishing Unity and Harmony among the entire humanity. Ayyavazhi works for dissolving the discriminations and exploitations based on religion, caste, creed, gender, social status and occupation. The establishment of Samathuva *Samajam* in 1838 marked an official expression of the movement in society. The movement worked for and became successful in the eradication of social evils like gender discrimination through the Upper Cloth Movement. Political exploitations like unethical taxation and forced labour were destabilized by creating self-confidence and awareness among common people. Through the common meal system and common sacred well of Muthiri Kinaru, Ayyavazhi created a sense of unity by defying caste discrimination and social discrepancies. Vaikundar consecrated Mirror and Lamp for worship in worship centres known as Pathis, where people of all religions and castes were allowed entry. Social service activities were conducted in Pathis and they served as spots for imparting education to the lower sections who were denied formal education. Ayyavazhi condemns the worship of beasts, images of clay, evil spirits, animal sacrifice and blood oblations. The movement is based on the worship of Singular Divinity underlying in the entire creation and inherent in each being. Ayyavazhi anticipates the advent of the Golden Age referred to as *Dharma Yugam* which is characterized by the unification of the entire creation. The statement "One World, One Aeon, One Language, One God, One Caste, One Religion, One Community, and One Government", by Vaikundar reveals the prime importance

attributed to the value of Unity and necessity of every individual to work for inward and outward transformation.

Scholars like Velayudhan Panikkassery in *Anayatha Deepangal* identifies Ayya Vaikundar as a renaissance leader, social revolutionary and spiritual master who emerged from downtrodden section of society. Vaikundar enabled people to break off the bondages and taboos imposed upon them by developing self-esteem and unity among them. He instigated public awareness against the unjust rule of the local government and their British colonial masters, which denied the civil rights of the lower caste people. How could a person think in such a way, even before one and a half centuries before renaissance movements budded in India? Anybody who studies the impeccable ideas and methods of action of Ayya Vaikundar is ought to think so. All the works he did became ideals for the later renaissance leaders. But he did not have any idols to look upon. Everything manifested from within his mind (13). Ayyavazhi can be and is being subjected to studies of various dimensions like social, political, anthropological, philosophical and religious. The discourses inherent in the movement plays a significant role in uplifting the marginalized communities and creating self-awareness among individuals.

Reading *The Chronicles of Narnia* as a text of Ayyavazhi can reveal the heterotopic dimension of the text. The followers of Ayyavazhi still lead their lives based on a heterotopic space maintained for more than two centuries after the demise of their leader. They always anticipate the advent of *Dharma Yugam*, which is characterized by an egalitarian world devoid of oppression and exploitations. Narnia holds a parallel reference to the Golden Age which was created as the result of human pursuit. Ayyavazhi too believes in the role of human beings to practice a life of dignity and adhere to the value of Dharmam, which would lead to the dissolution of the present

evil aeon of *Kali Yugam*. Here the concept of the present age as evil one is subverted by belief in the ideal *Dharma Yugam* and actions plans are suggested to people to constantly upgrade contemporary society. Ayyavazhi proves as a practical remedy to the colonial culture of corruption that continues to linger in the present post-colonial era.

Euro-centric shades of *The Chronicles of Narnia* can be demystified by approaching the text with a reformative school of thought like Ayyavazhi. Inherent discourses of marginalization and attempts of subversion can be identified and appreciated by this reading. The major character Aslan who is popularly visualized as a Christ figure and the popular notion of interpreting the Narnian series as a Christian text is questioned through this research work. Parallel reading of the Golden Age of Narnia and the *Dharma Yugam* of Ayyavazhi highlights the necessity to address all existing issues of humanity, instead of concentrating on specific ones. Globalization and the trend of Americanized cultural dissipation are contrasted with the concept of the New World as depicted here. Here the New World is not merely an egalitarian one, but it is based on global harmony that gives equal opportunity and space to all cultures and communities. The study tries to analyse the scope of a total transformation of the world which includes metamorphosis of the landscape and the mindscape. Practical application of Human Values is affirmed as the remedy to solve critical issues of humanity, which makes Human Rights accessible to all individuals. Ayyavazhi can be understood as a perfect tool of interpretation as it has already proved its potential by invoking social reformation in South India and has also heavily influenced the later socio-cultural movements.

The study extends the limited scope of text within euro-centric and American circles, to the entire world by including the concerns of marginalized sections.

Accordingly, the transformation of the present world is impossible without uplifting the downtrodden. Rosemary Jackson points out in *Fantasy: The Literature of Subversion*, that the real transformation of society is possible by re-reading the works of fantasy (10). The research attempts to unravel the inherent potential of Children's Fantasy by analysing and interpreting its inherent discourses. The child within the adult and the adult in the child are all addressed through the study which maintains the synthesis of aesthetic and analytical aspects. Myths, images and symbols are analysed along with parallel reading of narrative themes. Interpretation of the Narnian series through various literary and critical theories becomes indispensable to analyse multiple dimensions inherent in the text. Such an effort can be narrowed down by analysing the text with Ayyavazhi which is multi-dimensional and inclusive by nature.

Research in Brief

The Chronicles of Narnia is a series of seven novels written by C.S. Lewis, which occupies a prominent position in Children's Fantasy Literature. Along with the aesthetic and religious connotations attributed to the texts, the fantasy world depicted in them reflects critical issues relevant to the real world. A close reading of the narratives helps to identify various aspects of individual and social life inherent in the text. Resolving them involves them a Healing process which varies textually and contextually, intending to transform the present world. Re-reading the Narnian narratives can reveal multiple dimensions of meaning and propose solutions to impediments stagnating the advent of a New World.

Data collection method was employed to collect printed and online resources like books, journals, periodicals, newspapers, blogs, forums and websites. Field visits were conducted to collect resources and conduct interviews of persons concerned with

research topics. Seminars, conferences and workshops related to the research topic were attended and research papers were presented, to have a deeper knowledge on the subject. Language study and translation were undertaken to access and interpret the resource materials of Ayyavazhi in the Tamil language. Theory of Self-Actualization by Abraham Maslow was used to understand the relevance of spiritual discourses in the conditioning of human psyche. Cultural Studies was employed to analyse NWMs [New World Movements] like Rastafarianism, Jehovah's Witnesses, Santhigiri and Sanmarga Philosophy, which distinguish themselves from NRMs [New Religious Movements]. Thematic criticism was used to analyse the common themes of NWMs, which were subsequently analysed with contextual relevance. Among the various theories related to Fantasy, the concept of primary and secondary worlds was identified as the fundamental one upon which other theoretical formulations were based upon. The seven books of the Narnia series were analysed by the "Grammar of Fantasy" by John Clute to understand the variation in the degree of Healing in each of them. *The Lion. The Witch and the Wardrobe* was identified as the narrative which depict complete Healing. The same was identified as the primary or proto text of *The Chronicles of Narnia* based on the formulations of Peter J. Schakel and Colin Manlove, which is substantiated by thematic analysis of other six Narnian novels. Thematic criticism is employed to identify the following issues from the Narnian series: economic exploitation, social discrimination, political oppression, religious monopoly and malpractices, environmental exploitation, terrorism, human trafficking, domestic violence and gender discrimination. A comparative analysis of each of them in the text is made through Ayyavazhi, which reveals the approach towards the Healing process. Post-colonial concepts of "cultural corruption" by Gayatri Spivak, "enculturation of myths" by Elleke Boehemer and "Dharmic Protest" by Ranajith Guha help to understand the

issues of post-colonial cultures in the contemporary world, which extend the scope and space for *Ayyavazhi Dharmam*. Reader Response criticism enables to understand the extent of fan following for the Narnian series especially in India and examines changes in the reading culture of the present world.

The thesis entitled *New World philosophy of Narnia: Recognition and Resolution of Crisis* is divided into five chapters including the Introduction and the Conclusion. The research work begins with Chapter 1, which is the Introduction. This provides insights into the fundamental nature of the study conducted. The chapter highlights the concept of the New World which is the core topic of the study. The anticipations of a Post-apocalyptic world are described as a common topic of interest for the scientific and religious communities. The ideal nature and egalitarian nature of the New World is compared with the contemporary world characterized by Globalization. Influence of Globalization on Children's Fantasy is identified as a Euro-American centric one. Children's Literature, especially Children's Fantasy is highlighted as a popular genre in the present global context, following the digital explosion which includes graphics and animation. Hence it is utilized as an instrument of social refinement by invoking its inherent potential for transformation of the world. *The Chronicles of Narnia* becomes a fine selection which deals with the concept of transforming the present world into a New Egalitarian World. Ayyavazhi is selected as the interpretative tool, which has proved its potential in initiating the social renaissance in South India. The chapter also highlights the necessity of this re-reading which foregrounds heterotopic discourses and saves the fantasy text from being trivialized as a Utopian one. The chapter also provides a summary of the contents of each chapter and describes the methodology adopted for the research.

The second chapter entitled 'Fantasy and the New World', examines various theories related to Fantasy Literature. The genre Children's Fantasy is examined to point out its potential in incorporating transcendental discourses. The Narnian novels are mapped with fantasy theories and the "Grammar of Fantasy" by John Clute is selected as an interpretative tool. The theme of the New World is analysed with relation to New Religious Movements [NRMs], to identify the existence of New World Movements [NWMs]. Rastafarianism, Jehovah's Witnesses, Sanmarga Philosophy and Santhigiri are examined to formulate common characteristic features of NWMs. The reasons for selecting *The Chronicles of Narnia* as the text for study and Ayyavazhi as the interpretative tool is explained.

Chapter 3 is titled as '*The Chronicles of Narnia*: *A Text of Ayyavazhi*'. Here a comparative study of the Narnian series is made with the Ayyavazhi movement. The criticisms against C.S. Lewis and the Narnian books are examined and answered through critical evaluations made on the text. An overview of the textual narratives is provided along with a brief biography of the author. The transcendental discourses embedded in the text are evaluated based on available resources and critical studies related to life and ideologies of Lewis. The function and values of the Ayyavazhi movement are described along with a brief overview of the life history of Ayya Vaikundar. Comparative analysis of *The Chronicles of Narnia* and Ayyavazhi is made by identifying common characteristic features of NWMs in them. Parallel readings of mythography and symbolism are made, which confirm the Narnian series as a text of Ayyavazhi.

The fourth chapter titled 'The New World of Narnia: Recognizing and Healing Crisis', analyses *The Chronicles of Narnia* through Ayyavazhi to identify and solve critical issues. The chapter examines and resolves ambiguity in the order of reading

the Narnian books, by adopting a parallel reading for convenience of the study. John

Clute's "Grammar of Fantasy" is applied to identify the variation in the degree of

Healing in each narrative. Based on critical studies and aforementioned formulations,

The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe is identified as the primary or proto-text of the

Narnian series. The text is analysed through the tool to examine the Healing process

of various issues of the real world as reflected in the fantasy text. *Ayyavazhi Dhar-*

mam is identified as the New World Philosophy which proposes solutions to critical

issues through practical application.

      Chapter 5, is the Conclusion of the study. Here the popularity of the Narnian

series in the contemporary world is revealed and examined, which includes the Indian

context. The contemporary scenario of the Ayyavazhi movement and its socio-politi-

cal ramifications related to it are described. Concerning the abovementioned facts,

this chapter reveals the significance of this research, which inspires to re-evaluate the

text and the movement according to the present context. The scope and significance of

this study are discussed, which opens up new perspectives and approaches towards

the topics of research.

Chapter Two

Fantasy and the New World

"As a literary term a fantasy means any narrative that deals with impossibles and pre-ternaturals" (Lewis *An Experiment* 50).

Fantasy bears a legacy as old as human civilization. It is an undeniable fact that literary and cultural discourses all over the world have incorporated fantasy in various ways. Fantasy is often comprehended and defined by relating it to the idea of reality. Reality and fantasy are mostly viewed as contradictory to one another. Imagination marks the beginning of fantasy, whereas imagination comes to halt with reality. The degree of imagination determines the generic difference between the factual description and literary creation. Therefore, fantasy as a literary creation can be understood in detail only by analysing the concept of reality. Before going further deep into the realms of fantasy, it is necessary to understand the relevance and nature of reality in the contemporary world.

Conceptualizing Reality

Rationality and logical thought process are considered as the parameters which determine whether a text or context is real or not. Readers, as well as critics, unanimously equate logic with reality. Jacques Derrida, the exponent of deconstruction theory questions the existence of absolute reality and the preconceived notion of fixed meaning. He explains reality through retrospection of the concept of mimesis put forward by western philosophers like Plato and Aristotle. Derrida states that there is a logical factor which creates a certain order and also makes a distinction between the imitated and the imitator. "Logic" thereby foregrounds the imitated as more real than what imitates it. In spite of the numerous apparent challenges faced by this logical

order, Derrida affirms that no system has ever been able to make an explicit distinction between the imitator and the imitated. Nor has the imitator been successful to assert its superiority over the imitated (Derrida, "The First," 140). This provides a vision of how the real and the logical have been considered as central factors even in cultural forms of art, literature and philosophy. But the advent of digital age and technological boom has unveiled the anti-logical potential of the logical science. As a result, the conception of reality has now become heavily problematized. Derrida observes that this is not only present in the literary and cultural realms, but in the personal and professional lives of individuals. He also observes that contemporary age bears witness to an upheaval in science and technology which has blurred the notion of reality and profession by creating a virtual platform through global networking (Derrida, "The Future," 47). Globalization and digitalization have intervened and hijacked the conscience of each global citizen. Now it is quite common that an individual is unable to come to conclusions on what is real and what is deceptive. Like Derrida, this phenomenon has been deeply analysed by the writer and critic, Umberto Eco. The essay collection entitled *Travels in hyperreality* provides a close reading of the artistic and cultural institutions established by the United States of America. Here, Eco calls it as "The Industry of Absolute Fake", which is established by consistent activity through which the organic is replaced by artificial replications and imitations of the real. The fabricated reality exudes a deathless halo which is made to resemble the truth (56). Coincidentally this provides a cross-section of the contemporary globalized world. This is the reason why Jean Baudrillard calls the contemporary period as the age of digital simulation, where the real entities are replaced by their multiples which are seemingly more real than their originals. The binary of real/imaginary is highly problematic and irrelevant, due to the intervention of technological innovation which

disseminates simulation. Jean Baudrillard explains simulation as a process which inhibits every real function, by replacing the real with reduplicates that contains all finite insignia of the real. Thus, the binary of real/imaginary become highly problematic and irrelevant with the advent of the hyperreal. Hyperreality is insulated from the imaginary and it destabilises the difference between the real and the imaginary. Any kind of such distinction is created through simulation and continuous cyclical repetition of models (Baudrillard *Simulations* 4). This affirms that hyperreality created from simulation thwarts the necessity to produce the real itself. Especially when there is an abundant flux of reality, it is logical to think that disintegration of reality provides room for the replenishment of fantasy. However, in this fast-moving world, the "Death of reality" cannot be termed as the birth of fantasy. Baudrillard also observes that the contemporary world is tending towards a point where everything fantasy and open-ended thought process will be annihilated. People can actively engage with all such ideas and these conceptualizations will be spontaneously fulfilled virtually. Aspirations, imaginations and ideal conceptualizations will have no place in the future world. According to Baudrillard, such an endeavour to create an absolute defect less future world without any imperfection is a "Perfect Crime" (Baudrillard *The Vital* 66-67). This proves that literary critics like Baudrillard express their concern about the nature and evolution of our future world. It is also thereby emphasised that of the reality/fantasy paradigm, the latter has a prominent role in affecting the cultural consciousness of the entire human race. Hence the concepts of new world and fantasy become relevant topics of discussion in the contemporary age.

Fantasy in its literary and cultural forms has been lately recognised as part of the academic and critical study by the western world. Along with the artistic and aesthetic values attributed to it, fantasy has now emerged as an independent genre of

literature. This new trend proposes retrospections and re-readings of folk tales, epics and oral narratives of various cultures around the globe. Literary and critical theories are often used as tools of interpretation for works of fantasy and Children's Literature. Theorists and critics have interpreted and evaluated the nature and scope of fantasy in the contemporary world. Therefore, interpretation and analytical study of fantasy has become textually and contextually relevant.

Defining Fantasy

Fantasy has been defined in various ways. Almost all the definitions are based upon the relative nature of fantasy, by comparing it with the notion of experiential reality. Following this tradition, Kathryn Hume defines fantasy in *Fantasy and Mimesis*; "Fantasy is any departure from consensus reality, an impulse native to literature and manifested in innumerable variations, from monster to metaphor" (21). This definition acknowledges the fact that the innate nature of literature itself is fantasy in the form of imagination. Each literary genre exhibits variation in the degree of its fantasy content. From the marvellous fairy tales to the realistic biographical accounts, fantasy remains the undercurrent of literary creation. Literature without the element of fantasy would be simply factual reporting of information. The definition by Hume provides an answer to the classification of fantasy into watertight genres of high fantasy and low fantasy.

Contrary to theoreticians like Tzvetan Todorov, Eric S. Rabkin makes a distinction between Fantasy and the fantastic. In *The Fantastic in Literature*, Rabkin states that the fantastic is a powerful instrument used by the author who reverses the ground rules to create fantastic worlds. He explains the fantastic as the wonder experienced by readers when the basic rules governing the narrative experience are

spontaneously and directly inverted. Quantity of the fantastic varies along with different literary genres. Among them, Fantasy is a genre which expresses the fantastic in the highest degree and explores all its possibilities (Rabkin *The Fantastic* 41). This approves the fact put forth by Hume that, Fantasy shares its space with all literary genres. The fantastic is recognized as a literary device which has been used by creators as well as critics of fantasy. The theoretical foundation of Fantasy Literature can be understood from systematized studies conducted on this subject.

Origin of Fantasy

Origin and evolution of fantasy are correlated to the evolution of human civilization. In Fantastic Worlds, Rabkin traces the origin of the fantastic through three consecutive genres: myth, folk tale and fairy tale. He explains that the myth evolved into the folk tale and the latter later evolved into the fairy tale. The instinctual necessity of the people is identified as the source behind the creation of these genres. A deeper understanding of these genres is necessary to understand the fantastic in detail.

Myth: Myths bear their origin since prehistoric time. Myths define and determine the consciousness of specific cultures that gave shape to them. They were originally in the form of oral narratives which were later written down. The concept of worlds parallel to the real was incorporated by all cultures through myths. The initial forms of myths were meant for aesthetic purpose and explanations were later added to them.

Folk Tale: Along with the evolution of cultures, myths too incorporated more complex shapes and explanations, which lead to the birth of folk tales. Unlike the sanctified nature attributed to myths, they are considered to be of human origin. Initially, they originated in the form of songs, especially work songs.

Fairy Tale: As the degree of sophistication increased the canon of folk tale got reshaped into the category of narratives known as fairy tales. This genre has a limited number of audiences, mostly children. The narratives are comparatively more conventional and are more complex. Symbolic significations are given more importance than the literal meaning.

In all these genres the fundamental issues addressed are the same. Rabkin also points out that myth continues to be the most popular among people. The folk tale has a lesser number of followers and in the case of the fairy tale, the number becomes still narrow (Rabkin *Fantastic Worlds* 27-29). Significance of the fairy tale and its contribution to Fantasy Literature is acknowledged by critics and writers of fantasy. The core concepts related to fantasy and the rules governing its creation has not changed even after the advent of various theories and creative experiments made in Fantasy Literature.

Theorizing Fantasy

Conceptualizing and theorizing abstract concepts like fantasy is seemingly a difficult task. In spite of this, definite frameworks and recurring patterns have been observed by writers of fantasy. Writers of Children's Literature extensively employed fantasy in their works. Thus, the early studies on fantasy were primarily by writers of Children's Fantasy. Later studies observed fantasy as a concept beyond generic restrictions. In spite of extensive studies and theories made on fantasy, they are very less used as interpretative tools by scholars and academicians. It is rather curious to observe that texts of fantasy are analysed by literary and critical theories, rather than by fantasy theories.

"On Fairy Stories" by J. R. R. Tolkien is considered as a classical work in the field of the Fantasy Literature. Through this work, Tolkien opposes the predetermined notion of marginalizing fairy tales are trivial literature merely meant for the entertainment of children. He argues that fantasy surpasses the limitation of age restrictions and provides an aesthetic platform for everybody. Tolkien says that fantasy is the instinctive activity of human beings. Fantasy is considered as an almost pure form of art, as it utilizes the power of imagination to its highest possibilities. He reveals the nature and scope of fantasy from the creative and critical points of view. Through this work, Tolkien proves that fantasy is a higher form of art and one of the most powerful literary form.

He observes that fantasy provides a sense of freedom which is indeed beneficial and not a harmful or escapist one. Fantasy helps the readers to look beyond the restrictions imposed by canonical ideas and dogmas of the real world. Tolkien notes that fantasy introduces and depicts the concept of a world parallel to the real world. So he refers to the real world as the "primary world" and the parallel world of fantasy as the "secondary world". Creators of art forms rearrange the materials and rules of the primary world. Creators of fantasy are termed as sub-creators, as they employ a higher degree of imagination to induce the experience of strangeness to the readers. He calls the creator of fantasy as a "wordsmith". This wordsmith uses words to create images and expressions to effectively narrate and vividly project parallel worlds.

Rules true to the secondary worlds are unique and strange when compared to that of our real world. The readers are able to enter into and experience the secondary world with the secondary belief. The readers can interact with and experience the secondary world if they can outlive the restrictions imposed by logical thinking and believe in the existence of secondary worlds. Unlike the temporary enjoyment through a

willing suspension of disbelief, the secondary belief enables readers to obtain a vivid experience of imaginative power. This differentiates fantasy from other forms of art. The creator of fantasy initially creates and enters the realm of the secondary world through an extended faculty of imagination. The readers find this vivid sense of imagination as the key to re-enter into that world. Everything in the secondary world can be enjoyed and appreciated only in comparison with the primary or real world. Therefore, Tolkien emphasizes that the aesthetics of fantasy does not destroy but improves human reason which governs our real world.

Tolkien identifies four elements of fairy stories. These explain the psychological impact of Fantasy Literature on the readers.

Fantasy: Fairy stories invoke a sense of strangeness, which the readers experience in comparison with the facts of the real world. The presence of enchantment and magic invokes the effect intended by the creator, which induces wonder in the minds of readers. The element of wonder is passed on to the readers through the efficiency of expression and narrative techniques.

Recovery: The readers can perceive things more distinctly. Situations and narrative act as stimuli to the readers. Fantasy defamiliarizes the concepts and issues from the real world to approach them with fresh perspectives. The readers can look beyond the restrictions of social canons and their psychological frameworks.

Escape: Readers of fantasy do not avoid or flee from life situations. Fantasy offers a healthy escape from them, only to return after gaining renewed experiences. This empowers the readers to escape from negativities of real-life like pain, poverty, terrorism, injustice, war, sorrow, exploitation and marginalization. The temporary

escape helps them to acquire skills and return to face real-life situations more efficiently.

Consolation: Fantasy narratives always have a positive and hopeful ending. Tolkien refers to it as "Eucatastrophe", which is the subversion of catastrophe. The reader reaches a sense of accomplishment and finds solutions to the problems faced. The reality of life is spontaneously revealed in the mind of the reader and the search which began comes to fulfilment. This proves that, remediation and empowerment of human psyche is the prime motive of fantasy (32-72).

The aforementioned observations by Tolkien influenced the later theoreticians of fantasy. It was earlier mentioned that Rabkin recognises the presence of a secondary world as an inseparable element of fantasy as it evolved from myths. Farah Mendlesohn's classification of fantasy is also based on the interaction between the primary and secondary worlds. In the Theory of fantasy narrative by John Clute, the stages of recognition and healing are correlated to the aspects of recovery and consolation by Tolkien. Apart from them, many more theoreticians have influenced and enriched the field of fantasy.

Classification of Fantasy

Fantasy has been classified into many subgenres which in many cases share common spaces. Hence the attempts to classify fantasy into watertight compartments have remained unsuccessful till now. Nevertheless, fantasy has been classified into different categories by theoreticians for making a systematic study of the subject. Among the earlier theoreticians, Tzvetan Todorov makes an attempt to classify fantasy into interconnected categories. In *The Fantastic: A Structural Approach to a*

Literary Genre, Todorov classifies fantasy into primarily three subgenres: The marvellous, the fantastic and the uncanny.

The Marvellous: The narratives that are based upon transcendental phenomenon and magic, falls into this category. Events and characters are experienced by confirming to the existence of supernatural phenomena. The marvellous can be explained only through the unique laws of the supernatural. Myths, legends and folklore are often included in this genre. The marvellous is explained as the supernatural.

The Uncanny: The uncanny is characterized by experiences undetected but existing in the experiential world of readers. It is characterized by hesitation to move beyond the realms of the logical and rational mind. The experiences provided by the uncanny narratives can always be explained by laws of the real world. Gothic and horror narratives are included in this genre. The uncanny is explained by the term, the natural.

The Fantastic: The fantastic narratives are suspended between the marvellous and the uncanny. Thus, it can be described as: the unnatural, which lies in-between the natural and the supernatural. No explanations are possible to describe the happenings of the fantastic world. This genre of the fantasy highlights the limitations of reason and challenges realism. Feelings of wonder and strangeness predominate the narratives.

Todorov further expands these categories by classifying intermediate genres which share common features. Thus, he classifies fantasy into Pure Uncanny, Fantastic Uncanny, Fantastic Marvellous, and Pure Marvellous. Pure Fantasy is considered to be located in between Fantastic Uncanny and Fantastic Marvellous. Through this classification, he tries to analyse the vast genre of fantasy in terms of referential scales

and tries to logically establish these genres with suitable examples. The tales of Edgar Allan Poe are included in Pure Uncanny. Works like *Saragossa Manuscript* by Jan Potocki are considered as Fantastic Uncanny. Fantastic Marvellous is substantiated through works like *Vera* by Villers de I' Isle Adams. Fairy Tales and Science Fiction are considered to be Pure Marvellous (41-57).

Although the aforementioned classification has been questioned by theoreticians like Rosemary Jackson, the study by Todorov exists as a relevant reference. Lewis Carroll who falls into the category of a writer in Pure Marvellous has significantly influenced Todorov to make this classification of fantasy. In the Preface to *Sylvie and Bruno Concluded*, Carroll comments on three states of consciousness in readers who approach a text of fantasy.

Ordinary State of Mind: The readers are unable to have an experience of supernatural characters.

Eerie State of Mind: In this state of psyche, the person is conscious of the external situations of the real world and at the same time can experience and interact with supernatural beings.

Trans Like: In this state of mind the person is not conscious of the actual world. The person interacts with supernatural beings in an imaginary world. The imaginary world, in this case, maybe a recreation of real-world scenario or maybe purely an otherworldly one (Carroll).

Here, the Ordinary State of Mind is remarkably related to the Uncanny, Eerie resembles the Fantastic and Trans like is related to the Marvellous. Carroll as an established writer of Children's Fantasy, points out that the Trans Like State of mind, enables the readers to enjoy and experience Fairy Tales. It is thus clarified that

Todorov was influenced by classification of Carroll and secondary world is a funda-

mental factor behind these classifications. Todorov partly accepts the presence of a

secondary world but is reluctant to completely immerse in it. On the other hand, Car-

roll calls for an unrestricted experience of the secondary world. He emphasizes on the

proliferation human of imagination to its highest possibilities.

Monitoring the modes of interaction with the secondary world, Farah

Mendlesohn classifies Fantasy Literature into four categories. This classification is

based on the rhetoric elements, strategies of narration and the resultant effects of fan-

tasy texts on readers. *Rhetorics of Fantasy* is considered as the primary text in which

Mendlesohn explains each of these categories in details. Through the following taxon-

omy, the theoretician challenges the preconceived compartmentalization of fantasy as

children's/adults and light/dark, which thrive as a part of commercialization. Fantasy

is classified as Portal Quest, Immersive, Intrusive and Liminal. Apart from these a

fifth category of The Irregulars is also identified. They comprise of in-between genres

with common properties and many of which work beyond the patterns of classifica-

tion.

The Portal-Quest Fantasy: Characters enter the fantasy world through a gate-

way or a portal. Portal-Quest need not be a one-way journey from the real world to

the fantasy world. The portal is an opening in between the primary and the secondary

worlds for interaction. This type of fantasy is goal-oriented like a programmed game,

with detailed descriptions. The characters undertake a journey linearly, to achieve a

particular goal. In many cases, irrational activities are elaborately explained logically.

The readers and the protagonist share the journey and gain experiences together. At a

particular instance in the narrative, the protagonists recognize the fantasy world in a

better way which enable them to reshape it. In this kind of fantasy, the narrator

describes the story through the eyes of the protagonist. Thereby, readers are familiar-ised with the vision of the author through subjective interpretations of the fantasy world. *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (1950) by C. S. Lewis is undoubtedly cited as a fine example for the Portal-Quest Fantasy.

The Immersive Fantasy: In this type of fantasy, the story is devoid of any ex-planations by the narrator and the readers make assumptions based on the sense of re-ality. Readers gain experiences and travel along with the progress of the protagonist. They understand the context through the perspective of the protagonist in the form of hints and speculations. Mendlesohn states that an evolved form of Immersive Fantasy becomes indistinguishable from Science fiction. The element of fantasy is assumed and, in many cases, the plot contains the least degree of fantasy. The characters them-selves feel that they are immersed in the supernatural or magical. The readers too are endowed with an experience of magic all around them and there is no possibility of escape from it. *Titus Groan* (1945) by Mervyn Peake and *Ash* (2000) by Mary Gentle are examples of the Immersive Fantasy.

The Intrusion Fantasy: This kind of fantasy is characterized by breakage into the danger zone, from a safe and familiar space. Fantastic is always distinguished from reality and the former may enter the primary or the secondary world. The con-textual changes after the departure of fantasy can be predicted. The fantastic element in many cases is only visible to the protagonist. The intrusion of fantasy employs an investigative mode with deep levels of description. The descriptive language used in this fantasy is coherent with its structure and reflect the element of wonder. In many cases new protagonists appear along with each intrusion of the fantastic and different varieties of wonder or dreadfulness are described. The protagonist becomes

competent by continuously contesting with the intrusion and overcoming it. *A Scattering of Jades* (2002) by Alexander Irvine is given as an example of the Intrusion Fantasy.

The Liminal Fantasy: This is considered as the rarest form of fantasy. The narrative which is apparent to be normal is assumed to be fantastic by the readers. Fantasy is continuously maintained in the narrative and the readers are unable to demystify fantasy from reality. Liminal fantasy is rooted in the real world and the fantastic is unexpectedly spontaneous. The magical elements cannot be guessed by the readers and protagonists do not exhibit amazement. This genre and its narrative context are established by how the characters react to the magical elements. The protagonists are familiarized with the presence of fantasy while the readers are left with the sense of strangeness. Liminal Fantasy is the least fantastical among all categories of fantasy and is a threshold genre. It is comprised of fuzzy sets and subsets of which many share common spaces. Armitage family stories by John Aiken and "I did It" (2001) by M. John Harrison are cited as fine examples of the Liminal Fantasy (xix-xxv).

Theory of fuzzy set by Brian Atteberry marked a turning point in Fantasy Literature, which solved many inherent ambiguities. As mentioned earlier this theory influenced theoreticians like Farah Mendlesohn and has since become inevitable in the analysis of fantasy. This theory is based on the concept of the fuzzy set as used in mathematics. *In Strategies of Fantasy*, Atteberry explains his theory of fuzzy sets in fantasy. Here, the narratives which contain similar tropes that exhibit impossible experiences are arranged towards the centre. As it moves to the periphery the narratives with lesser fantastical elements are arranged. At the very edge, the readers are always in an ambiguity, whether they are reading fantasy or not. The narratives are arranged in such a way that those with common properties intercede and those with similar

properties are arranged near to one another (12-13). The classification represents an

effective model for critics as well as readers of fantasy.

Theorizing Fantasy Narrative

Theoretical developments in the field of fantasy would remain incomplete

without referring to the Theory of Fantasy Narrative by John Clute. Like some of the

aforementioned theoretical formulations, this theory does not evaluate certain catego-

ries as efficient and others as deficient. This theory by Clute works as an instrument

that evaluates the progress of fantasy narrative and its impact on the readers. In *The*

Encyclopedia of Fantasy, John Clute traces the narrative development through the

steps of Wrongness, Thinning, Recognition and Healing. These stages are identified

as cardinal reference points in the evolution of the narrative, which constitute what

Clute refers to as "Grammar of Fantasy".

Wrongness: In a fantasy narrative, Wrongness is characterized by a disorderli-

ness created through outside intervention. Even though it is possible to send back this

intrusion, it is not initially sensed by the characters and considered as something triv-

ial. It is characterized by changes in the landscape, alteration of the entire world, the

victory of tyrant lord, and aberration in the dimensions of time. Bondage faced by

characters and changes in their form by mistake or as a punishment is also the feature

of Wrongness. As a result of this, a thinning process begins in the world. According to

Clute, Wrongness is the important core factor feature of the secondary world, in Pure

Fantasy.

Thinning: Thinning can be detected when disorderliness increases in the world

and time has been tampered. Diligent measures are made by characters to check this

activity, with the hope that a redeemer would emerge to bring back order in the af-

flicted world. The alternate world is mostly threatened by a narrowing effect, in High

Fantasies. Often the characters feel the effect of Wrongness and they mourn over it. Fertile earth is degraded into its parody. This is often through the agency of an envious and malicious lord. In cases such as Low Fantasies, thinning is characterized by the gradual loss of magic, exploitation of humans; and the emergence of class difference and conflicts. Massive death through secular or technological agencies; and the triumph of authoritative religions penalizing other forms of worship, also amounts to Thinning. Time becomes distorted, in narratives concerning time travel and parallel universes. If fantasy is at a crossover point, then Thinning becomes the focus of attention.

Recognition: Clute relates the term recognition with the concept of anagnorisis by Aristotle. He points out that fantasy being non-mimetic literature, gives utmost importance to this scenario of transformation. Recognition is a moment of revelation, where both artistic creativity and the plot become visible in their highest grandeur. Irresolvable mysteries in the plot are unveiled and the characters can shed their ignorance. The way out of chaos becomes visible and it has yet to be practically undertaken. Clute says that Recognition is a point in the fantasy narrative, where the plot becomes meaningful by itself. In many fantasy narratives, the protagonists become aware of their own experiences and their presence adds meaning to the narrative. The characters, especially the protagonists recognize that solution has already been revealed, which they now come to realize. It is considered as the point of transformation, where dual realities play in a single instance.

Healing: Clute equates Healing with the concept of Eucatastrophe by Tolkien. Thus, it conveys a sense of consolation and hope. It precedes the most dreadful experiences and subjugation under tyrannical rule. Healing is characterized by the revival of the protagonist from forgetfulness, transformation into original form, escape from

the imprisonment of a tyrant lord, the fertility of barren landscape (Clute and Grant).

Clute later replaced the term Healing with Return (*Encyclopedia of Fantasy* (1997) –

Healing). Return is characterized by the transformation of the land and social order

into its previous form, similar to the context before the intrusion of Wrongness had

taken place.

The aforementioned theoretical formulations are effective in the interpretation

of Fantasy Literature and scaling down of its ambiguities. The attempt of theoreticians

to fit the trans-logical fantasy into the framework of logic, is helpful to understand

and appreciate the creative nuances of fantasy. The classification by Mendlesohn ex-

plains a fifth category of The Irregulars, which gives a picture of new trends emerging

in Fantasy Literature. This confirms that it is not an easy attempt to classify the latest

works of fantasy when the creativity of writers surpasses theoretical studies.

Mendlesohn considers Portal-Quest as the least significant form of fantasy, as

the author speaks through a third-person narrator. She points out that authoritative

ideas are superimposed on readers. On the other hand, the Liminal Fantasy is termed

as the most distilled form of fantasy, considering the highest degree of rhetoric used

in theme and structure of this category. But it is equally true that the Portal-Quest

Fantasy is the most simplistic in structure due to its linear nature. This category is also

identical to the storytelling form of narration often traditionally ascribed as grandmas'

tales. Such a type of narration is the typical characteristic of Children's Literature,

which is least complex in structure. This category of fantasy can be understood and

enjoyed by readers of all age groups, including the youngest. Therefore, this genre can

be seen as an intersection of fantasy and Children's Literature. Tolkien's and Rab-

kin's theories on Fairy tales, foreground and analyse this category of Children's Fan-

tasy Literature.

Children's Fantasy Literature

In the western cultural context, the children writing for children is quite unusual. Children's Literature is always a bipolar interplay between the children and the adults. In the study entitled "Intertextuality and the child reader", Christine Wilkie-Stibbs points out that in Children's Literature, the relationship between the writer adult and the reader child is characterized by an imbalance of power. The adults think, evaluate and execute things on behalf of children. The authors who write for adults as well as the children, are themselves adults. It is a well-known fact that the children are controlled and stimulated by the adults, through their literature. Wilkie-Stibbs, points out that the authors of children's books are also in turn influenced by their childhood experiences and books familiarized in their childhood (179-188). Children's Literature provides an intertextual space where the two polarities of adulthood and childhood mutually interact. This literary genre provides a space for the grown-ups to actively operate between their real identity as grownups and their ideal conceptualization of childhood.

The term Children's Literature is not as obvious as it seems to be. To define it as a literary genre concerned with books exclusive for children is a misleading definition. The books written for children of the youngest age can be read and appreciated by people of all ages. This means that Children's Literature is a more expansive literary genre than those genres made exclusive for the adults. It is equally an obvious fact that the categorization of literary works into Children's and Adults' are intentionally done by the adults themselves. In the study entitled "Theorising and theories", David Rudd identifies that the notion of the child is a problematic one and Children's Literature is a hybrid concept. He denies the concept of a 'universal child' and points out that it is a product of cultural construction. Adults can identify essentially an inherent

child within, with predictable characteristics and cravings. This is referred to as "constructive child". The other position is termed as "constructed child", which is created by the adult world. He positions Children's Literature as a threshold genre that exists between identities of the "constructed child" and the "constructive child". The writers who create these texts and the adults, who read them, engage with discourses of the intrinsic child (15-26).

Having understood that Children's Literature is a threshold genre with many ambiguities, it is easy to analyse Children's Fantasy Literature. It is a well-known fact that fantasy has been incorporated in oral narratives and later in the written narratives for children. It is also well-acknowledged fact that fantasy narratives constitute the major quantitative and qualitative plethora of this genre. We have already seen that in the process of theorizing, fantasy bears its roots from children's narratives. This is evident from the theories of Tolkien and Rabkin, who trace a generic journey from myth to modern fantasy. Children's Fantasy has been analysed and appreciated through the formulations of later theoreticians like Mendlesohn and Clute. Systematic studies on this specific genre reveal the significance of its crossover nature.

In *Fantasy Literature*, Pamela S. Gates identifies the features that distinguish Children's Fantasy from Adult Fantasy. The presence of an alternate world and the central role attributed to children is the uniqueness of the former. Children's Fantasy contains characters with which children can organically identify; like the presence of adults, anthropomorphic animals or animated toys and fantastic beings. The most important feature is the presence of a child protagonist. Gates also identifies two criteria for evaluation of Children's Fantasy. The narrative should be able to create an effect of wonder and strangeness that arrest the attention of readers. Fantasy is typically characterized by subversion of rules governing the physical world. Efficacy of

Children's Fantasy depends on the ability to create internalized logical order of its own. The fantasy creates its unique rules upon which the narrative relies upon and functions.

Apart from this, Gates identifies the following as six characteristic qualities of Children's Fantasy. These characteristics describe the uniqueness and potentials of this genre.

1. Fantasy is mimetic by innate nature and it borrows images from the real world.

2. Creation of fantasy is unique and original as it recombines the pre-existing elements into new formats. Hence each fantasy creation is original and unique.

3. Fantasy is termed as a power of conservation, due to its ability to re-construct by deriving from previously stored memory.

4. Fantasy is free and it ensures freedom. It is not restricted by time or limitations of the material world. It spontaneously creates the impossible and opens up the possibilities for multiple futures. Fantasy destabilises canonical establishments and restrictions imposed by traditional fundamentalism. Thus, it acts as a medium of revival and transformation.

5. Fantasy is unfettered by the finiteness of the real world; it can desire for the infinite, transcendental and divine experiences. Thereby, fantasy can express and inculcate religious discourses.

6. Fantasy is a subversive form of literature that operates beyond social taboos and conventions. It questions traditional norms and the underlying hidden agenda, thereby making the objectives clearly visible (5-9).

The aforementioned formulation by Gates seems to incorporate characteristics which are seemingly contradictory and yet are factually verifiable as true. Fantasy, on

one hand, subverts traditional establishments and challenges orthodoxy. On the other hand, it fosters religion and transcendental aesthetics. It is indeed paradoxical that religion which is often associated with orthodoxy and traditional canons is enriched by the subversive genre of Children's Fantasy. To resolve this ambiguity, the concept of religion by Gates has to be closely analysed. In this context, religion is not to be confused with spirituality, which is transcendental by nature. Alike the common masses, even some of the academicians use the terms religion and spirituality interchangeably. The correlation and difference between the aforementioned concepts can be understood from studies by experts on religion and spirituality and their effect on children.

Spirituality in Children's Literature

Religion and spirituality are always subject to variations according to cultural differences across the world. Social, political and historical factors have to be considered to analyse religions which are often subject to changes along with time. Hence a comprehensive outlook is necessary to make a systematic analysis of these phenomena and their affective significance on juveniles. "Difference between Religion and Spirituality in Children and Adolescents" by Friedrich Schweitzer tries to effectively address and evaluate the interrelationship between spirituality and children. He observes the literary creations by both the juveniles and the adults can describe the spiritual experiences of children. Analytical studies on these texts show that individual spiritual experiences are not limited by social or domestic influences, and these experiences reshape their consciousness and perspectives. The youngsters of the western world disapprove all institutional, authoritarian and dogmatic forms of religion; as the latter is unable to approve or address spirituality based on individual needs and experiences of the transcendental (121-122). Individual spiritual experiences have been a subject of study from a psychological perspective. Contrastive and complementary

nature of spirituality and religion can be verified by an analytical study of individual experiences.

In *Religion in Personality Theory*, Frederick Walborn examines the formulations of various psychologists on religion and spirituality. The book examines the therapeutic value of religion, spirituality and mysticism in the development of human psychology. Among the psychologists, Walborn describes the changes in the conception of Abraham Maslow that happened during the studies conducted in his lifetime. Maslow began with religion as a set of practices. As his studies matured along over time, Maslow identified spirituality as an essential inherent content of religion. Religion and spirituality are indistinguishable in many cases. Mysticism which is an amalgamation of these two can be more distinctly identified. He does not approve the concept of religion for the masses, which has been criticized by psychologists like Freud and Skinner. Maslow, on the other hand, formulated the theory of Self-actualization, where the individuals can refashion their identity from self-centeredness to other-centeredness. Spiritual experiences enable Self-actualizers to expand their limited identity and create inclusive space for fellow beings. They gain the ability to understand and appreciate diversity, without being judgemental (263-277). This verifies the fact that spirituality is an expansive and inclusive phenomenon which can reshape human consciousness. From the perspective of psychologists, spirituality is relevant due to its therapeutic value, rather than logical proof of an existing God.

It can be inferred from the former studies that spirituality is an expansive body of experience which may or may not overlap with traditional forms of religions. Spiritual discourses lay a powerful, reformative and therapeutic influence on children, especially through the medium of Children's Literature. Following up the formulations of Gates, Children's Fantasy not only ascribes the transcendental, but it destabilises

conventional canons of society through its subversive nature. Social issues are addressed by writers of Fantasy through texts which are conventionally referred to as Social Fantasies. Similarly, critics express their social concern through re-reading of fantasy through literary and critical theories. In most of these cases conscious or unintended attempts are made to purge fantasy texts of their spiritual discourses. The reason behind this trend of secularization has already been highlighted by Schweitzer, where the western world has lost credibility in organized and dogmatic forms of religions. From Walborn, we can understand that the transformation of human psyche makes the role of spirituality relevant in the contemporary world. Hence it would be a justifiable attempt to re-read Fantasy texts through the perspective of spiritual movements with social significance, instead of traditional organized religions or literary theories.

Conceptualizing the New World

The idea of an ideal new world is common to almost all fantasies and many of the spiritual movements. The contemporary world is prolific with certain spiritual movements which are termed as New Religious Movements. New Religious Movement is abbreviated as NRM, which originated in the 1960s in the western world as a reaction against dogmatic religions. Both fantasy and the NRMs have another common feature, which is the subversion of traditional canons. Their socio-cultural relevance has to be examined in correlation with an alternate reality of the secondary world. It has already been mentioned that secondary belief and the secondary world are the basic components of fantasy. It is also evident from Clute that fundamental design of fantasy narratives is intentional in the transformation of society. His coinage of Healing [Return] suggests the establishment of a new social order after disorderliness or Wrongness has been recognized and alleviated. Similarly, the central concern

of many New Religious Movements is the creation of a New World, often a post-apocalyptic one. A close examination of NRMs can reveal their potentials and limitations in the transformation of the contemporary world.

Change in the religious orientation of the western world and their contact with eastern systems of spirituality has been observed as a result of globalization. Intercultural confluence through the invention of global networking and digitalization has created a steady increase in the number and members of NRMs. This fact has been verified by Peter Clark in *Encyclopedia of New Religious Movements*, which explains that the concept of NRM originated as a euro-centric coinage. This term was attributed to rapidly growing newly established minority religions in contrast to the official or mainstream religions. The term NRM is not to be confused with the NAM or New Age Movement. The latter constitute a category of globally widespread NRMs which are often attacked by dogmatic religious authorities like the Catholic Church. Similarly, many NRMs face oppositions from traditional religious groups, on the ground of destabilizing their religious canons and decreasing the number of their believers. Yet it is a mistake that all NRMs are rapidly growing. Some of them have disintegrated and others can sustain several members. Generally, all NRMs are more open and secular systems, with lesser canonical impositions. They endow special freedom to people who can practice traditional religions and simultaneously be a practitioner of NRM. This is because the generally the NRMs do not condemn traditional belief systems, but propose a change in perspective towards religious canons. Clark says that the expected degree social change prophesied by NRMs has yet to be verified in most of the cases. NRM in no longer a phenomenon that is exclusive to the western world. Ethnic NRMs have emerged in many countries across the world. NRMs act as mediums to spread globally accepted techniques like yoga and lifestyles. They play a vital

role in reshaping public consciousness and re-conceptualizing social well-being (Clarke).

The concept of New World has a significant role in defining the ideologies and functions of NRMs. *New Religious Movements: A Documentary Reader* identifies the following features which define the distinct nature of NRMs and emphasize the necessity for new changes. These characteristics also portray sharp deviations from traditional dogmatism, intending to create more free space for individual experiences. Each NRM many incorporate one or more of these features with ethnical and cultural modifications.

New Understanding: The concept of the universe is renewed in which each individual has a significant role. Individuals can find their path towards development and fulfilment of life. By understanding the spiritual dimension within the physical world, people can understand cosmic harmony. These movements are influenced by eastern spirituality which became popular through earlier sects and organizations that got rooted in the western world.

New Self: Human birth is seen as a privileged position with which spiritual potentials can be achieved. The mundane physical bondages can be transcended through practices and individual gains psychological stability. The movements which follow this path are influenced by eastern systems like yoga and hence they are used for the treatment of ailments.

New Family: The NRMs are oriented as an intrinsic family where the members interact and construct their alternate pattern. Some of them have elders who are consulted by others, while the latter are referred to as children. In many cases, these

movements face opposition from the public who feel them as a threat to existing family systems.

New Society: They are in endeavours to transform the society by providing justice to the underprivileged people and work for changes in existing institutions. Often, they are related to Biblical allusions and the members believe that their movements would make a global change. Social resurgence and human values are divinely inspired. Most of them have their roots from Africa and the movements are reciprocations against oppressions faced in the past.

New World: Many of these movements are inspired by *The Book of Revelation* and Gaia theory, where the members expect a total transformation of the world after the apocalypse. Biblically inspired groups predict that the creation of a new earth and a new heaven will happen at psychological and physical levels. Total transformation of the earth is expected by supporters of Gaia ideology, which mostly is expected through the medium of new evolved races. It is also observed that these five characteristics are interlinked both sequentially and cyclically (Daschke and Ashcraft 11-13).

