

Use of Human Reason in the Apologetical Strategy of C. S. Lewis

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There are various angles from which we can observe a man like C. S. Lewis, for each angle sheds light on the different aspects of who he was and what he did. He has been viewed as an apostle to the skeptics²⁾, a spinner of tales³⁾, and a speaker-teacher⁴⁾. No less he should be called an apologist or a defender⁵⁾ of a Christian faith. When we attempt to see C. S. Lewis from this perspective, however, a bunch of questions immediately ensue: Was he really an apologist? If he was, whom did he have in mind for his target? What place did he give to human reason in his Christian persuasion? What were the chief methods or means that were adopted in his apologetical strategy? In this short essay, I hope I can answer these provoking questions.

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2) Chad Walsh, *C. S. Lewis: Apostle to the Skeptics* (New York: the MacMillian, Company, 1949)

3) Evan K. Gibson, *C. S. Lewis: Spinner of Tales* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1980)

4) Carolyn Keefe, ed., *C. S. Lewis: Speaker & Teacher* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1971)

5) Richard B. Cunningham, *C. S. Lewis: Defender of the Faith* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1966)

I

Was he himself an apologist? Yes, but not in the traditional sense. He did not fit the common mold of a conventional apologist, in that his apologetics does not "consist of academics talking to academics; of arid, abstruse, systematic rehashing of perennial problems within a limited, esoteric, theological eddy"⁶⁾, and in that he never attempted a systematic, all-comprehensive and thorough-going apologetical framework. However, if we define apologetics simply as a defense of Christian faith, he was an apologist, and apologist par excellence. First of all, nearly all of his works savor of an apologetical attempt either directly or indirectly.⁷⁾ Secondly, there are at least two books whose authors wrote with an overt declaration that C. S. Lewis was an apologist.⁸⁾ The most important evidence for his being an apologist is provided by his own acknowledgement: "I have found that nothing is more dangerous to one's own faith than the work of an apologist. No doctrine of that Faith seems to me so spectral, so unreal as one that I have just successfully defended in a public debate."⁹⁾ C. S. Lewis,

6) *Ibid.*, p.16.

7) He directly expresses the apologetical purpose in the following works either in Prefaces, in introductions, or in a subtitle: *Mere Christianity*, *The Great Divorce*, *The Problem of pain*, *Miracle*, *The Pilgrim's Regress*, *Surprised by Joy*. The other works are apologetical in character, even though it is not expressed directly: *The Screwtape Letters*, *Letters to Malcolm: Chiefly on Prayer*, *The Four Loves*, *Till We have Faces*, *Space Trilogy*, *Narnian Chronicles* and *God in the Dock*. The only work in whose preface he explicitly says, "This is not apologetic" is *Reflections on the Psalms*.

8) See Chad Walsh, *op.cit.* and Richard B. Cunningham, *op.cit.*

then, whether he saw himself or he was seen by others, was a Christian apologist indeed.

II

If he was an apologist, what kinds of people did he make his apologetical target or, in a simpler term, for what specific purpose did he speak, write and debate? Did he expound the cardinal Christian doctrines in order to convert the hearers? Or did his defense of Christianity have a chief aim against the attacks of skeptics, atheists, and liberals? Or again was his primary intention just doing service to the saints: instruction, consolidation and edification? These questions lead us ultimately to one of the most controversial subjects ---What is the proper function of apologetics? Can apologetical efforts prepare the hearts of non-believers prior to (and sometimes apart from) the work of the Holy Spirit? If not, is apologetics just a means used by the Holy Spirit in His initial illumination the hearts of non-believers? Or is apologetical enterprise only for the believers' maturity in their religious conviction and assurance? These hard questions can be dealt with adequately only after far deeper issues are settled, e. g. the relationship between faith and knowledge, the place of human reason related to the work of the Holy Spirit, the concept of truth and its authenticity, and so on. Generally speaking, the differences of emphasis and approach have brought about several types of apologetical systems among evangelicals.¹⁰⁾ More specifically, there

9) C. S. Lewis, *God in the Dock*, ed., by Walter Hooper (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1970), p.103.

10) See Bernard Ramm, *Varieties of Christian Apologetics* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1961), pp.11-27, and John Jefferson Davis,

has been a debate ---what we call now Warfield-Kuyperian controversy--- within the Reformed circle, which is worthy of re-examination in order for us to understand C. S. Lewis's apologetical position. The impugment, which was usually discharged on the part of B. B. Warfield,¹¹⁾ attracted the attentions of many Christians, because it was not so much individual conflict as a typical disagreement between Old Princeton and Amsterdam Schools.

Before we go on into the sharp contrast between the two theologians of schools, let us first consider the common ground of mutual agreement and acknowledgement. There are at least three doctrinal and propositional statements on which both of them stand as ally. Firstly, both of them acknowledge that the objective knowledge of God can be found only in the Scriptures. Secondly, both of them believe in the doctrine of man's total depravity and therefore noetic effects by the Fall. Thirdly, they deny with one accord that any genuine efforts of human persuasion or argument cannot automatically create a saving faith in the hearts of hearers, which is only the work of the Holy Spirit. Then, What are the differences? First of all, in regard to a saving faith Kuyper affirms unswervingly the primacy of the work of Holy Spirit over against the function of human reason, while Warfield lays emphasis on the role of rational groundwork either along with the work of the Holy spirit or independent of it. Listen to the words of Abraham Kuyper:

Primer to Theology (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1981) pp.58-61.

- 11) Most of the attacks were taken initiative by B.B. Warfield. See Francis R. Beattie, *Apologetics* Vol. I (Richmond, Virginia: The Presbyterian Committee of Publication, 1903), pp.19-32, and B. B. Warfield, "Recent Theological Literature, IV-Systematic Theology", *The Princeton Theological Review*, Vol. I, No. 1 (January, 1903), pp.138-148.

Faith is not the working of a faculty inherent in the natural man; nor a new sense added to the five; nor a new soul-function; nor a faculty first dormant now active; but a disposition, mode of action, implanted by the Holy Spirit in the consciousness and will of the regenerate person, whereby he is enabled to accept Christ¹²⁾.

