

CLIVE STAPLES LEWIS: A PSYCHOBIOGRAPHY

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Supervisor: Prof J. P. Fouché



Clive Staples Lewis

McGrath, A. (2013). *C. S. Lewis - A life: Eccentric genius, reluctant prophet*. Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers.

Canto 1, *Dymer*, in *Narrative Poems* (Lewis, 1969, p. 7)

...

You stranger, long before your glance can light
Upon these words, time will have washed away
The moment when I first took pen to write,
With all my road before me – yet to-day,
Here, if at all, we meet; the unfashioned clay
Ready to both our hands; both hushed to see
That which is nowhere yet come forth and be.

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Declaration

I, Gabriël Hermanus Oosthuizen, declare that the Master's degree research dissertation that I herewith submit for the degree/qualification Masters of Social Science at the University of the Free State is my independent work, and that I have not previously submitted it for a qualification at another institution of higher education.

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Contents

Declaration.....	iv
Declaration by editor	v
Turnitin report	vi
List of tables.....	xvi
Abstract.....	xvii
CHAPTER 1 : INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Chapter Preview	1
1.2 Primary Research Aim	1
1.3 Orientation to the Research	2
1.3.1 General problem statement.....	2
1.3.2 The psychobiographical subject.....	4
1.3.3 Psychobiographical approach.....	5
1.3.4 Erik Erikson’s psychosocial theory of personality development.....	6
1.4 Researcher’s Personal Passage	8
1.5 Overview of the Study.....	9
1.6 Chapter Summary	10
CHAPTER 2 THE LIFE OF CLIVE STAPLES LEWIS: A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW	11
2.1 Chapter Overview	11
2.2 Historical Periods of the Life of Clive Staples Lewis	12

2.2.1	Infancy: An Imagination Born (1898 - 1900).	12
2.2.2	Early Childhood: The Garden of Joy (1900 - 1904).	14
2.2.3	Middle Childhood: A Seeker in Solitude (1904 - 1910).	15
2.2.4	Adolescence: The Knock of Logic (1910 - 1916).	22
2.2.5	Emerging Adulthood: A Leap Past the Watchful Dragons (1918 - 1929).	32
2.2.6	Adulthood: The Allegorical Defender of the Faith (1927 - 1938).	48
2.2.7	Middle Adulthood: The Secret Road (1939 - 1964).	65
2.3	Chapter Summary	91
CHAPTER 3 ERIKSON'S PSYCHOSOCIAL THEORY OF DEVELOPMENT		92
3.1	Introduction	92
3.2	The Case of Erik Erikson	93
3.3	Psychosocial Theory of Development	95
3.3.1	Main principles and mechanisms.	96
3.3.2	Psychosocial crises.	100
3.4	The Psychosocial Stages	103
3.4.1	Trust versus Mistrust (birth to 1 year).	103
3.4.1.1	Psychosocial crises and the central process.	103
3.4.1.2	The prime adaptive ego quality and core pathology.	106
3.4.2	Autonomy versus Shame and Doubt (1 to 3 years).	108

3.4.2.1	The psychosocial crisis and central process.	108
3.4.2.2	The prime adaptive ego quality and core pathology.	111
3.4.3	Initiative versus Guilt (3 to 6 years).....	113
3.4.3.1	The psychosocial conflict and central process.	113
3.4.3.2	The prime adaptive ego quality and core pathology.	118
3.4.4	Industry versus Inferiority (6 to 12 years).....	120
3.4.4.1	The psychosocial crisis and central process.	120
3.4.4.2	The prime adaptive ego quality and core pathology.	124
3.4.5	Identity versus role Confusion (12 to 20 years).	126
3.4.5.1	The psychosocial crisis and central process.	126
3.4.5.2	The prime adaptive ego quality and core pathology.	133
3.4.6	Intimacy versus Isolation (20 to 40 years).	136
3.4.6.1	The psychosocial crisis and central process.	136
3.4.6.2	The prime adaptive ego quality and core pathology.	140
3.4.7	Generativity versus Stagnation (40 to 60 years).	142
3.4.7.1	The psychosocial crisis and central process.	142
3.4.7.2	The prime adaptive ego quality and core pathology.	146
3.4.8	Integrity versus Despair: (60 till death).....	148
3.4.8.1	The psychosocial crisis and central process.	148
3.4.8.2	The prime adaptive ego quality and core pathology.	151

3.5	Balanced Critique of the Theory.....	153
3.6	Conclusion.....	158
CHAPTER 4 : PSYCHOBIOGRAPHY: A THEORETICAL OVERVIEW.....		160
4.1	Chapter Preview.....	160
4.1	Psychobiography and Case Study.....	161
4.1.1	Case study conceptualisation.	161
4.1.2	Case study debate.	162
4.1.3	Case study criticism.	163
4.1.4	Case study of individuals.	165
4.1.5	Case study and psychobiography.	166
4.2	Psychobiography and Related Concepts.....	168
4.2.1	Biography.	168
4.2.2	Autobiography.....	170
4.2.3	Hagiography.	171
4.2.4	Life history and life story.	173
4.2.5	Psychohistory.	174
4.2.6	Psychobiography.	175
4.3	Historical Emergence and Development.....	177
4.4	An Answer to Theory-driven Research.....	184

4.5	Psychobiography in the South African Context.....	186
4.6	Value of Psychobiographical Studies	193
4.6.1	The study of unique individual lives.	194
4.6.2	An educational tool.	196
4.6.3	The reputation of a soft science.....	198
4.7	Critique and Analysis of Psychobiography.....	200
4.8	Conclusion.....	207
CHAPTER 5 PRELIMINARY METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS		208
5.1	Methodological Considerations in Psychobiographical Research.....	208
5.2	Research Bias.....	208
5.2.1	Discussing research bias.....	208
5.2.2	Eliminating research bias.	213
5.3	Reductionism	216
5.3.1	Explaining reductionism.	216
5.3.2	Minimising reductionism.	221
5.4	Cross-cultural Differences.....	224
5.4.1	Discussing cross-cultural differences.....	224
5.4.2	Addressing cross-cultural differences.	227

5.5	Elitism and Easy Genre	229
5.5.1	Investigating elitism and easy genre.	229
5.5.2	Mediating elitism and easy genre.	231
5.6	Evidence and the Absent Subject.....	233
5.6.1	The question of evidence and the absent subject.	233
5.6.2	Answering the question of evidence and subject absence.....	235
5.7	Inflated Expectations	237
5.7.1	Identifying inflated expectations.....	237
5.7.2	Dealing with inflated expectations.	238
5.8	Qualitative Criteria	239
5.8.1	Worthy topic.....	240
5.8.2	Rich rigour.....	240
5.8.3	Credibility.....	244
5.8.4	Sincerity.	247
5.8.5	Resonance.....	248
5.8.6	Significant contribution.....	250
5.8.7	Meaningful coherence.	251
5.8.8	Ethics.....	252

5.9	Ethics in Psychobiography	252
5.9.1	Institutional review board.....	253
5.9.2	Faithfulness to the objective research endeavour and respect of subjects and their family members.....	254
5.9.3	Newly revealed information.....	255
5.9.4	Interdisciplinary input.....	256
5.9.5	Tentative labels.....	257
5.10	Conclusion.....	258
CHAPTER 6 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY.....		259
6.1	Chapter Preview.....	259
6.2	Research Aim, Design and Methodology	259
6.3	The Research Subject.....	261
6.4	Data Collection	262
6.5	Data Extraction and Analysis	264
6.6	Conceptual Frameworks and Matrices	271
6.7	On the Issue of Quality	275
6.8	Revisiting Ethical Engagement	279
6.9	Conclusion.....	281
CHAPTER 7 PSYCHOSOCIAL FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION		282
7.1	Introduction	282
7.2	The Life-span Contextualisation of Erik Erikson	282

7.2.1 Trust vs. Mistrust (birth to 1 year).	284
7.2.1.1 An imagination born (1898 - 1900).....	284
7.2.2 Autonomy versus Shame and Doubt (1 - 3 years).	289
7.2.2.1 An imagination born (1899 - 1900).....	289
7.2.2.2 A garden of Joy (1900 - 1901).	290
7.2.3 Initiative versus Guilt (3 - 6 years).....	293
7.2.3.1 A garden of Joy (1901 - 1904).	294
7.2.4 Industry versus Inferiority (6 - 12 years).	298
7.2.4.1 A seeker in solitude (1904 - 1910).	299
7.2.5 Identity versus Role Confusion (12 - 20 years).....	304
7.2.5.1 A Knock of Logic (1910 - 1916).....	305
7.2.5.2 A leap past the watchful dragons (1918 - 1927).	313
7.2.6 Intimacy versus Isolation (20 - 40 years).....	315
7.2.6.1 A leap past the watchful dragons (1918 - 1927).	316
7.2.6.2 The allegorical defender of the Faith (1927 - 1938).	323
7.2.7 Generativity versus stagnation (40 - 65 years).....	333
7.2.7.1 The secret road (1938 - 1963).	333
7.2.8 Integrity versus despair (65 - death).....	345
7.3 Conclusion.....	346
7.4 Chapter Summary.....	354

CHAPTER 8 CONCLUSION, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	355
8.1 Chapter Overview	355
8.2 Revisiting the Research Aim	355
8.3 Overview of Key Findings	356
8.4 Value of the Study	357
8.5 Limitations	361
8.6 Recommendations	363
8.7 Final Reflections	365
8.8 Chapter Summary	368
References	369

List of Tables

Table 4.1	188
Table 6.1	273
Table 7.1	352

Abstract

History has delivered individuals who possess charismatic potential, and who have a remarkable effect in yielding reaction from the society in which they are embedded in time and place. When their influence on society is shown to counter the negative impact of circumstances presented by events, such as warfare, it becomes valuable to understand the characteristics they possessed, and to learn from their course of development. Having witnessed the cause and consequences of two World Wars, Clive Staples Lewis (1898 - 1963) spoke with the voice of the many ordinary lives touched by the war. His work as apologist offered reason to overcome the challenge to faith and belief at a time when the bleak truths of war settled on disheartened masses. However, Lewis had difficulties in establishing his own firm roots in the faith, and the trajectory of his development is proof of how a deviation from usual development within society does not preclude the outstanding nature of the qualities a historic figure may come to possess. Lewis used his own experiences to inform his writings, both through religion and through the world of fantasy. All the while, his role as a writer who was capable of sound logic was enriched by honing his craft of argumentation in the world of academia.

The present study sought to investigate the psychosocial development of Lewis. In accordance with database searches (EBSCOhost and ResearchGate) conducted prior to the submission of this study, no psychobiography has yet been attempted on Lewis, making this research the first of its kind. Lewis was selected by means of purposive sampling to longitudinally explore the details of his entire life within his socio-historical context, and describe its trajectory through Erik Erikson's psychosocial theory of personality development. The primary aim of the study was to uncover Lewis's life through stage-oriented psychosocial

crises, of which the resolution built toward enduring ego strengths, that propelled his development forward.

The research was conducted while remaining cognisant of recent developments in the field of psychobiography and contemporary stepwise approaches, and with a methodology that utilised Alexander's indicators of salience to prioritise, select, organise and analyse the extensive amount of public information available on the subject (which constituted both primary and secondary sources). Schultz's prototypical scenes offered an additional layer of labelling important subject information to be recognised. The use of a psychosocial conceptual matrix organised the data according to historical periods reflective of the major themes present during Lewis's life while categorising them according to the psychosocial stages of development.

Findings reveal that Lewis exemplified the adaptive progression that Erikson's stages could assume, being an example of a case where some stages existed before their prescribed period, or where others were revisited or prolonged, depending on the interaction of Lewis with his historical setting. Nonetheless, though the periods of Lewis's lifespan provided evidence of instances in which both adaptive ego qualities and core pathologies could be assumed, his life displayed a successful resolution of the crises presented by oppositional forces during each stage.

Lewis was a case of unique individual variation. He is an example that contributes to the broadened scope of application and quality of relevance that psychosocial theory can assume. The relevance of Erikson's theory was, thus, specified further through the present study. In addition, the present research adds to the growing value of psychobiography in the study of unique lives.

Keywords: Clive Staples Lewis, Erik Erikson, Psychobiography, Psychosocial development,

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Chapter Preview

This chapter will introduce the psychobiographical undertaking. It serves to create an initial familiarity with the organisation of the present study, and commences by delineating the research aim. This chapter, then, will seek to create a context of orientation, and to create awareness of: (a) the general problem statement, (b) the subject chosen for study, (c) the endeavour of psychobiography as research method, and (d) the theoretical framework that was chosen. The chapter concludes with a personal statement by the researcher, after which the structure of the present research will be laid firmly, as a broad outline of the chapters to follow.

1.2 Primary Research Aim

The present study sought to explore and describe the completed life of the renowned literary figure, academic, and Christian apologist – Clive Staples Lewis. Unlike biographical undertakings that have been done to disseminate his life for the public eye, the present research comprises a psychobiographical study of the shape of his life. A study of this nature seeks to relay the details of a life through a chosen psychological framework, effectively making the study unique in its kind by comprehending historical details (both public and private) through psychological principles.

A psychobiography comprises the exploratory-descriptive study of a single case, investigated longitudinally, and approached mostly qualitatively in terms of the details yielded.

Drawing on historiographic and psychologically saturated methods, it facilitates an intensive study into a contentious life story, which is interpreted through established psychological theory (Fouché, Nel & Van Niekerk, 2014; Fouché & Van Niekerk, 2010; Ponterotto, 2013, 2015a, 2015b, 2017; Runyan, 1988). This type of research seeks to explore the rich details of an individual outstanding from their social-historical context; from the perspective of a chosen psychological theory (in this case, the psychosocial theory of personality development by Erikson) to approach, in an inductive fashion, the data forthcoming from the subject's entire lifespan.

1.3 Orientation to the Research

1.3.1 General problem statement.

After the great Second World War, scientific inquiry found its saturation point in quantitative methods for the study of phenomena (Cara, 2007; Elms, 1994; Runyan, 1982, 2005a); thereby effectively witnessing a decline in life history research. Runyan (1982, p.13) argued that much can be gained from the study of individual life histories, an endeavour that has been made out as one of “methodological naïveté”. He vouched for inquiring into the lives of individuals, claiming its value as comparable to the contribution to the social sciences made by experimental inquiry. Quantitative methods offer little regarding the analysis of subjectivity, whilst reducible patterns from phenomena found beyond the individual fall more readily in its scope (Kóváry, 2011). Kluckhohn and Murray (1948) postulated a three-tier approach to the generalisation of findings of life stories. All tiers are interdependent and autonomous as levels, and it is a mistake to assume that what is regarded as *universals* or true for *some groups* could be

generalised to the level of *individual* people. This realisation has led to a contemporary resurgence of individuals contributing to the body of knowledge of psychobiography (Cara, 2007; Du Plessis, 2017; Kóváry, 2011; Mayer & Maree, 2017; Ponterotto, 2013, 2014, 2015a, 2015b, 2017; Ponterotto & Moncayo, 2018; Ponterotto & Reynolds, 2013, 2017; Schultz, 2005a, 2005b). Through psychobiography's extensive use of psychological conceptualisations to uncover a life, structured frameworks are tested and broadened regarding its scope of applicability (Robinson & McAdams, 2015; Tracy, 2010).

Ironically, it appears that the decline in the study of life histories corresponded with the period after the Second World War, a period in which remarkable figures (such as Lewis) displayed charismatic qualities that spoke to a mass audience who had experienced the disenfranchising effects of the war. Comprehending such complexity from a personality theory perspective (especially if the theory is developmental in nature) could offer an inductive view of the evolution of such qualities – which has successive effects on characteristics and traits that could possibly be bred, developed and valued in individuals, to shape societies in the future. When studying the effects of wartime and similar traumatic events that have shaped the course of history, it appears beneficial to glean an understanding of the qualities that have circumvented its enduring negative impacts. Enter here, the likes of figures such as Lewis, who embodied three distinct roles that were meaningfully intertwined to provide an influential voice within the historical setting: that of (a) college tutor and lecturer, challenging his students to logical argumentation; (b) that of apologist, who used dialectic to oppose the loss of faith by the average person touched by war; and (c) that of a writer who emphasised accessible and relatable truths through the lens and perspectives adopted in his own life. A short biographical portrait of Lewis follows in the next section.

1.3.2 The psychobiographical subject.

Clive Staples Lewis (1898 - 1963) was a famed mid-20th-century literary giant and celebrated apologist, who became a household name after stipulating the experiences of everyday Christianity by discussing the faith down to the core of its most basic tenets – a view that became labelled as ‘mere Christianity’ (Lancast, 2012; McGrath, 2013; Peters, 1985; Wilson, 1990). Today, his famous contributions to children’s literature, *The Chronicles of Narnia* (Lewis, 1950, 1951, 1952b, 1953, 1954, 1955b, 1956b) are better known to contemporary readers than his religious writings; however, the latter continue to be a cornerstone to valued Christian literature. Perhaps, his standing on matters on faith is made more significant by the shape of (especially) his early life, which was themed by a pervasive longing (termed ‘Joy’) that guided the nature of his beliefs and commitments (Hooper, 2004a, 2004b, 2006; Lewis, 1955a). His great childhood trauma, his schooling, and his involvement in the First World War had served to rattle his own faith to the point of disbelief, only for it to be reignited by a constant pang of longing that he struggled to describe, and by exposure to favoured authors and friends who were committed to the faith (Lewis, 1955a; Wilson, 1990).

His construction, since childhood, of an inner world, in which he used his imagination as a doorway to breathe sense into his external world, was perhaps most significant (McGrath, 2013). Despite the public image he presented, the complexity of Lewis’s life, both inner and outer, served to contribute meaningfully to the very essence of what he vested into the works that are now famous among his readership. His role as educator at Oxford, furthermore, was an illuminating period, during which his arguments, which saw him wrestling with the paradigms of logic and fact, serves to indicate the multidimensionality of his personality and the diverse roles he assumed throughout his life (Hooper, 1979; Lewis, 1955a; Peters, 1985; Wilson, 1990). It is

exactly this complexity of character and private life, which is rife in great periods of existential questioning and introspection, that makes the study of his life worthwhile. In a developmental sense, tracing the origins of his spiritual, literary, and scholarly identity to key historical moments, provides an understanding of the mechanisms involved in sculpting remarkable and enduring qualities that create outliers in a particular socio-historical context. Chapter 2 will address the main plotline of Lewis's life in greater length.

1.3.3 Psychobiographical approach.

Psychobiography entails the exploration of the celebrated, completed life of an exemplary individual, of which the rich detail is filtered through established psychological theory (Fouché & Van Niekerk, 2010; Ponterotto, 2014). Psychobiography maintains its foundation within the interdisciplinary relationship of psychology and biography (Fouché, 2015). One large difference remains in the utilisation of psychological theory to substantiate claims in psychobiography (Cara, 2007; Fouché, 2015; Fouché & Van Niekerk, 2010), whereas both disciplines find their source in life histories and life stories – as will be discussed in Chapter 4 (Cox & McAdams, 2014; Fouché & Van Niekerk, 2010; McAdams, 2001; Marraffa & Paternoster, 2015; Runyan, 1982). Thus, with the same tools at its disposal as traditional biography, psychobiography delves into a deeper understanding of individuals, by filtering a historic life through psychological frameworks (Ponterotto, 2015b).

In essence, psychobiography bases its structure upon the subject on which it is based, considering the person as palpable and real in its scrutiny (Schultz, 2005a). The aim is the discovery of a central story of life, through a psychological lens, in its entirety, from birth till death (McAdams, 1994). Ponterotto (2015, p.379) offered the most comprehensive definition:

“Psychobiography is the intensive life-span study of an individual of historic significance in socio-cultural context using psychological and historiographic research methods and interpreted from established theories of psychology.” Distinguishing facets of psychobiographical research are that, (a) it peruses (mainly) qualitative data, (b) it is approached longitudinally, (c) it is largely liberated from the ethics of anonymity, (d) it maintains a reliance on biographical and historical accounts, and (e) it is an interest-driven research, unbound by the testing of hypotheses (Van Niekerk, 2007). Psychobiography as a case study design is expounded on theoretically in Chapter 4.

1.3.4 Erik Erikson’s psychosocial theory of personality development.

Within the psychosocial developmental perspective, the ego is seen as more than a mediating force between the desires of the id and the moral boundaries imposed by the superego, as conceptualised in classic psychoanalytic theory (Shaffer, 2002), and the psychosocial perspective seeks to discuss development beyond the maturation of sexual characteristics (Freiberg, 1987). According to the theory, the ego acts as a synthesising element, which combines familial, societal, and individual factors in a way that achieves mastery of the environment (Gross, 1987). This action unfolds as a process of stage-related syntheses, with the desired outcome being the acquisition of prime adaptive qualities (Newman & Newman, 2017), which Erikson (1963) described as giving the individual the capacity to “demonstrate that his ego, at a given stage, is strong enough to integrate the timetable of the organism with the structure of social institutions” (Erikson, 1963, p. 238). From this view, Erikson (1959, 1963, 1968, 1977, 1982) investigated the lifespan in its entirety (Hoare, 2005; Newman & Newman, 2017; Schachter, 2005), and the age-related concerns about establishing security, which derives

from parental influence in infancy, the agency and competence proven during childhood, the search for an enduring sense of self in adolescence, the involvement of one's identity in romantic relationships in adulthood, and engagement in a productive life in later adulthood (Newman & Newman, 2017).

Development is seen as reflective of an organisation at a social level, which relates social institutions to development of the life cycle. The changes are systematic and are encapsulated by six concepts (Erikson, 1963; Newman & Newman, 2017): (a) developmental stages, (b) tasks related to development, (c) psychosocial crises, (d) a central process that aids in the resolution of the crisis at each stage, (e) a network of meaningful relations, and (f) coping. Erikson (1963, 1968, 1980) theorised the working of an epigenetic principle, in which structured stages follow one another sequentially and are built from the time-circumscribed ascendancy of parts to form a whole – that can predict challenge, instead of one stage just following the one prior sequentially. Erikson proposed eight stages or the psychosocial theory of development (Erikson, 1963; Erikson, Erikson, & Kivnick, 1989; Graves & Larkin, 2006), with the understanding that, even though the occurrence of a stage falls at a specific chronological age, it does not preclude individual variation, thereby making the time spent at each stage subject to change (Erikson, 1963; Erikson, 1997). The adaptability of the individual in the resolution of opposing crises is a salient phenomenon in the investigation of the subject chosen for this study. A more detailed discussion of the psychosocial theoretical framework in Chapter 3 will provide background for investigating the theory's applied value.

1.4 Researcher's Personal Passage

Clive Staples Lewis became known to the researcher at an impressionable age, during which fantasy literature was a great source of stimulation and enjoyment. *The Chronicles of Narnia* appeared to fuse the realms of mythology and spirituality in such a way as to communicate familiar themes of faith that resonated with the researcher's Christian upbringing, whilst, in addition, offering a novel and imaginative outlook on age-old views. During adolescence, the rereading of these classic tales provided great comfort when the researcher suffered his own religious qualms and questioned his faith, thereby affirming to him that the realm of the spiritual is not limited by entry through old doorways represented by tradition. The researcher, thus, sought to uncover the life story of the author who coveted creativity to such a degree that he created an imaginative realm of 'supposals' that reflected the deeper truths of meaning, purpose and belief.

An initial glimpse into the subject's life revealed the multi-dimensionality of his personality, displayed by the diverse roles he embodied: as celebrity in the literary field, but also as lecturer, and as defender of the faith. The progression of his life as he accumulated the formative experiences that lead to these roles would prove to be an idyllic slate for developmental study. The researcher had an inkling that Lewis could have possessed a complex self-concept that had been hard-won in terms of its adaptive and inspirational qualities, and which had been vigorously defended from its notorious aspects and qualities, which had affected his reputation and popularity negatively, especially academic circles. His tendency, throughout his life, to construct an inner world, removed from his external circumstances, as a means of finding reason, meaning and inspiration, also resonated with the researcher's own deeply-valued

life perspectives and introspective nature. Existentially, the researcher, thus, found that he was capable of vesting a great personal interest in discovering the shape of Lewis's life even further.

Above all, the researcher felt drawn to the repeated theme of 'Joy', as a desiring and longing that preoccupied Lewis's life in key formative moments. In addition, the researcher resonated with the approach Lewis assumed, which appeared to guide him in infusing his life with poetic meaning and conveying deep truths through his imagination and deeply-embedded (but often forgotten) convictions. The exercise of a psychobiographical investigation, thus, promised to provide the researcher with a sense of contentment. Lewis's stylistic tendencies and vibrancy in autobiographical reflection; the transparency of his writings, that were informed by his own personal experiences; and his capacity to evoke passionate accounts from those who knew or studied his life, were all accumulative as reasons that convinced the researcher of Lewis's significance in history and that he was an ideal subject of study.

1.5 Overview of the Study

The present manuscript is divided primarily into the broad framework comprising, first, presenting background literature, then, presenting the methodology followed to execute the research, and then, presenting the findings and their analysis.

Chapter 2 will explore the completed life of Clive Staples Lewis in its sociohistorical context. Chapter 3 will discuss the principles and mechanisms of Erikson's psychosocial theory of personality development, and the stage-related opposition of forces that create crises to be resolved. An explication of the theoretical premises of psychobiography as a field of study will be provided in Chapter 4.

Methodologically, Chapter 5 will deal with the preliminary methodological considerations and pitfalls that required continued researcher cognisance. The application of the design and methods inherent to psychobiographical practice will be discussed in Chapter 6, especially as it found application in the study.

The findings of the research are reserved for Chapter 7, which will describe the psychosocial perusal of Lewis's completed life, and how it held against the normative description of development as relayed by Erikson. The researcher concludes with the highlights that arose as results that were presented in Chapter 7. He acknowledges these highlights, together with the limitations and values of and recommendations for further research – in Chapter 8 – while sharing the reflections on the study conducted.

1.6 Chapter Summary

The present chapter sought to orient the reader to the research undertaken. This was done, firstly, by introducing the main research aims of the psychobiography, after which the reader was made familiar with the context of the research. The context sought to sketch an initial portrait of Lewis as subject of study, after which psychobiography was briefly perused as a method and the theoretical framework that it would be applied to – Erikson's psychosocial theory – was discussed briefly. The chapter concluded with a personal passage by the researcher, in which he communicated the subjective reasons for his involvement in the undertaking, and for pursuing this interest. The next chapter will illuminate the historical moments in the lifespan of C. S. Lewis.

CHAPTER 2: THE LIFE OF CLIVE STAPLES LEWIS: A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

2.1 Chapter Overview

Regarded in his day as one of the most influential figures of Christianity (Michael, 1993); an accomplished giant in the literary world (Peters, 1985); and an accessible voice in the classroom and his writings (Como, 1994; Duriez, 2005; Lancast, 2012; McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990), C. S. Lewis attained notoriety for bringing home his experiences and viewpoints in a way that anchored him as a prolific imagination and candid intellectual. All of these placed him within the “broad highway of thought” that afforded him a greater readership – mostly untethered to a cultural climate (McGrath, 2013) – which became apparent through his works, such as the autobiography of his early life, *Surprised by Joy* (Lewis, 1955a), and his literary masterpiece in the childhood fantasy genre, *The Chronicles of Narnia* (Lewis, 1950, 1951, 1952b, 1953, 1954, 1955b, 1956b). This overview of Lewis’s life suggests seven periods that each represent a dominant theme during the particular stage of his development. The stages are presented chronologically in the sections to follow, whilst the events that mark them are arrayed to explain each theme’s development and importance. The lifespan of Clive Staples Lewis stretched over nearly 65 years, from his birth in 1898 to his death in 1963.

2.2 Historical Periods of the Life of Clive Staples Lewis

2.2.1 Infancy: An Imagination Born (1898 - 1900).

Born into turn-of the century middle-class Ulster, a conservative Northern Irish province caught in the throes of a Protestant defensive,¹ Lewis entered the world on 29 November 1898. His town of birth was Belfast, and it was to here that his many preoccupations he experienced within childhood would return both him and his brother to that ‘Little End Room’ in their childhood home, where companionate fantasies coloured their carefree days (Lewis, 1955a; McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). In addition, Lewis’s native Ireland provided nostalgic inspiration for many of his poetic stylings (McGrath, 2013).

Lewis was to be the son of Albert Lewis and Florence Hamilton; both of whom were to be formative in shaping his life. However, the dominant social milieu, that of a distinct Ulster Protestant upbringing, should not be discounted regarding the influence it had on the thinking of Lewis (McGrath, 2013). Flora (as his mother was known) was to be a figure shrouded in mystery in Lewis’s own musings as someone prone to serene love (Wilson, 1990), and influential in his relationships with women. From her side sprang forth a family coloured by irony and critical thought (Lewis, 1955a; Peters 1985). As a clergyman’s daughter (McGrath, 2013), she had a standing by birth and education higher than that of her husband, however, she was not to deter Albert in his sense of devotion. His was the background of the Welshman, who gave themselves to the passions of anger and sentiment, and who were prone to argumentation; Lewis’s father’s turbulent feelings (Peters, 1985) would make Clive see ‘emotion’ as “something uncomfortable,

¹ Localised in the northern Irish counties of Down and Antrim in the Ulster province, the Protestant movement was a colonising force that dominated Irish culture (despite its minority status) in the spheres of economics and politics. This made them the target of great social resentment by Irish natives and rising early twentieth-century Irish nationalism (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990).

embarrassing and even dangerous” (Lewis, 1955a, p.2). Albert Lewis was a self-made man (Lewis, 1955a) and, due to his comedic predispositions, was to be ever regarded by his loved ones as a figure of fun (Wilson, 1990); not to be taken with the seriousness he was fully capable of when embodying his role as a police court solicitor. Flora doubted her love for the man in a letter she wrote a year prior to their marriage, yet, she was to be “as good a woman, wife and mother, as ever God has given to a man” (Lewis Papers, volume 3, p. 120 as cited by Wilson, 1990, *Early Days*, para. 20). Chiefly, it appears that Flora’s interest in Albert was, later, awakened gradually by his literary tastes (McGrath, 2013). The distinction between his father and mother’s families was clear, when Lewis spoke of his father’s people, who possessed no great inclination to happiness in contrast to the Hamiltons, on Flora’s side (Lewis, 1955a; Peters, 1985).

As the progeny of Albert and Flora, C. S. Lewis – affectionately nicknamed Jack – was by both inherited traits and upbringing (Wilson, 1990) sculpted into a figure of undeniable ‘Lewisian’ character, harbouring his marked education from early exposure from his mother’s cleverness (Lewis, 1955a) – she was in possession of a BA degree in mathematics – and showing the argumentative traits that was so refined by his father – noteworthy as political orator in his youth (McGrath, 2013). His ‘Ulsterian’ upbringing also shaped the way he was later seen as a literary figure, being referred to in his literary career as an English writer, instead of an Irish writer, indicative of his lack of fit to the typical Irish identity of the time (McGrath, 2013).

Lewis was keenly aware that his reading tastes, which elucidated his passion for the Romantics, were not shared by either parent (Lewis, 1955a, Peters, 1985), even though both did have strong literary inclinations and erudite traits (McGrath, 2013). Their first home was a semi-detached house in the parish of St Mark’s Dundela, the place of their marriage in the August of

1894 (McGrath, 2013). It was this choice of home that strengthened their local roots per request of their (especially Flora's) parents (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990).

2.2.2 Early Childhood: The Garden of Joy (1900 - 1904).

From a very young and impressionable age, Lewis found a constant in his older brother, Warren Hamilton Lewis, who was a presence in his life till the end. With only a three-year divide, Lewis managed to entertain and contribute to his brother's fantasies (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). Their strong relationship was exhibited by pet names – “Smallpigiebotham” for Clive, and “Archipigiebotham” for Albert – which regained its significance in their reconnection in the late 1920s (McGrath, 2013). In later life, Lewis wrote, “I fancy happy childhoods are usually forgotten. . . . It is not settled comfort and heartsease, but momentary joy that transfigures the past and lets the eternal quality shine through,” (Wilson, 1990, Early Days, para. 1). It is this joy that often he yearned to return to. Their past became, not so much mere memory (of a room at the end of a corridor where they spent their childhood), but a myth unto itself, which the brothers sought to recapture in their mutual interests of reading and writing (Wilson, 1990). Their days were spent in their respective and joint fantasies. For Lewis, it involved creating dressed anthropomorphised animals, whilst his brother meddled with ships, trains and places in his drawings (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). Lewis explained “My earliest aesthetic experiences, if indeed they were aesthetic, were not of that kind [in reference to the pictures that adorned the house]; they were already incurably romantic, not formal” (Lewis, 1955a, p.5).

One of the marked experiences that would provide a theme for much of his life was ‘Joy’, which he coined as a sense of longing evoked by a ‘toy garden’, which his brother had made for him. The ‘toy garden’ was a biscuit tin lid, of which the inside was lined with moss, and set with

flowers and twigs. “That was the first beauty I ever knew . . . It made me aware of nature . . . as something cool, dewy, fresh, exuberant” (Lewis, 1955a, p.5). It was part and parcel, as memory, of a larger theme that he believed he had lost for much of his life.

In each other, Jack and his brother each found a confidant, a companion, despite their differences (Lewis, 1955a), to stand with in view of the grown-ups they held and aimed to understand in their fantasy world-view. For Lewis, his childhood was “mainly a period of humdrum, prosaic happiness and [it] awakes none of the poignant nostalgia with which I look back on my much less happy boyhood” (Lewis, 1955a, p. 7). Their idyllic existence would soon change, when considerations for the children’s education dominated their parents’ minds (Wilson, 1990). Albert’s hasty decision to pack off, first, his eldest son, and then his youngest, to Wynyard School in Watford, was perhaps viewed as out of character and ill-considered, considering his professional standing (McGrath, 2013) – and would come to be a decision underestimated for its power in scarring the relationships with his sons. At the time, political and religious tensions in the country made an English education seem particularly appealing, which would mean the attendance of boarding school for Warnie (Lewis’s brother); which was delayed until the family moved house (Wilson, 1990).

2.2.3 Middle Childhood: A Seeker in Solitude (1904 - 1910).

Little Lea – the house, its rooms, corridors and hidden places, that would be adorned with the many memories shared by Jack and Warnie – became a substantial backdrop for enlarging the rooms for their fantasies (Wilson, 1990). Built by Albert himself as funds became available, the house met its new occupants on 21 April 1905. Warnie was not to have his initial experience of his new surroundings for too long, as he was off to attend Wynyard House at Watford – the

school blindly and uncritically chosen by his parents (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990) – to start his education. But Lewis became “a product of long corridors, empty sunlit rooms, upstairs indoor silences, attics explored in solitude, distant noises of gurgling cisterns and pipes, and the noise of wind under the tiles. Also, of endless books” (Lewis, 1955a, p. 9).

