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## **Reason and imagination: Clive Staples Lewis' paths to christianity**

**Summary:** The article explains the dialectic of reason and imagination in the journey to Christianity of Clive Staple Lewis. The road that led Lewis to Christianity was not a simple one. His quest for a comprehensive worldview was prompted by two seemingly irreconcilable forces, the intellect and imagination. Gradually, Lewis discovered how reason was the key to every apprehension of truth that brought him from one stage of his intellectual journey to the next. Meanwhile, he deduced that intellectual reflection resulted after something is perceived and appreciated primarily through the imagination. This later became the paradigm he reproduced as a Christian story-teller. Lewis' accomplishment in retaining the necessary interrelation of reason and imagination in his writings classifies him as a "reasoning romantic"; the needed catalyst to precipitate the romantic-rational blend was the very object he had feared, Christianity itself. Lewis' life and writings are evidence that reason, imagination and holiness are not exclusively separate characteristics but can form an integrated whole.

**Keywords:** C.S. Lewis, Reason, Imagination, Paths to Christianity, conversion, intellect, epistemology

**Streszczenie:** Rozum i wyobraźnia: Ścieżki Clive'a Staplesa Lewisa do chrześcijaństwa  
Artykuł wyjaśnia dialektykę rozumu i wyobraźni w drodze do chrześcijaństwa Clive'a Staple'a Lewisa. Droga, która doprowadziła Lewisa do chrześcijaństwa, nie była prosta. Jego dążenie do wszechstronnego spojrzenia na świat było inspirowane przez dwie pozornie nie do pogodzenia siły, intelekt i wyobraźnię. Stopniowo Lewis odkrywał, w jaki sposób rozum był kluczem do każdego kroku pojmowania prawdy, które prowadziły go z jednego etapu intelektualnej podróży do następnego. Wynioskował, że intelektualna refleksja powstała po tym, jak coś zostało dostrzeżone i docenione przede wszystkim przez wyobraźnię. Później stało się to paradygmatem, którym posługiwał się jako chrześcijański pisarz opowiadań. Osiągnięcie Lewisa w zachowaniu niezbędnej relacji rozumu i wyobraźni w jego pismach klasyfikuje go jako „rozumnego romantyka”; katalizatorem potrzebnym do wytrącenia mieszanki romantyczno-racjonalnej było samo chrześcijaństwo, a więc przedmiot, którego się wcześniej obawiał. Życie i pisma Lewisa są dowodem na to, że rozum, wyobraźnia i świętość nie są wyłączne odrębnymi cechami, ale mogą tworzyć zintegrowaną całość.

**Słowa kluczowe:** C.S. Lewis, rozum, wyobraźnia, droga do chrześcijaństwa, nawrócenie, intelekt, epistemologia

Trying to pin down the legacy of a writer like C.S. Lewis is no small enterprise. The Irish-born scholar, novelist, and author of over 40 books, countless essays and poetry collections is best known for his works of fiction, especially *The Screwtape Letters*<sup>1</sup> and *The Chronicles of Narnia*<sup>2</sup>, and for his non-fiction Christian apologetics, such as *Mere Christianity*<sup>3</sup>, *Miracles*<sup>4</sup>, and *The Problem of Pain*<sup>5</sup>. Today, almost 60 years after his death, his global readership dwarfs the readership that he enjoyed in his own lifetime. His classic children's story, *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* (one of the seven novels in *The Chronicles of Narnia*), is one of the top ten bestselling books of all time. As for his philosophical writings, these are widely cited by Christian apologists from many denominations.

A lesser known but nonetheless powerful part of Lewis' legacy is the impact that he has had on the conversion of countless numbers of people. A remarkable fact is the number of those who, through Lewis' influence, converted to the Catholic faith. This is indeed an astonishing phenomenon considering that Lewis never became a Catholic himself. Among the names of converts who stand out are the likes of Bernard Nathanson<sup>6</sup>, Leonard Cheshire, Meriol Trevor, the German economist E.F. Schumacher and Ronda Chervin, to name a few.