In contrast to this, Warfield tends to advocate the legitimate place of human reason, even though he does not deny the ultimate importance of work of the Holy Spirit.

We believe in Christ because it is rational to believe in Him, not even though it be irrational. Of course mere reasoning cannot make a Christian; but that is not because faith is not the result of evidence, but because a dead soul cannot respond to evidence. The action of the Holy Spirit in give faith is not apart from evidence, but along with evidence; and in the first instance consists in preparing the soul for the reception of the evidence.¹³⁾

Enlarging on the work of the Holy Spirit 'along with evidence', he goes further in giving an independent place to human reason, which may develop into a more dangerous position:

The truth therefore is that rational argumentation does, entirely apart from that specific operation of the Holy Ghost which produces saving faith, ground a genuine exercise of faith. This operation of the Spirit is not necessary then to produce faith, but only to give to a faith which naturally grows out of the proper grounds of faith, that particular quality which makes it saving faith.¹⁴⁾

12) Abraham Kuyper, *The Work of the Holy Spirit* (New York and London: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1900), p.415.

13) Benjamin B. Warfield, *Studies in Theology* (New York : Oxford University Press, 1932), p.15.

14) B. B. Warfield, *The Princeton Theological Review*, p.144.

Secondly, they disagree not only in recognizing the cause and elements of saving faith, but also in understanding the nature and characteristic of faith. While Kuyper frequently mentions human will related to faith, Warfield's idea of faith reflects a definitely intellectualistic view¹⁵⁾. Kuyper explains the faith "is not the act of the mind assenting to evangelical truth, but the trusting of the heart to be saved by Christ on the ground of His voluntary offering of Himself to sinners and of the promises to them that trust in Him. And we say also that faith has its seat, not in the understanding, but in the will; not being the assent to the truth it can not be in the understanding, and since it is trust it must have its seat in the will."¹⁶⁾ (emphasis' by Kuyper) But for Warfield, faith is, in all its exercises alike, a form of conviction, and is necessarily grounded in evidence¹⁷⁾. "It is not volitional consent or consent of will but rational(ly obtainable) evidence that moves the mind to consent to the reality of the thing in question".¹⁸⁾

Thirdly, there is a wide discrepancy between their statements about apologetics in its nature and task. Kuyper disparages the role of Apologetics, says Warfield in a disappointed mood when he summarizes Kuyper's position.

After the contents of Christianity have been set forth thetically in Dogmatics and Ethics, it finds itself, it seems, in a three fold conflict. This is waged with a pseudo-Christianity, a pseudo-religion, and a pseudo-philosophy. Three antithetic dogmatological disciplines are therefore requisite --- Polemics, Elenctics and Apologetics, corresponding, respectively, to heterodoxy,

15) John C. Vander Stelt, *Philosophy and Scripture: A Study in Old Princeton and Westminster Theology* (Marlton, New Jersey: Mack Publishing Company, 1978). p.171.

16) Abraham Kuyper, *op.cit.*, p.391.

17) Francis R. Beattie, *op.cit.*, p.25.

18) John C. Vander Stelt, *op.cit.*, pp.172.

paganism, philosophy. The least of these is Apologetics, which concerns itself only with the distinctively philosophical assault on Christianity.¹⁹⁾

In the eyes of Warfield, Kuyper had shown a parsimonious and reluctant attitude towards Apologetics, with which the former was tremendously dissatisfied. How can apologetics be just a reasoned defense of the faith and remain a small segment of the whole theological disciplines! For him it "undertakes not the defense, not even the vindication, but the establishment, not, strictly speaking, of Christianity, but rather of that knowledge of God which Christianity professes to embody and seeks to make efficient in the world, and which it is the business of theology scientifically to explicate. ---It is, on other words, the function of apologetics to investigate, explicate, and establish the grounds on which a theology---a science, of systematized knowledge of God---- is possible".²⁰⁾ He then proposes the five subdivisions of Apologetics : philosophical apologetics, psychological apologetics, establishment of the reality of the supernatural factor in history, historical apologetics and finally bibliological apologetics.²¹⁾ What should be our critique of Warfield's robust intellectual aggressiveness and conqueror mentality? "Warfield, in accordance with his emphasis on reason, pointed out that a truth, a fact, had to be credible to the mind before belief was possible,"²²⁾ while Kuyper, following in the footsteps of Calvin, clung adhesively to the doctrine of *testimonium Spiritus Sancti* putting the role of reason (and so Apologetics) into the secondary place. We can safely agree with R. Swanton in his

19) Francis R. Beattie, *op.cit.*, pp.21-22.

20) B. B. Warfield, *Studies in Theology*, pp.3, 4.

21) *Ibid.*, p.13.

22) Sidney H. Rooy, *Kuyper Vs. Warfield: An Historical Approach to the Nature of Apologetics* (a S.T.M. degree thesis, the Union Theological Seminary, 1956), p.46.

incisive appraisal of Warfield's theological roots and formation.

In certain respects, the theology of Warfield is stamped with the traits of the philosophy ruling at this time. The orthodoxy of the sixteenth century, by which Warfield was largely influenced, coming under Aristotelian stresses, showed some tendency of moving in a Thomistic direction. ---Thus he adopted a rationalistic apologetic as a necessary prolegomena for the establishment of theology as a scientific discipline and virtually accepted the two-story theory of Aquinas that "*gratia non tollit naturam sed perficit*".²³⁾

III

What significance does this critique bear to C. S. Lewis's strategy of persuasion as a Christian apologist? In other words, can we say C. S. Lewis's would take side either with Warfield's or Kuyper? As far as I am concerned, neither Warfield's position nor Kuyperian approach does not provide any direct, meaningful interpretative framework for understanding Lewis's apologetical theology.²⁴⁾ This will be understood clearly when we bring to light

23) R. Swanton, "Warfield and Progressive Orthodoxy", *The Reformed Theological Review*, 23 (October, 1964), p.76.