Little Lea remained the home of memory – the harbour of their imaginations (Wilson, 1990). Lewis would spend hours constructing the backdrops of fantasies, such as Animal Land, where personified animals served a purpose far greater than a mere escape through fantasy. Here, Wilson (1990) speculates, Lewis was flowering into a master of parody. His characters would be caricatures that could portray his sense of his own surroundings and the people it contained. Though he himself described his own childhood inventions as rather mundane and simple (Lewis, 1955a), there was fluency to his creations that bespoke of his attentiveness as a reader (Wilson, 1990), even at the ages of six, seven and eight. It was in this time that Lewis, forced to accept his own company, allowed his inner world to take shape (McGrath, 2013).

From the period 1905-1907, Jack found himself occupied with reading, with a vast collection of books as his only companions, whilst missing Warnie to whom he would write often (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). His thoughts would turn to the games they would busy themselves with when his elder brother returned from school. Their existence involved rainy days spent indoors, much like the way Lewis started his late creation of Narnia, in *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* (Lewis, 1950), where four children were left to their own entertainment while trapped indoors by the rain (McGrath, 2013). He painted his introverted life at this point as one of solitude (Lewis, 1955a; McGrath, 2013), where his time alone was spent traversing the makings and fantasies of his own interest. His ineptness at working with his hands turned him to writing and, for his own delight, he added illustrations to the imaginative stories he created

(Lewis, 1955a; McGrath, 2013). Initially, Lewis was educated at home, by a governess, Miss Harper; his mother started him on the path of French and Latin years earlier (Lewis, 1955a; McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990); however, it was his stacks of books that inevitably shaped his mind.

The memory of the toy garden arose once more, when, one day, he laid eyes on a flowering currant bush (Lewis, 1955a; McGrath, 2013):

It was a sensation, of course, of desire; but desire for what? . . . and before I knew what I desired, the desire itself was gone . . . the world turned commonplace again, or only stirred by a longing for the longing that had just ceased. . . . in a certain sense everything else that had ever happened to me was insignificant in comparison. (Lewis, 1955a, p. 16)

He experienced the desire twice more; the first was the feeling of ‘Autumn’ Lewis gained from reading *The Squirrel Nutkin* by Beatrix Potter (Lewis, 1955a; McGrath, 2013); a season he desperately wished to recreate, and about which he recognised a familiar sense of importance. Lewis stated, “It was something quite different from ordinary life, even from ordinary pleasure; something as they would now say, ‘in another dimension’” (Lewis, 1955a, p.17). The second time he experienced this desire was through the stylings of poetry (a translation of *Tegner’s Drapa*), where a few lines describing Esaias Tegnér’s vision of Nordic mythology; this time he was transported to the distant reaches of vast, cold landscapes, which made him long for northern skies (Lewis, 1955a; McGrath, 2013). In his autobiography, Lewis elucidates the value of memories: “it is that of an unsatisfied desire which is itself more desirable than any satisfaction. I call it Joy” (Lewis, 1955a, p. 18). ‘Joy’ would become critical in the meaning he gave to it in the plotline of his life (Lewis, 1955a; McGrath, 2013), leaving him burdened by this “thing”, which often seemed lost to him as soon as it had appeared. Given the instability of his father’s feelings, this perspective, tinged with romanticism, offered him a meaningful escape (Peters, 1985) from

what was to come. However, as many of his imaginative landscapes in later writings would reveal, his physical world played a large part in inspiring the settings of his tales whilst, at the same time, evoking a longing that he could not explain. An example is his feelings about Castlereagh Hills, seen from Leeborough House:

which seemed to speak to him of something of heartrending significance, lying tantalizingly beyond his reach. They became a symbol of liminality, of standing on the threshold of a new, deeper, and more satisfying way of thinking and living (McGrath, 2013, *Surrounded by Books: Hints of a Literary Vocation*, para. 5)

Tragedy struck the household and fractured the happiness that seemed to define Lewis's childhood till this point, a childhood framed by the nestled safety of his almost mythical world (Wilson, 1990). Flora was diagnosed with abdominal cancer in 1908 (McGrath, 2013). Lewis's description of the house filled with strange noises, people and smells coloured his memories of the time (Lewis, 1955a). He had sought out his mother when experiencing bouts of fever, to be met with an awareness of peculiar movements to and from the house. That night his father came into his room to convey "things his terrified mind had never conceived" (Wilson, 1990, p. 125).

On 23 August 1908, Lewis's mother passed away. Albert, having endured the death of his father earlier in the year, in April, experienced the greatest blow in the loss of his wife (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). Flora's death portended the death of Albert's elder brother, Joseph, only two weeks later. The accumulation of emotional burdens had its effect on Albert, to the extent that Lewis would later observe that his father's "nerves had never been the steadiest" (Lewis, 1955a, p. 20). Though the remark could perhaps, appear to have been made without remorse, Albert was inconsolable and incapable of supporting his sons or considering their needs at the time (Lewis, 1955a, McGrath, 2013; Peters, 1985). Lewis continued that, "Under the pressure of anxiety his tempers became incalculable; he spoke wildly and acted unjustly" (Lewis,

1955a, p. 20). Lewis struggled to forgive his father wholly at the time, and the tenuous relationship continued to exist on the verge of volatility, even later in Jack's life (Wilson, 1990) and the brothers lost the opportunity to restore filial affection with their father (McGrath, 2013). Lewis' relationship with his brother would deepen in this atmosphere of loss (Lewis, 1955a; McGrath, 2013; Peters, 1985).

Lewis' relation, though innocent and inexperienced, with God also seemed to reach a crossroads that would determine the journey of his spiritual life. Lewis recalled that he had prayed for his mother's recovery, though his approach to the act was not, as yet, coloured by any emotion that pointed to faith (Lewis, 1955a). He explains: "I accordingly set myself to produce by willpower a firm belief that my prayers for her recovery were successful. . . . The thing hadn't worked, but I was used to things not working" (Lewis, 1995a, p. 21). He resigned himself to disappointment, and the effect thereof on Lewis was powerful, and yielded rippling effects throughout his later life, where the traumatic sight of the touch of cancer on his mother's lifeless body left a lasting impression on his memory (McGrath, 2013). "There she lay, as he had seen her lie so many other times, propped up on the pillows, with a thin, pale face that would make you cry to look at" (Lewis, 1955a, p.166), he wrote, probably as a result of a vicarious re-experience through the eyes of Digory Kirk, the main protagonist of *The Magician's Nephew*, (Lancast, 2012; Lewis, 1955b; McGrath, 2013), who himself had a mother stricken with illness, and who had the opportunity to cure his mother with the magic of an apple from Lewis's fictional Narnia (Lewis, 1955b). In writing this, Lewis afforded himself the opportunity to consolidate his burdening wounds of the past through imagination, when his reality had not offered him this chance (Lancast, 2012; McGrath, 2013).

The decision was made in 1908 to send the nine-year-old Lewis to Wynyard House, in the Watford county of Hertford. This was one of the decisions an emotionally unfit Albert made in the light of tragic circumstances (McGrath, 2013). Wynyard was unpleasing to the eye, and with a capricious headmaster who created a milieu that Lewis came to describe as a “concentration camp” (Lewis, 1955a; McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990), Lewis came to display a hateful obsession with the place and its abusive headmaster (McGrath, 2013; Peters, 1985). In the 18 months he boarded there, Lewis maintained a plea to his father to be taken from the school. Albert, unmindful of the treatment his boys received at the boarding school, was convinced by Reverend Robert Capron that all was well. Reverend Capron, referred to by the Lewis brothers as Oldie, was a merciless harbinger of punishment (Wilson, 1990). There is little doubt that an oppressive atmosphere pervaded the halls of Wynyard School; this was something his brother could adapt to, but Lewis could not (McGrath, 2013). As Lewis (1955a, p. 37) comments, “Intellectually, the time I spent at Oldie’s was almost entirely wasted; if the school had not died, and if I had been there for two years more, it would probably have sealed my fate as a scholar for good.”

Though wanting of a better education, Lewis’s religious practices took a serious turn under Oldie’s tutelage, through prayer, Bible readings and conscientiousness. Oldie had a doctrine of unfiltered Christianity. This did not preclude Lewis from making of Oldie a monster in his mind (Lewis, 1955a), as was his custom for adults whom he was at odds with. Wilson (1990) accounts for the psychosexual terror² that Lewis felt under Oldie’s authoritarian influence that would, in addition, prove to be (confounded by loss of emotion experienced by the death of his mother) a significant influence in later development (Wilson, 1990). Lewis admitted that,

² It is speculated that this is a reference to the oedipal animosity that the child erects in relation to a dominant figure of the same sex, whom he regards as being in possession of (in Oldie’s case) a form of power.

“Joy (as I have defined it) was not only absent, but forgotten” (Lewis, 1955a, p. 37). In his spiritual autobiography, *Surprised by Joy*, Lewis describes Wynyard as his Belsen (Lewis, 1955a; McGrath, 2013).

In this experience, the role of Lewis’s father is noted as one of specific absence (Wilson, 1990). The boys pleaded with their father, to try to convince him of circumstances at the school, which should have lead any parent to doubt the quality of education their children were subjected to (Lewis, 1955a), only for Albert to be swayed into a state of ignorance by Oldie’s rebuttals to the letters of inquiry. An omission from Lewis’s autobiography, it happened that in the Christmas holiday of 1909, their second cousin – Hope Ewart – took them to a play of Peter Pan. The performance served to contrast Lewis’s life with that of a boy who remained free from the burdens of growing up through his belief in fantasy (Wilson, 1990). The hard realities at Oldie’s school made both boys perpetually unhappy (Peters, 1985), but it was to be harder with Warnie’s move to Malvern in 1909 while leaving Jack alone to the unstimulating environment (McGrath, 2013). Eventually, Lewis could also leave the stringent and disliked place, in 1910. A scandal, caused by malicious beatings executed by the headmaster, caused the Wynyard School to close (Wilson, 1990) and its headmaster was labelled with insanity (McGrath, 2013). Lewis retained his memories of the nightmare (Wilson, 1990), and expanded the dislike to other schools among those he attended:

Wynyard School, Watford (“Belsen”): September 1908–June 1910

Campbell College, Belfast: September–December 1910

Cherbourg School, Malvern (“Chartres”): January 1911–June 1913

Malvern College (“Wyvern”): September 1913–June 1914

Private tuition at Great Bookham: September 1914–June 1917

(McGrath, 2013, *The Ugly Country of England: Schooldays*, para. 5)

In fact, Lewis's intensity of hatred for his boarding schools surpassed his abhorrence of the conditions of trench warfare years later (McGrath, 2013).

2.2.4 Adolescence: The Knock of Logic (1910 - 1916).

Campbell was the next school to which Lewis was sent, briefly, for the last few months of 1910. Frequent illness became a given for him at the time, and he was soon taken from the school and placed in a preparatory school called Cherbourg (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990), to which Lewis referred as Chartres in his autobiography (Lewis, 1955a). It was located in the town of Wyvern, up the hill from the college his brother was attending, and the brothers could, thus, make the journey to and from home together (McGrath, 2013). It was here that the masters noticed Lewis had a natural and raw talent for the appreciation of reading, literature and even music. In fact, this talent was coined an imaginative renaissance, which took the guise of what Lewis was to call 'Northernness' (Lewis, 1955a; McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). His interests were stirred by Joy when he first caught a glimpse of an Arthur Rackman illustration in the *Times Literary Supplement* that accompanied a piece written on the book series, *Siegfried and the Twilight of the Gods* (a translation of Richard Wagner's operas). The illustration evoked in Lewis a strong memory of distant and mystical northern regions, which had snared him in his childhood as a sort of desire (Lewis, 1955a; McGrath, 2013). The picture was to make visual a co-occurring delight in the music of Wagner after Lewis heard the *Ride of the Valkyries*. The sheer pleasure he derived from Norse mythology overshadowed his misgivings about faith, and represented a pursuit of pleasure that was not bound by duty, as Christianity was (Lewis, 1955a). The fundamental importance of this pleasure echoed in his enjoyment of nature, which would, in

conjunction with the books he coveted, stand as a faithful reminder of Joy (Lewis, 1955a; McGrath, 2013). Lewis became aware of the way his reawakened desires fuelled the pangs of something elusive – this Joy – and he gave it a distinct form that satiated him intellectually. This was a separation he made between his imaginative life – all-encompassing of the elements that informed his experience of Joy – and the real life he was leading at Chartres (Lewis, 1955a). In fact, Cherbourg would be merely the backdrop, if not the direct influence, of his emerging inner life (McGrath, 2013). Regardless, Cherbourg (the world of his reality) recognised a prodigy in its midst (Wilson, 1990).

Lewis's time at Cherbourg lasted from January 1911 to June 1913. During this time, perhaps due to the influences of the Matron (Miss C), or negligence regarding religious outlook, something of his boyhood Christianity was lost (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). Lewis expounded on the loosening of the threads due to the allure of the occult, developed through conversations with the Matron. His fascination teased his beliefs and this description elucidates how far he was drawn: "From the tyrannous noon of revelation I passed into the cool evening twilight of Higher Thought, where there was nothing to be obeyed and nothing to be believed except what was either comforting or exciting" (Lewis, 1955a, p. 68). He dabbled in classical works, such as Virgil, of which the religious ideas worsened the state of his beliefs (Lewis, 1955a; McGrath, 2013). And then, Lewis was ready to get rid of the practice of religion altogether. It was his view that it was "a kind of endemic nonsense into which humanity tended to blunder," (Lewis, 1955a, p.71). His nightly prayers were no longer fuelled by faith, but bound by a dutiful willpower, like when he prayed for his mother (Lewis, 1955a).

Cherbourg overlooked Malvern College, which was to be Lewis's next destination, after the school holidays. McGrath (2013) mentions Lewis's letters during his Malvern period,

revealing a character trait that was to be prevalent for many years – the notion of his Irish origins while on English soil. When they returned home, it broke the longing that Albert felt for them during the school terms; however, Jack and his elder brother did not share the sentiment. They found much about their father irritating; among which his famous ‘wheezes’, which displayed his skills as eccentric raconteur (Lewis, 1955a). These stories, entertaining as they may have been to more adult audiences, did not meet the tastes of his sons (Wilson, 1990). Their school breaks found them in his company more often than they liked to be, leading Lewis to remark, “I thought Monday morning when he went back to his work the brightest jewel in the week,” (Lewis, 1955a, p. 103). Furthermore, their father displayed a remarkable talent in his proneness to misinterpret or recreate a version of facts which had been presented him, breeding in Lewis a secretiveness that conveyed little of what happened at Chartres, and much less of Malvern, where he was headed (Lewis, 1955a). At Cherbourg, Lewis had a significant experience after exposure to a tale about the separation of a father and son – Matthew Arnold’s *Sohrab and Rusehan*. It was a tale that reflected his own archetypal battle with his one remaining parent (Wilson, 1990).

After obtaining a scholarship to Malvern, Lewis began his public school career in the fall of 1913 without his brother, who had been asked to leave due to misconduct related to smoking (McGrath, 2013). For Lewis, Malvern was a draining experience of note (Lewis, 1955a; Peters, 1985), even though he liked the town of Great Malvern. Facilitated by the endless rounds of clubs, pretence in enjoyment, and subordination under the rule of the conceited ‘Coll aristocracy’ (as Lewis named it), Lewis was driven to an intense loathing of the place (Lewis, 1955a; Peters, 1985); Wilson observes that the Malvern environment, with its “rough and tumble” (1990, p.188) setting, made it particularly difficult for a mind such as Lewis’s. In fact, his Malvern period did

not aid him in his seeking of Joy, instead, McGrath (2013) sees the lengthy recounting of it as the period of catharsis.

Lewis was not easily entertained, or supportive of the hierarchical 'Blood' system. Being awarded the status of Malvern Blood was reserved for those of appealing aesthetics, disposition or even achievement in sports (Lewis, 1955a). Subjugation to this higher caste of Malvern learners, known as the fagging system, which involved younger learners (13 or 14 years of age) serving the elder, appeared to resemble what the lower classes were enduring under the dominance of the privileged in the first half of the 20th century (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). A hierarchy was in place to equip rambunctious new entrants morally, but Lewis ironically felt, that it was making him conceited and more of a 'prig'. Perhaps this characteristic worsened his experience, as he alludes, "I was big for my age, a great lout of a boy, and that sets one's seniors against one," (Lewis, 1955a, p. 108). Malvern, thus, offered him one positive yield, of making him aware of his arrogance (Lewis, 1955a; McGrath, 2013).

In relation to this physical appearance, Lewis was particularly discontented with his thumb joints, which seemed to bend at the middle. Though a seemingly trivial concern, the resultant clumsiness did cause the pursuit of certain sports and even craftsmanship, where athleticism was a factor, to be a disconcerting effort (Lewis, 1955a; McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). He, thus, found joy in escaping to the well-stocked college library, where the pleasures of reading could resume, unperturbed by the social expectations set to the 'fags' (Wilson, 1990). Another diversion (McGrath, 2013) from his uncouth fellow-collegians was Latin lessons by Harry Wakelyn Smith (referred to as Smugy), that Lewis describes as "little outposts of civilization in an otherwise barbarous world" (Wilson, 1990, p.193). The way he read poems by

Euripides, Horace, and Virgil, left an impression on a grateful Lewis (Wilson, 1990), for whom this was one of the many literary influences on his young life.

He experienced a persistent fervour to cast aside his belief in God, which was related to the dissatisfaction he felt in his surroundings, and the pessimism he housed (Lewis, 1955a). These feelings drove Jack to mask his misery by identification, and the Nordic myths found in *Loki Bound* (one of the few books he read at the time) came to embody the people of his world: Thor, whose aggravation and entitlement seemed to portray the Bloods; and Loki, who was claimed by Lewis for association, for his sense of tragic enlightenment that seemed to elevate him in his own mind, because of his knowledge (Lewis, 1955a). Interesting, and revealing in its manifestation, was Lewis's realisation of himself and of what he was to forgive in his life: "I could forgive much neglect more easily than the least degree of what I regarded as interference. . . . Never at any age did I clamour to be amused; always and at all ages (where I dared) I hotly demanded not to be interrupted" (Lewis, 1955a, p. 135). In later life, it is ironic that Jack would fall into this existence by coincidence, and it was to offer many disturbances, producing in him, at times, a noteworthy amount of distress (Wilson, 1990).

However, another era awaited him, as the old one was not suited for his developing mind (Wilson, 1990). In fact, Lewis did not seem to be a particularly good fit for the English boarding school system of the Edwardian Age; perhaps some of this discomfort was informed by his aversion to the culture that was pervasive on English soil – an aversion formed as one of his first impressions (McGrath, 2013). His Malvern career would be one short-lived year, and the summer of 1914 served as a prelude to the wonder that was to greatly influence his logical mind (Lewis, 1955a). The next chapter of his education would be supervised by his father's old

master, William Kirkpatrick – The Great Knock. It was a chapter Lewis approached with marked relief (Peters, 1985).

An altogether different development took place before his last term at Malvern. Lewis regarded friendship as a relationship established on mutual interest (Lewis, 1960), one that offered him immense joy if shared with someone of a similar sex – a relationship established through the act of “seeing the same truth” (Wilson, 1990, *The Great Knock*, para. 7). Jack shared this ‘truth’ with their long-time Belfast neighbour, Arthur Greeves. Until a house call made by Lewis in mid-April 1914 (with an ailing Arthur keen on a visit), the two boys had not shared more than a mere neighbourly connection (McGrath, 2013), though Arthur had wished to establish a friendship (Lewis, 1955a). Lewis had the images of H. M. A. Guerber’s *Myths of the Norsemen* on his mind, so it was evident that, upon entering Greeves’ room, and discovering the very book on Arthur’s bedside table (together with *Loki Bound*), friendship would be sparked (Lewis, 1955a), with its genesis set in the literature of the Romantic movement in literature (Wilson, 1990). Lewis and Arthur developed their mutual description of the emptiness or desire that seemed to be heightened by certain imaginative stimuli, such as the low-lying green hills of Castlereagh that could be seen from Little Lea (McGrath, 2013). Lewis’s friendship with Greeves was to outlast the reaches of distance and time, and they corresponded by letter from 1914 to two weeks before Lewis’s death (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990).

After the summer term of 1914, Jack found himself in the capable hands of Kirkpatrick, who was based in a house in the English county of Surrey – a place that evoked in Lewis a longing for what seemed like ‘domesticity’. The house was called Great Bookham, also referred to as Gastons (Lewis, 1955a; McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). For Jack, the Knock was a man who preferred logic above the social pleasantries of daily interaction (Wilson, 1990). On his

arrival, and their way to Kirkpatrick's home, Lewis commented about the wildness of the scenery in Bookham, which he found unexpected. At this comment, Kirkpatrick explained, "Stop! What do you mean by wildness and what grounds had you for not expecting it?" (Wilson, 1990, *The Great Knock*, para. 13). The event proved to be a lesson Lewis had to learn, namely, that any comment needed a logical basis for its sharing (Wilson, 1990) – in this case, knowledge on the topic being discussed. Anything else, or anything lacking a basis for its argument, was a point without meaning (McGrath, 2013). Lewis's 'priggish' contempt, bred by the fagging system of Malvern, was to be beaten down with certainty (McGrath, 2013).

Lewis soon grew accustomed to the Knock's ways, and his peculiar hasty and haphazard method of instruction in literature (Lewis, 1955a), in which critical thinking took precedence over argument based on intuition (McGrath, 2013). Rising to the challenge regardless (Lewis, 1955a; Wilson, 1990), Lewis found himself trying to gain a lead over his master regarding the readings. Kirkpatrick admired Jack immensely, finding that he made a similar impression to the one his father had made so many years prior; though Kirkpatrick's response was not one of affection, but an old-fashioned approach that taught Lewis dialectic (Lewis, 1955a). It was an argumentative style that Lewis would adopt in the many years he spent as a literary critic. The Knock wrote to Albert of his son, "It is the maturity and originality of his literary judgement that remains so surprising. By an unerring instinct he detects first rate quality in literary workmanship and the second rate does not interest him in any way" (Wilson, 1990, *The Great Knock*, para. 15). Lewis, characteristically, read an extensive range of writings, formidable for a teen (Peters, 1985). Being widely read was not to give stock to the illusion of superiority that he fostered in his earlier schooling; the Knock was sure to cure Lewis of the dispositional malady (Lewis,

1955a). Lewis became accustomed to life at Gaston's, which served as his home at a time when relationships with his parent and sibling were cooling (McGrath, 2013).

Deciding to send Lewis to Great Bookham was one of Albert Lewis's more informed decisions (McGrath, 2013). Life at Bookham was, however, tedious and dreary, as it offered little stimulation. The situation spoke of the unconventionality of Lewis's lifestyle at 16 or 17 (Wilson, 1990), and Mrs Kirkpatrick tried, in different ways, to offer entertainment; she even introduced him to some girls. At the time, the topics of Lewis and Greeves's letters – the arrival of a letter was a highlight Lewis awaited eagerly (Lewis, 1955a) – were love and sex. Lewis admitted, "Though I have no personal experience of the thing they call love, I have what is better – the experience of Sappho, of Euripides, of Catullus, of Shakespeare, of Spenser, of Austen, of Brontë, of, – anyone else I have read" (Hooper, 1979, p. 424). His experiences had always been of a primarily literary nature, and would later encourage the line of thought in him that one projects oneself into the stories one reads (Wilson, 1990).

Considering how impressionable Lewis was about literature, it must have been fate that lead him to come across a copy of *Phantastes*, by George MacDonald at the Great Bookham train station (returning after a visit to Leatherhead³). This work caused reverberations in Lewis's inner world early in March of 1916 (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). Years of emotions that had accumulated, untouched beneath the surface of his being since the death of his mother, were stirred by the book. "All was changed. . . . I had not the faintest notion what I had let myself in for by buying *Phantastes*" (Lewis, 1955a, p. 209), he wrote in his autobiography, *Surprised by Joy*. A tale of a young man on a journey involving selfhood, loss and other images, Lewis was enthralled by the literary experience – one which probably showed him what he needed (Wilson, 1990). The emotions he had repressed since his own great loss had remained hidden amidst the

³ A town in England.

boarding and public school experiences, leading to a hardening of the inner self, which seemed to have suffered for eight years, as recounted in his own words: “That night (with the book) my imagination was, in a certain sense, baptized; the rest of me, not unnaturally, took longer” (Lewis, 1955a, p. 209).

His time with Kirkpatrick, from 1914 to 1916, also made him susceptible to his father’s fear regarding the influence of the “Gaston’s heresies”⁴ (Wilson, 1990, *The Great Knock*, para. 17). Lewis was soon to be confirmed in the church, but his exposure to the teachings had, perhaps, emphasised his waning belief in God (Lewis, 1955a; McGrath, 2013), and he knew agreeing to the ceremony was all but truthful. Lewis (1955a) admitted to the features of Christianity externally (its prose, its music, and its edifices of worship), which fed his aversion; however, even more powerfully, “No word in my vocabulary expressed deeper hatred than the word ‘Interference’. . . . Christianity placed at the centre what then seemed the transcendental Interferer” (Lewis, 1955a, p.199). Yet, his dwindling relationship with his father left him without a solution as to how such a view was to be conveyed to Albert. Arthur Greeves, committed in his own faith, seemed to be a growing confidant during this estrangement between Lewis and his father, though his friend would sometimes find Lewis’s religious views challenging (McGrath, 2013). Lewis was at an age that his father’s anecdotal nature was just not as appealing or enjoyable as it might be for someone older (Lewis, 1955a). It was times nonetheless, on his visits home, that many hours were devoted to his reading and writing if not spent in the company of his father. These pastimes, together with walking (during which he could experience the glory of nature) and music were all attempts to reawaken a pang of that desire called Joy; he searched between the pages, and in his surroundings. All he would ever

⁴ A term suggesting Kirkpatrick’s almost atheistical outlook.

come by, as he describes it, was that desire of the desire itself (Lewis, 1955a). It was as if his burgeoning imagination was pulling against a developing reason (McGrath, 2013).

The important next step, approaching with the close of 1916, was the career Lewis was to be launched into. Kirkpatrick, taking seriously the future of his charge (McGrath, 2013), at the time wrote to Jack's father that he:

was born with the literary temperament and we have to face the fact with all it implies. This is not a case of early precocity showing itself in rapid assimilation of knowledge and followed by subsequent indifference or even torpor. As I said before it is the maturity of his literary judgements which is so unusual and surprising. (Lewis Papers, volume 3, p. 256 as cited by Wilson, 1990, *The Great Knock*, para. 41)

On further query, the Knock recommended that they consider for Jack the profession of advocate, "the career marked out for Clive by nature and destiny. . . . He has every gift, a goodly presence, a clear resonant voice, an unfailing resource of clear and adequate expression" (Wilson, 1990, *The Great Knock*, para. 41). Lewis (1955a) gleaned that Kirkpatrick had mentioned to his father that his path was to be that of a scholar or writer; though Lewis himself knew that he was made to be little else, and he certainly did not want to follow in the footsteps of his father and consider a legal career (McGrath, 2013).

Lewis would, eventually, make use of his skills as an advocate in later life, in an altogether different fashion, but between 1915 and the year to follow his term at Bookham, he wrote 52 poems and believed, until the late 1920s, his destiny was to be a poet (Wilson, 1990). On 4 December 1916 he was welcomed in the town of which he would be a lifelong occupant. During this period, he was to sit for the scholarship examinations at the collegiate Oxford University, but before this would occur, another significant event was to shape the course of his life significantly (Wilson, 1990). The turmoil of the First World War was the reality of the times

– it restructured social classes and even Ireland was on the dawn of being changed . . . and Lewis would change along with it (Lancast, 2012; McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990).

2.2.5 Emerging Adulthood: A Leap Past the Watchful Dragons (1918 - 1929).

The year 1917 saw Lewis enjoying a blissful first term as an undergraduate at University College Oxford (Wilson, 1990). Lewis had sat for one entrance examination in December 1916, and had not been accepted to New College; he had an interview with Reginald Macan, the master of University College, and aimed to fulfil the requirements for passing Responsions⁵ (mathematics) to gain the scholarship offered (McGrath, 2013). Lewis, along with 12 other men were left to soak in their surroundings, “I never saw anything so beautiful, especially on those frosty moonlit nights” (Hooper, 2004a, p.262). Where Lewis found himself was the Oxford of old, before industrial expansion. The Gothic architecture, surrounded by unspoilt nature, made for a captivating sight (Wilson, 1990). Neither was this experience to end, as Lewis was under no obligation (being Irish) to enlist for conscription, though he believed that forcible conscription was inevitable, with the British Army’s needs stretching beyond the sufficiency of the numbers of volunteers (McGrath, 2013). Nevertheless, informed by Macan in order to secure a title as an officer (McGrath, 2013), Lewis volunteered,⁶ and was packing for Kelbe College military barracks on 10 June, without a reading plan, as requested from the dean because of his service in the Corps. His wistful start at Oxford was at an end, and his future uncertain (Wilson, 1990). Lewis commented, “You may have my body, but not my mind,” (Lewis, 1955a, p. 184). It

⁵ Competency in mathematics settled the mind of Albert Lewis regarding a safeguard for his son during the war, by opening up the possibility of him serving as an artillery officer (Lewis, 1975).

⁶ The looming shadow of conscription posed the act of any able-bodied individual above 18 approaching Oxford for studies as a “moral impossibility”. Voluntary action hastened the climb to officer rank, instead of being bound by the title of private soldier after conscription. For Lewis, an officer’s commission in the British Army could be obtained through application to the Oxford University Officers’ Training Corps (Hooper, 2004a; McGrath, 2013).

typified Lewis as the inconvenienced scholar, for whom war evoked reluctance as a factor that was influential, but not controlling (McGrath, 2013). He adopted this stalwart mindset to keep the conscription period at bay, as an event yet to occur before the uncertain manifestation of his life following the war; this thinking reduced his inclination to anxiety over immediate career decisions (Lewis, 1955a). Even during trench warfare it appeared that literature, and his imagination, were signatures on a treaty to keep the advances of the war bordered off from the recesses of his mind (McGrath, 2013).

Lewis shared a room at the barracks of Kelbe College with one Edward Frances Courtenay Moore (nicknamed Paddy). A chance arrangement at the time, the significance of this meeting probably only dawned on him only much later (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). At Kelbe, the men engaged in what seemed to be casual training for warfare in the trenches on 7 May 1917 (McGrath, 2013). Albert was beside himself about Jack's decisions and the interruption of his studies (Lewis, 1955a). Nevertheless, on numerous occasions, he failed to visit his son. His problems with travel would see him absent at a crucial point of Lewis's emotional crisis, which occurred unbeknownst to people Lewis knew (Wilson, 1990). Just as Lewis had to respond to the call of war, which happened in November 1917 (McGrath, 2013), Jack wrote to his father and asked him to come and greet him before his departure from Southampton (where the troop ships sailed from). The telegram, stipulating "REPORT SOUTHAMPTON SATURDAY" (Wilson, 1990, *The Angel of Pain*, para. 6), provided the untraveled Albert with little indication of what was to happen; only later, in a further back and forth between him and his son, did he learn the unsettling truth. The delicate threads of their relationship were being frayed even further, and Albert could not have foreseen how this misunderstanding affected his son (Wilson, 1990).

Lewis was to find comfort with another. It came as no surprise that Jack had often chosen to spend periods of leave with Paddy's family, instead of his own (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). On one such leave, in September, Lewis experienced something he had not known since he was nine – a mother's touch. Nursing him to health, Janie Moore's presence in Jack's life would be more profound than his own family could suspect at the time (Wilson, 1990). The significance of the relationship between Lewis and Janie Moore may have been based in the fact that, at their first meeting, she was 45 years old, the age at which Flora died (McGrath, 2013). Paddy's mother wrote to Albert, 'Your boy, of course, being Paddy's roommate, we know much better than the others, and he was quite the most popular boy of the party; he is very charming and most likeable, and won golden opinions from everyone' (Lewis Papers, vol. 5, 239 as cited in Wilson, 1990, *The Angel of Pain*, para. 5). It was an affection that Lewis would come to return. Lewis and Paddy had themselves grown to be fast friends (Lewis, 1955a) and they made a pact in light of news that their service in separate regiments would not see them face the coming conflict together (McGrath, 2013). Should any one of them perish in the war, the other was to promise to take into their care the family of the one who failed to return (Lancast, 2012; McGrath, 2013).

A 19-year-old Lewis, second lieutenant in the Somerset Light Infantry, found himself in the frontline trenches near the village of Arras during the Christmastime of 1917 (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). Days were spent trudging through cold, muddy water while clothed in the fear of enemy fire and thigh-length gumboots that threatened to tear on barbed wire (Wilson, 1990). The violent ravages of war had left its marks on its occupants on the field (McGrath, 2013). They braved hidden grey figures and renewed offences by the enemy, and the horrors and suffering of war (Peters, 1985) that were revealed by the corpses strewn on the battlefield

(Wilson, 1990), which evoked anew in Lewis the childhood trauma of death (Lewis, 1955a). There was something, though, about the camaraderie of warfare that made him feel more comfortable than he had in the company of the Malvern Bloods. “Straight tribulation is easier to bear than tribulation that advertises itself as pleasure” (Lewis, 1955a, p. 218). The unpleasantness of the boarding school system seemed capable of dethroning even the irreversible mark of war in its effect on Lewis (Lewis, 1975; McGrath, 2013). Caught in the throes of war on the Front, there was no need to maintain pretension; this was what made Lewis write to Albert, “I must confess that I have become very attached to this regiment. I have several friends whom I should be sorry to leave and I am just beginning to know my men and understand the work” (Wilson, 1990, *The Angel of Pain*, para. 8), who was angered because Jack did not transfer to an artillery regiment. McGrath (2013, *The Curious Case of the Unimportant War*, para. 5) emphasises that the psychological and physical scarring of the Great War brought conflict to Lewis’s doorstep about the question of meaning – this was a trauma that “‘partitioned’ or ‘compartmentalised’ his life as a means of retaining his sanity”. Lost in the words of others, the reality of the world could be cordoned off from his mind. Two events unfolded then, which closed his chapter within the war, of which one was to be the start of a story unto itself.