What is it that makes the books of an Oxford scholar so pivotal in the conversion experience of a countless number of contemporaries searching for truth? How did this unassuming professor of English Literature come to be

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<sup>1</sup> C.S. Lewis, *The Screwtape Letters*, California 2015.

<sup>2</sup> C.S. Lewis, *The Chronicles of Narnia*, New York 2002.

<sup>3</sup> C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, London 1961.

<sup>4</sup> C.S. Lewis, *Miracles. A Preliminary Study*, New York 1974.

<sup>5</sup> C.S. Lewis, *The Problem of Pain*, New York 2015.

<sup>6</sup> Together with Betty Frieden and others, Bernard Nathanson pioneered the movement to legalise abortion in the United States. An obstetrician and gynaecologist by profession, Nathanson admitted having personally performed more than 60,000 abortions before realising that his actions were intrinsically evil. He narrated the hideousness and dishonesty of the abortion industry in his book *Aborting America* then directed and narrated the film *The Silent Scream* to expose the true horrors of in-utero infanticide. In his autobiography, Nathanson cited C.S. Lewis as a significant influence on his path to conversion. He stated: "It was entirely in character for me that I would conduct a diligent review of literature before embarking on a mission as daunting as this searching for God." Cf. Bernard Nathanson, *The Hand of God: A Journey from Death to Life*, Washington D.C. 2001, 106.

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considered one of the most widely-read Christian apologists of the twentieth century? The factors behind what might be justifiably called “the Lewis phenomenon”<sup>7</sup> are various. Notably, truth seekers find in Lewis a writer who gives his readers one of the most luminous presentations of the Christian understanding of the human person set within a worldview that integrates the primal questions of God, suffering and evil, immortality, miracles, and more. In addition, this scenario is expressed with a rigour of mind and a graciousness of style wedded to a soaring imagination. Through nearly fifty books ranging from Christian apologetics to science-fiction, Lewis exhibits an unabashed spiritual joy, a confident and incisive exercise of reason, and an unwavering belief in objective values. Quite evidently, Lewis came a long way in his own search and discovery of truth.

The Oxford don, scholar, author, and Christian apologist journeyed from atheism to philosophical theism, then on to “mere Christianity”<sup>8</sup>. Many can tell stories of powerful dramatic experiences of conversion. Lewis is not one of these. His conversion came slowly over time, and in several stages. His was not a simple road back to faith; it was cluttered with intellectual obstacles Lewis once thought impossible to overcome. The Oxford don’s journey to Christianity wound around a complex set of psychological, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual dynamics. This pilgrimage to faith ran along parallel paths: the search or longing for joy on the one hand, and intellectual integrity on the other. He gradually found his way, or better, was pursued by God, to Christianity, and a life that made him, as his friend Walter Hooper put it, “the most thoroughly converted man I ever met.”<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Cf. Alister McGrath, *C.S. Lewis – A Life: Eccentric Genius, Reluctant Prophet*, Illinois 2013, 363–379. Hereafter referred to as McGrath, *A Life*.

<sup>8</sup> C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, London 1961. This book was adapted from a series of BBC radio talks made between 1941 and 1944, while Lewis was at Oxford during the Second World War. It is considered a classic of Christian apologetics. C. S. Lewis, an Anglican, intended to describe the Christian common ground, employing the term “mere Christianity” to present essential Christianity – those core Christian beliefs held through the ages by Protestants and Catholics alike. Lewis adapted this term from Richard Baxter, a protestant clergyman and prolific author who lived in England from 1615 to 1691. More information about Richard Baxter and the relationship of his thought to C. S. Lewis cf. N. H. Keeble, *C.S. Lewis, Richard Baxter, and ‘Mere Christianity,’ in Christianity and Literature* (Vol XXX, No. 3, Spring 1981), 27–44.

<sup>9</sup> Quoted in Mart De Haan, *C.S. Lewis, The Story of a Converted Mind*, Michigan 2010, 1.