24) Cf. "His accusers think of him as a peculiar artifact, an intellectual anachronism; others of his readers, particularly those who are partisans of theological conservatism of various kinds, tend to believe that he must really hold to the inerrancy of Scripture, or to very high views of the church, or to some other meta-theological position with which such hearty supernaturalism is usually associated.

But Lewis Will not be thus associated. He does not espouse fundamentalism or "high-church" views, or a lofty view of the development of Christian doctrine, or a simply experiential anti-intellectualism either, His point is neither to be for any of these nor to be against them" [Paul L. Holmer, C. S. Lewis: *The Shape of His Faith and Thought* (New York: Harper& Row Publishers, 1976), p.102] Holmer seems to provide a food for thought in this matter, though I do not agree with him in every detail.

his theological foundation in a special regard to the nature, place and function of human reason within a context of Christian persuasion and communication. First of all, we cannot explain his apologetical position without mentioning his distinctive view of human rationality, which supports his emphasis upon the place of reason in theological thought. For him human reason is neither individual nor subjective activity. "Reason is not dependent upon any individual mind ; it is a universal reality that can be tapped by anyone at any time, as necessary. Like Plato's Forms---indeed, as one of Plato's Forms---it exists apart from individual reasoners"²⁵⁾ Aided by this Platonic thought pattern, he goes on to argue for the validity of reason itself. He established it by refuting those who are imprisoned in their mechanistic and deterministic view of human reason. "Of those who make this claim he asked, How is your mind able to decide that its functions are determined by nature, unless your power to reason somehow stands outside the natural process? If reason is not extranatural, rational inferences about nature's irrationality are themselves irrational".²⁶⁾ This same refutation applies to those who deny the objective validity of reason.²⁷⁾ For Lewis, human rationality and objective reality go hand in hand together, because

He lends us a little of His reasoning powers and that is how we think
---We reason because God reasons and holds our hand while we do it. ---just

25) Robert Houston Smith, *Patches of Godlight* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1981), p.115.

26) *Ibid.*, p.112.

27) See his "De Futilitate", *Christian Reflections*, ed. by Walter Hooper (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1967), p.63. And this is the major idea in his repudiation of naturalism in *Miracles*.

as our thinking can only succeed because it is a drop out of the ocean of His intelligence.²⁸⁾

Then what about human depravity after the Fall? What is the relationship between function of human reason and total depravity? Unfortunately Lewis's understanding of the doctrine of total depravity is both negative and defective.

This chapter will have been misunderstood if anyone describes it as a reinstatement of the doctrine of Total Depravity. I disbelieve the doctrine, partly on the logical ground that if our depravity were total we should not know ourselves to be depraved, and partly because experience shows us much goodness in human nature.²⁹⁾

It is obvious that his denial of the doctrine lies in misconception, since it actually neither rejects the "remnant" of *Imago Dei* in man nor disapproves human dignity and some potentiality.³⁰⁾ Lewis believes in the Fall through Adam, and understands it as loss of the ability of his rational soul fully to control his whole self.

Up to that moment the human spirit had been in full control of the human organism. It doubtless expected that it would retain this control when it had ceased to obey God. But its authority over the organism was a delegated authority which it lost when it ceased to be God's delegate. Having cut itself

28) C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity* (New York: MacMillan Publishing Company, 1952), p.60.

29) C. S. Lewis, *The Problem of Pain* (New York: MacMillan Publishing Company, 1962) pp.66-67.

30) Louis Berkhof says, "total depravity indicates (1) that the inherent corruption extends to every part of man's nature, to all the faculties and powers of both soul and body; and (2) that there is no spiritual good, that is, good in relation to God, in the sinner at all, but only perversion". [*Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co. 1976), pp.246-247]. See also John Calvin, *Institute of Christian Religion*, Vol. I, ed., John T. McNeill (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, p.270).

off, as far as it could, from the source of power. (...) And desires began to come up into the mind of man, not as his reason chose, but just as the biochemical and environmental facts happened to cause them. And the mind itself fell under the psychological laws of association and the like which God had made to rule the psychology of the higher anthropoids.³¹⁾

From the above explanation we are able to infer that he acknowledge the substantial change brought about by the Fall. What is ambiguous is that whether he admits the noetic defect or limitation by human depravity. Generally speaking, he can be seen to recognize the tragic effect on human mind, even though he still believes in the normal function of human reason as it is now.³²⁾

The second point we should take into account to understand Lewis's apologetical position is the function of reason in generating faith, or the relation between faith and reason (or evidence) As we expect, Lewis is very confident of the function and role in human persuasion. Reason is the means through which truth is apprehended. Reason, as analytical and discursive thought, is always in the foreground of attack, defense and conviction. After all, without logical clarity and precision of thought, how can our

31) *The Problem of Pain*, pp.81-82.

32) This problem can be controversial, since Lewis himself does not provide any direct, articulate doctrinal statements. Robert H. Smith in *op. cit.* interprets the matter in a different way:

One strain of Christian thought, the Calvinist, held that by the fall in Eden man became totally depraved, to the extent that even the ability of the mind to reason became corrupted by sin Lewis could not accept this doctrine. He held rather that ratio, like mathematical principles, had an inherently incorruptible quality, and that reasoning could be done properly by human beings within the limitations of the available data. He was also not inclined to doubt that the intellectus could be the vehicle for an ascent toward God, however incomplete the mortal perception of reality might necessarily be (chap.7, #12, p.254)

For me, he seems to be a little biased, since he assumes complacently that C. S. Lewis is influenced decisively by Platonic psychology (See p.169).

apologetics be fruitful? As Screwtape is worried, "By the very act of arguing, you awake the patient's reason; and once it is awake, who can foresee the result?"³³⁾ The insistence on Reason as the key to every kind of truth is depicted allegorically when John was rescued by Reason and when she [Reason] answers "They are younger sisters of mine, and their names are Philosophy and Theology".³⁴⁾ So he can advise anyone that

I am not asking anyone to accept Christianity if his best reasoning tells him the weight of the evidence is against it.³⁵⁾

Belief, in the initial stage as an assent to a proposition, demands good evidence which reason can judge and weigh.