On 15 April 1918, efforts against a desperate German offensive were underfoot. On Mount Bernenchon, Jack was experiencing his last sense of brotherhood in war, as a bombshell exploded close to him and a friend, Sergeant Ayres (McGrath, 2013). The attack took the life of his comrade, but for Lewis, the occurrence – as close to him as an experience of his own death (Lewis, 1955a) – made him a “Blighty” (Wilson, 1990, *The Angel of Pain*, para. 10). Taking exploding shrapnel in the face, hand, underarm and leg – with a piece nearly grazing his lung – he became a soldier wounded in war, an event that released him from further service (McGrath,

2013; Wilson, 1990). The war reached its end a few weeks before Lewis's birthday, on 29 November 1918 (McGrath, 2013).

After being treated in Liverpool Merchants' Mobile Hospital, Étaples, Jack returned to England and, once again, his father found himself incapable of visiting. Mrs Moore, Paddy's mother, showed none of Albert's hesitation (Wilson, 1990). Jack made an interesting exaggeration: "When I came first to the University, I was as nearly without a moral conscience as a boy could be . . . of chastity, truthfulness and self-sacrifice" (Lewis, 1940, p. 31). Both of them were untethered by the moral certitudes of Christianity (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990), and mystery clouds the nature of Jack and Janie's relationship after her visit. Its true nature has never proven, and Moore's act in later life of burning their letters of correspondence suggests the shrouded nature of what is believed to have been an intimacy (McGrath, 2013). Janie was married to an absent husband who resided in Ireland, and referred to as 'the Beast' (Wilson, 1990), and it was doubtlessly assumed that the nature of her relationship with Jack at the time may have been romantic. Little did Lewis suspect that he would be the one who would have to pay dues in the pact made between him and Paddy (Wilson, 1990). His friend was reported missing, and being unlikely to be found, Lewis remained true to his word and took charge of the care of Janie Moore and her daughter Maureen (Lancast, 2012).

Stewing in the background was the fractured relationship with his father (Wilson, 1990); a distance settled between familial bonds (McGrath, 2013). It was later, when he realised that he may have failed his son, that he wrote to Warnie, "No doubt Jacks thinks me unkind and that I have neglected him. Of course that fear makes me miserable . . . I have never felt so limp and depressed in my life" (Wilson, 1990, *The Angel of Pain*, para. 18). Albert failed, nonetheless, to stir himself to convey the pride he felt at his son's poetic efforts – a collection of poems

published in March 1919, written during his preparation for the war, called *Spirits in Prison* (later to be renamed, *Spirits in Bondage*).⁷ Jack exerted relentless effort to establish himself as a poet, but the quality of his work evoked criticism and analytic commentary (also from his father) (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). Yet, his poetry was revealing – “Any idea that the ‘red God’ might ‘lend an ear’ to human cries of misery lay discredited and abandoned in the mud, a disgraced ‘Power who slays and puts aside the beauty that has been’” (Lewis, 1919, p. 25). Lewis’s mind was assailed by two prevalent themes, that are significant in the lines quoted (McGrath, 2013): (a) scorn for a God of whose existence he wanted no claim, but to whom, nonetheless, he wished to assign blame for the havoc of war; and (b) an intense yearning for a past that he felt, in its comforts, had been lost to him forever.⁸ It is clear that the dreams his aspiring young mind had visited upon him had not found its expected manifestation, as his later status as novelist, apologist, and critic of literature would show (McGrath, 2013).

The entry of Mrs Moore into his life, even as early as the night that she spent at Kelbe college in 1917 (McGrath, 2013), thus, provided him with (among other things) a maternal figure that opened up a space for his emotions to experience healing.⁹ With the signing of the Armistice in November 1918, and a carefree summer term a thing of the past, Lewis returned to Belfast – a place no longer reminiscent of home (Wilson, 1990). Lewis was wary of keeping his relationship with Mrs Moore secret from his father, suspecting that an already frayed relationship would simply come undone, especially considering that a letter by Lewis pointed out to Arthur that he (Arthur) and Mrs Moore were the “two people who matter the most . . . in the world” (Hooper,

⁷ The work was originally published under the pseudonym, Clive Hamilton.

⁸ The particular poem, “Ode for New Year’s Day”, heralding the final death of “a God who was in any case a human fabrication” (McGrath, 2013, Lewis’s Wartime Experiences at Oxford, para. 14), was written during the assault on the French town of Arras, where Lewis was stationed, in January 1918 (Lewis, 1919; McGrath, 2013).

⁹ The social milieu of the Great War led to a time characterised by the circumvention of British morals, with female sympathies being affectionately extended to the brave men of the front (McGrath, 2013).

2004a, p. 348). The ideas Lewis may have entertained surrounding women may have been doubly fulfilled by a maternal streak embodied by Moore's caring, in tandem with what may have been intimate excitement (McGrath, 2013).

On 13 January 1919, during the Trinity Term,¹⁰ Lewis resumed his undergraduate career at University College – Oxford would be his home for the 35 years to follow (McGrath, 2013). These were peaceful times for a now-fully-committed academic (Wilson, 1990, McGrath, 2013). Advised to take the full course, comprising Latin, Greek literature, philosophy, ancient history and the classics – *Literae Humaniores*¹¹ (McGrath, 2013) – Jack found himself actively engaged in his prescribed readings, many of which offered him the air of delightful familiarity (Wilson, 1990). The beauty of Oxford unveiled itself with the turn of spring, as he notes in the June of that year, “It is perfectly lovely now both in town and country – there are such masses of fruit trees all white,” (Wilson, 1990, Undergraduate, para. 5). Oxford evoked from Jack a love for the culture it housed, its inheritance of knowledge and its aesthetic appeal, in an architectural sense (McGrath, 2013).

In that time, new friendships would grace his experiences; among these, was the friendship of Owen Barfield (Duriez, 2005; Lewis, 1955a). In his autobiography (Lewis, 1955a), Jack made mention of the contrast to be drawn between a First Friend, and one's Second Friend. Arthur Greeves, Lewis's lifelong confidant and the young teen who had so many years before serendipitously shared his interest in the romantic appeal Lewis termed “Northernness”, was like a First Friend. The Second Friend would be not as amicable regarding one's tastes. Owen

¹⁰ Oxford's academic year was divided into three eight-week periods of learning: Michaelmas (October to early December), Hilary (January through March), and Trinity (April through June) (McGrath, 2013).

¹¹ With the goal of re-establishing principles of reason and order, the classical age was seen as a bounty from which to draw wisdom, which would be weaved into an England damaged by the civil unrests of the seventeenth century, for a normative cultural and political drive towards stability. In a way, *Literae Humaniores* was a passport to a virtuous way of life for those who chose to study it (McGrath, 2013).

Barfield took up the role of the Second Friend (Peters, 1985), and it was this very quality that, perhaps, influenced Lewis more than he was able to reciprocate.¹² Religion was the topic most debated upon, with Lewis at this point a fully-fledged atheist (Wilson, 1990). Another friend, A. K. Hamilton Jenkin, also left a lasting impression on the young Jack.

I learned from him that we should attempt a total surrender to whatever atmosphere was offering itself at the moment, in a squalid town to seek out those very places where its squalor rose to grimness and almost grandeur, on a dismal day to find the most wet and dripping wood, on a windy day to seek the windiest ridge. Lewis (1955a, p. 231)

This was a perception held by Lewis (mindful, perhaps, of his very own atmosphere) that was irregular for the time.

Unlike his fellow-collegians, he had to keep a secret, that of his domestic and financial commitment to Janie and Maureen Moore (McGrath, 2013). Oxford was semi-monastic and, thus, strict in its dealings with odd relations with the opposite sex, even as late as the 1950s. Lewis's habit, of cycling out to Mrs Moore's lodgings in Headington village after his morning studies every day, to return to Oxford late at night) could, thus, be seen as a habit that would elicit great suspicion (McGrath, 2013). Jack, in his dutiful promise to the late Paddy – though, clearly, not bound by duty alone – thus, risked losing his prospects at Oxford. To exacerbate the tension, Lewis was dependent on his father for allowances to support the expenses of college life. With a fluctuating likelihood of financial support from her husband, Mrs Moore and Maureen forced Lewis to stretch his own funds to support them too. (Wilson, 1990), which was a scenario that his father came to suspect (McGrath, 2013). “If Jacks were not an impetuous, kind-hearted creature who could be cajoled by any woman who has been through the mill I should not be so uneasy,” Albert wrote to Warnie at the time (Wilson, 1990, Undergraduate, para. 15).

¹² McGrath (2013), however, claims that both Greeves and Barfield fitted into the category of first-class friends, whilst Tolkien – with whom Lewis would develop close affiliation later – was seen as the second-class friend.

Lewis's secretive relations with Mrs Moore – with deception practiced to keep his father unaware (McGrath, 2013) – was cause for concern for his family, and Warnie became a frequent mediator, who maintained the ties during hostile interactions between Jack and Albert (Wilson, 1990). This tension was only strengthened by Jack's already maintained and inherent guilt about his loosening connection to home, and his father's disapproval about Lewis's domesticated life with the Moores (Wilson, 1990). His deception and dishonesty about his financial situation, and the inevitable confrontations it caused, was to deal a serious blow to the relationship between Albert and his son (McGrath, 2013).

It appeared astonishing how a mind such as Lewis's was stimulated by the domesticated humdrum of his life with Mrs Moore. The dull monotony of the chores he was subjected to by Janie, who seemed to require a constant cognisance of her needs, would seem to be a vivid aggravator of his peeve relating to interruptions (Lewis, 1955a). Yet, Mrs Moore's presence appeared to give Lewis a great contentment, which was already being fuelled by his collegiate existence (Wilson, 1990), and between 1922 and 1925 she proved to be an emotional buffer through her availability and her provision of a sheltered family existence – something he did not seem to receive from his own family (McGrath, 2013).

1920s Oxford seemed peacefully distant from the Irish civil war, which was being waged against the Protestant population by Irish nationalists. In the spring of 1920, Lewis attained a First in his Honours Moderations exam. Against this academic backdrop, philosophy resonated with two distinct parts of his character: the argumentative spirit that sought an opportunity to wield his oratory prowess, and the aspiring poet, who sought purchase for his imaginative thriving (Wilson, 1990). These facets of himself gave birth to the poem, *Dymer* (Lewis, 1969), which he penned in the period when he was awaiting the results of his last examination

(McGrath, 2013), though the poem was only published in 1926. His academic career was moving forward: the First in his Moderations and the Chancellor's English Essay Prize was followed by a first-class degree in the Greats, in 1922. Lewis was a coveted prospect for employment as academic (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990).

One of Lewis's chief occupations during his first two years at Oxford was establishing a "New Look" (Lewis, 1955a, p. 234), which involved living with logic and avoiding the trappings of romanticism. During this time, the appearance of Joy was inconsistent and alluring in its empty offer to provide him with something of greater substance and he, thus, abandoned the pursuit thereof (Lewis, 1955a). Assuming this new state of mind did offer him contentment in its early conception, but it faded in the face of a steady onslaught by experience. He reflected, "I thought that the 'Cristian myth' conveyed to unphilosophical minds as much of the truth as they were capable of grasping" (Lewis, 1955a, p. 250).

Meanwhile, in his professional life, the prospect of career-hunting was as daunting to him as it had been in this period of 1921 to 1922 while studying the Greats in which he wished to academically excel (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). Lewis, however, faced additional pressures, which he desperately longed to escape. Insufficient funds lead Mrs Moore to ensnare him in a cycle of chores, to alleviate her anxiety, and their living arrangement was one of little permanence. The period 1918-1923 saw a move of the 'family' unit from one accommodation to the next. In this light, tensions with his father made the bond ever tauter for financial compensation, and Lewis no longer wished to subject himself to the dependency (Wilson, 1990). Yet, Lewis turned down many opportunities for the sake of his domestic arrangements, among which a lectureship in the Classics Department at Reading University (McGrath, 2013).

Nevertheless, his eligibility as a fellow was increasing, though he seemed unequipped in many areas of life, despite his maturity (Wilson, 1990).

For two to three years, these and other influences were to continue shaping his life. It was recommended that he complete an additional year of English literature, if the notion of an academic career was to become a reality; thus, his studies in English language and literature commenced on 13 October 1922 (McGrath, 2013).¹³ Lewis started working to teach those works he had devoted his leisure time to. It was a nudge in the right direction for a man who was still seeking his place in the world (Wilson, 1990), and his career to follow proved to be no small result of this involvement. English was a dubious discipline at the time, in that it was primarily philological, and its hazy presentation made it a field that seemed to harbour no masculine appeal. Lewis delighted in sorting his favourite works according to their era, and discussing their origins (Wilson, 1990). So began his introduction to the English faculty.

In 1922, Lewis met Neville Coghill in the English School. Coghill was an Irishman, like himself, and Jack regarded him as having the most enlightened opinions in the class (Peters, 1985). To Lewis's surprise, and as he would find with many of the Oxford men who became his friends in this isolating period of exhausting study,¹⁴ Coghill was a Christian. As Lewis would discover, English reawakened truths that he had felt as a child; the truth that shifting human nature was perhaps best understood by the shifting imaginations of poets and writers, in conjunction with, and not only by, the means of rigorous logic. It was such thinking that

¹³ A secured college fellowship after examinations was a phenomenon of the bygone era of the prewar days, and postwar demands forced Oxford to change their systems of employment. Students now needed to prove themselves by means of their studies, and this meant the mastery of an additional Honour School for Lewis (Darwall-Smith, 2008; McGrath, 2013).

¹⁴ He could enter the course on basis of senior status; because he was possession of a degree, he was exempted from the first year study of the three-year English course. It would, nevertheless, prove taxing to complete two years of study in one year, between 1922 and 1923 (McGrath, 2013).

confronted him with deep-seated questions, most potent of which were questions of a religious and spiritual nature (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990).

His mind was filled with new challenges posed by thinking in Western literature and art and rising modernity, in relation to his preferences for the old ways. Wilson (1990) refers to a powerful nostalgia, which would often transport Lewis back to the Little End Room, which seemed to convey, ideologically, all that he knew and loved. A challenge in preference overwhelmed him when he realised that it was the authors whose writings were tinged by religion that appealed to him most. This development even found its way into his choice of friends, of which the composition would change compared to when he had been studying the Greats after the Mods exams (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990).

Religion was a question of the supernatural: a topic which had already disturbed him in 1920, when it had dominated the thoughts of many intellectuals, both his elders and the generation to follow – “the heroically silly generation” (Wilson, 1990, p. 354). Men of his own generation knew not how to afford the trappings of such liberating thought – discussing the ethereal as if it was tangible. Men like Lewis, back from the gruesome realities of warfare (Lancast, 2012), were more concerned with the prospect of life than the abstractions of faith. It became clear that Lewis was, more and more, facing an onslaught on his system of belief by invading thoughts related to faith (Lewis, 1955a; Wilson, 1990).

Another ugly dragon reared its head in the year of 1923, clothed in the memorable experience of the madness that overcame Dr Askins, known as The Doc, who was a brother of Mrs Moore. Lewis enjoyed the company of the man, who shared his love of the Romantics (Wilson, 1990). Unbeknownst to them, The Doc had contracted syphilis, which had addled his brain to the point that he believed that his fate was hell, an idea spurred on by hidden, malevolent

voices who had planted the seeds. A psychotic episode portrayed the degree to which the illness had affected The Doc.

I thought I had seen a warning. It was to this, this raving on the floor, that all romantic longings and unearthly speculations led a man in the end. . . . Safety first, thought I: the beaten track, the approved road, the centre of the road, the lights on. . . . For some months after that nightmare fortnight, the words ‘ordinary’ and ‘humdrum’ summed up everything that appeared to me most desirable. (Lewis, 1955a, p. 236)

This was Lewis’s written account of the event involving a man who was, at the time, involved in the pursuit of spiritualism and theosophy. This event has been given as a cause for Lewis’s formulation of a ‘New Look’ (Lewis, 1955a; McGrath, 2013).

This development was to be beset by a conflict that is illustrated best by what was referred to in jest “The Great War” between Lewis and Owen Barfield (Hooper, 2006; Lewis, 1955a; McGrath, 2013). Jack’s opposition to the spiritual affinity was soon to be felt as a solitary quest. The clash of views between Barfield and Lewis happened both in writing and in person (Wilson, 1990), and was facilitated by Barfield’s assimilation of anthroposophy into his own system of belief. Lewis was not ready to accept an objective comprehension of the supernatural world, and he felt an animosity to the view of a general man who had been raised to believe that Christianity was a fantasy. It seemed to him that few people were safe from being led astray from what he perceived to be good sense (Lewis, 1955a). Barfield did not succeed in bringing Lewis into the fold of the Rudolf Steiner philosophy, but he did rattle the shell. It was to be the end of one quality of the New Look: the illusion of the obsolete quality of that which belonged in the past, as opposed to that which was modern (Peters, 1985); or, as Lewis termed it, a ‘chronological snobbery’ (Lewis, 1955a, p. 241).

It was around this period that domestic demands – his preferred oeuvre of the ordinary – coincided with a desperate need for money (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). Provision came his

way with the departure of his old tutor in philosophy, which opened a temporary post as lecturer in the subject for the academic year of 1924 to 1925 (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). The discipline was facing new ways of thinking, among other things, the principle of ‘verification’, popularised by the early ideas of Ludwig Wittgenstein (Wilson, 1990). This line of reasoning posited that meaning was only to be attributed to that which could be verified by something external thereto – a view that was supported by much of the Positivist movement of the time. Together with Lewis’s dilemma regarding the spiritual, and his consistent exposure thereto through the experiences of friends and the authors he loved, he was to be submitted to great wrestling thoughts (Wilson, 1990). It was a state that would earn him the title of ‘Heavy Lewis’, already given to him because of his study of the Greats, for what seemed to be a “heavy going” personality (Hooper, 1991, p. 240). Guarded and secretive, this persona portrayed the Lewis whose inner life remained a mystery, even to his friends, of whom few from his period of studying the Greats would remain (Wilson, 1990).

“‘Heavy’ Lewis was to be a heavyweight in the field of scholarship” (Wilson, 1990, Heavy Lewis, para. 45), and this claim was confirmed by his achievement of a triple First,¹⁵ and his ideal to approach the prospects of a B.Litt. or doctoral thesis, as proposed by his old tutor F.P. Wilson. However, the small scope of a research degree did not appeal to the broadminded Lewis, who sought a larger view of his field – this approach was a much-loved quality for generations of his students. So, 1924 passed, and the possibility of more permanent employment seemed bleak; his reliance on lecturing philosophy and assessing school examinations were also temporary (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). Then, in April 1925, an English fellowship opened at Magdalen, which would see Lewis compete with only one other candidate. Grandiloquent,

¹⁵ Lewis gained a First Class Honours in his sitting for the English examination, affording him a rare status within the university (McGrath, 2013).

noticeable and a true dialectician and Romantic, Lewis was set to make a lasting impression on, in particular, Sir Herbert Warren, the president of Magdalen (Wilson, 1990). Invited to the high table to assess the candidates' manners (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990), it was to be a decisive evening for Jack's career and turn of fortune. On 20 May 1925, he was appointed to the college. Curiously, his inauguration, in August 1925 (McGrath, 2013), was heralded by the college members imparting the words, "I wish you joy" (Lewis, 1966, p. 103). The position was to provide Lewis with relief from the dire financial straits he and the Moores had endured and, also, a healing development in relations with his father. He wrote to his father:

First, let me thank you from the bottom of my heart for the generous support, extended over six years, which alone has enabled me to hang on like this. In the long course I have seen men at least my equals in ability and qualifications, fall out for the lack of it. 'How often can I afford to wait?' was everybody's question; and few of them had at their back those who were both able and willing to keep them in the field for so long. You have waited, not only without complaint but full of encouragement, while chance after chance slipped away and when the goal receded farthest from sight. Thank you again and again. (Lewis, 1966, p. 101)

Much of the letter (his first act after the prestigious news of the fellowship) seemed to be a sharp contrast to the Lewis who felt hostile toward his father in the years of his dependency. With freedom, a newfound sincerity and emotionality set in, which did not merely confine itself to the principles of respect or manners. Lewis was genuinely grateful for his father's support and it led to a newfound perception of himself (Peters, 1985; Wilson, 1990). He had, finally, realised his aspiration to become an Oxford don¹⁶ (McGrath, 2013).

Unlike fellow dons who used their college rooms merely as a place to have lunch, before returning to their families, Lewis spent weekdays in the room allotted to him, and he moved in after the summer of 1925 (Wilson, 1990). He had acquired college rooms, a dining allowance, a

¹⁶ Term for Oxford teachers.

significant salary and a pension (McGrath, 2013). His life assumed a structure and order that found him balancing the demands of home and college (Peters, 1985). Lewis now earned £290 more than his father's allowance of £210, and his position had three distinct legs to its fulfilment: (a) the role of university lecturer, (b) the administrative role of being a Magdalen fellow, and (c) a college tutor – the latter perhaps the most important of his duties (Wilson, 1990). The 27-year-old Jack's teaching had the extensive scope of Old (Anglo-Saxon) English, Middle English language and literature (between the years 1200 and 1450) and all the periods leading up to the Victorian era, including the history of the readings. Lewis was to learn of the 'crust' (Wilson, 1990) that Magdalen dons were supposed to assume when entering the field as young bloods of the game of teaching. In fact, the 'crust' was to be such an integrated part of his persona that, faced by the challenges posed by unconscientious and idealistic undergraduates (Wilson, 1990), 'Heavy' Lewis became bluff, hardened and all the more vocal in his approach (McGrath, 2013; Peters, 1985); his was a constant effort to cordially yet thoroughly prepare his students for exams. He was a diligent educator, yet the 'crust' of fellowship seemed to be a given for him regardless (Wilson, 1990), in the 1930s, when he was mastering his teaching methods (McGrath, 2013).

It was unlikely that he would find lasting friendships among his colleagues, who were a collection of academics who seemed uninclined to praise the successes of those in their field (Wilson, 1990). Neither, it appeared, was the mythical poet ever going to find the success he craved (Lancast, 2012). *Dymer*, a poem he had invested in since the end of the War, fell to a tame public audience and did not seem to enjoy the commercial appeal he had hoped for (McGrath, 2013). Neville Coghill, who was, perhaps, Lewis's closest companion at Magdalen in

those early years, thought he had stumbled upon a considerable work, but it failed to capture the consciousness of Jack's audience (Wilson, 1990).

An influential friend entered his life one fateful night in 1929, and would be instrumental in reconnecting Lewis with Joy, which had haunted him his whole life (Lancast, 2012; Lewis, 1955a; Wilson, 1990). This Joy was elusive, making the ideas of Autumn and Northernness, and the love of his mother essential in avoiding its loss to him completely. However, even his religious chronicle, in his autobiography 25 years later, failed to provide an exposition of his holistic self (Wilson, 1990). Owen Barfield offered the view that, "at a certain stage in his life he deliberately ceased to take any interest in himself except as a kind of spiritual animus taking stock of his moral faults. . . . Self-knowledge for him had come to mean recognition of his own weaknesses and shortcomings and nothing more" (Gibb, 1965, p. 10). For Lewis had failed to account for Mrs Moore and his father in his spiritual journey (Lewis, 1955a), which made his personal tale seem to omit something that was formidably significant in his overall development (Wilson, 1990).

2.2.6 Adulthood: The Allegorical Defender of the Faith (1927 - 1938).

Lewis was in a period of logical crisis: A pattern of thought had been set in motion by, first, his undergraduate exposure to philosophy, which was, second, gradually exacerbated by the English idealists and empiricists (Wilson, 1990). He could bring himself to believe in an 'Absolute Spirit', instead, it needed to be distinguished from God. Part of the struggle was his willingness to admit his own flaws, an action that he did not comprehend would be facilitative of 'grace'. Barfield's words, thus, seem to harbour the truth of the matter, and were to lead Lewis to an extensive period of conversion from atheism (Wilson, 1990). On the topic of religion, 'The

Great War' between the two friends would resume on many occasions (Lewis, 1955a; McGrath, 2013) and to Lewis, his circle of friends (and even his authors of choice) was making him aware of feeling alone in his views. Greeves, Barfield, Tolkien, and Coghill were all Christians, but they knew little of the true crisis that gripped him; and about which he was as secretive as he was about his hidden life with Mrs Moore; the exclusion of the Moores from college life; and his seemingly emotionless interaction with his students (Peters, 1985). He was soon to realise that his reticence about his feelings would be a heavy burden if he continued this failure to disclose (Wilson, 1990). Lewis was aware of some truths that made itself evident: the chinks in the armour of his new look; the flaws in his scope of realism; and the temporal egocentrism that denied that that which was outdated, had been challenged (Lewis, 1955a).

It was in this season of his life, that he picked up a copy of *Hippolytus of Euripides*, which fractured him in its rereading without warning (Lewis, 1955a). The play set out the antithesis of passion as being the reservation of emotion, where the young are vessels of the latter. Within Lewis, it awakened that old and distant pang of emotion, and he wrote, "There was a transitional moment of delicious uneasiness and then – instantaneously – the long inhibition was over, the dry desert lay behind, I was off once more into the land of longing, my heart at once broken and exalted as it had never been since the old days at Bookham" (Lewis, 1955a, p. 252). He found himself admitting in 1929 that God was God, though his conversion was not yet to Christianity (Peters, 1985). Nevertheless, he was left with the profound sense having revealed his inner self by breaking through his exterior (Wilson, 1990).

What fuelled the effect of this development was his distinction between 'enjoyment' and 'contemplation', the exposition of which he came across in *Alexander's Space, Time, and Deity*. He became aware that Joy, in its passing, could not be consciously thought of whilst being

experienced; enjoyment and contemplation were incompatible, and his attempts to seek out Joy would only make him miss it once it had passed (Lewis, 1955a). Lewis realised that “Joy was the desiring,” (1955a, p. 257) and that his longing for it was paradoxical (Peters, 1985). He needed to experience it, and to do this, he needed to break from his self-proclaimed realism. A reading of Chesterton’s *Everlasting Man* –by a Lewis still stoic about what remained of his defences – expounded Christianity in a way that agreed with his logic. Lewis was realising that the resistance needed to be dropped; on a night in 1926, he realised that his hesitancy was a shield that would not long bar the inevitable (Lancast, 2012; McGrath, 2013; Peters, 1985, Wilson, 1990). He reflects on the night that a non-believer had sat in his room, commenting on the evidence in history that supported Christ’s life on earth: “If he, the cynics of cynics, the toughest of toughs, were not – as I would still have put it – ‘safe’, where could I turn?” (Lewis, 1955a, p. 260).

In 1929, Lewis’s father developed a serious cancer, and this illness exacted a serious toll on Lewis too. Lewis expressed a newfound admiration of his bedridden father when he went back to Little Lea to provide what care he could (Wilson, 1990). It was, perhaps, a strange experience for Jack, in that August/September, to be in his childhood home, with its vested memories; and his mind must not have taken the turn that the place was a home he would soon no longer return to. His last moments with his father did to add to the memories of hostility, “Jack saw that his father was a sort of hero – a maddening, eccentric hero but a man whose decency, courage and good humour were as unshakable as his sincere piety” (Wilson, 1990, *Redemption by Parricide*, para. 93). This was a wholly different relationship between Lewis and his father, and even his letters to Warnie did not reflect his usual mocking disdain or quips aimed at Albert (Wilson, 1990). McGrath (2013), however, appears to paint an antithetical picture, of

Lewis's experience of being at his father's sickbed being described as a situation of discomfort and unpleasantness; nevertheless, Lewis's responsibility towards his father seemed to overshadow any lack of affection he may have had. These moments of peaceful reunion were to be fleeting, as the month of September required Lewis's departure after his father's move into a nursing home. Albert died four days later, on 25 September 1929, at the age of 66 (Wilson, 1990). A great guilt was unleashed in Lewis, who admitted, years later, "I treated my own father abominably and no sin in my whole life now seems to be so serious" (Hooper, 2006, p. 445).

The loss of their father caused an all-encompassing sadness, a loss that Warnie managed to reflect effectively in his desire to preserve the Little End Room, which held the crux of their joyous childhood memories (Wilson, 1990). For Warnie, there was no home to which he could return in future¹⁷, and Jack was to maintain a genteel approach in his handling of his brother's boyish desire to recreate the Little End Room in Lewis's Magdalen quarters (Wilson, 1990). To recreate the memory was to disregard the preservation of what the room once was, and Lewis – despite his own recognition that their childhood seemed to have ended in a symbolic way – needed to console his brother and offer secure purchase for the loneliness that Warnie was facing (Wilson, 1990). The trek back to the house in April 1930 to make the necessary arrangements was to be even harder on Warnie. After postponing the sale of the house while awaiting Warnie's return, their childhood was packed up, and their toys were buried in a trunk beneath the vegetable garden (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). Warnie's isolation¹⁸ was curbed by an invitation to live with Jack and Mrs Moore (Wilson, 1990).

¹⁷ Warnie was still a soldier in service, at this point stationed in Shanghai (Wilson, 1990).

¹⁸ Warnie was asked to submit an early resignation from service, due to a bout of misconduct with alcohol possibly brought on by grief for his father. Effectively, in selling Little Lea, Warren was homeless (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990).

A great emotional balm was provided by the development of a friendship between Lewis and Tolkien which had started when they met in May 1926. Tolkien was a man who seemed to possess much of the creative skill that remained yet untasted by Lewis at the time (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). Lewis remained the perpetual critic, despite giving generous praise, and his own failure to achieve poetic success complicated his appraisal of the work of his contemporaries. Yet Tolkien, despite furtiveness in the sharing of his private life, relied on Lewis's view of his elaborate poem, *The Lay of Leithian*, which evoked, to some extent, the sense of Northernness in Jack once more (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). As he wrote to Greeves, "he is, in one part of him, what we were," (Wilson, 1990, *Mythopoeia*, para. 18). Lewis's reaction to the poem was one that he would cleverly convey through an invented group of academic editors, thereby softening the critique from the public on the poem's reception. This alias was perhaps the result of a quick wit, considering his junior position to Tolkien in the Faculty – Lewis was seven years younger than Tolkien. This devious approach was, in addition, the result of caution, considering that Tolkien was "irritable" and Lewis "brash and tactless" (Wilson, 1990, *Mythopoeia*, para. 17). Yet, Lewis remained in admiration of Tolkien's work, knowing his own shortcomings in style and content of his own writings. Tolkien found Lewis welcome company, feeling that the friendship overshadowed much of the sorrow caused by his failing marriage toward the end of 1929. Wilson (1990, *Mythopoeia*, para. 18) reflects, "there was something very cheering in the company of this clever, widely read, humorous and spontaneously affectionate Irishman". The observation seemed paradoxical at the time in 1929, as Lewis often deflected attempts by Tolkien to share personal information (Wilson, 1990).

Meanwhile, the possibility of Warnie moving in caused Lewis's own personal life to gain its share of complications. Lewis was not averse to the notion, and would, perhaps, even

welcome it – it was an arrangement that opened up the recreation of Little Lea in Oxford (Wilson, 1990; McGrath, 2013); however, a shift in circumstances lead to misgivings, which he shared with his brother (McGrath, 2013). Warnie took up the offer in May 1930, and he often wondered about the true nature of the relationship between Jack and Mrs Moore (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). His inquisitiveness on the matter once resulted in a reprimand that closed the discussion (Lewis, 1966). Lewis’s letter to Greeves shed some light on Warnie’s question, “I hope, as W. gets broken into domestic life, they may come to do so still more: but in the interval there is a ticklish time ahead and in any case it is a big sacrifice of our ...[letter cuts off]” (Wilson, 1990, *Mythopoeia*, para. 34). Greeves, who had remained in possession of the letters, had written “very private” and “to be burnt” at the top of the page, and the following pages were found to be missing. This secrecy so characteristic of ‘Heavy’ Lewis remained of paramount importance (Wilson, 1990). The new living arrangements did prove beneficial, as Warnie’s contribution to their funds, Lewis’s stable income, and a trust fund from the estate of Mrs Moore’s brother afforded them the opportunity to buy a home in July 1930 (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). The Kilns, a modern cottage nestled in the scenery of Shot Over Hill (inspired by two brick adjacent kilns), was to be Lewis’s home for the remainder of his days. In addition, he and his brother were left with a strengthened relationship that would be invaluable throughout Jack’s life (McGrath, 2013).

His correspondence with Greeves continued, and only to Arthur were the nebulous changes in his beliefs revealed in the 15 months during which Lewis converted fully to Christianity.

I have no rational ground for going back on the arguments that convinced me of God’s existence: but the irrational deadweight of my old sceptical habits, and the spirit of the age, and the cares of the day, steal away all my lively feeling of the truth, and often when

I pray I wonder if I am not posting letters to a non-existent address. (Hooper, 1979, p. 399)

Since the start of his theistic belief in God, in Trinity Term of 1929,¹⁹ Lewis had started attending the college chapel for the Morning Prayer – this is what he refers to in the letter (Lancast, 2012; McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). His doubts were apparent (Wilson, 1990) and his introspection had delved into a wealth of obstacles caused by his history (Lewis, 1955a). He was on the verge of a metamorphic experience: the famous pivot to his full Christian conversion in the summer of 1932 (McGrath, 2013). “Total surrender – the absolute leap in the dark, were demanded” (Lewis, 1955a, p. 265). It was also apparent that Lewis was cut from the same cloth as scholars of literature who experienced conversion due to the very essence of the literature they invested in (Lewis, 1955a; McGrath, 2013).