The decisive conversion to the Christian faith is an important aspect Lewis covers in detail in his autobiography *Surprised by Joy: The Shape of my Early Life*<sup>10</sup>, and in allegorical form in *The Pilgrim's Regress*<sup>11</sup>. Lewis wrote about his conversion experience to explain to others why he took that life-changing step and how misunderstanding Christianity can forfeit a person's experiential knowledge of God. The Oxford scholar valued logical thinking, and professed the Christian faith should be embraced, not only because it is good, but because it is true. He demonstrates how reason provides the intellectual foundation of belief and brings to the conversation of the transmission of faith in the contemporary context, a passionate love of truth, clarity of thought and an imaginative language that compels the intellect.

### 1. In Search of a Coherent Worldview

From his youth, Lewis was notably drawn to study the literature of the Middle Ages. He believed that medieval culture offered an imaginative vision of a unified cosmic and world order that the West had lost through the devastation of the Great War – and that he himself was yearning to recover. Philosophically, Lewis had come to believe that the world was “a meaningless dance of atoms”,<sup>12</sup> yet in his imagination, he yearned for the satisfaction of the deep human aspirations of meaning, truth, beauty, goodness and immortality he found in poetry and novels. The two hemispheres of his mind, his intellect, and imagination, were sharply divided: “On the one side a many-islanded sea of poetry and myth; on the other, a glib and shallow “rationalism”. Nearly all that I loved I believed to be imaginary; nearly all that I believed to be real I thought grim and meaningless.”<sup>13</sup>

In the years preceding his conversion in 1930, Lewis became increasingly aware of the existential deficiencies of most Enlightenment notions of rationality that deny the imagination and emotion any role in reasoning. In 1926,

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<sup>10</sup> C.S. Lewis, *Surprised by Joy: The Shape of My Early Life*, Glasgow 1955. Hereafter referred to as C.S. Lewis, *Surprised by Joy*.

<sup>11</sup> C. S. Lewis, *The Pilgrim's Regress, An Allegorical Apology for Christianity, Reason and Romanticism*, Great Britain 1980. Hereafter referred to as C. S. Lewis, *The Pilgrim's Regress*.

<sup>12</sup> C.S. Lewis, *Surprised by Joy*, 70.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 95.

while relinquishing his “New Look”<sup>14</sup>, Lewis expressed his conviction that reason was “utterly inadequate to the richness and spirituality of things.”<sup>15</sup> As McGrath observes, “A deeper understanding of rationality was required, if his deepest intuitions were to be accommodated within a coherent worldview.”<sup>16</sup> As a “reluctant convert”<sup>17</sup>, Lewis was compelled to accept a vision of reality that he did not wish to be true, but which appealed to reason, while at the same time, doing justice to its emotional and imaginative dimensions.

In a burst of sustained literary activity that spanned for a mere fortnight, Lewis penned the story of his conversion in his first novel *The Pilgrim’s Regress* two years after he became a Christian. The key to the unfolding of the novel is the intellectual issue of how reason and imagination may be both affirmed and integrated within the Christian vision of reality. *The Pilgrim’s Regress* is an intellectual early-twentieth-century version of John Bunyan’s classical allegory *The Pilgrim’s Progress*<sup>18</sup>. Indeed, Lewis provides the reader with a *Mappa Mundi*, the “country of Man’s Soul”<sup>19</sup> which is divided into North and South, the North representing arid intellectualism and the South, emotional excess. A straight Road passes between them indicating that the only safe path on which to travel is between these two extremes. The central character in *The Pilgrim’s Regress* is John – who loosely represents Lewis himself. John sets out on a journey that is one of regress rather than progress because he is in fact, going away, rather than towards the beautiful Island that he seeks. Born in Puritania, John early was taught to fear the Landlord of the country. From the very first moment, that he glimpsed the Island in a vision however, he was gripped with an intense longing to find it.

Like Lewis, John strayed far from the straight and narrow path leading to his destination by tending towards intellectual rather than sensual follies. In

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<sup>14</sup> Cf. Alister McGrath, *The Intellectual World of C.S. Lewis*, U.K. 2014, 31–54. Lewis adopted a turn of phrase from the world of fashion and applied it to the intellectual trends of his day which he adopted at Oxford. Among these trends were an aggressive atheism, ‘Oxford Realism’, Chronological Snobbery and the New Psychology.