But so far as I know it is not expected that a man should assent to these propositions in the first place without evidence or in the teeth of the evidence. --- And in fact, the man who accepts Christianity always thinks he had good evidence ; whether, like Dante, *fisci e metafisiti argomenti*, or historical evidence, or the evidence of religious experience, or authority, or all these together. For of course authority, however we may value it in this or that particular instance, is a kind of evidence. All of our historical beliefs, most of our geographical beliefs, many of our beliefs about matters that concern us in daily life, are accepted on the authority of other human being, whether we are Christians, Atheists, Scientists, or Men-in-the-Street.³⁶⁾

33) *Screwtape Letters* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1982), p.8.

34) *The Pilgrim's Regress* (New York: Bantam Books, 1981), p.59.

35) *Mere Christianity*, p.123.

36) "On Obstinacy in Belief" *The Worlds Last Night and Other Essays* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1960), p.17

In this sense, faith is never antagonistic to but rather based on reason. "The battle is between faith and reason on one side and emotion and imagination",³⁷⁾ (Somewhere else he contrasts faith with sight according to 2 Cor. 5:7).³⁸⁾

Is it the whole picture? Definitely not! Even though Lewis lays some emphasis on the role of human reason (and also evidence), that is not the ultimate element in possessing (or receiving) a saving faith. He classifies faith into two stages.³⁹⁾

(a) Faith-A: a settled intellectual assent. In this sense faith (or belief) in God hardly differs from faith in the uniformity of Nature or the consciousness of other people. This is what, I think, has sometimes been called a 'notional' or 'intellectual' or 'carnal' faith.

(b) Faith-B: a trust, or confidence, in the God whose existence is thus assented to. This involves an attitude of will. It is more like our confidence in a friend⁴⁰⁾

Philosophical arguments for the existence of God are presumably intended to produce Faith-A, which is not a religious state, even though it is a necessary pre-condition of Faith-B. He denies that Faith-B follows automatically on the acquisition of Faith-A, since the former is a gift from God. Faith in this sense clings obstinately to the proposition even against much evidence and possibly a state

37) *Mere Christianity*, p.122.

38) "Religion: Reality or Substitute?", *Christian Reflections*, p.43.

39) Richard B. Cunningham in *op.cit.*, affirms that Lewis's distinction of two levels of faith is originated from Thomas Aquinas's idea of *fides* and *fiducia*: *fides* as intellectual assent and *fiducia* as trust in a person (p.80). This proves to be false, because Lewis identifies Faith-B as *fides* [See "Is Theism Important?", *God in the Dock*, ed., by Walter Hooper (Grand Rapids: Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1983), p.174]

40) *Ibid.*, pp.172-173.

of doubt, without which no genuine trust can be produced.

We believe that His intention is to create a certain personal relation between Himself and us, a relation really *sui generis* but analogically describable in terms of filial or of erotic love. Complete trust is an ingredient in that relation—such trust as could have no room to grow except where is also room for doubt. To love involve trusting the beloved beyond the evidence, even against much evidence.⁴¹⁾

Lewis, though he puts confidence in the human reason, never maintains the human reason is the dominant factor in generating a true saving faith,⁴²⁾ since the human mind is not completely ruled by reason. He says, "Authority, reason, experience : on these three, mixed in varying proportions all our knowledge depends"⁴³⁾, according to the Medieval tradition.⁴⁴⁾ Elsewhere admitting the rose of diverse factors, he added the element of our conduct which he think is crucial to the salvation of men.

It is right and inevitable that we shd. be much concerned about the salvation of those we love. But we must be careful not to expect or demand that their salvation shd. conform to some ready-made pattern of our own. ---But God has His own way with each soul. --- What we practise, not (save at rare

41) "On Obstinacy in Belief", *op.cit.*, pp.25-26.

42) Consider the following statement: "As to whether reason can rigorously prove God and immortality, what is one to say? I so not remember to have seen a proof that appeared to me absolutely compelling, but that may be only my reason or the writer's reason. At any rate it is obvious that pure reason, in human being, is very often in fact not convinced". [unpublished letter, 5 October, 1938, quoted in Peter J. Schakel, *Reason and Imagination in C. S. Lewis* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1984), p.129] See also his autobiographical poem "Reason" in C. S. Lewis, *Poems*, ed. by Walter Cooper (New York: Harcourt, Brace&Word, 1965), p.81.

43) "Religion: Reality or Substitute?", *op.cit.*, p.41.

44) *The Discarded Image* (Cambridge University Press, 1964), p.189.

intervals) what we preach, is usually our great contribution to the conversion of other (...)45)

He even confessed in a letter to Dorothy Sayers that "A doctrine never seems dimmer to me than when I have just successfully defended it".46) In summary, human reasoning is essential in the initial phase or weighing evidence, but incomplete in producing a living trust in God, and ironically sometimes it saps the faith energy of the apologist himself!

Then why does C. S. Lewis put so much energy into argument, refutation and defense, for which he was regarded as a Christian rationalist? There are threefold, distinctive yet inter-related reason for his seeming tendency of being rational. Firstly, he reacted strongly against a great many schools of Christian thought in their negative, inadequate view of human reason.

Orthodox Protestantism has frequently disparaged Reason and contrasted it with faith. The Neo-Orthodox movement in contemporary European Protestantism tends to set Reason and Revelation in opposition and view man as a creature who tremblingly accepts a salvation that his Reason cannot encompass. Modernist Christianity, though theoretically committed to Reason, often becomes so subjective that it dwells on the religious twinges of the individual and bypasses the questions of whether Reason can work its way to any objective religious truth.47)

He knew very well the non-believers, specially the intellectual people had despised the Christian religion for their pre-occupation

45) W. H. Lewis (ed.), *Letters of C. S. Lewis* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1966) p.261.

46) *Ibid.*, p.209.