A dinner took place at Magdalen on 1929 with two of Lewis’s friends, Tolkien and Henry Victor Dyson (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). Lewis’s preoccupied thoughts were given voice by the turn of conversations, and much of his thinking about religion and his own beliefs revealed what impeded him (Wilson, 1990). An eccentric student, who afforded Lewis endearing difficulties, John Betjeman, had once asked the profound question that Lewis himself was now posing, “and is it true, and is it true, this most tremendous tale of all?” (Wilson, 1990, *Mythopoeia*, para. 45). Lewis was referring, of course, to the tale of Jesus Christ. “He stopped short of understanding Christianity because when he thought about that, he laid aside the receptive imagination with which he allowed himself to appreciate myth and became rigidly narrow and empiricist” (Hooper, 1979, p. 424). It was an observation mirrored by Tolkien: Lewis

¹⁹ It is important to note that McGrath (2013) provides a major revision of Lewis’s spiritual journey. He states that Jack’s emergent belief in God can, actually, to be dated to March-June of 1930 – a year later than all major biographies and Lewis’s own writing indicate. Major reasons for this revision is the apparent lack of spiritual reference in his work of 1929; absence of acknowledgement of faith in the period of his father’s illness, and eventual death; and lack of mention of any significant development to friends, such as Greeves, in 1929 (McGrath, 2013). The writings and letters of 1930 do, in contrast, have a noteworthy change in tone.

bordered himself by a rational attempt to comprehend the theory, whereas an imaginative comprehension of its significance evaded him (McGrath, 2013). As even Owen Barfield had often relayed to Jack, his balance of myth and fact was to be topic to tread cautiously (Wilson, 1990). The conversation after dinner continued for some time, and it was Jack who needed to accept that the myth of Christ was a true one, one that operated on the same principles as its more fantastical counterparts (Hooper, 1979, p. 434). The matter evident was that Lewis felt pressured to acknowledge as a possible truth an outlook that he was not favouring (McGrath, 2013). The temperate evening found them strolling between the birch trees of Addison's Walk, and a crucial point in the conversation was welcomed by a gust of wind that let fall the first leaves of autumn; the three friends stood in awe (Lancast, 2012; McGrath, 2013). Lewis later felt inclined to attribute this to God's enigmatic presence (McGrath, 2013). It was here that Tolkien described nature as 'myth woven' (Wilson, 1990), subjected to the wonder of those who first named it. Only later did nature seem to be the products of scientific mastery. Tolkien's was a statement that reflected Barfield's words, the distinction between 'myth' and 'fact', 'doctrine' and 'myth' (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). Distinguished from this myth was a variation of the truth, not capable of conveying its full glory. The Magdalen clock struck 3 a.m., and the memorable September eve was to leave its mark. Lewis would later regale the influence to Greeves (Hooper, 1979).

The truth was to be made more visible to him, intellectually, more than a week later (on 28 September 1931), when he and the household, accompanied by others, set off on a trip to Whipsnade Zoo (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). To the rest of the Lewis household, the day was ordinary and enjoyable, but Lewis was to take the final plunge – it was a telling aspect of his personality that he used journeys to mull over his thoughts (McGrath, 2013). As he relates in

Surprised by Joy, “when we set out I did not believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and when we reached the zoo I did” (Lewis, 1955a, p.275). An evident change in his routine ways of work and living also set in at the start of the 1930-1931 academic year, coinciding with his restored faith (McGrath, 2013). From this period onwards would swell his imaginative writings; and a creativity that had been dormant for most of his life as atheist, was awakened (Wilson, 1990).

The repercussions of his acceptance of a Christian orthodoxy, a standing that was a reflection of what he came from and what he came to believe (Wilson, 1990), was to be felt in his relationships with Janie Moore. Also, his commitments assumed in Christianity seemed to face at least one barrier, in the matter of celibacy and marriage. How much this reflected of the true relationship of a 33-year-old self and a 58-year-old Mrs Moore (or Minto, as he affectionately referred to her in older age) yet eludes the literature and much of the truth. His standing regarding the unnegotiable view of celibacy for the unmarried was made clear, however, in *Mere Christianity* (Lewis, 1952a). A later parable, drawn in a radio broadcast, revealed his dormant struggle, though implicitly: “Faced with an optional question in an examination paper, one considers whether one can do it or not; faced with a compulsory question, one must do the best one can. . . . It is wonderful what you can do when you have to” (Lewis, 1952a, p. 101). This ‘must’ is seen by some to refer to abstinence from the passionate side they suspect his relationship with Janie involved (Wilson, 1990), but perhaps, also, telling of a control exhibited over his sexual preference.

Greeves was still the correspondent for this topic, and Lewis’s letters revealed not only the hardship of his Christian duty on abstinence (Hooper, 1979), but, in earlier years, conveyed his sadomasochistic preferences. It was a desire he was assuming to reign in, though his

internalised shame maintained the shell he had built around himself, thereby keeping two of his subtler traits as inexplicable phenomena (Wilson, 1990). His friends would have likely have seen, in being told in confidence, that his “domestic enslavement” (Wilson, 1990, *Mythopoeia*, para. 62) and his vocal intimidation of students, was the result of sublimated behaviour from his repressed sexual nature. The second behaviour was felt sharply by the first recipient of his morning tutorials; were he to be contested on the topic under discussion, the pupil was left shaken by the brash approach Lewis assumed (Wilson, 1990). Though Jack would offer an apology, he confessed to the appeal in using this somewhat fiercer tinge, “I have a constant temptation to over-asperity . . . even when there is no subjective anger to prompt me: it comes, I think, from the pleasure of using the English language forcibly” (Hooper, 2004b, p. 187).

Some students, however, came to love this character he had adopted, perhaps as a residual adaptation of the stereotypical ‘crust’ of the experience of Oxford dons (Wilson, 1990), and there were many pupils who liked this façade. Lewis’s enjoyed stability in his Oxford fellowship, having passed the initial five-year appointment, and after which he was re-elected (McGrath, 2013). What marked his role as tutor was always his monolithic mind and manner, and that he did not entertain attachment personally or limitation in ability; this characteristic was a fact often misinterpreted as dislike of the role he garbed, which was far from the truth (McGrath, 2013; Peters, 1985). However, ‘a great change’ had come over him, which was, in fact, not rehearsed, and experienced by many who were there to witness it: “The strange locutions, the shabby clothes, the combination of kindness and brusqueness, the strong ‘personality’ but increasing impersonality of his conversation and interests, were all part of the same process” (Wilson, 1990, *Regress*, para. 47). It was an image even Lewis admitted threw him off his guard years later during his radio talks (Wilson, 1990).

His style of presentation stimulated the clever students, who found in his lessons a vast expanse of packaged knowledge and interesting facts; for those others (especially less inclined to work), his expansive notes made their efforts easier, and, in addition, they were offered the entertainment of his amusing wit (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). Lewis did not subject himself to the “gramophone” method of instruction; instead, he opted to empower students by encouraging them to discover the information personally (McGrath, 2013). The number of students who became teachers themselves and, even, thereafter, Lewis’s friends (Como, 2005), was a unique development of these relations. However, the passing of years lessened this trend; illustrated perhaps best by his tradition of hosting famous “English Binges”. It was reminiscent of a First World War tradition among the cadets, where the goal of the evening was to be inebriated towards the night’s end (Wilson, 1990). The revel of the evening was to be accentuated by obscenities of speech and, to many of the newer male undergraduates, it was often an embarrassing display that they tentatively regarded with uncertainty and proof of the changing times (Wilson, 1990).

The notion of regression seemed to reappear in other domains of Jack’s life, where he entered old doors, which he knew would give access to new things he was discovering (Wilson, 1990). Tolkien made this observation, even though it was made nearly three decades later, when he witnessed what he termed the ‘ulterior motive’ (Wilson, 1990). The description was related to Lewis’s approach to his religion, fuelled by egocentric values that reminded him of his childhood. In his religion, he reclaimed much of the Northern Irish Protestant, however, so much more of the brash and brazen tendencies of his Ulster background found its way into his manners (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). Paradoxically, a visit to St Mark’s Dundela would reveal to him his distaste for the practices of Irish Protestantism, and he believed that the connection with the

divine was not through a doctrine of obedience, but through the subconscious and imagination (Wilson, 1990).

His written work would, however, reflect something more profound. A rich imagination was unlocked at his conversion, and it seeped into the fabric of his style of writing fantasy, apologetic works, and literary critique in the years that were to come (Wilson, 1990, Regress, para. 11). At this point, it could be mentioned that Lewis exerted great effort to establish clarity about the distinct disconnect he still perceived between ‘surrender’ to God and the notion of ‘longing’, which threaded through his life (Lewis, 1955a; McGrath, 2013). In the autumn of 1931, Lewis was coming to grips with his introspected world; it was a process that reached its final stage in the summer of 1932 (McGrath, 2013). The conversation of the famous September night in 1931 yielded an impression that would reawaken the fantasies in art and literature that he felt drawn to. The insight, “promised all the things which Lewis and Greeves had come to label ‘It’ or ‘Joy’. These were the pleasures he got from the beauties of nature, from the music of Wagner, from the watercolours of Beatrix Potter, from the books of William Morris, George MacDonald and Wordsworth” (Wilson, 1990, Regress, para. 7). *The Pilgrim’s Regress* encapsulated much of Lewis’s newfound blend of faith and fantasy that he wished to lay down (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990), infused with a very Lewisian tale of discovery. It was a showcase of the literary style that would break loose, and was conceived on a visit to Greeves in 1932. It appeared, through all its allegories, to explain the wistful longing that saturated his experiences (Peters, 1985).

‘Joy’ or *Sehnsucht* (Peters, 1985) was no longer the elusive feeling; that overwhelming emotion that made one wonder at its nature only to find it was gone. It “had never had the experience that . . . [he] once gave it. It was only a wayside pointer to something other and

outer,” (Lewis, 1955a, p. 276). And, back home was his brother, his lifelong companion, who was present during the feeling’s first appearance, with the unveiling of the toy garden (Lewis, 1955a). And, in his brother’s presence, the detriments to their relationship between 1914 and 1932 seemed remedied, and Little Lea revived in the shape of The Kilns, to reinstitute the security of days of old (Hooper, 2004b). However, the days in the Little End Room, spent in their solitary, separated kinship, was not completely portrayed by life at The Kilns. Lewis’s attention was sought by both Warren and Mrs Moore. To them, Lewis represented the most significant person in their lives (Wilson, 1990). For Janie, he would set aside a nearly daily ration of his company. It was a noticeable devotion, as Mrs Moore was not an academic, who stimulated the clever talks he would engage in with his college coterie. “[T]here was nothing of ‘the ivory tower’, nothing ‘donnish’, about Lewis’s intelligence. In all his talk, and in his writings, he addressed the sympathetic, lively minded ‘general reader’ or ‘average man’” (Wilson, 1990, Regress, para. 30). It was exactly this approach that made him see the endearing qualities in Mrs Moore’s simplicity, and which made him acquaint himself, as a friend, with Dr R. E. Havard, who came to be his new house doctor on call. Havard came to be included in the vast proficiency of intellectual company present on famous Magdalen Thursday evenings attended by Lewis and his circle (Wilson, 1990).

His literary output now in higher throttle, Lewis set to work on *The Allegory of Love* in the early 1930s, closing its contribution to knowledge in 1935. The work posited the history of allegorical love, extending from the Middle Ages to about the end of the latter half of the 16th century (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). It took shape in his personalised content to undergraduate students, who were likely to experience the knack the don possessed adapting to the audience – a talent acquired from his father (Wilson, 1990). Destiny caused the book to reach

the eyes of Charles Williams when it went for publishing. It was coincidental that the two men were mutually influenced by each other's work in what seemed a synchronized moment (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). Lewis, who had read Williams's *The Place of the Lion*, felt that:

The reading of it has been a good preparation for Lent as far as I am concerned: for it shows me (through the heroine) the special sin of abuse of intellect to which all my profession are liable, more clearly than I ever saw before. I have learned more than I ever knew about humility. In fact, it has been a big experience. (Hooper, 1979, p. 471)

Williams was, in turn, learning a great deal from Lewis's work that had happened upon him. Thus, a friendship would inadvertently bud between them in the next three years. It was their shared view on the spiritual realm that which – despite differences in person and personality – especially strengthened Lewis's beliefs about God (Wilson, 1990).

The year of 1936 found Lewis venturing once again in the stylistic footsteps of two of his favoured authors, George MacDonald and Edmund Spenser. The project was an agreement between him and Tolkien, where he would write on the mysteries of space, while Tolkien focused on time (Wilson, 1990). Lewis was to be the one in possession however, of the inclination towards efficiency, as his efforts would deliver, first, *Out of the Silent Planet* (Lewis, 1938), with two books – *Perelandra* (Lewis, 1943) and *That Hideous Strength* (Lewis, 1945) – later, completing a trilogy. The books were an attempt to swing around the general criticism of developments in science and to *convince* a wider audience of the faith, rather than inspiring thinking against it (Hooper, 2004b, p. 236–237).

It brings together Lewis the scholar, Lewis the voracious reader of anything from medieval schoolmen or Italian epic to modern science fiction, Lewis the Christian apologist, Lewis the Irish satirist in the savage tradition of Swift, Lewis the failed Romantic poet. (Wilson, 1990, *The Inklings*, para. 13)

Back at home, Lewis's flourishing life left his brother, for the most part, to his own company and devices, and relations between Warnie and Mrs Moore were not always the most genial (Wilson, 1990).

Lewis's career at Magdalen did not match the strides of his literary ingenuity and his distinction as a scholar amongst his colleagues (Peters, 1985). In fact, from 1927 to 1954 the primacy of his duties lay in lecturing and tutoring, with a hefty number of tutorials in his scope of responsibility (McGrath, 2013). The reasons for the slow progression of his career were thought to be contained in a move by him and Tolkien to wage a battle against those of higher authority and status (Carpenter, 1981). The battle was later seen as a symptomatic trait of membership of the famous circle Lewis and his distinguished friends had founded, The Inklings (Carpenter, 1978; McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). The action that was to set in motion a blow to Lewis's reputation was voting for their friend, Adam Fox, as chair of poetry at Magdalen in 1938.²⁰ Fox found news of the favoured elective candidate to be absurd, and had made mention of it to Lewis. The comment was said with little thought, conveying, perhaps, only jokingly, Fox's preference to run for the position himself; but it was a comment Lewis would see through, with the wisdom of the decision possibly not well considered (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). Fox was hardly in possession of a feeling for poetry, and when the victory came his way, many of the Magdalen circle in the faculty distrusted Lewis, as the seeming campaign manager who, by his intimidating manner and popularist stance (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990) did not suit their preference for dealing with people with mild-mannered temperaments, who could be subjected to control more easily. The reactions echoed the behaviour of fellow collegians who celebrated the success of their colleagues in the same faculty: the reluctance, the jealousy. Lewis

²⁰ These were positions often bound to university politics, instead of judgement by ability, and symbolised a system of power Lewis and The Inklings circle, perhaps, wished to counter (McGrath, 2013).

may have been the bully, but he was implicitly a victim of this view (Peters, 1985; Wilson, 1990).

But The Inklings persisted . . . at least until their meetings declined after 1947 (McGrath, 2013). Tolkien commented that, “it was a pleasantly ingenious pun in its way, suggesting people with vague or half-formed intimations and ideas plus those who dabble in ink,” (Carpenter, 1978, p. 67). It was a dining club without formal procedures, and their meetings on Thursday nights witnessed the gathering of great minds sharing their latest works in mild revelry. The weekly event suited Lewis’s nature (Peters, 1985), though neither he nor Tolkien would be aware of its maturation into an exclusive gathering of literary minds since its conception in 1933 (McGrath, 2013). However, personal relations were taboo with Jack: It was a meeting of friends and colleagues with like-minded perceptions, but not a deepening of bonds (Wilson, 1990). Warnie was, perhaps, more than a friend in this regard, even though he was kept in the dark about much of Jack’s relations with Minto. What the brothers shared was a memory of their boyhood, a constant desire meant for the shape of their reflections, and something that made them wish for the thrust to old age, so they would engage in the memory as a pastime (Wilson, 1990). These were thoughts that traversed the minds of the brothers on a walking holiday in 1939, stuck in the infectious joy of the Little End Room (Wilson, 1990).

The ‘crust’ Lewis had adopted – that hardened set of qualities resistant to change – as Oxford don never seemed to crumble. The main evidence of a ‘crust’ was his literary taste, which lacked the flavour of ‘modern’ writing (Wilson, 1990). He admitted that, “The old Model delights me as I believe it delighted our ancestors” (Lewis, 1994, p. 216). His prejudice guided his preferences, and was a characteristic that spilled over into an observation that, in the well-read man that Lewis was, there was, nonetheless (where his very readings were a fuel to his

narrative), “something a little disappointing in such a man rejoicing in the limitations of his sympathy” (Wilson, 1990, *The Inklings*, para. 29). An ‘intellectual laziness’ also started to abound in his style (Wilson, 1990) and engagements. It is interesting that this preference for consistency seemed visibly reflected in his otherwise oblivious account of his own appearance – garbed in baggy clothes and a shabby look that communicated his indifference. Affection was reserved for this external sign, reflecting to his students the preoccupation of a don in the engagements of deeper matters (McGrath, 2013).

Rational debate was something he increasingly found himself being bested in and it is interesting that the simplicities of domestic life seemed to dominate his later conversations. Perhaps this observation was due to his penchant for communicating with the average man (Wilson, 1990). It was in this regard that his position of power as a Christian apologist would be put to the test. He was asked to write on *The Problem of Pain* (Lewis, 1940), a book that blends two distinct selves of his style: that of a master of rhetoric, and the imaginative self (Wilson, 1990). The book was completed in 1940, and the premise was, in part, a world seen through faith, that differed from the past as it did from the present. An understanding of the ‘old ways’ can only be achieved if we assume the context and way of thinking of the former. The understanding pits the suffering of people against belief in a benevolent God, making it an issue of ethical importance that causes strife and confusion for those who endure (McGrath, 2013; Peters, 1985).

The Problem of Pain was to change Lewis’s destiny. He set himself the task of using his gifts of argumentation and imagination in the service of God (Wilson, 1990) to resolve man’s common problems with the faith (McGrath, 2013). It was dilemma that had led him to the faith – the distinction between myth and truth that was the shape of his turbulent thoughts on that

memorable September night (Lancast, 2012). Lewis used his own door through which to come to considerations of the faith as the welcoming threshold for others, and this he did despite his apparent lack of Biblical training; even despite his school of philosophical thought being proven void by a scholar of Cambridge (Wilson, 1990). Lewis plodded on, and his was a readable view (Peters, 1985) that was epigrammatic, and lacking in English intellectual arrogance. Unknowingly, he was preparing himself for the Second World War (McGrath, 2013).

2.2.7 Middle Adulthood: The Secret Road (1939 - 1964).

A wartime sermon by Lewis, at one point, stated that, “all individuals face the ultimate realities all the time, war quickens and sharpens our awareness” (Wilson, 1990, Screwtape, para. 1). It was an observation that reflected the need for stability in faith at the time, where those people in possession of a prominent view on the topic were eagerly sought. His lecture, “None Other Gods: Culture in Wartime”, to a packed audience in the University Church of St. Mary the Virgin, in Oxford, exhibited his inclination to honest truths held about academic life in periods of uncertainty such as that (McGrath, 2013). This was to be Lewis’s calling, whilst each of his friends and his brother (recalled for active service) had their different positions to fulfil. Oxford reflected a scene of settled quiet, dusted off from memory: that of a silent university during the wartime of 1919 (Lewis, 1955a; McGrath, 2013).

Peculiar wartime circumstances witnessed Lewis asking Charles Williams (the Milton enthusiast) to stand as a lecturer in the English Faculty (McGrath, 2013). William’s astonishing feeling for Milton’s works influenced Lewis to consider a lecture on the prelude to *Paradise Lost*, in 1940, at Bangor, The University College of North Wales. Wilson (1990) remarked on

how these lectures represented the striking quality Kirkpatrick had seen in the boy who arrived at Bookham (Lewis, 1955a); the likable quality seen by his friends and students:

Here is evidence of a mind abundantly stocked with reading which the author has enjoyed – effortlessly, intelligently, and selflessly enjoyed – and he wishes to communicate this enjoyment to us. . . . There is a great moral self-confidence and a common sense in the writing. (Wilson, 1990, *Screwtape*, para. 7)

Lewis did not escape further religious development himself. A friend he made at the time was Sister Penelope (Lawson) of the Community of St Mary the Virgin at Wantage, and she remained his confidant with his struggle at the time, on the use of confession (Wilson, 1990). He wrote to her, “the suggestion about an orgy of egoism turns out, like all the Enemy propaganda, to have just a grain of truth in it, but I have no doubt that the proper method of dealing with that is as I intend to do, to continue the practice” (Wilson, 1990, *Screwtape*, para. 19). This development was no surprise, because Lewis’s next literary venture was to require him to identify with that which is evil, in the story of a higher ranking devil writing to his subordinate. *The Screwtape Letters* (1942) was to make of Lewis a household name, and even give him international status (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990), addressing the people and their moral misgivings, and explain how people give in and can be lead astray. The letters were published at the behest of Ashley Sampson, who had asked Lewis for the work on, *The Problem of Pain*. The weekly letters that were submitted to the periodical, *High Church Weekly* (later to be called *The Guardian*²¹), were, thus, collected into a book in 1942. It propelled Lewis forward, and laid bare to the public his capacity to penetrate emotions, to persuade, and to weave a tale of satire as a master parodist. And though it taxed Lewis and his moral certitudes, the writing reveals the imminent triumph of God and his designs (Wilson, 1990).

²¹ A magazine not to be confused with the famous British newspaper.

Lewis accepted a RAF²² invitation to present talks at RAF stations across England (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). Lewis felt he wanted to make some sort of contribution, and the wound he had incurred in the previous war made him ineligible to be a soldier. The duty before him was daunting to its own degree: it would involve journeys to distant, unknown, squalid places, “leaving little but doubt whether any seeds had fallen on good soil” (Wilson, 1990, *Screwtape*, para. 30). It was a platform for which the stylings of his language needed adaptation to an audience unfamiliar with the jargon of academic circles (McGrath, 2013). His teachings involved creating awareness of the position of the listener to that of the faith (Wilson, 1990).

The success that followed – with *Screwtape* marking his new-found talent of creating accessible vocabulary and views (McGrath, 2013) – made the flow of surviving amiability in his faculty all the more murky, and the faculty of Theology added their voice to the criticism launched at Lewis by his colleagues in the English Faculty at the slightest falter (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). Tolkien also displayed difficulty expressing approval of Lewis as a rising evangelist, perhaps because of their differing religious backdrops. Regardless, despite his success, Lewis did feel the effect of these reactions (Wilson, 1990). The criticism did not staunch his efforts, however, and, in 1941, he was invited by the director of religious broadcasting at the BBC²³ to talk of Christianity from the view of the run-of-the-mill man – to offer something beyond denominational views (McGrath, 2013; Phillips, 2002). He excelled, compared to others who were offering expositions of the ideals of Christian behaviour at the time, and his talks – *Broadcast Talks* (1942), *Christian Behaviour* (1943) and *Beyond Personality* (1944) – were

²² Royal Air Force

²³ British Broadcasting Corporation – which, by the mid-1940, realised their role in encouraging the masses through the struggles of the war (McGrath, 2013).

assembled into the compendium, *Mere Christianity* (Lewis, 1952a).²⁴ Peters (1985) recounted how Lewis, with lucid and analytical genius, managed to enthrall ordinary folk. He set their experience (with his own) firmly within the Christian faith, to bring home a clarity that validated and comprehended the feelings they witnessed within themselves (Lewis, 1952a; Michael, 1993), a skill he has perfected by pitching his talks to impressionable young recruits at RAF stations (McGrath, 2013).

He did not reconsider his highbrow stance on Christianity, in 1941, for a possible flaw, yet, he triumphed over the sceptics and freethinkers as a national celebrity (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990) and he accepted an invitation to the Socratic Club at Oxford. Here, his oratorical abilities could once again be refined on the grounds of debate. His spirited arguments were, to some, heroic, whereas it was clear that his defence of Christianity made him less idolised in other circles – especially Oxford University (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). The church, in comparison, was to notice his influence and increase their regard for him. A co-founder to the Society of Divine Compassion, Father Andrew, wrote of Lewis: “To me it is one of the most helpful things of this epoch that it produced C. S. Lewis” (Burne, 1948, p.126).

Lewis was, unknowingly, to charm someone else. When London was evacuated in the light of imminent bomb threats in 1942, Minto seized the opportunity to fill The Kilns with company. One of those sent by the convent was an attractive 16-year-old, June Flewett, who had been enraptured by Lewis’s books (Wilson, 1990). She was to return to The Kilns numerous times, having been recalled after the first visit by the Reverend Mother, and she spent the summer holidays at The Kilns on invitation of Minto. She encountered the men in the

²⁴ “The analogy enables us to appreciate the essential point that Lewis wished to make: that there is a notional, transdenominational form of Christianity, which is to be cherished and used as the basis of Christian apologetics; yet the business of becoming or being a Christian requires commitment to a specific form of this basic Christianity.” (McGrath, 2013, *International Fame: The Mere Christian*, para. 19).

background of the household, at first unaware that one of them was her idol. Jack felt the effect of domestic burdens at the time, about which he said to himself, “The great thing, if one can, is to stop regarding all the unpleasant things as interruptions of one’s ‘own’ or ‘real’ life. The truth is of course that what one calls the interruptions are precisely one’s real life – the life God is sending one day by day” (Hooper, 1979, p. 499). Such interruptions balanced out when Minto appropriated June for 18 months, to help with work in the house. June’s three-week visit in the summer had allowed her to develop affection for Lewis. She was taken, interestingly enough, by Lewis’s patience and kindness toward his ‘adoptive’ mother (Wilson, 1990). June also experienced the company of Lewis’s friends when she was taken to see a production (by Neville Coghill) of *Measure for Measure*. Here, she saw “Jack [not] the patient domestic drudge of The Kilns, but as an urbane, grown-up man at ease with his friends” (Wilson, 1990, Separations, para. 24). In addition, a noticeable civility was witnessed in Lewis in the company of Neville Coghill, who shared with Lewis the Irish backdrop, but did not share Lewis’s edge of roughness (Wilson, 1990). The wartime, ironically, was for Lewis a very happy time of peace. The Inklings met more irregularly at this point, but their company nevertheless persisted (McGrath, 2013)

However, separations were on the verge of interrupting this happiness. The wartime – and even, by speculation, Lewis’s friendship with Charles Williams (McGrath, 2013) – did much to harm the good standing between Lewis and Tolkien, who were to suffer a religious parting (Wilson, 1990) over the years. Yet, Lewis maintained a strong devotion to Tolkien, whose mythology in *Lord of the Rings* inspired Lewis to deliver the motivation and thrust Tolkien would need to complete it. The very completion of the work is, to some extent, attributable to Lewis’s feedback and incessant desire to know of the rest (Carpenter, 1981; McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). The Second World War proved, in spite of everything, to be a time of friendship,

and a time of prosperous success – with a mass readership, an audience enthralled by his words, and teaching opportunities that took him to other university fields, such as in Wales and Durham. Lewis experienced a life in sharp contrast to the bleak horrors and solemn atmosphere that wartime offered others (Peters, 1985; Wilson, 1990).

1945 brought with it the end to more than just the war; for Lewis, it would introduce a series of endings that appeared symbolic in its occurrence: “As if our holiday had intended to end then, the sky clouded over and the world became dim: the curtain had fallen most dramatically on our jaunt” (Kilby & Mead, 1982, p. 185). This was a comment made to close a Victory Inklings held in the second week of December; this meeting was a holiday in the Gloucestershire village of Fairford. The comment was made in reference to the loss of one of the fellowship, Charles Williams (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990), whose death had a deep effect on Lewis:

[A]ll that talk about ‘feeling that he is closer to us than before’ isn’t just talk. It is just what it does feel like – I can’t put it into words. One seems at moments to be living in a new world. Lots, lots of pain, but not a particle of depression or resentment. (Lewis, 1975, p. 206)

One farewell he did anticipate was of the delayed departure of June Flewett. She was to pursue her destiny at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts, a venture Lewis had supported with monetary incentive (Wilson, 1990). Her departure burdened Lewis, once more, with continual domestic interruptions, and he was to face a bleak period characterised by misgivings held by a miserable brother who had given himself to drink, and a worsening illness of Mrs Moore (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). It was clear that his personal life attested to feelings that contrasted to the expectations of fulfilment others believed he felt as a result of his fame by the end of the war (McGrath, 2013). The bustle at Oxford would similarly resume. Lewis had less time for his chief pleasures – reading, writing, and seeing friends (Wilson, 1990) – as the peace

after the war had made Oxford less inclined to allowing such pastimes. Coming along in his years, the 47-year-old Lewis realised that his traditional English binges held less appeal socially, and the boisterousness of the evenings was taking its toll on him physically (Wilson, 1990).

There were those that attested to Lewis's remarkable qualities. He was to make an impression on the future avant-garde theatre critic of his contemporaries, Kenneth Tynan; a student whose noticeable stammer made Lewis take up reading, instead of listening to, his essays. For Tynan, "It became quite a test writing essays that could survive being read in that wonderfully resonant voice" (Tynan, 1987, p. 54). Lord David Cecil, destined to become a famous literary biographer, recognised "the agility of Lewis's mind, its immense fund of reading and reflection, and its bedrock of common sense. Lewis was also great fun" (Wilson, 1990, Narnia, para. 5). John Buxton, in oral testimony, remarked, "He had the extraordinary gift", Buxton remembered, "of instant parody. It was not prepared as a party piece – it came out naturally" (Wilson, 1990, Narnia, para. 7). Sheldon Vaunaken met Lewis in the 1950s, and stumbled upon a large, smiling man with a questioning look and sonorous voice, and experienced overall conviviality in his company (Peters, 1985). Lewis's students remembered the seemingly disinterested bald man, whose red face lit up amidst dense smoke clouds at a show of critical thinking, with less enthusiasm reserved for less effort on the student's part (McGrath, 2013).

It is unlikely that the English faculty at the college, and the University at large, remembered him with the same degree of fondness. Lewis's notoriety in the religious field made his reputation all the worst amongst his fellow academics (McGrath, 2013; Peters, 1985), and neither did his reputation subdue his natural affinity for a brazen and brusque manner towards his fellows (Wilson, 1990). The University had become accustomed to meeker men, who were predictable and safe, and Lewis did not quite fit the category, which affected his career prospects

adversely (Peters, 1985). His views on Christianity were not as favoured in the academic realm, where there was resentment about his motions that appeared to be surrender to popular culture for the sake of fame (McGrath, 2013). The tedious routine of his current position was leaving its mark. Despite Tolkien's effort to acquire a position of Merton chair with him and Lewis, Jack was to be left without the prestige that dawned on his friend (Wilson, 1990).

The 1940s were fast approaching a close, and Lewis had started to counterbalance his academic and teaching positions at Oxford and to become known as one of the greatest apologetics of his time (Peters, 1985), despite criticism by fellow collegians (Wilson, 1990). *Time* magazine celebrated his popularity as lecture, writer, and as 'voice' of Christianity in September of 1947 (McGrath, 2013). He was accessible to the general audience and expounded the faith through shared principles that define Christianity, refining himself in an unobscured patois understood by the common man, as opposed to the formal musings of the faith (Hooper, 1971). It was a voice welcomed for its discourse (especially in America), even if theologians were inclined to disagree with him (McGrath, 2013). In addition, the 1940s and 1950s painted a scene of a post-war era that had left many people disillusioned and without a solid system of belief to soothe the trepidations that came with shifting life purposes (Lancast, 2012; Peters, 1985). However, Lewis's his rise to fame failed to equip him for the infringement it would have on his personal life (McGrath, 2013).

His beliefs would lead to the clash with the formidable figure that was Elizabeth Anscombe, the philosopher. The experience would be singularly memorable to him. "This was a contretemps of much graver importance in Lewis's imaginative life. It was one of those landmarks which, like other Romantic egoists before him, Lewis used as a way of punctuating or mastering experience" (Wilson, 1990, Narnia, para. 21). The experience is emphasised as one of

the formative experiences that sculpted him as a person, and as a writer (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990).

In 1947, Lewis's most sophisticated theological work, *Miracles*, was published (Lewis, 1947). The third chapter (named *The Self-Contradiction of the Naturalist*) addressed the physical perception of the universe as the only truth, as opposed to a truth evading sense, and the values that could otherwise inform it (Wilson, 1990). On its release, Anscombe perused a copy of the book, and extended an invitation to share her reply at the Socratic Club. For the first time, Lewis, as the president, was cut down by a woman who equalled his immense verbal assaults, whilst trumping his outdated philosophic views, which echoed the era of Wittgenstein. She was a terrible force to be reckoned with on her own terms, and she revealed Lewis's incompetence in a battleground that was hers (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). Dyson would later remark, "now [he had] lost everything and come to the foot of the Cross" (Wilson, 1990, Narnia, para. 27). Scepticism abounds in light of evidence that Lewis revised the chapter, stating as the main reason that the public nature of such a challenge necessitated refinement of his view (McGrath, 2013). Lewis was described as being downtrodden by the event. In this moment he regressed to a childlike state of mind, having faced a woman who had revitalised old fears and hurts by exploiting a truth that he held in faith, because his imagination had made him feel present in that other realm, beyond the empiricist view (Wilson, 1990).²⁵

Lewis was confronted with past hurts, which had started with a pivotal point – his mother's death, which had sealed away his notion of love. Every emotional event leading up to his full conversion at Whipsnade Zoo, 16 years prior, lay bare before him – seeming to be meaningless in the formation of his perception of God's existence (Wilson, 1990). Some believe

²⁵ Opinion is divided on whether the confrontational event was pivotal to Lewis's turn to imaginative writing; even though its significance is clear (McGrath, 2013).

that this is an exaggeration of the effects of the event (McGrath, 2013), however, he was motioning ever closer to the answer that lay in that now-famous September night. For it was that conversation that had made him remember the path of imagination as the other way to belief. It was so unlike the intellectualised way adults formed their mindsets. . . it was like *Phantastes*, “in which another world opens up to the Dreamer through a piece of bedroom furniture” (Wilson, 1990, *Narnia*, para. 29). It was the first outline of *Narnia*: the chronicling thought to propel him into the genre he was to become most famous for: children’s literature (McGrath, 2013). Despite his popularity, his days of apologetics had come to its end, and he sought the new way “further up and further in” (Wilson, 1990, *Narnia*, para. 29). By 1955, the themes of his writings no longer seemed to address faith in apologetic terms (McGrath, 2013). The opening lines of his work, *Reflections on the Psalms*, reads:

This is not what is called an “apologetic” work. I am nowhere trying to convince unbelievers that Christianity is true. I address those who already believe it, or those who are ready, while reading, to “suspend their disbelief.” A man can’t be always defending the truth; there must be a time to feed on it. (Lewis, 1958, p. 7)

Changes were inescapable, and Lewis felt the strain on more fronts than his sudden existential crisis that caused him to delve back into work, to discover the ways of the make-believe world. During the war, The Kilns household had experienced the circumstances of the time: rationing, a Labour government, the need for asceticism – difficult to live with for the Lewis brothers, with their large appetites and smoking habits (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). Jack was feeling overburdened with the amount of work at the College once the war ended, and an influx of students had changed the Oxford scene (McGrath, 2013). The normally jovial Thursday evenings and sardonic banter of the Inklings were having a different effect on those present, and a result of this was a diminishing of the friendship between Tolkien and Lewis

(McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). The effects were to be felt even more strongly by Jack, due to the contrasting friendliness of Christopher (Tolkien's son) who later joined the coterie of educated men (Wilson, 1990).