As far as primary importance is given to complete resurgence of society, the most important among the aforementioned will be the New World. The others are primary steps towards total transformation or imply partial and temporary changes. Even though NRMs have proved themselves in subverting traditional religious canons, as previously mentioned, critics like Clark have questioned their role in executing social reformation successfully.

New World Movements

The New Religious Movements that foreground the concept of a New World can be conveniently termed as New World Movements. Practical relevance and possibilities of the New World Philosophy inherent in New World Movements can be understood by closely examining them. Here, the term New World Philosophy is used to designate the common characteristics which determine the nature of the New World and the interrelationship of humans to it. New World Philosophy can be understood from the following features, which can be traced from NRMs, by understanding their spiritual and social insignia.

1. An egalitarian world which integrates and unifies all dimensions of human life like, social, political, economic, cultural and religious.

2. The world devoid of violence, suffering and hypocrisy.

3. Harmony fostered among not only human beings but, established through the unity of all forms of creation.

4. All are endowed with qualities like self-reliance and self-respect.

5. Specific issues faced by individual beings and the society, in general, are recognized and they are effectively addressed through the implementation of proposed solutions.

6. Massive destructive and cataclysmic events are expected to happen, which instigates human beings to outlive them through proper measures.

7. Spiritual discourses are practically incorporated and human values form an integral part of each individual.

Each movement may vary its emphasis on the social or spiritual aspects in different degrees and incorporate the aforementioned in different permutations. It is near to an impossible task to examine all New World Movements which may include

NRMs and spiritual reform movements. I have chosen the following New World

Movements to examine the discursive content of New World Philosophy. Rastafarian-

ism, Jehovah's Witnesses, Sathya Gnana Sabai and Santhigiri are chosen based on the

cultural background of the researcher. The first two have their roots in cultural con-

texts different from India and have made a global impact on nations like India. The

other movements have their base in South India and have made an influence on com-

paratively limited groups from foreign nations. Similarities and variations in the con-

ceptualization of New World Philosophy can be understood by analysing these move-

ments. This would be helpful to get a clear perspective about the New World and its

intricacies, as reflected in New World Movements.

Rastafarianism

Rastafarianism is a socio-religious movement that originated in the 1930s in

Jamaica. The movement is a reaction against British colonization, which is character-

ized by social mobilization of Jamaican subaltern tribes. They consider the Bible as

their authentic text which is re-read and interpreted in an Afro-centric way. Rastas or

the followers of Rastafarianism consider Haile Selassie, the former Emperor of Ja-

maica as a divine incarnation as promised in the Bible. They believe in Singular Di-

vinity who is referred to as Jah, and the African subcontinent or Ethiopia is consid-

ered to be "The Promised Land". The National Flag of Ethiopia is used as their Reli-

gious symbol, signifying the Biblical allusion of rule under "The Lion of the Tribe of

Judah". Reggae music and Bob Marley made this movement famous throughout the

globe, as Marley was a staunch follower of the movement. Belief systems of each

Rastafarian school are different due to variations interpretation of scriptures. Three

major Rastafarian sects are popular in the contemporary world, The Nyabinghi Order,

The Bobo Shanti and The Twelve Tribes of Israel, apart from other ethnic community

groups in Africa. Yet many of the Rastas are not confined to any particular order. Rastafarianism also exhibit affinity with eastern belief systems and the concepts like reincarnation.

Apart from uniting people, this movement demands active participation in socio-political resonances around them. "Towards a New Map of Africa through Rastafari "Works"" by Jahlani Niaah, traces the historical significance of this movement. Rastafarianism rose as a nationalist movement that created a momentum in common people to study the historical and cultural legacy of African continent. Niaah points out that the political movements like the Battle of Atwa and Italo-Ethiopian War were interpreted by Rastas through Biblical scriptures. Hegemonic communities of officials and corrupt systems of government were termed as Babylon, which is rooted in the spread of falsehood. Hence, Haile Selassie, the Black emperor became the saviour Christ figure who is contrasted against the diabolic white British monarch and the Dictator Mussolini. Decolonization of African subcontinent and repartition movements are heavily indebted to Back-to-Africa movement lead by Rastas like Mortimer Planno. Rastafarian movement played an important role in the revival of African symbolism and cultural lifestyle (189-192). Stand against oppression and subversion is relevant in the present world, which highlights the significance of this movement. Reggie music and Rastafarian ideologies are often recognized as expressions against social marginalization. This may be the reason behind the widespread of Rastafarianism even in non-black communities.

The belief systems and ethnic features Rastafarianism is a subject of study on various levels. This is socially and medically relevant from controversies arising from the use of Marijuana by followers. *Challenges Faced by the Rastafari Community* is a systematic study of various Rastafari groups made by CRL Commission of South

Africa, which gives an overview of the characteristics of Rastafarianism in contemporary Africa. Smoking of the herb marijuana is the part of rituals like nagging and reasoning. The latter is characterized by reciting prayers by sitting in a circle and transferring pipe for smoking among participants. The followers use this intoxicant herb for ritual based on various interpretations of biblical scriptures. Another distinguishable feature of Rastas is the wearing of dreadlocks which some of them cover with turbans. The ethnic spirit of African origin, affinity with nature, and biblical allusions of prohibiting hair cutting bear the reasons behind this feature. The colours red, gold or yellow, green and black have special connotations in this religion. This is an influence of the national flag of Jamaica since the reign of Haile Selassie, which also depicts the biblical symbol the Lion of Judah. The lion is an interconnecting symbol of African power and biblical description of Jesus Christ. This is also a reason why Rastas wear dreadlocks which indicates a lion's mane. This helps the individuals to reaffirm their connection with Divinity. Each individual is considered as the representation of divinity and no one is superior to another. This is evident from the term "I and I", which equalizes social status and divisions under the rule of Singular Divinity, Jah. Most of the followers adopt the rule of Ital for their diet. They stick on to natural organic food and avoid synthetic and chemical produces. Alcohol is considered as an intoxicant which is unnatural and harmful to the human system. Marijuana is considered as a natural herb which instigates reasoning, whereas coffee and milk are categorized as unnatural. Rastas usually prefer a vegetarian diet and many are pure vegans (11-13).

This belief system is influenced by eastern schools of thought like Buddhism and Vedanta. Rastas' belief in re-incarnation and innate existence of Divinity in each individual, confirm the above-mentioned fact. William David Spencer explores the occidental influence of Rastafarian ideology, in *Dread Jesus*. He confirms that,

Hinduism has influenced the movement although not in its entirety (73). Cultural plurality and underlying unity within cultural diversity are also the common features of Rastafarian and Indian spirituality. This reveals that the movement is mosaic and incorporates intercultural modifications. Similarly, the passage of time since its origin, Rastafarianism too has become subject to many modifications.

Following the time of the earliest preachers of Rastafarianism like Leonard Howell and Marcus Harvey, this movement has incorporated many changes in the present global context. Change of global situations from slavery and colonization to globalization has affected the perspectives of this movement. "Rastafari in a Global Context" by Richard C. Salter examines the contemporary relevance of the movement through textual resources and case studies. In spite of the presence of elders in many Rastafarian communities and the centrality ascribed to Biblical scripture, Rastafarianism cannot be categorized as an orthodox system or a dogmatic religion. Salter describes the movement as "orthognostic", which gives freedom to the followers to create their views using the process of reasoning. Apart from "mystical revelation" experienced by the believers, all the descriptive rituals are superfluous. Therefore, this system is not based on religious conversion and the members are held together by the commonality of experiential beliefs. Reinterpretation and redefining individual identity is characterized by Rastafarian "I", which is the path to salvation. This is necessary in the contemporary globalized world where concepts like a global citizen and global community compel individuals to re-evaluate their restricted notion of identities (19-25). Such analytical works bring out the dimension of self-transformation which results in the transformation of the world. Here spirituality is synthesized with the social resurgence, which provides the scope of liberating oppressed sections on global level.

New World according to Rastafarianism will be a post-apocalyptic one, following the descriptions of *The Book of Revelation*. Unification and equalization of the entire human race are expected without any traces of racial, religious, political and social discrimination. The world will be an Afro-centric one, which will bring back the lost privileges of the natives who will find their Promised Land. The latter is not a geographical entity but a state of mind according to many Rastas. The world will become a single political entity under the rule of Messiah who may or may not be Haile Selassie in his second coming. Jesus Christ is given central importance as the saviour sent by Jah the Singular God. But these concepts are much different from orthodox Christian ideas of euro-centricity. The centrality of leaders or leader is unimportant as personal reasoning process governs the decisions and actions of the individual. The New World will thus be free both within and outside. There is no question of any kind of violence, dominance and exploitation. Following the concept of "I and I", all persons will have equal social importance and status. The natural way of life will come to prominence by replacing artificial and inorganic ones. There will be complete harmony of entire humanity with nature, like the pre-colonial time of Africa. The rule of Haile Selassie marks a beginning step in the total transformation of the world, which unites social and political awareness. Thus, a deep understanding of social and political context is emphasized along with spiritual experiences like mystic revelations. Systematic adherence to these values will enable Rastas to find their existence in the forthcoming world.

Jehovah's Witnesses

Jehovah's Witnesses is a movement which originated from Bible Students' Movement in Pennsylvania during the 1870s. This group was led by Charles Taze Russell who was also the founder of Zion's Watch Tower Tract Society in 1881. The

organization was named as Jehovah's Witnesses under the presidentship of Joseph Rutherford Franklin after Russell. Franklin refined many views including his previous conceptions and reinterpreted the biblical scriptures. This society undertakes the publication of literary materials related Jehovah's Witnesses, which includes books, pamphlets, brochures and the official journal *The Watchtower*. www.jw.org is the official website of this movement, which allows access to resources in multiple languages. The movement has a centralized governing body with is organizational headquarters in Warwick, USA. The organization is run by a hierarchy which consists of elders, ministerial servants, students, publishers and associates. The movement holds the Bible as the scriptural authority and believes in Singular God, Jehovah. This rejects the doctrinal notions of Christianity, like the Holy Trinity and permanence of human spirit. Interpretations of Biblical scriptures are based on their symbolic relevance rather than factual ideas, whereby subverting the ideas like "Hellfire" and the "Heavenly Kingdom of God". The movement is renowned for religious activities like preaching and baptism, even though social works like disaster relief programmes are also organized.

To understand the belief systems of Jehovah's Witnesses, a comparative study with traditional Christian belief will be helpful. Both of them adhere to the scriptures of The Holy Bible but interpret it differently. Jehovah's Witnesses consider *The New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures* as the authentic translation of the Bible. This translates and interprets the scriptures as per the vision of the organization. In the scholarly work *Reasoning with Jehovah's Witnesses*, Kevin R. Quick compares the variations in scriptural interpretations and distinguishes the characteristics of Jehovah's Witnesses. Unlike Christians, they do not believe Christ to be God and have no faith in the Holy trinity. Christ is the foremost creation and son of Jehovah, the only

God. The only one worthy to be worshipped is Jehovah, the almighty God and not his son Christ. The latter should be approached as the medium to reach God. Human soul or spirit is perishable and will disintegrate along with the death of the physical body. Christ was not be resurrected in body but spirit, and faith in him without good actions is insufficient for salvation. The advent of Christ in invisible form happened during 1914 when the Kingdom of God was established. God has promised an Earthly Paradise for human beings and not an otherworldly heaven. All will be resurrected and judged for their deeds on earth and the unfit will not be tormented in Hellfire, but will just be non-existent. The term "Witnessing" is denoted by preaching work which is ought to be done regularly by followers. The message to be preached is that the Kingdom of God is now established on earth, everlasting life will be granted to humanity and earth itself would be the aspired paradise for all (100-106). This has been a challenging thing to many traditional believers of Christianity, who consider the movement as blasphemous. Especially when Jehovah's Witnesses claim that they are the only channel through which the Word of God is being revealed, invites hostility from other religions as well.

This movement has faced numerous persecutions throughout history due to stands taken by the followers in social, political, medical and religious fields. The most notable one is the opposition faced by the Third Reich of Adolf Hitler during the Second World War. Studies reveal the Nazi movement persecuted the Jehovah's Witnesses as they too opposed other religions. In *Jehovah's Witnesses and the Third Reich: Sectarian Politics Under Persecution*, M. James Penton tries to find out the reasons behind the hostility by tracing historical background of this religious movement in Germany during the reign of Hitler. Penton argues that numerous persecutions were faced by the followers of this group, which had already received hostility

from the public even before the advent of Hitler. The then-president of this movement J. F. Rutherford initially tried to negotiate with Hitler, by supporting their attack on the League of Nations including the Jews. On the negative response from the Nazi parties, Jehovah's Witnesses openly unleashed propaganda against the Third Regime. It is noted that the persecutions were the result of such policies and ended along with the breakdown of the Nazis. Penton points out that the Jehovah's Witnesses are least interested in the study of their history or acknowledging their own mistakes. He concludes that the reason for hostility towards this movement is the result of their policies and change in stands (236-239). Following the tradition of their past, the movement still faces challenges, especially due to commitment to their ideologies. Abstinence from blood transfusions, disregard to armed forces and non-commitment to patriotic events has led to legal issues affecting the movement. Non-corporation with other religious beliefs has also created a social gap between Jehovah's Witnesses and the rest of society.

There are criticisms against the movement from Christian as well as secular groups. The change in their prophetic statements regarding the advent of the New World is a major reason for this. For example, various dates have been predicted by Jehovah's Witnesses which prophesied the end of the world and all proved to be incorrect. The official website of Jehovah's Witnesses tries to explain to this through scriptural authority. There have been misunderstandings of Jehovah's words among followers since the time of Moses, which was later corrected and clarified by God himself. Thus, the organization claims to acquire more insight from their erratic interpretations of the Bible through the grace of God and thereby gain a clearer view of his words (JW.ORG). However, it is hard to prove the authenticity of the movement in predictions and beliefs which are subject to constant change. The movement always

attributes their views as guided by God and yet it is paradoxical that mundane errors creep in. Taking personal responsibility for such ideological fluctuations is helpful to a great extent in creating authenticity and avoiding criticisms of false prophesying.

The growth of this movement into a well-structured organization, from a humble beginning, indicates the increasing acceptability in spite of persecutions and criticisms faced. The followers, especially in the present world, face challenges from nations with state religions and secular governments. *Jehovah's Witnesses and the Secular World* by Zoe Knox examines the role of Jehovah's Witnesses in subverting and influencing sectarian state policies. It is observed that as a result of the unique lifestyle adopted by the followers and employment of public ministry system devoid of the clergy; increased the popularity of the movement. Leaving aside the spiritual interpretation of the followers, Knox affirms that the growth of this movement was equally the result of legal and illegal oppositions faced on a worldwide scale. This organization unconsciously unleashed a campaign against the marginalization of minority religious communities. Attacks on non-militant and socially insulated communities like Jehovah's Witnesses reveal the underlying hegemonic state policies and hidden agendas of orthodox religious groups (3-6). The study is relevant especially when there is a steady increase in the number of followers of Jehovah's Witnesses, in contrast to the receding public interest in mainstream religions. Thus, the movement which represents a minority religion is often subjected to scrutiny by changing policies of governments, especially when the latter is renowned for its apolitical stance.

New World is a concept which has primal importance for Jehovah's Witnesses, which is evident from their scriptural translation titled *The New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures*. The followers indulge in spreading the word of Jehovah as the procedure to transform the present world. Though social service programmes

and disaster relief activities are conducted, the spiritual aspect of the movement seems to be predominant. This movement subverts traditional notions of Hellfire and Paradise, revealing its rational side. The belief in the mortality of the human soul normalizes human beings with other creatures. A forthcoming world which is devoid of all human sufferings like ageing, disease and death, creates a sense of hope in the believers. By conceptualizing Kingdom of God on earth under the rule of Jesus Christ, the movement tries to harmonize the spiritual and material dimensions of life.

Sathya Gnana Sabai and *Sanmarga* Philosophy

Sathya Gnana Sabai was an institution established in 1872 at Vadalur, by the renowned social reformer and spiritual leader, Ramalinga Swamikal [Arul Prakasa Vallalar]. He simultaneously formed an organization named Samarasa Suddha *Sanmarga* Sathya Sangam, which still continues to function by providing social service activities. Vallalar is recognized as a pioneer in social renaissance movement in Tamil Nadu, who played an important role in the eradication of caste discrimination and other social malpractices. He is also known as a poet and musician who created a new genre of lyrical poetry known as *Vallal Padalgal*. The movement pioneered by Vallalar synthesized spiritual experiences and social welfare, which worked on all levels of social strata. Sathya Gnana Sabai continues to serve the poor and needy with food on a daily basis. The organization also works for eradication of social evils and malpractices. The followers of Vallalar adopt a vegetarian lifestyle, adhere to non-violence and worship the Singular Divinity in the form of Arul Perum Jyothi [Supreme Grace Light]. The major teachings of Vallalar are available from resources like *Thiruvarutpa* and *Jeeva Karunya Ozhukkam*.

The movement subverted colonial canons as well as traditional hegemonic stances. Therefore, Vallalar condemned caste system and the apartheid philosophy of racial discrimination. The historical significance of this movement is analysed by S. P. Annamalai in *The Life and Teachings of Saint Ramalingar*. The religious reforms undertaken were explicitly against all institutions of discrimination, thereby upholding the necessity of a Universal Religion. Samarasa Suddha *Sanmarga* Sangam functioned as an organization that undertook the reform activities and social service programmes as per the injunctions of Vallalar. He explicitly criticized the affluent and elite sections of society for the unsympathetic attitude towards the poor and desolate. Sathya Gnana Sabai at Vadalur was established to foreground not only an all-inclusive spiritual outlook but also to practice charity work through poor feeding. Vallalar put forth his teachings through discourses, poems and essays with firm conviction, and never resorted to forceful standards of preaching (40-45). The philosophy influenced and resonated among the common masses. *Sanmarga* Philosophy of Vallalar aimed in the complete development of individual beings. This inspired the common masses to undertake activities of social and religious refinement. *Sanmarga* Philosophy is essentially a New World Philosophy which works for the transformation of individual consciousness beginning with the transformation of society. Universal fraternity and Global Harmony were concepts unheard in the 19th century, which were propagated through this movement.

Teachings of Vallalar were against polytheism and caste system of Hinduism. The movement anthropocentric and exploitative culture of colonial Christianity. Even though this movement subverted traditional religions, it was not antithetical to them. Modification and reformation of existing cultural systems was the major aim of *Sanmarga* Philosophy. This has been the subject of systematic studies like that made

by G. Vanmikanathan, who enlists core features of this movement, in *Makers of Indian Literature: Ramalingar*.

1. Worship of Singular Divinity.

2. Divinity should be worshipped in the form of Light through the medium of pure devotion.

3. Worship of minor deities and other godheads should be avoided.

4. All should refrain from violent modes of worship which involve harming or killing living beings.

5. Avoid the consumption of meat to stop others from killing living creatures.

6. All discriminations based on gender, race, caste and class should be avoided.

7. Understand the equality of all forms of life, as all are equal in the view of Divinity. Unlike the western concept of Universal Fraternity within human beings, this movement believes in the brotherhood of all living creatures.

8. Feeding the impoverished and appeasing their hunger is the path towards salvation or God's Kingdom.

9. Dead people are not to be cremated but buried.

10. All kinds of superstitious ideologies and practices are to be avoided.

Pure devotion is the same as pure wisdom with which the individual can attain Divinity. This path is known as *Sanmarga* which views no distinction between individual life and the life of other living beings. Vallalar reinterprets traditional concepts of devotion in *Sanmarga* Philosophy. Human devotion to Divinity is possible only through devotion to fellow living creatures. Being a slave of all living beings, living as a good offspring of all beings, friendship with them and understanding one's own life as inseparable from them; constitutes the quintessence of this path (62–63). This movement considers social and spiritual dimensions as complementary and not

contradictory to each other. Non-violence is foregrounded to its highest possibilities where the individual makes an organic evolution from social to spiritual dimensions.

Sanmarga Philosophy also is unique regarding the evolution of human consciousness which affects the human body. The changes in the human body as a result of spiritual practice are commonly related to the yogic system. Such systems defy boundaries of religion and nationality. Harry Holloway in *Christian Yoga* compares the eastern systems of spirituality with western religious belief systems like Christianity. Holloway visited and examined the institution of Vallalar at Vadalur, where it was observed that social service activities are being conducted in an effective manner by volunteers. Apart from organizational centres, many individuals have made service as part of their daily routine and personal lives. The lifestyle of non-violence and adherence to spirituality are being followed by many who are inspired by *Sanmarga* Philosophy. Experiences of devotees reveal simple spiritual practices followed by Vallalar which summarizes the essence of his spiritual experiences. Devotees have witnessed Vallalar swiping aside seven sheets of cloth hung before him and then his bright reflection was seen in mirror (76-80). The seven veils of illusion have to be transcended to visualize the innate divinity which is referred to as Arut Perum Jyothi [Supreme Grace Light]. The lamp is used as a consecrated symbol of Divinity which is installed in centres of worship established by Vallalar. The use of mirror and lamp for worship can be seen as an influence of Ayya Vaikundar, a social reformer and spiritual leader who commenced the social renaissance movement in South India.

New World is a central aspiration of Vallalar and an inspiration for the followers of *Sanmarga* Philosophy. Even though he does not explicate and elaborately prophesise the dawn of a New World, many hints on the subject can be deciphered from his verses. *English Renderings of Thiru Arutpa* by A. Balakrishnan sheds light

on the subject through English translations of verses from *Thiruvarutpa*. Vallalar says

that the time is coming near when Supreme Grace Light will endow Everlasting Bliss

and deathless life to human beings on the physical level. For securing this experience,

human beings must work on the path as expounded by Divinity. Vallalar testifies the

inefficacy of scriptural knowledge and racial taboos which will result only in conflicts

and argumentation. He invites the attention of entire humanity to embrace the path to-

wards absolute perfection as the Supreme Lord is going to reveal his magnificent

glory abundantly. He asks everyone to cultivate unity, as everlasting justice, enlight-

enment and bliss is going to be granted through direct experience by The Supreme

Lord. For this Vallalar suggests an action plan that involves individuals to follow the

path towards eternal compassion, by eradicating all kinds of sufferings from fellow

beings. By imparting joy truth and peace to them, each individual transform them-

selves into embodiments of compassion. Along with this, Vallalar demonstrates to

sincerely pray and sing the glory of Supreme One, who transcends the denominations

of gender (144-146). As Divinity is referred interchangeably as Mother and Father,

Vallalar envisions the same in the concept of a New World where entire cosmos is

united beyond restrictive identities of gender, caste and religion.

Santhigiri

Santhigiri is an organization that works on behalf of Santhigiri Asramam es-

tablished in Pothencode, Thiruvananthapuram by Navajyothi Sri Karunakara Guru.

Asramam or the hermitage consists of residents who consist of renunciates as well as

householders. Karunakara Guru is renowned as a spiritual leader who worked for so-

cial welfare through spiritual awareness. This institution found by Guru is deemed as

a Social and Scientific Research Organization by the Government of India. Empower-

ment for women and the revival of cottage industries are undertaken as part of

economic activities. However, the major activities are categorized as *Annadanam*, *Atmabodhanam* and *Athurasevanam*. Offering food to visitors daily at various centres is referred to as *Annadanam*. Redirection and orientation of spiritual experiences in spiritual aspirant is referred to as *Athmabodhanam*. *Athurasevanam* is service of sick people through health camps and medical institutions run by the organization. Guru refers to the ideology of the organization as a universal spirituality beyond religion, which is relevant to householders and seekers of truth. Worship of Singular Divinity or Brahman through the medium of Guru and devoid of scriptural authority, is its peculiarity. Personal spiritual experiences in the form of *Darsanam* [Spiritual Insight] is the path adopted by followers, who also perform service activities within and outside hermitage voluntarily.

The *Asramam* was established by Guru to materialize his vision and action plan for humanity. The intention behind the establishment of this organization has been published in *Santhigiri: Spiritual Magazine*, entitled "Asramoddesyam" [Purpose of the Hermitage]. This summarizes the proclamation made by Guru in 1968 when Santhigiri Asramam was formally established.

<div align="center">

ആശ്രമോദ്ദേശ്യം

</div>

ആദ്ധ്യാത്മികാനുഭൂതി കുട്ടികളിലും മുതിർന്നവരിലും ഉണ്ടാകുന്നത് തെറ്റുകൂടാതെ മുൻപോട്ട നയിക്കുക.

അവരിൽ ഉണ്ടാകുന്ന അനുഭൂതികൾ എങ്ങനെ ലോകത്തിനു പ്രയോജനപ്പെടണം, എക്കാലവും അവ എങ്ങനെ നിലനിർത്താൻ സാദ്ധ്യമാകും, അതിനു സാദ്ധ്യമാകുന്ന മാർഗ്ഗം സ്വീകരിക്കുക. ഇതിൽ സ്നേഹം ഏറ്റവും പ്രധാന ഘടകമാണ്. സഹജീവികളോട് മാത്രമല്ല ഒരു ജീവിയോടും ദ്വേഷം തോന്നാതെ മനുഷ്യരോടെന്നപോലെ എല്ലാ ജീവികളോടും ഹൃദയാനുകമ്പയുള്ളവരായിരിക്ക. എല്ലാവരോടും മിത്രഭാവം, കരുണ, ക്ഷമ, അഹങ്കാരമില്ലായ്മ, സുഖത്തിലും ദുഃഖത്തിലും ഇളകിപ്പോകാത്ത മനഃസ്ഥിതി ഇവ ഉണ്ടായിരിക്ക. ഇത്രയുംകൊണ്ട് നിങ്ങൾ നിങ്ങളെയും ഈശ്വരനെയും സ്നേഹിക്കുന്നവരായി മാറും.

മനസ്സ്, വാക്ക്, പ്രവൃത്തി ഇവ മൂന്നിലും പരിശുദ്ധി നേടാൻ ശ്രമിക്കുക. ഇതിന്റെ ഫലം ഈശ്വരനിൽ നിങ്ങൾക്കും ഈശ്വരന് നിങ്ങളോട്ടം സ്നേഹമുണ്ടാകും.

അതിയായ സന്തോഷം, അസൂയ, ഇവ ഭയപ്പെടേണ്ട വസ്തുക്കളായി സൂക്ഷിച്ചുകൊള്ളുക. എന്തെന്നാൽ അവ നിങ്ങളെ ഈശ്വരനിൽ നിന്നും അകറ്റും.

ശത്രുവിലും മിത്രത്തിലും മാനത്തിലും അപമാനത്തിലും സ്തുതിയിലും നിന്ദയിലും തുല്ല്യരായിരിക്കുക. ഈ ലോകം തന്നെ തറവാടെന്ന കരുതുക.

ആതുരശുശ്രൂഷയും സേവനസന്നദ്ധതയും നമ്മുടെ വ്രതമായിരിക്കണം.

ലോകഗുരുക്കന്മാരും അവരുടെ വാക്കുകളും നമുക്കെന്നും ആദരണീയമായിരിക്കണം.

ഈ കാര്യങ്ങൾ എല്ലാ ദിവസവുമുള്ള അനുഷ്ഠാനങ്ങളിൽ ഉണ്ടായിരിക്കണം. ഈ സംഗതികൾ ഇവിടെ പ്രസ്താവിക്കുന്നത് ഈ പരമ്പരയിൽ എക്കാലത്തും ആത്മീയ അനുഭൂതിയുള്ള ഒരു ഗുരു ഉണ്ടായിരിക്കുമെന്ന് ബ്രഹ്മത്തിൽ നിന്നുള്ള അറിയിപ്പിന്റെ അടിസ്ഥാനത്തിലാണ്.

Purpose of the Hermitage

To guide forward the spiritual experiences manifesting in children and adults.

To undertake the methods to sustain their experiences forever and make them useful to the world. Love is the most important factor among them. Not only to be compassionate towards fellow human beings but to similarly have compassion towards all living beings from the core of heart and to have no hatred towards any living creature. Be un-egoistic and be unwavering in pain and pleasure. To have a mentality that sustains: friendship with all, compassion, forbearance and abstinence from arrogance. Having all these you should be able to love yourself and God.

You should strive to acquire the purity of these three: mind, word, and action.

Beware of and guard against extreme joy, and jealousy; because they will distance you from God.

Find equanimity in foe or friend, pride or insult, praise or blame. Consider the

world as your ancestral home.

Our steadfastness should be in caring for the diseased and readiness for service.

World Teachers and their words should always be respected by us.

These things should be in daily practices. These things have been declared here

because there will always be a Guru with spiritual experience in this lineage; as

it is revealed from Brahman. (Guru, "Asrammodddesyam," my trans.; 83)

These factors are prescribed as guidelines for the followers of Guru and are re-
peated in publications of Santhigiri, for more social outreach. The lifestyle and out-
look of the followers are determined by these values, which exhibit the interconnect-
edness of the human mind with society.

According to Guru, spirituality and human society are inseparably intercon-
nected. Change in social outlook is made possible by a change in spiritual values and
practices. Santhigiri undertakes the continuation of social reformation lead by Chat-
tampi Swamikal and Sri Narayana Guru. This is clarified by O. V. Usha in an inter-
view published in the magazine *Guruprabha*, entitled "Kavithayile Athmiyasugand-
ham". Guru affirmed the faith in Singular Divinity which is the eternal spiritual path
of India. This is against the procedure of worshipping ancestors, deities and other ab-
errations of worship. Worship involving the killing of animals or humans, blood sacri-
fices, flesh, and intoxicants creates a massive impact on the human mind. These lead
human life into complexities rather than towards peace. Guru attempts to revive the
long-forgotten tradition of the path of sages which is oriented towards Brahman. Usha
refers to *Gurugita* by Sage Veda Vyasa, which emphasizes that aberrations of worship
inflicting human consciousness can be removed in the presence of a true Guru.

Material and spiritual benefits can be achieved in this path revived and propounded by Karunakara Guru. This proves to be an eye-opener for the majority of the population which is still caught up in the mesh of restrictive ideologies and actions (22-23).

Santhigiri is known for its social welfare activities and voluntary service activities, which have been in collaboration with governmental and non-governmental agencies. The service activities undertaken by Santhigiri are described in "The Vision and Mission of Navajyoti Sri Karunakara Guru" by P. R. Mukundan. Human values and reformative culture are instigated through outlets like Viswa Samskarika Navodhana Kendram for adults. Santhimahima for youth and Gurukanthi for children are organized for the development of life skills and inherent potentials. Value education of women is initiated through Gurumahima and Mathrumandalam which provides job opportunities through various professional units for the economic development of women. Organic farming and animal husbandry are organized with proper waste management where the residue materials are used in the production of organic manure and biogas. Numerous colleges and research centres are established by Santhigiri to promote Ayurveda and Siddha forms of medicine. Mobile medical camps and other free services are provided to residents of rural areas. Manufacture of traditional medicines and maintenance of herbal farms are undertaken by healthcare units. Through educational institutions, and publications Santhigiri tries to disseminate the culture of knowledge and values (Mukundan). This clarifies that, apart from women empowerment and value education, preservation of natural and environmentally friendly lifestyle is the essential values upheld by the organization through social activities. Transformations of social establishments are evoked through changes in human perspectives by the practical application of human values.

The concept of the New World is of primary importance to Santhigiri which endows responsibility to the followers to work towards this goal. Transformation of the present world should be in a progressive way and transformation of perspective is deemed necessary. For this purpose, Guru draws interconnectedness between the social and spiritual aspects of human life. *Guruvani* [Word of Guru] published in *Santhigiri Magazine* entitled "Vritam and Prayer" reveals the idea of New World and the action plan to achieve it, as per the vision of Karunakara Guru. The present age of *Kali Yugam* is considered as the right time for rectification of mistakes that have been committed by our ancestors, which have been blindly followed by the contemporary generation. Humanity will be able to enter the perfect and egalitarian age of Sathya Yuga only on correcting these aberrations. The present generation should learn from the purpose, limitations, and contributions of great personalities who had worked in the direction of uplifting humanity. Mere faith in Guru can be hazardous, whereas faith with the right perspective and action in proportion to one's ability are necessary to invoke the transformation of the world. The lineage of Santhigiri including monks and householders is directed to work on this standard, to attain liberation through action. For this purpose, children should be made competent from their early ages through the universal spiritual practice of prayer. Education without inner illumination will hamper the growth of individuals and thereby distort the world. Hence, Santhigiri must share its spiritual benefit for redirection of children within and outside the lineage (Guru, "Vritam," 5-7). Individual human beings are themselves seen as the reason for the progress and decay of humanity. Therefore, individual beings are endowed with the responsibility to transform the world, rather than leaving things in the care of Divinity. Transforming and elevating the quality of life is the quintessence of vision proposed by Karunakara Guru.

Common features of New World Movements have already been enumerated, by observing the nature of New World Philosophy in them. The concept of the New World can be better understood by identifying its relation with the present world. Rastafarianism, Jehovah's Witnesses, Sathya Gnana Sabai and Santhigiri are movements that can be subjects of study on various levels. Here, these four have been analysed as New World Movements to have a deeper perspective on the concept of the New World conceptualized by them. Along with the common characteristics, the contrastive features of these movements determine the criteria for evaluating the New Worlds represented through them. Despite common features among the four, Rastafarianism and Jehovah's Witnesses have been categorized as NRMs. The role of *Sanmarga* Philosophy has been recognized as pivotal in the renaissance of Tamil Nadu. Apart from spirituality, Santhigiri is renowned for its contributions to traditional medical systems. A close examination of these movements based on the following features reveals that these very features can be utilized as criteria for evaluating New World Movements in general.

Scriptural Authority: New World Movements may or may not be based on traditional scriptural authority. In the case of Rastafarianism and Jehovah's Witnesses, the Holy Bible is adopted as the central scriptural authority, where the latter emphasizes on routine readings. In both cases, re-readings and interpretations of the scriptures make their spirituality different from traditional Christian schools of thought. *Sanmarga* Philosophy and Santhigiri are not based on any scriptural source but follow the path laid down by their founders. Yet, their spirituality is based on the spiritual values common to traditional religions, without confirming or adopting their ritualistic and dogmatic dimensions. Approach of inclusiveness towards traditional religions,

while sustaining their own uniqueness, can be useful in most cases. This facilitates the expansion of New World Movements, which become less insolate and more open.

Subversion of orthodoxy: Subversion of dogmatic and authoritarian forms of religion is common to almost all these movements. Rastafarianism challenges euro-centric Christianity and identifies afro-centric roots of the scriptures. Jehovah's Witnesses questions doctrinal beliefs like Hellfire and otherworldly paradise, through rational interpretations of the Bible. *Sanmarga* Philosophy simplifies the contradictions and hypocrisies of world religions, by reflecting upon human values like Non-violence and Compassion. Santhigiri proposes inclusiveness of teachings from world teachers and religions, which are spiritually analysed to avoid their inherent errors. New World Movements which provide a universal space for all belief systems will be more acceptable to followers of traditional religions. Thus, dogmatic religions can make necessary changes in their belief systems and ideologies through self-evaluation.

Conformity with nature: Followers of these movements give less importance to extravagant lifestyle, by relating themselves to their ethnic native culture. This is often due to their affinity with nature, which is a practical expression of the inherent spiritual values. Rastafarians strictly avoid synthetic products and chemicals, by adopting an organic lifestyle. They promote traditional African systems of healing and manufacture native products through cottage industries. Jehovah's Witnesses lead a natural, modest way of life and avoid blood transfusion as it is considered as against natural law. Followers of *Sanmarga* also lead a simple lifestyle with an emphasis on Compassion and Non-violence. Thus, they refrain from causing death and suffering to any creature. Santhigiri is known for organic farming, animal husbandry and production herbal pharmaceuticals. The organization is known for research and propagation

of Ayurvedic and Siddha systems of natural healing. In these movements, compassion towards all living beings, foregrounds post-humanist values which are interconnected with spirituality. This is the reason why followers of Rastafarianism, *Sanmarga* and Santhigiri adopt a vegetarian or vegan lifestyle. Variation in the practice of human values like Compassion and Non-violence determines the degree of inclusiveness in each New World Movements.

Nature of Apocalypse: It was already mentioned that most of the New World Movements prophesize catastrophic events as precursors of the total transformation of the world. Descriptions and severity of apocalypse vary according to movements. It is almost uniformly recognized that the series of destructions lead to the purification of the present world and selects the people who are eligible to enter the ideal New World. Rastafarians believe in the biblical Book of Revelation and emphasize on post-apocalyptic glory rather than on impending disasters. Jehovah's witnesses do not believe in the total annihilation of the earth as they negate the concept of Hellfire. Unsuitable entities for the ideal world simply cease to exist, where eternal torment and damnation are irrelevant. *Sanmarga* Philosophy by Vallalar does not give an explicit idea about the apocalypse. His teachings encourage everyone to follow the suitable path towards perfection, as the right time is near ahead. Followers of Santhigiri believe in the prophetic statements of Karunakara Guru, which foresees certain cataclysmic events but denies the possibility of total annihilation before the advent of the new aeon. In many New World Movements, fear of mass destruction acts as the driving force to ardently strive for individual and social transformation. A balance between fear of apocalypse and hope of a post-apocalyptic world creates a comfortable space for the followers to act freely and diligently. Movements that foreground a sense of

hope, instead of emphasizing on disastrous dimensions of the transition will be more acceptable to the followers and the public in general.

Entry into New World: It is a well-acclaimed fact that only selected people do find a place in the New World. Each movement describes the criteria of selection and the methods which enable the followers to achieve self-perfection. Rastafarianism does not claim that only by embracing their belief system, can the individual can find place in the ideal future world. They believe in the doctrine of "I and I", where all are equal and embodiments of divinity. This initiates the practice of basic human values as the pathway to the ideal way. Though Jehovah's Witnesses are tolerant towards other faiths, they advocate the necessity to embrace their system for salvation. Unlike them, followers of *Sanmarga* are least concerned about scriptural knowledge, but emphasize the practice of values like Compassion and Non-violence which serve as the tools of self-transformation. This process of transformation help the individuals towards perfection, which is a precursor to the total perfection expected in the future world. Santhigiri adopts the path put forth by Guru which leads, corrects and transforms individual beings to become perfect. The rectification process is given prime importance which is the key towards a perfect world. New World Movements which propagate that individuals can enter the perfect world only through their medium, tend to be less open. More open and less prescriptive movements are more likely to be recognized and approached by the public.

Nature of the New World: Despite similarities, most of the movements mark their difference through variation in conceptualization and description of the New World. Ideal nature is determined on different standards of inclusiveness, culture and inherent ideology of each movement. Rastafarians believe in the biblical descriptions of the New World, but they do not restrict it as a world owned by believers of a

particular religious dogma. They are however sure that Africa, particularly Ethiopia will become the centre of that world and the black race will return to cultural prominence. Jehovah's Witnesses believe that the whole of the earth will be converted into an ideal paradise and the selected beings will find a place there. Unlike the Rastafarians, they emphasize and preach that the ideal world will be devoid of ageing, death, disease and suffering. *Sanmarga* based on the teachings of Vallalar does not explicitly state but gives a hint that the ideal time for acquired utmost perfection is at hand and everyone should derive benefit from it. Vallalar prays and aspires that through Divine Grace, the entire humanity shall achieve the state of physical deathlessness. Followers of Santhigiri believe that the present aeon of *Kali Yugam* will end and the ideal age of Sathya Yuga will arrive soon. They do not recognize physical immortality but believe that that the entire human race will become spiritually evolved and absolute peace will dawn all over. Despite the dissimilarities, these movements all agree on the evolution of human consciousness and achievement of ideal state on a global level. Subversion of the current social order is expected as a precursor of the establishment of an egalitarian world. Transformation of landscape and mindscape are often interconnected, where the latter is given prime importance.

Presence of a Leader: New World Movements are usually centred on a leader figure which may or may not be the actual creator of the movement. Rastafarianism and Jehovah's Witnesses do not have a particular founder figure but arose as mass movements. Rastafarian communities have a group of elders who instruct the other members of the group, whereas Jesus Christ or in many cases his reincarnation Haile Selassie is considered as the Messiah and true leader of the world. Similarly, Jehovah's Witnesses consider Christ as the ruler of the World, but the organization is governed by leadership on various levels. The presence of leadership is less authoritarian

in Rastafarianism which is evident from the presence of many ethnic groups and individual followers. On the other hand, Jehovah's Witnesses have leadership on various levels which exert explicit control on followers and have powers to excommunicate them. Sathya Gnana Sabai established by Vallalar has a head monk who serves as a spiritual instructor and makes decisions on matters concerning the organization. Yet, the head has comparatively lesser subjective authority over devotees and visitors. Santhigiri established by Karunakara Guru has separate heads for spiritual and managerial purposes, where the former serves as the representative of Guru, who directly holds influence over and makes decisions concerning the followers. Followers of Rastafarianism worship their leader Haile Selassie or Jesus Christ, whereas Jehovah's Witnesses do not worship Christ. Followers of *Sanmarga* Philosophy only worship Divinity in the form of Supreme Grace Light, whereas followers of Santhigiri worship Brahman through the spiritual form of Karunakara Guru. In the case of New World Movements, there is always ambiguity between the creator of the movement and the central figure of worship, which may or may not be the same. Centralization of power can be, or need not be vested in representatives of the founder. Non-authoritarian leadership with the least restriction are often preferred by the followers. Abstract and inclusive forms of worship, are suitable for people with diverse spiritual orientations. Worshipping the founder leaders as representations of Divinity becomes more acceptable through abstractness and inclusiveness attributed to their identity.

Social Relevance: Spiritual movements are often evaluated by the public, on how far they have contributed to society. Most of the New World Movements have a social dimension which is organically interconnected their spiritual discourse. Rastafarianism is known for cottage industries and production of herbal medicines. These activities are in conformation with their lifestyle. Jehovah's Witnesses is known for

participation in relief activities and impartment of value education. They are more re-

nowned for spreading of the gospel than social activities due to their belief in Divine

agency as the primary source of transformation. Sathya Gnana Sabai has continued its

legacy in providing food and health care for impoverished sections of society, which

is done a daily basis. The followers of *Sanmarga* are steadfast in social activities in-

volving compassion as they adhere to the teachings of Vallalar. Santhigiri is known

for a variety of service activities related to healthcare, education of life skills and em-

powerment of women. The followers of Santhigiri follow the action plan and holistic

design of activities as per the design of Karunakara Guru. Therefore, the social en-

deavours of New World Movements are the products of their ethnical cultural back-

ground like the Rastafarians or they are influenced by teachings of scriptures in the

case of Jehovah's Witnesses, or by the value system ingrained from the spiritual lead-

ers as in the cases of Sathya Gnana Sabai and Santhigiri. Whatever may be the case,

unless spiritual movements can make contributions in all dimensions of human life

their inclusiveness becomes restricted. Spiritual movements which tend to become re-

stricted end up being ritualistic and religious like the orthodox belief systems.

Social Relationship: The movements which interact with other groups and the

general public tend to be more acceptable by society. Involvement in social causes

and development of a healthy relationship with the public can help in unrestricted

growth of these movements. Rastafarians are not only free mingling with society but

have received global attention through the trend of dreadlocks and Reggie music. On

the other hand, Jehovah's Witnesses are known for social insulation due to their

unique belief system. They do not participate in celebrations and political events, nor

do they revere any symbols including national and religious ones. Yet, they constantly

interact with the public through the door to door preaching. Followers of *Sanmarga*

are known to participate in social works by collaborating with other groups and organizations. Like the former, Santhigiri also conducts inter-religious conferences and indulge in social works in association with government agencies. Service works are done by volunteers through this organization, and the activities are usually confined within the devotee circle. The amount of interaction and social impact created by these movements makes them more acceptable to the public. Creation of free interactive spaces within society helps to influence and transform society.

Selection of the Text and the Tool

Reading fantasy texts through literary and critical theories are attempts to locate discursive patterns that support or oppose each theory. Theoretical re-reading also is subject to ideological restrictions, where an integral approach to all dimensions of life is not possible. Theories try to invoke changes in parts and this is the relevance of integrating social reformation and spirituality, which aims in a total and integral transformation of the world. This approach has been formerly addressed through the terminology of the New World. Reading fantasy in the perspective of socially oriented spiritual movements can destabilize both religious and social canons embedded in the text. Even if the text is generically classified as religious fantasy, such re-readings can even subvert textually inherent religious canons and reveal new dimensions of spirituality.

After examining the possibilities of fantasy and New World Movements, it can be inferred that re-reading fantasy texts can reveal new levels of meaning. As it was examined earlier, the total transformation of the present world and the advent of a New World are common to both of them. Moreover, it was also revealed that both fantasy and New World Movements are committed to address the issues prevailing in

the society. It was also identified that both of them subvert social canons and at the same time incorporate transcendental discourses. Therefore, reading texts of Children's Fantasy in the light of New World Movements opens up the possibility of social reformation through spiritual awareness. Before making such an attempt it is necessary to examine the possible drawbacks of such a reading.

There is always a disparity between the real world and the secondary world represented in fantasy texts. Ideal worlds are modelled on the real world by considering its limitations and by extending its potential possibilities. The void space in the real world is filled in the ideal one, according to the aspirations and expectations of the readers. Studies on fantasy reveal that it is an inherent nature of fantasy which leads to the creation of ideal worlds similar to the real world. Lucas Rabaey points out the limitation of ideal worlds represented through fantasy texts. The readers clearly understand that transformation which is possible in the secondary world cannot expect to happen in the primary world. Through their endeavours, the protagonists transform the secondary world into an ideal world. This is unlikely to be expected to happen in the real-world context, through human agency (Rabaey 49). From a practical point of view, this is a serious limitation of fantasy. Due to this very reason, numerous re-readings of fantasy become relevant, which analyses social discourses embedded in the text. Still, the idea of total transformation is far away from credibility and such a transformation is considered as a representation of unfulfilled human aspiration of perfection.

Such a limitation explores the possibility to read fantasy texts through New World Movements, where the latter expect a total transformation of the world. Such a reading becomes convincing only when the movement has proved itself in making significant changes in society. Those spiritual movements which have created social

renaissance are relevant in this context. Such movements have influenced social values and endowed the followers of traditional religions with a wider outlook towards society. In an interview published in *Church Times*, Alastair Mclntosh the co-author of *Spiritual Activism* clarifies that spiritual movements can transform the world and have done so in many aspects. He reveals that spirituality is twice marginalized from contemporary humanity. Secular and religious groups are disappointed with spirituality as it does not fit into their predetermined framework. He also points out the reformative movement launched by Basava, Julia "Butterfly" Hill and Khudai Khidmatgar as fine examples of spiritual activism. This contradicts many traditional groups who preach regressive discourses of God-ordained violence and just-war theory (48). Spiritual activists like Mclntosh sustain an interreligious outlook and tries to expand the religious dimensions into spirituality. They derive inspiration from social renaissance movements launched by spiritual movements. This is mainly due to the impact created in society through these movements and the inclusive outlook fostered through their spirituality. Therefore, it can be concluded that New World Movements which have contributed to social renaissance are most suitable to analyse fantasy texts.

On analysing various factors, I have selected *The Chronicles of Narnia* by C. S. Lewis as the text of my research. Among the seven books included in this collection, central importance is given to *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. Following the classification of Mendlesohn, the Narnian series fall under the category of Portal-Quest Fantasy, which adopts the style of a third-person narrative which is an extended form of traditional storytelling. This genre of fantasy is linear with less complexity of rhetoric and can be read and appreciated by children as well as adults. This approves the categorization of Narnian books as Children's Fantasy, which provides readability

over a wide range of age groups. Critical situations in the fantasy texts can be identified by and analysed through The Grammar of Fantasy by Clute. This is useful to evaluate the quality and the quantity of Healing process in each one of the Narnian series. Secular and religious studies are being conducted on the Narnian series, as the text provides ample scope for both these dimensions of life. Lewis is renowned as a defender and propagator of Christian faith, and many of the scholars consider *The Chronicles of Narnia* as a text of theological importance. Yet, the author is equally criticized for blasphemy and heresy by conservative religious groups. This is mainly on the fact of blending pagan themes and imagery, along with the Christian ones. It is thus revealed that the author consciously or unconsciously subverts traditional religions and still foregrounds spiritual values in the text. Total transformation of the world through the human agency is the common theme reflected in the seven books of Narnian series. Among the books of Narnia, an organic transformation of the world is presented in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. The other six books of the series which were later written can be seen as extensions and elaborations of this text.