<sup>15</sup> *Letter to Cecil Harwood – October 28, 1926*, in: Walter Hooper (Ed.), *C.S. Lewis: Collected Letters, Vol. 1, Family Letters (1905–1931)*, U.K. 2000, 670.

<sup>16</sup> Alister McGrath, *The Intellectual World of C.S. Lewis*, 134.

<sup>17</sup> C.S. Lewis, *Surprised by Joy*, 183.

<sup>18</sup> John Bunyan, *The Pilgrim’s Progress*, England 1678.

<sup>19</sup> C. S. Lewis, *The Pilgrim’s Regress*, 20.

the preface to the third edition of *The Pilgrim's Regress*, Lewis lists four stages in his intellectual journey toward Christianity: “from ‘popular realism’ to Philosophical Idealism; from Idealism to Pantheism; from Pantheism to Theism; and from Theism to Christianity.”<sup>20</sup> Reason held the key to every apprehension of truth that brought John the Pilgrim – as for Lewis himself – from one stage of his journey to the next. In *Surprised by Joy*, Lewis gives one such example of how, with the help of a friend, he was spurred into parting with the naturalistic worldview to come one step closer to truth:

He [Owen Barfield] convinced me that the positions we had hitherto held left no room for any satisfactory theory of knowledge. We had been, in the technical sense of the term, “realists”; that is, we accepted as rock-bottom reality the universe revealed by the senses. But at the same time we continued to make for certain phenomena of consciousness all the claims that really went with a theistic or idealistic view. We maintained that abstract thought (if obedient to logical rules) gave indisputable truth, that our moral judgment was “valid,” and our aesthetic experience not merely pleasing but “valuable.” ... Barfield convinced me that it was inconsistent. If thought were a purely subjective event, these claims for it would have to be abandoned. If one kept (as rock-bottom reality) the universe of the senses, aided by instruments and coordinated so as to form “science,” then one would have to go much further - as many have since gone - and adopt a Behaviouristic theory of logic, ethics, and aesthetics. But such a theory was, and is, unbelievable to me.<sup>21</sup>

## **2. Christian Confidence in Reason: Making a case for Theism**

As the narrative of *The Pilgrim's Regress* unfolds, we find John imprisoned by the Spirit of the Age. He is rescued by no other than the tall, blue-clad figure of Reason who serves as his teacher and directs him back on the Main Road. Following the guidance of Mother Kirk (Christianity), John and his companion Vertue reach the other side of the vast canyon from where John could see the sea and his Island. The Island, he later discovered, was the other side of the mountains near Puritania, not an Island at all. As for the Landlord, John's idea of him had turned out to be false, and the home of the Landlord in those mountains was to be John's as well. *The Pilgrim's Regress* is thus Lewis' dialectic

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<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

<sup>21</sup> C.S. Lewis, *Surprised by Joy*, 167.

of reason in the form of an allegory. Reason, faithfully followed, as evidence is examined and conflicting logical and philosophical arguments are sifted through, could lead to a theistic position, and successively, to revelation at the threshold of faith. Having reached its proper boundaries, reason points to the Church and the Christian experience.

Following his conversion, Lewis staunchly espoused a central role to reason<sup>22</sup> in epistemology and consequently, to the defence of Christianity as an apologist. The point of departure for Lewis's epistemology is his anthropology. According to Lewis, the human person is a composite creature, "We were made to be neither cerebral men nor visceral men, but Men. Not beasts nor angels but Men – things at once rational and animal."<sup>23</sup> Although closely related to nature, the human person cannot be understood solely in natural terms. Humans are thinking/feeling beings, related to their Creator both through reason and through longing. Hence, human reason is independent of, and not produced by nature, but it is not autonomous. The chain of rational causation must ultimately rest in a Self-existent Reason which all reason depends on.<sup>24</sup> Thus, Lewis came to believe that "the whole universe was, in the last resort, mental; that our logic was participation in a cosmic *Logos*."<sup>25</sup>