47) Chad Walsh, *op.cit.*, pp.110-111.

with naturalism, determinism, and scientism. What makes things worse was that the Church could not present Christianity in an effective and reasonable way to them. Lewis tried to turn the tide and make human reason to take side with Christianity. Secondly, Lewis becomes as rational as possible knowing that the objective and reasonable evidence is desperately needed when the hearers of Christian belief system are encouraged to pass the threshold of faith. As I pointed out the distinction earlier in this paper, Lewis distinguishes between two senses of the word 'faith'. Into the stage of 'intellectual' faith, no one can be forced without good evidence. Most of C. S. Lewis's works are written for this purpose ---providing the reasons for believing God's existence, defending the outright attacks against Christianity and persuading human mind with forceful argument. Fortunately, he was highly qualified for this job by endowments and by training.⁴⁸⁾ Once he unsheathes the sword of reason, great territory is claimed under the flag of Christianity. Thirdly, he demonstrated the rational element of Christian faith so that he might generate a favorable atmosphere in which Christianity could seem reasonably tenable and skeptics or doubters could not gain any psychologically, intellectually advantageous strongholds over Christianity. Austin Farrar carries

48) Among other things, he was educated under the atheist tutor Kirkpatrick: "If ever a man came near to being a purely logical entity, that was Kirk. ---Yet though I could never have been a scientist. I had scientific as well as imaginative impulses, and I loved ratiocination. Kirk excited and satisfied one side of me. ---After being knocked down sufficiently often I began to know a few guards and blows, and to put on intellectual muscle. In the end, unless I flatter myself, I became a not contemptible sparring partner. ---If Kirk's ruthless dialectic had been merely a pedagogic instrument I might have resented it. But he knew no other way of talking. No age or sex was spared the elenchus. It was a continuous astonishment to him that anyone should not desire to be clarified or corrected". [*Surprised by Joy* (New York" Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Publishers, 1955), pp.135, 137]

the point cogently when he says, "For though argument does not create conviction, the lack of it destroys the belief. --- Rational argument does not create belief, but it maintains a climate in which belief may flourish".⁴⁹⁾ The apologist does not force, impose, or beg. He just describes and presents. The decision and judgment are totally up to the hearers of the content. The three typical didactic works of C. S. Lewis present Christianity in this way. Actually he makes this point clear either in the preface (*Mere Christianity*) or in the introductory chapters (*Miracles*, *The Problem of Pain*).

But in this book I am not trying to convert anyone to my own position, Ever since I became a Christian I have thought that the best, perhaps the only, service I could do for my unbelieving neighbors was to explain and defend the belief that has been common to nearly all Christians at all times.⁵⁰⁾

This book is intended as a preliminary to historical inquiry. I am not a trained historian and I shall not examine the historical evidence for the Christian miracles. My effort is to put my readers in a position to do so.⁵¹⁾

In what follows it must be understood that I am not primarily arguing the truth of Christianity but describing its origin—a task, in my view necessary if we are to put the problem of pain in its right setting.⁵²⁾

By putting Christianity into a public arena of rational objectivity, he never dispels but rather more frequently fascinates and charms the other-wise perennially skeptical, intellectually biased outsiders

49) Austin Farrar, "The Christian Apologist", *Light on C. S. Lewis*, ed. by Jocelyn Gibb (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1965), p.26.

50) *Mere Christianity*, p.26.

51) *Miracles*, p.4.

52) *The Problem of Pain*, p.16.

of Christianity.

IV

Having looked into the apologetical position of C. S. Lewis in regard to his view of human reason, let us revert to the earlier question : How does Lewis's position fit into the Warfield-Kuyperian debate? or What significance does the critique of Warfield's aggressive intellectualism bear to Lewis's strategy of persuasion as a Christian apologist? If Warfield's position was criticised for his extreme elements, then, what about Lewis's? Are there any common ground for both? Apparently even the first few glimpses suggest there be some similar points between Warfield's position and Lewis's. The most striking similarity lies in their distinction between two stages of senses of faith. What Warfield calls "historical faith" and "saving faith"⁵³⁾ is roughly equivalent to "intellectual faith" and "trusting faith" in Lewis's system.⁵⁴⁾ The formers are grounds of or pre-conditions for the latters. Secondly, the role of reason in weighing the evidence is given much importance in their apologetical position. Compare the following statements of evidence; first Warfield's, then Lewis's.

For ourselves, we confess we can conceive of no act of faith of any kind which is not grounded in evidence : faith is a specific form of persuasion or conviction, and all persuasion or conviction is grounded in evidence.⁵⁵⁾

53) B. B. Warfield, *The Princeton Theological Review*, p.144.

54) "Is Theism Important?" *op.cit.*, pp.172-173.

55) *The Princeton Theological Review*, p.142.

But so far as I know it is not expected that a man should assent to these propositions in the first place without evidence or in the teeth of the evidence. ---And in fact, the man who accepts Christianity always thinks he had good evidence.⁵⁶⁾

Thirdly, both of them tend to minimized or belittle the influence of the Fall on noetic aspect of human mind, even though they admit man gas fallen nature now.

Sin clearly has not destroyed or altered in its essential nature any one of man's faculties, although it has affected the operation of them all. The depraved man neither reasons, nor feels, nor wills as he ought.⁵⁷⁾

Up to that moment the human spirit had been in full control of the human organism. --- And desires began to come up into the mind of man, not as his reason chose, but just as the biochemical and environmental facts happened to cause them. And the mind itself fell under the psychological laws of association and the like God had made to rule the psychology of the higher anthropoids.⁵⁸⁾

However, though there may exist an overlapping aspect between C. S. Lewis's pattern and Warfield's, and though the Warfield-Kuyperian debate may give some insight into C. S. Lewis's apologetical position, his apologetical tactics can not be fully realized within the context of their controversy for the following five reasons : (1) Contextual or Situational differences ; (2) No presentation of overall theological position on apologetics ; (3) Reflection of spiritual odyssey ; (4) Sensitivity to the diversity

56) "On Obstnacy in Belief", *op.cit.* p.17.

57) *The Princeton Theological Review*, p.145.

58) *The Problem of Pain*, pp.81-82.

of fiducial problems, and, finally, (5) Wholistic approach to human persuasion.