The aforementioned fading relationship was made clearer by one 1948 evening's reading by Lewis of his intended *Oxford History of English Literature*, or OHEL, which touched on a subject of 16th century religion, and the derogatory stance weaved toward the Catholic faith by the use of words such as 'papist' (Wilson, 1990). Though Tolkien would apologise per letter for his reaction that night, the words contained therein did not exactly imply the mending of grievances. What Tolkien expressed was his esteem for Lewis, but he was not to be a stranger to the feelings that he developed.

We are safe in your presence and presidency from contention, ill will, detraction, or accusations without evidence. Doubtless, as you say, I have as a member of the brotherhood a right to criticize as I please. But I shall not lightly forget my vision of the wounds; and I shall be deterred from rash dispraise, for myself. . . . And let me beg of you to bring out OHEL with no coyness. (Carpenter, 1981, p. 181)

Lewis seemed all the more driven in the new course of thought he pursued. His dialectic approach to the faith did not have the effect it had had on his readership across the sea, especially America, and he realised that force was not the way to convince someone about faith; the acceptance of it is a holistic identification: "This was something which Lewis only learnt through great suffering, and his best art came out of it" (Wilson, 1990, Narnia, para. 43).

A great suffering threatened once more to arise. His home situation proved strenuous, and senility had gripped Minto; she was moved to a costly nursing home – Restholme, on Woodstock Road – in 1950. Beforehand, Lewis had himself buckled under the burdens of work and home,²⁶ which had Warnie intervene on his behalf to secure for Lewis a month's leave from, at least, the

²⁶ It was an instance that required his hospitalisation on 13 June 1949, where he was cast down by symptoms of exhaustion and infection (McGrath, 2013).

stressors in his domestic existence (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). But now, with Minto's well-being declining, it appeared as if Lewis was staring, once more, into the maw of his great childhood trauma – the loss of his mother.

Mrs Moore was taken by a bout of influenza in January 1951, and Lewis was left with reminiscent memories that displayed the tinge of warmth and happiness that he had invested in: their financial struggles and the shift of lodgings in his early days as a student; the emotional turmoil caused by the lunacy of her brother; the bliss of holidays spent at sea; and Janie's pride in the worldly success of Lewis and his work (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). Warnie's view on the matter was different, and he described Lewis's dedication to the care of Janie as, "the rape of J's life. . . . I wonder how much of his time she did waste" (Wilson, 1990, Narnia, para. 66). But Janie Moore never believed she had caused interruption in Lewis's life, instead, she believed she was relieving him thereof (McGrath, 2013).

Thus, Lewis vested his experiences in the world of Narnia (the last book was finished in March of 1953) by blending his interests, his literary influences and the fundamentals of his faith in a story that seems:

[A]s though Lewis, in all his tiredness and despondency in the late 1940s, has managed to get through the wardrobe door himself; to leave behind the world of squabbles and grown-ups and to re-enter the world which with the deepest part of himself he never left, that of childhood reading. (Wilson, 1990, Narnia, para. 56).

It seemed as though the parable drawn in *The Lion, The Witch, and the Wardrobe* (Lewis, 1950), could be explained better by being thrust through the wardrobe door; and, thus, a harder shove back into Lewis's childhood. This parable was the culmination of his rattled view of the faith, the great loss of friendships and (eventually) his 'adoptive mother', and Lewis needed all the more to flee to the days of the Little End Room – which made the distant wish of his brother

at their father's death seem all the more prophetic (Wilson, 1990). The writing thereof was not an attempt to escape however, but rather an act of re-enchanting the known world in a collection of 'supposals'²⁷ (McGrath, 2013, p. 278). With his brother lost in a drunken stupor, his childhood companion left him no choice but to unlock his imagination. "He was launched back deep into the recesses of his own emotional history, his own most deeply felt psychological needs and vulnerabilities. It is this, surely, which gives the books their extraordinary power. They are written white-hot" (Wilson, 1990, Narnia, para. 75).

In the period that followed the grief of Minto's death, he expressed an artistic brilliance and returned to all that he loved, which was reflected in a letter to Sister Penelope: "Everything without, and everything within, are marvellously well at present" (Lewis, 1975, p. 232). For Lewis, now free of the restraints of the daily burden of care and health expenses of Minto, was beginning to experience a profoundly settled peace (Wilson, 1990). A sabbatical leave, from 1951-1952, bought him the time he required for the academic publication of *OHEL* (McGrath, 2013). The peace would make him nonchalant about not being appointed as the new chair of poetry, for which he was in the running. Instead, C. Day Lewis was elected to the position (Wilson, 1990). His merits were acknowledged on other grounds, such as the boost to morale he received when he was recommended by Winston Churchill in 1952 for Commander of the Order of the British Empire²⁸ (McGrath, 2013).

Lewis was now a free man. He had, up to that time, been bound by the secret life he shared with Mrs Moore, and driven to conceal it for the sake of appearance and of circumstance. But this secrecy around his personal affairs did not open up the revelations about Lewis's literary

²⁷ It was Lewis's wish to make known that Narnia is not, as was commonly done, to be seen as a (religious) allegory. Rather, it rearranged the presentation of known ideas 'supposingly' to be capable of utilising imagination to be seen differently (Hooper, 2006; McGrath, 2013).

²⁸ Though Lewis declined the title, it is meritorious for its inclusion in the King's New Year's Honours List of that year, as a title below knighthood (McGrath, 2013).

and personal life (Wilson, 1990). His friends would forever remain outside the wardrobe door of his inner world, strangers to the emotion-driven character they could only see in bold strokes in the pages of his works. He would even reciprocate their unchosen ignorance of his personal life, by displaying a lack of interest in theirs (Peters, 1985). This quality did not prevent others, however – people who knew not this man behind his imagination, the parody, the logical readability, and the dialect – from writing to him about their own struggles in life and in faith. Upon meeting Lewis, a clergyman who had written to him was astonished by the look of the man – portly and in threadbare tweeds – who managed the level of patience and cordiality that he did (Wilson, 1990). Though unprepared for the fame his apologetic writings would accrue him from 1942 (McGrath, 2013), Lewis was devoted to his flurry of correspondences, and he set time aside to answer every letter (Wilson, 1990).

Enter here Joy Gresham,²⁹ an aspiring writer. Through many developments in the years that were to come, the fate of Lewis was destined to intertwine with this woman who felt an absolute thrill at the force of his letters: “I’d raised an argument or two on some points. Lord, he knocked my props from under me unerringly” (Dorsett, 1983, p.70). Her words also alluded to the emotional investment she was making, “Being disposed of so neatly by a master of debate, all fair and square – it seems to be one of the great pleasures of life” (Wilson, 1990, *The Silver Chair*, para. 15). She started writing to him in 1950, newly realised in the faith, with Lewis serving as a spiritual guide (McGrath, 2013). She was experiencing her own turmoil, with an unfaithful husband and the repercussions a divorce would have on her two children. Lewis was unaware, as her best friend observed that this woman in her mid-thirties was falling for the man across the Atlantic (Wilson, 1990). In 1952, Joy made the journey to England; and later, in 1998, newspapers published a comment by her younger son, Douglas, that his mother had gone with

²⁹ She was still maritally bound to William Lindsay Gresham when she wrote to Lewis.

the intent of seduction (Wroe, 1998). Though Douglas's claim did not receive much credence when he made it, new evidence, such as the 45 sonnets she wrote between 1951 and 1954 increasingly supports this idea (McGrath, 2013).

Her arrival in Oxford was accompanied by an invitation extended from her to Lewis to join her for lunch at the Eastgate Hotel. Warnie accompanied them, and though he later failed to remember this meeting when they were at a lunch party at Magdalen with Lewis's friends, he found Joy a charming woman, as did Jack (Wilson, 1990). The meeting would lead to a reciprocated lunch date arranged by Lewis at Magdalen, before he was to introduce her to his friends. His friends harboured disdain for this woman, with her crude language, the unguarded tongue and the fervent manner of her company, but Lewis was spellbound, to the point of great amusement at her words (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). Lewis asked her to spend the Christmas of 1952 at The Kilns, during which she shared with Lewis the circumstances of her marriage. The appearance of motives held by Joy did seem to validate the suspicion of his friends (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990), but Lewis was experiencing the exuberant feelings of a teenager (through the wiles of a woman) after having been transported back to his boyhood in the Narnian saga.

Meanwhile, his professional life saw the production of his most formidable work in volume: *The English Literature of the 16th Century*. Commissioned by Oxford University Press in 1953, the book puts on display a man speaking of his passion. OHEL also was proof of his merit, and the failure of the English Faculty to reward his greatness was remedied in 1954, after years of deserving work, by an appointment of Jack as Cambridge Chair professor of English, specialising in mediaeval and renaissance literature (McGrath, 2013; Peters, 1985; Wilson, 1990). Lewis was the unanimous and seemingly obvious first choice of the electoral committee

(McGrath, 2013). His inaugural lecture at the University witnessed him positioning himself as “a dinosaur, as a specimen representing a vanished age, an obsolete set of beliefs, a wholly outmoded way of looking at the world” (Wilson, 1990, *The Silver Chair*, para. 46).

The truth, as Lewis himself could see, was the great reveal of parts of himself that, at 56, he had not yet discovered (Wilson, 1990) – perhaps, thus, fitting that the topic of his opening lecture was ‘Renaissance’ (McGrath, 2013). What more to do than lay himself bare to the audience (Lewis, who with that speech, became an immediate phenomenon at Cambridge from the start)? He was hesitant about making the move to Magdalene College at Cambridge. The college was as unknown to him, as was much of himself. The dictums of thought favoured by Cambridge’s English faculty, for instance, were based on the analytic critique of texts, instead of mediums to broaden knowledge and appreciate (McGrath, 2013). Yet, the decision was made, and a farewell dinner with Hugo Dyson, J. R. R. Tolkien and Tolkien’s son, Christopher, F.P. Wilson and Neville Coghill, was held. Perhaps, those in attendance, including his successor (the bright and contrasting Emys Jones), celebrated what the English Faculty could not – a recognition of Lewis well-stocked literary mind. To them, and to many at Oxford, his fame by faith, his readership and his writings had made him unpopular (Wilson, 1990) and this unpopularity denied him the promotions he was qualified for (Peters, 1985).

It was iconic of Lewis’s character that many of his decisions were influenced by the serendipity of circumstance. Wilson (1990, *Smoke on the Mountain*, para. 48) describes this approach to decision-making as a “passivity of attitude”, that shaped Lewis’s life. As Lewis states in his autobiography, his routine at Bookham, “has ever since served in” his “mind as an archetype” (Lewis, 1955a, p. 164). “I would choose always to breakfast at exactly eight and be at my desk by nine, there to read or write till one. If a cup of good tea or coffee could be brought to

me about eleven, so much the better,” (Lewis, 1955a, p. 164). His routinised life seemed to change at the presence of an event. This likelihood of change was what coloured his life as odd to the outsider, for it was the pattern woven from the time he met Paddy Moore, till 1951. And now, Joy Davidman arrived on the scene, causing developments (mainly initiated by Joy), that Lewis was similarly open to accept in its unpredictable flow (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990).

Affections were deepening towards Joy, with her humour and intellect, who, in return, experienced great ecstasy during their hand-in-hand walks on her visits to Oxford (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). She had brought her children, the eight-year-old Douglas and the nine-year-old David, from America to England in November 1953, and Lewis showed generosity by paying for their preparatory school (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). Lewis felt himself inclined to an openness of personality that he had not known before, and, compared to the early days with Minto, he also enjoyed openness in the relationship (Schofield, 1984). Even Warnie felt he had more of Jack, in addition to the solitude of home (Wilson, 1990).

Warren’s authorship was also showing success, and distracted him from drinking. His letter to Jill Freud, on 30 December 1956, made clear that Lewis was finding his roots among the Cambridge crowd, “the ideal we all have of less work and more pay. . . . Also he has a Fellowship at Magdalene which he so much prefers to his old Magdalen Oxford that he now always calls the latter the Impenitent” (Lewis, W., as cited by Wilson, 1990). At Cambridge, Lewis enjoyed the pleasures and graces of friendship and civility from his colleagues and students, and found appreciation for his current turn of circumstances; yet, an openness in what was to be years of reflection in preparation for writing his autobiography, proved less forthcoming in its honesty (Wilson, 1990).

But the issue of transparency was different with Joy. He did not yet comprehend fully the extent of Joy's affection for or interest in him, even from their earliest meetings (McGrath, 2013) – his failure to comprehend reflected a lingering trait of his father, a tendency to interpret a situation wrongly, despite his perception otherwise (Wilson, 1990). Joy accepted Lewis's financial support, and in 1954 her living arrangements seemed to echo his own in years past. Lewis chose her company, despite his friends denouncing her and expressing reservations about her presence. "Her mind was quick and muscular as a leopard. It scented the first whiff of cant or slush, then sprang," (Lewis, 1961a, p. 6). Not everyone found her company as pleasant. Lewis's friends were confused and affronted about his choice of companion; they were aware that he valued their friendship and that he normally felt embarrassed at rejoicing in that show of appreciation (Wilson, 1990).

Douglas later said: "There was never two people alive in the history of the world more in love than Jack and Joy" (Gresham, 1988, p. 127). It was a development that would cause Jack great emotional and moral conflict, when Joy's citizenship was threatened in 1956 unless they married (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). Through hesitations, their marriage was witnessed by Austin Farrer and Dr Havard on 23 April of that year, even though it was to be merely a legal binding (a marriage by the state), which Lewis assured his brother was a simple 'convenience' (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). The marriage was concealed by the preservation of her last name, and Lewis continued to visit her daily while they acted like lovers who had nothing to hide (Wilson, 1990).

It was inevitable that the secret would out, and his friends came to hear what had befallen Lewis's romantic life; some were hurt at his failing to seek their confidence (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). He faced another challenge before he could fully accept her as his wife. Lewis

was caught in the throes of elation, and shared the news of his civil marriage with Arthur Greeves. His life at work and home, and in his faith, was idyllic (Wilson, 1990) and he paid attention to Joy's physical ailments over the summer. A call by Dr Havard would be the prelude to ripping from him the semblance of contentment he thought he had attained (Wilson, 1990).

The news was that the rheumatic aches led to an X-rayed perusal, and revealed that Joy had broken her left femur. She also had a lump on her breast. Lewis was forced to pay the medical bill with his own coin, as she could not claim from the National Health as Joy Gresham. The malignant tumour also placed her in mortal danger (Kilby & Mead, 1982).

"I wish you would pray very hard for a lady called Joy Gresham and me. . . . I am shortly to be both a bridegroom and a widower, for she has cancer", he communicated to someone at the time (Hooper, 2006, p. 808). Perhaps his devotion to her was cleanly proven by this correspondence, where he was consciously pursuing the situation despite the circumstances and conditions that presented themselves (Peters, 1985). His goal was to marry Joy in the light of the church, so that she was to die without indignity to her name. Lewis's desire to make Joy his wife fully in all accounts of the faith, was not to be granted by the church circles and officials he approached. It was a position exacerbated by his past days as apologist. Yet, it was help provided by the newly ordained Peter Bide (whom he had known for 20 years) that allowed him and Joy to abandon the secrecy regarding their love and say their vows in the Churchill Ward in 1957 (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990).

Lewis was, nevertheless, to experience a traumatic flashback to 1908, as explicated by his letters to Bill Gresham (Joy's former husband) on 6 April 1957:

Your letter reached Joy after a day of agony. The effect was devastating. She felt that the only earthly hope she now has has been taken away. You have tortured one who was already on the rack; heaped extra weights on one who is being pressed to death. There is nothing she dreads so much as the return of the boys to your charge. You perhaps do not

understand that certain scenes (when you were not yourself) came early enough in their lives to make you a figure of terror to them. Their return to the U.S.A. when their education is finished is of course quite a different matter. Now, bitterly against their will, coming on top of the most appalling tragedy that can happen to childhood (I was put through it and I know) tearing them from all that has already become familiar and shattering all sense of security that remains to them, it would be disastrous. If you realise the cruelty of what you are proposing to do, I am sure you would not do it.

You have a chance of recovering at some future date, instead of alienating forever, the love and respect of your children. (Dorsett, 1983, p. 135)

The letters were in response to Bill's awareness of Joy's deteriorating health, and his wish to claim custody of the children should she die. Lewis envisioned Bill as his father reincarnated (Wilson, 1990) who delivered the perpetual pain that had plagued Lewis his entire life due to his own mother's death. David and Douglas were, at the time, briefly under the care of Maureen Blake, who (as Minto's daughter) had a stake in The Kilns when the brothers died. Like Lewis's friends, she was astonished by the presence of Mrs Lewis (Joy) in Jack's life, and it was a fact she could not ignore (Wilson, 1990). During Maureen's visit in 1957, Joy also firmly made clear her own position in the authority over The Kilns with her boys (McGrath, 2013). The sombre and troublesome behaviour of David (the eldest), however, made Maureen's efforts to have the boys live with her and her husband unlikely to succeed (Wilson, 1990).

It was then that the unfathomable happened: Joy recovered (Lancast, 2012). The pain vanished and the traces of cancer (appearing to be in remission) disappeared from her body; she was able to walk a year after their wedding, and Lewis was ecstatic (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). "I am experiencing now what I thought would never be mine. I never thought I would have in my 60s the happiness that passed me by in my twenties" he confided to Peter Bayley and Neville Coghill (Wilson, 1990, Marriage, para 19). Warnie, doubtlessly, mirrored the happiness of his brother, and came to believe that his position at The Kilns was precarious. His increasing loneliness, furthermore, made him consider taking up accommodation elsewhere. However, Joy

and Jack would not be audience to such a notion (Wilson, 1990). “Years ago when I wrote about medieval love poetry and described its strange half make-believe ‘religion of Love’ I was blind enough to treat this as an almost purely literary phenomenon. I know better now” (Lewis, 1960, p. 102).

His older friends still did not share Lewis’s delight in Joy’s coarse company, and not too many people were impressed at his notion of reforming The Inklings around his new wife. There was an unacceptable and irritable sense that the Thursday evening gatherings, which were the antithesis to Lewis’s present efforts, were defined around Lewis expectations that his companions would leave their own families to their machinations whilst the men enjoyed the all-male gathering. It was on this basis, that Lewis’s disposition towards them was odd with regards to his wife. The reason for this was most simply, and most likely, that she did not share the interests discussed at this meeting of formidable minds (Wilson, 1990). A dramatization by film of the love affair between Lewis and Joy depicted her character as dissecting the shape of Lewis relationships, “I have just now seen how you have arranged a life for yourself, where no one can touch you. Everyone is either younger than you or weaker than you . . . or under your control” (Attenborough & Eastman, 1993). The comment, made in a light of her frustration and failure to comprehend Lewis’s friendships, as depicted in the film, *Shadowlands*, does reveal and point to Jack’s inclination to verbal bullying, and his reserved manner with regard to his personal life. He became a changed man with Joy (Lewis, 1961).

“For those few years,” they “feasted on love; every mode of it – solemn and merry, romantic and realistic, sometimes as dramatic as a thunderstorm, sometimes as comfortable and unemphatic as putting on your soft slippers. No cranny of heart or body remained unsatisfied”, Lewis wrote in *A Grief Observed* (Lewis, 1961a, p. 9). This love would make him blissfully

unaware of the haphazard manner in which this woman had been introduced to his circle. Their time was brief, indeed, but in the few years they had together, Lewis experienced great productivity and exhibited his range in the academic grounds of Cambridge (Wilson, 1990). Joy never failed to attend his talks, and inspired in him a different literary style that, although vulnerable, remained less favoured by the public. An example is *The Four Loves* (Lewis, 1960), which made its debut in the late 50s, of which the most memorable chapter revealed a “very different Lewis from the man who breezily wrapped up the whole mystery of the Incarnation. . . . He had already begun to glimpse both the incomprehensibility and the challenge of his faith” (Wilson, 1990, Marriage, para. 39).

This challenge of his faith would present itself in 1959, in the month of October, when a check-up revealed a cancer not gone by miracle, but simply in remission. The struggle had resumed (Lancast, 2012), yet with Lewis’s first visit made in response to the first call by Dr Havard in 1956, Joy showed her good spirit and heroic inclination in the face of it all through the winter of 1959 – 1960 (Wilson, 1990). Not to be put off by her condition, they accepted an invitation to the Wings Tour to Greece by Roger and June Lancelyn Green (McGrath, 2013). Lewis considered travel to be an unnecessary expense, which, he was certain, would counter the charm of a place as it is envisioned in the imagination (Attenborough & Eastman, 1993; Wilson, 1990) and those places visited only once to be regarded with the joys of memory (Lewis, 1955a); however, the outing was a tremendous success. Joy’s suffering was apparent, but Lewis wrote about witnessing her perform feats, such as climbing the Acropolis and seeing the sites of Attica and Rhodes: “Joy knew she was dying. I knew she was dying, and she knew I knew she was dying – but when we heard the shepherds playing their flutes in the hills it seemed to make no difference” (Dorsett, 1983, p. 140).

The joys were to be short-lived upon their return. The pain took Joy Davidman once more in May of that year, and it required numerous visits to Ackland Nursing Home. Preparations for the deathbed farewell were being made, yet also being delayed by Joy's brave fight, which saw her condition improve once more on 7 June. The evening of 12 July found Jack and Joy together, Warnie offering tea before bed, and a memory solidified as "how long, how tranquilly, how nourishingly we talked together that last night!" (Wilson, 1990, *Men Must Endure*, para. 9). Lewis's real test of endurance was to unfold. Joy died at 01:20 on 13 July, in the Radcliffe Infirmary (McGrath, 2013).

Jack fluctuated through the motions of grief, healing, and renewed despair, and such faltered cohesion clothed itself in a truthfulness and vulnerability in *A Grief Observed* (Lewis, 1961a). The book captured the essence of bereavement, that is a universal feeling, and the need for grief to be experienced. And experience it, Lewis did; Joy's death unleashed an intellectual and great emotional burden, and battered his faith (McGrath, 2013). He had lost a wife, but also a source of inspiration, as Joy had been the catalyst for three of his books: *Till We Have Faces* (Lewis, 1956a), *Reflections on the Psalms* (Lewis, 1958), and *The Four Loves* (Lewis, 1960). His honesty reflected his relationship with Joy: "The most precious gift that marriage gave me . . . something very close and intimate . . . in a word, real" (Wilson, 1990, *Smoke on the Mountain*, para. 30). And, in such authenticity, it stood to Lewis's astonishment that the 'realness' of God's good nature should have no proof; nevertheless, Lewis retained his faith (Attenborough & Eastman, 1993), though it did not mean that he did not experience conflict towards God, and he was to emerge in a deeply pious and introspective self in the book (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). Published under the pseudonym, Nat Whilk (Old English for "I Know not Whom"), the book did not sell very well. It was only when it was re-released by Owen Barfield, Jack's literary

executor, under Lewis's own name, that it garnered major success (Wilson, 1990). Lewis's subjective vulnerability and frank approach was widely divergent from the style he had adopted in his other writings (McGrath, 2013). During this period of mourning, his sadness was an embarrassment to the boys and thus his father seemed to be reborn within himself, reflecting Jack's own emotional turmoil from so many decades before. One incident offered an endearing image of a grown man, stumbling upon a crying adolescent Douglas, to offer consolation and a mirrored sobbing embrace in that intimate moment of catharsis – an honesty of his inner self that his old friends had never been audience to (Attenborough & Eastman, 1993; Wilson, 1990).

He regained himself to the extent of returning to Cambridge and his work. The Faculty of English was under the influence of 'evaluative criticism' and Lewis would set himself to the task of contesting its premise of categorising literature on the basis of its value, as opposed to his way of laying judgement by means of its reading (Wilson, 1990). *An Experiment in Criticism* (Lewis, 1961b) took its shape, and it was to be a well-nursed conclusion for his time as writer. Lewis made it clear that it is the matter of experience that is to be communicated in writing – and it was this, in addition to his versatility in literary mode, that made him accessible to the general reader (Wilson, 1990).

Lewis's literary career was often misconstrued under two main lines of thought. The first made him accountable for a falsehood in experience; he was seen as a man who donned a mask that heightened ordinary life into a blend of exuberance and pathos. Yet, Lewis's life attested to a mixture of childhood grief, love lost and found, friendships formed while other friendships faded. All these experiences were to be completely his, together with their amalgamation of feelings. Secondly, Jack's narrative was seen at its high points, as the experience of a being unknowing of imperfection. Once more, his life was rife with testament from others about

shortcomings – such as the stringent privacy of his personal life toward his friends – and those mislead to think of faults turned virtue, failed to see him in his many-masked splendour (Wilson, 1990).

1961 had brought with it complications in his own physical health (McGrath, 2013). An enlarged prostate required of him to wear a catheter, which only once, upon bursting at a dinner party, humiliated him (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). Inspection revealed that the shoddily assembled device (the works of Lewis's friend, Havard) was worsening his health through its unhygienic construction. The possibility of surgery was also reduced by Lewis's heart, and he was placed on a low-protein diet – restricting him to the culinary tastes his father had enjoyed years ago, but which Lewis hated. He was to be unwell for most of winter, during a period that would see a brief reunion with Tolkien (Wilson, 1990).

Lewis wrote a letter conveying his reason for not writing a puff piece on *The Adventures of Tom Bombadil*, as requested by Tolkien's authors, and ended, "I wish we could ever meet" (Wilson, 1990, Last Years, para. 33). Tolkien paid Lewis a visit at The Kilns, accompanied by his son, who had long convinced Tolkien of the course of action to visit Lewis. The frosty reunion of old friends exhibited a level of alienation that had crept in between them, and Tolkien took his departure (Wilson, 1990). Lewis would stand in admiration of Tolkien, as revealed by a letter of nomination, written by Lewis on 16 January 1961, for the Nobel Prize for Literature, recommending Tolkien as its recipient for *The Lord of the Rings* (McGrath, 2013).³⁰

In the following spring, of 1963, Lewis planned a trip with Douglas to Ireland to visit Greeves, but on 15 June a heart attack confined him to Ackland Nursing Home. Lewis's health did strengthen somewhat (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990) after a balming sacrament performed

³⁰ This letter was unearthed recently, in January of 2012, by the opening of the Swedish Academy archives to scholars. The letter suggests that the cooling of bonds between the two friends may have been primarily from Tolkien's side (McGrath, 2013).

by a church curate. He was well enough to return for two teaching terms at Cambridge in 1963 (McGrath, 2013). Noticeable, was the absence of his brother whom, unknown to Jack, was in Ireland, and unwilling to brave the truth of his younger brother's declining health. As Lewis remarked, Warnie "doesn't even write and is, I suppose, drinking himself to death" (Hooper, 2006, p. 1455). In this period Lewis felt isolated, and the summer term had left Oxford deprived of its lecturers, its students and his friends. Lewis needed to be looked after, and his appraisal of circumstances made him feel inclined to resign from Cambridge. It was here that an admiring young Walter Hooper³¹ entered the scene (McGrath, 2013), visiting Oxford to meet Lewis, and presenting with the notion of completing some form of academic work on this icon. Lewis had found a man to serve as his secretary, and after August and then September, Hooper returned to America, planning to resume his position more indefinitely after Christmas (Wilson, 1990).

Lewis spent his days in the bed that Joy had slept in and reminisced about the memories caught in the rooms of their home:

As he sat there with a book on his lap, Lewis could not fail to remember the scenes of a past existence: Paxford egging Minto on to buy the dud wireless set; Minto, still in the days of her vigour, feeding the fowls, exercising the dogs, amusing the evacuee children; shy, kind June Flewett coming up behind him in the study and kissing him on the back of his head; or much earlier, in the late 1920s, Bruce MacFarlane and another Fellow of Magdalen calling at the house unannounced. Lewis had hovered, and not gone to the door. Maureen had answered it. He had watched the Fellows walk away, clearly astonished to discover that Jack the archetypal bachelor was sharing his house with two women. Whatever the real secret was, they never penetrated it. Nobody would ever quite know, truly know, what he had shared with Minto in those early days. The poor P'daytabird [the boys' name for their father] certainly knew nothing of it. Sometimes, in the glass, Jack saw his father's face staring back at him, and all that world came back – of hot days in Strandtown, when their heavily tweeded father led the two boys indoors for steaming roast meat. 'Well, boys, this is grand'. (Wilson, 1990, Last Years, para. 49)

³¹ A young scholar from the University of Kentucky, where he taught English, Hooper regarded Lewis as a literary icon, and he was devoted to Lewis's views and writings.

The next few months was the experience that implicated his life as a cycle that would end where it had started – in the milieu of the ‘Little End Room’. Lewis did not feel overshadowed by the thought of death, even after Joy’s passing (Wilson, 1990). It was a stance strengthened by his faith, and he was accepting of it as his final days drew nearer (Peters, 1985). These days were spent in the company of Warren only, and they enjoyed the leisure hours for their freedom from labouring academics, and losing themselves in the books from which they derived pleasure (Wilson, 1990). 22 November would be overshadowed by news of Kennedy’s assassination. On what would seem a normal course of a day, where Lewis’s brother had checked in on him, and had remarked that Lewis was “calm and cheerful” (Wilson, 1990, Last Years, para. 50) Clive Staples Lewis – the Wagnerian romanticist, the man transported by imagination, the defender of faith, the dialectician of great form, the man ever in search of ‘Joy’ (Wilson, 1990), passed on.

2.3 Chapter Summary

The life of C. S. Lewis was testament to his lifelong pursuit of a wistful desire that he was unable to comprehend when he experienced it, and unable to regain the experience once defined. The pervasive theme of ‘Joy’ coloured the shape of the bigger part for Jack’s life, and even after his conversion to Christianity, the residual marks of the pangs of desire were found in the unfolding of events of later years, in both his professional and secretive personal affairs. The prevalence of influence, and the nature of its consequences, reveals an interesting adaptiveness to Lewis’s life from a psychosocial view of development. The next chapter expounds on Erikson’s theory of psychosocial development.

CHAPTER 3:

ERIKSON'S PSYCHOSOCIAL THEORY OF DEVELOPMENT

3.1 Introduction

Erik Erikson's psychosocial theory considers the outline of individual development from a biopsychosocial framework (Newman & Newman, 2017), thereby moving the focus from the ego to the role and establishment thereof in society (Erikson, 1963). The theory never aimed to replace the psychosexual concepts envisioned by Freud, but merely sought to inform them by expanding the scope of these concepts included, from a psychological point of view, to development beyond the maturation of sexual characteristics (Freiberg, 1987). The theory investigates the holistic life of an individual (Hoare, 2005; Newman & Newman, 2017; Schachter, 2005), and looks at the entirety of age-related concerns, which includes the parental bond experienced in infancy, the competency gained in educational settings, the striving towards a self-concept, the involvement of one's identity in romantic relationships, and the productivity invested in the continued experience of well-being (Newman & Newman, 2017). This chapter will seek to explain the main premises of the theory, while dissecting the stages and explaining the conflicts a developing individual faces at each stage in striving to achieve enduring ego qualities. The chapter serves as a foundational theoretical framework for the psychobiographical study of the life of C. S Lewis.

3.2 The Case of Erik Erikson

Erikson's intellectual curiosity was, for long, drawn to the ways individuals appeared to embody the permeating ideologies of the particular moment in history that surrounded their sociocultural setting and society (Douvan, 1997), as was seen in individuals such as Ghandi, Luther, and even Hitler – figures to which Erikson dedicated his studies. His introduction to psychoanalysis in 1927 (Roazen, 1976), and resultant training with Sigmund and Anna Freud in Vienna, till 1933, made major contributions to our conceptions of personality and the life cycle (Schachter, 2005; Stevens, 2008). Most fittingly, Lewis's life presented with a similar instance of isomorphic connection between individual and society as described by the theory (Douvan, 1997; Newman & Newman, 2012, 2017), namely, his motion away from traditional psychoanalytic stances, to post-Freudian thinking (Erikson, 1963; Hoare, 2005).

Erik Homburger Erikson (1902-1994) was raised in Karlsruhe, Germany, as the son of Dr Theodore Homburger and Karla Abrahamsen, and it was only later that his true origins – a theme which he regarded as important for the self-conception of originality (Erikson, 1975) – as a son of a woman who had been abandoned by Erikson's Danish father, came to the fore (Erikson, 1975; Newman & Newman, 2012). It was a truth he was blissfully ignorant of during his early childhood, a truth hidden from him by parental judgement (Erikson, 1975). His later life, growing up among his mother's artistic friends, afforded him new models of impressionability, and he desperately sought to escape the rigidity of his Jewish stepfather's expectations for his career (Erikson, 1975; Newman & Newman, 2012).

It is during this time that the interconnection between Erikson's life and the contemporary youthful struggles with identity started to unfold (Douvan, 1997), as the turn of adolescence brought with it an intensified awareness of 'being different' from the Jewish

bourgeois background he was being raised in, given his mixed Scandinavian heritage (Erikson, 1975; Newman & Newman, 2012).

Yes, if ever an identity crisis was central and drawn out in somebody's life, it was so in mine. Let me tell you some of my marginalities. . . . So it is true, I had to try and make a style out of marginality and a concept out of identity confusion. (Coles, 1970, p. 180)

The identity crisis was evidence of his iconic representation of youthful nonconformity, the desire to prolong the period of moratorium, and the discovery of an enduring and meaningful identity that could find expression in society – traits so idiosyncratic of adolescents and critical even in modern times (Coles, 1970; Douvan, 1997; Newman & Newman, 2012). Adolescence was a time that was made possible for its qualities of discovery due to his father's professional standing in their setting, and Erikson was allowed to venture forth on an artistic quest to find continuity within his sense of self, that satisfied his inner drive for creativity and reflective observations (Douvan, 1997; Erikson, 1975).

And in those days every self-respecting stranger in his own (northern) culture drifted sooner or later to Italy, where endless time was spent soaking up the southern sun and the ubiquitous sights with their grand blend of artifact and nature. I was a “Bohemian” then. (Erikson, 1975, p. 28)

Erikson distanced himself from the conformist status of his household and early home (Erikson, 1975), and would preside in the role of marginalist in later life by seeking to traverse the cultural boundaries that separated the praxis he both originated from and adopted. This effected a greater understanding in him of the divides and ambiguities in human society (Douvan, 1997). His theoretical stance traced back to his investigation of American and German national identities, profiles of World War 2 antagonists, and even childrearing traditions of North American Indian tribes (Erikson, 1963; Hoare, 2005; Pietikainen & Ihanus, 2003; Schachter, 2005). His investigation of case histories and development over a lifespan was his introduction to

becoming influential in the field of psychobiography (Stevens, 2008). His pursuit of the study of individuals through biographical perusal was key to, ultimately, enhancing his understanding of a greater human condition already held, and satiating his curiosity about the individuals in question and their charismatic prowess within society (Barresi & Jukes, 1997), which illustrated the intersections of *self* and *environment* he became known for (Erikson, 1963; Hoare, 2005).