To make an effective reading of the text, I have selected the Ayyavazhi Movement as an analytical tool. Ayyavazhi is not strictly a New Religious Movements, but it can be termed as a New World Movement. It was established by Ayya Vaikundar who is recognized as a spiritual leader and social reformer of 19th century in South India. Ayyavazhi is also recognized as a movement which marked the beginning of the social renaissance in South India. The movement has influenced later renaissance movements of Kerala and Tamil Nadu and made significant changes in the social order. Ayyavazhi has made hallmarks in the resurgence of subaltern sections of society and eradication of social anomalies. The concept of the New World is of core importance to Ayyavazhi, which can be understood from the teachings of Vaikundar.

The present aeon of *Kali Yugam* is expected to give way for *Dharma Yugam*, where an egalitarian world will be established. Transformation of society and the evolution of human consciousness are necessary for the creation of such an ideal world. It is a well-known fact that *The Chronicles of Narnia* was written by a British writer after World War II and Ayyavazhi was a movement that originated in colonial India more than a century before it. Reading the former text through the latter movement makes it necessary to address the existence of cultural differences and time gap between them. These differences turn out to be superfluous through a close reading which reveals many similar traits between the two.

Reading *The Chronicles of Narnia* as a text of Ayyavazhi can reveal several layers of similarities between them. They are identical in many respects like the representation of imagery, social issues addressed, spiritual values, mythology and conceptualization of New World. Moreover, the life of Aslan the central character of the Narnian series and the life history of Ayya Vaikundar bear close resemblance in many factors. It was previously explained that the following criteria are inevitable in the evaluation of New World Movements: scriptural authority, subversion of orthodoxy, conformity with nature, nature of apocalypse, entry into New World. nature of the New World, the presence of a leader, social relevance and social relationship. Apart from being a renaissance and spiritual movement, Ayyavazhi stands out as a unique New World Movement, which can be verified through the aforementioned criteria. The concept of leadership is ambiguous in Ayyavazhi. The teachings of Ayya Vaikundar, the spiritual leader, have been practised by followers. However, he is worshipped and not worshipped at the same time. As per Ayyavazhi tradition mirror and lamp are consecrated symbols of worship, which reflects the physical form of the worshiper. In this case, even if the spiritual leader is considered as a manifestation of

Divinity, this is inseparable from the innate Divinity in every individual being. Apart from this, there is a spiritual head for the movement who guides the followers but does not function on authoritarian standards. This is evident from other individual establishments of Ayyavazhi which function independently and work in harmony with the spiritual head. The teachings of Ayya Vaikundar which foreground the value of *Dharmam*, are practised by the followers of this movement. Spiritual values are incorporated from traditional spiritual legacy the native culture, but no scriptural sources are followed. Hegemonic canons of orthodox religions and politics are subverted, to establish equal priority and equal justice for all. This movement has made revolutionary changes in social structure and has pioneered renaissance movements in South India. Spiritual practices and ideologies of Ayyavazhi reflect human values like compassion and show affinity towards the environment. This is the reason why most of the followers adopt, vegetarian and organic cultures of lifestyles. Institutions and organizations of Ayyavazhi are open to the public and many welfare activities are done in collaboration with other organizations. A series of cataclysmic events are expected before the dawn of the ideal aeon of *Dharma Yugam*, though the concept of total annihilation of the present world is not emphasized. All those individuals who practice *Dharma* are considered eligible to enter the New World and following the path of Vaikundar is not deemed as the singular criterion towards salvation. The egalitarian world in the aeon of *Dharma Yugam* will be devoid of all kinds of sufferings and not only human beings, but the entire creation is expected to live in harmony.

The aforementioned facts present a brief outlook of Ayyavazhi as per the evaluative factors of New World Movements. This confirms that Ayyavazhi movement imposes least authoritarian control over followers and has proved its social relevance through the changes invoked on society. It can also be inferred that spirituality of the

movement is universal, inclusive and practically significant. Analysing Narnian series following these criteria of evaluation helps to explore the social and spiritual relevance of the study. This helps to identify various aspects of the crisis that has dawned upon humanity and proposes ways to resolve them.

The aforementioned facts provide a general outline of the study and these dimensions are to be explored in detail through a close reading of *The Chronicles of Narnia* in the light of Ayyavazhi. The study reveals the relevance of re-reading Children's Literature in the contemporary world, especially when ideal and real are indistinguishably problematic. Inherent reformative discourses in the text can be identified only by analysing it through a reform movement. Similarly, the transcendental discourses embedded in the text can be unravelled by re-reading it with the spiritual movement. Conceptualization of New World in the fantasy text, its practical scope and relevance in the real world can be understood by reading it through a New World Movement which incorporates transcendental, social and practical significance. Considering the aforementioned facts, Ayyavazhi becomes a perfect choice as it is a social renaissance movement and a spiritual movement which has proved its potential in transforming society. Re-reading Narnian series through the New World discourse of this movement foregrounds the concept of transforming the existing world into a New World. Such a reading examines the metamorphosis of the secondary world as described in the text, and tries to figure out its suggestive implications in the primary world.

Chapter Three

The Chronicles of Narnia: A Text of Ayyavazhi

"Whenever this world of ours, on account of growth and of additional circumstances, requires a new adjustment, a wave of power comes; and as a man is acting on two planes, the spiritual and the material, the wave of adjustment comes on both planes" (Vivekananda).

The Chronicles of Narnia by C. S. Lewis occupies a significant place in Children's Literature. This series along with the works of Tolkien was instrumental in creating a space for Children's Fantasy among the mainstream literature. The Narnian series consists of seven novels: *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, *Prince Caspian*, *The Voyage of the 'Dawn Treader'*, *The Silver Chair*, *The Horse and His Boy*, *The Magician's Nephew* and *The Last Battle*. These narratives deal with the experiences of four British children in the secondary world of Narnia, followed by other child protagonists. Following titular significance, the characters can witness and involve in the chronological developments of Narnia from the time of its creation until its dissolution. This is a boiling pot of diverse cultures and character types, which in many cases are contrasting ones. Lewis characterises a plethora of landscapes following the romantic tradition and tries to represent the medieval world through the narrative. Transformations of landscape and mindscape are inevitable recurring themes in all the novels which have social and spiritual dimensions.

Evaluating Narnia and C. S. Lewis

Despite the critical disparities regarding Lewis, it is an undeniable fact that he has been and is still known for his remarkable works in fantasy and science fiction. It is also a well-known fact that Lewis was a Christian apologist and often referred to as

a right-wing fundamentalist by some of the critics. Apart from explicit propagation of faith through oral and written forms, religious undercurrents are also found in fantasy sequels like *The Chronicles of Narnia* and Science Fiction series like *The Ransom Trilogy*. This explicitly makes way for a dichotomy not only among critics but for the common readers. Kath Filmer-Davies in *Scepticism and Hope in Twentieth Century Fantasy Literature*, analyses Narnian series like *Prince Caspian* and *The Last Battle*. Tragic events including separations and death are depicted with the vividness of imagination. He points out that the religious-minded readers comprehend the narratives as optimistic, whereas the same narratives are conceived as tragic by the non-religious (43). This implies that the fantasy works of Lewis stand apart among his other creations. Fantasy works like *The Chronicles of Narnia* bring out the scope for multiple and contrastive readings, which are less possible in the case of his evangelic non-fiction literature.

Lewis utilized religious belief as an aid to address the sufferings faced throughout his life. His transition from the earlier period of atheism to a Christian believer greatly influenced writings. This is explained by Michael Ward in the study, "On Suffering". The transformation of Lewis as a religious believer marked a sharp shift in his perspective towards life. Previous escapism from sufferings of life paved the way for accepting the dark realities with a perspective of hope. He believed in the final redemption in a Christian way, by correlating his suffering with that of Christ. His later works including fantasy narratives recurrently deal with the theme of suffering (207). This makes it evident that his literary works including the fantasies have little to do with escapism. Even though the solutions are proposed from a religious perspective, these works faithfully reflect and try to address human problems.

The Narnian series is often viewed as a religious narrative with propagandist intentions by the author. Hence, Lewis is criticized by several critics and writers who have analysed Narnia as a religious fantasy. Writers like Philip Pullman and J.K. Rowling have accused *The Chronicles of Narnia* as a harbinger of racial discrimination and misogynist ideologies. It is also an undeniable fact that many supporters of Narnia and Lewis often entertain vested interests of religious propaganda. Very few among the critics have tried to re-examine the works from perspectives different from these groups of opposers and supporters. Any analytical approach towards the Narnian series becomes valid only after understanding the criticism raised against it.

From Alice to Harry Porter: English Fantasy in England by Colin Manlove, analyses the growth and development of Children's Fantasy Literature. Here, Manlove criticizes Lewis and his intent behind the creation of *The Chronicles of Narnia*. He accuses Narnia to be a Christian Fairyland isolated from the real world when compared to the "other fantasies" of the writer. Narnian narratives are deemed to be spiritual, which contests with the materialism of empiricism and scientific temperament. He accuses Narnia for imposing threats on "secular reality" through its events and characters. Moreover, Manlove observes that all narratives of the Narnian series revolve around the centrality of Aslan the lion who represents God or Christ. He observes that individual freedom, growth and expansion are tarnished through the presence of a Divine agency in these narratives. There is also an accusation that the morality exhibited by the child characters in Narnia is established by "indirection". It is also observed that the calamities caused by World War II had a direct impact on the fantasy works of Lewis and Tolkien. These writers of fantasy created secondary worlds to escape from their familiar real worlds. The first five among the Narnian series is cited as an example for this. Narnia is also seen as an attempt to evoke stagnation in

the readers by confirming and confining them in the past (83-89). The demerits of Lewis and the aberrations in the creation of *The Chronicles of Narnia* are highlighted by Manlove in comparison with other authors and works of the 1950s. This provides a cross-section of the critical views which disapproves C. S. Lewis as a writer of Children's Fantasy.

Following the tradition of Manlove, Peter Hunt in *Alternate Worlds in Fantasy Fiction* questions the intent of Lewis in the creation of Narnian fantasy. He points out that Narnia is a mystic Christian world, where the characters are devoid of free will. These novels were banned in many places on account of religious blasphemy. It is also pointed out that Narnia is the representation of the author's ideology and the narrative is favoured against the characters which he dislikes. Lewis is accused of racism and sexism, as he imposes Euro-centric and patriarchal ideologies in Narnian novels. The writer further tries to create complexity by amalgamating different cultures in this work (9, 34-35). Following the views of Hunt, some of the later critics of fantasy claim that discourses of racial and sexual discrimination are visible in Narnian fantasy. *Deconstructing the Hero: Literary Theory and Children's Literature* by Margery Hourihan sheds light on this topic in detail. Hourihan states that Lewis has followed the western trend by describing the antagonist Calormen race as dark-skinned, while the virtuous are fair in complexion. The stand of Lewis is compared with that of Ursula Le Guin, who deliberately portrayed a dark-skinned hero Ged in *A Wizard of Earthsea*. Attempt to subvert euro-centric racial ideology by Le Guin remained unsuccessful as the publishers insisted on portraying a white-skinned hero on the book cover. Hourihan further remarks the Lewis look down upon female sexuality and the girls imitate the chivalry and warfare of males. Susan in *The Last Battle*, is unable to enter the "Real Narnia" of Aslan just because she is obsessed with invitations, nylons

and lip-sticks. This is explained as an antithetical attitude of Lewis towards female sexuality, which indicates the inherent male-dominant ideology of the writer. Lewis is also accused of justifying violence in the form of hatred, conflicts and wars. Moreover, these acts of violence by the good against the evil is encouraged and supported by Aslan who represents Christ. The culture of violence represented in these narratives is compared to that of contemporary James Bond movies. Hourihan points out that the works of Tolkien and Lewis have gained massive popularity among children, especially because of their unawareness of inherent religious symbolism in these works. Lack of knowledge about the intrinsic religious symbolism in the Narnian series can negatively affect the youth. This can create an inclination towards violence as factually represented in the narratives (60-67, 101-105). Observations of Manlove, Hunt and Hourihan summarizes the criticisms raised against C. S. Lewis and *The Chronicles of Narnia*. The trend of opposing the Narnian series was later continued by writers like Philip Pullman and J. K. Rowling. Criticisms against Narnian narratives create the necessity of making a refined reading of the texts. This becomes helpful in understanding the perspective of the writer and the affective relevance of textual discourses on readers.

Resolving Ambiguities in *The Chronicles of Narnia*

Admitting the validity of studies conducted on Narnia by the aforementioned critics, certain contradictions can also be observed in their findings. Manlove, on one hand, describes Narnia as a God centred world, but also states that the moral values of characters are governed by "indirection". This proves that even though the narrative revolves around the God figure of Aslan, he never authoritatively imposes set values on the characters. The characters intrinsically acquiring human values is different from the typical characteristic of dogmatic religion. Manlove's claim that the

secondary world represented an escape from the stark realities of World War II,

should be read along with the statement of Hourihan who accuses Lewis as a pro-

moter of violence and war culture. A close reading of these novels reveals that war-

fare and fighting scenes highlight chivalry, enthusiasm and competence; rather than

foregrounding and celebrating bloodshed. Manlove's predeterminism of scientific

logic and "secular reality" provides little space for the creation of Fantasy Literature.

Confirmation to the scientific thought process is applicable in the case of science fic-

tion and not for fantasy which may be secular or spiritual. The standpoint of Hourihan

becomes a biased one while comparing Narnia with the culture of violence, especially

by comparing with contemporary action movies. Critics who accuse Lewis of vio-

lence often fail to criticize, or even comment upon the trend of violence unleashed in

many Young Adult narratives. The latter is hailed as a genre that has defied social ta-

boos, whereas Narnia is still a subject of contempt. A close reading of the Narnian se-

ries reveals that Lewis himself is aware of the social restrictions imposed on children

by the adults. In *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* a popular one among the Nar-

nian novels, Lewis speaks to the child readers about his inability to overcome taboos

imposed by the adult world over children's books. "… whom I won't describe, be-

cause if I did the grown-ups would probably not let you read this book …" (Lewis

The Lion, the Witch 180). His statement reflects the gravity of control imposed by the

adult world over juvenile readers. This gives a glimpse of Lewis as a writer who

dreamt of changes in Children's Literature, and probably anticipated the emergence of

Young Adult fiction.

   The charges of misogyny and racism on Lewis are more serious charges which

need to be closely examined. The repeatedly cited case of sexism is that of Susan, one

of the protagonists who is banned from entering 'Real Narnia' just because of her

femininity. Mary Stewart Van Leeuwen, analyses various perspectives of critics about the Narnian series in *A Sword between the Sexes?* Leeuwen clarifies that Lewis deliberately uses a pair of male and female children as rulers of Narnia as if intended to equalize gender disparity. Moreover, it is pointed out the most celebrated character throughout the novels is Lucy the youngest girl and not any of the male figures. The case of Susan is analysed from a different perspective in the light of original passages from *The Last Battle*. Social acceptability became more important for Susan than the inner relation with siblings and she distanced herself from Narnia too (51). Misinterpretations about Susan are further clarified by Brian Carnell who explains that the accusations of Pullman and Rowling are baseless. Like Leeuwen, he proves this by quoting passages from 'Through the Stable Door', Chapter 12 of *The Last Battle*.

> "Yes," said Eustace, "and whenever you've tried to get her to come and talk about Narnia or do anything about Narnia, she says, What wonderful memories you have! Fancy your still thinking about all those funny games we used to play when we were children.'"
>
> "Oh Susan!" said Jill. "She's interested in nothing nowadays except nylons and lipstick and invitations. She always was a jolly sight too keen on being grown-up."
>
> "Grown-up, indeed," said the Lady Polly. "I wish she would grow up. She wasted all her school time wanting to be the age she is now, and she'll waste all the rest of her life trying to stay that age. Her whole idea is to race on to the silliest time of one's life as quick as she can and then stop there as long as she can." (Lewis *Last Battle* 741)

Carnell explains that the downfall of Susan is her fixation over things that have no lasting value. Characters like Reepicheep, Caspian and Shasta always try to move beyond the set boundaries and sustain vividness of imagination. Susan like other characters Miraz and Lady of The Green Kirtle is fixating on visible realities and things which have no lasting value. Lipsticks and nylons are not bad in any sense, but fixating on them is a trap. Lady Polly wishing that Susan would grow up indicates that someday she would recover from such a narrow vision of life. Thus, the concept of being grown up as indicated by Lewis is not related to sexual maturity. This is further clarified by Carnell where he highlights the opening dedication of Lewis before beginning *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. This is addressed to his godchild Lucy Barfield, to whom the writer dedicates this Narnian book.

TO LUCY BARFIELD

MY DEAR LUCY,

I wrote this story for you, but when I began it I had not realized that girls grow quicker than books. As a result you are already too old for fairy tales, and by the time it is printed and bound you will be older still. But some day you will be old enough to start reading fairy tales again. You can then take it down from some upper shelf, dust it, and tell me what you think of it. I shall probably be too deaf to hear, and too old to understand a word you say, but I shall still be

your affectionate Godfather,

C. S. LEWIS. (Lewis *The Lion, the Witch* 110)

Here it is clear that the growth which is intended by the author is that of the potential imagination and not related to the physical body. This is expressed by Lewis, where he hopes that Lucy would grow old enough and regain the freshness of her mind. That is why there is a hope for Susan like Lucy Barfield to regain the youth-fulness of imagination and once again enter the space of fantasy (Carnell). This proves that accusations of sexism against Lewis are biased and prejudicated, even if they are made by eminent writers and critics. It has already been mentioned by Hunt that the Narnian series has been banned in many places on charges of blasphemy. The aforementioned facts reveal that both secularist critics and religious community have condemned *The Chronicles of Narnia*. Therefore, it is an undeniable fact that Lewis is renowned as an exceptional fantasy writer who has been twice marginalized.

Studies conducted on Lewis and his works find a comprehensive analytical ex-pression by Devin Brown, where he minutely examines the charges against the author and his works. The keynote address given by Brown during the 12th Annual Confer-ence of The C. S. Lewis and Inklings Society, created a free space to re-examine the Narnian series through an integral approach. Brown reminds that criticisms have al-ways been companions of fantasy writers like Tolkien and Lewis and this has little af-fected the increase in readership of their works. The debate between the supporters and opposers of Lewis seem to be a never-ending one. Yet, he questions the attitude of writers like Pullman, Ursula Le Guin and Laura Miller who leave out other writers and reserve the accusations of misogyny and racism exclusively for Lewis. He cites the examples of Kargs in *A Wizard of Earthsea* by Le Guin and Gyptians in *The Golden Compass* by Pullman, which overtly reflect racist representations of the white-skinned and Asian races respectively. It is ironical that accusers of Lewis themselves overtly portray racial discourses in their works. From the Narnian series, Brown cites

the examples of interraciality of Doctor Cornelius in *Prince Caspian* and interracial marriage of Shasta and Aravis in *The Horse and His Boy*. This weakens the accusation of Lewis as a racist, especially when the latter book is cited as a case of depicting the dark-skinned Calormenes as malicious. The White Witch in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, Miraz in *Prince Caspian* and Uncle Andrew in *The Magician's Nephew* are only a few among the examples of white-skinned antagonists from Narnian series. Similarly, Brown disproves the accusations on Narnian series through textual quotations, verifiable citations and elaborate analysis of critical materials. He also points out that major apathetic attitude of writers like Pullman and Laura Miller towards Lewis arises from their aversion towards supernatural elements and the Christian religion. Adding to this, he explains that their confirmation to negative comments would receive better attention and circulation than positive ones (Brown, "Are The Chronicles"). The speech by Brown has clarified many ambiguities by resolving the misconceptions regarding the Narnian series. Such re-readings provide scope for understanding the narratives beyond secular cynicism and religious fundamentalism. This also inspires individual readers to analyse textual material without pre-determinism and even question the popular notions propagated by intellectuals.

An unbiased and inclusive perspective is necessary for any study, which is equally true in the case of the Narnian series. Whether secular or spiritual reading of the texts should be given importance is a debatable topic, which needs disambiguation. This is relevant in the case of fantasy texts like the Narnian series which are renowned for depicting religious themes. "Secular or Spiritual: Re-reading Anne of Green Gables" by Ann F. Howey discusses the concept of secularizing religious narratives. She reflects on the discussions to purge and secularize Narnian series. This is undoubtedly seen as a reaction against the interference of institutionalized religions

over common people. On the other hand, she also questions the ideological neutrality of the term "secular". Following the perspectives of postmodern theories like feminism, the possibility of an ideologically-free standpoint is impossible. It is clarified that the concept of secularism is no exception to this and it is not an unbiased standpoint. Secular readers generally avoid religious texts, while the religious readers opt for a wider readership of both religious and the secular. Therefore, the works with inherent spiritual discourses need not be side-lined, as they reflect the cultural identity of people and are instrumental in individual development (395-411). Thus, Narnian series like any other narrative, should not be subjected to restricted ideologies and all possible re-readings should be encouraged. Fixation on either secular or religious readings of texts can afflict the open nature of critical studies.

Sophie Masson, an author of Children's Literature shares her opinions on the influence of Narnian series on readers, in "Going to Narnia". The readers who have identified themselves with the Christian belief system need not necessarily interpret or become aware of the embedded religious discourses in *The Chronicles of Narnia*. This fact is affirmed through her personal experiences. Masson mentions that even though she was associated with Catholicism since childhood, the idea of reading Narnian series as a Christian text never occurred to her. She was introduced to such a perspective much later in her life. Nevertheless, she was able to evaluate the work independent from religious perspective (146-151). Reading experience of Masson affirms that even people with a religious background are not aware of religious discourses in the texts unless they are reminded of it by critics. It has been earlier pointed out by Hourihan, that the immense popularity of Narnian fantasy is a result of the unawareness about inherent religious discourses. Therefore, it is clarified that the majority of

the readers enjoyed the novels not as a religious text, but as interesting tales of fantasy.

Religion has a different and unconventional role to play in the Narnian series. In his study *Children's Multiple World Fantasy Fiction and the Journey Home Structure in the Light of the Escapism Debate*, Mecu Ginting points out that *The Chronicles of Narnia* made a turning point in the history of Children's Fantasy. In fantasy narratives before the 1960s, depicting child protagonists as the central and powerful entities was an unacceptable notion. He speculates that this was mainly due powerful influence of dogmatic religion over literature. Aslan the lion who personifies Divinity wants the support from children for anything to happen. Lewis created the Narnian series as a trendsetter through the creation of powerful child-protagonists with central importance (11). This clarifies that Narnian narratives involve in the decentralisation of religious dogmatism and simultaneously confirm to spirituality. Any reader can make out that there are no overt references to any form of belief system in the novels. Nor do the fantasy series promote, acknowledge and standardize any sort of rituals. As Masson had earlier pointed out, recognition of religious discourses in the Narnian series depends upon the perspective of the individual reader. Resolving the ambiguities regarding transcendental discourses in the Narnian series creates space for a better understanding of the text. This is inevitable before re-reading the textual narratives without considering the pre-determined notion about the author's intentions.

The Chronicles of Narnia and C. S. Lewis: An Overview

Familiarising with the text and the author can be helpful, before commencing any analytical study. Conceptualizations and ideologies of the text in many instances can be seen as reflection of the experiences of the creator. Interconnecting and

repetitive themes can be understood and evaluated by comparing the plot of each book within the series. An overall view of the Narnian series can be made only by knowing the interconnections between the themes and narratives of each novel.

Summarizing *The Chronicles of Narnia*

The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe: It is the first book among the seven Narnian novels and has been since the most popular one among them. Lewis took almost ten years from 1939 to 1949 to conceive and complete it. The book was published in 1950 and was well received by the public. Four siblings of Pevensie family, Peter, Susan, Edmund and Lucy come to stay in the countryside house of Professor Kirk, to escape the air raids of London during World War II. There, Lucy the youngest accidentally steps into a wardrobe where she visits the parallel world known as Narnia and meets a faun Mr Tumnus. Nobody believes her except the Professor and later she visits Narnia again unknowingly followed by Edmund. Edmund meets Jadis, the White Witch who serves him enchanted Turkish Delight and asks him to bring his siblings to Narnia. On their return, all including Edmund chide Lucy for making up stories again, but all the Pevensie children reach Narnia through the wardrobe. There they know that Mr Tumnus is arrested by the secret police of Jadis, who has usurped the throne of Narnia and has caused eternal winter there for a hundred years. They meet Mr and Mrs Beaver who reveal the evil intentions of Jadis and together they set off to meet Aslan the lion who is camping near the Stone Table. Edmund meets Jadis who imprisons him and asks Maugrim and other wolves to kill the children and Beavers. The Beavers and children meet Aslan and asks him to save Edmund. Aslan asks them to fulfil the prophecy of being enthroned as the rulers of Narnia and wage war against the Witch. Peter kills Maugrim and Aslan rescues Edmund. Jadis visits Aslan and lawfully asserts her claim over Edmund, who was a traitor. Aslan, in turn, makes

a pact with Jadis and willingly accepts death to save Edmund. Aslan resurrects him-self and revives all the people who have been turned into stone by the Witch. Peter and the Narnians fight with Jadis and her evil army. Jadis is killed by Aslan, in the ongoing battle. The four Pevensie are enthroned in Cair Paraval as rulers of Narnia and Aslan quietly leaves. They rule the land for many years and matures into adult-hood when all accidentally re-enters the real world through the wardrobe and find that they are all children again.

Prince Caspian: This book was written by Lewis in 1949 and was published in 1951. The four Pevensie children are unexpectedly transported into Narnia, from a railway station. They understand that a thousand years have passed in Narnia. Later all of them search the ruined castle and find their magical instruments except Susan's horn. They rescue a dwarf Trumpkin, who reveals that Narnia is being ruled by the usurper King Miraz of Telmarine race and all old Narnians have been killed or driven away. He narrates that Miraz, the assassin of his brother King Caspian IX now intends to kill Prince Caspian to secure the throne to his own newly born son. Caspian flees to the forest as per the warning of his tutor Doctor Cornelius, who later joins him there. It was Caspian who summoned the Pevensie children and he is now staying with the badger Truffle hunter and the dwarfs, Nikabrik and Trumpkin himself. They procced to help Caspian, but get deviated from the path when Aslan appears to the sight of Lucy and the others fail to believe her. Later all of them follow Lucy to meet Aslan and all receive his instructions. They reach Aslan's How, in time to prevent Nikabrik, a werewolf and a hag. who were persuading Caspian to awaken the White Witch. Nikabrik, the werewolf and the hag were killed in the fight and later Peter invites Miraz for a duel. Miraz falls during the combat and his lords Glozelle and Sopespian cry out that the king was killed treacherously by the Narnians. Glozelle stealthily kills

Miraz and the enraged Telmarines attack the Narnians. Lucy travels into the forest and meets Aslan, who revives the forces of nature. Bacchus and Silenus, along with moving trees attack and defeat the Telmarines. The Telmarines surrender themselves to the Narnians and Aslan proclaim Prince Caspian the king of Narnia. Aslan allows all willing Telamrines to go back to the human world from where they had arrived. The Pevensies leave Narnia through the doorway created by Aslan and the Telamrines are thereby assured of their safe journey. Before leaving Narnia the Pevensie children are informed by Aslan that Peter and Susan cannot enter Narnia, as they have grown up. The children reach back safely in time to board their train.

The Voyage of the 'Dawn Treader': Lewis wrote this book in 1950 and it was published in 1952. Edmund and Lucy are spending their holidays with their Aunt Alberta and Uncle Harold and their son Eustace Scrubb who was a self-centred bully. Edmund, Lucy and Eustace are magically transported to Narnia through a ship's painting, when they reach a ship in Narnian ocean. Prince Caspian who is now the King of Narnia welcomes them to the ship named Dawn Treader and narrates that he is on a mission to find out the seven lords exiled by his uncle Miraz. Eustace becomes irritated and is pranked by Reepicheep, the valiant mouse. The latter expects to reach Aslan's Country at the utter East, which is the goal of his life. The ship reaches Lone Islands where Caspian and friends end the slave trade of governor Gumpas and replace him with Lord Bern, who is the first of the missing Lords. After a terrible storm, they reach an island where Eustace reaches a dragon's cave, sees a dragon dying, wears a bracelet from its treasure and gets transformed into a dragon. The dragon Eustace painfully convinces everyone about his true identity and they recognize his bracelet as belonging to Lord Octesian. Aslan later restores Eustace into his original form and he becomes a better person. They later narrowly escape from a sea serpent

and arrive in an island of Deathwater with a lake containing the golden statue of a missing Lord. In the next island, Lucy revives Dufflepuds from invisibility using the spellbook of Magician Coriakin, who welcomes the Narnians. They know that the golden statue was Lord Restimar. Later they arrive at "the island where Dreams come true", where they meet Lord Rhoop. In the following island, they see a table with feasts, where the Lords Argos, Revilian and Mavramon have been sleeping for years. They meet the daughter of Star Ramandu and later her father, who asks them to sail to the utter East and leave one of their crew to break the spell of the lords. Edmund, Lucy Eustace and Lucy sail to the world's end where Reepicheep sails towards the country of Aslan. Aslan receives them and reveals that now only Eustace can reach Narnia. The spell is broken, Caspian sails back and Eustace with the Pevensies return home.

The Silver Chair: This Narnian book was written in 1951 and got published in 1953. Eustace Srubb and Jill Pole are chased by the bullying gang of students in their school, Experiment House when they are transported into the Country of Aslan. Eustace falls off the cliff when he tries to prevent Jill from falling due to her vanity. Aslan appears, safely transports Eustace to Narnia and asks Jill to atone her misdeed by performing the task of finding the missing Prince Rilian. She was to remember four signs and Aslan makes her memorize them before sending her to Narnia. Eustace and Jill see a frail old king boarding a ship, but fail to recognize him as an old friend King Caspian X and greet him. They know about it later from an owl Glimfeather who soon takes them to the parliament of owls. There all are informed that Prince Rilian went in search of the green serpent which killed his mother and himself became absconded. As per owls' advice, they go to search Rilian along with a Marshwiggle named Puddleglum, to the ruined city of giants in the north, as per the second sign.

On the way, they encounter the Lady of the Green Kirtle along with a silent black armoured knight and as per her advice, they meet the "gentle giants" of Harfang city. Comforts and leisure make Jill forget the signs and she dreams of the third sign "Under Me" under the ruined city. Later as they know the giants' plan to cook them as a meal, all of them stumble down into earth during their attempt to escape. They meet the Earthmen who work for the Queen of the Deep Realm and later talks to the young man whom they saw as the knight. They release him from the bondage of the Silver Chair as he appeals so in the name of Aslan, which was the fourth sign. The young man reveals himself as Prince Rilian and the queen is recognized as the Lady of the Green Kirtle who wanted to conquer the Overworld. The Queen soon arrives are tries her spell on them, when Puggleglum stamps on her magical fire and disenchants the charm. She becomes a giant green serpent which is killed by Rilian and the Earthmen are released from her spell. The protagonists return to Aslan who revives the dead King Caspian and they all reach the Experiment House to threaten the bullies. Jill and Eustace feel relieved, as the misconducts of headmistress are exposed and she is expelled from the school along with the bullies.

The Horse and His Boy: This book was written by Lewis in 1950 and was published in 1954. Shasta the son of fisherman Arsheesh suddenly knows that he is a foster child and the latter plans to sell him to a Calormen warlord Anardin. He flees on the back of Anardin's warhorse Bree who is really a talking horse from Narnia captured by Calormenes in its childhood. Coincidentally they meet Aravis who is a wealthy aristocrat, also travelling on her talking horse Hwin. Aravis was escaping from a forced marriage to the aged Ahoshta who was the grand vizier of Tisroc. Together they reach the city of Tashbaan to eventually reach their common destiny Narnia. In Tashbaan, the Narnians take away Shasta mistaking him as Prince Corin of

Archenland. Meanwhile Edmund and Susan plan and escape from the Tashbaan city to avoid the marriage proposal of Prince Rabadash with Queen Susan. Pince Corin secretly arrives and Shasta who is his replica leaves to the Tombs of the Ancients awaiting the others. Aravis sees her friend Lasaraleen with whom she finds a secret way out of the city and she overhears the conversation between Tisroc, Rabadash and Ahoshta. Rabadash plans to attack Archenland, intending to conquer Narnia and take Susan forcibly. Shasta, Aravis, Bree and Hwin meet at the tombs and decide to inform King Lune about the invading enemies. They start quickly when Aravis is attacked by a lion and they reach a hermit. Aslan meets Shasta and reveals that the latter has been guided and protected by him, since the time of his birth. Shasta later reaches King Lune, warns him of Rabadash's attack and reaches Narnia to warn them too. Aslan appears to Bree and Hwin, to inspire them and rectify the former. Shasta and Corin join Edmund, Lucy, the Narnians and Archenlanders in the battle against Rabadash and Calormen army. The Calormenes are defeated and Rabadash is captured. Aslan arrives and transforms Rabadash into a donkey who can regain his original form at the Temple of Tash, but should not move ten miles off it. Shasta is identified as his lost son by King Lune of Archenland and proclaims him as the heir of his throne. Shasta and Aravis later gets married and they become the parents of Ram the great. Bree and Hwin marry separately and live happily in Narnia with their kinsmen.

The Magician's Nephew: Lewis wrote this book in 1954 after the completion of *The Last Battle* and it was published in 1955. Digory Kirk a boy living in London during the twentieth century enters into the house of Polly Plummer through the connects attics. They become friends and accidentally enter the attic room of Digory's uncle Andrew. He was a utilitarian and selfish magician who makes Polly vanish to an alternate world when she picks up a yellow ring. Digory is forced to go and bring

her back, with green rings which can help a person to return. He touches the yellow

ring and reaches the wood between the worlds, where he meets Polly and a Guinea

Pig. They try jumping into the several pools and find out that touching yellow ring

transports them to these woods and touching the green ones gives entry into any of the

parallel worlds with pools as openings to them. They mark the pool of their world and

later reaches the ruined world of Charn. There they reach a hall with statues of several

monarchs. Digory forcibly resists Polly and ring a brass bell, which awakens Jadis a

wicked queen who had destroyed Charn with "The Deplorable Word". She asks about

their whereabouts and stealthily reaches London along with their return. Even though

her magic is ineffective there, she subdues Uncle Andrew and creates havoc in the

city, with the aim of conquering it. Polly and Digory transport her along with Uncle

Andrew, the cab driver Frank and his horse Strawberry to a void world. They witness

the creation of Narnia a new world created by Aslan the lion through his song and the

witch tries to ineffectively attack him a lamppost. He is unharmed and she flees of

fear. Digory approaches Aslan to cure his mother afflicted with an incurable illness,

but the latter asks him to atone for bringing evil into the new creation. As per Aslan's

direction; he reaches the garden on Strawberry who is now a metamorphosized into a

flying horse named Fledge, by Aslan. There he secures a Silver Apple, overcomes the

temptation of Jadis who had already consumed the apples and returns back to Aslan.

Aslan plants it in Narnia, where it grows into a tree to keep off Jadis for the span of a

century. Frank and his wife Helen become the first rulers of Narnia. Digory's mother

is cured by the Silver Apple and its core grows into an apple tree with which he later

builds a wardrobe.

The Last Battle: This was selected as the best Children's Literature book

which made Lewis the recipient of Carnegie Medal. The book was written in 1954

and was published in 1956. An ape named Shift gets a lion skin from Cauldron Pool and dresses his simpleton subordinate Puzzle, the donkey to pretend as Aslan. Shift becomes a mediator of the false Aslan and convinces most of them that Aslan has returned to Narnia. Assisted by the talking cat Ginger, he exploits them by extracting money and makes a pact with Calormenes headed by Rishda Tarkaan who ruthlessly deforest Narnia. King Tirian receives complaints of this from an injured Centaur and a Dryad who dies immediately before him. While trying to expose Shift Tirian along with Jewel, his unicorn; are bound by Calormenes. Tirian calls Aslan for help, sees dream visions of seven friends of Narnia and Eustace along with Jill arrives there. They release him and Jewel who collect arms and an army of remaining faithful Narnians. They free Puzzle and wage battle with the Calormenes. The dwarfs who remain neutral kill the good horses of Narnia and Caloremens kill the Dwarfs. Rishda Tarkaan who claims that the evil god Tash and Aslan are the same, claims that this "Tashlaan" is staying in the stable. Emeth a Calormene soldier enters and vanishes after killing the hidden assassins in the stable. Ginger the cat enters and returns dumb when Rishda offers Shift who is eaten by Tash. One by one Rishda throws all his enemies into the stable and finally he is captured by Tash who goes away, while all others have reached the Country of Aslan. Aslan appears and reveals that all the Pevensies except Susan have died in a train accident. He later summons all Narnians, and the eligible ones into his domain, while the rest go into the wilderness. Aslan awakens Father Time who destroys the entire creation of Narnia, and finally ends up as a frozen evacuated land. All the chosen ones go "Further Up and Further In" into the Real Narnia, which is a magnificent model of Old Narnia. Aslan meets Emeth a Calormen believer of Tash and conforms his honest inquisition as the criteria to enter there. All

the old friends unite and live joyfully in the Real Narnia, where each chapter is better than the previous one.

Life of C. S. Lewis

The book entitled *C. S. Lewis* by John C. Davenport provides a comprehensive analysis on the life, ideology and influences of C. S. Lewis. Tracing back the roots of the writer is helpful in understanding the nature of his social and spiritual outlooks, which are reflected in his works. The development of his psyche and transformation of perspective provide relevant information for this study.

Clive Staples Lewis was born on November 29, 1898, at Belfast of Northern Ireland. He was born as the second son of Albert James Lewis a legal practitioner and his wife Flora Augusta Hamilton Lewis. C. S. Lewis had an elder brother Warren Hamilton Lewis, who was three years elder to him. Following a lack of cordial domestic environment, the childhood of Lewis was mostly spent in the company of his nurse, Lizzie Endicott. It was from Lizzie that Lewis was introduced to the world of fantasy and folk tales. She was instrumental in familiarizing him with Irish oral narratives and instigating religious fervour through her staunch Protestant background. Lewis was bold and held a unique identity since his childhood. He renamed himself Jacksie which later got abridged to Jack. Albert and family moved to a new residence named Little Lea outside Belfast. This badly constructed house was the place for exploration and adventure for Jack and Warren. From this location, Lewis received the building blocks of his fantasy narratives like corridors, antiques and wardrobes. As the parents were voracious readers, Lewis had ample opportunity to read a variety of books, during his growing years. Warren and Jack used the attic place as the venue to create imaginary fantasy worlds and characters. They named the attic space as "Little

End Room". This bore witness to the first literary creation of Lewis known as Boxen.

In May 1905, Warren was sent to England for education and Jack became lonely in the company of his mother. Much time was utilized by Jack for proliferating the imaginary world of Boxen and he created new narratives in the form of short stories. His mother Flora was diagnosed with cancer and after desperate attempts of treatment, she died on August 23, 1908. Suffering and death of his mother made a lasting impact on Lewis, which can be conceived from his later writings. Death of his wife made Albert move to a secluded life, which distanced him from his children. Thus, Lewis was sent to Wynward in September 1908 to study along with Warren. Corporal punishments and mental tortures in the school created a sense of lasting bitterness in the mind of Lewis. Warren graduated to Malvern College in 1909, which made Lewis more remorse and lonely. Apart from the ill-treatments, he acquired an aversion to organized religion. This was due to strict and compulsive stand made by school authorities over the religious sentiments of students. Despite his disinterest towards Catholicism, Lewis read the Bible for its literary content and was influenced by its variegated imagery.

When the Wynward school was closed in 1910, Lewis returned to Ireland and continued his education near his home for a brief time. Later he was sent to a boarding school in Cherbourg which was near to Malvern College. Thus, he regained the company of Warren and continued the pursuit of literature, unlike the latter. He excelled in the subject of classical literature and developed a unique style of writing, beginning with scholastic essays. G.E. Cowie the matron of Cherbourg influenced his idea of spirituality and created a wider inclusive space of mysticism that included

eastern and western schools of thought. Richard Wagner was equally a powerful influence on Lewis during this period, which shaped his mystical and mythical interests. He had a special interest in Norse mythology and its obsessions with good-evil conflicts. In 1913, Lewis moved to Malvern College where he continued the pursuit of Scandinavian literature and mythology. For private studies, he spent extensive time in the library and within a year became completely exhausted. Albert allowed his son to return home after repeated pleas and a threat of suicide. Albert appointed William Kirkpatrick his former teacher as the private tutor for his son. Under the mentorship of Kirkpatrick, Lewis became proficient in five languages including Greek and German. Lewis also acquired the skills of argumentation and logical debating. Following the influence of his tutor, he became a confirmed atheist and completely rejected Christianity which was a familiar form of organized religion.

After completing the studies under Kilpatrick in 1916, Lewis joined Oxford University the following year after passing the entrance examination. World War I was in full swing and laid pressure on all citizens of England, including the youth of University. Along with many other students, Lewis got enrolled in Officer Training Corps to join the English army to fight the war against France. He made a special relationship with Janie Moore, who was the mother of his friend cadet, Paddy Moore. Lewis served as a second lieutenant in Somerset Light Infantry from November 1917 to April 1918. He fought the war in trenches and captured German soldiers until he was wounded by a shell. He discontinued fighting and returned to London in May 1918. Paddy Moore died fighting in France and Lewis developed an intimate relationship with Janie. Meanwhile, Albert distanced himself from Lewis, where latter found affection and inspiration from Janie. Lewis compiled his poetry from 1915 and published the collection *Spirits in Bondage* under the pseudonym "Clive Hamilton". After

returning to his home in Ireland, He re-joined Oxford in 1919. Janie and her daughter Maureen moved to a residence near Oxford and their monetary needs were supported by Lewis. He obtained a bachelor's degree in August 1923 and after two years became a fellow of Magdalene College at Oxford. Albert was diagnosed with cancer and underwent surgery in 1929. He died the very year which made Lewis deeply reflect upon his relationship with the deceased father. This also awakened his consciousness towards spirituality and a deeper understanding of the soul.

In October 1930 Lewis and Warren along with Janie moved to a new residence which they named "The Kilns". This venue served as a meeting place for discussing creative literature, where Lewis often entertained writers like J.R.R. Tolkien and Hugo Dyson. In September 1931 all the three had an elaborate discussion on religion and faith in the Christianity. Tolkien encouraged Lewis to maintain a spiritual faith based on personal experience rather than relying on external manmade doctrines which were later incorporated as religion. Dyson tried to convince him about the healing nature of Christianity and its role in the personal growth of individuals. After nine days of deep reflections, Lewis returned to the Christian belief system by accepting Jesus Christ along with the concept of God. This was the result of an epiphanic experience, when Lewis along with Warren were walking towards the zoo. The former officially declared his belief by visiting the church and adopting Christian lifestyle on December 25, 1931. Thus, Christianity became a central premise of his later writings which include fiction and non-fiction writings.

His work *Pilgrim's Regress* was published in 1933, which reflects the return of the protagonist John from disbelief to faith. He and Warren sold their residence Little Lea and the amount was utilized for the development of The Kilns. Lands were purchased and new staff were appointed, while ownership was conferred to Janie.

Lewis along with Tolkien established and extended their friends circle which was named Inklings. The group consists of writers with similar literary interests who held discussions, shared, commented and criticized their literary works. Weekly meetings were held on Thursday nights from 1934 to 1949 when the Inklings read aloud their creations and evaluated them. His science fiction *Out of the Silent Planet* was published in 1938, which was developed into a trilogy popularized as *The Ransom Trilogy*. These narratives portrayed the experiences of the protagonist Ransom and incorporated covert religious discourses. During World War II, Warren was selected to serve the army for a short period in France and got relieved in 1940. Lewis delivered speeches on air to inspire the Royal Air Force members to instil courage and patriotism. Due to bombing threats in major cities of Britain, children were evacuated to safer places in the countryside. Lewis too accommodated evacuated children in his residence, which inspired him in the creation of later fantasy novels like *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. This finally culminated in the completion of the fantasy series renowned as *The Chronicles of Narnia*.

The Problem of Pain by Lewis was published in 1940, which was a successful experiment by using common language to describe abstruse philosophical concepts. His outlook on the concept of suffering is described in the work which is conceived from a religious perspective. Another popular work *The Screwtape Letters* appeared in the weekly journal *The Guardian* from May 1941 and later published as a book in 1942. The publication was a great success and the outpour of funds was utilized for charitable purposes under the Agape Fund. Lewis began to address British citizens through BBC radio broadcasts on Christian topics, which became popular among the public including supporters and opposers of religion. The science-fiction trilogy which began with *Out of the Silent Planet* was completed with the publication of

Perelandra in 1943 and *That Hideous Strength* in 1945. Raging war did not deter publications like *The Abolition of Man* in 1943, *Beyond Personality* in 1944 and *The Great Divorce* in 1945 which was an extension of *The Screwtape Letters*. Speeches delivered on BBC radio were published in 1952 as *Mere Christianity* and its success increased his popularity among readers. Janie fell off the bed in 1950 and was hospitalized where she died in 1951. Lewis was still busy with his writings and published his most popular fantasy book for children *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* in 1950. This marked the beginning of *The Chronicles of Narnia*, which consists of seven novels among which the aforementioned became the most popular one. He intended to convey his religious ideology to people of all age groups, for which Children's Literature proved an effective medium. The following Narnian series was completed in seven years and published in the following order *Prince Caspian* in 1951, *The Voyage of the 'Dawn Treader'* in 1952, *The Silver Chair* in 1953, *The Horse and His Boy* in 1954, *The Magician's Nephew* in 1955, and *The Last Battle* in 1956. Contemporary writers including the Inklings were apathetic of them and his best friend J.R.R. Tolkien vehemently criticized the series. Depiction of religious themes in Children's Literature was an unacceptable and unreliable trend according to Tolkien. Such speculations were proved wrong by the unexpected popularity gained by *The Chronicles of Narnia* in Britain and America among children. The books were enlisted among the bestsellers for almost fifty years and have been favourites of adults along with the juveniles.

Joy Gresham an American writer met Lewis in 1952 and made a deep impression on the latter. She stayed with Lewis and Warren at The Kilns for almost two weeks and developed an intimacy with Lewis. Her husband later divorced her to marry her cousin, which allowed her to strengthen her relationship with Lewis. Joy

began to stay in England and Lewis moved from Oxford to Cambridge University. Very soon the latter became a victim of writer's block and Joy tried to infuse new ideas into his mind. Joy along with her two children Douglas Gresham and David Gresham moved to a residence in England which was monetarily supported by Lewis.

In 1956, Joy was diagnosed with bone cancer and the couple wanted to spend time together until the impending death. He married Joy twice, where the first was an official procedure at Oxford on April 23, 1956. This was done in a haste to avoid legal issues preventing the prolonged residence of Joy who was a foreigner in England. The couple underwent a marriage procedure again according to Anglican Christianity defying the consent of the bishop on March 21, 1957. This was performed in the hospital bed of Joy, by a priest who was Lewis's friend. J.R.R. Tolkien could not agree or accept their marriage, as he was against remarriage of widowers. During short spans of recovery, Lewis and Joy stayed for a while in Ireland and went for a vacation in Greece. On their return, Joy became seriously ill, underwent a tumour surgery and was advised to go home. On July 13, 1960, Joy was hospitalized again and passed away after consoling her husband. Going through the immense experience of grief, Lewis published his new work *A Grief Observed* in 1961. This was an attempt to find relief from the sorrows of human life by reconnecting with their spiritual implications. After a year his health conditions began to deteriorate and had to go through a series of blood transfusions. Despite renal failure and cardiac arrests which threatened his life, Lewis made a quick recovery after an anointment ceremony. Even though without complete recovery, he returned to The Kilns and resumed his routine. He was mentally prepared to welcome his death. Lewis passed away on November 22, 1963, which was one week before his sixty-fourth birthday (Davenport).

In the above-mentioned biographical facts, Davenport traces the influences on Lewis which moulded his psyche and the peculiarities of his religious outlooks. G.E. Cowie who had incorporated eastern and western mysticism instigated a unique spiritual outlook in Lewis. This can be the reason why Lewis incorporated trans-Christian mythology and imagery in his fantasy works. The liberal attitude of Lewis, especially in the case of widow re-marriage, contrasts him from conservative religiosity of Tolkien. Lewis married Joy Gresham by defying the disapproval of Anglican bishop and still followed the religious customs. These facts reveal that Christianity followed by Lewis is a liberal form of religion which is inclusive and does not alienate other cultures. That is why the Narnian series incorporate a conglomeration of various images and myths, like the Greco-roman and Norse.