Convinced not only in the validity of reason but of the indisputable reasonableness of Christianity, Lewis insisted that Christianity is to be subjected to reason, stating, "I am not asking anyone to accept Christianity if his best reasoning tells him that the weight of evidence is against it."<sup>26</sup> Reason has a duty not to decide without evidence. As a former atheist himself, Lewis's concern as a Christian apologist was for the unchurched, who need to have their eyes opened to the rational and imaginative potential of faith. The 'Argument from Reason'<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Cf. "De Futilitate" in Walter Hooper (Ed.), *Christian Reflections by C.S. Lewis*, Michigan 1967, 57–71. Hereafter referred to as Walter Hooper (Ed.), *Christian Reflections*. In his essay, Lewis extols and defends reason by directly confronting scepticism and challenging its major premise: the assumption that futility reigns supreme.

<sup>23</sup> C.S. Lewis, *The Pilgrim's Regress*, 19.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. Walter Hooper (Ed.), *Christian Reflections*, 64–65.

<sup>25</sup> C.S. Lewis, *Surprised by Joy*, 167.

<sup>26</sup> C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, 120.

<sup>27</sup> Lewis expounds on the 'Argument from Reason' in his book *Miracles, A Preliminary Study*. For a critique of Lewis's argument cf. John Beversluis, *C.S. Lewis and the Search for Rational Religion*. Revised ed. New York 2007, 143–194. For a philosophical defense of

thus formed one of Lewis's main argumentative approaches to apologetics where he confutes philosophical naturalism and argues for the existence of a supernatural being that is the source of human reason.

Though his respect for clear, logical thought was high indeed, Lewis did not make rational investigation an end in itself. In *Mere Christianity*, he points to the faulty assumption he once held that the human mind is completely ruled by reason" and "will automatically go on regarding (something) as true until some real reason for reconsidering it comes up." Such is not the case at all. Human emotions and imagination also wield a powerful influence on us. This, Lewis asserts, is where Faith comes in as "the art of holding on to things your reason has once accepted, despite your changing moods."<sup>28</sup> A distinction between two senses of the word 'Faith' is provided by Lewis: "This (Faith) may mean (a) a settled intellectual assent... (b) a trust, a confidence, in the God whose existence is thus assented to." He adds that "Philosophical arguments for the existence of God are presumably intended to produce Faith-A," yet Faith-B is a gift, where "the operation of Faith is to retain, so far as the will and intellect are concerned, what is irresistible and obvious during the moments of grace."<sup>29</sup>

### 3. Imagination: The Organ of Meaning

If Lewis regarded reason as "the natural organ of truth", he identified imagination as "the organ of meaning."<sup>30</sup> Imagination acted as a catalyst for Lewis' conversion. He was in his mid-teens when imagination served as a cosmic pointer while reading George MacDonald's book *Phantastes*. Lewis describes in *Surprised by Joy*, how he was enraptured by a peculiar, new quality in this dream-like narrative. Many years later, he discovered this distinct quality was "Holiness." Reading *Phantastes* had "baptised" Lewis' imagination. It

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Lewis's argument, cf. V.E. Reppert, *C.S. Lewis's Dangerous Idea: A Philosophical Defense of Lewis's Argument from Reason*, Illinois 2003.

<sup>28</sup> C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, 120–121.

<sup>29</sup> *Is Theism Important?*, in: Lesley Walmsley (Ed.), *C.S. Lewis Essay Collection: Faith, Christianity and the Church*, California 2002, 54–55. By "moments of grace" Lewis is referring to religious experiences which, by nature, are transitory.