Erikson would opt to wander continuously, as he had done in his schooling period during his moratorium, and he was an observer, in his own life, of the alienation afforded by his immigrant status in the US when he moved there in 1933, and his refusal to sign a loyalty oath to preserve his academic occupation in California (Erikson, 1975; Newman & Newman, 2012). All these developments were key to Erikson's remarkable powers of discernment and humble existence while seeking meaning. He retained clarity regarding his own system of beliefs, but pursued universal human practices knowledgeably (Douvan, 1997).

3.3 Psychosocial Theory of Development

It was Erikson's (1968) view that a discussion of psychosocial development should encompass several points within its inventory. The first point speaks of the acts of sublimation that stand in service of changing needs that require satisfaction, including hindrances to gratification that arise. The second point refers to the accumulation of unique capacities to (the third point) navigate the expanding social milieu in its diversity. From this navigation arises a developmental crisis that necessitates resolution, as the fourth point of discussion, to which Erikson (1968), as the fifth point, subverted the individual to a different level of sameness, including novelties that lie in the scope of experience. Lastly, psychosocial strengths deserve acknowledgement as products of each crisis, standing as a basis for the future strengths to be

garnered. Later, Erikson (1968) added a seventh aspect to his consideration, namely, the institutions that develop along with ever-emergent needs presented by humanity, mentioned in its assumption of vigil – by these institutions – over these needs in adult life.

The relation between them is twofold: each generation brings to these institutions the remnants of infantile needs and youthful fervor and receives from them – as long as they, indeed, manage to maintain their institutional vitality – a specific reinforcement of childlike vitality. (Erikson, 1968, p. 105)

3.3.1 Main principles and mechanisms.

Going beyond the conceptions of the ego as a mediating force between the desires of the id and the moral certitudes of the superego (Schaffer, 2002), the ego's role is redefined more as combining familial, societal, and individual factors in a way to achieve mastery of the environment (Gross, 1987). The aim of the stage-related syntheses present during development is the acquisition of prime adaptive qualities (Newman & Newman, 2017) that Erikson (1963) described as giving the individual the capacity to “demonstrate that his ego, at a given stage, is strong enough to integrate the timetable of the organism with the structure of social institutions” (Erikson, 1963, p. 238). This becomes a relevant statement when taking into consideration that the individual experiences a significant exchange of systems, from the womb's secure physical nature, to the social environment that presents ever-increasing limits and challenges that evolving capacities need to meet (Erikson, 1968).

The rationale of the psychosocial thinking surrounding development is structured around three points (Newman & Newman, 2017) that establish its value to institutions of healthcare, social well-being, and education. Reciprocally, these institutions are described as protecting the ego qualities that individuals acquire (Capps, 2004).

1. Psychosocial thinking relates to growth through the most salient events present during the human lifespan.
2. Individuals are described as assuming agency over their development through self-regulatory processes, which incorporate both biological and social influences to structure and define experience that offers challenges to how they deal with circumstances, how they secure themselves and how they steer the route that their life paths assume.
3. Culture is recognised as a driving mechanism that stipulates the qualities that individuals are to grow into, so that they reach the goals and meet the expectations informed by differential beliefs and praxis. Culture is, thus, seen as an active regulator of maturity, according to which the individual acts.

The last-mentioned point harbours great significance when considering the psychosocial theory under the greater framework of psychosocial evolution (Huxley, 1941, 1942; Newman & Newman, 2017), according to which a generational transmission of human capacities contributes to the maturation of descendants based on adaptive information and values. This maturation, in turn, gears these individuals to generate their own knowledge, to use it symbolically, to utilise these culturally significant symbols adaptively, and to share this contextually-based knowledge with generations to follow (Newman & Newman, 2017).

Erikson's (1963, 1997) approach to considering how practices and expertise are formulated within interrelated cultural and social spheres, to then lay at the foundation of the growth of human personality, is integrative. The structure of development revolves around the *soma* (hierarchically structured systems of biology), the *psyche* (where the ego synthesises individual experiences on a psychological level) and the *ethos* (which consist of the social background) (Erikson, 1997; Stevens, 2008). Erikson (1963), thus, pictured development as

reflective of the organisation at a social level, which relates social institutions to development of the life cycle. Change is systematic and encapsulated by six concepts (Newman & Newman, 2017): (a) developmental stages, (b) tasks related to development, (c) psychosocial crises, (d) a central process that aids in the resolution of the crisis at each stage, (e) a network of meaningful relations, and (f) coping.

The stages of psychosocial development are said to unfold according to a blueprint of development, with each phase systematically unfolding according to a biologically devised schema. Erikson (1963, 1968, 1980) called this process the *epigenetic* principle, whereby the orderly stages of growth correspond with each other and lead to a functioning individual – built from the time-circumscribed ascendancy of parts to form a whole – who can predict challenges, instead of one stage just following the one prior sequentially. Erikson (1997, p. 29) explained how “each part exists in some form before ‘its’ decisive and critical time normally arrives and remains systematically related to all others so that the whole ensemble depends on the proper development in the proper sequence of each item” (Erikson, 1997, p. 29). The logic appears to be that a regression to previous stages is not possible, and the stages, thus, build on one another and become integrated, in order to yield value from its systematically developing functions (Erikson, 1963, 1977; Newman & Newman, 2017). Though Jenkins, Buboltz, Schwartz and Johnson (2005) mentioned the possibility of difficulties arising if the conflicts of a stage are not successfully handled, the individual is not precluded from reevaluating the stages previously progressed through when a different expertise arises later in life (Newman & Newman, 2017).

Reinterpreting previous stages is only necessary when the patterns of earlier life reappear to inspire a reconsideration of the resolution of its conflicts, which is possible in light of the insight gained through development since the onset of the particular period (Newman &

Newman, 2017). Erikson et al. (1989) offered a valuable insight on the matter of reemerging themes, claiming that its intensity and frequency makes it noteworthy for development.

Initially, eight stages were proposed for the psychosocial theory of development (Erikson, 1963; Erikson et al., 1989; Graves & Larkin, 2006). It was implied that the occurrence of a stage falls at a specific chronological age, but that it does not preclude individual variation from making the time spent in each stage subject to change (Erikson, 1963, 1997). The significance of this possibility lies in progressive meaning-making, where the implicit qualities assumed from prior stages contribute to growth in later life. Erikson's (1997) assumption of an epigenetic ground plan aided comprehension of the way earlier stages served as foundations for those that follow, making salient the value of revisiting earlier conflicts (Newman & Newman, 2017). Development is said to ought to take place according to a proper sequence, and unfold according to a certain rate. Children are capable of adhering to their inherent structure of growth if the interactions of guidance received shape experiences, and open up opportunities to interact with guiding people and institutions, to achieve success (Erikson, 1968).

The organisation of the life cycle was, however, subject to critique: (a) The stages are not of equal length and, thus, imbalanced; (b) changes are systematic and gradual, and do not involve an immediate unfolding that marks a distinct movement from the one stage to the next; and (c) a broader understanding, provided by psychosocial evolution (Huxley, 1942, 1943), claims that cultural transmissions informed by progressive knowledge creation require psychosocial development for adaptation in its stages (Newman & Newman, 2017).

Newman and Newman (2012, 2017) expanded the stages of psychosocial development to 11 stages, namely, (a) prenatal (conception to birth), (b) infancy (birth to 2 years), (c) toddlerhood (2 to 4 years), (d) early school age (4 to 6 years), (e) middle childhood (6 – 12

years), (f) early adolescence (12 to 18 years), (g) later adolescence (18 to 24 years), (h) early adulthood (24 to 34 years), (i) middle adulthood (34 to 60 years), (j) later adulthood (60 to 75 years), and (k) elderhood (75 to death). The stages they added accommodate the greater fluidity of development that is, perhaps, not clear in the way distinct stages had initially been conceptualised. These initial stages were limited to, (a) trust versus mistrust, (b) autonomy versus shame and doubt, (c) initiative versus guilt, (d) industry versus inferiority, (e) identity versus role confusion, (f) intimacy versus isolation, (g) generativity versus stagnation, and (h) integrity versus despair (Erikson, 1963, 1968). The distinction of adolescence offers a sound example, where the interconnectivity of society and access to information has broadened the resources available for adolescents' identity moratorium (Erikson, 1968, 1977). Culture and society support the prolonged extension of competence building by adolescents (Newman & Newman, 2017), in the hope that it produces young adults who are capable of coping with the demands of later life.

Erikson's original conceptions of psychosocial development will enjoy the main focus of the present study. Through careful judgement, it is the researcher's view that the formulation of the theory and its principles during Lewis's lifetime affords the original stages a temporal and contextual relevance that makes it possible to apply the theory to the subject's own life.

3.3.2 Psychosocial crises.

Erikson (1963) theorised that the demands presented by society create a discrepancy in relation to the individual's capacity to meet them, which is known as the psychosocial crisis. The period characterised by psychosocial crises serves as a pivotal force to change, and creates capacity for potential and vulnerability (Graves & Larkin, 2006) that could prove itself to be a

“ontogenetic source of generational strength and maladjustment” (Erikson, 1968, p. 96). The crisis pits contrasting forces, syntonic and dystonic, against each other, which must be resolved for the sake of synthesising the two forces (Erikson et al., 1989). The expectations of the social environment may vary, and the crisis that occurs is a normal experience of pressure (Newman & Newman, 2017) or creative tension (Gross, 1987; Kroger, 2005) that presents the challenge of balancing oppositional energies. Growth is instituted through the successful resolution of the crisis in the favour of the syntonic force, but this growth nevertheless seeks integration to the degree of presenting features of both forces at the end of the crisis (Erikson, 1997; Gross, 1987; Roazen 1976). Erikson (1968) elucidated on the matter by characterising the developing individual as possessing a vulnerability regarding certain facets that is countered by a determination to overcome it with regard to these same facets.

Individuals are, thus, faced with the task of internalising environmental expectations, to the extent that the demands are assimilated into an individualised frame of reference. This task results in a tension that the individual must seek to reduce, but the nature of this tension is inclusive of actions that are not overly taxing of the individuals with regards to their capacities to learn and solve problems (Newman & Newman, 2017). Accommodating the challenges posed by particular developmental tasks at a given stage, and the resultant ability to direct the acquired skills toward their development, individuals are capable of positioning themselves in being presented with new experiences, to gain the aptitude to invest in relationships, and experience a sense of worth (Erikson, 1968; Newman & Newman, 2012).

The psychosocial theory presents an age-related sequence of stages, because the shape of the developmental tasks and expectations at each stage differ; nonetheless, the stages have a shape of predictable progression. The progression is seen in the expected increasing complexity

of the challenges posed by each stage, and the likelihood of resolving the crisis in the negative direction becoming more plausible (Newman & Newman, 2017). In dealing with oppositional forces that demand a balanced assimilation into a meaningful life story (Gross, 1987; Roazen, 1976), the individual confronts struggles that involve undermining personal needs and insecurities for the sake of being cognisant of the wants of society. The dynamic psychosocial conflict, thus, has, at its end, an outcome mediated by both positive and negative experiences, of which the majority of people manage to resolve the crisis, and mature inclinations are taken up into subsequent stages (Newman & Newman, 2017). The outcome of the tension between the polarities is the adoption of resultant ego strength (Gross, 1987; Roazen, 1976), which serves as integrative virtues that are gained throughout the stages of the lifespan. Prime adaptive ego qualities (Erikson, 1978) benefit the individual, by serving as resources for coping with the tasks of the next developmental stage. They contribute to the formulation of dominant orientations individuals have about the world, which are reshaped and reorganised during the accumulation of other ego qualities (Markstrom, Sabino, Turner, & Berman, 1997), which Erikson (1978) described as mental states. Different opportunities are, thus, utilised by different capacities to develop and add to the emerging personality of the individual (Erikson, 1968).

The negative outcome of balancing the polarities of each crisis ineffectively is the development of core pathologies (Erikson, 1982) that have similar strengths, but opposite effects, and that have a guiding influence on shaping worldviews. Core pathologies are vested with a similar amount of influence as the adaptive ego qualities, and serve to cordon off the individual in responses to ongoing societal expectations. Consequently, these characteristics actively limit meaningful social engagement, whilst preventing the balancing of tensions in psychosocial crises

that follow, and the changes that are naturally wrought by facing the challenges posed by the developmental tasks (Newman & Newman, 2012).

The next section will elucidate the different stages of psychosocial development, whilst explaining the polarities that are responsible for the creative tension of each presenting crisis. The central process that guides the individual in balancing these forces will be described, as will the core adaptive ego qualities and core pathologies that result in the positive or negative resolution of each stage.

3.4 The Psychosocial Stages

3.4.1 Trust versus Mistrust (birth to 1 year).

3.4.1.1 Psychosocial crises and the central process.

Berzoff (2011) placed the approximate time span covered by this stage at between birth and 18 months of age. During the psychosocial crisis of the first year of life (Erikson, 1963), infants face the challenge of delaying the gratification of their own needs for the sake of developing a reliability on an environment that remains consistent (Newman & Newman, 2017). This reliability is extended to availability inherent in an available caregiver (Erikson, 1963, 1977), and to continuity of experience related to the self (Erikson, 1977; Newman & Newman, 2017), rightly resulting in a “pervasive attitude” about one’s person and the one’s surroundings (Erikson, 1968, p. 96). Erikson (1963) investigated this quality as a *trust* with a basic nature, related to the satisfaction of urges, such as feeding, bowel control and sleeping schemes (Erikson, 1977), in a stable environment that includes the broader physical world and immediate

figures of attachment (Graves & Larkin, 2006; Newman & Newman, 2017; Sigelman & Rider, 2012). Mikulincer (1998) phrased his description of trust as the evaluation of a present, sensitive and dependable caregiver. It stands to reason that this trust, then, becomes more than an appraisal of the past, and ultimately offers a collection of anticipated sensations, that extend to a faith in a future that is less clear (Erikson, 1977; Newman and Newman, 2012, 2017). Infants, at this stage, need to feel confident in the caregiving capacity of their surroundings (Graves & Larkin, 2006), and must have confidence in its stability – which is achieved through the mutuality established between the infant’s sense of immature receptiveness and the caregiver’s provision (Erikson, 1977) - whilst exploring through their own reliance on sensory information (Newman & Newman, 2017) and all while harbouring a certainty within regarding the predictable presence of the mother without (Erikson, 1977). This inner certainty shows receptivity on behalf of the infant that could deem the first year of life to be an incorporative stage (Erikson, 1968). It then extends to trustworthiness of the infant’s own coping abilities, to confidently explore the environment (Erikson, 1963, 1968). Trust is thus seen as an integrative orientation to the uncertain social surroundings, and blends thoughts, emotions and behaviour to function in a space deemed as safe for the predictable gratification of one’s needs (Newman and Newman, 2012, 2017), and gives origin to a rudimentary ego identity (Erikson, 1977). Infants first positively experience this feeling during the relief of their discomforts, and in the warmth and delight in the company of their immediate primary caregivers (Newman & Newman, 2017; Sigelman and Rider, 2012), but, later, relive trust in the reduced extent of frustrations in later life, which results from a recognisable similarity in their environment and a diverse framework of meaningfulness to which frustrations can be attributed (Erikson, 1977).

The opposite side of the crisis resolution sees the experience of *mistrust*. Negative interactions that pervade the social environment leave the infant with the ability to distinguish these interactions as experiences that threaten their sense of safety (Davies & Woitach, 2008; Newman & Newman, 2012, 2017). This insecurity also results when immediate needs of hunger, and cleanliness, and emotional frustration are left unattended (Freiberg, 1987). Newman and Newman (2017) described mistrust as originating from three sources. In infants' exploration of their environment through sensory information and the use of their reflexes, infant wariness may, firstly, be experienced when infants are overexposed to stimulation (Erikson et al., 1989) and in a sudden experience of support loss through stranger anxiety (Sigelman & Rider, 2012). Secondly, a confidence loss may result from the inevitable mistakes made by caregivers who are learning to respond to the needs of their infants (Newman & Newman, 2017). Inconsistencies and neglect (Freiberg, 1987) may see the child lacking confidence in the responsiveness of the caregiver, and leading to a fixation on the caregiver (Pollak, 2008) that displays itself as signs of hostility or variations of abuse. Thirdly, Newman and Newman (2012, 2017) elaborated on the potency of personal experiences of frustrations, the extent of which makes the infant vulnerable to experience doubt about their own loveableness. This doubt is due to the lack of meaningfulness they attach to environmental frustrations when an outer sameness cannot be predicted to ensure an inner certainty for the infant (Erikson, 1977). Erikson (1968) mentioned cultural prerogatives that permit the endurance that should be displayed in the presence of certain frustrations.

The central process that mediates the crisis is a characteristic of the infant-caregiver bond termed as *mutuality*. Mutuality with the caregiver is fostered through initially consistent responses to the child's ever-evolving repertoire of expectations of needs being met (Newman & Newman, 2012, 2017). Erikson (1977) first alluded to this in referring to maternal care as the

facilitative task that brings resolution to psychosocial conflict; this resolution is influenced more by the quality of responsive caregiving than by the amount of needs being met. Geared with a set of eliciting behaviours that function under the framework of their temperaments, infants can either maintain or break contact with their caregivers through a wide set of responses, from crying to smiling (Newman & Newman, 2012), which means timing and intensity are crucial in parental responsiveness (Erikson, 1968). Tronick (2003) added to this understanding with a study of coordination between the two parties. Coordination entails revolving motions of *matching* and *synchrony*: the first entails the presence of both motions in the current state and time, while the second is the fluid transition between states. This explanation could be seen contextually, as institutional safeguards are in place to meet human needs, translating into a parental faith that derives its roots from infantile trust, and later finding institutional expression in religion (Erikson, 1977).

3.4.1.2 The prime adaptive ego quality and core pathology.

Erikson (1982, 1997) put forward the first of the prime adaptive ego qualities, geared to the establishment of well-being and elevated levels of functioning (Peterson & Seligman, 2003), as being *hope*. According to Erikson, hope integrates the oppositional forces of trust and mistrust and sets forth the shape of a person's life:

Hope bestows on the anticipated future a sense of leeway inviting expectant leaps, either in preparatory imagination or in small initiating actions. And such daring must count on basic trust in the sense of a trustfulness that must be, literally and figuratively, nourished by maternal care and – when endangered by all-too-desperate discomfort – must be restored by competent consolation. (Erikson, 1982, p.60)

Erikson (1967) elaborated further on hope as a foundational tenet for acquiring subsequent ego qualities. The global orientation is rooted in goal attainment and inherent belief in the face of adversity (Newman & Newman, 2012). Snyder, Cheavens, and Sympson (1997) described hope's capacity to expand the possibilities of pursuing such goals, linked to a belief in the chosen route to be traversed.

Erikson's (1997) view was that hope, in infancy, transitions into faith later in life, becoming the sustaining expression of hope in old age (Graves & Larkin, 2006; Roazen, 1976) and, in recognising the cyclical feedback of development, religion becomes the institution that informs parental faith to facilitate infantile trust (Erikson, 1977; Graves & Larkin, 2006). In the caregiving relationship, the hope of infants and the faith of their caregivers interact mutually to sustain and influence each other (Erikson, 1963, 1968; Roazen, 1976). The development of religious faith offers the individual the enduring personal resource of overcoming the trepidations and tragedies of daily living, helping the individual to find resolve in the transcendent good, to pursue life with integrity (Erikson et al., 1986). Religions are elucidated as having a childlike quality in its nature and in the believer's complete and confident abandon to the powers of a higher being, thus, displaying the translation of infantile trust to mature faith (Graves & Larkin, 2006).

In antithesis to the healthy orientation of hope, maldevelopment may see infants becoming increasingly *withdrawn* – perhaps even estranged – and lacking interest in new and novel experiences that facilitate enjoyment in learning (Erikson, 1968; Newman & Newman, 2012). This core pathology is due to a mismatch in mutuality, desynchronised patterns of responding, or perhaps even neglectful and over-restrictive parenting; individuals experiencing maldevelopment also display a more passive adaptation to their surroundings, which is fuelled by

a lack of agency in their experimentation therein (Erikson, 1968, 1977; Newman & Newman, 2012). Stevens (2008) elaborated on this idea, which, with its display of an excessive amount of caution, Erikson et al. (1986) explained as a sensory maladjustment due to overstimulation.

3.4.2 Autonomy versus Shame and Doubt (1 to 3 years).

3.4.2.1 The psychosocial crisis and central process.

A sense of independence grips children during this stage, while they realise that their needs cannot always be met sufficiently by their caregivers, nor their emotions always comprehended. This independent approach defines *autonomy* (Erikson, 1968; Newman & Newman, 2017), and involve children asserting their sense of self-control and pride (Freiberg, 1987) in exploring beyond the trusted environment of their caregivers (Graves & Larkin, 2006). The flowering of autonomy facilitates novel encounters with their surroundings, with the environment, in turn, responding by markedly adding to the shaping of the individual (Erikson, 1968). Spanning, possibly, from as early as 18 months, until the third year (Berzoff, 2011; Hamacheck, 1990), neuromuscular growth permits the execution of gross motoric action, which translates into greater mobility (Freiberg, 1987); daily tasks are adamantly pursued and attempted by themselves (Newman & Newman, 2012; Sigelman & Rider, 2012). Erikson (1963) explained how children develop into more self-reliant and energetic styles, from more irrational and discounting modes that are bound to routine. Parents are seen to exercise great patience during this stage (Newman & Newman, 2012), by balancing permissiveness and restrictiveness in their approaches to create a space of exploration with the necessary attention to caution (Erikson, 1963, 1997; Graves and Larkin, 2006).

This exploration takes the form of experimentation with two different actions: “holding on and letting go” (Erikson, 1977, p. 226). These tendencies conflict with one another, while being coordinated into a general orientation of retention and expulsion that extends beyond anal muscular control that is present in this stage (Erikson, 1968). Autonomous children will, thus, develop confidence in their own efforts to achieve their goals successfully without help, leading to a growth in their sense of competency in the provision of their own needs (Newman & Newman, 2012). This competency, however, fosters a critical importance placed on the firmness of trust developed earlier in life. The sudden ownership of choice can be potentially harmful to children’s ability to masterfully navigate when to hold on and when to let go (Erikson, 1968, 1977; Graves & Larkin, 2006). In addition, Graves and Larkin (2006) reminded us, that the balance between the contending forces become significant for the child when leading to the delimitation of curiosity to avoid threats to the self; a moral autonomy also needs to be considered when an overextension of control, while failing in the regulation of daily activities, becomes apparent.

The opposite pole of the crisis is that children can become *doubtful* of their mastery of approaches to certain tasks (Newman & Newman, 2012, 2017); this doubt is directly influenced by their untrained capacity to execute autonomy or to discriminate between new encounters from old ones (Erikson, 1968, 1977). It is a phase of experience in which skill acquisition becomes lethargic, due to a decrease in children’s confidence in their capabilities to pursue a task; it is a confidence that first finds its roots in having ‘the self’ exposed (Erikson, 1963). This exposure happens through the feeling of *shame*, which defines a self-consciously negative evaluation (Erikson, 1963, 1968) that usually originates in an interpersonal situation, either real or imagined (Tangney, 2001), which imparts on the individual a feeling of foolishness (Erikson, 1968). Toth,

Rogosch, Sturge-Apple and Cicchetti (2009) reported on research into the experience of shame that is linked to negative self-representations, with its origin in insecure attachments earlier in life. Erikson (1977, p. 227) stated that, “Visual shame precedes auditory guilt, which is a sense of badness to be had all by oneself when nobody watches and when everything is quiet – except the voice of the superego.” Children doubt themselves during rejection or indifferent parenting interactions, and build internal working models of themselves in relation to others when they experience humiliation and belittling feedback in situations where their thoughts and actions are critiqued (Newman & Newman, 2012). The child risks being inhibited in terms of their gradual process of developing control if outer influence becomes too stringent or enters too early (Erikson, 1968). In the child’s impairment of daily functions, which include self-care and declining physical independence that threaten dignity, the experience of shame and doubt is not lost on the individual in later adult life (Graves & Larkin, 2006). The enduring presence of the negative pole can manifest in individuals exacerbating unreasonable fears in adulthood (Erikson, et al., 1986). It, thus, rests in the scope of parental duties to impose limits on the child’s curious explorations, whilst allowing significant expression of their independence (Graves & Larkin, 2006).

The process, thus, sees self-control alternating with self-esteem, to produce autonomous pride or enduring shame and doubt (Erikson, 1977). Toddlers take ownership of the skills they need to reach their ideals through the central process of *imitation*. Imitation implies the recreation of cultural praxis by the imitator, after having observed the actions being performed by a more skilful individual (Newman & Newman, 2012). In a sense, this relates to what Erikson (1977) believed to be the preserving element of *willpower*, that is, law and order. Imitation is not synonymous with norm adherence, as toddlers who imitate have little understanding of the

cultural relevance of their behaviours, to them, the behaviour merely serves their needs of engagement, and sustains social interaction (Meltzoff, 2002), language acquisition, and need-fulfilment (Newman & Newman, 2012). However, a sense of social morality does establish itself later in life, when the older child becomes aware of the limits set for the self in the social context, where the sense of autonomy serves to invest in protecting the obligations and gains of society (Erikson, 1963, Roazen, 1976, Stevens, 2008). Individuals are left with an enduring sense of independence, and belief that their autonomous dignity, established earlier in life, will not be compromised (Erikson, 1980). Lakin, Chartrand and Arkin (2008) expanded on using imitation to establish a sense of kinship and likeness, even after moments of disconnection with the desired model. Reaffirming that sense of affinity to another, the imitator re-establishes a closeness with the other, but the shift of action from model to imitator allows the action's independent execution (Newman & Newman, 2012).

3.4.2.2 The prime adaptive ego quality and core pathology.

In mediating the conflict between remaining autonomous and doubting their abilities (Sigelman & Rider, 2012), Erikson et al. (1986) presumed that the formation of *will* serves as the prime ego strength for navigating challenges with a sense of self-controlled direction. This self-control is evident in both holding on (informed by muscular maturation), in the sense of a pervasive care displayed by the individual in cherishing what is kept back, or in executing a relaxed approach and leaving things to pass on (Erikson, 1977; Graves & Larkin, 2006). *Will* serves as a buffer for *hope* in the face of these obstacles, maintaining hope in the pursuit of alternate pathways to goal attainment (Erikson et al. 1986; Newman & Newman, 2012). *Will* is a characteristic of endurance in the trials the individual faces, with the individual voluntarily

exercising the capacity to utilise freedom to establish these goals, with the added responsibility of delaying the fulfilment of desires in order to reach these goals (Newman & Newman, 2017) – extending the meaning of *will* to facets describing *willpower* (Mischel & Ayduk, 2004). Erikson (1977) described lawful principles operating in society as the institution through which will is safeguarded.

When autonomy is left without proper guidance to adapt systematically, Erikson (1968, 1977) claimed that a *precocious conscience* develops, which seeks almost complete control over and manipulation of the self and its play – in which repetitive testing in service of will becomes an obsessive drive (Erikson, 1968; Graves & Larkin, 2006). From this, *compulsion*, as core pathology, stems from an early violation of stringent routines to deal with patterns of hunger, sleep and outside exploration – including the allocation of finances, feelings and time; routines that toddlers adapt in the light of their familiarity and sense of self-control (Erikson, 1968; Newman & Newman, 2017). Ritualised as a set of repeated actions, these routines emerge amidst the imposition of limitations, or the driving impulse to find expression (Newman & Newman, 2012, 2017). This expression can be also be found in the modalities informed by muscular maturation, in which children subject themselves to holding on to a level of restraint, or letting go in destructive ways (Erikson, 1968, 1977; Graves & Larkin, 2006). Erikson (1968) mentioned that, if compensated for by the individual, impulsiveness could secure a sense of release, and that compulsiveness could aid in the execution of order.

The expression of these compulsions, however, also serves the important function for toddlers of traversing the unknown, and creating comfort in their establishment of order and structure to negate threats to themselves (Evans, Gray, & Leckman, 1999; Newman & Newman, 2017). Rituals comprise behaviours that have been tried and tested; rituals elicit confidence and

trust through their utilisation, and provide consistent results in changing circumstances and settings (Newman & Newman, 2012). Compulsions, however, do not effectively alleviate anxiety, putting the child at risk of an increased prevalence of obsessive compulsive disorder, which institutes the experience of ritualised actions without changing utility and intrusive, repetitive thoughts called obsessions (Barlow & Durand, 2015). Compulsion carefully orchestrates the navigation of unknown frontiers due to the ego's desire for structure, but offers no opportunity for development, instead, inhibiting the voluntary expression of will in the pursuit of goals, thereby trapping the individual in the snare of repetitive, meaningless behaviours (Erikson, 1982; Newman & Newman, 2012).

3.4.3 Initiative versus Guilt (3 to 6 years)

3.4.3.1 The psychosocial conflict and central process.

This stage spans three to six years of age (Erikson, 1997; Berzoff, 2011). Labelled by Erikson (1968) as the *intrusive mode*, children find cause to enter their surroundings by developing movement, the realm of the unknown through overwhelming interest, and the lives of people by means of the children's forceful voices. By *attempting* to find the patterns of stability and consistency externally, which they have discovered as a regularity in their sense of selfhood, and which has helped them to establish a separateness from others (Erikson, 1968; Newman & Newman, 2012), children, in their play age, focus renewed attention on their surroundings. This attention serves to provide continued models of imitation (Erikson, 1977; Gross, 1987) with which children engage through developing motor control (Erikson, 1997) and language competency (Erikson, 1980). These improving characteristics, (a) give children greater mobility,

which expands their perception of goals to be pursued; (b) stimulate a greater inquisitiveness, based on improved linguistic capacities that, in addition, create strong misunderstandings; and (c) facilitate greater imagination, due to incorporating the many roles that movement and language now make possible (Erikson, 1968). Erikson (1977) reminded us that the epigenetics of this stage highlight the impressionable nature of this stage for learning, and for maintaining a balance with obligation. This selfhood translates into a consideration of the possibilities of what children may become, with parents as both cautioned and idolised figures on which (till this point) children have modelled themselves (Erikson, 1968).

While their maturing qualities were previously manifested as manipulation of their physical surroundings, Erikson (1963, p.247) described that *initiative* “adds to autonomy the quality of undertaking, planning and ‘attacking’ a task for the sake of being active and on the move”. Through a sense of initiative, children display their capacity to influence their worlds through their sense of agency, which had been formulated earlier in life by the effective resolution of the ego crisis during the play age, which infused them with ambitious purpose (Erikson, 1968). Autonomy is largely depended on to yield a drive for the exploration of consequential action, which is approached with confident self-control (Erikson, 1977; Newman & Newman, 2017). This autonomy imposes on the individual an explicit drive to negate the influence of contenders – a *jealous rage* (Erikson, 1968), to allow later initiative to establish eagerness within the individual to overcome long-standing competition in a particular context – *anticipatory rivalry* (Erikson, 1968, 1977). Frese (2001) added that qualities of outward discovery, infused with an inquisitive trait, work in relation to schemes that the child relies on to break through the barriers imposed. Consequentially, as the causal agent, children leave the imprint of their own curious perusals and innovations on the world (Erikson, 1968; Newman &

Newman, 2012, 2017). Children exhibit an excess of inextinguishable drive, which assists them to overcome their failures, and to approach untested areas of discovery (Erikson, 1968). Should hurdles pause the advances of children's exploration (Newman & Newman, 2012, 2017), according to Erikson (1980), initiative implies an improved effort, even when success is not forthcoming as a consequence.

Initiative is also displayed in patterns that reveal social confidence. A study by Dodge, Pettit, McClaskey and Brown (1986) revealed mechanisms displayed upon entering peer group interactions: children established commonality on the basis of helpful feedback received; engaged positively and gregariously with their social environment; and avoided irritability in working to achieve the goal of establishing meaningful interchange. The premise remains clear: school-age children seek to impress on their environment their ideas, whether it involves implicating their sense of self in the social contact, or expressing their ideas innovatively while alone. Whatever its course, in envisioning possible future roles, the basis of association with peers becomes possible (Erikson, 1968).

Though an investigative approach to the world dominates the child's thinking, curiosity is reined in by societal limitations imposed by institutions of school and family, which impose boundaries for the purpose of maintaining privacy and cultural respect (Newman & Newman, 2012, 2017). Erikson (1968, 1977) offered the view that the child now is divided, between instinctual growth, which pervaded much of development till this point, and a greater (almost parental) cognisance, which now includes guidance and discipline enforced upon oneself. The child's expression of agency remains paramount for navigation through the present psychosocial crisis, though regulated by norms that promote conscience and responsibility (Gross, 1987). Tangney (1991) supported the empathetic adaptation that *guilt* can, therefore, have in vesting the

individual with guilt's normal manifestation, which is geared to the assumption of responsible behaviours (Newman & Newman, 2012). Erikson (1977) described guilt as a mechanism for staunching the energy that individuals gain exceedingly due to their increasing mental capabilities and locomotor actions. However, guilt opposes a sense of initiative in its regressing stance, requiring the caregivers to be tentative in their modelling behaviours related to morality, which should not contradict the learned perspectives of the child in questioning behaviours taught to them as being irresponsible (Erikson, 1963). *Guilt* evokes feelings of remorse about cognitions and actions that violate internalised obligations (Izard, 1977; Newman & Newman, 2012). Guilt is a prosocial feeling of reorientation, which leaves the individual with a sense of compensation owed to remedy perceived wrongdoing (Tangney, 2001; Newman & Newman, 2012) and bringing a halt to initiative that goes beyond the managerial capabilities of the individual (Erikson, 1977).

The mechanisms underlying *guilt* were explored by Zahn-Waxler and Kochanska (1990). Psychoanalytic perspectives remind us of the formation of the superego and rising oedipal crisis that a child experiences (Erikson, 1963), which confronts children with hostile impulses that the developing moral component of the personality seeks to suppress (Newman & Newman, 2012). Reaching back to the emotional bond established between infants and their caregivers (Hoffman, 1982), empathy is a second mechanism, which has its premise in a sensitivity to the reactions of others; empathy also inspires reparation for harmful action. Thirdly, a personal frame of standards can provide an outline for the experience of guilt (Newman & Newman, 2012, 2017).