(1) Contextual or Situational Differences : We must bear in mind that there is a wide gap of theological, academical and religious environments among those three people : between Kuyper and Warfield, Warfield and Lewis, and Lewis from both of them. The main difference between Warfield and Kuyper in terms of apologetical response and emphasis can be traced back to the different historical situations in which both of them wielded the swords of apologetics in a dissimilar way. " Kuyper, in attempting to reclaim Christianity from the radical Rationalists, refused to compromise with the Moderates. ---But all of this, he insisted, could never be theoretically defended in the courts of pure reason. ---Warfield, contrawise, had been educated in an atmosphere favorable to the supernatural character of Christianity. ---partly, then because of his own ability to use the apologetical method of defense with brilliance, but more because of the defensive theological situation in which he chose to remain, he accorded to reason a high position in the defense of Christianity".⁵⁹⁾ The historical scenes of Lewis's apologetical efforts, however, are totally different either from Kuyper's or Warfield's. Even though there is an outward similarity between Warfield and C. S. Lewis in being a rationalist, ultimately Lewis's romantic rationalism⁶⁰⁾ is considerably different from Warfield's aggressive intellectualism. Besides that, unlike Warfield, Lewis was directly involved in

59) Sidney H. Rooy, *op.cit.*, pp.44, 45.

60) Cf. Peter Kreeft, *C. S. Lewis* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1969), pp.4-12. Lewis's rationalism can be said to follow the pattern of Plato, while Warfield's intellectualism can be traced back to Aristotle.

defending the faith against atheist, skeptics and liberals through the Oxford Socratic Club.⁶¹⁾ It was not only after the university intellectuals but after " the great mass of storekeepers, lawyers, realtors, morticians, policemen and artisans"⁶²⁾ that his heart was. Mere Christianity was primarily developed from his Broadcast Talks. His chief aim was to " translate every bit of our Theology into the vernacular".⁶³⁾ Without considering the environmental factor, we do not do full justice to the cause they had fought for.

(2) No Presentation of Theological Position on Apologetics : It was far from the intention of C. S. Lewis to erect a magnificent apologetical system or to explain the relationship between theology and apologetics. Being neither a professional dogmatician nor a religious philosopher, he simply answered the questions, explained the doctrines, and defended the 'mere Christianity'. "The grand yet simple theological truth that Lewis has such a strong concern for are actually the elementary and plain assertions that make up the gospel itself. These are the Kerygma, the rudimentary components making up the evangel, summarized in the creed of the apostles".⁶⁴⁾ Since most of his works are focusing of specific problems one at a

61) "The Founding of the Oxford Socratic Club". *God in the Dock*, pp.126-128. Also cf. "C. S. Lewis lived through a period in English life when the intellectuals and the esthetes were anti-Christians and certainly highly critical of the role of the church. ---Lewis could scarcely disregard the obvious fact that the intellectuals also had been disregarding Christianity for a long time. Shelly, William Morris, Thackeray, Meredith, Swinburne, Hardy, Trollope; and numerous scientists and philosophers of the past century and a half have written books that are neither by nor for people who think of the likelihood of damnation, the possibility of miracles the incarnation of God in Jesus Christ, or the magnitude of sin (Paul L. Holmer, *op.cit.*, pp.92, 93)

62) C. S. Lewis, "Rejoinder to Dr. Pittnger", *Christian Century*, Vol. LXXV NO. 48. (November 26, 1958), p.1361.

63) "Christian Apologetics", *God in the Dock*, p.98.

64) Paul L. Holmer, *op.cit.*, p.98.

time, it is a baffling experience to correlate the explanations here and there, and to reconstruct even a minimal coherent theological system from them. For example, there is no clear statement regarding the relation between the role of human reason and the work of the Holy Spirit in conversion experience, not to mention common grace, natural theology or point of contact, which makes Lewis's apologetical position ambiguous or misunderstood, whereas Kuyper and Warfield express their views unequivocally through the significantly theological declaration.

(3) Reflection of Spiritual Odyssey : Any apologists can rightly be said that their works of apologetics reflect or display, in some way or other, what they have experienced and struggled with until they commit themselves to God. In this sense Lewis is no exception.⁶⁵⁾ As he confessed, his spiritual journey in terms of intellectual or philosophical transition had been from "popular realism" to Philosophical Idealism; from Idealism to Pantheism; from Pantheism to Theism; and from Theism to Christianity.⁶⁶⁾ These consecutive but distinct intellectual experiences give a peculiar yet enriching flavor to his apologetical enterprise. The sheer variety of his ideas, expressions, and illustrations can never be subjected to a priori theological diagnosis or to an oversimplified appraisal.

(4) Sensitivity to the Diversity of Fiducial Problems: The human soul is never static in the process of believing, doubting and committing itself to God. The inner struggles as well as outward reactions become full-blown as it goes under intellectual,

65) Cf. "More important, C. S. Lewis was an atheist who became a Christian. He traveled a circuitous path to God, and his own moral, spiritual, and intellectual experience colors and illumines his later writings, giving him perceptive firsthand insight into many problems confronting the Christian apologist". (Richard B. Cunningham, *op.cit.*, pp.21-22).

66) *The Pilgrim's Regress*, Preface XII..

psychological, and spiritual dynamics. Even after becoming a believer in God, his painful strivings never decrease. Intellectual barriers may force him into a state of practical atheist. The problem of pain can drive him a burned-out Christian even after a lot of times of rededication. Various levels of religious experience may turn him into a relativistic backslider. In order to get across the Christian message to these agonizing people, whether Christian or not, the apologist should be sensitive and creative enough. Therefore, Lewis has attempted to cope with these complicated fiducial problems through diverse apologetical means and devices, which cannot be moulded into neither Kuyper's scheme nor Warfield's. His works, sometimes, serve as a pre-evangelistic tool, tearing down the intellectual barrier which the non-believers usually have, even though they do not begin to profess Christianity right at the moment they read them. Listen to the reviewer of a journal:

At the ingenuity of this book [*Miracles*] I stood aghast. But I am not touched by its covert appeal to piety, nor moved to credence by its overt argument. It is modernistic apologetics for Christian fundamentalism⁶⁷⁾

Or think about Charles Colson's testimony⁶⁸⁾ of how he was "born again" mainly through reading *Mere Christianity*, in which case his writing played a decisive and direct role in converting a non-believer into Christianity. Lewis's works have contributed not only in the area of pre-evangelistic and evangelistic endeavor but

67) T. V. Smith, "Book Review", *The Saturday Review of Literature*, Vol. XXXI NO.5 (January 31, 1948), p.28.