Retracing the Spiritual Discourse of Narnia

It is a known fact that the literary career of Lewis commenced with the creation of Boxen and this laid an unconscious influence on later creations like the Narnian books. Both Boxen and Narnia depicts a mythic land with talking animals. The former satirizes social issues, whereas the latter provides solutions to them through self-initiative of characters. An unconscious affinity to India and its culture can be inferred from the Boxen. Allan Bates explains in *The Narnian: The Life and Imagination of C. S. Lewis*, that Boxen was a fusion of Animal-Land and India. Lewis was influenced by the stories of Beatrix Potter who had created an imaginary land of talking animals through her narratives. Warren his elder brother created imaginary narratives based on Indian setting as an influence of Rudyard Kipling. Lewis combined both of these imaginary spaces into Boxen which he continued to develop even after Warren left him and went for Wynward. Lewis himself was unaware of any connection between Narnia and Boxen apart from anthropomorphic Characterization. The Narnian

fantasy narratives represented political interactions and incorporated cross-cultural mythical figures. The spiritual outlook of Lewis outlived oppositions of conservative Christians like Tolkien, who could little approve of synthesizing Christianity and paganism. Jacobs concludes that inclusiveness had been an integral part of Lewis since his earlier days and it continued to find expression through spiritual discourses in his works (12-13). Thus, Narnian series cannot be compartmentalized as texts of any conservative religion, apart from its overt resemblance to Christianity. Syncretism displayed in the Narnian novels bears a close resemblance to Indian spirituality. The fantasy land always sustains unity in diversity, which quite resembles Indian culture.

Davenport had already mentioned that Lewis embraced Christianity as an influence of Tolkien and Dyson. Allan Bede Griffiths who was a student of Lewis in Magdalene College, Oxford recollects his experiences with the master. He sheds light on the spiritual outlook of Lewis in his essay "The Adventure of Faith" which summarizes the discussions held between them. Lewis perceived Divinity as a concrete Personal God and could not comprehend transcendental Divinity beyond the limitations of forms and concepts. He cites a letter written by Lewis which describes similar outlooks fostered by both of them who were once atheists. Lewis along with Griffiths was in the quest of a complete religion which he found in Christianity and Hinduism. The former had little opportunity to make a deep study of the Indian spirituality and therefore was unable to understand the concept of Impersonal Divinity. Griffiths clarifies that if Lewis had an opportunity to comprehend Indian spirituality, he surely wouldn't have made intellectual arguments against Hinduism as he had done so in *Surprised by Joy*. He perceives that, Lewis would have also accepted concepts like mysticism and pantheism (93). This makes it evident that Lewis had a hidden inclination towards expansive and inclusive concept of spirituality. Griffiths on the other

hand created an interreligious space by tracing the interconnectedness of Vedanta and Christianity. He is renowned for establishing Christian Ashram Movement which combined Hindu and Christian systems of spirituality.

In spite of Lewis unacknowledging the fact, he had an unconscious inclination towards Indian spirituality. Many dimensions of the this can be found in his works. Jessica Frazier in *Hindu Worldviews: Theories of Self, Ritual and Reality* points out that Medieval European world described by Lewis bears resemblance to Indian culture. The indistinct similarity between the individual entity or microcosm with the outward cosmos is the common premise; yet Hinduism is different from the medieval European school of thought. Hinduism is characterized by the inclusiveness of diverse traditional practices and different schools of thought (18). The choice of the Medieval world as the background for Narnian narratives shows not only Lewis's overt love towards medievalism; but the inherent acknowledgement of an inclusive religion. It is also an undeniable fact that Narnia is a fantasy land of diversities and contradictions which owes much to Indian culture. It has already been mentioned that critics like Manlove had questioned Lewis for depicting the past in medieval European setting and created an anti-progressive attitude in readers. These arguments become irrelevant when Narnia is re-read as a text of Indian spirituality.

Like the secondary world of Narnia, Indian culture has been and is still known for unity in diversity. Stephen Knapp in *The Power of the Dharma: An Introduction to Hinduism and Vedic Culture* traces the perspective of Lewis on Hindu culture. Lewis was well aware of the fact that the growth of Hinduism is characterized by accepting and incorporating ideas from all outward sources. Knapp explains the fact through an example, that Indian culture fosters all schools of thought and religions. Hinduism has provided space for the growth of non-Hindu religions like Islam. India has the largest

variety of Islamic sects which are banned in many other parts of the world. All religions are seen as pathways towards Absolute Truth and personal spirituality is emphasized. Hence Sanatana-*Dharma* also known as Hinduism is not an organized religion, but an all-inclusive culture without fixations (3-5). It is a clear fact that Indian spirituality defies the conventional format of organized and dogmatic religions. By itself it is a conglomeration of various doctrines, cultures and diverse traditions.

Aslan, the lion is portrayed as a representation of Divinity in the Narnian books and the character exhibits the qualities of a natural leader. Analysing this character can reveal a clear picture into the general and specific dimensions of spiritual discourses embedded in the text. Gary K. Wolfe in *Evaporating Genres: Essays on Fantastic Literature* highlights the scope of reading the Narnian text beyond the predetermined fixation on Christianity. He emphasizes on the necessity of analysing the universal values exhibited by Aslan such as kindness and strength (77). Identifying the identity of Aslan is inevitable before beginning any specific reading of Narnia. Aslan being the central character acquires various connotations according to the approach towards the text. There can be multiple possibilities to visualize the spiritual content of the text and the re-reading can create a plethora of meanings. The comment made by Liam Neeson about his perspective on Aslan widens space and extends the scope to approach the Narnian series. This Bollywood actor had been the voiceover of Aslan in the three Narnian films. Neeson reflects his thought on the open-ended nature of this character created by Lewis: "He hasn't just made Aslan "Christ-like". He has made him Muslim. He is Mohammed, He is Buddha. He is the figurehead of all the religions in the world" (Neeson). The comment was made by Neeson in an interview conducted by Stevie Wong in STAR Movies VIP Access. The actor's views

shed light on re-reading *The Chronicles of Narnia* as texts of spiritual movements like Islam, Buddhism etc.

The inclusiveness and cultural plurality of Narnia extend the scope of divergent readings of the text. Sarah Zettel traces the unity of spiritual discourses in Narnian series and Hinduism in the study entitled "Why I Love Narnia: A Liberal, Feminist Agnostic Tells All". Lewis highlights the underlying goodness within all beings and transcends the boundaries imposed by differences in belief systems. *The Last Battle* reflects this view, where Aslan accepts the Calormene soldier Emeth into the Real Narnia. Emeth was the worshipper of the evil deity, Tash; contrary to Aslan who was the personification of goodness. Aslan declares that all good acts done or oaths kept in the name of even a false God like Tash will be accepted and rewarded by Aslan himself. Contrastingly, the cruelties committed in Aslan's name will be accepted by Tash and such evildoers cannot be the worshipers of Aslan who personifies true Divinity. False forms of worship and corruption of belief system are condemned in Narnia and it does not matter who is the subject of worship. Zettel concludes that Narnia reflects the Hindu concept of action-oriented result and accepts multiple belief systems. Honesty, sincere search for truth, good path and commitment to action are considered as the criteria for emancipation (188-189). This opens up the scope of reading the Narnian texts through belief systems other than Christianity. It has already been observed that the spiritual discourses of the text bear close resemblance to Indian spirituality, instead of prescriptive and dogmatic religions.

The aforementioned studies and observations conform to the fact that the Narnian series can be identified and analysed as a text of Indian spirituality. Among the various traditions and schools of thought within Indian spirituality, the selection of any specific one is a tedious task. Renewed traditions and movements have been

appearing in India during different periods, like Buddhism, Jainism, Sufism, Bhakti movement, Sikh tradition, Alwar and Nayanar traditions. Among a plethora of spiritual movements in India, Ayyavazhi stands out as a perfect choice due to intricate similarities with the Narnian narratives. As a New World Movement, Ayyavazhi addresses issues faced by humanity and it synchronizes spirituality with social progress. Transformation of the outward world and that of the inner consciousness is the common fundamental thread that runs through Ayyavazhi and *The Chronicles of Narnia*. Before re-reading *The Chronicles of Narnia* as a text of Ayyavazhi it is necessary to understand the impact of this movement and the contributions made by its founder.

Familiarizing Ayya Vaikundar and Ayyavazhi

Ayyavazhi is renowned as a social renaissance movement of the early nineteenth century in South India. The movement was envisioned by Ayya Vaikundar who is known as a social reformer and spiritual leader. Ayyavazhi synthesized spirituality and social welfare, by working for the freedom of oppressed sections of society. Even though the movement originated in Travancore it made a lasting impact on later reform movements of South India. Exploitations of Colonial rule and the local government was questioned by Ayyavazhi. Social reformers like Chattampi Swamikal, Sri Narayana Guru and Mahatma Ayyankali in Kerala extended the impact of the movement and practically implemented many ideas of Ayyavazhi for the eradication of social evils. Similarly, Arul Prakasa Vallalar in Tamil Nadu instigated reform movements and uplifted the marginalized sections of society.

Resources of Ayyavazhi

Readers and scholars can understand and evaluate Ayyavazhi through the available textual resources. Study of the origin, spread and contextualization of this

two-century-old movement is possible only through the resource materials which are known as sacred texts of Ayyavazhi. Apart from the spiritual contents, they describe the historical, social and political reverberations of South India. Exploitations faced by the downtrodden sections of society and details of tyrannical judicial systems employed can also be inferred from them. The following are the major resources of Ayyavazhi, which describe the life and teachings of Ayya Vaikundar.

1. *Akhilathirattu Ammanai* written by Sidar R. Harigoplan

2. *Arul Nool* compiled by Arulalarkal

Akhilathirattu Ammanai is considered as the primary text of Ayyavazhi, which was written by R. Harigoplan. The author who is also renowned by the name Sahadeva Sidar was one among the main five disciples of Ayya Vaikundar. This is an epic poem composed in the local Tamil vernacular, which could be easily understood by the common masses. This work is composed in the traditional Tamil performative ballad form of "Ammanai" and metrical styles of "Nadai" and "Virutham" are employed, along with the use of prose passages. This work contains more than 15000 verses and is regarded as the longest work in Ammanai form. *Akhilathirattu Ammanai* was composed by Harigopalan in 1840 as per the instruction of Vaikundar himself and was completed the following year. The original text is in the form of a palm leaf manuscript and it's first printed from appeared in 1933. Apart from depictions of spiritual discourses and biography of Ayya Vaikundar, the text includes relevant information on mythography, philosophy, anthropology, history and geography. Different versions of *Akhilathirattu Ammanai* are available at present, which include *Swamithope version*, *Saravanantheri version*, *Panchalakurichi version*, *Nariyan Vilai version*, *Varampetran Pantaram version* and *Kottangad version*. These were made into printed books based on their original manuscript versions and apart from them, there

are other modern versions like *Vivekanandan version*, *Kalaiilakkiyaperavai version*, *Thirukudumbam version*, *Sentrathisai Ventraperumal version* and *Palaramachandran version*. There are also printed versions like the *Ambalapathi versions* which were published after cross-examination of the existing printed versions and manuscripts.

Arul Nool consists of the verses expounded by Vaikundar on different occasions and were written down by his disciples who were commonly referred to as Arulalarkal. The work is recited as the part of daily and occasional prayers by devotees and it also includes a few hymns sung by Arulalarkal. The work is an anthology of subtexts like "Pothippu", "Uchippathippu", "Vazha Padippu", "Uga Padippu", "Chattuneettolai", "Thirumana Vazhthu", "Panchadevar Ulpathi", "Thinkal Padam", "Sivakanda Adhikara Pathiram" and "Naduthirvai Ula". The verses were originally compiled and stored in the form of palm-leaf manuscripts. The first paper print version of *Arul Nool* was published in 1927 and has been later translated into Malayalam. In *Arul Nool* there are many passages and ideas which have been borrowed from *Akhilathirattu Ammanai*. Hence the latter is considered as the primary resource of Ayyavazhi, even though there also autobiographical references regarding Vaikundar in "Chattuneettolai" of *Arul Nool*.

Ayya Vaikundar

To understand the inherent values and potentials of the Ayyavazhi movement, a brief glimpse into the biographical account of its founder is helpful. There are slight variations in opinions among scholars regarding the exact dates of birth and demise of Vaikundar. This may be due to the dual system of calendars: Tamil era and the *Kolla Varsham* followed in the state of Travancore during the nineteenth century. The following biographical details of Vaikundar is primarily based on the study of R. Ponnu

entitled *Vaikunda Swamikal: Oru Avatharam*. Ponnu is renowned as the first researcher who introduced Ayyavazhi movement and highlighted the contribution of Ayya Vaikundar in the social renaissance of South India.

Ayya Vaikundar was born as the second son of Veyilal Ammaiyar and Ponnumadan on March 12, 1809, at Agastheesvaram Thaluk of Kanyakumari District. Kanyakumari was at that time the part of the State of Travancore and the exact place of his birth was Poovandanthopu. Poovandanthopu was land owned and named after Poovandar who was the umbrella bearer of the King of Travancore. Vaikundar was born is the *Channar* caste which followed the tradition of Palm tree climbing and sale of its produces. The child was initially named as Mudichoodum Perumal which literary meant "King wearing a Crown". This was vehemently opposed by the upper caste authorities and the child was called renamed as Muthukutty. Muthkutty took the profession of a palm tree climber but was sensitive to the injustices faced by lower caste people. They were doubly marginalized under the tyranny of the British colonial and rule and that of the local government. He was unique in spiritual outlook since childhood and defied the rules of traditional religiosity. He made a pedestal in his residence and worshipped Lord Narayana, which was against his caste norms of worshipping evil spirits and Brahminical norms of temple worship. Even without acquiring any formal education, he was able to instruct his fellow beings and exhibited the quality of a natural leader.

In 1825 he married Paradevathai a lady from the neighbouring village of Puviyoor. Later he was afflicted by a severe skin disease and became bedridden. In spite of various treatments, this condition continued for a year. His mother had an epiphanic dream where Lord Narayana instructed her to bring her ailing son to the *Masi* Festival of Thiruchendur Temple. Following this, he was carried in a large cradle by

his relatives, accompanied by his mother. Unexpectedly Muthukutty ran and disappeared into the sea of Thiruchendur. On the third day which is March 1, 1833, he emerged out of the sea as a renewed personality. Muthukutty declared that he was Vaikundar the offspring of Narayana and had incarnated to destroy the aeon of Kali. He declared that the present aeon of misrule and injustice will give way to *Dharma Yugam* which is characterized by global unity. *Akhilathirattu Ammanai* describes the instructions given by Lord Narayana to his progeny Vaikundar, before sending him for his mission. Vaikundar travelled on foot to his birthplace Poovandanthope where he began a penance for six years. The first phase of two years is known as *Yuga Thavasu*, which was undertaken to destroy the present age of *Kali Yugam* and for creation of *Dharma Yugam*. During this period, he sat in a six feet deep pit and partook only liquid food for survival. The second phase of two years is known as *Jathi Thavasu* which was intended for alleviating the suffering of caste discrimination and for creating unity among all the people. In this phase, he ate only fruits and milk as food. People from all walks of life and belonging to all castes approached Vaikundar for healing and blessings.

The fame of Vaikundar spread far and wide as a spiritual leader who instructed the people to procure their rights and stand against the tyrannical advances of the oppressors. His instructions and teachings created self-respect and confidence in the downtrodden sections of society, who began to strongly disagree with injustices like unethical taxation and forced labour. This enraged the authorities as they were no longer able to impose their oppressive power over the subaltern sections. They raised accusations against Vaikundar and formally complained against him to the ruler of Travancore, Swathy Thirunal Ramavarma, who had arrived at Suchindram temple. Vaikundar assuming the title of Divine incarnation and his stand against traditional

norms were pointed out as accusations. The king approached the traditional astrologi-cal divination which confirmed that Vaikundar was the incarnation of Lord Narayana. Adhering to the caste hierarchy of society he concluded that Divine incarnation is not possible in lower castes like the *Channar*. Poovandar the umbrella bearer of the King reminded him of the omnipresence of Divinity beyond restrictions of caste and creed. This was unheeded by the king who succumbed to the malicious advice of courtiers and sent orders to bring Vaikundar before him. Armed forces of the king were resisted by devotees of Vaikundar who assumed a violent stance. Vaikundar asked them to curb their anger in intelligence by upholding courage and fortitude. Vaikundar was ruthlessly thrashed and dragged from the pacified mob by the king's soldiers. Even when he was pelted stones and spat by opposers, Vaikundar pacified the helpless dev-otees who were mere onlookers of this scene.

Vaikundar was brought before the King in Suchindram temple, where the in-terrogation was conducted. The king was dissatisfied with Vaikundar and ordered him to be taken to Singarathope prison at Thiruvananthapuram. The latter was subjected to severe tortures and life attempts including poisoning, burning in a lime kiln and suffo-cating with burned chillies. The final test of Vaikundar was to confront a hungry wild tiger in a cage, where the former was unharmed and instead caused the accidental death of an onlooker brahmin. This was taken as an ill omen by the King who was again advised by Poovandar to release the accused. King asked Vaikundar to sign a palm leaf document stating that the latter would confine his teachings and services within the *Channar* community. Vaikundar tore the palm leaf with his fingernail and threw it aside, affirming his all-inclusive stand on unity. The king was finally forced to release Ayya Vaikundar from prison unconditionally and never interfered in any of his later activities. After 112 days in prison, devotees carried back Vaikundar to

Poovandanthope where the social reform activities began with full fervour. Social evils, political tyranny and religious anomalies were questioned and rectified by him through the commencement of Samathuva Samajam. Social mobilization process was achieved to a great extent through the construction of *Muthiri Kinaru* the scared well, common meal system, wearing of ritual headgears, launching upper cloth revolt, initiating social service activities, the abolishment of devil worship and condemning animal sacrifice. Tremendous changes were achieved by Vaikundar within his eighteen years of social reform activities. On June 2, 1851, before leaving his mortal frame Vaikundar consoled the devotees, asked them to foster unity and work with the stability of mind (Ponnu *Vaikunda Swamigal* 52-84). The inherent values and ideologies of Ayyavazhi are directly proportional to those exhibited by Vaikundar in his life sojourn. Examination of each activity of movement reveals that they were by no means accidental and were perfectly planned for a better future by Ayya Vaikundar. Direct involvement of the leader among the common masses along with disciples lead to changes in the social structure from the grass-root level.

Ayyavazhi

In *Religion and Subaltern Agency* G. Patrick summarizes the fundamental values of Ayyavazhi which were based on the teachings of Vaikundar. Awareness was created among the common masses who inculcated these values for subverting the oppressive canons imposed upon them. Empowerment of individual consciousness is considered as the pathway for transformation and progress of society. As per the study of Patrick, following are identified as the cardinal values of Ayyavazhi.

> *Dharmam*: Righteousness is a rough translation of *Dharmam* in Sanskrit and
> the word denotes charity in Tamil. Ayyavazhi incorporates both these

concepts of *Dharmam* which inspires the followers to follow social service activities and foster spiritual values. The movement foregrounds the value of *Dharmam* which is summarized by Vaikundar as uplifting the downtrodden.

Courage and fortitude: People are motivated to develop fearlessness against all agencies, whether human or supernatural. The teachings of the preceptor are considered as a powerful voice against all powers of oppression. There is little space for fear of oppression from authorities and exploiters, as fortitude is itself considered as the source of power and courage. Fortitude represents a practical dimension and courage is the by-product value that goes along with it.

Living with dignity: Total annihilation of the evil aeon is possible through human agency and not a supernatural one. Dignified life is considered as the instrument which will cause evil to undo itself. The spiritual discourses of Ayyavazhi and the related rituals were created to instil a dignified lifestyle in people.

Subversion of socio-religious evils like caste discrimination, political oppression, economic exploitations, religious monopoly, ritualization, offerings and demonolatry (112-116).

Dharmam is the fundamental value which fosters and sustains all other principles of Ayyavazhi. Courage and fortitude constitute the internalized expressions of *Dharmam*, while the establishment of a dignified life is its practical implication. Ayyavazhi aims in the abolishment of social, political, economic and religious exploitations, through reformative practices based on *Dharmam* as a human value. This value is foreseen as a unifying force which enables people to grow beyond the restrictions

of caste, creed, race, gender, religion and social status. *Dharmam* stands as an inclusive power that would lead to the advent of the egalitarian world of *Dharma Yugam*.

Reformation initiated by Vaikundar has been the subject of study by scholars like R. Ponnu and G. Patrick. The reform activities influenced and included multiple dimensions of human life including, the social, political, economic and religious spheres. Kadavil Chandran in *Ayya Vaikuntar: Jeevithavum Sandesavum* analyses the changes made by Ayyavazhi in society and its later influences. "One World, One Aeon, One Language, One God, One Caste, One Religion, One Community, and One Government". This is the declaration made by Ayya Vaikundar and is the quintessence of his vision for the present and the future of humanity. For achieving this ideal condition, he redefined the existing concept of *Dharmam* as: "Upliftment of the downtrodden is *Dharmam*". The concept of a unified global identity was emphasized by Vaikundar who integrated social service with spirituality. In 1838 Samathuva Samajam was established for ensuring rights of the working-class in society and their unification. Chandran points out that the concept of global solidarity of proletarian class was envisioned in Ayyavazhi, even a decade before the publication of *Communist Manifesto* by Karl Marx. Samathuva Samajam destabilized the divide and rule policy of British colonial power which was adopted by the Travancore government to exploit the subaltern communities through segregation. Vaikundar unified the eighteen castes which include all religions and communities in his contemporary society. This highlighted his stand against all institutions which separated human beings based on caste and religion.

Pathis, the places of worship served as venues for the education of the illiterate majority of subaltern communities. They functioned as night schools for the labouring class who were denied formal education. Caste discrimination and untouchability

were inseparable anomalies of Indian society. Caste hierarchies were existing in the society where the upper caste people marginalized the castes lower to them. As a remedy for this, Vaikundar transformed a spiritual ritual into a procedure of social gathering. Common meal system was initiated in the centres of worship by Vaikundar which later on took the name and form of Sama Panthi Bhojanam. People irrespective of their differences in caste and religious beliefs gathered in Pathis and partook meals together. This pacified inter-caste hostilities and helped to create a sense of unity and fraternity among them.

Followers of Ayyavazhi wear headgears, especially during the time of worship. This custom was introduced by Vaikundar to create self-esteem and dignity to oppressed classes of society. The headgear is a symbol of the crown and proclaims that all the people are themselves the rulers and no one is inferior to another. In Travancore, the lower caste people were not allowed to wear clean white clothes, nor were they permitted to cover their knees. This was an oppressive custom followed since centuries, where the lower caste was forced to follow an unhygienic lifestyle and an undignified lifestyle. Vaikundar insisted that people should wear clean clothes, follow a hygienic lifestyle and wear clothes covering their ankles. There was also an age-old practice were the women lower castes were not allowed to cover their breasts. The representatives of the king treated women as sex symbols and taxes were levied from women to wear upper cloths. The upper cloth revolt was launched by Vaikundar who insisted that the women should wear upper cloths and cover their breasts. After many decades of struggle, the common citizens procured their right to clothing through the success of Upper Cloth Revolt or *Channar* Revolt in 1859 July, 26. Chandran notes that the followers of Ayyavazhi had achieved their freedom of clothing as the king and his allies dared not confront Vaikundar or interfere with his followers (76-90). It

is a notable fact that social reforms and spirituality cannot be categorized as binary paradigms in the case of Ayyavazhi. Every ritual or custom has a social connotation and enables people to evolve individually and socially.

Religious reforms of Ayyavazhi is interconnected with other dimensions of human life and has been a subject of systematic study. In *Sri Vaikunda Swamigal and The Struggle for Social Equality in South India*, R. Ponnu explains the rituals of Ayyavazhi and sheds light on the religious reformation undertaken by the movement. He points out that the teachings of Vaikundar made a tremendous impact on the reformation of Hindu society by necessitating changes in traditional customs. There were separate water resources like ponds and wells for people of upper and lower castes. The latter were prohibited from taking bath in temple ponds and public wells, which were exclusively reserved for the higher caste. Vaikundar created and consecrated a sacred well in Swamithope, where all the people took a ritual bath before worship. The same was used for drinking purpose, which united different sections of society and alleviated them from discrimination. Apart from beginning a system of inter-dining, Vaikundar helped the people of various communities to share, cook and partake meals together. People brought the necessary items and cooked using the water from the sacred well. This ritual obliterated the untouchability and caste discrimination, by creating a bond of fraternity among them. It was mentioned earlier that Vaikundar established Pathis as places of worship. He also built numerous Nizhalthangals or Inatthangals for worship, where people gathered for common worship. The lower castes who were denied entry into temples found spiritual solace in Nizhalthangals. These places were utilized to spread the teachings of unity among the masses and they acted as venues for social service activities. Feeding the destitute and poor sections of society was conducted as a discipline along with biannual or thrice a year festival known

as *palvaipuvizha*. Ayyavazhi creates a ritualistic union of spirituality and society, where spiritual discipline is inseparable from the concerns of society.

People of the lower strata of society usually lead an unhygienic lifestyle and were addicted to intoxicants. Vaikundar made the people perform a spiritual austerity known as *Thuvaiyalpanthi* [*Thuvaiyal Thavasu*], near the seashore of Muttapathi. Their routine life and personal outlook underwent significant changes. The followers of Ayyavazhi regularly bathed and washed their clothes. They adopted a vegetarian lifestyle, abstained from intoxicants like liquor and tobacco. People thus began to develop personal cleanliness and imbibed spiritual values. People of the lower class were not allowed to build storied houses nor were they permitted to build houses on roadsides. Vaikundar instructed people in matters like planning and building of residences like: maintenance of proper ventilation, the necessity of adequate rooms and proximal distance to neighbouring houses. It was observed that his instructions influenced the lower sections of society to maintain their houses and premises clean. To develop social unity among people and instruct them in human values, Vaikundar hoisted *Anbukodi* or the Love Flag. This ochre-coloured flag had a white trident mark which signifies the values of purity peace and love. The central spike of the trident is in the shape of a lamp flame which signifies the light of knowledge. Ochre colour of the flag is related to mental strength and the quality of sacrifice. Even today the flag is hoisted in worship centres of Ayyavazhi. Followers of Ayyavazhi are also known as *Anbukodi Makkal* which connotes with the name of this flag. This name signifies the value of all-inclusive love which unites the entire humanity. The followers wear a mark on their forehead in the shape of lamp flame, which is known as "*Namam*". This mark by white soil is directly smeared on the forehead of devotees and also given

directly in their hands. This ritual by Vaikundar stood against caste discrimination and untouchability.

Ayyavazhi never alienates spirituality from society and its reformative influence is inseparable from the Indian context. Ponnu points out that Ayyavazhi is different from established religions and occupies a significance in history. Like many other societies, in the province of Travancore, religion was utilized as an instrument of power over the kings by orthodox priests. The same religion was made instrumental in the process of reviving society by Vaikundar. He questioned the elaborate procedures and rituals which were traditionally followed in the places of worship. He condemned the patriarchal forms of exploitations like the devadasi system in temples and ensured equality of women. Ritual processions of unmarried girls with uncovered breasts was severely criticized by Vaikundar. Along with reforming Brahminical institutions, religious practices of the lower castes were also questioned. Killing animals or human beings in the form of blood sacrifice was severely condemned by Vaikundar, who stood for the value of compassion. He was against all forms of violence and cruelty. Worship of evil deities was discouraged by him and adherence to the worship of Singular Divinity was emphasized. As the representation of Supreme Divinity, Vaikundar practised a procedure of burning and destroying evil deities. His acts and teachings emphasized on fearlessness. In the procedures of worship, he replaced love in the place of fear.

Unity of entire cosmos is reflected through the concept of *Dharma Yugam*, put forth by Vaikundar. He declared that the present evil aeon of *Kali Yugam* will be replaced by *Dharma Yugam*, which is characterized by universal harmony. Instead of orthodox religious practices, *Dharmam* is foregrounded as the path to liberation. People are encouraged to indulge in service of the poor and needy to reach spiritual

fulfilment. Worship of any particular deity and following religious ceremonies are unnecessary according to Ayyavazhi. Vaikundar emphasized on adherence to *Dharmam* as a preparatory step towards the New World of *Dharma Yugam*. *Dharma Yugam* represents an egalitarian world, which is characterized by social, political and religious unity. Upliftment of the entire humanity, Singular Divinity, global harmony and prosperity are the concepts put forth by Vaikundar. These reflect the healing effect of his teachings which acts as practical solutions to social evils and criminal tendencies (Ponnu *Sri Vaikunda Swamigal* 53-70). The uniqueness of Ayyavazhi lies in the fact that it is not a propagandist religion and the founder Ayya Vaikundar himself practised what he preached. It is a spiritual movement that works for the transformation of human consciousness on the individual level through the acquisition of human values. It is renowned as a reformation movement which uplifted the marginalized sections and intends the complete transformation of the entire humanity.

The Chronicles of Narnia as a Text of *Ayyavazhi*

It was already mentioned that C. S. Lewis, the creator of the Narnian series was influenced by India since childhood. Creation of the fantasy animal land of Boxen, liberal religious outlook, inclusive spirituality and depiction of cultural plurality in Narnia have been discussed earlier. Apart from these characteristics, the Narnian series and Ayyavazhi share more intrinsic features of New World Movements. The following characteristics of New World Movements were identified in the previous chapter, which describe their unique identity:

1. Scriptural Authority
2. Subversion of orthodoxy
3. Conformity with nature

4. Nature of Apocalypse

5. Entry into the New World

6. Nature of the New World

7. Presence of a Leader

8. Social Relevance

9. Social Relationship

The last two criteria of Social Relevance and Social Relationship will be mentioned in the following chapters, as they are based on social impact and public receptibility. A comparative analysis of Narnia and Ayyavazhi through the first seven characteristic features is necessary to understand their intertextual quality. It also validates the credibility of reading *The Chronicles of Narnia*, a British Children's Fantasy novel as a text of Ayyavazhi, which is an Indian socio-spiritual renaissance movement. Along with this, a study of imagery and mythography is helpful to understand the degree of similarity exhibited by the Narnian series and Ayyavazhi. Understanding the similarities of the New World in the fantasy novel and the reformation movement further highlights the inseparability between the primary and the secondary worlds.

Scriptural Authority and Subversion of orthodoxy

Considering the attitude towards Scriptural Authority and Subversion of orthodoxy, Lewis makes his standpoint very clear by proposing his inclusive spiritual outlook. Even though he had the reputation of being a Christian apologist, Lewis had a broader vision about Divinity. This is explained by David C. Downing in *Into the wardrobe: C. S. Lewis and the Narnia chronicles*, where he cites the views made by Lewis in a private letter and compares it with his views expressed in *Mere*

Christianity. Lewis is sure that the knowledge of Jesus Christ and his gospel are not the criteria for salvation. Even if an individual has distorted or false notions regarding Divinity, his prayers will be accepted by God. People belonging to non-Christian religion or culture will be saved by Christ himself, despite their ignorance about him. To explain the point, Downing further cites the reply given by Lewis to the mother of Lawrence, a nine-year-old American boy. Mother of the boy expressed her anxiousness about her son replacing his devotion towards Christ with his love and fascination towards the Aslan the Lion in Narnian novels. Lewis replied to the letter of this lady in a positive sense that the boy is more devoted to Christ through his adoration towards Aslan. This is because the actions indulged and values exhibited by the fantasy character Aslan and the real-life spiritual leader Jesus Christ are very much similar to one another (85-86). This once again reflects the depth of inclusive spirituality fostered by Lewis. Even though Lewis does not explicitly acknowledge it, his standpoint is a subversion of orthodox Christianity and its scriptural authority. This could be the reason why Lewis did not directly include any Christian doctrines into the Narnian novels. Such an approach brings forth the scope of multiple re-readings other than Christian ones.

It has already been mentioned as per the studies of R. Ponnu, G. Patrick and Kadavil Chandran, that Ayyavazhi subverted orthodox religious canons and reformed Hindu religion. This movement does not rely on the authority of traditional scriptures and the teachings of Ayya Vaikundar are considered as the guideline. The textual resources of Ayyavazhi, *Akhilathirattu Ammanai* and *Arul Nool* are the available resources of the master's teachings. Direct statements made by Vaikundar and values he stood for are given importance instead of mere ritualization. As previously mentioned by Patrick, the values of *Dharmam*, courage and fortitude, and living with dignity

form the cardinal values of Ayyavazhi. Earlier cited explanations by Chandran and Ponnu reveal that the movement stood against caste discrimination, political oppression, economic exploitations, religious monopoly, ritualization, offerings and demonolatry. Thus, Lewis unconsciously and the Ayyavazhi movement consciously subvert orthodox religious canons for the creation of a New World.

Conformity with nature

Both Ayyavazhi and Narnia confirm to nature and exhibit affinity to the natural environment. It has been previously stated that the followers of Ayyavazhi adopt a vegetarian lifestyle and follow the principle of non-violence. Spiritual practices like *Thuvaiyal Thavasu* tries to create an intimacy between human beings and nature. The life history of Vaikundar bears testimony to his love and commitment to all living creatures which includes humans as well. *Akhilathirattu Ammanai* relates the inseparable bond between Vaikundar and nature. After the emergence of Vaikundar from the ocean, "*Maabhutham*" the Great Devil along with his party meets him to offer their service. Vaikundar rejects their service and proclaims that he has *Panchavar* as his five attendants. This is followed by descriptions of the five elements who worship and welcome Vaikundar during his journey. On the way, he is confronted by many living creatures who had been hiding in the forest in fear of being killed by the evil ruler *Kaliyan* [Personification of *Kali Yugam*]. They share their love towards him and pray for the redemption of the world. The ocean along with its living creatures and precious jewels pay obeisance to Vaikundar. The Good Deities later meet him and express their happiness, as the time of good-minded people soon replace the evil time (Harigopalan *Akhilathirattu* 237-240). This anecdote reveals that the evil aeon of *Kali Yugam* is characterized by exploitation of nature and its resources. The arrival of

Vaikundar is welcomed by the creatures of the physical environment and deities who are the forces of nature.

Another fine example is the episode of "*Kaduva Sodanai*" which testifies the intimate bond between Vaikundar and the animal world. The evil ruler Kalineechan decides to testify the genuineness of Vaikundar by putting him into the cage of a hungry tiger. Having known this fact, the fear-stricken devotees approach Vaikundar and express their anxiety. The latter consoles them and reveals that he is the azure hued Narayanam who has created the birds, beasts and all living creatures. He is the life of all living beings and even if these wicked ones do not recognize him the animals which are his creations will not fail to do so. The narrative later testifies that Vaikundar was unharmed by the hungry ferocious tiger who lied down prostrating like a tame animal. The repeated attempt to instigate the animal, caused the accidental death of an onlooker brahmin (Harigopalan *Akhilathirattu* 282-285). Similarly, Narnia is full of anthropomorphic characters like Fauns, Centaurs, Unicorns and other talking animals. There are also supernatural agencies Dryads [Tree Women], Naiyads [Well Women], from folk tales and those from classical narratives Bacchus and Silenus. Human children, who are the protagonists get the opportunity to interact and develop intimacy with nature through their contact with the secondary world of Narnia. Nicole M. DuPlessis in his study 'ecoLewis: Conservationism and Anticolonialism in *The Chronicles of Narnia*' unravels the role of C. S. Lewis as an environmentalist and anticolonialist. He cites the examples of the rule of Narnia under Pevensie children as contrasted with that of the Telmarines and Calormenes, where the latter ones ruthlessly exploit nature following the colonial model. Social stratification portrayed is compared with the food chain and the fantasy land provides space for interaction with nature. Human beings try to associate with the living and non-living entities of nature

and the fantasy land proposes an ideal model for this harmonious lifestyle. Unethical experimentation on animals is condemned by Lewis in *The Magician's Nephew*, where Uncle Andrew is cited as an example of utilitarianism and exploitation. Deforestation by the usurper King Miraz in *Prince Caspian* and the Telmarine race is answered by nature retorting back. Temarines are defeated by the trees of Narnia who acquire mobility and the peaceful rule of Caspian is established. *The Last Battle* describes the exploitation of nature to its maximum extent, which is carried out by Calormenes. DuPlessis cites the example of a Dryad describing the death of her fellow beings before King Tirian and while doing so she falls down dead. This exemplifies anthropomorphic imagery of nature raising voice against human cruelty. Many such examples prove that Lewis was an environmentalist and animal rights activist even before ecocriticism as a theory was established and recognized by critics (195-206). It is a notable fact that *The Last Battle* is the Narnian novel which describes total annihilation of the planet through an appending apocalypse caused by extensive environmental exploitation. Impending dangers like global climatic change, global warming and environmental pollution at various levels are often followed by predictions of cataclysmic occurrences. Here, Lewis probably unknowingly uses the fantasy land of Narnia to highlight the future occurrences of the real world.

Nature of Apocalypse

Apocalypse and cataclysmic events are expected before the dawn of the New World as per Ayyavazhi and in Narnian fantasy. Both of them describe the destruction of unfavourable elements as an inevitable step before the upliftment of the entire world. According to Ayyavazhi, the entire obliteration of creation is not expected to happen before the dawn of the New World. "*Thiruvachakam – 4*" of *Akhilathirattu Ammanai*, describes the events before the commencement of *Dharma Yugam*. The

destructive process happens in different stages, through the passage of time and the forces of nature conduct the annihilation process. The arrival of eighteen Durga Goddesses in the nation of Maha Panchamirutham and heavy rainfall are perceived as forces of destruction. The destructive forces within the collective consciousness of human beings are also foreseen as the causes of massive annihilation. In between different periods of destructive processes, there are also hopeful junctures where people attain fulfilment of life and redemption from bondage. Each process of annihilation ends with the description that, those which are to be destroyed will be annihilated and the rest shall flourish (Harigopalan *Akhilathirattu* 252-253). The apocalypse described in Chapter 14 of *The Last Battle* by Lewis is based on Christian belief, where all characters have to die to reach Paradise. The Pevensie children die in a railway accident and subsequently bear witness to the total annihilation of Narnia. Destruction begins with the awakening of the father Time who blows a horn and all the stars fall to make the sky pitch black. All Narnians are judged by Aslan and the chosen find a place in the Real Narnia. It is worth to note that there is no hellfire to torment the unworthy who are unable to face Aslan and they simply run away into the wilderness. Later all the creations are eaten up by dragons and giant lizards, and the oceans overflood all the terrains. The enlarged sun becomes red hot along with the moon which fuses with the former and later squeezed by Father Time who discards his trumpet into the ocean. Finally, Narnia becomes frozen and void without any light (Lewis *Last Battle* 749-753). The similarity of this case with that of Ayyavazhi is that, the forces of nature cause destruction to the creation. It is also to be noted that Apocalypse of Narnia occurred after limitless exploitation of nature. The major difference is that in Narnia the New World is a parallel world which is inorganically a replica of the former. Ayyavazhi, on the other hand, proposes the transformation of the existing world itself

into the New World through a series of purgatory processes. The Golden Age described in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* is very much similar to the New World of *Dharma Yugam* in Ayyavazhi. This Narnian book describes different stages of transforming the landscape and the mindscape of its inhabitants. Beginning with the end of the hundred years old winter and ending with the coronation of Pevensie siblings, the Golden Age is finally established through different stages of the refinement process. This case is similar to Ayyavazhi, where the inhabitants need not face death to reach the cherished New World.

Entry into the New World

The criteria to reach the New World as per Ayyavazhi and the Narnian narrative is not belief in any particular dogma or doctrines. As per Ayyavazhi, *Dharma Yugam* is the aeon of *Dharmam*, where all those who following *Dharmam* can evolve themselves and find a place in the New World. As each individual is responsible for one's own destiny, there is no divine agency for transportation to the New World. Similarly, Aslan merely acts as an agent in the judgement scene, where he neither punishes nor selects anybody. Those who are unable to look straight into his eyes do not find a place in the Real Narnia, as they are likely to be haunted by memories of past actions. This is similar to Ayyavazhi which emphasis on the acquisition of values like *Dharmam*, courage and fortitude, and living with dignity. This rules out possibilities of fear and guilty conscience in individuals, by intrinsically empowering them. Ayyavazhi has also incorporated the concept of judgement before the commencement of *Dharma Yugam*. Ayya Vaikundar judges *Kalineechan* who represents the collective consciousness of evil since the dawn of time. He is interrogated for committing crimes of corrupting the consciousness of all individuals and for unleashing all the evil deeds without any repentance. The epitome of evil is made to surrender all his

powers and is punished by his own forces of illusion who torment him in fire and finally dump him into worm pit (Harigopalan *Akhilathirattu* 369-377). Similar to Ayyavazhi, scholars reveal that the concept of evil is an impersonal one in *The Chronicles of Narnia*. The epitome of evil, Tash in *The Last Battle* is closely examined by Lawrence Watt-Evans in "On the Origins of Evil". He points out that Tash arrives in Narnia only after people summoned it and is different from Aslan who appears only when needed. Aslan is the representation of Divinity who created individual beings and they, in turn, created Tash. Tash represents the collective consciousness of evil rather than any particular individual being or deity. The paramount of criminal activities, exploitation of nature, religious monopoly and subjugation together give rise to the advent of Tash (31-32). The collective and impersonal representation of evil is a common factor of Narnia and Ayyavazhi. Ayyavazhi uses terminologies like *Neechan*, *Kaliyan*, *Kailneechan* and *Venneechan* as various representations of evil without fixation of individual identities. As per changing situations, these epitomes refer to the corrupt local ruler, the tyrant coloniser, the evil counsellors or other beings who indulge and instigate evil activities in society. Vaikundar tries to point out oppression and intend to eradicate evil nature within the individuals who misuse power. Thus, he did not indulge in armed revolutions nor did he promote any forms of physical violence.

Nature of the New World

Description of the New World is an interesting fact in the case of Narnian novels, as the fantasy land itself represents an egalitarian and harmonious world. Chapters 15 and 16 of *The Last Battle* give elaborate descriptions of Real Narnia, where all are free from sufferings and exhibit their potentials to their maximum. This replicates the concept of a Paradise where people meet their lost ones and old friends. The readers

are familiarized with the selection process of judgement and the joy of uniting with all

good beings fill the mood. The Golden Age in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*

is different from this, as it foregrounds the value of unity and harmony instead of the

selection process. Here, a new social order is created without rooting out society and

replanting it in a better setting. This exemplifies the organic transformation of the pri-

mary world through human agency, which is similar to *Dharma Yugam* of Ayyavazhi.

Thaliyil Lakshmanan in *Bhagavan Sri Vaikunda Swamiyum Pravachanangalum* com-

piles the prophecies of Ayya Vaikundar from various sources of Ayyavazhi. Here it is

pointed out that in *Dharma Yugam* the population of human beings will be very less,

which is an aftermath of various cataclysmic events. Social progress will be immense

and inexplicable bliss will be conferred by Divinity to the entire humanity. Vaikundar

will appear again in the form of an ascetic and will rule the entire world along with

another young ascetic under one umbrella. Vaikundar will transfer all his powers to

that young ascetic who is described to be strong as an elephant (92-102). The young

ascetic can be understood as the refined and redefined representation of *Dharmam*.

Moreover, this scene confirms the unification process fulfilled by Vaikundar and later

renunciation of his powers. Such a scene marks a stark resemblance in Chapter 17 of

The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe, where Aslan wins back Narnia from Jadis and

transfers powers to the four Pevensie siblings. Even being the supreme centre of

power and the unifying force, Aslan relinquishes his claim over Narnia. After assuring

the safety of the land and coronating the protagonists, he quietly slips away. As ideals

rulers of Narnia, the four Pevensie children later became renowned for the values

which they exhibited. Peter was entitled as "the Magnificent", Susan as "the Gentle",

Edmund as "the Just" and Lucy as "the Valiant" (Lewis *The Lion, the Witch* 192-195).

Creation of a unified New World and decentralization of power is the common theme

of Narnia and Ayyavazhi. In both of them, values are foregrounded instead of individual power centres and individual ruler is nothing but a representation of human values. Unification of the entire creation and decentralization of power equates the Golden Age of Narnia and *Dharma Yugam* of Ayyavazhi.

Presence of a Leader

The presence of a leader is a common characteristic feature of the Narnian narratives and Ayyavazhi. Parallel reading of the real-life spiritual leader Ayya Vaikundar and that of Aslan from a fantasy world can reveal different layers of similarity between the two. Aslan is the central figure which interconnects narratives of the seven Narnian books, who is portrayed as an epitome of Divinity. Aslan is an untamed lion who appears in Narnia during different periods and employs human agencies to provide solutions to various issues. This is similar to Vaikundar who is described as an advent of Divinity, who incarnates from age to age. Both of them work for the alleviation sufferings faced by the downtrodden sections of society and unification of various cultural groups. *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* deals with a narrative which describes the unification of Narnian inhabitants, beyond their racial prejudices. A fine example can be found from the references to the Giant Rumblebuffin and the destruction of the tyrannical rule of the White Witch. The Narnians were always obsessed with the concept of race and considered specific races as evil. The righteous action of rescuing the Narnians by Giant Rumblebuffin cleared the century-old misconception of all giants being evil. There is also an instance where Aslan curbs the pride of another lion who was obsessed with the racial superiority of belonging to the lion family. After ending the misrule of Jadis all the Narnians were united beyond the restrictions of race and community, which is evident from the gatherings assembled for the coronation of the Pevensies. Narnians began to be judged only through

their actions as good or bad, which is evident from the terms such as "good centaurs" and "good dwarfs". (Lewis *The Lion, the Witch* 190-195). This is similar to the struggle against the misrule of the ruler of Travancore lead by Vaikundar, who united the eighteen castes. The various practices and activities of Ayyavazhi to foster unity and dispel discrimination have already been discussed. The Golden Age described in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* can be understood as the representation of *Dharma Yugam* in Ayyavazhi which is based on the idea of global unity: One World, One Aeon, One Language, One God, One Caste, One Religion, One Community, and One Government.

Vaikundar, like Aslan, is considered as the representation of Divinity and both of them lived as common individuals among the masses. Both of them exhibited extraordinary powers and were renowned as healers. They shared the experiences of the pain and sufferings like any common individual. Both of them were captured and tortured by their opposers, where the onlookers could evaluate and appreciate courage and fortitude exhibited these leaders. The case of Aslan has been analysed by Anggie Dessi Witantri in her study "A Symbolic Character of Aslan the Great Lion". The execution of Aslan in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* is often related to The Passion of Christ, which is a misconception according to Witantri. Like Christ was betrayed by Judas, Aslan is not betrayed by anyone. Edmund was a traitor in the eyes of his family members but is in no way connected to or forces Aslan for his sacrifice. Without any external pressure, Aslan willingly allows himself to be executed by Jadis. The Narnians are all ever faithful to him and Susan and Lucy bear witness to his execution (10). Even though his scene has little likeliness to the Christian narrative of crucifixion, it bears a close resemblance to the trial scene of Ayya Vaikundar as described in *Akhilathirattu Ammanai*. Ayya Vaikundar becomes aware of the king's

intentions to interrogate and imprison him. Vaikundar runs into the ocean where he meets his father Lord Narayana and receives instructions from him which is renowned as "*Muttapathi Vinchai – 1*". Lord Narayana asks Vaikundar to bear fortitude and assures him about his successful return after imprisonment. *Muttapathi Vinchai* also summarized the events of the future when the evil rule of *Kalineechan* will end and *Dharma Yugam* will be established. Vaikundar returns and willingly allows the king's soldiers to bind, drag and torture him. When the king interrogates him, he refuses to give explicate answers and was immediately imprisoned. After outliving various attempts to assassinate him, Vaikundar returns unharmed after the 112 days of imprisonment (Harigopalan *Akhilathirattu* 270-286). The resurrection of Aslan can be related to the unharmed return of Vaikundar after multiple attempts on his life. Like the latter, Aslan too was aware of his resurrection after the White Witch's attempt on his life. This is explained by Aslan to Susan and Lucy, where it is hinted that he was present before the dawn of time and knew about the Deeper Magic which ensures his safe return from the clutches of Jadis (Lewis *The Lion, the Witch* 185). Aslan later enlivens the Narnians who were metamorphosized into stone statues by Jadis. Consequently, the Narnians win the battle over the forces of evil and Narnia is metamorphosized into a New World. Human agencies are entrusted to establish righteousness in society in both Narnian narratives and Ayyavazhi. Just as the four Pevensie siblings are destined by Aslan to rule out evil from Narnia, Ayyavazhi encourages people to live with dignity, to annihilate the evil aeon of *Kali Yugam*.