<sup>30</sup> "Bluespels and Flalansferes: A Semantic Nightmare" in Walter Hooper (Ed.), *Selected Literary Essays by C.S. Lewis*, London 1969, 265.



would be many years before his intellect would follow. Nevertheless, that experience was the beginning of the slow and winding spiritual journey to faith. Similarly, Lewis' fascination with mythology which he cultivated from an early age, was a frequent occasion of "the memory of Joy itself."<sup>31</sup> It was after a crucial all night conversation with his friends J.R. Tolkien and H.V.D. Dyson that he discovered how pagan myths were echoes of reality and pointers to the true myth, the "Myth become Fact" in Christ:

I was by now too experienced in literary criticism to regard the Gospels as myths. They had not the mythical taste. And yet the very matter which they set down in their artless, historical fashion... was precisely the matter of great myths. If ever a myth had become a fact, had been incarnated, it would be just like this... Here and here only in all time the myth must have become fact; the Word, flesh; God, Man. This is not "a religion," nor "a philosophy." It is the summing up and actuality of them all.<sup>32</sup>

McGrath likens Lewis' recognition of the Gospels as "Myth become fact", to the "imaginative embrace of Christianity"<sup>33</sup>. He adds that it was only after this experience, "that Lewis began the rational exploration of its landscape. The rational exploration, expressed in terms of Christianity's doctrines, follows on from the captivation of the imagination through its images and stories.

According to Lewis, myth opens our imagination to that reality which is fundamental to all life, and from which all meaning emerges. Myth, therefore, permits us to break out of our "normal modes of consciousness" and through our imagination, grasp reality pre-critically, "on this side of knowledge."<sup>34</sup> Apprehending reality (even if it belongs to the unseen world) preceded concepts and "theory"<sup>35</sup> for Lewis. Theory was the intellectual reflection that resulted after something is perceived and appreciated primarily through imagination. This was the paradigm of what Lewis was attempting to create for his readers through his story-telling. Hence, for him, the more nearly a story rises from allegory and symbol into genuine myth, the more it succeeds in taking all things we know and restoring to them "the rich significance which has been hidden

<sup>31</sup> C.S. Lewis, *Surprised by Joy*, 62.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.* 188.

<sup>33</sup> Alister McGrath, *A Life*, 153.

<sup>34</sup> C.S. Lewis, *George MacDonald: An Anthology*, New York 2001, Preface xxxii.

<sup>35</sup> Includes here the doctrine of the faith.

by the veil of familiarity.”<sup>36</sup> Through his myth, Lewis wanted his readers to hear the voice of Joy rising from without *and* within. Lewis was trying to create, as it were, not the cause, but the condition of truth.<sup>37</sup>

#### 4. A “Reasoning Romantic”

Lewis’s accomplishment in retaining the necessary interrelation of reason and imagination in his writing won him the title of a “reasoning romantic”. Duriez divided “Romantic” influences upon Lewis into four main areas: ancient mythologies, older writers, nineteenth-century authors and contemporary sources.<sup>38</sup> Lewis worked in his fiction according to a *theology of romanticism* that owed much to the nineteenth-century writer who was Lewis’ mentor, George McDonald. As a romantic theologian, what Lewis says about Williams in his introduction to *Essays Presented to Charles Williams* applies also to himself:

A romantic theologian does not mean one who is romantic about theology but one who is theological about romance, one who considers the theological implications of those experiences which are called romantic. The belief that the most serious and ecstatic experiences either of human love or of imaginative literature have such theological implications and that they can be healthy and fruitful only if the implications are diligently thought out and severely lived, is the root principle of all his (Williams’s) work.<sup>39</sup>

Lewis’s romanticism and reason were separate and combative factors in his world – the North and South of the road in *Pilgrim’s Regress*. The battle raged through his youth and into adulthood. Kreeft observed that in Lewis’s life, “The romantic-rational blend was far from automatic. A catalyst was needed between the two very diverse powers.”<sup>40</sup> That catalyst was Christianity which lit up both Lewis’s imagination (as we see in his fiction) and his rational intellect (as we see in Lewis’s religious philosophy). Perhaps Lewis was settled

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<sup>36</sup> For more on this theme, cf. C.S. Lewis, *Essay Collection and Other Short Pieces*, London 2000, 519–525.