68) Charles W. Colson, *Born Again* (Old Tappan, New Jersey: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1977), pp.118-130.

also towards Christian maturity for those who have intellectual, doctrinal and sometimes theological questions. Turn your attention to the words of Richard B. Cunningham:

At a crucial time in my own spiritual experience, when I first began to have intellectual difficulties about the Christian faith, I bought and read *The Screwtape Letters*. Shortly afterward I read *Mere Christianity*. Both books helped me surmount some initial obstacles in my faith.⁶⁹⁾

(5) Wholistic Approach to Human Persuasion: Most of the apologist's (including Kuyper and Warfield if they can be called apologist at all) tactics are solely dependent upon the intellectual bombardment or rational deployment, and that is all. Unlike the traditional apologists, C. S. Lewis appealed both to human intellect and to his emotion, about which we will look over in next section. He employed the imaginative elements into his apologetical strategy so that the readers may fully respond to the meaning of Christian faith, at the same time not minimizing the element of reasoning powers. His ingenuity lies in the integration of intellect and emotion, of reason and imagination, of scholarship and aesthetics, and of speculative philosophy and literary artistry --- so powerful and so innovative that he created an apologetical strategy of a *sui generis* kind.

Thus far we have covered some aspects of C. S. Lewis's apologetical strategy with a special regard to human reason. Let me summarize them in the following four statements.

Firstly, Lewis's affirmation of human reason can be traced back to Platonic thought of Form. In this sense he is a rationalist.

69) Richard B. Cunningham, *op.cit.*, p.11.

Secondly, we arrive at the higher form of faith starting from the 'intellectual faith'. Men cannot work at faith in the former sense, for it is a gift from God. Usually apologetical efforts are directed towards the intellectual faith for which the role of human reason is significantly important in weighing the evidence.

Thirdly, he bears the brunt of various kinds of attack against the Christianity, frequently through his reasoning power. The unfavorable atmosphere against the Christian faith can partially be reversed with the reasonable explanation of Christian religion.

Fourthly, when we examine Lewis's understanding of human reason in the light of Warfield-Kuperian debate, his position seems to approximate Warfield's rather than Kuyper's. However, we should not identify the position of C. S. Lewis either blindly or completely with that of Warfield.

V

Up to now, Lewis's apologetical strategy has been viewed primarily in regard of human reason or rationality. In this final section, I would like to turn my focus

on the extralogical (or non-rational) constituent and relational elements of human persuasion which distinguish Lewis from all other apologists and bring him such a success. They are (i) integrative harmony between intellect and imagination; (ii) interpersonal communication skill, and finally (iii) total commitment to God. The first quality we now focus on is integration of reason and imagination. Why is it necessary for perceiving reality? Let us listen to C. S. Lewis's own words.

Human intellect is incurably abstract. Pure mathematics is the type of successful thought. Yet the only realities we experience are concrete ---this pain, this pleasure, this dog, this man. While we are loving the man, bearing the pain, enjoying the pleasure, we are not intellectually apprehending Pleasure, Pain or Personality. When we begin to do so, on the other hand, the concrete realities sink to the level of mere instances or examples we are no longer dealing with them, but with that which they exemplify. This is our dilemma-- either to taste and not to know or to know and not to taste--or, more strictly, to lack one kind of knowledge because we are in experience or to lack another kind because we are outside it.⁷⁰⁾

This dilemma can be partially solved by myth. Myth enables one, through the imagination, to "taste" reality. Since "reason is the natural organ of truth; but imagination is the organ of meaning",⁷¹⁾ both elements find true fulfillment in myth. "What flows into you from the myths is not truth but reality (truth is always about something, but reality is that about which truth is)".⁷²⁾ The integration of reason and imagination⁷³⁾ opens up a new dimension

70) "Myth Became Fact", *God in the Dock*, p.65.

71) "Bluspels and Flalaansferes", *Rehabilitations and Other Essays* (London: Oxford University Press, 1939), p.157.

72) "Myth Became Fact", *op.cit.*, p.66.

73) Roughly speaking, there are two views about how reason and imagination get together in Lewis' apologetical strategy: what I call "polymor rationality" view and "progressive integration" view. The former view is proposed by Paul L. Holmer in *C. S. Lewis: The Shape of His Faith and Thought*. His discovery is that there is no single and univocal way of being rational: for rationality cannot altogether exclude emotion, it cannot say all myths are prescientific and leave matters at that, it cannot be coolly detached and exclude a life of feelings and pathos.--- This is a rediscovery and not invention, It is a clue to a kind of polymorphic rationality which can be practiced and verified in the reduplication (pp.99-100, 107)

Similar interpretation is given in Robert Houston Smith's book *Patches of Godlight Ratio*, for all its importance, was, as we have seen, a lesser stage of rational thought *Intellectus* represented a loftier form of reason, which

for both Lewis himself and the readers. Their Whole man was touched --their minds and their hearts-- by his writings. A lot of literary and hermeneutical devices were created: transposition,⁷⁴⁾ symbolism,⁷⁵⁾ personification, allegory. As Lewis became mature in the integration, it was naturally demonstrated in his apologetical writings.⁷⁶⁾

The second quality found in Lewis is one of the most neglected factors in the apologetical scene. The success of interpersonal communication skill is dependent not so much on techniques but on sensitivity to human needs. John S. Brent and Douglas E. Chismar challenge us in this matter:

Traditional methods of intellectually defending Christianity err through being overly abstract and insensitive to the interpersonal dynamics involved in an apologetic encounter. ---It is argued that a person-centered approach reduces defensive posturing and encourages openness to a change in belief-systems.⁷⁷⁾

included human imagination and was capable of lifting the spiritual adept ever closer to absolute reality (p.135.)