Apart from the physical persona of Ayya Vaikundar and Aslan, they are also similar in their spiritual identities. *Akhilathirattu Ammanai* describes Vaikundar as the offspring of Lord Narayana, who resides in the ocean. "*Muttapathi Vinchai – 1*" stated before, describes one of the instances when Vaikundar, as a son receives

instructions from his father. Aslan too is referred to as the son of the great Emperor-beyond-the-Sea. Aslan expresses his desire to defy the Deep Magic established in Narnia at the time of its creation, but is bound by the rules established by his father. (Lewis *The Lion. The Witch* 175-176). Yet Aslan himself is described as the creator of Narnia in *The Magician's Nephew*, where he is the representation of Supreme Divinity. Aslan has undertaken the role of protector throughout the seven books of Narnia, where he arrives to set right the problems. He reveals himself to be the annihilator of creation in his conversation with Jill Pole in *The Silver Chair*. When she asks Aslan whether he has eaten girls, Aslan replies that "I have swallowed up girls and boys, women and men, kings and emperors, cities and realms" (Lewis *Magician's Nephew* 557). This is equivalent to the Indian concept of Divinity from which the entire creation emerges, is sustained by it and later get dissolved in it. Confirming to this principle of *Advaita Vedanta*, Vaikundar is described as the Supreme Entity by his father Lord Narayana in *Akhilathirattu*. "You are Sivan, You are Nathan, You are Mahavishnu. O My son! Yourself is penance, You are Brahma, You are the beginning of all varieties of the creation" *'சிவனும்நீ நாதனும்நீ திருமாலும் நீமகனே /*

தவவும்நீ வேதனும்நீ சங்கமுத லெங்கும்நீயே' (Harigopalan *Akhilathirattu*; my trans.; 210).

Vaikundar is not only described as the creator, the preserver and annihilator of creation, but as their primordial source of all creations. Brahman according to the Upanishads is the source of creation, which is Omnipresent and non-dual by existence. Ekam in Ayyavazhi is the synonym for Brahman, the Singular Divinity according to Indian spirituality. Lewis was aware of the underlying unity which problematises the conceptions of polytheism and monotheism in India. He expresses his views on the Singular Divinity in *Allegory of Love*, which summarizes his exposure to the

concept of *Ekam*. "The principle, I understand, is well illustrated in the history of Indian Religion. Behind the gods arises the One, and the gods as well as men are only his dreams" (Lewis *Allegory* 57). Unconsciously Lewis has interwoven this concept of Singular Divinity underlying all pluralities, in his representation of Aslan. The observation of Zettel has been cited earlier where Aslan accepts Emeth, the worshipper of the evil deity Tash into the Real Narnia. Here, Lewis unknowingly transcends the limitations of names and forms, where he problematizes embodied Divinity in Aslan with the Transcendental. This is similar to Vaikundar who is considered as the manifestation of Singular Divinity, *Ekam*. In 'Uchchippathippu' of *Arul Nool*, Vaikundar is described as: "The One which remains as Singular even after being encompassing everything. Renowned throughout the cosmos as Lord of Illusion, Preceptor and Ascetic" *'எங்கும் நிறைந்தவர் ஏகமாய் நின்றவர் / மண்டலம் புகழ்படைத்த மாயன் குரு சன்னியாசி'* (Vaikuntanathar *Arul Nool*; my trans.; 73).

Similarly, Aslan is a Lion with magical powers, he is a preceptor who guides the Narnians and is an ascetic who renounced his claim on the throne, in spite of being its sovereign creator.

Mythography and Symbolism

Akhilathirattu Ammanai is a mythographic narrative that interconnects history and myth while describing the biographical account of Ayya Vaikundar. He is described as an incarnation of Mayon [Lord Vishnu], who took birth as a human being as per predestined decision. The narrative of this epic is different from that of traditional Puranas, where the ten incarnations of Lord Vishnu is highlighted and enumerated sequentially. They divide time into cyclical recurrences of four aeons, the *Chathuryugas*. On the other hand, *Akhilathirattu* describes a non-cyclical concept of

time comprising of seven aeons, which will culminate in the eighth and final aeon of *Dharma Yugam*. The episode of "*Natuththirppu*" from the epic summarizes the events of these seven aeons as narrated by Vaikundar.

Nitiya Yugam: During this aeon, Isvaran [Lord Sivan] replenishes his illumi-nance in the cosmos, when the primordial evil from the collective consciousness of all the creations is manifested as Kroni with a gigantic figure and countless limbs. When he began to engulf the creation, the sage Bodhaggurumuni approached him and tried to prevent him from harming the living beings. Without paying heed to these words, this demon devoured the mountain Kailasam along with Lord Sivan, Goddess Sakthi, the divine entities and all its inhabitants. Mayon [Lord Vishnu] who was a resident of Kailasam at that time quickly escaped from being consumed by the demon and under-took penance in the physical world. Kroni later drank up the waters from all the oceans and started devouring the entire creation. Lord Sivan in the form of a mendi-cant appeared before Lord Vishnu and granted him the boon to destroy Kroni. As per the boon, Kroni was sliced by Lord Vishnu into six parts, which were to take re-birth in the form of six aeons. Latter had to incarnate in each aeon to destroy the primordial evil, sequentially.

Chathura Yugam: The first part of Kroni manifested in the form of Kunto-masali and other countless demons. Kuntomasali was like a gigantic leech with thou-sands of limbs, exceptional gravity and length. Out of immense hunger, he engulfed all the demons that were existing in that aeon. Still unappeased he intended to prey upon the creation when the sage Kopa Rishi approached him and instructed him against the destructive act. Neglecting the words of advice. Kuntomasali reached the realm of Thava Lokam and roared aloud. Alarming resonance of the roar awakened the sages from their penance and they prayed to The Divine for help. As per the

approval of Lord Sivan, Lord Vishnu travelled in a boat and hurled a noose which had divine being held on as bait. When Kuntomasali approached to eat the prey, he was killed in the noose along with all the demonic forces in his belly.

Netu Yugam: The second part of Kroni took birth in the forms of two demons, where each one had fifty heads, ninety-five hands and one hundred legs. They were asked by the divine beings to interrupt the penance of Sruthi Muni in Kailasam, to get their desired boons. They not only awakened Sruthi Muni but tried to assassinate him by throwing him into the ocean. Sruthi Muni unharmed reached the proximity of Lord Vishnu who by now had made ocean as his residence. Lord Sivan named them as Thillaimallalan and Mallosivahanan, who secured the boons of being invincible by The Trinity, all divine entities and their weapons. They subjugated all divine entities, enslaved human beings, employed unethical taxation and enforced forced labour. The sage Roma Rishi approached them and tried to dissuade them against the tyranny unleashed. Neglecting the words of the sage, they continued with the anarchical rule, assuming themselves to be immortals. Ignited by the angered curse of Sruthi Muni, Lord Vishnu assumed the form of a Primordial Arrow, which burnt out the Thillaimallalan and Mallosivahanan with all their allies.

Kretha Yugam: In this aeon, the third part of Kroni was born as the demons Suran with one thousand heads and Simhamukhavan. They performed austerities and the former sacrificed his life in a firepit, when Lord Sivan along with Goddess Sakthi appeared, revived him, named him as Surapadman and gave him the boons of invincibility. Surapadman occupied all the worlds including Kailasam and the givers of boons themselves left their abode to live with Lord Vishnu in the ocean. Surapadman ruled all the worlds, exploited every one and enslaved the divine entities as well as human beings. Tormented by his tyranny the divine entities, Devendran and The

Trinity appealed to Lord Sivan and Lord Vishnu to end the misrule. After the council

with Lord Sivan, Lord Vishnu assumed the form of Lord Arumukhan and took God-

dess Sakthi as his weapon Vel. He arrived at the seashore of Thiruchendur, tented

there and sent his messenger Veerabahudevan to Surapadman. Veerabahudevan tried

his best to dissuade Surapadman from exploiting and enslaving people. But the latter

mocked the messenger and fought a fierce battle with the Lord. Lord Arumukhan de-

stroyed the entire demon race, along with Simhamukhavan and Surapadman. Just be-

fore dying Surapadman accused the Lord of using Goddess Sakthi as a weapon to kill

him, else it would have been impossible to defeat him. In the same aeon, the same

fragment of Kroni was born again in the form of the demon Hiranyan, who obtained

exceptional boons of invincibility. Along with the demonic clan he too established his

terrible reign over all the worlds and compelled everybody to worship himself as God.

He ordered to replace the recitation of Divine name with his own and laid control over

the forces of nature. Lord Vishnu advised Hiranyan through the medium of his son

Prahladan, to stop exploiting people and divine entities. The demon king not only un-

heard the words of his son, but repeatedly tried to assassinate him. Lord Vishnu saved

Prahlada finally by assuming the form of Narasimham [Man-Lion] and killed Hiran-

yan by ripping him apart. Before his death Hiranyan accused the Lord of using His ten

hills as nails to kill him, or else it would have been impossible to win him.

Thretha Yugam: The fourth part of Kroni was born as the demon Ravanan and

residual blood of Kroni became the race of demons. After intense penance to Lord Si-

van, Ravanan with ten heads and twenty limbs obtained three and a half crore boons

from all divine entities, which was reduced to half a crore by the clever intervention

of Lord Vishnu. As Ravanan lost the strength of his penance by lustfully spying on

Goddess Lakshmi who had arrived in Kailasam, Lord Sivan determined his death

through the chaste woman, Goddess Sitha. With the existing boons, Ravanan evoked terror in all the worlds and conquered the realms of divine entities. He controlled the forces of nature and exploited human beings. Unable to bear this evil rule, all divine entities along with Lord Vishnu approached Lord Sivan. After consulting with the latter Lord Vishnu was born as Sri Raman, the son of Dasarathan who himself was an incarnation of Guru Muni. Sukhaseela Muni was born as Dinakaran who obtained Goddess Lakshmi in the form of Sitha from his ploughland. Rama had three brothers Bharthan, Lakshmanan and Sathrughnan; who were incarnations of the bed of Lord Vishnu, the serpent Anantha and the Lord's pillow, respectively. The divine entities were born as monkeys to help the Lord Vishnu. Along with Kumbhakarnan, Ravanan had another brother Vibheeshanan who was a facet of Lord Vishnu. Sita was married to Raman and they along with Lakshmanan spent fourteen years of exile in the forest, as per the boon given by Dasarathan to his wife Kaikeyi. Sitha was abducted by Ravanan as instigated by his envious sister Surpanakha and Raman took the help of the monkey king Sugriva to find her. Hanuman went in search of Sitha, met her and subsequently instructed Ravanan to give her back to Sri Raman. Lord again through the medium of Vibheeshanan advised the demon king to repent for his misdeeds and return Sitha. The enraged Ravanan drove Vibheeshanan away and the latter found a place in the proximity of Sri Raman. Lord Raman along with an army of monkeys built a bridge across the ocean, reached the city of Lanka, fought a fierce battle and killed Ravanan along with his demonic clan. The Lord reminded him about the misdeeds in his previous births, but the dying Ravana failed to repent and in turn accused the Lord of using his brother Vibheeshanan to defeat him.

Dvapara Yugam: The fifth part of Kroni was born as Duryodhanan and his ninety-nine brothers, in the clan of Kuru. Lord Vishnu receiving permission from

Lord Sivan was born as Sri Krishnan the son of Devaki and Vasudevan. The three brothers of Sri Raman along with Jambavan and Vibheeshanan were born as Yudhishtiran, Bheeman, Arjunan, Nakulan and Sahadevan who were collectively known as the five Pandavas. Kumbhakarnan and the allied demonic armies were born as Kamsa and his comrades. Fearing his death by the eighth son of Devaki, Kamsa imprisoned her along with her husband Vasudevan. As soon Sri Krishnan was born, he was miraculously transported to Ayothai, where he grew up along with his elder brother Balaraman. Sri Krishnan later killed Kamsan, ending his tyrannical rule, and freed his parents and grandparents from prison. He killed many evil rulers like Kalayavanan and Sisupalan. Later he settled down in the newly built city of Dvaraka. Through the help of Sri Krishnan, the Pandavas were saved from several attempts on their lives made by Duryodhanan and other Kaurava brothers. Through the medium of Bheeshmar who was the grandsire of the Kuru clan, the Lord advised Duryodhanan and his brothers to stop their misdeeds and maintain harmony. They never paid heed to his words and even tried to strip off the clothes of Queen Draupadi, the wife of Pandavas. Even though Sri Krishna intervened to protect her, the Pandavas had to spend fourteen years in exile and incognito, as they were stealthily defeated by Kauravas in a game of dice. Subsequently, the Kauravas and their allies were annihilated in the war of Bharatha, by the Pandavas supported by Sri Krishnan. Duryodhana and his brothers were killed by Bheeman, and the former was reminded of his past misdeeds by Sri Krishnan. Yet, Duryodhanan refused to repent and accused the Lord of having killed him in treachery using his brother. The Lord replied that he will be given one more birth with all knowledge and skills, and even then, if he does not change his evil ways, it would be his total annihilation.

Kali Yugam: After completion of his incarnation as Sri Krishna, Lord Vishnu hid his causal frame under the mountain Pravatha Malai Uchchi and then proceeded to Sri Rangam. During the journey, he tested *Saptha Kanniars*, the seven virgins and through his intervention seven sons, the *Santrors*, were born to them. They were later entrusted to Bhadrakali, who trained and fostered them. The celestial beings approached Lord Sivan and requested to give birth to the final part of Kroni. When the Lord asked them where Lord Vishnu was, they answered that he was lying dead in the nether world. The sixth and final fragment of *Kroni* was born as *Kaliyan* in an inverted male body from the womb of the earth, even before Lord Sivan intended it. He at first mocked and tested Lord Sivan, but later secured boons from him through Agatheesar, after his spouse *Kalichi* was created from his left rib bone. The boons comprised of all the powers, features and weapons of all divine entities to extend total control over everything, including the Trinity. The sages knowing the impending danger prayed to Lord Vishnu who appeared before them in the form of a *pandaram* [mendicant], and challenged *Kaliyan* for a duel. *Kaliyan* refused it out of shame and made a promise that if he would ever torture a *pandaram*, he along with all his kinsmen would perish. *Kaliyan* afflicted the collective consciousness of all living entities in the form of illusion [*Maikai*], which lead to outburst of endless discrimination and oppression in society. Lord Vishnu had been staying in Thiruvananthapuram after he had left Sri Rangam. *Kaliyan* became *Kalineechan* the ruler of Travancore who mocked and sent away Lord Vishnu from his kingdom when the latter advised him to stop his tyrannical reign. When the atrocities committed by *Kaliyan* to the entire humanity including the *Santror* became unbearable, the divine entities and Lord Sivan requested Lord Vishnu to destroy him. Lord Vishnu and Lord Sivan sent a warning to Kaliyan as *Thiruvachakam*, which was simply neglected. Then Lord Vishnu

incarnated as Vaikundar from the sea of Thiuchendur sea, who in the form of a panda-

ram taught, spread and acted *Dharmam*. *Kalineechan* unjustly imprisoned Vaikundar

who was a pandaram and tortured him, which violated the promise given to him ear-

lier (Harigopalan *Akhilarathirattu* 369-376). Vaikundar judges and interrogates *Kali-*

yan who is found guilty of all previous misdeeds and the latter is unable to reply. *Ka-*

liyan the personification of the evil aeon was annihilated to create *Dharma Yugam*,

which would be devoid of crimes and exploitations.

Ayyavazhi too problematizes the concept of godhead after the advent of *Kali*

Yugam, where Ayya Vaikundar is depicted beyond all names and forms of Divinity

and is not confined to Lord Vishnu. Re-incarnation of Lord Vishnu is a recurrent

theme throughout the narratives of Puranas, but Ayyavazhi conceptualizes it in a vari-

ant form. Usually, ten incarnations of Lord Vishnu are depicted in the Puranas and the

aeons are cyclic and repetitive. Ayyavazhi describes seven incarnations of the Divine

and here the aeons are linear, interconnected and non-repetitive. Parallel reading of

the Narnian novels can conceptualize each one of them as narratives describing sepa-

rate aeons. It is an obvious fact that the time in Narnian narratives in linear as de-

scribed in *Akhilathirattu Ammanai*. Like that of Ayyavazhi, Aslan too appears in each

aeon to restore order in society and establish the value of righteousness. Like the Di-

vine incarnations in Ayyavazhi, Aslan too employs human agencies to carry out his

mission rather than individually fighting the evil like a superhero. Aslan can be visu-

alized as various incarnations of the same entity as he appears in different sizes in

each Narnian novel. Devin Brown analyses this fact in *Inside Narnia: A Guide to Ex-*

ploring The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe. He observes that Lewis deliberated

sustained ambiguity regarding the appearance of Aslan in different books. Aslan be-

comes magnanimous in size after resurrection in *The Lion, the Witch and the*

Wardrobe; he appears taller than a horse to Shasta in *The Horse and His Boy* and Lucy in *The Voyage of The 'Dawn Treader'* is not sure whether Aslan is the size of an elephant or a cart-horse (Brown *Inside Narnia* 207-208). Like Ayyavazhi, the purpose of Aslan in each novel is to uplift the downtrodden and to establish *Dharmam*. The conspicuous difference between narratives of Narnian books and the seven aeons of Ayyavazhi is that is the former is a fantasy text modelled on European literary tradition, while the latter employs the mythographic tradition of Indian culture.

Pathis and Nizhalthangals are worship centres of Ayyavazhi, where they have a vertical mirror in the background and lamp flame is consecrated before it. Mirror and Lamp Flame have been the sacred symbols of worship since the time of Vaikundar and later the symbol of thousand-petalled lotus with a lamp flame was incorporated as the official emblem of Ayyavazhi. It is an interesting fact to note that both these symbolic combinations culminate in *The Chronicles of Narnia*. The final chapter of *The Voyage of the 'Dawn Treader'* describes the journey of Caspian, Edmund, Lucy, Eustace and Reepicheep towards the utter East to reach the country of Aslan. When they almost reach their destination, water becomes sweet and shallow. They see countless water lilies covering the sea and the sea itself gets transformed into a Silver Sea. The Sun becomes brighter and ever radiant (Lewis *The Voyage* 536). This scene is followed by their meeting with Aslan when Reepicheep has already reached his destination. The ocean by itself is the largest reflector surface in the creation and the concept of Silver Sea indicates a magnanimous mirror. The countless water lilies in the sweet sea connote the thousand-petalled lotus. The sun which is naturally the cosmic lamp becomes enlarged and luminescent, indicating the lamp flame symbol of Ayyavazhi. Thus, the Narnian narrative incorporates the symbols of lamp flame in a thousand-petalled lotus and same the Lamp Flame with Mirror. The

situation also has a spiritual connotation where Caspian, Edmund, Lucy and Eustace benefit from the proximity of Divinity and Reepicheep realizes his long-cherished destination of reaching Divinity. Ayyavazhi and Narnia are impregnated with the love and dedication of people towards their master who represents Divinity. However, neither Aslan nor Vaikundar demand personal worship from their followers as they intend to uplift the consciousness of the people and make them self-reliant.

Through the aforementioned facts, *The Chronicles of Narnia* can be identified as a text of Ayyavazhi. Similarities exist in the inherent spiritual discourses, social outlook, imagery used, mythographic and biographical elements; which fill the cultural and diachronic gaps between Ayyavazhi and Narnian series. Analysing each text of Narnia series through Clute's "Grammar of Fantasy" reveals the inherent Healing process and the variation in the degree of its completion. A close reading of the texts reveals that practical application of the values of Ayyavazhi play vital roles in the Healing process described in the fantasy narratives. The Healing process in the secondary world is directly related to and represents the reformation process of the primary world. Instead of sequential reading, parallel reading of each Narnian book provides cross-sections of social transformation with qualitative variations. This approach towards *The Chronicles of Narnia* reveals seven cases of New Worlds with variations in the complete resolution of the crisis. The study brings out the social relevance of recognizing issues affecting humanity and thereby providing a complete solution for them. Incorporating Ayyavazhi as an analytical tool increases the credibility of this re-reading, as the movement has already proved its success in invoking social transformation.

Chapter Four

The New World of Narnia: Recognizing and Healing Crisis

"If, then, you sometimes fall, do not lose heart, or cease striving to make progress, for even out of your fall God will bring good, just as a man selling an antidote will drink poison before he takes it in order to prove its power" ('Summary of St. Teresa of Avila's Interior Castle').

Reading *The Chronicles of Narnia* as a text of Ayyavazhi creates a new space for understanding the issues addressed through the narrative. Resolving critical issues existing in the human community becomes a precursor to the advent of the New World. This is true in the case of Ayyavazhi, where the movement has created a lasting impact on society through the social renaissance. In the case of Narnian narratives, the context is that of a secondary world which can be deciphered as a reflection of the primary world. The fantasy takes into consideration issues related to the primary world and describes the approaches of resolving them. Before beginning to read *The Chronicles of Narnia*, it becomes necessary to address the ambiguities regarding the approach towards the reading process.

How to read *The Chronicles of Narnia*?

Ambiguity regarding the order in which the Narnian series should be read, is an unresolved matter for the readers as well as the critics. Will the reading order affect the aesthetic receptivity and whether it will change the inherent meaning, are some of the questions hovering over this issue? Prioritizing any one or more than one among the seven novels and fixing the first one in the reading order are also subjects of endless debates. It is interesting to note that the books were published, circulated and

popularized in the following order, which was quite different from publication trends prevalent today.

1. *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe: A Story for Children*

2. *Prince Caspian: The Return to Narnia*

3. *The Voyage of the 'Dawn Treader'*

4. *The Silver Chair*

5. *The Horse and His Boy*

6. *The Magician's Nephew*

7. *The Last Battle: A Story for Children*

Later the order was rearranged to the chronological events happening in textual narratives. Therefore, the following order has been adopted by publishers and continues till now.

1. *The Magician's Nephew*

2. *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*

3. *The Horse and His Boy*

4. *Prince Caspian*

5. *The Voyage of the 'Dawn Treader'*

6. *The Silver Chair*

7. *The Last Battle: A Story for Children*

The order in which Lewis completed writing each book is different from the order of their publication. This difference makes it clear that the author did not want the books to be published in the order they were written by him. Margaret Patterson Hannay in "Further Up and Further In: The Chronicles of Narnia" explains the order of completion of the Narnian series. Lewis began writing *The Lion, the Witch and the*

Wardrobe in 1939 and took almost ten years to complete it in 1949. *Prince Caspian* was completed by the end of 1949, *The Voyage of the 'Dawn Treader'* and *The Horse and His Boy* were completed in 1950 and *The Silver Chair* in the following year. *The Magician's Nephew* was completed only in 1954, many months after writing the final book *The Last Battle*. Hannay observes that Lewis had created the first book *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* unintentionally from a series of images and he later tried to incorporate religious ideologies into the narrative. The latter seems to be scarcely noticed by many who simply love the landscape of Narnia and affiliate with Aslan as a person missing from the readers' world. It is observed that the Christian elements of the text is highly problematic due to cross-cultural discourses and open-ended statements like in *The Voyage of the 'Dawn Treader'* where Aslan asks Lucy to know him by another name in their world. Genesis described in *The Magician's Nephew* is different from the Biblical concept, as the creations spring from within the pre-existing landscape of Narnia. There is no question about temptation, as evil enters Narnia from another dimension. Apocalypse too is differently portrayed in *The Last Battle*, where Narnia ends in ice rather than in fire as per the Biblical concept and the New Narnia is a garden instead of the post-apocalyptic city of New Jerusalem. Hannay cites several examples which conclude that the Narnian series help the juvenile readers to inculcate wisdom, strength, courage, compassion, fortitude, socialization and prepare to deal with adverse situations of real-life (63-76). The differences from Christian narratives are pointed out along with the emphasis on underlying values of the narratives. The observations of Hannay convey that the Narnian novels need not be read in their chronological order of events, as they do not provide an exact Biblical chronology. Thus, reading the text as a Christian narrative or not is no way related to the order of reading the books.

Walter Hooper claims to have jotted down directly the "Correct Order" of reading the novels from Lewis himself, and this is adopted by Harper Collins while publishing the series. This led to the emergence of the current trend to release the Narnian series in the chronological order of narratives. Peter J. Schakel questions this trend and intent in "The "Correct" Order of Reading The Chronicles of Narnia?". He identifies two orders of reading the Narnian series which are: the order of publication and the order of narrative chronology. It is highlighted that publishers like Harper Collins claim that the novels have been rearranged following the "original wishes" of the author. Such a trend was established only by 1994, before which the books were read by readers in the order in which they were published since 1950s. Shackel questions the credibility of authorial intention in intervening the reading process of the readers. He cites numerous examples which prove that *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* creates gaps and engages the readers with inquisitiveness and arrests their attention to sustain the aesthetics of the reading experience. The finest example is that of the descriptions of Narnian landscape when Lucy for the first time enters into Narnia, and the introduction of Aslan given in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. Whereas beginning with *The Magician's Nephew* before reading the other books, slacken the magnanimity of Aslan. This answers the unfilled gaps like the mystery behind the Lamp Post, which on the other hand would have arrested the attention of readers who would begin with *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. Thus, changing the reading order and beginning with *The Magician's Nephew* can seriously affect the receptivity of the readers. The letter written by Lewis on April 23, 1957, is cited as an example to prove that the author himself does not impose any restriction of the reading order and approves the readers' own choice in the matter (91-99). This observation highlights the reader-response critical viewpoint, which emphasizes active

engagement between the text and the recipient. Lewis hereby indirectly approves the Barthian concept of "Death of the Author", which broadens the scope of multiple readings of the same text. This also overrules the finding of Walter Hooper who claims that Lewis insisted on an authentic way to read the books. It is also worth notice that no such re-ordering of these novels was emphasized by the author during his lifetime.

From the aforementioned facts, it is up to the readers and critics to read or analyse the works as per convenience. The next question arises on the necessity to assign priority on any of the books and the resultant impact made on the reading process. It has been observed in the previous chapter that *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* resembles Ayyavazhi, as both of them describe the organic evolution of a New World. Therefore, among all the textual narratives of Narnian series; *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* is selected as the core text. Apart from the subjective concerns of this research work, former is renowned the first book written among the Narnian novels and has been the most influential one among the public, due to its immense popularity. Apart from this *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* exists as the primary or proto text of *The Chronicles of Narnia*, from which all other textual narratives have evolved.

Such an observation has been made by Colin Manlove in an essay entitled "The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe". He observes that this is the only book among the others which stands out as an open-ended one and it serves as a parameter based on which the narratives of other books are presented. Manlove reveals that the concept of cultural plurality of Narnia was initiated through this book and Lewis never planned to write any of the other six novels in the initial stage. He points out that this novel is unique among the others due to the centrality attributed to the

development of the individual self, social corporation and employment of micronarratives in the form of subplots. Among the Narnian series, this one subverts the theme of narrowness and foregrounds the space for growth and expansion. Manlove remarks that Jadis, the White Witch has converted Narnia into her mirror image where the land has been completely frozen. The arrival of Aslan leads to revocation of the spring season and his activities executed as adventures through the Pevensie children lead to emancipation from her misrule. Manlove observes that *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* represents an ever-growing space where the readers along with the characters move from limited to more expansive landscapes. A similar theme of eternal expansiveness can be observed in the other six Narnian narratives, where *The Last Battle* factually addresses the experience of eternal growth (Manlove, "The Lion," 159-168). These observations not only assert the importance of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* as a socially relevant text but synthesizes social reformation and spiritual outlook. This text is an authentic representation of Ayyavazhi as a spiritual movement which works for social reformation through unity and inclusiveness. Development of individual self and inculcation of social harmony, eternal growth and development are the themes of this book as is in the vision of *Dharma Yugam* in Ayyavazhi. Narnia as a frozen and clogged mirror image of The White Witch melts into a lively landscape with the arrival of the effulgent Aslan. This concept by Manlove perfectly fits into the lamp and mirror used by Ayyavazhi for worship. Here landscape and mindscape are undifferentiated and cleansing of which is made possible through enkindled enlightenment.

Following the aforementioned observations, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* is taken as the primary text of research and the other six correspond to as its subtexts. The observations and analysis of the other six Narnian books are not

devalued but considered as explanations given to the primary text. A close reading of the text confirms the fact that there are intricate similarities among the narratives of the other six books of Narnian series with *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*.

Prince Caspian: In this book the true heir of the throne Prince Caspian is living in the forest, as his uncle Miraz has usurped the throne of his father King Caspian X. He can regain the throne only through the intervention of human beings in the form of Pevensie children and the Narnians. The case of Prince Caspian is similar to that of Aslan in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, where the latter is the true owner of Narnia and the land has been usurped by Jadis for almost a century. Aslan too awaits the arrival of human agency in the form of four Pevensie children and succeeds in his mission through the combined effort of humans as well as the Narnians.

The Voyage of the 'Dawn Treader': This book describes the challenging journey made by Edmund, Lucy, Eustace and Reepicheep along with Caspian and his crew to the utter East. There they finally meet Aslan and Reepicheep finds a place in his country as per the prophecy at the time of his birth. Similarly, in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, the Pevensie children travel through many hurdles to finally meet Aslan at the Stone Table, where their problems began to resolve. They are also backed up by prophecies as foretold by Mr and Mrs Beaver, which finally becomes true with the death of Jadis and their coronation at Cair Paraval.

The Silver Chair: Here, Prince Rilian is allured by the Lady of the Green Kirtle and made her slave in the underworld through enchantment. Puddleglum the marsh wiggle arrives there and disenchants him along with Eustace and Jill, by stamping on the witch's magic fire. His leg gets seriously burnt and later Rilian kills her. During their journey to save Rilian, Eustace and Jill forget the signs given by Aslan. The

consecutively make mistakes, which are all channelled into beneficial results. The mistake makers themselves become the saviours who rescue the Rilian. This is similar to *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, where Edmund is tempted by Jadis using the Turkish Delights and she later enslaves him. He is made free by Aslan who voluntarily sacrifices his body at the stone table and later resurrects himself. The mistake made by Edmund becomes the reason for the success of Aslan from whom death begins to turn backwards and Aslan finally kills Jadis. Edmund who committed the mistakes, saves the Narnians from being turned to stone; by breaking the magic wand of Jadis, in the battle.

The Horse and His Boy: This narrative depicts contrasting binaries of the free land of Narnia and the land of oppression which is the Calormen. Archenland and Calormen represent the primary world governed by reality, whereas Narnia represents the secondary world which operates in fantasy. The narrative is based on interactions between the good and the evil, where the protagonists finally reach their cherished destiny outliving their traumatic past. Binaries of good and bad can be easily deciphered from the polarization of Narnians under Aslan and Jadis in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. Here the primary world of England is contrasted with the secondary world of Narnia. The protagonists overcome the tyranny of Jadis and finally establish their peaceful rule in Narnia.

The Magician's Nephew: In this novel, the protagonists enter into the secondary world to witness the creation of a new world named Narnia, from the void. Aslan the lion creates Narnia through his magical song, and finally relinquishes his claim over the world by transferring power to the non-magical human agency namely Frank and Helen. In *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* the protagonists enter into the fantasy land and witnesses the recreation of Narnia from a frozen state of oppressive

rule. After defeating the evil forces Aslan coronates the protagonists as rulers of the land and quietly slips away to ensure decentralization of power.

The Last Battle: The narrative describes apocalyptic and post-apocalyptic experiences of the protagonists in Narnia. Narnia is annihilated by the forces of nature and the protagonists enter the Real Narnia which is an ideal replica of the old world. People are themselves responsible to pass through judgement process and the worthy find entry into the New World. *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* describes a fierce battle almost comparable to an apocalypse where all Narnians pawn their lives to win or die. The miseries of Narnia are healed and the protagonists experience an egalitarian New World free from oppression. The good people who are turned into stone by Jadis are brought back to life by Aslan and the forces of evil are annihilated in the battle.

From the aforementioned facts, it becomes clear that *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* can be considered as the primary text and the other six narratives are its extended expressions. Analysis of any of the Narnian series, therefore, contributes to the studies conducted on the primary text. The other Narnian books differ superficially from the primary text on account of difference in plot, characterization and degree of emphasis on specific themes. Each critical issue is approached and solved differently in each narrative of the Narnian series. A close reading of the narratives can reveal the inherent issues within a specific text and how they are resolved.

Recognition and Healing of Critical Issues

Reading each book of *The Chronicles of Narnia* using a particular theory can reveal the issues embedded in the text, within its specific framework. As mentioned in the previous chapters, the narratives of each of the Narnian series is analysed through

the "Grammar of Fantasy" by John Clute. This is helpful to understand the stages of Wrongness, Thinning, Recognition and Healing within the narrative structure of each of the books. Clute's Theory is used for analysis instead of other literary and critical theories because the latter tend to confine the reading within their predetermined frameworks. Clute's Theory can reveal the multidimensional issues within the text in the form of Wrongness, which becomes a decisive factor and creates an impact on the narrative context. The narrative content of each book of the Narnian series can be analysed into the stages of Wrongness, Thinning, Recognition and Healing. Wrongness provides an insight into the disruption of order and Thinning reveals its degree of intensity. Recognition is a point where the characters become aware of solutions to the issues and their practical application leads to Healing, where social order is re-established. In all the cases, there need not be a linear progression of these four stages and often there are overlappings between them. Following is an analysis of *The Chronicles of Narnia* through Clute's Theory which reveals the four stages of narrative development in each book.

The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe: Wrongness has already happened in the form of a century-long reign of Jadis, which has led to eternal winter in Narnia. This fact is revealed by Mr Tumnus and later elaborated by Mr and Mrs Beaver to the Pevensie children. They become aware of the intensity of the tyrannical rule when Edmund is confiscated by Jadis, which marks the Thinning. The protagonists recognize that the war against Jadis is the only solution to save Narnia when they meet Aslan. He sacrifices his life for Edmund and soon resurrects himself, which marks the beginning of Healing by ending the process of Thinning. Resurrection of the Narnians from stone statues into their original form and destruction of Jadis completes the Healing process. But the Healing process had already begun when the protagonist travel to

meet Aslan, where they see that winter along with the magic of Jadis is fading away. Healing is complete in this narrative and the Golden Age is established.

The misrule of Jadis is characterized by overt expression of power and dictatorial reign. This is the crisis that has affected Narnia and the solution is in the form of a combined effort from Aslan and the Pevensie children. Peter who leads the battle in the absence of Aslan and Edmund. Edmund takes the risk of destroying the magic wand of Jadis and thereby express the values of courage and intelligence according to the situation. Aslan himself embodies courage and fortitude by sacrificing himself to save Edmund and thereby the inhabitants of Narnia. The Healing process reverberates even after Aslan leaves Narnia and is carried out by the Pevensies who are now rulers of the land.

Prince Caspian: Similar to the previous narrative, here too the Wrongness has already happened before the protagonists reach Narnia. The Pevensies are made aware of the colonization of Narnia by Telmarines and usurping of the throne by Miraz. Thinning process happens with the escape of Caspian from Miraz, and heightens at the point where Narnians are attacked by the Telmarines. Recognition phase begins when Pevensies meet Aslan and Peter fights a duel with Miraz to win back Narnia. Healing happens when Aslan unleashes the forces of nature and walking trees, who defeat the Telmarine armies. Here the Healing process is incomplete as, even though stability is brought back in the social order, the damaged done by the Telmarines has not healed.

Peter uses intelligent tactics to fight a duel with Miraz, as the Narnians were very small in number when compared to the vast army of Telmarines. This attempt encompasses the value of living with dignity, however powerful the enemy may seem

to be. The idea of invoking the White Witch to defeat Miraz is foiled by the timely intervention of Pevensies, as it would lead to the transfer of power from a utilitarian tyrant to a totalitarian tyrant. Prince Caspian joins the marginalized sections of society and works for their upliftment, apart from his own benefit. Forces of nature play an important role in destabilizing the tyrannical rule of foreign invaders and Healing the crisis that has afflicting the native community.

The Voyage of the 'Dawn Treader': Here Wrongness has happened a generation before the setting of this story when the seven lords of late King Caspian IX, were exiled by Miraz. The narrative thus begins with the Healing process where the Pevensies and Eustace join Caspian on his journey towards the east to find the missing lords. There are several interplays between Thinning and Recognition as the narrative progresses through dangers of the voyage through various islands and the unique experience learnt from them. Healing completes with Edmund, Lucy and Eustace meeting Aslan after Reepicheep reaches Aslan's country. Here even though the Healing process is completed, unfulfillment still lingers on as the protagonists are denied entry into the country of Aslan; where Edmund and Lucy cannot even enter Narnia anymore.

Each obstacle in the journey is overcome through courage and intelligence of the characters. Practical wisdom and tactics help the protagonists to escape from the slave traders and the sea serpent. Life of dignity lead by Reepicheep enables him to reach the cherished goal of his life, Aslan's country. The Healing process in the narrative enables the characters to inculcate the value of fortitude, as they have to patiently overcome the difficulties before reaching the country of Aslan.

The Silver Chair: Two parallel narratives can be identified in this text which culminates in a common juncture of Healing. The first narrative is from the perspective of Prince Rilian who goes missing from Narnia and Wrongness begins with this event. Thinning has been happening unnoticed by the inhabitants of Narnia or by Rilian who has been enslaved by the Lady of the Green Kirtle who is building a tunnel from the Underland to the Overland of Narnia to conquer the latter. Recognition happens when Rilian is released by Eustace, Jill and Puddleglum from the bondage of the enchanted Silver Chair. Rilian is now able to recollect that he had been an intellectual prisoner of the Queen of Underland and identifies her intentions to defeat Narnia. The second parallel narrative has Eustace and Jill as the protagonists who are sent by Aslan to find the missing prince. Wrongness happens when they pay heed to the Lady of the Green Kirtle and receives the hospitality of the "Gentle Giants" at the city of Harfang. Later they come to the Recognition that the pleasure of staying at Harfang distracted their mission and lead to a near-to-death experience from the cannibal giants. The common point of Healing is when Puddleglum disenchants the magic spell of the Lady by stamping on the fire and Prince Rilian kills her to release the enslaved Earthmen. This text is unique with parallel threads of narratives and a common nucleus of Healing. Healing is incomplete as there are remnants of evil giants who remain a threat to society.

Puddleglum, who risked his life to save fellow beings and society, embodies courage and fortitude. He stamps on the magic fire and disenchants the Earthmen from the slavery of the Queen of the Underland. The protagonists subvert the preconceived notions of Rilian and release him from intellectual subjugation. The narrative raises voices against hegemonic indoctrination and fascist forms of government.

The Horse and His Boy: In the case of this narrative, Wrongness is a process that is currently happening when the protagonists Shasta, Aravis, Bree and Hwin, make their journey towards Narnia. Narnians staying in the palace of Tisroc at Tashbaan amounts to the Thinning process which imposes a risk on their lives. Recognition takes place when Aravis overhears Rabadash planning to conquer Archenland and later Narnia. Simultaneously Edmund, Susan and other Narnians recognize the evil intend of Rabadash seeking Susan's hand for marriage, and they stealthily leave Tashbaan. Healing happens with the defeat of Rabadash and his transformation into a donkey. Even though the protagonists move to a safe zone, the misrule of Calormenes is not eradicated and the inherent social injustices are not rooted out. Hence the Healing process is only a partial one.

Shasta and Aravis leave their respective homes towards the free nation of Narnia, to live their life with dignity. They express the values of courage and fortitude, which help them to overcome the difficulties of their journey and take decisions as per the demand of situations. Both of them look for the welfare of society amidst their errand and informs Archenlanders about the invading attacks. Aravis who was a Calormen herself transgresses the social canons and finally reaches the cherished free nation of Narnia.

The Magician's Nephew: The narrative introduces the concept of parallel worlds and the protagonist travels through them. Here, Wrongness happens much later, after the protagonists enter the secondary world. Jadis the destroyer of the land of Charn is awakened by Digory, which marks the beginning of Wrongness. Thinning is described by the havoc created by Jadis in England and culminates when she reaches the newly created world of Narnia. Recognition of the solution to the evil in Narnia is made by Aslan who asks Digory to compensate his wrongdoing. When

Digory takes the Silver Apple by overcoming the temptation of Jadis, Recognition process is completed. Aslan plants the Silver Apple in Narnia which grows into a tree denoting Healing of all impending harms. Healing happens when Digory's mother is cured of her illness and the Jadis is kept off from Narnia for a hundred years. The healing process here is incomplete and sustains an impending threat from Jadis in future.

Digory and Polly use their soft power to overcome overt exertion of physical power by Jadis in the form of violence. The protagonists undergo individual development through constant endeavours of supporting society and thereby inculcate the values of non-violence and courage. Overcoming the temptation offered by Jadis, Digory exemplifies the quality of selflessness and intelligence of sustainable development. Conservation of existing resources and long-term planning for the welfare of future generations is also an inherent theme of the narrative.

The Last Battle: Wrongness in this book begins when Shift the ape gets a lion's skin from Caldron Pool and forces the donkey named Puzzle to wear it. Thinning follows when Shift announces the return of Aslan who is Puzzle in lion's skin and exploits the Narnians by associating himself with the talking cat Ginger and the Calormenes lead by Rishda Tarkaan. From deforestation of Lantern Waste, Thinning continues till apocalypse and outlives all attempts of Healing. King Tirian comes to the Recognition of the crisis that has engulfed Narnia when he observes the activities of Shift and Calormenes. Healing in this narrative is a post-apocalyptic event when Aslan creates the Real Narnia after dissolving the older one. The Healing, in this case, is incomplete and inorganic as the protagonists have to die to reach the New Narnia, which is a result of the failure of Healing in the old Narnia.

Courage, Fortitude and dignified life are the values that enable the protagonists to fight against the oppressors till the end. They never succumbed to the pressure of situations nor were they disheartened by their repeated failed attempts. The protagonists exhibit discrimination and intelligence to identify hegemonic currents within society.

According to the aforementioned analysis of *The Chronicles of Narnia* by Clute's "Grammar of Fantasy", variation in the degree of Healing can be deciphered from each book of the series. The seven novels of the Narnian series can be arranged in the ascending order as per increase in the magnitude of Healing: *The Last Battle*, *The Magician's Nephew*, *The Horse and His Boy*, *The Silver Chair*, *The Voyage of the 'Dawn Treader'*, *Prince Caspian* and *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. Complete Healing of the crisis happens in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* which is referred to as the Golden Age. The critical situations are directly addressed and subverted to transform the landscape of Narnia and the mindscape of its inhabitants. To foreground the concept of total global transformation as described in Ayyavazhi in the form of *Dharma Yugam*, it is justifiable to select *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* as the primary text. This also confirms to the concept of Eucatastrophe put forth by Tolkien and does not confine the text as merely a utopian one. Reading *The Chronicles of Narnia* as a text of Ayyavazhi saves it from being marginalized as an impractical utopian narrative. This can be understood from the concept of the ideal egalitarian aeon of *Dharma Yugam* conceptualized in Ayyavazhi, which influenced the subaltern section of society and resulted in social reformation movements of South India.

Healing or resolution of the critical issues in the text are carried out by the protagonists through their love and compassion for the fellow beings, which is termed as *Anpu* in Ayyavazhi. Individual development and social resurgence are inseparable

and the Healing process is based on values of Ayyavazhi like Living with Dignity, Courage and Fortitude and *Dharmam*. Following the teachings of Vaikundar, the characters of the novel employ practical wisdom to solve the issues through self-initiative. They follow a hygienic and unsophisticated lifestyle, confirming to nature and ecosystem. Like followers of Ayyavazhi, the rulers of Narnia and the friends of Narnia together work for upliftment of the downtrodden and have unconditional faith in their master, Aslan. Reliance on Aslan inspires and instigates them to face adversities of life and take appropriate decisions. Another important formulation of the aforementioned analysis is that each book of the Narnian series cannot be mapped to a particular theme or social issue. There are multiple critical issues embedded in a single book and sometimes common themes can be identified from more than one of these novels. Economic exploitation, racial discrimination, political oppression, religious monopoly and malpractices, are the common themes that are addressed in the Narnian series when analysed through Ayyavazhi. Such a reading also considers contemporary issues like domestic violence, gender discrimination, human trafficking, terrorism and environmental exploitation.

The following is a cross-section of Narnian series which analyses specific critical issues and provides insight into the resolving process. Apart from their confirmation to Ayyavazhi, the issues discussed are common to many societies of contemporary world. Therefore, the study has universal relevance and provides scope for similar cross-cultural readings. Choice of Ayyavazhi prompts the reading to foreground the value of non-violence, which dilutes factual connotation behind the scenes of violence, as struggles against injustice and oppression.

Healing Economic Exploitation

Economic stability constitutes the fundamental framework of a society and discrimination on economic basis denotes the lack of social evolution. Narnia depicts a completely evolved society where social hierarchies are irrelevant and the society is seldom concerned about the economic status of the other. The Narnian series describe the invasive forces like Telmarines in *Prince Caspian* and Calormenes in *The Horse and His Boy* and *The Last Battle*, who unleash tyranny and exploitations in the nation. Economic benefits of these foreign powers are the main reasons of the conquests and invasions made by them against Narnia. It is interesting to note that none of them try to adopt the social structure of Narnia, nor do they tend to make any change in their social values. The presence of Aslan as a leader can be seen as the reason for the integrity of Narnian values and social harmony of its inhabitants. This is a clear reflection of Ayyavazhi, which stands against discrimination of any kind and fosters unity among members of the society. The ideal nature of Ayyavazhi and Narnia can be understood in contrast with Telmarines and Calormenes.

Economic deprivation is the characteristic of social degradation and such a condition can destabilise society in inflicted nations, as wells the adjacent countries. Famine, malnutrition and natural disaster can create such a condition, apart from man-made wars and conflicts. *Prince Caspian* symbolically depicts the hazardous condition overcome by the protagonists, who have been victims of tyrannical power. Nikakrick the Dwarf, tries to persuade Prince Caspian for reviving the White Witch, who would fight for them against the oppressive ruler Miraz. For this purpose, Nikabrick takes help from his friends Hag and Wer-wolf who subsequently reveal themselves as "hunger" and "thirst". They describe their powers and show eagerness to finish off the enemies of Caspian. They explain their powers to live for a hundred years on starving, to remain unfrozen on ice for a century, to sustain unquenchable

thirst for people's blood and to hold on the bite and leave its impact on a person even after death (Lewis *Prince* 392). Agitations or wars fought through or fought for hunger and thirst can be disastrous. Wars waged to inflict poverty on the rival community and wars fought to appease personal bitterness cannot help to create stability in society. Lewis indirectly gives a hint of these hazardous tendencies happening in the form of World War II, while he was writing the book. In the context of Narnia, if Caspian had agreed to the plan of Nikabrick, hunger and thirst would have revived the White Witch and she would have established her tyrannical rule in Narnia after defeating Miraz. This would have been much worse than Miraz's rule and can be testified from the description of her reign in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. This scene also reflects the after-effects of social revolutions that evolved from hunger and thirst of humanity. The after-effects of the French revolution and the disintegration of USSR are a few examples of wrongdoings that followed the movements that were created for the right reasons. Nikabrick was a victim of social and economic deprivation like other Narnians who were marginalized and exiled by Miraz. Yet he chose to oppose the oppression through motivation derived from personal vengeance. This is different from the approach of Peter to regain Narnia, who fought a duel with Miraz to minimize violence and bloodshed. This bears resemblance to Ayyavazhi where social revolution at the cost of violence is least approved as a solution of humanity.

Narnia is described as a free land which is characterized by harmony between all sections of society. This egalitarian context is contrasted with Calormenes who exhibit various levels of socio-economic disparities. Slavery and poverty are inseparable features of that society, which are altogether absent from Narnia. This is the reason why characters like Bree, Hwin, Shasta and Aravis travel to the free land of Narnia, in *The Horse and His Boy.* As they make their journey through the Calormen city of

Tashbaan, Lewis describes the downtrodden sections of society in contrast to the noble class. The narrative describes the city of Tsahbaan as a magnanimous and beautiful city with palatial buildings, towers and market places. Calormen lords and nobles are carried by slaves in a palanquin, and the less privileged sections of society have to make way for the higher ones. On the other hand, there are beggars, children in rags and slaves without foot wares. Foul odour emanates from garbage heaps, unbathed people and dogs, which describe their unhygienic and marginalized conditions (Lewis *The Horse* 228, 230). The description sheds light into social stratification in Calormen society which ranges from rulers, warlords, nobles, merchants, soldiers, peasants, up to the slaves. The pathetic condition of slaves and beggars can be understood from their unhygienic appearance and surroundings. Similar social stratification can be witnessed in many nations, including the underbellies of cosmopolitan cities in the contemporary world.