<sup>37</sup> This distinction is made by R. Cunningham in his book, *C.S. Lewis: Defender of Faith*, Westminster 1967.

<sup>38</sup> Cf. “Romanticism” in Colin Duriez, *The C.S. Lewis Encyclopedia: A Complete Guide to His Life, Thought, and Writings*, New Jersey 2003, 179.

<sup>39</sup> C.S. Lewis (Ed., Contributor), *Essays Presented to Charles Williams*, Michigan 1996, Preface vi.

<sup>40</sup> Peter Kreeft, *C. S. Lewis, A Critical Essay*, Virginia 1988, 15.

psychologically about the bridge, but Kreeft argues that his work still reveals a bifurcated nature: “Lewis never fully resolved his basic dualism of rationalism and romanticism: his philosophy is better put in his philosophical works, and his fiction is best when the philosophy is so implicit in the simple beauty of the story or setting that extraction is impossible.”<sup>41</sup>

## 5. Conclusion

The intellectual and spiritual journey Lewis travelled had set him on the road that led to his discovery of a cosmic Other, until his personal encounter with Christ as the Son of God incarnate, precipitated a radical transformation in his life. Lewis’ conversion was also what brought a profound sense of integration in his inner being – his imagination was baptised and married to reason and transformed by the revelation of the person of Christ. Following his passage to Christianity, as a lover of truth, Lewis had no qualms about letting the integration of heart and mind, soul and spirit, work and faith manifest itself in any occasion. The long and arduous journey that led Lewis to a personal encounter with the *Logos* and the Object of Desire had partly shaped him into the Christian apologist, writer and scholar intent on awakening the contemporary world from its slumber, to the pursuit of truth and righteousness.

Lewis saw a lack of imagination as a great hurdle to faith since he held that the imagination is a privileged path leading to a deeper apprehension of truth. Theology here plays a crucial role. Its task is twofold: it exchanges the false pictures that hold us captive, with truth, and it disciplines the imagination with sound doctrine. By virtue of being a literary scholar and a poet before he turned lay theologian, Lewis has indeed expounded and demonstrated an approach to the language of religion that Christian scholars will disregard to their loss.

Lewis’ life and writings are evidence that reason, imagination and holiness are not exclusively separate characteristics but can form an integrated whole. He discovered and celebrated this integration in Christianity: “the faith preached by the Apostles, attested by the Martyrs, expounded by the Creeds, (and) expounded by the Fathers.”<sup>42</sup> What he discovered, he laboured hard both intellectually and spiritually, to give away. Today, his imaginative effusions remain as fresh as nature itself; his reason and reasoning as compelling as they

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<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 58.

<sup>42</sup> C.S. Lewis, “Christian Apologetics” in *Essay Collection*, 148.

have ever been, and his spirit as beckoning, as liberated and as liberating as the open arms of the Cross at which he worshipped.

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**Anna Cappello** (born 1961) – a former teacher of English Literature, following her conversion, the author resigned from her job to become a missionary. Together with her husband, in 1985 she co-founded the Institute for World Evangelisation – ICPE Mission, an International Association of Pontifical Right. The author holds a licentiate in Sacred Theology with a specialisation in Spiritual Theology (Rome). As a missionary, she has founded an education programme for underprivileged children in Ghana and Woman-to-Woman, a ministry promoting the vocation and dignity of women, that is today spread in different countries around the world.

**Anna Cappello** (ur. 1961) – pracowała jako nauczycielka literatury angielskiej; po nawróceniu autorka zrezygnowała z pracy i została misjonarzem. Wraz z mężem w 1985 r. założyła Instytut Ewangelizacji Świata – Misja ICPE, międzynarodowe stowarzyszenie na prawie papieskim. Autorka posiada licencjat kanoniczny z teologii ze specjalizacją z teologii duchowości (Rzym). Jako misjonarz założyła program edukacyjny dla defaworyzowanych dzieci w Ghanie i „Kobieta-dla-kobiety”, posługę promującą powołanie i godność kobiet, która jest dziś rozpowszechniona w różnych krajach na całym świecie.