For the above two authors, imagination is one of major functions of human rationality, insofar as the holder of progressive integration view asserts that it takes a long time for these two co-existing yet distinctive elements to be integrated in Lewis's consciousness (See Peter J. Schakel's book *Reason and Imagination in C. S. Lewis*, especially pp.148-151) There is an evidence which supports the second view even in Lewis Himself's writing:

Such, then, was the state of my imaginative life, over against it stood the life of my intellect. The two hemispheres of my mind were in the sharpest contrast. On the one side a many-islanded sea of poetry and myth; on the other a glib and shallow "rationalism" (*Mere Christianity*, p.170).

74) "Transposition", *The Weight of Glory and Other Addresses* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1966), pp.16-29.

75) *Allegory of Love* (London: Oxford University Press, 1948), pp.44-46.

76) The most well-integrated book is *Till We Have Faces* according to Peter J. Schakel, *op.cit.*, Preface X.

77) John S. Brent and Douglas E. Chismar, "Person-Centered Apologetics: An Emphatic Approach", *Journal of Psychology and Christianity*, Vol. 3 No. 1

Unlike the traditional apologists, Lewis excels in a class by himself if measured by the above standard. Besides technical clarity,⁷⁸⁾ stylistic simplicity,⁷⁹⁾ and masterly confidence⁸⁰⁾ in the subject concerned, his enviable personality flickers through his speech or writing. Among many virtues two are outstanding; modesty and honesty. On modesty, there abounds a plenty of evidence.

Lewis was not trying to impress his own personality on his readers or listeners, but rather trying to get out of the way and let his message speak⁸¹⁾

He claims himself to be just a layman; he does not ascribe originality to his writings;⁸²⁾ he admits his mistakes or weakness when exposed.⁸³⁾ Closely related to this is his honesty. When touching a personal matter, he practises a complete self-transparency.⁸⁴⁾ He candidly shares his doubt and rage when his wife dies.⁸⁵⁾ It is totally no wonder that

The reader never feels lectured at or detached from the author. Rather, one feels that he and C. S. Lewis are sitting down over tea to discuss an interesting subject-- whatever it might be.⁸⁶⁾

(Spring, 1984), p.18.

78) Richard B. Cunningham. *op.cit.*, p.188.

79) Peter Kreeft, *op.cit.*, pp.9-10.

80) Austin Farrar, "The Christian Apologist, *op.cit.*, p.24.

81) Richard L. Purtill, *op.cit.*, p.10.

82) See *Mere Christianity*, p.6. and *The Problem of Pain*, p.10.

83) See "Rejoinder to Dr. Pittenger", *op.cit.*, p.1359.

84) For example, see *Mere Christianity* for his expression of manual clumsiness (p.12) and shyness (p.47).

85) N. W. Cleak (a pseudonym of C. S. Lewis), *A Grief Observed* (Greenwich, Connecticut, 1961), pp.7-16.

86) Richard B. Cunningham. *op.cit.*, p.131.

The last quality, which is the most precious and laudable, is total commitment to God on the part of C. S. Lewis. It is very easy for an apologist to fall into arid, prideful intellectualism or to wallow complacently in the ditch of self-glorification. But he fixes his eyes of faith only on the Author of faith. He has learned how to live out the doctrines he defends in a vital fellowship with the Giver of that doctrines. Here is the secret:

I have found that nothing is more dangerous to one's own faith than the work of an apologist. No doctrine of that Faith seems to me so spectral, so unreal as one that I have just successfully defended in a public debate. For a moment, you see, it has seemed to rest on oneself: as a result, when you go away from that debate, it seems no stronger than that weak pillar. That is why we apologists take our falling back continually from the web of our own arguments, as from our intellectual counters, into the reality---from Christian apologetics into Christ Himself.⁸⁷⁾

87) *Christian Apologetics*, *op.cit.*, p.103.

cf. also on his poem "The Apologist's Evening Prayer" from *Poems*, p.129.

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-요 약-

C. S. 루이스의 변증에 나타난 이성의 역할

송 인 규

C. S. 루이스처럼 다차원적인 인물을 어떤 한 틀에 넣어 정형화시키는 일은 상당히 편협한 작업이 될 수 있다. 그러나 변증가로서 루이스를 살피는 일-- 특히 그가 인간의 이성을 어떻게 이해하며 활용하고 있는가와 관련하여 --은 매우 유익하고 보람이 있는 작업으로 여겨진다.

필자는 루이스의 변증 작업을 분석·평가함에 있어, 하나의 '이종교배'(異種交配 crossfertilization) 방식을 도입하고자 한다. 즉 개혁파 신학 내에서는 이미 널리 알려진 카이퍼-워필드(Kuyper-Warfield) 논쟁을 하나의 기준점으로 삼아 루이스의 변증 신학적 기초를 밝혀보려는 것이다.

전체적으로 보면 루이스의 입장은 워필드의 친(親) 이성적 경향에 가까운 것으로 평가할 수 있다. 그러나 그 말이, 루이스를 워필드와 똑같은 진영의 변증가로 분류해야 한다는 뜻은 아니다. 사실 루이스가 펼친 변증 활동의 성격은, 루이스 특유의 플라톤주의적 이성(理性) 이해, 이성과 신앙 사이의 다층적 관계 설정, 이성과 상상력의 보완적 통합 작업 등 여러 가지 특이하고 비상한 요인들로 인해, 그를 판에 박힌 듯한 전통적 변증가의 범주에 가뒀을 수 없도록 만들고 있다.

이 소논문의 종반부에서는 이렇게 루이스를 독특한 모습의 변증가로 만들어 준, 더 이상의 요인들을 추적해서 밝히고자 했다. 오직 이와 같은 다양한 각도에서의 고찰만이, 루이스 같은 인물의 변증 활동과

변증 신학적 면모를 좀더 사실적으로 드러내는 것이라 여겼기 때문이다.