"Work, Vocation and the Goodlife in Narnia" by Devin Brown reveals the views of Lewis on the economic structure in society, Lewis in the Narnian series questions economic upliftment of elite class at the cost of the common masses. He condemns idleness and insists on activities performed by the individuals to upgrade the society. The contemplative thought process and should practically work for upgradation of society rather than confine humans within ideal ideas of idleness. Lewis borrows the Marxian concept of acting according to individual ability and need, which will lead to the overall progress of society. Brown cites the example of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, were the animals who are disenchanted actively participate in the battle against Jadis, according to their natural ability. The gifts given by Father Christmas to the Pevensie children are also according to the need and ability of each one. Along with this, Lewis emphasizes on the intention behind an

individual's action, which are resemble the teachings of Thomas Aquinas and Buddha. Thus, Narnian narratives testify with examples that, the manner in which a person works in society is more important than the superficial nature of the action. The governor Gumpas in *The Voyage of the 'Dawn Treader'* accumulates large capital through unethical and illegal means of slave trade. He justifies this action in proportion to the enormous amount of wealth accumulated effortlessly and advises the king about social progress through this method. King Caspian dismisses him from the governorship, as the king's idea of social progress includes the welfare of the entire society without confining to the elite class. In *The Last Battle*, Shift, the tyrant ape redefines the freedom of work as different from an individual's subjectivity. Asserting the need for social welfare, Shift lectures against selfishness and simultaneously asserts his selfish motives on Narnians. The concept of impersonal and unbiased decisions is highlighted by Lewis as the necessity for social progress. This is reminded to King Caspian by Reepicheep, the mouse, in *The Voyage of the 'Dawn Treader'*. The ruler of the nation should marginalize the importance of private life, foreground the sense of duty and earn the faith of the subjects (Brown, "Vocation, Work", 86-91). This reveals the view of Lewis that asserts parallel importance to spiritual values and the socio-economic progress. Social concerns can be actively addressed only through individuals who work for the benefit of the entire society by looking beyond personal benefits. The anecdote of Reepicheep advising Caspian is itself a proof of Narnia being an egalitarian society, where the ruler assimilates and accepts ideas from a mouse. The society depicted here destabilizes social stratification based on economic statuesque and foregrounds democratic values within the framework of the monarchy.

This is similar to the economic policies and social harmony depicted in "*Dharma Neetham*" of *Akhilathirattu Ammanai* when Chozhan ruled *Kali Yugam*.

The ruler constructed temples, wells and ponds with banks, and also built frontier walls. Without the distinction of the poor or the rich, he used to thoroughly observe, question and settle the disputes of citizens. Service centres were established to provide food for the poor and shelter to provide drinking water were also constructed. These services were provided day and nights to all the needy and visitors. The policies to obtain taxes from the violators were not harsh, but practically levied. The king fostered the knowledge of the Divine name throughout the nation and followed the traditional spiritual procedures without failure (Harigopalan *Akhilathirattu* 7). This reminds that even in the diabolic aeon of *Kali Yugam*, peaceful and harmonious society can be established if the ruler incessantly works for social welfare. The scenario is slightly different from that of Narnia, as Narnia is already in an ideal condition and doesn't need service activities or welfare programmes. When invasive forces capture and exploit the land of Narnia, it has to be brought back into its former glory. There are several occasions where Narnians offer food, drink and shelter to the strangers who visit the country and extend hospitality. Caspian, Aravis and Shasta are the persecuted who find refuge in the free land of Narnia. This trait can be related to the Indian subcontinent which has sheltered persecuted races like Jews and Zorastranians and welcomed individuals like Dalai Lama and Tasleema Nazarene.

Healing the harms of economic exploitations are undertaken by Aslan and human agencies, which is similar in all Narnian books. In *Prince Caspian* even though the misrule of Telmarines is ended by invoking the natural forces, the in-between steps of Healing have much relevance. Aslan sends Peter, Edmund and Lucy to stop the wicked plans of Nikabrick, where the latter is killed along with the Hag and the Wer-Wulf. The importance of timely intervention and proper council are highlighted here. In the case of Governor Gumpas in *The Voyage of the 'Dawn Treader'*, Caspian

himself dismisses him from the governorship and appoints Lord Ber as the ruler of

The Lone Islands. Slave trading is abolished and economic stability is re-established

in society. In *The Horse and His Boy,* the invasion of Calormenes under the leader-

ship of Rabadash is curbed by Archenlanders and Narnians. *The Last Battle* describes

the destruction of Narnia as an aftermath of the oppressive rule of Calormenes. The

critical situations are resolved in *The Horse and His Boy* by Aslan who transforms the

defeated Rabadash into a donkey and indirectly warns the Calormenes from attacking

Narnia. In the case of *The Last Battle*, even Aslan is unable to control the crisis that

has happened and is forced to make Healing through an apocalypse. This illustrates

that the economic stability of a nation determines its social security and even the very

survival of the human community. Even though here, the good Narnians are unable to

defend their nation against the exploitations of Shift and invasions by Calormenes,

they are finally rewarded by Aslan by giving entry into the Real Narnia. Apart from

the religious connotations of it, this New World creates a space for the growth and de-

velopment of human potential. That may be the reason why all those who have main-

tained progressive outlooks and creative values find a place in the Real Narnia. This

includes Emeth who opposed Aslan, but his inquisitiveness for knowledge makes him

eligible for the New World. The idea behind an egalitarian New World creates hope

of progressing life through adverse situations. Such an experience of Eucatastrophe is

incorporated into the Narnian series through the introduction of a post-apocalyptic

New World in *The Last Battle*.

Sequential Healing is common to Ayyavazhi which describes incarnations of

Divinity through aeons. There are references to exploitations on the economic ground

like unethical taxations, forced labour and slavery. The very dictum of Vaikundar is

not to work without wages and to lead a dignified life. The definition of *Dharmam* in

Ayyavazhi is uplifting the downtrodden, which in the physical sense denotes the re-
surgence of economically backward sections of society. Alike these concepts, the pro-
tagonists work against slavery and forced labour imposed by Shift and Calormenes on
the Narnians. Courage and Fortitude help the individuals to fearlessly stand against
oppressions and respond responsibly to life situations. The Courage and Fortitude ex-
hibited by the protagonists in *The Last Battle* is an example of adherence to the cause
of public welfare, even at the point of death. The conceptualization apocalypse itself
can denote a complete inversion of the prevailing systems of oppression and establish-
ment of an egalitarian society. In *The Last Battle* some facts stand out like, the ab-
sence of a strong leader to work for the cause of common masses. Almost the entire
race of Narnia is unable to detect the Wrongness that has happened, until things have
irrecoverably worsened. This is different from the other Narnian narratives where ap-
propriate measures were implemented as the trends of exploitations and plans of ene-
mies were detected in early stages. Even in the case of conquests made in *The Lion,
the Witch and the Wardrobe* and *Prince Caspian,* the Narnians were not intellectually
subjugated to those hegemonic powers. They had understood the critical situations
and were waiting for the right time of outburst. The case of *The Last Battle* leaves the
destiny of Narnians to themselves, without any intervention from Aslan. But they fail
to achieve social stability and succumb to the control of hegemonic powers in the ab-
sence of their leader, Aslan. This reflects the innate inefficiency of humanity which
always long for living ideals in the form of leadership. This may be the reason why
Vaikundar who assigned responsibility to the people to root out the evil aeon of *Kali
Yugam*, assures them of his arrival in the future to commence *Dharma Yugam*. Narni-
ans were assured of no such hope, as Lewis was planning a judgement scene modelled
on Christianity. Hence all good Narnians enter the Real Narnia after their death and

find blissful life in the proximity of Aslan. Anyway, in both cases of Narnia and Ay-

yavazhi, individuals are themselves held responsible for their bondage and emancipa-

tion.

Healing Political Oppression

Lewis as an academician, was not known for his genius in political discus-

sions. But he had his own views on politics and nation-building. *C. S. Lewis on Poli-*

tics and the Natural Law by Justin Buckley Dyer and Micah J. Watson, explains the

views of Lewis regarding the relationship between the nation and its members. Lewis

was not completely convinced of the democratic form of governments, as he saw that

human beings are susceptible to lack of wisdom and goodness. His concept of govern-

ment is characterized by mutual protection and preservation maintained between the

government and the people. The government should do the duty of maintaining law

and order in the nation and curtail criminal activities in society. The people should be

able to choose and replace governments through revolutions if necessary (98). This is

the form of government depicted in the land of Narnia, which ensures freedom and se-

curity to its inhabitants. Narnia can be understood by correlating in contrast with soci-

eties of Telmarines and Calormenes. The latter are examples for the political issues

and exploitations of the primary world, which are reflected in the narratives of the

secondary world of Narnia.

Different forms of political powers are depicted in various narratives of the

Narnian series. Narnia itself stands out as a form of the monarchy with democratic

characteristics. In *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe, Prince Caspian* and *The*

Horse and His Boy there are altogether four rulers of Narnia, which depicts a decen-

tralized form of monarchy devoid of power hierarchies. The rulers directly interact

with the subjects and consider their opinions while making decisions. Narnia is characterized by mutual love and support between rulers and subjects. Important positions of power are occupied by Narnians according to their eligibility and skills, rather than considerations of race or gender. Kings and queens participate in battles and equally involved in policymaking of the nation. There are no forms of social hierarchies and social status attributed to any particular groups or communities. These progressive characteristics of the Narnian nation lend it the reputation of the free land. Refugees find space in Narnia and invasive power try to plunder its resources, which highlights the prosperity of the nation. Such characteristics of Narnia are much similar to the past glory of Indian subcontinent which attracted voyagers like Columbus and commenced colonial invasions through the Da Gamma epoch.

Colonization and imperialist forms of rules are described in *Prince Caspian*, where Miraz represents the past nine generations of Telmars who had been exerting their power in Narnia. The narrative also describes the repetitive expressions of power politics and Miraz is a crystallized epitome of colonial conquest. Miraz assassinated his brother King Caspian IX for the throne and finally Miraz, in turn, is treacherously stabbed to death by his own Lord Glozelle who repeats the patterns of his master. There are multiple layers of power politics inherent in the novel which defines the history of Narnia after the reign of Pevensies. These historical developments are narrated by the Dwarf Trumpkin in *Prince Caspian*, to the Pevensie children. Nickabrick refers the native inhabitants as Old Narnians, and the New Narnians as the Telmarines who have colonized the native land by obliterating the former aboriginals. The Old Narnians are driven out of the mainstream society and annihilated immediately on being found out. The natural resources are plundered for the nation-building process of the Telmarines, who have rooted out the culture and traditions of the natives. This evident

from the experience of prince Caspian who is not allowed to speak or think about the history of Old Narnia which is referred to as silly stories by Miraz. The tutor Doctor Cornelius reveals to Caspian about the colonial conquest of Telmarines and their annexation of Narnia. Later, Caspian began to understand that Narnia is twice marginalized nation when he grows up. "He also began to see that Narnia as an unhappy country. The taxes were high and the laws were stern and Miraz was a cruel man". Doctor Cornelius eventually asks Caspian to flee from Narnia as, Queen Prunaprismia the wife of Miraz has delivered a male child who will become the heir of the throne after Miraz's rule, and Caspian is a threat to his lineage. The tutor narrates the legacy of the power politics played by his uncle, who treacherously eliminated all the supporters of his dead brother and accessed the throne for himself. Cornelius reveals that Miraz who was the murderer of his brother Caspian IX will weed out Prince Caspian who is the legitimate heir of the throne (Lewis *Prince* 338-343). The narration reveals the case of Miraz's as a peculiar one, as he not only becomes a threat to the native Narnians but is a cruel ruler to his own Telmarine people. Excessive taxation and misuse of the legal system reveals the heightened degree of his tyranny. Like the colonizers of the real world, Miraz and his ancestors try to invent their version of history by silencing the documented history of the native Narnians. Cornelius represents the voice of the oppressed sections who try to reclaim their lost space through Prince Caspian. Caspian with the aid of the Pevensie children and Aslan win back Narnia after defeating the Telmarines.

Anything and everything that exploits and oppresses is considered as the personification of the evil aeon *Kali Yugam* known as *Kalineechan*. The colonial powers are considered as the extension of *Kalineechan* and a more diabolic force than the latter. *Akhilathirattu Ammanai* describes the colonial powers as *Venneechan* [The

Wicked White], who is the offspring of *Kalineechan*. The clan of *Venneechan* will establish his rule all over the world and subdue even *Kalineechan*. The former will replace the traditional and native cultures, by enforcing their ideologies, religion, sciences, calendar and systems of knowledge. The skills of navigation, warfare, treachery and political diplomacy are their major powers. Their rule will intensify the suffering of good people in the aeon of *Kali Yugam*, by magnifying its power (Harigopalan *Akhilathirattu* 116-119). These descriptions match with the colonial conquest of the real world as well as with the Telmarine reign in Narnia. The creation of their systems of knowledge and marginalization of the native knowledge is carried out through revisions in the education system. The history of the natives is replaced by the colonial canons, which is implemented through the process of cultural indoctrination. Subversion of the colonial canons is carried out by Doctor Cornelius using the same educational system, where he contrasts the present condition with the past glory of Narnia. Thus, the revolution of emancipation originated from Doctor Cornelius which was executed by Caspian with the help of Narnian rulers and Aslan.

The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe describe Narnia as a frozen landscape for a hundred years under the tyrannical rule of Jadis. Jadis is referred to as the White Witch who uses her magic wand to turn all her opposers into stone statues and maintain her reign through the physical expression of power. This provides a faithful representation of totalitarian and dictatorial forms of government. Any form of violation of her order invites death in the form of metamorphosis into stone statue or imprisonment. Secret police forces are used as agents to execute the orders and create fear of subjugation in the subjects. Jadis employs Maugrim and other wolves who arrest, investigate and assassinate the subjects as per her orders. Though soft power and

strategies are used to maintain a hold over the nation, physical power in the form of military forces is used to ensure the sovereignty of her rule.

Since the period of the two World Wars fascism has been detected and later detested by the people as forms of exploitations. Lewis was writing the Narnian books during the period of World War II, where fascist forms of governments had emerged as decisive forces of global politics. The reflection of such political entities can be understood by a close reading of the Narnian narratives. *The Silver Chair* narrates the political campaign planned and executed by Lady of the Green Kirtle, who is the Queen of the Underland. She gains control of the Earthmen and even Prince Rilian who are made to believe that they are followers of a just ruler, who is a noble lady. The Earthmen work like slaves for creating tunnel towards the Overworld which she intends to conquer. This is the major feature fascist regime where the common people are unaware of the oppressive intentions of the ruler. When Jill, Eustace and Puddleglum accidentally reach the Underland, they are taken by the earthmen to meet the black knight, who is Rilian himself. Eustace Scrubb reveals that this very Lady had evil intentions to kill them and she had sent them to be feasted by the cannibalistic Giants. The hegemonic control of the Lady of the Green Kirtle makes Rilian believe that she is the epitome of all virtues and he bluntly disagrees with Eustace. He is ever sure of her good intentions and tries to convince the visitors of the same. He elaborately explains her plan to conquer the Overworld and he would destroy the enemies with the large army of Earthmen. Rilian expects the Lady to coronate him as the ruler of the Overworld and reveals he would explicitly follow her words. The Queen is rhetorically referred by the prince as a "deep politician" which fits her true definition. This is confirmed by the Queen who ensures that Rilian does not interact with anybody while he is allowed to visit the Overworld (Lewis *The Silver* 619-622). Indoctrination

policy of the Queen cannot be successful in a polyphonic society like Narnia. There-fore, she insulates the Prince from everybody in the name of safety. Later the protago-nist saves Rilian from the enchantment of the Lady and he remembers how he had been abducted by that Queen of the Underland. The same rhetoric speech and the magical spell of indoctrination are tried upon the visitors by the Queen, which is foiled by the determination of Puddleglum. The Queen is killed by Rilian, which re-sults in the release of the Earthmen from her enchantment.

The Horse and His Boy depict the diplomatic stand of politicians and the dili-gent employment of their intelligence to secure position. In Chapter Eight of this novel, Aravis accidentally overhears the conversation of Tisroc the ruler of Tashbaan, his son Prince Rabadash and his Grand Vizier Ahoshta. Rabadash is contrasted with his father Tisroc as the former is emotionally vulnerable, while the latter uses his ma-nipulative intelligence. Despite disagreements from the Tisroc, Rabadsh wants to at-tack Narnia and make Queen Susan his wife. Rabadash plans to attack the castle of Anvard with his two hundred horsemen and defeat King Lune. Later he plans to at-tack the castle of Cair Paraval at Narnia, kill the Narnians in the absence of the High King Peter and abduct Queen Susan. The conversation reveals that Rabadash is mad with lust for Queen Susan and vengeance of the Narnians. He is determined to accom-plish the mission despite of the arguments put forth by Tisroc and the suggestions given by Ahoshta. Hot discussions happen at the end of which Rabadash is allowed to do as he pleases and he leaves to conquer Archenland. The political stand of Tisroc is revealed to Ahoshta after Rabadash leaves and is overheard by Aravis who was hid-ing. Rabadash was a threat for Tisroc, who feared his hot-blooded son may kill him to become the ruler of Calormen, which was not a new trend in the history of that nation. If Rabadash dies his father would be relieved and would make his next son the heir of

the throne. In case Rabadash succeeds in his conquest, vast nations like Archenland and Narnia would be added to his empire (Lewis *The Horse* 256-261). Such political stands can be seen in the rulers of nations throughout history and are relevant in the contemporary world. The anticipation of new political stands is subject in interpretations and helps in making proper decisions. In this case, there is no time for anticipation or interpretation and Aravis who hears all their plans warns the Archenlanders through Shasta about the forthcoming attack from Calormenes.

Healing of political oppression is carried out in different ways through the various narratives. In the books, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* and *Prince Caspian*, people of the marginalized sections of the society are gathered and the protagonists fight the oppressors with their support. Social resurgence and unification of various communities help to create an upsurge against the political domination of the tyrannical powers. This is similar to that of Ayyavazhi where Vaikundar unified eighteen castes together and boldly stood against the divide and rule policy of the local government, which they had borrowed from their colonial masters. Courage, fortitude and dignity of the protagonists are revealed from their fights against the forces of oppression. Peter courageously faces Jadis and her army even in the absence of Aslan and wins the battle with the aid of Narnians and Aslan. He uses the strategy of challenging Miraz for duel combat rather than a battle, as the Narnians were less in number and cannot win over the huge army of Miraz. Finally, the Telmarines are defeated by the trees and forces of nature enlivened by Aslan, which suggest the resurgence of the subaltern communities, who have been silenced by thousand years of oppression under the Telmarines. This is a reflection of the social renaissance initiated by Ayya Vaikundar who uplifted the subaltern sections and influenced the later renaissance movements including the Indian independence movement against colonial rule.

Proper use of the available time leads to the success of Narnians against the invaders in *The Horse and His Boy*, where Shasta delivers the news of Rabadash's attack on time to alert King Lune. Here the practical knowledge and skill of an individual helped in resolving the political issue. *The Silver Chair* describes the role of common citizens in solving the complicated problems of the nation. Two children and a Marsh-wiggle subvert the political strategies of the Lady of the Green Kirtle through their courage. Puddleglum found Aslan as a source of inspiration and did not succumb to the rhetoric indoctrination of the Lady as he led the dignified life of a Narnian. The values of Courage and Fortitude empowered him to stamp on her magic fire and ex-tinguish it, which lead to the liberation of the entire society from her enchantment.

Healing Religious Monopoly and Malpractices

The Narnian narratives do not give importance to religion and ritualization. None of the Narnians performs rituals and invokes Aslan as a deity. Even though Aslan represents Divinity he never allows himself to be worshipped or advises the people to follow any forms of worship. This is similar to Ayyavazhi, where Vaikundar never allowed people to worship his physical form. None of the followers of Ayyavazhi worships the images or sculptures of their master. Vaikundar installed Mirror and Lamp as symbols of worship in shrines known as Pathis and Nizhalthan-gals. The Lamp symbolizing knowledge and the Mirror symbolizing the innate exist-ence of Divinity in every individual conveys a unique spiritual experience. This is similar to *The Chronicles of Narnia*, where the characters are made to seek strength from within themselves and face adverse situations, in the absence of Aslan. The Nar-nians live on the values for which Aslan stood and his very idea without physical proximity inspires them to take proper decisions and solve critical issues. Aslan thus

makes him deliberately absent from Narnia to indirectly initiate the people into the spiritual awareness of Abstract Divinity existing within each individual.

It is also an irony that in the fantasy text that involves a lot of magic, the main character Aslan cannot be invoked by any sort of magic. Instead, Aslan calls all the protagonists into Narnia through his supernatural powers to solve the issues. Magic, witchcraft and sorcery do not have positive connotations in Narnia. The tyrannical oppressors are witches like Jadis, the White Witch in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* and the Lady of the Green Kirtle in *The Silver Chair*. *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* describes the tyrannical rule of Jadis who exerts her power over Narnia by creating eternal winter in the landscape through her magic. She uses her magic to enchant Edmund by creating his favourite dish Turkish Delight and thereby manipulates him to trace her enemies. When the Narnians attack her and save Edmund, she uses magical powers to transform herself into a boulder and the Dwarf into a stump, to escape from the sight of her enemies. Jadis also wields a magic wand with which she metamorphosizes her enemies into stone statues. Each of these magical powers is subverted by Aslan in different ways. The mere arrival of Aslan brings back spring into Narnia and the winter along with the ice dissolves away. Jadis claims the blood of Edmund who is a traitor as per the inscriptions made through Deep Magic from the Dawn of Time. Aslan makes a treaty with her by allowing himself to be sacrificed on the Stone Table in the place of Edmund. Jadis agrees to this and after elaborate magical rituals at the midnight, she kills Aslan with her stone knife. Thus, the Deep Magic becomes appeased along with Jadis and the hoard of her diabolic allies. Unexpectedly Aslan resurrects the following morning according to the Deeper Magic before the Dawn of Time and gives life to all those whom Jadis had converted into statues. In the battle that happens between the good and the evil, Edmund destroys her magic wand

and Aslan kills Jadis to end the tyrannical rule. In *Prince Caspian*, Nikabrick along with his allies the Hag and the Wer-Wulf try to revive Jadis again, which was disrupted by the Pevensies and Trumpkin. Jadis exhibited multiple powers of witchcraft and sorcery, while the Lady of the Green Kirtle only has the power of verbal enchantment. The latter also can transform herself into a green serpent and finally, Prince Rilian kills her in this form, to release the Earthmen from her enchantment.

Magic, sorcery and witchcraft usually denote oppressive forms of power in *The Chronicles of Narnia*, which contrasts with Aslan who is a seemingly ordinary lion. The exception is the magician Coriakin in *The Voyage of the 'Dawn Treader'*, who is introduced to Lucy by Aslan himself. Despite this exception, Aslan never encourages the people of Narnia or the protagonists to learn or rely on magic, sorcery or witchcraft. This is the fundamental outlook of Ayyavazhi movement and Vaikundar opposes these tendencies which have become part of many religions. "Thiruvachkam – 4" of *Akhilathirattu Ammanai* describes the proclamation of Vaikundar made to people regarding the abolition of religious malpractices. *Dharmam* is sustained by eradication of perversions in spirituality, which has to be followed by avoiding offerings, bribes, arm-swing, blood oblations from animal sacrifice and other formal rituals. After the declaration, Vaikundar incinerates evil spirits by burning them in fire. Later he confiscates the powers of the magicians known as *Malayarachar*, who have been practising magic, sorcery, demonolatry and witchcraft for many generations. The magicians who have become powerless take refuge under Vaikundar, following the instructions of a fortune-teller woman. He commands them to surrender all their powers acquired from witchcraft, black magic and sorcery and to stop the worship of evil spirits. Vaikundar asks them to adopt agriculture for livelihood and stop misleading the innocent people. As they have not brought their manuscript books of sorcery for

surrendering, the *Malayarachar* take oaths to never again use their demonic crafts or worship evil deities (Harigopalan *Akhilathirattu* 252-263). Vaikundar invoked changes in the ideology of people and the religious practices adopted by them. Ayya-vazhi equally condemned religious monopoly, as the individuals can directly correlate with Divinity without any intermediary persons. Following the dictum of "*Thiru-vachakam – 4*" forms of worship involving violence and non-violence are to be avoided. The movement subverted the role of sorcerers like *Malayarachar* and the brahmin priests, who represented religious power centres of the lower and the upper castes respectively. Decentralization of religious authority was the intention envisaged by Vaikundar, through this movement.

Lewis introduces the concept of Tash as contrary to that of Aslan. Calormenes worship Tash as their god and claim themselves to be his descendants. *The Horse and His Boy* explains the concept of Tash from the experiences of Aravis a Calormen Tarkeena, who flees from her nation to escape from a forced marriage. Like any other Calormen citizen, she has been instructed that Narnia is a primitive uncivilized nation which worships the demonic god named Aslan in the form of a lion. Tash, on the other hand, is a gigantic bird with wings and many hands. Tashbaan is the capital city of Calormen nation which has a golden statue of Tash who is worshipped through blood oblations and human beings are sacrificed on his altar. Aravis has been famil-iarized with the religion of Tash since her childhood. Following this culture of cruelty and violence, Aravis detests the lower sections of society including peasants, servants and slaves. Aravis, unconcerned of the slave girl, drugs her to sleep and escapes on the back of the talking horse Hwin. Aslan in the form of a lion tears the back of Ara-vis as a punishment, in proportion to the beatings received by the innocent slave girl from her masters. Eventually, Aslan appears before Bree, Hwin and Aravis while they

were staying with the Hermit. Aravis experiences that Aslan is an embodiment of love and compassion, which is contrary to the Calormen conception. Aslan reveals that it was he who tore her back with his paws, as he intended her to experience the suffering of the slave girl who was badly beaten by the step-mother of Aravis. Aravis by now becomes a changed person in her social outlook and accepts Aslan along with his values (Lewis *The Horse* 218-221). This is similar to the teachings of Vaikundar who tried to diminish the distinction of caste and social strata. It is a known fact that he unified different castes and classes of society, to subvert the social canons of discrimination. Aslan, through a punishment, teaches Aravis to be an inclusive person and to free herself from the norms of social discrimination. The development of such progressive and humane values makes Aravis the perfect choice to become the Queen of Archenland and later the mother of Ram the Great.

Religion becomes a tool of power politics when individuals exert control over social groups using their monopoly. This is a valid reason behind the trend of secularizing institutions in the contemporary world. The transition between Chapters Eleven and Twelve of *The Last Battle*, marks a decisive point in the fate of Narnia. *C.S. Lewis in Context* by Doris T. Myers examines this transition point which problematizes the social and spiritual discourses of the text and the context. The themes of religious monopoly can be known from Shift in *The Last Battle* where the ape claims himself to be an aged human and the mediator of Aslan. He simulates a false Aslan by dressing the donkey named Puzzle, in a lion skin and announces to the Narnians that Aslan has arrived in their country. He terrorizes the Narnians about the return of Aslan and convinces them that Aslan and Tash are one. Calormenes began spreading their power by subverting the concept of traditional spirituality. Through indoctrination process Rishda and Shift make them believe that Aslan is Tashlan. A revolution

is unleashed by King Tirian who opposes the invasive forces of his nation and the Narnians have to choose between him or Shift. The patriotic natives despite many betrayers on their side support Tirian and fight the invaders till death. This situation describes the unity of all Narnians without distinctions of creed and community. Creatures of all kinds belong to either side of opposers or supporters of Narnia, where the latter finds a place in Real Narnia. Longing for freedom prompts Rilian to fight against the injustices and reveals his emotional maturity to handle all adverse situations (175-178). This is similar to the colonial conquest where the native culture and religion are marginalized by the forces of invasion. Vaikundar opposed the cultural corruption of the colonizers by strengthening roots of the native culture through cultural unity. Vaikundar had to go through trial and imprisonment due to the havoc created by common masses who opposed the tyrannical rule of the landlords and allies of the king. Here they did not adopt physical forms of violence like the Narnians but firmly disagreed to obey the oppressive norms like unethical taxation, forced labour and biased laws. However, in both cases, the old social order is replaced by a new one, where the oppressive canons are subverted. The values exhibited by the protagonists is similar to that of the other books and resembles the values of Ayyavazhi. The values of Courage and Fortitude helps the protagonists to avoid any hasty action on their part and to act appropriately to the situation. Their courage is put to vigorous test and they prove it by incessantly fighting till the end. The spirit of patriotism and their confidence in Aslan prompt them to lead a dignified life and die with dignity.

The Healing of religious malpractices like witchcraft, sorcery and demonolatry is undertaken by human agency in many cases. The humans always have the moral support of Aslan and they invoke social progress by forsaking such perversions of religion. When the rule of Jadis ends, the Golden Age is established in Narnia. This

denotes the change of social order which is a product of the reformation movement

lead by Aslan. Aslan in the form of a spiritual leader exhibits his supernatural powers

to escape from the death inflicted by Jadis. Subversion of the tyrannical rule of Jadis

in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* is similar to the social reformation move-

ment initiated by Ayya Vaikundar. Like Aslan's resurrection from Jadis's hands,

Vaikundar too escapes from several attempts on his life made by the *Kalineechan*.

The exhibition of spiritual power is indeed deeper magic than that of the oppressor's

occult science. In *The Horse and His Boy,* Aslan reveals his values, sense of justice,

compassion and love, to Aravis who can see the contrast between Calormene religion

and Narnian spirituality. Tash the diabolic god of Calormenes who feeds upon peo-

ple's blood, represents the culture of violence and tyranny in both psychological and

social levels. Aslan on the other hand is not an intangible idea like the former, but a

real palpable individual who lives among the common people and guides them. Apart

from the political overtones, this Narnian novel describes solutions to all issues

through human agency. Though indirectly guided by Aslan, the protagonists resist the

culture of Calormenes and defeat them in battle. This narrative incorporates the least

degree of fantasy, except the final scene where Aslan transforms Rabadash into a don-

key. Thus, the religious practices, sorcery and witchcraft are directly condemned in

The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe while they are indirectly exposed in *The Horse

and His Boy* through a contrast with the culture of Narnia.

     The Last Battle gives a clear view of religious monopoly through the character

Shift, who commands the entire inhabitants of Narnia by assuming an authoritative

role. This narrative does not give hint on the use of magic or the existence of the su-

pernatural, either by the supporters or the opposers of Narnian values. The

Caloremene commander Rishda Tarkaan within himself is sure that there is nothing

called Tash, but outwardly he uses the deity's name as a means to terrorize and exert control over Narnia. The entire nation of Narnia is controlled using the religious monopoly of Shift, which is supported by Rishda and his army. Here the malpractices are different from their strict religious context and include deforestation, forced labour and forced extraction of wealth. Social, economic and ecological dimensions of Narnia are controlled through the creation of a new cult by combining Aslan and Tash to make Tashlan. Narnia which withstood many adversities in the former narratives now disintegrates completely due to aberrations in the fundamental spiritual values of the nation. Thus, the real Healing happens only after total annihilation of the landscape takes place.

Healing Social Discrimination

Various aspects of society and the forms of discrimination are described in *The Chronicles of Narnia*. It is obvious that the free land of Narnia is free from any form of discrimination, but the incipient forms of Wrongness create an imbalance in the social order. Forces of invasion usually exert their control over Narnia based on magical powers, political strategies, hegemonic and overt expressions of power. Aslan himself has divided the inhabitants of Narnia into two classes of talking animals and mute animals. The talking animals are asked to be kind and generous towards the non-talking ones. This is an analogy of human and animal interaction represented by Lewis, which employs balance and harmony between them. This is the only visible form of social stratification present in the Narnian series, and on the other hand, Narnia represents a mosaic of different socio-cultural groups.

The free land of Narnia as described by Lewis, provides an awkward experience to the forces of oppression. This is evident from the characters of Uncle Andrew

and Jadis in *The Magician's Nephew*. The narrative gives insight into the socially

marginalized sections, which incidentally are common to the primary and the second-

ary world. When Digory questions Uncle Andrew for defying from the promise given

to Mrs Leafy, he justifies the deed by referring himself as belonging to the category of

profound scholars, intellectuals and sages. Andrew considers small children, women,

servants and common people in general as insignificant beings who are subject to reg-

ulations. The superior people like himself have distanced themselves from common

forms of pleasure and are not subjected to common norms (Lewis *The Magician's*

19). Here the canons of oppression are inherent in Andrew who tries to execute them

as per his capacity. His unethical experimentation sends Polly to a parallel world us-

ing a yellow ring and forces Digory to fetch her back using the green rings. Jadis too

reiterates the ideology of oppression when Digory and Polly ask her about the de-

struction of Charn using the "Deplorable Word". Jadis too proclaims herself as be-

longing to the superior segment of society who are vested with special privileges.

Therefore, she is least bothered or guilty of killing the common sections of society in-

cluding animals, children and women. As a Queen, she asserts herself to be free from

all rules and implies thereby making her actions justifiable (Lewis *The Magician's*

14). Contrary to the case of Uncle Andrew, Jadis held authoritative power and social

privilege, which enabled her to destroy the land of Charn. These are examples of in-

herent oppressive canons and variation in their practical execution. The marginalized

sections of the society include small children, women, servants and animals, which

are referred to as being common. This sheds light on discrimination based on physical

maturity, gender, social profession and anthropocentrism. The final one is relevant in

Narnia because many of the inhabitants are anthropomorphic beings. The very nature

of the land is subversive to anthropocentric canons. Thus, Narnia finds the utilitarian Andrew and tyrants Jadis, unfit in its design.

The Narnian series describe three societies which can be distinctly identified as Telamrines, Archenlanders and Calormenes based on their racial identity. Telma-rines are invaders from the human world who conquered Narnia and settled there like the colonializers of the real world. The Calormenes belong to the nation of Calormen located far south of Narnia and Archenland. Tashbaan is its capital. Tash is the god worshipped by this race who are constantly engaged in warfare and conquest. Archenland, located immediate south of Narnia is a peace-loving nation which rever-berates the values of Narnia but is inhabited by human beings instead of anthropo-morphic beings. Archenlanders/Calormenes constitute a binary which represents soci-eties based on contrasting power relations. The readers can easily identify the collec-tive unconscious of these two races which in the case of latter is based on values of subjugation and exploitation. By providing contrasting examples of oppression and resistance, Lewis provides an insight into the inevitability of social reformation. ""Beautiful Barbarians": Anti-Racism in *The Horse and His Boy* and Other *Chroni-cles of Narnia*" by Jennifer Taylor clarifies that Lewis depicted anti-racist discourses in his works and he was against the trends of oppression. Racial discourses in the western culture and those embedded in the human psyche are faithfully depicted in the form of imagery in the Narnian chronicles. Lewis opposes the opinion that chil-dren are a separate race and he emphasizes on universal unity of human race. He de-stabilizes political establishments that are based on racism and disapproves mutual unconcern of collective consciousness in human beings. This is the reason why Lewis does not depict Narnia as an absolute condition superimposed upon people. Those who intend to reach freedom need not convert themselves into Narnians like which is

expected of organized religions. An individual can reach Aslan through one's own culture and this proves that truth is beyond the restrictions of culture. The example of Emeth is cited in this context where he reaches Aslan despite being a worshiper of the evil deity Tash. Even while following Tash, Emeth unknowingly served Aslan throughout his life. Thus he finally reached the Real Narnia due to his own unflinching sincerity. The concept of transcendental truth is depicted as omnipresent and culturally all-inclusive. In the Real Narnia, the Calormen nation along with the city of Tashbaan is present with magnanimous glory. This clarifies that Aslan does not marginalize anything as absolute evil, which includes the nation of the extremely diabolic Calormen race. The Calormenes destroyed the culture of Narnians and eventually began killing their people who defied their dictatorial rule. Racial identification is therefore merely a pretence to carry out the power politics of the authorities. Lewis epitomises Aslan as a powerful figure who subverts the oppressive powers by transcending the boundaries of geography and culture. Degradation of values, racial discrimination and lack of spiritual awareness can be resolved by the unification of the entire humanity, which is the intention of Aslan (175-176). This is the quintessence of Ayyavazhi, which does not marginalize any individual or community including the tyrants and the oppressors. The movement aims at transformation of the collective consciousness of all individuals including the oppressors and the oppressed, to create reformation of a global level. This is the reason why Vaikundar always referred to misuser of power as *Kailneechan* [manifestation of the evil aeon of *Kali Yugam*] and such oppressive communities as *Kalineecha Kulam* [the race of *Kalineechan*]. It is a fact that Vaikundar never instigated vengeance upon any individual or a particular race, including the king and his allies who imprisoned him. Vaikundar neither surrendered his values to their oppressive stands nor did he succumb to their political strategies. He unified the

eighteen castes proclaiming the unity of the entire human race and instilled the egalitarian value of global harmony by creating spiritual awareness.

The Narnian series depicts the upliftment of people in general, which includes females who have been subject to oppression. Aslan through his physical presence and mostly as a source of inspiration helps the children to develop their capabilities and inspire them to provide solutions to issues. The studies of Cornell and Devin Brown has been cited in Chapter II, which disproves the critical accusations of Lewis being a sexist and a misogynist. Monika B. Hilder in "Jack, the "old woman" of Oxford: sexist or a seer?" cites the example of a female protagonist who develops over time, into mature and skilful individuals. Lewis does not create tomboy characters out of the girls who reject all typical feminine characteristics and exclusively embrace stereotypic masculinity. She cites the example from *The Magician's Nephew* wherein at the end of the narrative, Polly acquires the abilities of swimming, climbing, riding, baking and climbing when she makes contact with the family of Digory. These defy the general stereotypical norms of male and female, as the protagonist learns a variety of skills both relevant to males and females. Lewis never superimposes the institution of marriage on his characters, especially the females. That is why Helen, Daughter of Ramandu and Aravis all choose their life partners and accept happiness in motherhood. Lady Polly, on the other hand, is described as unmarried in *The Last Battle*, and Lewis in no way gives an impression that she should have chosen to marry to live happily. In the combination of dual protagonists, Lewis never describes as one superior the other even though the pair consists of a boy and a girl. Thus, Peter and Lucy, Eustace and Jill, Shasta and Aravis equally indulge in progressive actions in Narnia. Thus, Hilder disproves the views of critics like Kath Filmer who connotes the Narnian series as misogynist expressions of the author. She also gives examples of female

protagonists who excel the male ones in solving critical issues. In *Prince Caspian* Susan saves the life of the Dwarf Trumpkin before Peter, by shooting a Telmarine soldier when he was going to assassinate the Dwarf. Lucy willingly goes to the house of the Magician and disenchants the invisible people, to save her people in *The Voyage of the 'Dawn Treader'*. Jill as a pathfinder in *The Last Battle* leads the other protagonists to Stable Hill, to rescue Puzzle and Jewel. The presence of unique and independent female protagonists is an exclusive feature of Narnian narratives. Their confidence and capabilities are highlighted throughout the seven books, making them unparallel examples (106-107). Like the Narnian text, empowerment of women is a fundamental feature of Ayyavazhi. Upper cloth revolt initialized by the movement is an example of uplifting the women from being degraded as sex symbols. Education of women in Pathis is also a vision envisaged by Vaikundar, and equal status is given to all the people irrespective of distinctions of class caste or gender. Spirituality acts a unifying force in both Ayyavazhi and the Narnian narratives, which unifies the entire humanity beyond the gages of gender or social class.

Narnia devoid of social stratification always portrays the rulers freely interacting with the common subjects. Peter, Susan, Edmund, Lucy, Caspian and Tirian are accompanied by Centaurs, Fawns, Unicorns, horses and even mice. Sometimes, the seemingly trivial individuals are given positions of excellence. In *The Voyage of the 'Dawn Treader'*, Reepicheep the mouse reaches the Country of Aslan, through his valour and determination. The entry of the other protagonists including the rulers of Narnia is procrastinated by Aslan himself. It is also a unique fact that Reepicheep is the only character who reaches the abode of Aslan while alive. All the other friends of Narnia reach the Real Narnia only after they die, that too in incidents like train accidents and battles. This is described in *The Last Battle* where all the protagonists and

the chosen Narnians enter posthumously into Real Narnia, where they are welcomed

by Reepicheep who was already present there. The mouse qualifies himself to reach

Aslan on the basis on his actions and values, instead of belonging to any social class.

This is similar to Ayyavazhi in two respects, following the social and the spiritual di-

mensions. Reepicheep becomes liberated and enters the realm of enlightenment while

he is still alive. This is a feature of Indian spirituality, which is also reflected in Ayya-

vazhi. The mouse considers Aslan as a source of inspiration and has been influenced

by his words, which is described in *Prince Caspian*. A lifelong commitment to his

master and following the values of Courage and Fortitude leads to the fulfilment of

his destiny. In Ayyavazhi too, the teachings of Vaikundar are followed and people

lead their lives based on values upheld by him.

The downtrodden sections are uplifted by Aslan through subversion of tyran-

nical forces in each Narnian narrative. New social order is created in each case, where

the inhabitants enjoy freedom from forces of exploitation. In *The Lion, the Witch and

the Wardrobe*, Aslan fights a battle with Jadis, which reforms the society and estab-

lishes the Golden Age. Social conflicts are also evident from *Prince Caspian* and *The

Horse and His Boy*. In the former book, the imperialist Telmarines are sent away from

Narnia, after they were defeated by the walking trees. The existence of walking trees

and talking animals proves that the subaltern can speak and also act. This connotes

that the downtrodden sections are revived by Aslan who creates social revolutions

which are described in the form of battles. Creating a renewed social order and resur-

gence of the working-class people are the essential themes inherent in the Narnian se-

ries. This is analysed by Gracia Fay Ellwood in *Taking the Adventure: Faith and Our

Kinship with Animals*, where she examines *The Magician's Nephew* as a text of social

evolution and revolution. Frank the cabby driver stands out among the other

characters for his kindness and bravery. He not only belongs to the working class, but cares for his horse Strawberry as a comrade. Frank becomes delighted when Strawberry gets transformed into a talking-winged horse. He asks permission from the horse before making Digory sit on his back, for the mission of bringing Silver Apple. He always thinks from the perspective of his horse and expresses empathy for the hardships endured by the latter. Aslan not only allows him to reside in Narnia with his wife Nellie but coronates the couple as King Frank and Queen Helen who become the first King and Queen of the land. The liberation of the working class from oppression and uplifting them to a higher social status is a revolution created by Aslan. The metamorphosis of a dumb horse into a talking and flying horse connotates the emancipation of marginalized sections from oppressive canons. Despite endowed with supernatural powers, Aslan who is the creator of Narnia identifies himself as a normal beast who is only another member of the vast Narnian community (174-176). These facts equally reflect the essential motif underlying Ayyavazhi that redefines *Dharmam* as uplifting the downtrodden. The essential spiritual value of the movement encourages people to recognize the underlying Divinity in all the creations including humans and animals. Social emancipation and spiritual empowerment become inseparable in Narnian narratives and Ayyavazhi.

Resolving other Contemporary Issues

Environmental Exploitation

Environmental concerns and ecocriticism were concepts and terms unheard during the times of Lewis. Yet the author on several occasions highlighted the correlation of humans with the natural world, in the Narnian series. The utilitarian ideology of Uncle Andrew in *The Magician's Nephew* and the dichotomy between economic

greed and human need is explained and highlighted in the series of Narnian books. Such violence towards the animal world and the fear psychosis behind it is analysed by Kevin Kinghorn in "Virtue Epistemology: Why Uncle Andrew Couldn't Hear the Animals Speak". Andrew constantly indulges in cruel experiments on animals, which reshapes his mental grid with fear and hatred towards all creatures. This is the reason why he is unable to understand the language of the inhabitants of Narnia. He is terrorized by their presence and even falls unconscious with fear. Never for even a single instance does Andrew think about the reason behind this fear of animals, nor does he think whether this fear is necessary at all. Self-reflection never crosses his mind even when he witnesses the calmness and love with which others interact with the animals. He has fixated on his self-centredness and is completely devoid of self-awareness. The characters like Digory, Polly and Frank are contrasted with him through their friendship and kinship with the creation and the creatures of Narnia. Andrew is compared to the Telmarine race in *Prince Caspian*, who had made enmity with the trees. As a result of their hatred towards the trees, their collective psyche develops fear and they begin to believe that the woods are haunted (22-24). Andrew is a cross-section of the larger section of humanity who are unmindful of their relationship with the animals and the environment in general. The lack of affinity towards the natural world is the only palpable reason behind environmental exploitation and human-made natural hazards. Living in conformity with nature and adoption of vegetarian lifestyle have connotations in Ayyavazhi beyond mere ritualization. This movement emphasizes on *Anpu* [Love and Compassion] as the value which not only uplifts the downtrodden human beings but the entire creation. Love towards the entire creation is emphasized by Vaikundar that subverts all canons of discrimination between humans and humans, and human and the environment. This is established through spiritual awareness of the

Singular Divinity, *Ekam* which coexists within all the creations including the humans and the non-human. Narnia as a text and Ayyavazhi as a movement raise voice against the apathy of human beings towards nature and the necessity to change their anthropocentric mindset. Such posthuman concerns were introduced to humanity even before the theories of ecocriticism and environmental activism were established.

The real world of human beings and the ideal world of Narnia are not only contrasting with their outward settings, but with their outlook towards nature. Through the example of Narnia Lewis tries to draw a margin between conservation and exploitation of nature. The ideal nature of Narnia is often contrasted with the trends of environmental exploitation in the nation of Calormen. *Narnia and the Fields of Arbol: The Environmental Vision of C. S. Lewis* by Mathew Dickerson and David O' Hara traces the similarities between contemporary society and the Calormenes. Use of technology, commercialization and industrialization are intended for the progress of society. But their hazardous trends and by-products are not taken seriously by modern society as well as the Calormenes. Practices like mining and deforestation are considered as a part of social progress by Shift, who popularizes extensive agriculture through slavery. He explains and convinces the Narnians that, exploitation of natural resources will lead to economic stability and progress. The urbanization process is suggested by the names of institutions ranging from roads to schools, that will spring up in Narnia which will be filled with big cities. Introduction of saddles whips and prisons; indirectly suggest that the legal system will be reversed and Narnians will be subjugated by the policies of the new government. This is identical to the status quo cherished by modern society that marginalizes agrarian culture with the industrial trends of progress. The speech delivered by Shift is compared to many of the political leaders who speak for economic progress of society which challenge the sustainability

of natural resources. The development thus envisaged by Shift is not a long term one and finally results in the complete annihilation of Narnia (134-136). This is similar to the cataclysmic events anticipated by scientists, which are the expected outputs of extensive environmental exploitation. Ayyavazhi similarly makes many prophecies of natural calamities and even changes in the resources of the present world. "*Thiruvachakam – 1*" of *Akhilathirattu Ammanai* clarifies that the religions will become corrupt and commercialized, along with the transformation of geographical features. The exploitation of intrinsic values and the external environment, receding of oceans, extensive urbanisation, increase in commercial outlets for food and commercialization of religious symbols, are predicted as the final indications of the apocalypse (Harigopalan *Akhilathirattu* 191). This is similar to the trends of urbanization, religious corruption and commercialization unleashed by Shift in Narnia. Disasters of environment mark the final phase of destruction and which is followed by the manifestation of Real Narnia. Such descriptions subvert the predetermined canons of anthropocentrism and caution the readers to re-evaluate their attitude towards conservation of the environment.