Inhibitions to behaviour are, however, bound to restrictions internalised systematically from the environment into a *moral conscience* (Erikson, 1968; Newman & Newman, 2012), and parents appear tasked with the role of modelling conscientiousness (Gross, 1987). Erikson (1968)

described this inner voice as directing observation to the children themselves, and supervising behaviour. Children use certain qualities as the basis for establishing sameness between themselves and role models, where appearance, influence, and skill-sets become positive attributes in the establishment of similarity (Newman & Newman, 2012). This experience involves (a) being made aware of how they compare to their models, (b) perceptions held of physical and psychological likenesses, and (c) the assimilation of behaviours exhibited by caregivers. This experience also comprises the constituents of *identification*, a central process in the resolution of *initiative* versus *guilt*. Identification is defined as “the taking on or internalizing the attitudes and behaviours of another person” (Sigelman & Rider, 2012, p. 50). Erikson (1977) elaborated on a mutual regulation that becomes necessary for a conscientiousness regarding a responsible involvement in institutions, and the accompanying roles of the individual’s environment, which, if understood, affords him/her a sense of accomplishment.

Through combinations of observations and imitations, and interactions with others (Decety & Chaminade, 2003; Sherkow, 2001) children develop comparable reflections of themselves, motivated through (a) fear of losing affection due to a dependency on the caregiver; (b) establishing a similitude with feared behaviours which may inspire the redirection of harm inflicted by caregivers (Freud, 1936); (c) the representation of power through the capacity of control and status; and (d) the view of likeness to the caregiver (Newman & Newman, 2012, 2017). The social spheres of the child, thus, hold within their arsenal models of adult behaviour, an *economic ethos or ethos of action*, which exposes the child to societal functions and ideals that replaces figures emulated in fantasy (Erikson, 1968, 1977).

It becomes clear that the process of identification occurs through the adaptation of culture, which serves to inform the image that children seek to incorporate of themselves

(Newman & Newman, 2012). The child now learns, from the foundational patience exhibited by the family unit, the boundary of play from where purpose takes hold to establish action along norm-governed routes (Erikson, 1968). Thus, not only does identification help to internalise the prohibitions in relation to children's assertions in their surroundings, it also fosters an independent appraisal for coping when modelling behaviour is no longer present to scaffold (Jacobsen, 1964; Newman & Newman, 2012).

3.4.3.2 The prime adaptive ego quality and core pathology.

Erikson (1963; 1968) viewed the prime resolution to occur through the acquisition of a strength that balances the perspective on what is allowed in relation to what is achievable, guided by a set of evolving standards. The ego quality of *purpose* finds expression through a guided sense of action (Newman & Newman, 2012), and Erikson (1978, p.29) stated that, "Purposefulness is the courage playfully to imagine and energetically to pursue valued goals". *Purpose* sees behaviour manifesting in a sense of direction, rather than in the mere pleasure of it through the expression of *will*, as in toddlerhood (Newman & Newman, 2012). Action is accompanied by goal-setting and success evaluation after the execution of stratagems (Scholnick, 1995). Erikson (1977) elaborated on a mutual regulation that becomes necessary for conscientiousness in relation to responsible involvement in institutions, and their accompanying roles of the individual's environment, which, if understood, affords the individual a sense of accomplishment. Erikson (1997) added to our understanding by explaining that playfulness is a powerful drive for the development of humour, later.

An increase in the experience of guilt gives rise to, and is increased by, a sense of over-restriction, to the extent that it is a harmful maldevelopment (Boeree, 2006; Erikson, 1968,

1977). The child may resort to a nearly unforgiving resolve toward initiative that crosses familial and wider societal taboos (Erikson, 1968; Erikson et al. 1989, Newman & Newman, 2012), but the core pathology during this stage is termed as *inhibition*. “Inhibition refers to the restraint or suppression of thoughts and behaviour”, and is “assumed to emerge when parents or caregivers use high levels of love withdrawal and guilt inducing interactions with their children” (Newman & Newman, 2012, p. 279). The result is often over-restriction, beyond parental wishes, and this restriction subjects parental figures to similar boundaries that they themselves had set to the child, that then yield resentment from the child if not heeded (Erikson, 1977). The child, thus, adopts a limit to his/her confidence for the sake of accommodating caregiver approval through action taken within parental boundaries. Affection is deemed a reward for rule-governed behaviour (Newman & Newman, 2012). Thus, Erikson (1963, 1968, 1977) warned of parental hypocrisy, when parents approach behaviours taught to the child as defying morality. The reason for this warning is that the self-awareness of moral behaviour risks causing a child to withdraw in middle childhood, which restricts interpersonal growth (Newman & Newman, 2012) and exacerbates the risk of harm to the ego; challenges are also posed to others (Erikson, 1963, 1977) to adhere to similar moral standards.

Children’s thoughts, ideas and emotions are no longer put to the test in group context, which withholds from them the development of adequate social skills. This observation became significant when Erikson (1963) stated how the role-functions of play offer directedness for career choices later in life, through its mechanism of identification. Toys and environments sustain the investigation of adult roles (Capps, 2004; Stevens, 2008). In adult life, this investigation transitions over into straining overcompensation to maintain a label of achievement if initiative is to show prevalence, or an inhibitive sense of denial. With its barrier of

contradiction imposed on possible aspirations yielded from capacities possessed, it becomes clear where a monitoring process should be avoided, because it can lead to a ban of rightful initiative, instead of providing guidance (Erikson, 1968, 1977).

Initiative, furthermore, imposes a transitioning quality on approaches to the identity conflicts of adolescence, where leadership is seen to influence an appeal of victory that is powerful enough to trump a sense of guilt – a tendency Erikson (1968) described as fuelling the aggressive aspirations of especially men, who then drive deep their roots in this stage of their growth to identity.

3.4.4 Industry versus Inferiority (6 to 12 years).

3.4.4.1 The psychosocial crisis and central process.

At the end of a period of evolving imagination, the child becomes ready to learn, efficiently and in a disciplined manner, ways of approaching achievement and obligation (Erikson, 1968). This stage spans the ages of six to 12 years of age (Erikson, 1997, Hamacheck, 1990; Schaffer, 2002), with Berzoff (2011) having approximated the end of this stage closer to 11 years. Success becomes a powerful motivating factor when children start developing their core attitudes to making a contribution to their social setting (Newman & Newman, 2012). According to Erikson (1963, p. 250), the child “becomes ready to apply himself to given skills and tasks, which go far beyond the mere playful expression”. The desires of the past, which invested the child with such a boisterous imagination, is tamed now for the sake of more impersonal goal pursuit (Erikson, 1977). Interpersonal growth and socialisation, as discussed by Newman & Newman (2012), thus, become important, as the production of work becomes

fundamental within the school setting, where peer interaction and skills development is set forth. Family can, thus, no longer harbour the individual safely if he/she is to gain attention for his/her labours (Erikson, 1977).

Kowaz and Marcia (1991) explained that the positive pole of *industry* comprises (a) affective, (b) behavioural and (c) cognitive components. The cognitive component refers to the actual gain in culturally emphasised knowledge and skills, while the behavioural component comprises determined and focussed application of these knowledge and skills in the frame motivating job practices. This point is something that Erikson (1977) also acknowledged, namely, a readiness to utilise skill-sets for the tasks required for moving beyond the playfulness displayed earlier in life. The affective component adds an emotional appraisal to the process of skill acquisition, which includes a self-confident inquisitiveness and a need to persist, and to experience the joy attached to success – which, in itself, fuels an internal sense of motivation in learning something novel (Erikson, 1968; Newman & Newman, 2012).

The premise of *industry* becomes clear when the child wishes to learn the capacities to accomplish tasks – and to do them well – to eventually lead to a meaningful engagement with work (Erikson, 1968, Newman & Newman, 2012), usually by means of what Erikson (1968, 1977) phrased as a systematic mode of instruction. The boundaries of known environments are transcended (Boeree, 2006; Stevens, 2008) and the child forgets “past hopes and wishes, while his exuberant imagination is tamed and harnessed. . . . he now learns to win recognition by producing things” (Erikson, 1963, p. 250). Thus, outside influences, especially the school, appear to become powerful in mediating knowledge acquisition through support from significant others and gradual teaching in children’s approach to praise and reward; though negative feedback from peers also carry influence (Erikson, 1968; Newman & Newman, 2012). In addition, the child

seems to understand the rudimentary expectations that society impress upon children to start providing. Industry, thus, moves to the forefront of development, and the importance of play and games are dethroned by a longing for the satisfaction of producing things (Erikson, 1968).

Evolving specialisations often blur the resulting goals that are established by a sense of initiative, which complicates the social world in which the individual invests, as well as the roles played by caregivers (Erikson, 1977). Due to efforts being appraised as average and meagre, the child is faced with his/her own feelings of inadequacy regarding his/her abilities, because recognition is not distributed equally (Erikson, 1963), thereby, possibly, effectively estranging the child from his/her tasks (Erikson, 1968). These feelings and the resultant questioning of values form the basis of *inferiority*, which develops from self-appraisal and social input (Newman & Newman, 2012, 2017). Children become aware that skill mastery does not always yield success, leading them to reconsider the value of their aptitude for certain tasks, and their experiences gained till that point; the capabilities of the self are naturally inclined to reveal failure in certain attempts that lead to disappointment (Erikson, 1963; Newman & Newman, 2012). Children may be faced with mental and physical limitations that hinder skill development (Adler, 1935), leading to further frustration during school-based development (Newman & Newman, 2012). These limitations require circumvention through the availability of skilled educators, who are trained to re-emphasise the capabilities of the child (Erikson, 1968). It becomes paramount for the child to be firmly pushed into circumstances that yield learning and exploration that would be unlikely to result from own initiative, thus, helping the child to move away from the fantasies of play to the logic practices that contribute to larger participation.

The social environment facilitates the unequal distribution of recognition for achievement further, exacerbating the conflict caused by balancing prided success appraisal (Freiberg, 1987).

Newman and Newman (2012) mentioned how parents face this risk, of comparing criticisms of a child's efforts to an equally constructive remark of their success. Culture offers the imposition of what is regarded as valued abilities, to the exclusion of others. Newman and Newman (2012) proposed that social comparison fosters the type of inadequacy, when the efforts of the child are compared to those of others, and seen as mediocre (Erikson, 1963). They propose two types of *failure messages* that result in feelings of inadequacy. Messages related to *effort* question the attempt at work offered, while messages addressing a *lack of ability* imply that the child does not possess an affinity to skills required by the presenting task. It forms part of a collection of affective appraisals about the self that is termed learned helplessness (Nelson, 1987; Seligman, 1975), which is an attitude that overextends the negative value of criticism and the lack of consideration for one's actual successes, resulting in a diminished hope of accomplishing something in future (Newman & Newman, 2012). Learned helplessness sees the individual possessing a belief that achievement is measurable, not by individual ability, but by the influence of uncontrollable factors (Nelson, 1987; Seligman, 1975). Erikson (1977) noted that children in their school environment could start to feel that their worthiness is dependent on factors such as upbringing, race or wealth, and not on a judgement of ability – this turns to the consideration of *identity*, which is at the forefront of consideration in the stage to follow. Identity can, furthermore, be limited to the efforts extended in good labour and assistance, which severely limits the potential of who children could become (Erikson, 1968).

“*Education* is a culture's process for transmitting valued knowledge and skills from one generation to the next” (Newman & Newman, 2012, p. 323). It is through the process of systematic education that children realise their potential through acquiring the societally valued skills and knowledge, which make them experience the intrinsic pleasure of being faced with a

challenge posed by a sense of industry, or which, if it is criticised, leads to the child feeling inferior (Erikson, 1968, 1977; Newman & Newman, 2012). Through situations of social comparison, self-reflection, and the development of skill-sets and the assessment thereof – through schooling institutions that poses its own limits and opportunities along this line (Erikson, 1977) – children navigate through the psychosocial crisis that regulates their behaviours toward the achievement of success (Newman & Newman, 2012). Different cultures appropriate different ways of systematic teaching the skill-sets to be accrued for dealing with adult life, and this happens by means of a *technological ethos* (Erikson, 1963; Roazen, 1976), which makes it clear that society at large prepares the child for the realities created by technology and economy (Erikson, 1968). The technological ethos encompasses the societal function maintained by a division of labour and varying opportunities (Erikson, 1968). In situations of competitiveness and teamwork, children re-centre their imaginative energy into systematic strategies that aid the accomplishment of specific tasks (Erikson, 1997, Stevens, 2008).

3.4.4.2 The prime adaptive ego quality and core pathology.

Competence, in turn, is the free exercise of dexterity and intelligence in the completion of tasks, unimpaired by infantile inferiority. It is the basis for cooperative participation in technologies, and it relies, in turn, on the logic of tools and skills,” (Erikson, 1978, p. 30).

Erikson (1963) described competence as the synthesis that follows the completion of this crisis, and with which novel tasks are approached (Newman & Newman, 2012). Self-esteem plays a powerful role, and emerges in two different ways. *Stable self-esteem* implies positivity in the approach to events; the approach involves background experience of competence that contributes to a consistent view of one’s abilities in the attempt of each task. A history of adequacy gives individuals a steady expectation of the outcome of each newly attempted task,

and the individual optimistically strives to achieve skill refinement. If self-esteem is *monitored daily*, however, competence is dependent on an upward or downward social comparison, and the added approval offered by others in the context (Newman & Newman, 2012). A technological ethos, furthermore, secures the competence in the way work is distinguished and defined, by the redirection of attention to using skills to achieve within specific roles (Erikson 1963, 1968, 1997).

The malignant consequence of moving towards a greater sense of inferiority is the development of *inertia* (Erikson, et al., 1989). Children with this core pathology are stanchied in their enthusiastic approach to a productive existence (Erikson, 1982, 1997; Newman & Newman, 2017), but lack the energy to strive for accomplishment. They pursue life tasks aimlessly, without confidence, or are assailed by feelings of boredom, and delay tasks fruitlessly, without a belief in their capabilities to meet the challenges they face (Newman & Newman, 2012). Building on the sense of inhibition developed at the play age (Erikson, 1982), children who are inclined to inertia, furthermore, fail to commit to societal demands; they are posed in their passivity and reserved nature (Newman & Newman, 2012). In addition, a great threat is posed by self-imposed limitations, where work is assumed to be the main responsibility for establishing relevance within an individual's environment, a belief that subjects the individual further to the will of the tools he/she so prides him/herself in using, and to that of those who are in control thereof (Erikson, 1968, 1977). The exclusive use of work as criterion for worth is what Marx phrased a "craft-idiocy" (Erikson, 1968), and it presents problems in the next psychosocial phase.

3.4.5 Identity versus role Confusion (12 to 20 years).

3.4.5.1 The psychosocial crisis and central process.

Berzoff (2011) placed this phase of adolescence between 11 and 18 years of age, while other authors extend the establishment of identity over role confusion to between 12 and 20 years of age (Erikson, 1977, Gross, 1987, Hamacheck, 1990). The onset of puberty brings forth rapid physical growth and genital maturity, which requires that,

The young individual must learn to be most himself where he means the most to others – those others, to be sure, who have come to mean most to him. The term identity expresses such a mutual relation in that it connotes both a persistent sameness within oneself (self-sameness) and a persistent sharing of some kind of essential character with others. (Erikson, 1959, p. 102)

From the quote it is clear that the psychosocial crisis pits the adolescent against the challenge of consolidating more than just one part of him/herself to resolve the crisis (Newman & Newman, 2012). Erikson (1968) described adolescence as a marked period that shelters a unique way of life after the school age that increasingly becomes part of the past, and involves a move to differentiated labour that will define individuals' uncertain future societal functions as adults. Thus, Erikson posited that individuals progress to a stage in which they vest themselves as part of a subculture with a sense of finality, as opposed to this same action being the first transitioning tendencies involved in forming an identity. In striving to achieve the consistent experience of mutuality, adolescents similarly seek to define their sense of originality within a larger setting (Kroger, 2005), a motion on their own behalf that Erikson (1968, 1977) described as forming the fit of earlier established roles to the contemporary positions open to individuals within society.

With individuals at this stage caught in the throes of puberty and its accompanying rapid bodily changes, Erikson (1968, 1977) was of the opinion that continuity is broken to the extent of leading to renewed questioning. During the period of adolescence, individuals are focused on the formation of enduring schemes, and integrated representations or ideas about themselves and the groups with which they wish to identify (Gurin & Markus, 1988). This development alludes to what Erikson (1968) understood around the integration of the disparate parts of an emerging identity, amidst the awareness of a greater demanding sphere of influence – society. Early group ties foster the capability to traverse connections on wider and wider social domains, extending from one’s personal frame to international levels (Lawler, Thye, & Yoon, 2009). Thus, competence forms a significant part of the confidence to contribute effectively in a social sense, in order to establish this ascendance of a social hierarchy (Newman & Newman, 2012). And considering how important it was to establish competence in an earlier phase, the crises of previous stages make their appearance for reconsideration, in order to establish an enduring sense of identity in years to follow (Erikson, 1968, 1977).

The main premise of the psychosocial crisis is, thus, consolidating the disparate parts of the self, which both fulfil personally meaningful strivings, and allows adolescents to contribute meaningfully to values that they are willing to commit to (Erikson, 1968; Newman & Newman, 2012). Erikson’s (1959) elaborated further on his view on individual *identity*, to include the continuity of experience of past, present and future selves. From the *past self*, the formation of identity is informed by childhood identifications. The *present self* creates awareness of where aptitudes lie, what capacities are, and where attentions are drawn; and the *future self* reveals the value placed on objectives and dreams in life.

Past selves could, furthermore, present the adolescent with lasting impressions of previous stages, in light of developing a present self for the sake of the future self (Erikson, 1959). Erikson (1968) started this view with the earliest notion of *trust*, which needs to be found by the individual within a grouping to which one's ideals would ascribe to, or, alternatively, a lack of faith in making commitments, as an inkling of *mistrust*. Newman and Newman (2001) pitted a group identity against the experience of alienation, to define a crisis that explicates how the pressures of belongingness weigh against the pressure to conform. The individual's move is towards a greater expression of the social self, wherein social needs of approval and status are comfortably met in the experience of connection (Newman & Newman, 2012).

Erikson (1968) continued by discussing how the freedom to express *will* (as is displayed in the second stage) becomes evident in the choice made among the possible avenues of societal duty, and how shameful repercussions may often be preferred for the sake of avoiding coerced roles. Freiberg (1987) explained how adolescents at this stage are set on finding direction for their career-related lives and the adult tasks that centre around these careers in order to establish values on social, religious and economic grounds. Imagination, as the inheritance of the third stage, furthermore, creates a boundless initiative to invest an earlier trust into groups that feed into adolescent's great ideals, thereby creating adolescents who are less inclined to acknowledge their guilt for the sake of their aspirations (Erikson, 1968). The importance of occupation is, thus, a non-negotiable quality that permeates identity from the fourth stage, where successful production requires a distinctive imprint, rather than an unsatisfactory career that nonetheless proves to be industrious. To re-establish familiarity, individuals commit themselves to engaging with reviewing these past conflicts, and appointing significant others to challenge emerging perceptions (Erikson, 1977).

Newman and Newman (2012, 2017) made a distinction between what is known as a private and public senses of self. The first, the *private* sense of *self*, is explained as consisting of four elements (Blasi, 1991; Glodis & Blasi, 1993): (a) a sense of agency, where the individual feels that thought and action are self-initiated; (b) a sense of unity, where the individual experiences a coherence in his/her moment-to-moment idea of the self; (c) a sense of otherness; where distinctions can be drawn between the originator and those with whom the individual interacts; and (d) a sense of decentring and distancing, where ownership can be taken of mental processes and behaviour, which become a topic of reflection. The *public self* encompasses the internalisation of norms posited by the society or community, thereby setting a standard of behaviour attached to the roles the individual commits to assume (Newman & Newman, 2012).

Integrating the various parts of the self becomes difficult, and Erikson (1968, 1997) explained how society has incorporated and approved a psychosocial *moratorium*, which gives the adolescent the freedom to delay commitment to meeting societal demands. According to Erikson (1977), the adolescent is inadvertently subjected to societal demands regardless, since he/she is caught between the morality accrued in childhood, and the ethics as taught during adulthood.

Marcia (1980) expanded on the period of discovery within the moratorium, and formulated four identity statuses based on the experience of commitment and crisis. When adolescents find themselves with an *achieved identity*, a period of ideological questioning that defines the crisis period is navigated, to reach a commitment to the beliefs and practices of the different social institutions that comprise society. *Foreclosed status* is assumed on the basis of values other than those attained through a deepened self-knowledge, and the individual commits to beliefs without having the experience or explorations of different roles. With the *psychosocial*

moratorium, Marcia (1980) viewed the adolescent, engaged in the throes of self-discovery, as synthesising many variations of private and public selves in the hopes of committing to specific roles. The fourth status creates the more insecure resolution of possible commitments to be made, as crises have not produced an initiative to discover roles that might elicit their attention.

The wandering, free and untethered approach of adolescents during the moratorium may evoke labels from society that contribute to negative identities (Erikson, 1959). These labels, furthermore, dissociate individuals (one core pathology of adolescents) and lead them into the trap of a confirmation bias, where their behaviour becomes consistent with the perceptions assigned by others (Newman & Newman, 2012). What results is an ego identity, an integrative whole that is established from the variations of sexual energy, emergent talents, and the possibilities put forward by society (Erikson, 1977).

Role confusion (Erikson, 1968, 1977; Hamachek, 1990) prevents the formation of an individual identity in adolescence. With the present psychosocial stage being originally conceptualised as role confusion against identity, adolescents may resolve in the negative pole of the presenting crisis, and be unable to assimilate the assumption of different roles because of value conflicts and a decreased sense of self-efficacy. Confusion is wrought by the inevitable norm-setting of society, making the intervention from more knowledgeable others invaluable if an adolescent is subjected to a negative label that is ignorant of the finer mechanisms of the stage (Erikson, 1968). In addition, if the social setting fails to provide the individual with a sense of identification with a group that he/she feels bonded to, the system of support can lead to the experience of *alienation* (Mau, 1992). Role confusion complicates tertiary education, through individuals delaying task demands and resisting to apply themselves (Kroger, 2004). Adolescents on this pole have a less powerful self-image, which makes them susceptible to the influence of

peers and certain behaviours that can cause them to venture into delinquent behaviour (Erikson, 1963, 1968; Newman & Newman, 2012). Freiberg (1987) mentioned how uncertainties related to self-esteem may lead adolescents to imitate others. The negative result of this increases through a reduced inclination toward conscientiousness (Clancy & Dollinger, 1993) and a lower likelihood of acceptance of the roles society has available for them. It is this indecisiveness that is clearer in an occupational identity that remains unestablished (Erikson, 1968, 1977). Conformity to these roles is, thus, met with indifference or even angst; because the individual finds it hard to succeed in assimilating goals and identifications into a coherent whole that provides him/her a secure self-definition (Newman & Newman, 2012, 2017). In an attempt to maintain the disparate parts of the identity, the adolescent is likely to overidentify with apparent idols, to avoid the loss of individuality (Erikson, 1968, 1977).

Erikson (1959) posited the allotted time of unrestrained discovery that can help with the attainment with identity known as the *psychosocial moratorium*. The period offers the freedom to filter through a range of different ideological standpoints, and shift through the demands inherent in different roles, in order to discover an identity that can tap and develop the individual's core potential. It is for this reason that society provides an institution that secures the process of identity development – *ideology* (Erikson, 1968, 1977). Reciprocally, society is fuelled in its generational relevancy when youths sustain loyalties to values that still harbour significance, or which challenge old beliefs that should be revised (Erikson, 1968). Yet, the individual needs to, somehow, realise that rules within a society are governed by individuals who have taken upon themselves the obligation to succeed above others, and that from this success stems the normative values that guide identity development (Erikson, 1977).

Newman and Newman (2012) wrote of the playful way in which adolescents need to impose themselves into the process of identity achievement. This can only happen when authority figures in their lives disengage from the assertion of stringent values and expectations that would see the adolescent caught in the throes of defending his/her sense of independence. The central process of *role experimentation*, thus, becomes salient. This process involves investigating possibilities to establish commitments relating to the fulfilment of various occupations; analysing the institution of marriage and the value inherent in sharing enduring beliefs with another; investigation into the scrupulous moral avenues of religion; and scrutiny of the political stances that capture fundamental beliefs (Newman & Newman, 2012). Klimstra et al. (2010) added to our understanding of the complexities of role experimentation when they refer to *commitment formation* and *commitment reevaluation*, where shifts are made between the confidence harboured in the knowledge of certain commitments, and the questioning of the meaning and value inherent to the commitments already made.

One other central process that guides the link that the adolescent establishes with the group, is *peer pressure*. Mutuality is considered as important on some level to facilitate commitment (Newman & Newman, 2012), and this is significant to the degree that peer pressure, thus, inspires loyalty to a collective in possession of certain perceptions, as opposed the adolescent to drifting around. Brown (2004) listed four of these kinds of influence: (a) overt influence that appears to dictate behaviour, and is, in a sense, stereotypical peer pressure in its negative light; (b) modelling, which involves attentive observation of a template of behaviour, resulting in its reproduction (Bandura, 1977, 1986) for the sake of a perceived similarity with a specific grouping; (c) the use of normative regulation in more subtle ways implies a covert influence by peer behaviour through indirect jaunts that create self-awareness; and, lastly, (d) the

pursuit of unsupervised behaviours. Peer pressure becomes comprehensible in its saliency, as Erikson (1963) claimed that the pursuit by youths of their social identity makes them prone to comparisons made by contrasting their own self-esteem with perceptions of their image held by others. In fact, the value of the way of life of the individual is held in high regard, together with the affirmation extended by peers and educators, which speaks to the attractive ‘ideological potential of a society’, as phrased by Erikson (1968, 1977).

3.4.5.2 The prime adaptive ego quality and core pathology.

The purpose of role experimentation for the late adolescent goes beyond a mere shift from role to role. The process includes reflection by the constituents on their own value positions, which is followed by them seeking novel sources of ideas and beliefs that might find resonance with their choices (Klimstra, et al. 2010, Waterman, 1992). The outcome of this process is twofold: (a) either the core values offer a sense of certainty regarding adolescent’s commitments, or (b) the navigation through different roles only affords them a sense of increasing dissonance and a refusal for role adoption. Building on the ego equalities and successful conflict resolutions of earlier stages, including infancy and the school age (Erikson, 1968, 1977), adolescents infuse their experiences of devotion to certain ideologies with a sense of hope in its values and principles. Having, furthermore, identified with particular role models in the different positions that they explored, their notions of commitments seems informed and approached conscientiously (Clancy & Dollinger, 1993; Newman & Newman, 2012). Erikson (1978, p. 28) referred to this adaptive ego quality as *fidelity*, “the ability to sustain loyalties freely pledged in spite of the inevitable contradictions and confusions of value systems” (Erikson, 1978, p. 28).

In adolescence, *fidelity to values and ideologies* involving interpersonal relationships, societal consciousness, and spiritual beliefs serve to guide individual behaviour towards making meaningful contributions to defending against role confusion (Erikson, 1977; Newman & Newman, 2012), while managing to successfully evade the thorny ethical dilemmas that adult life may pose for them, because they have clearer commitments (Newman & Newman, 2012). Fidelity, furthermore, informs the decisions individuals make on their career paths – with occupational identity remaining an almost prime concern (Erikson, 1968, 1977) – how they display independence and aid in the establishment of a firm gender identity. It stands to reason that the adolescents who experience permissive freedom to adopt and reject different value stances, similarly, exhibit agreeableness and respect for others in the future (Andersen, Downey, & Tyler, 2005; Newman & Newman, 2012).

Erikson (1963, 1968) posed the notion that adolescents with a sense of fidelity may be rebellious in their nature to label themselves and their grouping, as they label others who oppose them. Gross (1987) added the view of adolescents' confidence in refuting a lifestyle for the sake of upholding a specific creed. Rosenberg and McCullough (1981) heightened our understanding of fidelity in a more positive sense with the concept of *mattering*. Relational in its nature, *mattering* has in its scope the quality of possessing significance in the lives of others, who convey this through their sense of interest and care for the person. Fidelity is the outcome of a meaningful connection to units of family and community, who buffer experience and prove themselves to be a basis of social support for the individual (Newman & Newman, 2012). Erikson (1997, p. 73) added that fidelity can be understood to build toward future adaptive qualities, in that it “maintains a strong relation to infantile trust and to mature faith”. Even the

labels that adolescents assign and assume are to be understood in light of their eventual purpose in challenging and maintaining commitments to conflicting creeds (Erikson, 1968, 1977).

When they fail to experience a sense of inclusiveness that welcomes their private and public selves (Newman & Newman, 2012, 2017), individuals may respond with a fervent refutation of the belief systems with which they fail to identify. However, this rejection is not limited to the experience of being unaccepted in terms of their group identity (Newman & Newman, 2012). *Repudiation* is identified as the core pathology when the adolescent is more inclined to identity confusion. Erikson (1997) regarded repudiation as a hesitancy to embrace the potential of the self, being hindered in the movement thereto, or the adoption of a negative identity (Erikson, 1959) that opposes the normative role requirements of society. In the absence of experience of mutuality, which is key to having a common bond or sharing in common group identity within this society, the adolescent runs the risk of becoming disconnected from a social reality, revealing a core pathology of *dissociation* (Newman and Newman, 2012).

In its most exacerbated sense, repudiation would see adolescents denying any role or principled system that does not accommodate their own perspective (Erikson, 1982). However, repudiation does serve adolescents by filtering through a variety of values and beliefs that they could, for no reason, readily assume. Newman & Newman (2012) mentioned that disagreement with the characteristics of particular roles (many of which may be negative) may actually open the way for commitments to roles with greater focus on the positive qualities that adolescents aim to assimilate.

It was Erikson's (1968) view, however, that over-identification with a group results in a loss of individuality when the separate parts of a developing self cannot be drawn together. The consequence of rebellious fidelity was also earlier highlighted as indicative of labels assumed by

the group (Erikson, 1963, 1968). This consequence opens up an intolerance in relation to those perceived as dissimilar in their traits as related to culture and appearance (Erikson, 1968), a manifestation that exists for its purpose in coping with rapid bodily changes and the many contradictions held by the future.

3.4.6 Intimacy versus Isolation (20 to 40 years).

3.4.6.1 The psychosocial crisis and central process.

Already in adolescence, the notion of love was pursued, although for altogether different purposes than the intimate bond that is attempted during early adulthood (Erikson, 1968, 1977). In fact, mattering (Rosenberg & McCullough, 1981) is a fundamental experience to the inclusivity that is experienced during adolescence, and displays qualities of belongingness that are relayed toward a sense of group fidelity (Newman & Newman, 2012). Thus, “adolescent love is an attempt to arrive at a definition of one's identity by projecting one's diffused ego-image on another and by seeing it thus reflected and gradually clarified” (Erikson, 1977, p. 235). Uncertainty breeds promiscuity in youth who are incapable of establishing the bonds of intimacy reserved for adulthood (Erikson, 1968). With the onset of early adulthood, the crises resolved in earlier stages are tested in terms of the valuable strengths that were gained (Erikson, 1977) for developing an identity and progressively moving from the family environment to seek a fit through other interpersonal relations and groupings (Freiberg, 1987). This development now creates the desire to share this identity meaningfully with another, as opposed to seeking a greater clarified image of oneself by means of such bonds (Erikson, 1977).

The first crisis of adulthood is posed as the period extending from 20 to 35 years of age (Hamachek, 1990; Shaffer, 2002). Newman and Newman (2012, 2017) described *intimacy* as fearless involvement of one's identity in a relationship defined by a mutual openness and caring, which act as an emotional buffer. For Erikson (1963), intimacy encompasses a self-abandon of many personal desires for the sake of establishing a committed, close investment with another.

Progressive certainty in self, then, inspires a greater desire for meaningful connections (Erikson, 1980) and the capability to traverse the fears bound to an ego loss and abandonment of self (Erikson, 1977). Erikson (1968) emphasised that it is this course of strongly emergent identity that prepares for a merging of identities. Rusbult, Finkel, and Kumashiro (2009) emphasised the way self-actualisation is enriched by support and affirmation by intimate partners. When this intimacy is highly developed, partners strive for the fulfilment and encouragement of their partners' strengths. It makes sense that the establishment of this kind of intimacy results from particular personal views of self-esteem and autonomous confidence in inner potential (Newman & Newman, 2012).

Within this intense dyadic context, the partners experience the openness to communicate their innermost feelings and are rewarded with the responsiveness and excitement with which the other person accepts these gifts of trust. What comes to life are special feelings of tenderness and devotion for another person, and feelings of being cherished and treasured by the other person. (Newman & Newman, 2012, p.468)

It is these factors that contribute to a sense of well-being, to which Erikson (1963) added the influence of emotional and cognitive stimulation, which augment this experience. It reminds of the presence of a true genitativity, where mutuality is obtained beyond the mere physical preoccupations of sex and the libidinal energies that, in the previous stage, mediated one route of identity development (Erikson, 1968, 1977). The goals of genitativity, thus, extend to (Erikson, 1977, p. 239):

1. mutuality of orgasm
2. with a loved partner
3. of the other sex
4. with whom one is able and willing to share a mutual trust
5. and with whom one is able and willing to regulate the cycles of (a) work, (b) procreation, and (c) recreation
6. so as to secure to the offspring, too, all the stages of a satisfactory development.

When the possibility of sharing a mutually established trust and support for a personal sense of self is not forthcoming, it may be that a strengthened sense of individuality prevents the individual from escaping their need for independence (Newman & Newman, 2012). Erikson (1977) attempted to explain it through a fear of situations that call for self-abandon and the loss of an established identity. The inability to establish the intimate bonds that extend, not only to others, but, as Erikson (1968, p. 135) added, “with his own personal resources”, leads to an isolation. The very personal nature inherent in self-reflection and self-exploration creates a relational separation because of the difficulty of confiding these feelings with another (Rokach & Neto, 2001). This difficulty points to the development of the negative pole of the early adulthood crisis: *isolation*, which involves a lack of capacity to commit (Erikson, 1977). In withholding the capacity to allow one’s identity to meaningfully connect with another, the individual experiences the consequences of intimacy to be a threat, such as the nurture to be devoted to one’s progeny (Erikson, 1968).