Terrorism

The Narnian Chronicles depict the reign of terror ravaged by invasive powers on several occasions. References of Jadis, the White Witch conquering the land and the attacks of Calormenes are all explicit expressions of terror, that has already taken place when the protagonists arrive in Narnia. These are examples of terrorist occupied nations, which stunts the growth of society by spreading fear psychosis in the collective consciousness of the masses. This is the reason why an average Narnian tremble with fear at the sight of Jadis and it is only the followers of Aslan who dare to resist her authority. It is through military power that the forces of terrorism are resisted in

Narnia. This is similar to the scenario of a contemporary world where anti-terrorist

military operations are common features of many nations. In *The Horse and His Boy,*

the Calormen attacks on Narnia and Archenland can be related to modern forms of

terrorism. Surprise attacks and trespassing the frontiers are common features of terror-

ist groups in the secondary world of Narnia and the real world. As the setting is mod-

elled on medieval Europe, bombarding shells and suicide bombers are not present in

Narnia. Rabadash wants to expand his empire by conquering Archenland first and

then get hold of Narnia. He plans to attack Narnia and stealthily abduct Queen Susan

to fulfil his conditions from King Peter, which is similar to the ransom calls made by

modern-day terrorists after hijacking or kidnapping people. Hostility with neighbour-

ing nations and intention to expand the borders are features common to terrorist-con-

trolled nations in our world and same is the case of Calormen nation. Here too the

Narnians and Archenlanders resist the forces of terrorism using paramilitary forces

and their union is similar to that of world nations jointly resisting terrorism on a

global level. *The Last Battle* gives the description of a terrorist occupied territory,

which is a common phenomenon in many nations of the contemporary world. The

woody area of the Lantern Waste is occupied by the Calormen army under the leader-

ship of Rishda Tarkaan. They set up their camp on Stable Hill, which is managed by

Shift and his ally Ginger who uses Puzzle as a pawn. Similar to many nations in mod-

ern world, here too the ruler King Rilian is unable to detect and control the terrorist

forces that have infiltrated into the nation of Narnia. The collective psyche of the

masses is governed by religious canons which are used as sources of power to em-

power terrorist activities. Shift interconnects the images of Aslan and Tash and cre-

ates the god named Tashlan, which is used to manipulate the religious sentiments of

Narnians and create a fear psychosis in them. This too resembles the phenomenon of

the real world where the terrorist groups are ideologically based upon canons of religious fundamentalism.

In the case of the real world, no permanent solution has been achieved by the use of violence to curb terrorism. A chronological reading of the Narnian narratives too expresses the same fact, where the entire nation is destroyed through forces of terrorist oppression in *The Last Battle*. This proves the futility of using violence to resist violence and highlights that fact the battles in Narnia should not be taken as factual expressions. This is a reason why this research work has adopted a parallel reading of each Narnian book and related six of them as expansions of the primary text: *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. This provides experiences of Healing as palpable solutions to issues like terrorism, where the battles indicate collective forms of resistance that does not involve physical violence. Melting of wintery snow from Narnia and Aslan killing Jadis in battle indicate the transformation of the landscape as well as that of the mindscape. This has been earlier stated in 'The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe' by Manolve that Narnia is a mirror image of Jadis, the White Witch. Following this notion, Lewis does not promote the culture of violence and all forms of violence including terrorism can be alleviated by the unification of human beings. The presence of Aslan indicates that the unity of human society should be based on awareness about individual emancipation through upliftment of society. Vaikundar too resisted violence through his courage and fortitude instead to resorting to violent methods. He emphasized on the unification of humanity which acted as a power that subverted various forms of oppression. Like the *Dharma Yugam* of Ayyavazhi *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* depicts the Golden Age devoid of any misuse of power.

Human Trafficking

Human trafficking in the form of slave trading is represented in the Narnian books like *The Voyage of the 'Dawn Treader'* and *The Horse and His Boy*. In both these cases, the involvement of Calormenes is the common factor, who promote the demand and supply of human beings as mere products in the market. *The Voyage of the 'Dawn Treader'* describes the rule of Governor Gumpas in the Lone Islands, who makes huge capital by selling his subjects to the Calormenes. His policy of "end justifies means" is subverted by King Caspian who dismisses him from the governorship and appoints Lord Bern as the Duke of the Lone Islands. Here Caspian uses his political power to abolish slavery, as in monarchy the king's command is equivalent to law. This is similar to the abolishment of forced labour, slavery and other forms of discrimination legalized through democratic rule, as an influence of Ayyavazhi. An explicit description of slavery is given in *The Horse and His Boy* through the character of Aravis. She is an affluent Tarkeena who elopes from her home to avoid a forced marriage arranged by her parents. For this, she drugs a slave-girl who later gets brutally beaten by the stepmother of Aravis. This reveals the inherent unconcern about slaves and marginal communities in the mindset of the elite class, which is the expression of their oppressive attitude. The pathetic condition of slaves is revealed by the description of Tashbaan city where the slaves are devoid of footwears and live in unhygienic conditions. Yet, Aravis, on the other hand, subverts the canonical animosity towards the slave community through her love towards the oldest of slaves. This man dearly loved Aravis and took care of her since her childhood, which created a bondage deeper than that of her parents. He writes a false letter on her behalf to her father, which helps in the swift escape of Aravis (Lewis *The Horse* 223). Such a deviation from the traditional canon of violence towards the marginalized sections stands out as the primary reason for Aslan choosing her to be the Queen of Archenland. Here the

social canon of oppression is subverted by Love and Compassion, which is similar to that of Ayyavazhi. *Anpu* [Love and Compassion] is considered as the power of unification employed by Vaikundar, which helped to harmonize and unify the eighteen castes. All the reform activities of Ayyavazhi have such values as the underlying source of power. Thus, Aslan chooses Aravis, on the basis of the Human Values like Love and Compassion inculcated, and not by her social status or class. He does so only after purging her consciousness from the ill-treatment afflicted upon the slave-girl. As mentioned earlier, it is a fact that the Healing process in *The Horse and His Boy* is incomplete. This is clear from the fact that, even though the freedom of Narnian inhabitants is maintained by resisting the attacks from Calormenes, the malpractices of oppression and slavery continue in Calormen nation. Neither Aslan nor the other protagonists try to work for the reversal of the situation in Calormen and uplifting of the downtrodden became a practice confined within the geographical boundaries of Narnia. This can be seen as a tragic flaw which is referred to as "hamartia" by Aristotle in *Poetics*, which leads to the reversal of action that culminates in tragedy. The responsibility of the final tragedy *in The Last Battle* owes to the ignorance of oppressive trends of human slavery by the rulers of Narnia. Like the Calormenes who after repeated attempts invade and spread their tyranny in Narnia, the kings or queens of Narnia never tried to, if not invade but at least influence the Calormenes through their ideologies against oppression and slavery. Finally, Aslan appears to dissolve the entire creation of Narnia, which shows his inability to directly execute the Healing process.

Domestic Violence and Gender Discrimination

Lewis highlights the issues like gender abuse and domestic violence in *The Horse and His Boy*. Aravis who belongs to a wealthy Tarkaan family is forced upon

marriage with an aged man named Ahoshta Tarkaan. The reason behind this is revealed as the social prestige of creating an alliance with the Vizier of Tisroc and a large amount of wealth obtained in the form of dowry. The social anomalies of premature marriage and dowry system are questioned by Lewis in this book. This is substantiated by the elopement of Aravis from her home to find a secure space in the free land of Narnia. The character of Aravis is contrasted with that of her friend Lasaraleen whom she meets in the city of Tashbaan. Latter is alarmed at the elopement of Aravis and she persuades her to marry Ahoshta and lead a luxurious life like her own. Aravis is least interested in the statuesque of an aristocratic life nor is she overwhelmed like Lasaraleen about the pompous lifestyle of the palace (Lewis *The Horse* 205-208). The revolutionary outlook and quest for freedom make her the beneficiary of Aslan who clarifies her consciousness and provides inspiration. She becomes the Queen of Archenland and the wife of King Corin who is initially introduced into the plot as Shasta. The early life of Shasta as described in Chapter 1 reflects the issue of domestic violence and child abuse. Arsheesh a fisherman who is the foster father of Shasta has been behaving cruelly to him since his childhood. As Shasta is cut off from the outer world, he is unable to compare his state with that of other children in their families. He is forced to cook food, clean the cottage and repair the fishing nets. He usually gets beatings from Arsheesh when the latter was in a bad temper and Arsheesh scolded Shasta by finding his faults. His inherent disliking towards Arsheesh proves true when he overhears the conversation between the latter and a Tarkaan lord who wishes to buy Shasta as a slave. Shasta is at once horrified at his fate and simultaneously relieved that he is not the biological son of this abusive foster parent (Lewis *The Horse* 205-208). Like Aravis, Shasta also sets off towards the North to reach the free land of Narnia, by boarding on the talking horse Bree. The condition of Shasta

highlights the issues of physical abuse, especially child abuse and child labour. These issues have now become common in the contemporary world where even the biological parents in many cases turn abusive. Thus, child labour and child abuse are detested as criminal activities and have been legally penalized in many nations.

The childhood of protagonists like Caspian in *Prince Caspian* and Digory in *The Magician's Nephew*, also reveals the inherent themes of child abuse and domestic violence. Caspian who had been raised under the royal surveillance of the usurper king Miraz is initially unaware of his malicious intentions. Caspian is usually ignored by his uncle Miraz, but the latter severely scolds him, violently shakes him by shoulders and threatens him, merely for showing interest in the history of the Old Narnia who represents the oppressed class. Miraz dismisses his Nurse who has been the only source of love for the boy and himself is apathetic towards the sorrow of his nephew (Lewis *Prince* 335). Caspian later gains solace from his tutor Doctor Cornelius who acts as a mentor, friend and well-wisher to the boy. Here the Healing of the issue is done immediately and prepares the character for facing further challenges of life. Instead of physical harassments, Digory is psychologically repressed by his uncle Andrew in *The Magician's Nephew*. Here Andrew the magician forces his nephew Digory to find out Jill who has been vanished by his experimentation. Uncle Andrew risks the life of a young girl Jill into trouble and harshly argues with Digory by justifying his deed. When Digory cautions the ultimate consequence of his wicked sorcery Andrew accuses him of being silly as he was brought up by women (Lewis *The Magician's* 21-22). This reveals the misogynist attitude of Andrew who lays hegemonic control over children like Digory and Polly. Here domestic violence is in the form of hegemony, rather than physical expressions of power and the threat on his power is levelled by accusing women who have ingrained silly facts into the minds of children.

The stories and values transmitted by grandmothers and mothers are marginalized by the rational and scientific temperament of Andrew, who is fixated on the utilitarian value of everything. Uncle Andrew and Jadis, the White Witch who carry similar traits represent the variations in their degree of exploitation. Andrew wants to utilize Narnia, the Land of Youth, for commercial purposes and replenish the material things from the physical world and be a millionaire. He also plans to start hospitals, health resorts and amass a huge amount of money from them. For fulfilling his intentions, he too like Jadis, intends to kill Aslan who is the creator of Narnia (Lewis *The Magician's* 67-68). The oppressive trends of both the magicians Andrew and Jadis are subverted by the intervention of Aslan. The former transforms himself into a better individual with lesser selfishness and lives with the family of Digory. The latter gets subdued for the period of one hundred years and returns to create total tyranny than mere domestic violence. Here it is implied that domestic violence is the proto form of social exploitation. Oppression against individuals in private life is extended towards the subjugation of the entire members of society. Like the subversive trends of Aslan, Vaikundar too initiates the transformation of the individual consciousness along with changes invoked in the society. Social reformation is achieved through the refinement in the thought process of individual members of society.

Ayyavazhi Dharmam and the Inherent Values

The term *Dharma* is the Sanskrit equivalent of *Dharmam* in the Tamil language. *Dharma* is a pluralistic concept and incorporates several layers of meaning in different schools of thought in India. To understand the contextual relevance of *Dharmam* it is necessary to understand the connotations of *Dharma*. Surendranath Dasgupta in *A History of Indian Philosophy* summarizes the underlying meanings attributed to the word *Dharma* according to various traditional schools of Indian

philosophy. The *Mimamsa* school defines *Dharma* as those desired results obtained by performance of rituals according to the Vedic scriptures. This is a purely material-istic outlook where there is little relevance of Divinity or spirituality and the performance of actions contrary to the injunctions of Vedas is termed as *Adharma* that accounts for sin. Vedic definition of *Dharma* does not emphasize on non-violence, but schools like Buddhism, Jainism, Pasupata and Bhagavata strictly prohibit animal sacrifice and emphasize on the value of non-violence. The later Smritis attributed to Brihaspati, Manu and Yajnavalkya, Puranas like *Vishnudharmottara* and epics like *The Mahabharata* introduces *Dharma* as a universal concept. Self-realization is understood as the ultimate goal of *Dharma* and Puranas like *Srimad Bhagavata* extends the scope of *Dharma* to the devotion of God as a means of Self-realization. Apart from these stages in the development of *Dharma*, there are other *Dharma*s which are related to *Asrama*s [stages of life], *Varna*s [castes] and various human life conditions. The evolution of *Dharma* from the gratification of senses, to the inculcation of human values like truth, non-violence and self-restraint, and finally to the spiritual fulfilment of Self-realization summarizes the various dimensions of *Dharma* (2-11). These observations by Dasgupta reveal the diachronic evolution of *Dharma* from a materialistic to a social and finally to a spiritual dimension of life. The *Dharma*s according to different stages of life known as Asrama *Dharma*s also give priority to spiritual attainments, but only at the final stage of human life which is dedicated to *Moksha* or liberation. This reveals that spiritual discourses were also inherent in India from the early stages, but they were foregrounded and popularized in the later periods.

Dharma was popularized as a doctrine by Gautama Buddha, which aimed in the liberation of the individual through Nirvana or Enlightenment. Even though Buddhism acquired different changes and got divided into separate schools, the eight-fold

path of *Dharma* is recognized as the fundamental principle of it. Buddha is renowned for his contribution to social reformation, where his teachings subverted the traditional canons of oppression. He emphasized on *Ahimsa* or Non-violence which fosters unity in humanity and thus created stands against caste and gender discriminations, animal sacrifice and ritualization. Compassion is considered as the greatest power for transforming individuals and thereby changing the entire society. *The Buddha-Carita or The Life of Buddha* by aśvaghōṣa clarifies this concept. The following verse is cited from the translation of Edward B. Cowell. "Since then, when I attain this righteous end, my escape from hence will be for the good of the world, — O best of steeds, by thy speed and energy, strive for thine own good and the good of the world" (5.78). The intention of monastic life according to Buddha is the liberation of oneself and the liberation of the world. Here we can find a synthesis of social commitment and spiritual fulfilment. Thus, spirituality does not intend to escape from the world, but functions within the world to make it a better place of living. *Dharma* is utilized as a powerful tool for subverting canons of oppression based on class, caste, gender and race. The changes invoked in society by Buddha is proof of the practical credibility of *Dharma* and highlights its value above impractical philosophies of jargoned rhetoric. According to Joseph Campbell in *The Masks of God*, India has been contributing and still has much to give to the value system of the western world. He finds out that human values are steeply receding in the western world, which is looking forward towards India for its Upanishadic and Buddhist teachings which fundamentally arise potentially from the power of the human mind and operates by relating to the symbolism of occidental thought (630). Indian spirituality which includes Buddhist philosophy and Upanishadic teachings are relevant to the western world as they are universal by nature. The practical significance and cardinal nature make Indian spirituality

acceptable and applicable to the entire humanity. Therefore, *Dharma* which is a common value of Buddhism, as well as the Upanishads, is understood as a globally significant force.

It is a well-known fact that the fundamental value of Ayyavazhi is *Dharmam* and the whole reform activities of the movement revolve around its practical application. The concept of *Dharma* was also utilized in the later period of Indian history as a source of emancipation through resistance. This became possible through the existence of *Dharma* as an embedded discourse in the culture of Indian society through many ages. *Dharma* was revived in the form of an ideology which empowered Indian Independence movement, to subvert the oppressive colonial rule of the British Raj. Ranajith Guha in *Dominance without Hegemony* argues that both the colonialists and the social hierarchy in India function on common operating principles of misinterpreting and misreading the fundamental dimensions of *Dharma* embedded within the subalterns. Especially in its final stages, the British colonial power had to face popular forms of protest from the public, which were instigated and motivated by the power of *Dharma*. This phenomenon of Dharmic Protest as Guha calls it, was interpreted as Rightful Dissent by the colonialists. *Dharma* re-defines itself though its transcendental nature by endowing the people with the duty of dissolving *adharma* [injustice] which has originated as a result of degradation in *rajadharma* [duty of rulers]. This confines the role of rulers as mere executives of power and destabilizes their monopoly over position and the nation. This motivated Indian public to make rectification of deviant trends in the ideal functioning of government as per the vision of *Dharma* and this led to public resistance against the policies of British Raj (59). This trend adopted in the Indian independence movement is closely related to the Ayyavazhi movement that questioned the power politics of oppression at the grass-root level. Ayyavazhi did

not pick up momentum at a national level, due to the lack of strong leading forces after Vaikundar and he was able to work for only a limited span of eighteen years. However, the findings of Guha prove that the movements after Ayyavazhi though directly inspired or not by it, utilized *Dharma* as an instrument of social emancipation and resistance against political oppression.

As mentioned earlier Ayya Vaikundar redefined *Dharmam* as: "Uplifting the downtrodden". Here *Dharmam* incorporates many dimensions associated with it. Social service of giving alms and charity is the basic Tamil connotation of *Dharmam*. Ayyavazhi launched the system of common meal system and encouraged the people to indulge in social service activities. *Dharmam* in Ayyavazhi also includes a plethora of values associated with the Sanskrit word *Dharma*. Non-violence, truth, self-restraint in the form of fortitude, self-confidence in the form of courage, living a dignified life, unity, harmony, love and compassion all are variegated expressions of *Ayyavazhi Dharmam*. As per the vision of Vaikundar, the practice of *Dharmam* in its entirety will lead to the dawn of the New World and a new aeon of *Dharma Yugam*. This inspired people to work for establishing a renewed social order, where the existing conditions of oppression will be obliterated. The practical implication of *Dharmam* can be verified from teachings given and adhered by Ayya Vaikundar during critical situations faced in his life.

When the soldiers of the king came to arrest and torture Vaikundar, his followers began to resist them and retort back their violence. Ayya Vaikundar immediately asked them to calm down and enlightened them with his following words.

பொதுக்கென்ற கோபமதைப் புத்திதனி லடக்கிப்

பொறுத்து இருந்தவரே பெரியோரே யாகுமக்கா

அறுத்திட வென்றால் அபுருவமோ எந்தனக்கு

வம்புசெய்வதைப் பார்த்து வதைக்கவந்தே னக்குலத்தை

அன்பு குடிகொண்ட அதிகமக்கா நீங்களெல்லாம்

பொறுத்து இருங்கோ பூலோகம் ஆளவைப்பேன்

O, Children! Only those who contain the outburst of rage within their intelligence and have the fortitude, are bound to become great. When the races who consider: "killing is nothing exceptional" began to act cruelly, you saw that and longed to kill them. O! Children with limitless Love and Compassion, all of you wait with fortitude. Thou shall be given the world to be ruled. (Harigopalan *Akhilathirattu*; my trans.; 275)

The values of Love and Compassion [*Anpu*], Courage and Fortitude are expected to be adhered by people even in the worst situations of life. Anger is to be contained within intelligence and non-violence is to be foregrounded. The teachings of Vaikundar demand proper use of intelligence according to the situational demands. He did not want to create another bloody revolution in history by instigating his followers to attack the soldiers of the tyrant ruler. According to *Akhilathirattu Ammanai*, Vaikundar was already aware of the impact of his trial and imprisonment. He was confident of his capability of overpowering the forces of tyranny. The teachings imparted to people proved valid because he emerged unharmed from the prison even after several attempts on his life. Moreover, his later reform activities were by no means interrupted by the ruler or his allies.

When Vaikundar was bound by ropes and was taken for trial, people gathered on roadsides and lamented on their ill fate. They had been greatly relieved by the

advent of Vaikundar in their clan who was the only support for all miserable people. Now that he was captured and beaten by the Evil One, the people felt themselves to be lonely and destitute. Hearing their pleas and cries Vaikundar instilled them with confidence and assured them of his successful return which would eventually lead to their redemption.

மலையாதுங் கோநீங்கள் மாமுனிவன் புத்   ரரே

அலையாதுங்கோ மக்காள் அய்யா திருவாணை

இப்பூமி தன்னில்வந்து இத்தனை நாள் வரைக்கும்

கைப்பொருளுக் கிச்சை கருத்தில் மிகநினைத்து

கைக்கூலி வேண்டிக் கருமஞ்செய்தே னானாக்கால்

இக்குவ லயததில் இனிவரேன் கண்டிருங்கோ

தர்ம்மமது நிச்சித்துத் தாரணியில் வந்ததுண்டால்

நன்மைக் கடைப்பிடி   நான்வருவேன் நானிலத்தில்

ஒன்றுக்கும் மலைய வேண்டாங்கா ணுத்தமரே

என்றைக்கும் நானிருப்பேன் என்மக்கள் தங்களிடம்

ஆளுவே னோர்குடைக்குள் ஆனவை குண்டமனாய்

வாழுவோம் மக்கா வையகத்தில் நாமாக

விரு தம்

ஒன்றுக்கும் மலைய வேண்டாம் உகபர நாத னாணை

என்றுக்கும் மலையின் மீதில் ஏற்றின தீபம் போலே

கன்றுக்குப் பாலு போலும் கண்ணுக்குப் புருவம் போலும்

என்றுக்கும் மக்கா வுஙள் இடமிருந் தரசு ஆள்வேன்

முன்முறை விதியா லிந்த முழுநீசப் பாவி கையால்

என்விதிப் படவே வுண்டு இறப்பு அவன்தனக் கென்றாலே

பின்விதி யெனக்கு நன்றாம் பெரும்புவி யாள்வோம் மக்கா

உன்விதி நல்ல தாகும் ஒளிவறா வாழ்வீர் தாமே

O! Offsprings of the Great Sage, do not get dishevelled. In the name of The Divine Lord, do not either wavered. From the time of arriving on this earth, all these days having well thought in mind about the tangible wealth; to make it into various modes I indulged in action to obtain the resultant bribe [return result]. If I had fixed upon *Dharmam* and arrived on the earth, wait and watch, I shall come again to this world. Having adhered to goodness I shall come to all the four landscapes. O! Excellent ones! See that you need not wander for anything. I shall be ever-present in the proximity of my children. Having manifested as Vaikundam, I shall rule under an umbrella. We shall live as ourselves in the world.

<center>Verse</center>

In the name of The Transcendental Lord of the aeon, you need not wander for anything. Forever like a lamp placed on top of a mountain, like milk for the calf and like eyebrow for the eye, I shall rule forever from your proximity. Following the previously destined dictum, my destiny has to be shaded in the hands of the Omni-Cruel Evil One, and his destruction is through me. O! Children! The future destiny is good for me and shall rule the magnificent world.

Your destiny shall be good and we by ourselves shall live in endless efful-

gence. (Harigopalan *Akhilathirattu*; my trans.; 277)

Here Vaikundar refers to himself as the Great Sage and instils confidence in

the people by reminding them of their identities as his children. Being the progeny of

a Great Sage amounts to inculcation of Courage and Fortitude. They are expected to

wait patiently for the safe return of their master, who himself is the embodiment of

Courage and Fortitude. Vaikundar rhetorically refers to the marginalized sections as

his tangible wealth and his reformation works undertaken for uplifting them are the

attempts for their upliftment. His trial and torture by the king, is referred to as a bribe

for releasing the downtrodden section of society from the oppression of the ruler and

his allies. *Dharmam* is foregrounded as the greatest power which can outlive all criti-

cal situations of life. This cardinal value of Ayyavazhi is projected as the source of

strength which helped Vaikundar to emerge safely out of the prison in spite of several

attempts on his life. Here *Dharmam* is visualized as inseparable from goodness and

this replenishes Divinity by highlighting its expansive dimensions. Vaikundar assures

the people of forthcoming New World where they will live with dignity in their ele-

vated identities. This egalitarian world will be immensely prosperous that people will

have no necessity to yearn for anything. Vaikundar assures that he in the form of Om-

nipresence will pervade the world, rule and unite the entire humanity. The following

verse in the metrical form of *Viruththam* narrates that the suffering endured by

Vaikundar in the form of imprisonment and tortures was known to him as inevitable

process for his future success. His love and compassion towards the entire creation is

expressed by the analogy of lamp over a mountain, where Vaikundar enlightens eve-

ryone without distinctions. His teachings are universally relevant and not confined

within the boundaries of religion, caste, race, gender, nationality, creed or community.

He embodies the milk of motherly love, which sustains life and nourishes the people who are compared to calves. He assumes a paternal role and assures to safeguard the people like the brow which safeguards the eye. He reaffirms the people of a bright future which will be ruled by the effulgence of Vaikundar in the form of his values. The New World is described of an endless state where humanity will never have to stoop down into the clutches of oppression. Here the people are endowed with the hope of a new aeon that operates on the value of Unity and their courage is elevated to a higher degree for working towards this ideal condition. The people are assured of not only material prosperity, but they shall live in the infinite effulgence of Omnipresent Divinity. All the material and immaterial wishes of the people will be fulfilled in the New World, when they will have to no more wander for fulfilment. Vaikundar always identified himself with Divinity that transcends the limitations of time and space, by which he assures the people of his ever-existing proximity. This is the reason behind the worship of Mirror and Lamp in the Pathis consecrated by Vaikundar. Here the individual identifies and worships Omnipresent Divinity, which is inherent in everybody. Ayyavazhi stands out as a spiritual movement that empowers individual identity instead of enslaving people into religious dogma.

The final words which were spoken by Vaikundar before he leaves his mortal body summaries the practical implication of *Ayyavazhi Dharmam* and the inherent values. *Akhilathirattu Ammanai* describes the scene where Vaikundar decides to shed his mortal frame and lies down on a cot. The loving people approach him and express their sorrow of losing his proximity forever. Vaikundar consoles them and thus utters his final words of instruction.

உடற்க்குள் குறியாய் ஒத்துமிக வாழுமென்று

சொல்லிமக்கள் கையைத் திருமுகத்தோ டேசேர்த்து

இல்லியல்பாய் வாழும் யாழுழித்து வாறோமெனப்

பதறாமல் நீங்கள் பண்பா யொருப்போலே

சிதறாமல் நீங்கள் செய்யஅனு கூலமுமாய்

இருந்துமிக வாழும் என்றுநாமம் கொடுத்து

Sustain the qualities even amidst distress and live united prosperously. Having said this, he placed the palm of his people on the Divine face. May all of you live by transcending nature and We shall come together. May all of you live in abundance: by becoming culturally united, without being perturbed, existing without getting dispersed and by working favourably. With these words, he initiated them with *Namam*. (Harigopalan *Akhilathirattu*; my trans.; 360-361)

They are asked to adhere to the qualities and values imbibed from their preceptor, instead of lending faith to any scriptures or rituals. The people are advised to maintain Courage and Fortitude which will help them to overcome distress and dangers facing their lives. The value of Unity and material prosperity goes hand in hand according to Vaikundar. Only unified efforts can lead to the growth of individuals and culminate in the prosperity of the entire community. The final physical contact of the master and his message of unity emphasize on the unification of the entire humanity based on love, rather than organizational fervour and utilitarian necessities. Unity in Ayyavazhi emphasizes on the heart to heart relationship and harmony among the members to the entire creation, which is based on *Anpu* [Love and Compassion] as exhibited by Vaikundar to the people. He implies the spiritual harmony of each individual with Divinity, where the limited nature is transcended to reach spiritual unity.

Vaikundar problematizes the concepts of physical and spiritual dimensions by fore-grounding the values of unity and harmony. Ayyavazhi thus considers the external harmony among individuals and the expression of refinement of consciousness. Vaikundar wishes the people to foster unity based on culture, where Love acts as the power that unifies people belonging to various cultural backgrounds. He expects the people to remain ever courageous and unwavering in all situations of life. Along with Courage, Vaikundar wishes the people to inculcate Fortitude which prevents them from being scattered away. Apart from adherence to the aforementioned values, working according to favourable conditions like situational demands and necessities of society can ultimately lead to the prosperity of the individual and the society. To empha-size the impact of his teachings, Vaikundar immediately marks *Namam* [white soil in the shape of a lamp flame], on the foreheads of the people. The words of advice and spiritual initiation reflects the emphasis given on the inculcation of values and their practice. Ayyavazhi confirms that each individual is responsible for one's own destiny and destiny can be changed by adherence to *Dharmam* and the inherent values.

Ayyavazhi Dharmam: Healing Critical issues of Narnia

Re-readings of the fantasy texts can help to identify the critical issues embedded in the secondary world as the reflections of the primary world. Reading *The Chronicles of Narnia* as a text of Ayyavazhi proposes solutions to the issues depicted in the textual narratives. The practical and diligent application of the values of Ayyavazhi can be perceived from the characters in Narnian narratives, who successfully resolve the crisis inflicted upon them. Here Aslan and Ayya Vaikundar are identified as similar manifestations of spiritual leaders who are equally renowned as social reformers. The following values of *Ayyavazhi Dharmam* are identified as those which play a pivotal role in resolving the crisis faced by individuals and the society in general.

Dharmam, *Anpu* [Love and Compassion], Courage and Fortitude, Living in Dignity, Harmony, Unity, Non-violence and Truth.

Dharmam: *Dharmam* which means charity in the Tamil language, acquired expansive and inclusive dimensions through its reinterpretation in Ayyavazhi. *Dharmam* in Ayyavazhi as previously mentioned is an umbrella term which incorporates all the inherent values that would enhance the progress of individuals and the society in general. Adherence to *Dharmam* is considered as the only criterion to find a place in the egalitarian aeon of *Dharma Yugam*. Adherence to *Dharmam* is evaluated as a powerful form of resistance, which can lead to the emancipation of marginalized sections. Definition of *Dharmam* according to Vaikundar is uplifting the downtrodden, which synthesizes the spiritual value with its physical connotation. All the other values are the extensions of *Ayyavazhi Dharmam* and function for uplifting the marginalized sections of society.

The Golden Age in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* is the direct result of *Dharmam* followed by Aslan who uplifted the downtrodden sections of Narnia from the tyrannical rule of Jadis. Love and Compassion to the entire Narnians made Aslan sacrifice his life for their emancipation, which was a decision that demanded great courage. Fortitude made him endure the tortures and insults of the evil creatures and kept up his life's dignity by never morally succumbing to Jadis. He inspired the Narnians with the values of Harmony and unified them together to resist the forces of oppression. The Narnians reflected the truth and sincerity which Aslan showered upon them, by opposing the forces of tyranny in the battle against Jadis. The Pevensie children ruled Narnia in an ideal way even in the absence of Aslan, which earned them titles according to their values. Peter became renowned as "the Magnificent", Susan was entitled as "the Gentle", Edmund was addressed as "the Just" and Lucy became

famous as "the Valiant". Together they ruled Narnia in the aeon renowned as the Golden Age. As observed before, a parallel reading of each Narnian book revealed that complete Healing of the Wrongness can only be observed in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. This is the only narrative where values are coronated as rulers of the nation, instead of monarchs with traits of subjectivity. Thus the Golden Age of Narnia can be equated to *Dharma Yugam* of Ayyavazhi where the value *Dharmam* rules the world instead of personal biases.

Anpu [Love and Compassion]: The word *Anpu* in Tamil can be almost be translated as Love and Compassion in English. This value of Ayyavazhi is foregrounded as the fundamental principle of human co-existence. Vaikundar hoisted a saffron-coloured flag with a three-pronged mark in white colour, where the central one resembles the flame of a lamp. This instilled the value of Love and Compassion and thereby the followers of Ayyavazhi are referred to as *Anbukodi Makkal* [The people of Love Flag]. Vaikundar himself embodies this value through the Love and Compassion he showered on the marginalized people, for which he undertook the risk of being imprisoned. His Love and Compassion extends to the entire creation including the oppressive people who retorted back with violence. Such inclusiveness is implied through the practical adherence of this value, which fosters other values like Harmony and Unity among humanity.

The overall culture of Narnia is based on *Anpu*, which instigates the inhabitants to welcome the newcomers to their land, without any inhibitions. Narnians provide food and hospitality to even the people whom they are suspicious about. This is evident from compassion exhibited by Trufflehunter and Trumpkin who protects and takes care of Prince Caspian even before they made kinship with him. Aslan himself is depicted as an embodiment of Love and Compassion. He allows himself to be

executed by Jadis on the stone table, to save Edmund and safeguard the future of Narnia. Aslan knew that he would resurrect unharmed even if he gets killed by the White Witch, which proves that he did not blindly adhere to the value of *Anpu*. Aslan used his intelligence and strategically defeated the plans of Jadis, by offering his life as a sacrifice. This marks the final words of Vaikundar who advises to execute the values as per favourable conditions and according to the situational demands. Aravis in *The Horse and His Boy* is punished by Aslan as she had drugged a slave-girl and was unmindful of the punishments received by the latter. Aslan later helps Aravis to inculcate the values of Love and Compassion, and motivates to think beyond the restrictions of caste and social strata.

Courage and Fortitude: Ayyavazhi considers these values as powerful instruments of emancipation. Vaikundar insisted his followers to inculcated Courage and Fortitude, without opposing the forces of oppression with physical violence. Vaikundar himself followed this dictum by imposing no physical resistance against the king or his forces who imprisoned him. However, he never hesitated to proclaim his teachings against the misrule of the king and united all communities against the policies of oppression. When the king asked him to confine his teachings within his birth community as the condition for releasing him from prison, Vaikundar firmly disagreed to it and tore the agreement with his fingernails. The powers of oppression were finally subverted and Vaikundar was released unconditionally. The practical adherence of the master to his teachings and the successful results motivated the followers to uphold the values of Ayyavazhi.

Aslan courageously embraces death by the hands of Jadis and he exhibits immense fortitude by enduring the tortures inflicted by the evil forces of the White Witch. Puddleglum exhibits Courage and Fortitude by extinguishing the magic fire of

the Lady of the Green Kirtle by stamping on it. He endures the burns inflicted upon his leg but succeeds in liberating everyone from the enchantment of the Lady. Similar to the final words of Vaikundar, Puddleglum moves beyond the limitations of his nature and risks his own safety. The protagonists in *The Last Battle* exhibit an unprecedented degree of Courage and Fortitude, in the greatest critical situations of life. King Rilain, Jewel, Eustace, Jill, Poggin and all other faithful Narnians fight for the emancipation of their nation against the forces of invasion headed by Rishda Tarkaan. Edmund courageously and skilfully destroys the magic wand of Jadis during the battle in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. Moreover, that battle itself is proof of the courage exhibited by Peter and his army, who readily face the enemies even in the unexpected absence of Aslan. All the protagonists in the Narnian narratives accomplish their tasks by confirming to these values and the characters like Eustace in *The Voyage of the 'Dawn Treader'* inculcate them through personal experiences in Narnia.

Life of Dignity: Vaikundar insists on a dignified life as a prerequisite for the annihilation of the evil aeon of *Kali Yugam*. Ayyavazhi foregrounds the necessity of self-confidence for social progress and individual transformation. The consecration of Mirror and Lamp for worship provides awareness about the underlying Divinity inherent in each individual. This evokes a sense of self-confidence and dignity in the place of guilt and fear, which helps in the evolution of human consciousness. Vaikundar advised the people to live with dignity and be fearless of any forces of oppression including humans and the supernatural. Vaikundar never allowed to forsake his dignity even while enduring the experiences of trial and imprisonment. The teachings in practice beyond mere preaching created a deep impact on the people and resulted in social resurgence.

Puddleglum in *The Silver Chair* is never ready to surrender his dignity and accept the arguments put forth by the Lady of the Green Kirtle. He firmly believes in his experiences of Narnia however logically the latter tries to negate its existence. Puddleglum's love for his land and its inhabitants prevents him from forsaking dignity and embracing the indoctrination of the Lady. The self-confidence sustained from his dignified life, helped him to act courageously and subvert the power of this tyrant ruler (Lewis *The Silver* 633). All battles in Narnia including *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* and *Prince Caspian* reflect the dignity upheld by Narnians who are ready to face dangers and death for the safety of their nation. *The Last Battle* is a fine example where the protagonists have to testify their valour and dignity to the greatest extent. The protagonists in this narrative fight courageously until the end of their life, instead of accepting the slavery of the Calormenes. Here the Narnians value a dignified life as superior to a subjugated existence under oppressive powers. Reepicheep is a character who is renowned for his dignified life and valour. Even being born as a little mouse, he is able to reach the country of Aslan purely through his qualities and actions. Through this example, Lewis tries to highlight the fact that even the lowest sections of society can reach the highest possible heights.

Harmony and Unity: Unity of all the creations is the essential trait of Ayyavazhi, which highlights the concept of Omnipresent Divinity inherent in all living beings. Unity and Harmony are associated with Divinity, while disharmony and divisions are considered as evil. On the social level, Vaikundar applied the same spiritual principle of unity whereby he unified the eighteen communities of society. Here Unity is not based upon utilitarian principles or social statuesque. Ayyavazhi emphasises on unity based on mutual harmony of the members of society beyond the restrictions of caste, class, gender, community and religion. Such unity is possible only through

Anpu [Love and Compassion], where every individual care for fellow beings and try to uplift others.

There are various forms of unified communities depicted in the Narnian series. The Calormenes constitute a community who live together but sustain mutual hatred. Moreover, the Calormen nation is characterized by domestic violence and civil riots. This materially prosperous nation is a harbinger of social inequalities, power politics and various forms of oppression. This is an example of superfluous unity realized through the tyranny of military forces, where the inhabitants are under constant threats. Archenland is a nation that exhibits unity through systematization and political harmony. Their society is modelled upon Narnia, where the ruler and the inhabitants are peace-loving. Narnia is depicted as a natural habitat where the inhabitants are in constant harmony with nature. The inhabitants are anthropomorphic and mythical beings who live in mutual harmony. Various events in the Narnian series foreground the necessity of unification of all inhabitants and this harmonizing process of society is initiated by Aslan. The presence of Aslan as a leader and his values enlivened by the rulers of Narnia together try to maintain the ideal nature of the land in s[ite of invasions from external disruptive agencies. These values get infiltrated into the society of Archenland, where human society tries to relive the values of Narnia. Here Archenland and Calormen try to connect with our primary world by providing cross-sections of progressive and regressive forms of society.

Non-violence: Ayyavazhi is a movement that does not encourage any form of violence, physical or mental. Vaikundar proved with his life and activities that social resurgence and eradication of social anomalies can be achieved without the execution of violent forms of resistance. As a policy to cause minimal pain to other beings, most of the followers of Ayyavazhi adopt a vegetarian form of lifestyle. This movement

follows the teachings of Vaikundar which prohibit animal sacrifice and other forms of worship that involve physical violence. The strong stance exhibited by Vaikundar during his trial and imprisonment proves that non-violence is not a form of weakness but a powerful instrument of resistance.

The Narnian book *The Magician's Nephew* describes the origin of evil in the newly created world of Narnia. Digory wanted to ring the brass bell in the Hall of Statues and he violently subjugates Polly by twisting her arm, when she opposes his attempt. The Evil Queen, Jadis is awakened and later this very epitome of evil enters Narnia. Thus, Aslan uses the term "violence" twice to refer to the pain inflicted by Digory on Polly, in the land of Charn (Lewis *The Magician's* 82). This proves that physical violence in its subtlest form is the primary source of evil, which precedes all other forms of oppression. Considering this case, it is inevitable to conclude that the scenes of battles described in various books of the Narnian series should not be interpreted in terms of physical expression of violence. Hence the scenes of fighting should be understood as attempts to overrule the rule of tyranny and exploitation. The narration of the origin of evil in Narnia is similar to the concept of Primordial Evil in Ayyavazhi which is referred to as *Kroni*. *Akhilathirattu Ammanai* describes the birth of *Kroni* with a magnanimous torso and multiple limbs. The primordial manifestation of evil is from the collective consciousness of the entire creation, and this spontaneously happens when the thought of subjugating the others arise together in the minds of the entire creation (Harigopalan *Akhilathirattu* 13). Here too the thought of violence is considered as the primary source of evil, which later evolves into various forms of oppression. The solution of violence is identified as *Anpu* [Love and Compassion] which harmoniously unites the entire creation and subverts all kinds of regressive canons.

Truth: The Absolute Truth in the form of Divinity is worshipped in Ayyavazhi in the form of Lamp and Mirror. Truth as a value is correlated with *Dharmam* and the former is arbitrary in the experience of individuals. What is true for the oppressor cannot be the truth according to the experience of the oppressed. *Dharmam*, on the other hand, has been redefined by Vaikundar as uplifting the downtrodden. Truth in the form of value is often associated with prescriptive morality which is commonly understood as not uttering lies. Vaikundar does not try to impose prescriptive teachings on people but addressed the fundamentals of human values. Unflinching belief in one's conscience can be understood as Truth in Ayyavazhi, which is expressed in the outward form of Courage. Hence the traditional notion Satya Yuga [Aeon of Truth] is absent in Ayyavazhi, and *Kali Yugam* is followed by *Dharma Yugam* or the aeon of *Dharmam*.

In the Narnian series like *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* and *Prince Caspian*, Lucy faces cynicism and mockery from the outward world for adherence to her notion of truth. Lucy is disbelieved by her siblings about the experience of the fantasy world of Narnia, which they had to later accept as truth. Similarly, in *Prince Caspian*, Lucy sees Aslan and follows him despite discouragement from her siblings. In this case, too the latter confirms the experience of Lucy as true, when they later see and talk to Aslan. Confirming to the aforementioned evaluation of Ayyavazhi, truth manifests as Courage in Lucy. Lucy becomes renowned as "the Valiant", which denotes the Courage arising from her truthfulness. In *The Magician's Nephew,* Digory follows his conscience and confirms with his notion of truthfulness. Thus, he outlives the temptation by Jadis who tries to persuade him to use the Silver Apple for healing his mother without the permission of Aslan. Similar to the final words of Vaikundar, he acts beyond his limited nature and works for the welfare of the entire society.

Aslan asks him to plant the Silver Apple in Narnia which grows into a tree for the benefit of the entire society and along with that, Digory's personal need is also fulfilled. Truth inherent in individual consciousness is foregrounded as a power of empowerment, which outwardly manifests in the form of Courage and Fortitude.

The Chronicles of Narnia is verified as an inherent reflection of *Ayyavazhi Dharmam* and its inherent values. The parallel reading of each text with emphasis on *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* foregrounds *Ayyavazhi Dharmam* as an inclusive and universal principle, with practical implications of invoking significant changes in the society. *Ayyavazhi Dharmam* can be identified as the New World Philosophy of Narnia, which acts as a pivotal force in the advent of an egalitarian New World. Here the term philosophy is far from any concept or intellectual diagram without practical implication. The critical issues in the fantasy text reflect those of the real world and the possibility of resolving them cannot be merely negated as a figment of imaginative fantasy. This is ensured by re-reading the fantasy text through Ayyavazhi, where the latter has proved its credibility by invoking social reformation. Thus, the Golden Age of the fantasy text and *Dharma Yugam* of the reform movement problematizes the contours between improbability of the secondary world and possibilities of the primary world.

Chapter Five

Conclusion

"There is only One God and He is Omnipresent. There is only One Language, the Language of the Heart. There is only One Caste, the Caste of Humanity. There is only one Religion, the Religion of Love" (Baba).

The concept of the New World can be understood only by evaluating the scope and limitations in invoking transformation of the present world. Otherwise, the very idea of a New World would merely be reduced to the representation of some impractical utopian world. Every step towards up-gradation of society need not be overshadowed by the predicaments of social reformation. Predetermined fixation on dystopian and pessimistic thought processes prove equally determined as the blind belief in utopian notions of society. Re-reading the Narnian series as a text of Ayyavazhi destabilizes the binaries of utopian/dystopian, real/ideal and possible/impossible, by foregrounding values of hope and practical compatibility of life. The issues of the real world reflected in the fantasy work are analysed and solutions are sought out by the protagonists. Ayyavazhi redefines the issues in the cultural context of readers which is common not only to Indians but have universal relevance. Human Values have an explicit role in finding solutions to the issues haunting humanity.

Contextualizing the Research

Reading *The Chronicles of Narnia* as a text of Ayyavazhi reveals renewed insights into the socio-spiritual discourses embedded in fantasy. The impact of this study can be understood by analysing the relevance of Narnian novels in the contemporary world. It is an interesting fact that the popularity of the Narnian series has remained and even increased over time. The contemporary world impregnated with

digital culture has witnessed the emergence of new and experimentative genres. Despite these rapid changes, people have accepted the Narnian series especially in book form, which was written in the previous century. This can be verified from the survey conducted by OnePoll on behalf of eBay in Britain, which enlists the top ten books of 2019. The survey analyses the opinions of two thousand adults regarding their favourite novel. The following is the list of these top ten novels as published by Simpson George in Express on August 8, 2019.

1. *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*

2. *The Da Vinci Code*

3. *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*

4. *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*

5. *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*

6. *Harry Potter and Goblet Fire*

7. *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*

8. *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*

9. *Nineteen Eighty-Four*

10. *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince*

The Harry Potter Series which is supposed to have been the most popular children's novel is surpassed by *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (Simpson). Except for two, all other books belong to the category of Children's Fantasy and reveal that along with the children, adults are equally receptive to this genre. Of these eight books, six of them belong to the Harry Porter Series and the seventh one is *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll. Even though *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* is the most popular book, none of the other Narnian series has found a place in the list of top novels. Even though this survey does not cover globally, it

reveals the changing aesthetic inclination of many ethnic groups. The result of the survey also reveals that the Anti-Narnian campaign unleashed by critics and intellectuals did not have a sustaining effect on the readers. This also proves that the readers read and appreciate the Narnian books beyond the religious themes and their receptivity demystifies the polarized accusations fabricated upon these novels.

The Chronicles of Narnia has been influencing the popular culture since the time of its creation in the mid-twentieth century. These novels have become popularised through television and film adaptations. Toys, video games and cartoons related to the Narnian narratives have become an inseparable part of the euro-centric culture. The following films have received the attention of the global audience and revitalised the fan following of Narnian series.

1. *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* released in 2005 by Walt Disney and Walden Media, directed by Andrew Adamson.
2. *Prince Caspian* released in 2008 by Walt Disney and Walden Media, directed by Andrew Adamson.
3. *The Voyage of the 'Dawn Treader'* released in 2010 by Walt Disney and Walden Media, directed by Michael Apted

Andrew Adamson's film *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe;* realistically portrayed the characters and themes of the storyline. The film efficiently balances mythic and allegorical elements and systematically synthesizes aesthetics and pragmatic elements to directly influence the audiences. Sabrina Karlin highlights the inclusive nature of the film in "Where Reality and Fantasy Collide: A Critical Analysis of The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe". The film transcended the generic limitations of Children's films and was

widely accepted by young adults as well as adults. The Christian believers could identify the underlying religious elements in it and in general, it catered to the popular aesthetics of viewers. Representation of intrinsic conflicts of siblings and exploration of different strata of human psyche, increased the public acceptance of the film (35-36). The commercial success of the film is determined by addressing the aesthetic sensibility of the public which covers all age groups. More than confirmation to the religious theme, the film created an impact on a wider range of secular audience by adopting familiar themes. The film was successful and achieved a great fan following even amidst the release of other Children's Fantasy films like The Harry Porter. Increase in readership and promulgation of book culture has increased through the intervention of digital culture. Books are now available in formats like pdf, Epub and Kindle, which can be read in mobile phones. Mobile applications and audiobooks of the Narnian series have become part of popular culture. Websites, forums, blogs and social media networking has created platforms to discuss, like, share and comment on the aesthetic and critical dimensions of the text.

Digitalization and cyberculture have extended the fan following of Narnian narratives beyond the cultural boundaries of Europe and America. Apart from the film versions, the Narnian novels have also been able to influence non-European cultures through their printed form. Along with nations like Britain and the United States of America, the Narnian series has gained popularity in third world nations too. Reading Narnian series as a text of Ayyavazhi creates the necessity to evaluate its popularity and receptivity among Indian readers. Garima Sharma reports in *The Economic Times* about marketing of Narnian films in India and the impact of their fan following in India. It is pointed out that *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Voyage of The 'Dawn Treader'* is the second Hollywood movie released in India preceding its release in the

United States. Sharma, on account of various sources, affirms the fact India has been a leading market place for Hollywood movies, especially related to the genre of Children's Fantasy. Early release of films in India becomes necessary, as downloadable digital copies will be available soon after their release in the US. Franchise of Narnian films belongs to the top five all-time franchisees of Hollywood in India, which is evident from the success of the previous Narnian film *Prince Caspian*. The film collected 27 crore rupees in India and is counted among the top ten of Hollywood movies with all-time gross collection in the nation. Sharma concludes by citing the data from the international website of Narnia, which reveals that India has the second-largest number of fan-following of Narnia. This is substantiated by the fact that more than one and a half crore copies of *The Chronicles of Narnia* have been sold in India (Sharma). The aforementioned data reveals that the Narnian series has catered to the tastes of Indian people through film adaptations and their book form. Even though Narnia cannot be recognized as an inseparable part of Indian popular culture, the reading culture and fascination for fantasy have created many fans of it. Despite the cultural gap between India and England, the elements of fantasy in the narratives and animation in the film versions have created a receptive ambience among Indians.

Re-interpretations and re-readings of *The Chronicles of Narnia* in the cultural context of India can further increase the popularity of the text. Among the various such possibilities, this study has focused on reiterating the narrative as a text of Ayyavazhi. Ayyavazhi is a social reformation movement which has made a tremendous impact in South India by triggering renaissance movements. Unlike Narnia, this movement is practically unknown to global citizens and has not been a subject of study at the international level. As mentioned in Chapter II, Ayyavazhi shares many features of NRMs, but it has not spread out as a global cult throughout different nations. This

confirms to values upheld by its founder Ayya Vaikundar who never intended to create a new religion or a cult in the form of Ayyavazhi. Vaikundar worked for uplifting the downtrodden by uniting the entire humanity through Love and Compassion. The movement has undergone many changes in the past two centuries and continues to be relevant in the present context.

Today Ayyavazhi and Ayya Vaikundar are usually associated with the *Nadar* community, the caste into which Vaikundar was born. This trend is common to other social reformers like Sri Narayana Guru and Chattampi Swamikal who are now hailed as the prominent figures of their respective communities. Ironically, all of them worked for unity beyond restrictions of any caste, creed, community or religion, and yet they are now depicted as the patrons of specific communities. Vaikundar has been a subject of political debate and historical interpretation, especially after the issue of censorship on *Nadar* history in NCERT textbook of History prescribed for Class IX. The issue began by S. Ramdoss, the leader of the Pattali Makkal Katchi, issuing a letter to the central government pointing out the distorted representation of the history of *Nadar* communities in the textbook. This letter issued in October 2012 was backed up by J. Jayalalitha who was then the leader of All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam and Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi from Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam. A central premise of the letter also dealt with the inclusion of the contribution made by Ayya Vaikundar in launching upper cloth revolt. M.S.S. Pandiyan vehemently opposes this trend in his article "Caste in Tamil Nadu: A History of *Nadar* Censorship", published in *Economic and Political Weekly*. He firmly believes that the trend of censoring upper cloth revolt and the degraded history of the *Nadar* communities is an agenda of manipulating right-wing Hindutva for political benefits. Pandiyan makes his arguments based on three historical facts:

1. *Nadar*s were originally referred to as Shanars. The name *Nadar* was attributed to the *Shanar* community by non-brahmin Justice Party in Madras Presidency in 1921.

2. Ayya Vaikundar did not play any significant role in the upper cloth movement. The *Shanar* women won the rights to cover their breasts in 1812 from the Government of Travancore. This happened only when Vaikundar was four years of age and proves that the movement was launched by the Christian missionaries.

3. Both Christian and Hindu *Nadar* women were legally allowed to cover their breasts in an order issued in 1869. This was eight years after the death of Vaikundar and hence cannot be considered as the result of his effort.

According to Pandiyan anti-Christian, Anti-conversion and affinity with Brahminism are identified as the reasons behind the clamour for re-writing the past of *Nadar* community. Citing the examples of politicians ranging from J. Jayalalitha and Sharad Kumar to P. Thanulingam and Pon Radhakrishnan, Pandiyan identifies the hidden agenda of Hindutva and Right-wing politics, in reclaiming the past of *Nadar*s. To substantiate his views Pandiyan foregrounds the contributions made by Rev Robert Caldwell and oppositions faced by him in representing the lowly status of *Nadar*s. Samuel Sargunar and Y. Gnanamuthoo *Nadar* issued petitions to the Archbishop of Canterbury and the British Government which lead Cadwell to withdraw the writings degrading the status of *Nadar*s. The former claimed the origin of their community to a warrior race of India and their protest reflects a tending upsurge in the identity of the community. Pandiyan sites the examples of overt Hindutva agenda of Aravindan Neelakanthan and Rajiv Malhotra who foreground the contributions of Vaikundar in the social reformation (12-14). The formulations of Pandiyan reflects the political

implications associated with Ayya Vaikundar and the *Nadar* community. It can be primarily understood that he opposes Vaikundar and his contributions mainly because of the intervention and manipulation of political entities. The fear of Right-wing politics utilizing Vaikundar as a pawn in establishing their political power is a major concern for intellectuals like Pandiyan. The easiest way to destabilized such political upheavals is to defame and neglect the contributions of Ayya Vaikundar. Beginning from the three historical facts enlisted by Pandiyan, it is clear that the intentions of Christian missionaries were evangelization and conversion of the natives into their religion. Hence only the Christian *Nadar* women were allowed to cover their breast as per the order of 1812. Pandiyan fails to recognize the narrow intent of excluding the non-Christians from such a social privilege. The posthumous impacts of Vaikundar have been analysed by researchers like R. Ponnu and G. Patrick. Patrick belonging to the Christian evangelical circle completely acknowledges the contributions made by Vaikundar as a social reformer. Intellectuals like Pandiyan often fail to make a deeper study of reformers like Vaikundar before publishing their propagandist research works. Such studies would claim more authenticity by analysing the manipulative agendas of political parties as separate and contradictory to the contributions made by the social reformer.

The eighteen castes unified by Vaikundar consists of the so-called non-Hindu religions like Christianity [*Nachurani*] and Islam [*Thulukkan*]. His aim was the unity of the entire humanity which he depicted through the concept of *Dharma Yugam*. Vaikundar never restricted himself to any particular religion or community including the *Channar* [*Nadar*] caste into which he was born. The life history of Vaikundar holds testimony to this fact, where he tore the agreement of the King of Travancore, which intended to restrict his activities withing his native community. Like other

spiritual leaders who were also renowned as social reformers, Vaikundar too was later patronized by a particular community. It is not a strange fact the universal teachings of Vaikundar are often restricted within the Hindu religion and mainstream cult of other religions seldom incorporates or even acknowledge him. Such facts should be understood along with the socio-political stance of governments in issuing restricted holiday on the birthday of Ayya Vaikundar. Tamil Nadu and Kerala governments have declared the birthday of Vaikundar as a restricted holiday exclusively for the *Nadar* community. Such declarations marginalize the universal message and contributions of the reformer to the narrow framework of a community. Restricting Vaikundar to the *Nadar* community can increase the entropy of communalism in Indian society and this, in turn, will widen the gulf between communities. Such a trend is antithetical to the fundamental ideology of unity fostered by Ayyavazhi and will hinder the culture of social harmony propagated by the movement. Another discrepancy lies in the change in the birth dates of Vaikundar as issued by the Tamil Nadu and Kerala governments. The former follows the Tamil calendar which fixes this date as *Masi* 20 or March 4th, and this will fall on March 3rd on leap years. This date commemorates the declaration of his incarnation by Vaikundar from the sea of Thiruchendur. Apart from the spiritual connotations, this date marks the beginning of the eighteen-year span of the social reformation movement undertaken by the leader. In Kerala, on the other hand, the birthday of Ayya Vaikundar is fixed on the date of his birth according to the Gregorian Calendar which falls to be March 12th. The reason for choosing a more secular date of birthday may be due to the lack of religious nucleus of Ayyavazhi in Kerala. Swamithope, the birthplace of Vaikundar lies in Tamil Nadu where his birthday celebrations are organized every year. Processions from various places, lead by thousands of participants reach Swamithope on the Tamil month of *Masi* 20. Thus,

considering the religious sentiments of the masses, the Tamil government officially declared as the birthday of Vaikundar as a restricted holiday in Tamil Nadu. Governments thus ensure their political stability to win the confidence of the *Nadar* community.

Nadar community and the Ayyavazhi movement have now become interlinked with politics and play a decisive role in the power politics of state governance in Tamil Nadu. The movement which was intended to carry out an apolitical reformation seems to be polarized in and manipulated for political motifs in many cases. The current religious head of Balaprajapathi Adigalar has raised the demand for endowing the position of a unique religion to Ayyavazhi, which carries implicit political connotations. The political intent underlying this demand is examined in an article by PTI published in *The Economic Times*. Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments Department's involvement and control over Swamithope, is seen as the triggering factor which prompted Adigalar to make this demand. The interest of the department to administer non-spiritual activities is seen as an attempt to exert control over Swamithope which is the main worship centre of Ayyavazhi. The denomination of the Hindu religion to the followers of Vaikundar should be replaced by a unique religious denomination. Adigalar claims that his demand is supported by Union Minister Pon Radhakrishnan, while it is reported that none of other BJP leaders commented on this matter. The report by PTI analyses various viewpoints which deny the influence of the religious head of Ayyavazhi in the political power of Kanyakumari district. It is equally an undeniable fact that many political leaders are constant visitors of Swamithope, but the separate religious status attributed to Ayyavazhi will not affect the political elections according to many Right-wing intellectuals. It is interesting to note that Adigalar tries to highlight the differences of Ayyavazhi from the mainstream

Hindu religion and his influence over the majority of the Hindu community is questionable. PTI also reports that according to followers, Adigalar is known for resolving interreligious conflicts like the Mandaikadu riots between Hindus and Christians in 1984 (PTI). From the aforementioned report, it is clear that the religious head of Ayyavazhi demands separate religious status and non-intervention from outsides organizations. It is also obvious that Ayyavazhi as an organization and Swamitope as its religious centre are approached by politicians especially from the Right-Wing for their political benefits. Even though the influence of Ayyavazhi cannot be still proved as a criterion of success in political elections, the movement has invited hostility from Left-Wing intellectuals. The latter from their ideological disparity from the Hindutva and the BJP, seem to marginalize the contributions of Vaikundar and Ayyavazhi which on the other hand may fall beneficial to the Right-Wing politicians. This is a triggering factor for leftist intellectuals like Pandiyan to foreground the reforms of minority religions organizations and to devalue the contributions of Vaikundar, who does not even identify himself with any particular religion.

The socio-political scenario of Kerala is quite contrary and different from that of Tamil Nadu. Ayya Vaikundar is unanimously accepted as an important social reformer by almost all political entities. Recent years show a new fervour in Left-Wing parties who have incorporated all social renaissance leaders including the spiritual masters like Sri Narayana Guru, Chattampi Swamikal and Ayya Vaikundar. The party meetings and programmes display flex boards and hoardings of these renaissance leaders who had been earlier unnoticed by the mainstream Left-wing parties of Kerala. The change in their outlook mostly can be seen as a political stance against recent upheavals in the Right-Wing parties like BJP and organizations like the RSS. It is not a curious fact that the latter has incorporated social reformers like Vaikundar for

propagation and socio-political activities. This is different from the political polarization and conflicts of Tamil Nadu where one group vehemently oppose the other by completely negating the value of social reformers like Ayya Vaikundar. A major reason for such a shift of approach in Kerala is probable due to the lack of a religious centre of Ayyavazhi in the state. It is a known fact that Swamithope carries along with it the prospect of political vote banking that tends to create conflicts and tensions between parties. Ayyavazhi as an organization with a definite leadership opens up the possibility of securing votes based on community. It is a positive sign that the political conflicts in Kerala have not devalued social reformers like Vaikundar or negated the possibilities of the teachings. Many leftist intellectuals in Kerala have foregrounded the contributions made by Vaikundar in upholding the solidarity of the working class and uplifting the labourer class of society. This is evident from books by Chintha Publishers which stand as the official publication wing of the Leftist political parties like CPI and CPM.

Vaikundaswamiyum Samoohika Navodhanavum by Joy Balan Vlathankara is a fine example where the contributions of Vaikundar is comprehensively subjected to study. In the foreword for this book, P. Govinda Pillai reveals the fact that Vaikundar was the initial inventor of many ideals that were popularized in the later periods. It is also pointed out that the later renaissance leaders were greatly influenced by the teachings of Vaikundar, from whom they learned and propagated many values. The lineage of social reformers is examined by Vlathankara in this work, where he traces the influence of Ayya Vaikundar on them. Thycaud Ayya [Subbaraya Panikkar] and Shanmukha Vadivel Swamikal [Athmananda Swamikal] are identified as the disciples of Vaikundar, who themselves became social reformers and also moulded the lives of later reformers. Social Reformers like Chattampi Swamikal, Sri Narayana Guru,

Mahathma Ayyankali and Raja Ravi Varma are renowned as the disciples of Thycaud Ayya. Athmananda Swamikal was also the preceptor of Chattampi Swamikal and Sri Narayana Guru. At the age of twenty-five, Thycaud Ayya met Vaikundar at Singarathopu prison where the former had been employed as an officer. Having familiarized with the teachings and social activities of Vaikundar, he persuaded the Travancore government for releasing Vaikundar. It is also observed that Thycaud Ayya was a regular visitor of Swamithope. He participated in the common meal system of Vaikundar and worked for the Samathuva Samajam. After the demise of Vaikundar, he propagated the values and activities of Vaikundar through his disciples. Another disciple of Vaikundar was Athmananda Swamikal who was also known as Shanmukha Vadivel, Shanmukha Vadivel *Nadar* and Kumaravelu. He lived in Swamithope Pathi and later moved to Maruthva Malai where he imparted the teachings of Vaikundar to Chattampi Swamikal and Sri Narayana Guru. This influence can be understood from the social outlook and activities undertaken by these reformers. Arattupuzha Velayudha Panikkar made significant contributions in the upper cloth revolt and nose-stud revolt by demanding equal rights for lower caste women in clothing and ornamentation. He also worked for cultural equality to participate in art forms like Kathakali and right for worship for the marginalized sections. Raja Ravi Varma popularised the aesthetics of painting by incorporation of realism and helped in securing equal rights of worship by the lower caste people. The pictures of Hindu deities were made available for the public on a large scale with minimal price. Chattampi Swamikal became the disciple of Athmananda Swamikal and learned about the reforms of Vaikundar from him. The former stayed for many years in Maruthva Malai and directly observed the influence made by Vaikundar on society. Chattampi Swamikal also familiarized himself with the values of Ayyavazhi through his long stay and association with Thycaud Ayya.

Swamikal later worked for the social integrity by opposing the matriarchal system in Nair community, illegal marriages, pre-mature marriages and untouchability in society. Apart from upliftment of the Nair community, he worked for the equality of entire society and wrote many literary works to ensure equality of education, to promote cultural dignity and to oppose forceful religious conversions. He emphasized on non-violence through his writings and introduced the common meal system after Vaikundar to subvert untouchability. Chattampi Swamikal introduced Sri Narayana Guru to Thycaud Ayya, who imparted to them yogic wisdom and social reformative values of Ayya Vaikundar. Years of travels during later years and penance done by Guru in Maruthva Malai made Guru aware of the socio-cultural anomalies and the impact made by Vaikundar in resisting them. His reformation work began with the consecration of Siva Temple at Aruvippuram, which challenged the taboo of untouchability and ensured the right of worship to lower caste communities. His dictum "One Caste, One Religion, One God" reflects the influence of Vaikundar who proclaimed "One World, One Aeon, One Language, One God, One Caste, One Religion, One Community, and One Government". Similarly, Guru too consecrated mirror at Kalavankode Temple in 1927, which resembled the ideology of Ayyavazhi. Guru established various temples throughout Kerala, where people of all religions and castes including the marginalized sections were permitted to worship. Apart from working for the equal right of worship, he opposed many social evils and relentlessly worked for establishing unity in society. Mahatma Ayyankali through his discipleship with Thycaud Ayya and inspired by Sri Narayana Guru and Chattampi Swamikal made immense contribution in the social resurgence of lower castes, especially the Pulaya community. He mobilized society and resisted the illegal taboos imposed by upper caste people, including the right of using public roads and the freedom of clothing for

the lower caste people. Ayyankali organized Villuvandi Revolt in many places. Accompanied by several people he travelled in a bullock cart through public roads banned for lower caste people, wearing dignified attire which was also not permitted by the higher castes. The first peasant revolt was made by Ayya Vaikundar and Ayyankali followed his path by becoming pioneer of the first organized peasant revolt. Through this, he secured the right of education to children of lower caste communities, who were not allowed to attend public schools despite legal sanction. He established an organization known as Sadhujana Paripalana Yogam, which procured rights of the marginalized communities to use public roads, to obtain public education and to secure increment in labour charges for workers. Like Vaikundar, Ayyankali too was devoid of formal education and made significant changes in society by deriving inspiration from the principles of the former. Sahodaran Ayyappan was another reformer who worked on the principles of social equality as put forth by Ayyavazhi. He established the organization Sahodara Sangham to root out caste system and organized inter-dining and inter-caste marriages. Vlathankara notes that Brahmananda Sivayogi too has been influenced by the impact created by Vaikundar in the form of Channar Revolt. He too worked for the destabilization of the caste system, discrimination against women, and idolatry. Sivayogi questioned the scriptural authority, idol worship and rituals of Hinduism. He raised voice for education of women, widow re-marriage, changes in the matriarchal system and de-addiction from alcohol (7-9, 101-119). The aforementioned facts trace the influence of Vaikundar on later reformers of Kerala society.

Such studies reveal the general outlook of Leftist intellectuals and parties who recognize Vaikundar as an iconic figure and validate his contributions for society. In Kerala Ayya Vaikundar and Ayyavazhi are exalted by both Right-Wing as well as

Left-Wing intellectuals and political parties on both sides instrumentalize Vaikundar
for propaganda and campaigning purposes. This is contrary to the socio-political sce-
nario of Tamil Nadu, where Ayyavazhi is made a pawn of political conflicts and po-
larizations. Ayyavazhi being treated as a separate religion undoubtedly deepens com-
munal feelings and reveals the inherent political agenda of vote banking. This reaf-
firming the demographic binary of Religious Majority/Religious Minority in society.

It is an irony that endowing Ayyavazhi with the position of an independent re-
ligion will separate itself from the mainstream religion of Hinduism and in turn, will
lead to sectarianism which confutes with the fundamental principle of unity fostered
by Vaikundar. It is a well-known fact that Ayya Vaikundar tried not only to unite dif-
ferent castes withing the so-called Hindu religion but intended to unite all belief sys-
tems and manifest the concept of "One Religion". This seemingly politically unim-
portant issue related to Ayyavazhi points out into the fault of default religious denom-
ination in post-independent India. Even though democratically elected governments
belonging various political ideologies ruled India after colonial reign, none of them
tried to deconstruct the religious denominations legally established by the colonial
masters. The divide and rule policy of Britishers continued to thrive in a different for-
mat in the nation by endowing different laws and privileges on religious de-
mographics and castes. In Chapter III the findings of intellectuals like Frazier, Knapp
and Griffiths reveal the fact that classifying Hindu as a religion instead of a culture,
has been and still continues as an uncorrected mistake. As Knapp points out Hindu-
ism, better defined as Sanatana-dharma, is an inclusive culture which accepts and fos-
ters different religions and belief systems. The system of reservation based on caste
and religion in post-independent India, intended to uplift the underprivileged sections
has now fostered sectarianism and created space for the vested interest of political

parties. The concept of uplifting the downtrodden as put forth by Vaikundar does not conform to any sort of reservation or privileges based on caste or religion. Reservations based on the economic and educational background of individuals is foreseen as the solution to discrimination and marginalization in society. This is substantiated by the activities undertaken by Samathuva Samajam which includes socio-spiritual activities like the common meal system and education imparted to the underprivileged people through Pathis. Vaikundar stood for and propagated the concept of equal rights for all people and never clamoured for special privileges either for the upper cate or the lower caste sections of society.

Significance of the Research

A close study of Ayyavazhi as a movement can unravel new methods of addressing issues concerning various dimensions of human life including social, economic, religious and political. The recurring concerns of humanity beyond specific synchronic approach are addressed through the reform movement. K. Maheswaran Nair in his work *Ayyavaikundar*, explains the significance of Ayya Vaikundar in the present world. Ayya Vaikundar and his contribution in invoking reformation have not been recognized or even noticed by spiritualists and Dalit intellectuals including progressive stalwarts like Guru Nitya Chaitanya Yati, V.T. Rajshekar and Kancha Ilaiah. Nair points put that the Leftists in India have confined themselves merely into Left-Wing Politics which is devoid of serious visions or discussions about ideologies. Dalit revolutionaries have put forth various ideologies and there are also plural opinions on the nature of revolution needed in the society. Nair observes that little attempts have been made to implement the concept of "Counter-hegemony" put forth by Antonio Gramsci. Nor do the leftists have a strong cultural organization at the national level. Cultural revolution and counter-hegemony have been effectively employed by Ayya

Vaikundar through his procedures like *Thuvaiyal Thavasu*. Vaikundar was initially
forbidden by upper caste groups to be named as Mudichoodum Perumal [Lord with a
crown] and his parents were forced to call him Muthukutty. The later revolutionary
works of Vaikundar compelled them to addressed him as the Lord [*Ayya*] Incarnate.
Nair points out that this is the reason why his name becomes first and foremost among
the reformers. Thus, Vaikundar stands as an ideal even for the contemporary institu-
tions of revolution (115-119). Deeper readings of Vaikundar and Ayyavazhi are nec-
essary to understand the movement and the leader from an unbiased viewpoint. Practi-
cal application of Ayyavazhi to solve issues of the contemporary world becomes pos-
sible only by deeper understanding of the movement and its reverberations through
later reform movements.

Policies governing social life on state, national and international levels can be
analysed and effectively amended through their critical readings based on Ayyavazhi.
Understanding and reading *The Chronicles of Narnia* as a text of Ayyavazhi analyses
various issues of the contemporary world, through the aesthetically popular medium
of Children's Fantasy novel. The reading provides a renewed space for multiple and
contrary dimensions like material/spiritual, reality/fantasy, individual/community and
national/transnational. The aesthetic value of the fantasy work and practical relevance
of the reform movement problematizes all possible binaries by foregrounding the con-
cept of a New World. As previously observed the popularity of the Narnian series in
many parts of the world including India, is still on a hike. Re-readings and re-repre-
sentations of this fantasy work can influence people of all ages at a global level. This
can clear out the limitation of limited popularity of Ayyavazhi movement, which is
often confined within South India. Here, the ethnic culture of Ayyavazhi in South In-
dia is foregrounded to the mainstream global culture. The approach of the movement

towards social issues can reach people of all age groups and nations through the popular medium of Children's Fantasy.

The choice of Ayyavazhi as the tool of interpretation becomes relevant as the text itself has a high fan following in India. It has been earlier mentioned that India has the second-largest number of Narnia fans. The interpretation of Narnian series as a text of Ayyavazhi enables the fans as well as critics to identify multiple voices within the text. This re-reading can influence the admirers of these books to identify the fantasy text with their native culture and contextual issues. Which in turn can increase its popularity among Indian readers and renew our perspectives to approach and solve social issues. On the other hand, the cardinal values of Ayyavazhi are highlighted through this study and can be inculcated from local to global levels. The medium of Children's Fantasy can and should enable the religious heads, politicians and intellectuals to make self-reflection on their utilitarian and manipulative stance on the movement. De-contextualizing Narnia enables the global readers to affiliate the text with their ethnic cultural contexts, which in the case of Ayyavazhi is an Indian one. The universal message of Narnia and Ayyavazhi creates and widens spaces for all such re-readings. This can be appreciated by a wider group of people including the agnostic and atheistic groups, along with the religious. The multidimensional nature of Ayyavazhi opens up multiple interpretations in the text and the latter is prolific with multiple themes. Social, religious, political and economic issues in the Narnian series are explored through the application of Ayyavazhi. Plural and inclusive nature of the text and the tool has enabled the analysis of many contemporary issues like domestic violence, gender discrimination, human trafficking, terrorism and environmental exploitation.

Scope of Research

This research work can open up new approaches towards the reading of literary texts in series form. This study collaborates two ways of reading *The Chronicles of Narnia* and highlights the necessity for new approaches to reading literary texts. The seven novels of Narnian series are read as parallel texts without following their chronological order, publication order or the order of completion. Such an approach is helpful for theoretical analysis without predeterminism or prejudicated notions. The seven novels are analysed by John Clute's "Grammar of Fantasy" and the variation in the degree of Healing is mapped. Following the parameter of the Healing process, the second way of reading the texts becomes explicit, where *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* is identified as the primary text and the other six novels are considered as its subtexts. The concept of the Golden Age in the book is subject to a comparative analysis by the notion of *Dharma Yugam* in Ayyavazhi.

Writers of Children's Fantasy Literature usually follow the trend of secularism adopted by mainstream writers, who marginalize the spiritual and transcendental discourses. Re-reading *The Chronicles of Narnia* as a text of Ayyavazhi not only foregrounds the necessity to create spiritual genres but those with social significance. The study synthesizes materialism with spirituality and opens up a new space for socio-spiritual genres in Fantasy Literature. It also encourages critics and readers to analyse and re-read the existing texts of Children's Literature to identify socio-spiritual discourses embedded in them. The research also creates a new scope for reading Puranic, Semitic and other traditional literature belonging to the spiritual genre as texts of social reformation. Such an approach can be visualized in the mythographic narratives depicted in *Akhilathirattu Ammanai*. Deviating from the tradition of religious dogmatizing; the Divine entities, incarnations and prophets can be analysed as leaders of social reformation. This makes space for revisiting the social upliftment created by them

and reiterating their significance in the social context. Following this method, *The Chronicles of Narnia* which has traditionally been understood as a Christian text can also be analysed as a text of Pantheism, Buddhism, Judaism, Islam, Saivism, Vaishnavism, Sakteyism, Ecofeminism and so on. This opens up wider interpretations of the identity of Aslan which can be as Nature, Buddha, Moses, Mohammad, Siva, Vishnu, Devi, Mother Nature and many others. Similar readings can unravel socio-cultural dimensions of ethnic communities and also reflect on issues implied at a global level. The case of Narnia may not be suitable to all sorts of re-readings, but approaching the text with various cultural hermeneutics enhances the spirit of experimentation. The cultural context depicted in other fantasy works also may be superficial and re-readings are potential in revealing the covert cultural content of these texts.

Finally, the question arises as to what extend *The Chronicles of Narnia* has incorporated *Ayyavazhi Dharmam*? The study proves that almost all the values of Ayyavazhi have been incorporated into the fantasy series through the exposition of their practical implication. Analysing the text from a cultural perspective different from the author's ideology can be seen as a result of the open space created by the author himself. Lewis never directly superimposed Christian imagery or theology in these narratives but created an inclusive and multi-cultural platform susceptible to diverse interpretations. Both the Narnian narratives and Ayyavazhi share the common property, where spiritual discourses are made use of social reformation and individual empowerment. This is to be distinguished from the positivist notion of religion as a means of oppression. *Ayyavazhi Dharmam* is identified as the New World Philosophy which initiates and instigates the action plan for social transformation and upliftment. The study further reveals that it is the human agency which corrupts religion and even restricts the value of socio-spiritual reform movements. The power politics and clamour

for unique religious identity associated with Ayyavazhi movement in the present context, marks a deviation from its cardinal principle emphasizing unity and harmony of the world. Futuristic perspective of Vaikundar has been recognized through the activities of Ayyavazhi. On the contrary, Lewis who is renowned as a Christian apologist is seldom recognized as a person who thought ahead of his times. His association with the Christian belief system attributed inclusiveness and openness to religion. Lewis probably unknowingly contradicted the dogmatic and conservative dimensions associated with it. The popular misconception about Lewis as a religious fundamentalist and evangelist, almost made his liberal ideologies unnoticed by western intellectuals and readers. Along with that, Lewis never was conscious of the subversive discourses in the Narnian series, nor did he speak or work for social upliftment like the character Aslan. Thus, Narnia continues to remain trapped in aesthetic and critical circles, without disseminating awareness in the recipients about the value of each individual in invoking social reformation.

The research foregrounds the Healing property of Eucatastrophe inherent in conceptualization of a New World in Fantasy Literature and the real world. This study highlights the element of heterotopia within the Healing process, which saves the text from improbable Utopian optimism and probable Dystopian pessimism. Transcendental and spiritual discourses are endowed with the potential of creating social transformation, which exemplifies the Healing process. Transformation of the landscape and that of the mindscape are the common characteristics of socio-spiritual reformation of the primary world of humanity and the secondary world of fantasy. Social reformation achieved through spiritual movements rarely highlights the concept of a New World, of which Ayyavazhi stands out as an exception. Re-reading *The Chronicles of Narnia* as a text of Ayyavazhi reveals the refinement of various dimensions of human life.

The reading justifies that the fantasy world is a reflection of the real world and hence addresses various anomalies inherent in human society. This study reveals the concept of an Egalitarian New World characterized by unity and harmony on a global level. *Ayyavazhi Dharmam* and the inherent values together constitute the New World Philosophy which provides solutions to critical issues faced by humanity. The approach sheds light on the necessity of socio-spiritual reformation, where human agency is endowed with the responsibility and potential in fulfilling the vision of: "One World, One Aeon, One Language, One God, One Caste, One Religion, One Community, and One Government"

Works Cited

Annamalai, S. P. "A Social Reformer". *The Life and Teachings of Saint Ramalingar*, Bharathiya Vidya Bhavan, pp. 40–46.

Attebery, Brian. *Strategies of Fantasy*. Indiana University Press, 1992, pp. 12-13.

aśvaghōṣa. *The Buddha-Carita, or The Life of Buddha*. Translated by Edward B. Cowell, Cambridge University Press, 1894.

Baba, Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai. *1979 #Sathya #Sai Baba #Documentary | The Message I Bring COMPLETE*. 2019. *YouTube*, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UBIxgH6-lyY. Accessed 24 July 2020.

Balakrishnan, A. *English Renderings of Thiru Arutpa (Select Verses)*. Nachimuthu Industrial Association, 1966, pp. 144-146.

Bates, Allen. *The Narnian: The Life and Imagination of C.S. Lewis*. Harper Collins, 2005, pp. 12-13.

Baudrillard, Jean. *Simulations*. translated by Paul Foss et al., Semiotext[e], 1983, p. 4.

---. *The Vital Illusion*. Edited by Julia Witwer, Columbia UP, 2000, pp. 66-67.

Boehemer, Elleke. *Colonial and Postcolonial Literature*. 2nd ed., Oxford University Press, 2008, p. 22.

Bolch, Ben W., and Harold Lyons. *Apocalypse Not: Science, Economics, and Environmentalism*. Cato Institute, 1993, pp. 1-3.

Brown, Devin. "Are The Chronicles of Narnia Sexist and Racist?" *CS Lewis Society of California*, https://www.lewissociety.org/brown/. Accessed 3 Dec. 2019.

---. *Inside Narnia: A Guide to Exploring The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. Baker Books, 2005, pp. 207-208.

---. "Work, Vocation and the Goodlife in Narnia". *The Chronicles of Narnia and Philosophy: The Lion, the Witch, and the Worldview*, edited by Gregory Bassham and Jerry L. Walls, Open Court, 2013, pp. 86-91.

Campbell, Joseph. *The Masks of God: Creative Mythology*, 12th ed., vol. 4, Penguin Books, p. 630.

Carnell, Brian. *Susan's Shocking Fate in the Final Chronicle of Narnia (Spoilers)*. YouTube, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p1kyMi389og. Accessed 3 Dec. 2019.

Carroll, Lewis. Preface. Sylvie *and Bruno Concluded*. illustrated by Harry Furniss. Macmillan and Co, 1893.

Chandran, Katavil. *Ayya Vaikuntar: Jeevithavum Sandesavum*, 1st ed., Anpuvanam, Swamithoppu, 2012, pp. 76-90.

Clarke, Peter. Introduction. *Encyclopedia of New Religious Movements*. Routledge, 2004.

Clute, John, and John Grant, editors. *The Encyclopedia of Fantasy*. Orbit, 1999.

CRL Rights Commission. *Challenges Faced by the Rastafari Community in South Africa*. CRL Rights Commission, 2012, pp. 11–13.

Daschke, Dereck, and W. Michael Ashcraft, editors. Introduction. *New Religious Movements: A Documentary Reader*. NYU Press, 2005, pp. 11-13.

Dasgupta, Surendranath. *A History of Indian Philosophy*. Motilal Banarsidass Publ., 1975, pp. 2-11.

Davenport, John C. *C.S. Lewis*, foreword by Zyle Kimmer, 2nd ed., Chelsea House Publishers, 2011.

Derrida, Jacques. "The First Session." *Acts of Literature*, edited by Derek Attridge, Routledge, 1992, p. 140.

---. "The Future of the Profession or the University without Condition." *Jacques Derrida and the Humanities: A Critical Reader*, edited by Tom Cohen, Cambridge UP, 2002, p. 47.

Dickerson, Matthew. David O' Hara. *Narnia and the Fields of Arbol: The Environmental Vision of C. S. Lewis*. University Press of Kentucky, 2008, pp. 134-136.

Downing, David C. *Into the Wardrobe: C.S. Lewis and the Narnia Chronicles*, 1st ed., Jossey-Bass, 2005, pp. 85-86.

DuPlessis, Nicole M. "ecoLewis: Conservationism and Anticolonialism in *The Chronicles of Narnia*". *C.S. Lewis's The Chronicles of Narnia*, edited by Harold Bloom, Infobase Publishing, 2006, pp. 195-206.

Dyer, Justin Buckley, and Micah J. Watson. *C. S. Lewis on Politics and the Natural Law*. Cambridge University Press, 2016, p. 98.

Eco, Umberto. "Travels in Hyperreality." *Travels in Hyperreality: Essays*, translated by William Weaver, A Helen and Kurt Wollf book, 1986, p. 56.

Ellwood, Gracia Fay. *Taking the Adventure: Faith and Our Kinship with Animals*. Preface by Carol J. Adams, Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2014, pp. 174-176.

Encyclopedia of Fantasy (1997) – *Healing*. http://sf-encyclopedia.uk/fe.php?nm=healing. Accessed 28 May 2019.

Filmer-Davies, Kath. *Scepticism and Hope in Twentieth Century Fantasy Literature*. Popular Press, 1992, p. 43.

Frazier, Jessica. *Hindu Worldviews: Theories of Self, Ritual and Reality*. Bloomsbury Publishing, 2017, p. 18.

Gates, Pamela S., et al. *Fantasy Literature for Children and Young Adults*. Scarecrow Press, Inc, 2003, pp. 5–9.

Ginting, Mecu. *Children's Multiple World Fantasy Fiction and the Journey Home Structure in the Light of the Escapism Debate*. 28 June 2013, p. 11.

Griffiths, Allan Bede. "The Adventure of Faith". *Remembering C.S. Lewis: Recollections of Those Who Knew Him*, edited by James T. Como, Ignatius Press, 2005. p. 93.

Guha, Ranajith. "Colonialism in South Asia: A Dominance without Hegemony a and Its Historiography". *Dominance without Hegemony: History and Power in Colonial India*, Harvard University Press, 1997, p. 59.

Guru, Navajyothi Sri Karunakara. "Asramoddesyam". *Santhigiri: Spiritual Magazine*, vol. 39, no. 4, Aug. and Sept. 2011, p. 83.

---. "Vritam and Prayer". *Santhigiri: Spiritual Magazine*, vol. 3, no. 5, May 2014, pp. 5–7.

Hannay, Margaret Patterson. 'Further Up and Further In: The Chronicles of Narnia'. *C.S. Lewis's The Chronicles of Narnia*, edited by Harold Bloom, Infobase Publishing, 2006, pp. 63-76.

Harigopalan, Sidar R. *Akhilathirattu Ammanai*, compiled and edited by A. Arisundara Mani, Ayya Vaikundar Narpani Manaram, 2016.

Hilder, Monika B. "Jack, the "old woman" of Oxford: sexist or seer?". *Women and C.S. Lewis: What His Life and Literature Reveal for Today's Culture*, edited by Carolyn Curtis and Mary Pomroy Key Lion Books, 2015, pp. 106-107.

Holloway, Harry. *Christian Yoga - Love God with All Your Strength and Your Neighbor as Yourself: The Gospels Enlightened - for Me*. Xlibris Corporation, 2009, pp. 76-80.

Hume, Kathryn. *Fantasy and Mimesis: Responses to Reality in Western Literature*. 1984. Routledge, 2014, p. 21.

Hourihan, Margery. *Deconstructing the Hero: Literary Theory and Children's Literature*. Routledge, 1997, pp. 60-67, 101-105.

Howey, Ann F. "Secular or Spiritual: Rereading Anne of Green Gables". *Christianity & Literature*, vol. 62, no. 3, June 2013, pp. 395–411. *SAGE Journals*, doi:10.1177/014833311306200308

Hunt, Peter, and Millicent Lenz. *Alternate Worlds in Fantasy Fiction*. continuum, 2001, pp. 9, 34-35.

Jackson, Rosemary. Introduction. *Fantasy: The Literature of Subversion*, 10th ed., Routledge, 2000, p. 10.

Jenkins, Alice. "Getting into Utopia". *Utopian and Dystopian Writing for Children and Young Adults*, edited by Carrie Hintz and Elaine Ostry, Routledge, 2013, pp. 26-35.

JW.ORG. "Why Have Jehovah's Witnesses Changed Some of Their Beliefs?" *JW.ORG*, https://www.jw.org/en/jehovahs-witnesses/faq/jw-doctrine-changes/. Accessed 12 June 2019.

Karlin, Sabrina. "Where Reality and Fantasy Collide A Critical Analysis of The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe". *Myth and Archetype Class*, Erik Wessler, 2013, pp. 35-36.

Kellner, Douglas. "Globalization and New Social Movements". Globalization and Education: Critical Perspectives, edited by Nicholas C. Burbules and Carlos Alberto Torres, Psychology Press, 2000, pp. 315-316.

Kinghorn, Kevin. "Virtue Epistemology: Why Uncle Andrew Couldn't Hear the Animals Speak". *The Chronicles of Narnia and Philosophy: The Lion, the Witch, and the Worldview*, edited by Gregory Bassham and Jerry L. Walls, Open Court, 2013, pp. 22-24.

Knapp, Stephen. *The Power of the Dharma: An Introduction to Hinduism and Vedic Culture*. iUniverse, 2006, pp. 3-5.

Knox, Zoe. Introduction. *Jehovah's Witnesses and the Secular World: From the 1870s to the Present*. Springer, 2018, pp. 3-6.

Lakshmanan, Thaliyil. *Bhagavan Sri Vaikunda Swamiyum Pravachanangalum*, 1st ed., K. Ponnumani, 2015, pp. 92-102.

Leeuwen, Mary Stewart Van. *A Sword between the Sexes?: C. S. Lewis and the Gender Debates*. Brazos Press, 2010, p. 51.

Leslie, John. *The End of the World: The Science and Ethics of Human Extinction*. Psychology Press, 1998, pp. 25-132.

Lewis, C. S. *An Experiment in Criticism*, 2nd ed., The Syndics of The Cambridge University Press, 1965, p. 50.

---. *Prince Caspian. The Chronicles of Narnia*, Harper Collins, 2010.

---. *The Allegory of Love: A Study in Medieval Tradition*, 10th ed., Oxford University Press, 1996, p. 57.

---. *The Horse and His Boy. The Chronicles of Narnia*, Harper Collins, 2010.

---. *The Last Battle. The Chronicles of Narnia*, Harper Collins, 2010.

---. *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe. The Chronicles of Narnia*, Harper Collins, 2010.

---. *The Magician's Nephew. The Chronicles of Narnia*, Harper Collins, 2010.

---. *The Silver Chair. The Chronicles of Narnia*, Harper Collins, 2010.

---. *The Voyage of The 'Dawn Treader'. The Chronicles of Narnia*, Harper Collins, 2010.

Manlove, Colin. *From Alice to Harry Potter: Children's Fantasy in England*. Cybereditions, 2003. pp. 83-89.

---. "The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe". *C.S. Lewis's The Chronicles of Narnia*, edited by Harold Bloom, Infobase Publishing, 2006, pp. 159-168.

Masson, Sophie. "Going to Narnia". *Through the Wardrobe: Your Favorite Authors on C. S. Lewis's Chronicles of Narnia*, edited by Herbie Brennan and Leah Wilson, BenBella Books, 2010. pp. 146-151.

Mclntosh, Alastair. Interview by Terence Handley MacMath. "Back Page Interview". *Church Times*, 4 Dec. 2015, p. 48.

Mendlesohn, Farah. Introduction. *Rhetorics of Fantasy*. Wesleyan University Press, 2013. xix-xxv.

Mukundan. P.R. "The Vision and Mission of Navajyoti Sri Karunakara Guru". *Tiferet Journal*, 13 Jan. 2011, http://tiferetjournal.com/the-vision-and-mission-of-nav-ajyoti-sri-karunakara-guru/. Accessed 16 June 2019.

Myers, Doris T. *C.S. Lewis in Context*. Kent State University Press, 1998. pp. 175-178.

Nair, K. Maheswaran. *Ayyavaikundar*. Sahithya Pravarthaka Co-operative Society Ltd., 2018, pp. 115-119.

Neeson, Liam. Interview by Stevie Wong. *STAR Movies VIP Access: Chronicles of Narnia - Liam Neeson*. YouTube,

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UqNBwNhcQO0. Accessed 18 Jan. 2020.

Niaah, Jahlani. "Towards a New Map of Africa through Rastafari "Works"". *Africa Development*, vol. 35, no. 1 and 2, 2010, pp. 189-192.

O'Sullivan, Emer. *Comparative Children's Literature*. Routledge, 2005, p. 123.

Pandiyan, M. S. S. "Caste in Tamil Nadu: A History of Nadar Censorship". *Economic and Political Weekly*, vol. 48, no. 3, Jan. 2013, pp. 12-14.

Panikkassery, Velayudhan. *Anayatha Deepangal: Biographical Sketches*. Current

    Books, 2013, p. 13.

Patrick, G. *Religion and Subaltern Agency*, University of Madras, 2003, pp. 112-116.

Penton, M. James. *Jehovah's Witnesses and the Third Reich: Sectarian Politics Under

    Persecution*. University of Toronto Press, 2004, pp. 236-239.

Ponnu, R. *Sri Vaikunda Swamigal and The Struggle for Social Equality in South In-

    dia*, 1st ed., Ram Publishers, 2000, pp. 53-70.

---. *Vaikunda Swamigal Or Avatharam*, Ram Publishers, 2002, pp. 52-84.

PTI. "Separate Religion Demand for Ayya Vazhi Raised in Kanyakumari, BJP's Sole

    Constituency in TN". *The Economic Times*, 21 Mar. 2019, https://econom-

    ictimes.indiatimes.com/news/elections/lok-sabha/tamil-nadu/separate-religion-

    demand-for-ayya-vazhi-raised-in-kanyakumari-bjps-sole-constituency-in-

    tn/articleshow/68508486.cms. Accessed 23 Feb. 2020.

Quick, Kevin R. *Reasoning with Jehovah's Witnesses: A Scriptural Study of the

    Teachings of Jehovah's Witnesses*. Kevin R. Quick, 1986, pp. 100-106.

    http://www.kevinquick.com/kkministries/books/reasoning/.

Rabaey, Lucas. *'The Wheel Weaves as the Wheel Wills' Metaphors of Fate in Robert

    Jordan's The Eye of the World*. MA Thesis. Ghent University, May 2016, p.

    49.

Rabkin, Eric S., editor. *Fantastic Worlds: Myths, Tales and Stories*. Oxford UP, 1979,

    pp. 27-29.

---. *The Fantastic in Literature*. Princeton UP, 1977, p. 41.

REVELATION CHAPTER 21 KJV. *www.kingjamesbibleonline.org*, https://www.king-

    jamesbibleonline.org/Revelation-Chapter-21/. Accessed 24 July 2020.

Rudd, David. "Theorising and Theories: How Does Children's Literature Exist?" *Understanding Children's Literature*, edited by Peter Hunt, 2nd ed., Routledge, 2005, pp. 15–26.

Salter, Richard C. "Rastafari in a Global Context: Affinities of "Orthognosy" and "Oneness" in the Expanding World". *Ideaz: The Globalization of Rastafari*, edited by Ian Boxill, vol. 7, 2008, pp. 19–25.

Sarah, Zettel. "Why I Love Narnia: A Liberal, Feminist Agnostic Tells All". *Revisiting Narnia: Fantasy, Myth and Religion in C.S. Lewis' Chronicles*, edited by Shanna Caughey, BenBella Books, 2005, pp. 188-189.

Schakel, Peter J. "The "Correct" Order of Reading The Chronicles of Narnia?". *Revisiting Narnia: Fantasy, Myth and Religion in C.S. Lewis' Chronicles*, edited by Shanna Caughey, BenBella Books, 2005, pp. 91-99.

Schweitzer, Friedrich. "Difference between Religion and Spirituality in Children and Adolescents". *Encyclopedia of Religious and Spiritual Development*, edited by Elizabeth M. Dowling and W. George Scarlett, SAGE, 2006, pp. 121–122.

Sharma, Garima. "Latest Narnia Flick Set to Release in India Ahead of US". *The Economic Times*, 16 Nov. 2010, https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/media/entertainment/latest-narnia-flick-set-to-release-in-india-ahead-of-us/articleshow/6934106.cms. Accessed 20 Feb. 2020.

Simpson, George. "Harry Potter BEATEN in NEW Poll of Britain's Favourite Books – Can YOU Guess No 1?" *Express.Co.Uk*, 8 Aug. 2019, https://www.express.co.uk/entertainment/books/1163384/Harry-Potter-The-Lion-the-Witch-and-the-Wardrobe-Britain-s-favourite-book-CS-Lewis-Narnia. Accessed 17 Feb. 2020.

Spencer, William David. *Dread Jesus*. Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2011, p. 73.

Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. *Other Asias*. Blackwell Publishing Limited, 2008, p. 56.

'Summary of St. Teresa of Avila's Interior Castle'. *Owlcation. owlcation.com*,

https://owlcation.com/humanities/Summary-of-St-Teresa-of-Avilas-Interior-

Castle. Accessed 24 July 2020.

Taylor, Jennifer. '"Beautiful Barbarians": Anti-Racism in *The Horse and His Boy* and

Other *Chronicles of Narnia*'. *C.S. Lewis: The Chronicles of Narnia*, edited by

Michelle Ann Abate and Lance Weldy, Macmillan International Higher Edu-

cation, 2012., pp. 175-176.

Todorov, Tzvetan. *The Fantastic: A Structural Approach to a Literary Genre*. Trans-

lated by Richard Howard. Cornell University Press, 1975. pp. 41-57.

Tolkien, J. R. R. "On Fairy Stories." *Tree and Leaf*. Houghton Mifflin, 1965, pp. 32-

72.

Usha, O. V. Interview by Dhanya M. T. "Kavithayile Athmiyasugandham".

Guruprabha, vol. 6, no. 4, Apr. 2017, pp. 22–23.

Vaikuntanathar, Ayya. "Uchchippathippu". *Arul Nool*, translated by Painkulam Ra.

Sikhamani, 1st ed., Ayya Vaikuntanathar Siddhasramam, 2013, pp. 73.

Vanmikanathan, G. "His Life and Work (Man-Oriented)". *Makers of Indian Litera-

ture: Ramalingar*, Sahithya Acdemy, 1980, pp. 62–63.

Vivekananda, Swami. *Vivekananda, World Teacher: His Teachings on the Spiritual

Unity of Humankind*. SkyLight Paths Publishing, 2006., p. 149.

Vlathankara, Joy Balan. *Vaikundaswamiyum Samoohika Navodhanavum*. 2nd ed.,

Foreword by P. Govinda Pillai, Chintha Publishers, 2013, pp. 7-9, 101-119.

Walborn, Frederick. *Religion in Personality Theory*. Academic Press, 2013, pp. 263-

277.

Ward, Michael. "On Suffering". *The Cambridge Companion to C. S. Lewis*, edited by Robert MacSwain, and Michael Ward, Cambridge University Press, 2010, p. 207.

Watt-Evans, Lawrence. "On the Origins of Evil". *Revisiting Narnia: Fantasy, Myth and Religion in C.S. Lewis' Chronicles*, edited by Shanna Caughey, BenBella Books, 2005, pp. 31–32.

Wilkie-Stibbs, Christine. "Intertextuality and the Child Reader". *International Companion Encyclopedia of Children's Literature*, edited by Peter Hunt, 2nd ed., vol. 1, Routledge, 2004, pp. 179–188.

Witantri, Anggie Dessi. *A Symbolic Character of Aslan the Great Lion in C.S. Lewis' novel The Chronicles of Narnia The Lion, The Witch And The Wardrobe*. University of Gunadarma, p. 10.

Wolfe, Gary K. *Evaporating Genres: Essays on Fantastic Literature*. Wesleyan University Press, 2011, pp. 77.