If developed in a context where inclusivity was denied, self-esteem was demeaned or identity was not given the acceptance to flourish, insecurities may contribute to the ways in which the development of intimacy is stanchied. Termed distantiation by Erikson (1968, 1977),

the individual likely seeks to oppose the influences that infringe on his/her grounds of connection. From the strong rejection of value stances that was likely experienced as an adolescent, the young adult develops more mature judgements that are informed by familiar views against those that seem more alien (Erikson, 1999). Freiberg (1987) added that mistreatment and being taken advantage of as added reasons. A mismatch between partners with strong but disparate personal identifications, however, also easily denies the sense of openness and bondedness intimacy offers (Newman & Newman, 2012). However, Erikson (1963) agreed that a less grounded self-image leads to a distancing due to risks that these individuals perceive in these connections. Newman and Newman (2012) related that experiences of isolation manifest from (a) situational factors, (b) divergent spheres of interest, (c) a fragile identity, (d) loneliness, (e) depression, (f) sexual disorders, and (g) enmeshment. It evokes in isolated individuals a readiness to distinguish and separate themselves from ever less familiar influences (Erikson, 1968). All at once, young adults are involved in connections which elicit intimacy, but, at the same time, these individuals are pitted against one another – an occurrence later regulated by the ethical prescriptions that guide adult life (Erikson, 1968, 1977).

Mutuality is the central process that aids the early adult on a route to intimacy, and is characterised by the comprehension of personal needs in relation to those of the partner, whilst, when capable, reacting empathetically to meet those needs (Skerrett, 1996). More specifically, the process manifests as a mutuality among peers (Newman & Newman, 2012) and is a driving force described by its capacity to enhance the couple together, whilst ensuring the development of each partner respectively. It creates a ceasefire among the rife differences of partner interests, making them seem superfluous in light of raging contradictions that discount the conditions of true genitality (Erikson, 1968). Mutuality establishes a balancing of strengths and potentials that

secures the symbiotic need-fulfilment that may fluctuate when different situations present themselves. Avery (1989) mentioned how a belief is cultivated and supported in the partner's recognition of and responsiveness to the others' needs through the presence of a trust in these actions. Neff and Harter (2003) found that a relationship style that fosters consideration of both partner autonomy and partner connection resonated best with a sense of mutuality. Erikson et al. (1997) also mentioned how the balancing of intimacy with a degree of isolation provides the pathway to the experience of mutuality. This balance contributes to satisfaction within the relationship and maintains a positive image while connected, and fights relational depression (Newman & Newman, 2012).

3.4.6.2 The prime adaptive ego quality and core pathology.

Building on hope, acquired as the enduring adaptive quality within infancy, *love* encompasses the mutuality present since the establishment of a secure attachment between infant and caregiver (Sigelman & Rider, 2012). It is love that now satisfies the longing for a shared identity (Erikson, 1968). This love similarly, helps the individual to be resilient during periods of isolation (Gross, 1987). The strengths assimilated during previous stages are instrumental in creating a synchronicity between two individuals in terms of their awareness, their language and their principles (Erikson, 1968).

Sternberg (1988) expanded comprehension of love by identifying three independent yet collaborative components that establish the experience of love in a relationship through cognitions, affect and drives. *Passion* seeks the satisfaction of the physical and psychological desires that manifest as sources of immediate attraction. *Intimacy* sees the emotional input through experiences of affinity and bonding that is sought. *Commitment* points to the intentional

decision to be consistent and involved in the loving relationship. The relative presence and absence of the three components, together with their stability, define the adaptive quality that love assumes over time, when passion dwindles, while intimacy and commitment have the capacity to grow. Conflicts are part and parcel of the process and, thus, love is accurately also defined as a “mutuality of mature devotion that promises to resolve the antagonisms inherent in divided function” (Erikson, 1997, p. 71).

Though, to some degree, present in some relationships, *exclusivity* is seen as a malignant quality that is formed when digressing toward the pole of isolation (Erikson et al., 1989). There is a distinction between exclusivity within relationships and exclusivity from relationships – both tendencies which Erikson (1968) described as the very occurrence that leads to isolation, because of stereotyped relationships. Closing oneself off from others has an adaptive quality in monogamous relationships (Newman & Newman, 2012), but may develop into extreme boundaries, and create preoccupations about the significant other’s contact interpersonally. Such inclinations to jealousy create tensions that lead to negative expression toward the partner and the sources of their social contact outside of the relationship (Firestone, Firestone, & Catlett, 2006). Increasingly, thoughts relating to the partner’s actions divert attention away from establishing interpersonal connections for oneself. Exclusivity as an expectation for relational commitment, is not its only manifestation, as a loathing toward one’s own image and strivings towards an isolated lifestyle may further preclude the formation of meaningful relationships and, instead, lead to a recursive pattern of connections that lack authenticity and care (Newman & Newman, 2012, 2017). The restrictive behaviours of exclusivity, furthermore, leads young adults to embrace prejudices that prohibit their own connection to people or ideas outside their spheres of belief, as the social institutions that establish one’s belonging is over-regarded for its value –

and an almost mature form of repudiation, as core pathology from adolescence, may develop (Erikson, 1977; Newman & Newman, 2012).

3.4.7 Generativity versus Stagnation (40 to 60 years).

3.4.7.1 The psychosocial crisis and central process.

Eventually, the conflicts that have been resolved through the psychosocial crises of previous stages results in the adult assuming the role of regulating how younger generations deal with their own psychosocial conflicts (Freiberg, 1987). Maturity and dependency, thus, enter into a cycle, lasting from as early as possibly 35 years of age, to retirement (Hamachek, 1990; Gross, 1987), with middle adults experiencing a demand for their expertise and knowledge to be transferred to a newer generation that would benefit from its utilisation (De St. Aubin, McAdams, & Kim, 2004; Erikson, 1968), and not simply the cry for care, as exuded by the developing child (Erikson, 1977). It is a move to leaving behind a legacy of resources and skills (Newman & Newman, 2012), felt from a “need to be needed” (Erikson, 1963, p. 258) and an awareness of their finite time for making a contribution, privately and socially. This is known as *generativity*, which “encompasses procreativity, productivity, and creativity, and thus the generation of new beings, as well as of new products and new ideas, including a kind of self-generation concerned with further identity development” (Erikson, 1982, p. 67). Therein lies the implication of a reciprocal teaching of and learning from succeeding generations; it does not refer exclusively to the fostering of personal progeny, but, instead, leaves behind a concern directed at the products of their talents and capabilities, which are vested in a generative application (Erikson, 1968, 1977; Graves & Larkin, 2006). Erikson (1977) described an adult as

being bred to be an organism of learning, who is involved in passing on knowledge and founding institutions.

Generativity leads to an expansion of ego-interests through its involvement and productivity in context, and is described as a process of creation that is directed at the welfare of newer generations (Erikson, 1963, 1968; Graves & Larkin, 2006; Newman & Newman, 2012), which is approached through nurturing qualities and a drive to achieve sustainability of the environment (Erikson et al. 1986). By this reasoning, terms such as *productivity* and *creativity* have become synonymous with the implications of this stage (Erikson, 1977). Generativity unfolds from the presence of *generative motives*, of which the *desire* to benefit society seeks expression through the opportunities available to assume *generative action*. Through these opportunities, middle adults become aware of their ability to make a difference. This awareness paves the way for the accomplishment of generativity and, thus, the continuity of societies (Erikson, 1963; Newman & Newman, 2012; Stewart & Vandewater, 1998). The avenues for generative expression are varied, and are not limited to the establishment of a family. Middle adults may find that their careers, their artistry and their modelling in society all become meaningful and receptive fields for their generative motives (Clark & Arnold, 2008; Erikson, 1963, 1968). Often, however, middle adults are not as enlivened by aspects that promote development along this route, often because of a preoccupation with a self-styled mutual connection or a lack of interpersonal bondedness overall (Erikson, 1968, 1977).

Stagnation contrasts with generativity, and limits the interest of the self (Erikson, 1963), to the extent that some individuals do not experience motives to contribute to the development of others, nor seek to expand on their own growth (Newman & Newman, 2012). Signs of stagnation are revealed in behaviours directed at pleasure pertaining to the self, superficial intimacy in

relations that ask for a deeper connection, and a limited capacity to invest hope and belief in people (Erikson, 1963). High restrictions placed on self-development and the inability to pursue relationships with ease highlight the positive links stagnation has with neurotic tendencies (Newman & Newman, 2012) and, perhaps, even a regression to conflicts faced in earlier stages (Erikson, 1997), such as a lack faith extended to their environment (Erikson, 1977). This is seen in situations of role stagnation, where routinised ways of approaching work descriptions become redundant, compared to novel competitive elements offered by newer generations. Stagnated individuals fail to see their own capacity for generative action (Stewart and Vandewater, 1998), and the mentorship their expert skills can provide to build productively in the environment they have been present in for some time (Clark & Arnold, 2008; Newman & Newman, 2012), leading them to a perception of invalidism (Erikson, 1968). Stagnation is described as surging in the face of novel challenges that present the pressure of an option to re-evaluate sense of agency in the present for the sake of adaptation (Newman & Newman, 2012). The act of having offspring, for instance, does not imply complete generativity (Erikson, 1968), and parental figures often fail in their task to execute the proper care, because of faulty identifications and parents' own stringent approaches to identity. Unprepared for facing the changing demands of the years, the reliance of middle adults on old methods of coping may decrease their life satisfaction, due their hesitancy to adopt fluidity. Middle adults then become inclined to withdraw for self-preservation in the light of overwhelming changes, in the face of which they become incapable of tapping resources for different approaches (Erikson, 1968; Newman and Newman, 2012)

Thus, in order to avoid stagnation, and develop psychosocially with an inclination toward generativity, a process of *interactivity* and *creativity* is required during middle adulthood. The interaction of the person with the environment constitutes the first major process, which sees the

development of fit between the drives of the person and the expectations that the setting places on him/her (Newman & Newman, 2012). Goals are, thus, set within the bounds of what society accommodates, leading to an exchange of influence, where the views of the person are altered by the environment, and where the context is shaped by the imposition of desires and values. In this light, “all institutions by their very nature codify the ethics of generative succession,” (Erikson, 1968). Growth is determined by the demands extended from social institutions, such as family, and from areas, such as occupation, that offer middle adults resources and interpersonal buffers in order to develop (Newman & Newman, 2012), thereby, creating a cycle that has momentum to continue by virtue of institutional investment in development during each stage (Erikson, 1968).

When community norms and family needs are balanced, the individual manages to adopt to the stage-specific tasks of middle adulthood that sees a generative action extending to the investment in the nurturing of elders and children (Erikson, 1968, 1977). Regardless of the reciprocity present between the environment and individual, a mismatch needs rectification: the setting is left behind or changed, or else, adaptations are made by the individual to have a more significant impact on his/her surroundings (Newman & Newman, 2012).

Creativity is the second mediating process that contributes to generative concerns in middle adulthood. Creativity suggests originality in shifts that are brought about in levels pertaining to practicality or theoretically bound views (Newman & Newman, 2012). Creativity involves digression from the normative and established ways behaviours are approached and, instead, seeking new ways in which to approach the production of something. Ideas are given new fruition and utility in the way they are arranged, created and then conveyed, so as to contribute better to need-fulfilment (Newman & Newman, 2012). The environment in its social and physical ontology is, thus, remodelled to cater for solving the issues that middle adults

encounter, and influencing others in their own agency for approaching problems (Newman & Newman, 2012, 2017).

3.4.7.2 The prime adaptive ego quality and core pathology.

Newman and Newman (2012, p. 518) state that, “Implied in the concept of generativity is a moral directive to *take care of* and to *care for and about* the development of others.” Graves and Larkin (2006) posited that generative care implies an extension of focus to incorporate the mentorship and motivation of others.

Care is a widening commitment to take care of the persons, the products, and the ideas one has learned to care for. All the strengths arising from earlier developments in the ascending order from infancy to young adulthood (hope and will, purpose and skill, fidelity and love) now prove, on closer study, to be essential to the generative task of cultivating strength in the next generation, for this is indeed the ‘store’ of human life.” (Erikson, 1982, p. 67)

Erikson’s (1968, 1997) emphasis on the importance of previous strengths becomes significant when he tactfully reminded of the value inherent in possessing those qualities, and being able to transmit them to the generation to follow. This sharing of knowledge is unconditional, and given without a sense of confusion resulting from fulfilling the rules presented by society (Stevens, 2008). All forms of home environments and differentiated work spheres become institutional safeguards, and generative concern could almost be seen as a commodity – the traditions and values thereof are upheld and kept safe, to serve generations that are to follow (Erikson, 1968).

Parenting practice, for instance, is regarded as a powerful source for constructing strength of care. Newman and Newman (2012) highlighted seven facets of emotional development that are seen as consequences of this adoption of care. Firstly, in fulfilling the responsibility to

contribute to the child's survival, the parent becomes involved in a meaningful obligation directed away from the self. Secondly, the parent discovers affection can be communicated in multiple and novel ways. Thirdly, parents are taught how to achieve harmony between the satisfaction of their own needs and that of the child. The fourth facet of emotional development is the esteem parents feel in their position as caretaker. Fifth is the broadened scope of emotional experiences that adults are exposed to in light of empathetic feelings conveyed by them. The sixth facet sees the child's behaviour evoking increasingly elevated emotions in him/herself. The seventh facet is the move, on behalf of the parent, to guiding the child in his/her mastery of emotional intelligence.

The goal of the psychosocial crisis is for middle adults to seek out the possibilities and instances in their setting that allow them to reshape its quality, so that it becomes an environment that provides in the physical and psychological needs of its inhabitants (Newman & Newman, 2012). Erikson (1968) had a similar thought about each generation meeting the needs of successive generations through a fund of invested strengths that organise development and, thus, society, regardless of personal differences and situational variations.

Erikson (1982) coined the term *pseudospeciation* for a sub-condition of a stagnated resolution during middle adulthood. In this process, other groups of people are seen as fundamentally different, and are conceptualised as a threat to one's own group identifications. Erikson (1997) elaborated how this differentiation leads to infighting between and within societies, where, in the micro context of the family, it can simply lead to ostracising of particular members of the family. At the core of this lies *rejectivity*, the pathological resolution of middle adulthood. Pseudospeciation focalises the discernment of beliefs and characteristics as being a fundamental attribute of identity that calls for its almost cruel imposition on other groups,

however, the unsuccessful mediation of syntonio and dystonio forces in middle adulthood can lead, more generally, to the restriction of one's generative care. This reactivity does not exclude the presence of generative concern, but merely limits its extent to individuals and groups that the adult deems worthy of their identification (Newman & Newman, 2012). Furthermore, its legacy can possibly be found in an exacerbated fashion in the negative resolution of the psychosocial crises of offspring (Erikson, 1968). It may incorporate a passionate defence of assumed beliefs and chosen community, whilst maintaining a dismissal of and aggression towards groups identified as other (Erikson, 1997; Newman & Newman, 2012, 2017).

3.4.8 Integrity versus Despair: (60 till death).

3.4.8.1 The psychosocial crisis and central process.

Making meaning of the life lived constitutes one of the main goals of the psychosocial crisis in late adulthood. Within this reflection is included musings over what was achieved in life in between changing roles and relationships formed (Newman & Newman, 2012). Erikson (1963) described integrity versus despair as the final conflict, in which thoughts of restricting health concerns, and aspirations as yet unrealised, dominate the thinking of adults in this stage (Newman & Newman, 2012; Stevens, 2008). The past may, thus, be regarded as mere glimpses of memory, or become the focus of much rumination (Newman & Newman, 2012). Erikson et al. (1989) offered that the process of resolving the conflict between ego integrity and despair (Erikson, 1963) sees that the individual, (a) acknowledge past choices and, then, motions to accept them, (b) to make peace with a past that cannot be changed, and (c) recognising and integrating despair in the authenticity of this past.

Individuals in later adulthood seek to resolve the crisis in the favour of *integrity*. Erikson (1963) described ego integrity along the lines of developing an acceptance of oneself and one's life's work. Integrity seeks not to reject the facts of life, and death is reflected on with reduced trepidation (Newman & Newman, 2012). Adults seek to organise and re-evaluate the elements of their lives to become aware of a flow of experience that was invested with purpose (Krause, 2004; Reker, 1997). They accept the lifestyle they assumed responsibly, and seek to avoid, first, the consequential loss of satisfaction by making lifestyle comparisons to others and, second, the pressures of time, which prevents them from rectifying a life by the timely assumption of another style (Erikson, et al. 1989; Graves & Larkin, 2006;).

It becomes clear that integrity seeks to marry present realities that resulted from a life lived, with past hopes, which had been established in earlier stages of the life cycle. It is what Newman and Newman (2012) explained to be an existential reflection of a life story that springs forth from the assimilation of ego strengths and pathologies. The assessment of one's life with the goal of yielding meaning therefrom lead to Krause (2004) establishing four dimensions: (a) possessing a value system; (b) experiencing purposefulness; (c) setting goals, to offer a direction in life; and (d) reconciling past achievements with present strivings. Newman and Newman (2014, p. 552) reminded us that, "In order to experience integrity, however, older adults must incorporate into their self-image a lifelong record of conflicts, failures, and disappointments, along with accomplishments". It implies that the resolution of the crisis includes greater possibility of negative outcomes than in previous life stages, as the adult is tasked with a significant challenge that culminates in an entirety of life experience (Newman & Newman, 2017).

The oppositional force to integrity is a sense of *despair* (Erikson, 1963; Newman & Newman, 2012) which validates a negative confrontation with increasing physical limitations and cognitive capacities that leads older people into a sense of despondency. Haber (2006) described experiences of bitterness and remorse that a sense of despair causes in older individuals. Much of this is exacerbated by what Newman and Newman (2012) called ageism, which stigmatises older generations based on these shortcomings. Societal stigma about their age-related value, being perceived as having been saturated in terms of the meaningful contribution they can still offer society, leads further to a deep questioning of the purpose of the choices made. This process can evoke a great sense of regret in the life lived, making the older adult ruminate on the lack of time available for its compensation to garner greater meaning and, thus, opposing the possibility of constructing peace in the approach to death (Newman & Newman, 2012). Erikson (1997) highlighted the great tragedy of the overemphasis of death, leading to an aversion to social networks and institutions; an act that merely signifies contempt of the self.

The individual is guided in the conflict through the process of *introspection*, whereby the individual redirects thoughts to an assessment of the self, and identifying the importance of the shape of moments that defined development. Newman and Newman (2012) claimed that reminiscence is a pathway to self-evaluation; it is a process in which crystallised memories are recalled for their sense of involvement in the self (Ross, 1989). Three types of reminiscence come to the fore, the nature of which reports the value thereof to the individual engaging in vivid recollections (Newman & Newman, 2012). The first, *integrative reminiscence*, seeks the settlement of past feelings with present inclinations toward particular life events. Second, *instrumental reminiscence* seeks the resources used for coping in the past by drawing on past

achievements and outcomes for inspiration. *Obsessive reminiscence* is not included as a buffer to well-being, as the individual proves to lack the capacity to reconcile history with current circumstances, confronting them with a heightened regret of the past (Wong & Watt, 1991).

The value of reminiscence, thus, lies in using present insight to make sense of the past, finding coherence in the way life events presented themselves to unfold (Newman & Newman, 2012). Reminiscence takes place through, (a) choosing the event to appraise; (b) using the details of the event, including the feelings present, to captivate oneself; (c) then, removing oneself from such immersion through musings of the present; and, (d) then, gathering insight from the memory to effectively bring a meaningful closure to the process (Meacham, 1995). The degree of comprehension sought of the self, together with the enduring traits and characteristics of the individual, guide the nature of reminiscence in its manifestation in the type of stressor being faced at that particular time (Cappeliez & O'Rourke, 2002). Newman and Newman (2012) explained that reminiscence does have a positive and adaptive value, but that a preoccupation with the past removes the focus from present functioning.

3.4.8.2 The prime adaptive ego quality and core pathology.

Wisdom is defined by Erikson et al. (1989, p. 37) as the “detached concern with life itself in the face of death itself”. In the face of this impending end, Erikson et al. (1986) theorised, the wish to impart life experiences becomes salient for the elderly individual. The concept is elaborated by considering a foundational realism in the approach to life, from which individuals manage to draw secure judgment and comprehension to regulate their lives (Baltes & Staudinger, 2000; Newman & Newman, 2012, 2017). This becomes important for considering the value of life, since wisdom does not intend to manifest with the forceful exclusion of despair. Rather,

Erikson et al. (1989) acknowledged, the experience of a balanced cynicism is inevitable with the onslaught of age-related changes. Wisdom is understood to be gained from, (a) the open possibilities of expansively different situations within life; (b) a psychohistorical life perspective that perceives life from multiple points of view whilst being scaffolded and motivated by someone more knowledgeable; and (c) a concern of a generative shape that seeks expertise on coping with the hurdles of life (Newman & Newman, 2012).

Wisdom comprises the following traits (Ardelt, 2004; Baltes, Smith, & Staudinger, 1992; Kramer, 2003; Staudinger, Dornier, & Mickler, 2005):

1. *Factual knowledge* communicates a general understanding and details of age-related concerns and their specific outcomes.
2. *Procedural knowledge* is information that facilitates ways in which comprehension and regulation of events across the life cycle are approached.
3. Life-span contextualisation is the idea that occurrences within a life are embedded in a framework of a temporal and cultural nature, which comprises different roles and social elements that add meaning to experience.
4. Relativism of values and life goals informs respect of differential commitments in beliefs and motivations, whilst maintaining a central collection of values assembled as relevant to the self.
5. Recognition and management of doubt is key to the approach to the unpromised future and the elements of a misunderstood past, and asks the individual to govern an awareness of such.

Wisdom is, thus, seen as the peak of achievement and the fruit to the labour of life (Sigelman & Rider, 2012). For Erikson (1963, 1997), development is a life cycle, during which conflicts of the past are incorporated to resolve present challenges. Graves and Larkin (2006) discussed the cyclical nature of psychosocial theory by stating that integrity becomes central to later adulthood, but nonetheless becomes a source of dependence and reliability in gaining a sense of trust during the first crisis period. The cycle “weaves back on itself in its entirety, ultimately integrating maturing forms of hope, will, purpose, competence, fidelity, love and care, into a comprehensive sense of wisdom” (Erikson et al., 1989, pp. 55-56).

The other side of the resolution of the conflict at this age is the experience of *disdain* as core pathology (Erikson, 1997), which involves a disordered and helpless outlook directed to the self or others. The quality opposes the adaptability of thinking that is part of wisdom, which would allow a person to be receptive to different understandings of the complex dimensions of their life. What remains is rejection of such interpretations and the individuals who hold them, and maintenance of egocentric notions about life (Newman & Newman, 2012). Erikson et al. (1986) described how rising contempt allows these individuals to distance themselves from concerns outside of themselves. In light of a self-criticised recollection of a life, these individuals rebuff caring and patience for themselves and others (Erikson, et al. 1986; Newman & Newman, 2012, 2017).

3.5 Balanced Critique of the Theory

Much is to be said about the rigour of the psychosocial theory, a topic determined by its series of identified strengths and weaknesses. The strength of the psychosocial theory of development lies in its viability as developmental theory that considers the complex interaction

of social and individual forces in the shaping of the individual (Newman & Newman, 2012, 2017); a feature which appears to be less the case in other developmental perspectives (Miller, 2002). In fact, many of its basic tenets are substantiated by longitudinal research to be combined over the progression of a life (Whitbourne, Sneed & Sayer, 2009) to facilitate shifts in thinking, personality and individual image that is comprehensible by terms such as industry, identity or generativity (Newman & Newman, 2012). The context of the scope of the theory is, thus, expansive when considering development across the lifespan, where historical factors are integrated with future possibilities that consider both individual and societal pathways; where the outcomes of child growth are not seen in isolation from adult functioning; and where the ontology of culture and society are kept in perspective during consideration of the person singularly (Newman & Newman, 2012).

It is not to say that the theory renounces the credit to be given to individual variation. In fact, the polarity inherent to each staged crisis presents conditions that allow for consideration of the way individuals experience different trajectories along a predicted normative line of development. Positive and negative poles accumulate in its influence on the individual over the lifespan – with society simply offering the conditions to contribute or detain the process – leading individuals to different development outcomes across their lives (Newman & Newman, 2012, 2017). In fact, the very acceptance of his theory lies in Erikson's recognition of human adaptation, that rationally unfolds during the interaction of biological determinants, and of social influences (Sigelman & Rider, 2012).

In its dichotomous consideration of both the role of individual and society, the theory's merit lies in having moved beyond its psychodynamic theoretical kin, the psychosexual theory, which highlights deterministic antecedents to behaviour and personality (Newman & Newman,

2012, 2017). Instead, it presents individual development as a pathway to possible adaptation to the environment, to allow the emergence of healthy and positive qualities that allows the individual to cope socially (Hamachek, 1985, 1994; Newman & Newman, 2012).

The theory utilises terminology that has been operationalised, making its language and the use of its jargon more inclusive for use by modern studies and instruments – a development that is especially useful for resolving the creative tensions that naturally come into existence when the needs of society and that of the individual come into conflict (Newman & Newman, 2012, 2017). It offers comprehensible ways to describe how the personal natures of people seek expression, despite these people trying to feel less excluded from wider social networks because of their originality, while additionally seeking guidance to posited societal norms that were conceptualised for the very purpose of guiding maturation (Newman & Newman, 2012, 2017).

The psychosocial theory does, however, have shortcomings too. Key among these is that an elucidation on how to progress between stages that are inclusive of the mediating conditions, and a proposed strategy or explanation of resolution towards development throughout the psychosocial stages, is not forthcoming (Miller, 2009; Newman & Newman, 2012, 2017; Sigelman & Rider; Wastell, 1996). Successful coping experiences for effectively navigating the tensions, thus, remain unaddressed, and the theory fails to mention the action repertoires or mechanisms required to achieve successful outcomes (Newman & Newman, 2012, 2017, Wastell, 1996).

The developmental expectations offered by the theory contrast the community variation in maturation that may be seen in reality, where the period of adolescent growth (though physically manifest) may be limited in its further extension in societies that prescribe no allotted

time for self-concept discovery or, perhaps, the development of self-driven choices regarding intimate connections or careers (Newman & Newman, 2012, 2017).

A cross-cultural relevance appears to arise as additional criticism when considering the differences in normative expectations that exist between traditional and more modern societies, each allowing different progressions of the proposed periods of development – especially the transition between childhood and adulthood (Haber, 2006; Newman & Newman, 2012, Wastell, 1996). It is fair to acknowledge that Erikson (1963) himself retained an awareness of this limitation inherent to his theory, and the possible cultural biases it presented – this, despite his psycho-anthropological research on non-Westernised societies, such as the American Indian tribes of the Sioux and Yurok. His continued application proved puzzling to some, who launched critique of his individualistic sense of thinking, among whom Schachter (2005, p. 137), who recognised that “more than any other of the early psychoanalysts and personality theorists, Erikson . . . is well known for his insistence on delineating the interplay between the psychological and the social across the lifespan”.

For this reason, Erikson’s biologically determined blueprint for development is questioned for its link to the number of stages that are proposed, as reflected by Newman and Newman (2012, 2017), who extended adolescence into two stages, to allow for the adaptation of the individual to the technically driven environment characterised by the contemporary era. They apply the same extension to later stages of adulthood, as a result of differing lines of research that acknowledge the multiplicity of labels afforded to the elderly (including terms such as ‘young-old’ and ‘old-old’), who function at the same chronological age, but have dissimilar health status and unequal abilities to exercise their agency in fulfilling the same life tasks (Deeg, Kardaun, & Fozard, 1996; Newman & Newman, 2012; Poon & Harrington, 2006) – an ability

that is possibly informed by the cultural variation in available health care and predicted life expectancy.

It appears, then, that the theory can, furthermore, be criticised for the contemporary relevance of Erikson's original conception of psychosocial development, which fails to accommodate more recent societal trends (Schachter, 2005). Eurocentric threads of reasoning, a dominance of the male perspective (Wastell, 1996), and the heavy emphasis on individualism is also criticised (Newman & Newman, 2012, 2017). In part, this criticism is tailored by the focus the theory sports on a sense of agency over communion (Abele & Wojciszke, 2007), which appears key to concepts such as autonomy, a sense of initiative and industry, and the formation of identity. Erikson (1963) applied his theory regardless, and support for its principles are substantiated through the observation that a universal nature is clear in its emphasis of structure, and the reduced focus on content – which speaks, itself, of a lack of specified cultural convergence in focus. However, Schachter (2005) is among the critics who renewed the onslaught in the mention of culture's sensitivity to the principle of structure and not just preferences to its detail.

Social interaction relatedness has been found to be integral to understanding female psychological growth, which are distinct experiences the theory seems to neglect (Horst, 1995). Maturity is measured by a collectivistic sense of responsibility and the social attachments that exist in the contribution to one's immediate social spheres, especially in societies that place primacy on a sense of community (Boykin, 1994; Franz & White, 1985; Josselson, 2003; Newman & Newman, 2012; 2017). Erikson's androcentric focus, which harbingers independence and individual success, and delimits its scope of practice to modern society, an observation largely supported by Sorell and Montgomery (2001) for its foundation in the middle-

class experiences of Caucasian men, American capitalism, Erikson's personal striving to produce an enduring image and forms of connection, and, then, the way in which normal development is framed psychosocially.

3.6 Conclusion

Informed by the events shaping the entirety of the life cycle, the psychosocial theory seeks an explanation of the ego's development in socio-historical and cultural context. Extending its basic concepts to explain more than mere sexual maturation, personality is seen to be influenced by cultural, social, political and religious forces in conjunction with psychological processes. In interaction with their contexts, individuals navigate through crises caused by opposing polarities at different stages of life. Infancy seeks the establishment of trust over mistrust; toddlerhood is approached with hopes of gaining autonomy over doubt about one's actions; the school age wishes to impart a sense of industry over feelings of inferiority; adolescence is a stormy phase of individual identity development in context, and is characterised by role confusion and alienation; early adulthood involves the individual experience of sharing one's identity intimately or facing the fear of becoming isolated; middle adulthood vests the individual with a charge to generativity or, alternatively, to stagnate; and later adulthood sees the culmination of life experience, from which integrity is drawn over a sense of despair in relation to a life viewed as wasted. Erikson's theory allows for developmental adaptation, where earlier crises can be revisited in later life, or else, where resolutions are given a greater time frame. At the end of each stage lies the gains of an ego quality or core pathology that influences the life course in its subsequent adoption of adaptive strengths over debilitating barriers. Erikson's theory, thus, appears to recognise unique individual experiences of moving

successfully through stages, where the holistic influences over the lifespan exert greater and more complex influences over the linear effects of distinct events. This complexity provides the rationale for the rigorous application of the theory for filtering historical details of the psychobiographical subject. The next chapter will discuss the theoretical propositions of the field of psychobiography.

CHAPTER 4:

PSYCHOBIOGRAPHY: A THEORETICAL OVERVIEW

4.1 Chapter Preview

Psychobiography entails the exploration of the celebrated, completed life of an exemplary or contentious individual, of which the rich detail is filtered through established psychological theory (Fouché & Van Niekerk, 2010; Ponterotto, 2014). The 1980s witnessed the revival of the psychobiographical research method as an idiographic approach (Cara, 2007; Runyan, 1982) to investigating the narratives of people (Kőváry, 2011) without a latent pathographic quality (Schultz, 2005a) that had come to colour the field's reputation. It was this renaissance (Kőváry, 2011) that, once more, inspired the intensive study of unique individuals through the use of established psychological knowledge, in order to comprehend the motivations of remarkable lives, saturated in their socio-historical contexts (Cara, 2007; Ponterotto, 2013, 2015b; Ponterotto, Reynolds, Morela, & Cheung, 2015). As this chapter aims to illustrate, the psychobiographical method has experienced its share of fluctuating popularity, which developed in tandem with dominant positivist psychological doctrine. Initially, psychobiography was classified as a qualitative approach, and in this chapter, constituent components of the method (together with its historic growth) will be addressed to elucidate its nature, thereby fully conceptualising the art for what it is seen as in its modern guise.

4.1 Psychobiography and Case Study

4.1.1 Case study conceptualisation.

Qualitative research offers a variety of methods to investigate a topic in depth, making it a tool that offers wide utility in its approach (Ponterotto, 2005). Among these methods, it is the case study method that promises a systematic investigation and presentation of a single subject and its related context, so as to pursue a complete understanding of the individual unit of study (Berg & Lune, 2012; Runyan, 1982). Robinson and McAdams (2015, p. 1) defined a case study as “a research initiative in which the investigator focuses data collection, analysis, and reporting on a single person, event, dyad, organisation, or social group”. Such a holistic comprehension, then, offers the necessary detailed explanation and description of the said phenomena (Bromley, 1990). The rigour of the method is essentially encompassed by two elements. Berg and Lune (2012) highlighted the first among these as the triangulated use of multiple sources of information (of which the specific source use is determined by the case). Secondly, the identification of a subject of analysis that implies a contextual background of which the phenomenon forms part, which inspires an exploration into both figure and ground (which would constitute the placement of the historic subject, in this research, within time and place).

Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2011) elaborated on the form that case research may assume. Case research could be seen to be, (a) theoretically driven, (b) structured according to an arising problem, (c) descriptive in nature, or (d) exploratory. Psychobiography appears to encompass all, not only some, of these manifestations, as it can discern an individual through exploration and description; it addresses the issue of subject inquiry (although the investigation is not necessarily

problem-driven); and, through its interpretative goals, it bases much of its analysis on theory that it ultimately tests and exemplifies (Robinson & McAdams, 2015; Ponterotto, 2014).

The scope of such investigations might, thus, have an exclusive focus on exploring the constituent parts of an individual life. The entire background of an individual might be laid bare for scrutiny, and the experiential sets, social world, defining events, and assumed roles of an individual considered in explaining the behaviour characteristics of the subject (Berg & Lune, 2012). Dollard's (1935) definition of a life history, as a purpose-driven account of a life investigated in its array of socio-historic milieus, comes close to encapsulating the scope of case history. Thus, an obvious strength of this approach is highlighted by the discovery of nuanced, latent content, which would be less discernible through the use of approaches that look for recurrent trends in that which is clear and manifest (Berg & Lune, 2012). Though there is danger and potential for criticism in the pursuit of information that can readily assume a retrospective quality (Runyan, 1982), case studies are, nonetheless, born from the consultation of a wide array of sources, such as diarised thoughts, letters, public observations, and archival information (Elms, 1994; Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011). With such an amalgamation of material, it comes as no surprise that the method provides a firm basis for idiographic interpretations (Cara, 2007; Runyan, 1982), such as psychobiography.

4.1.2 Case study debate.

The approach to case studies is subject to methodological conflict, as both interpretative and positive ontological standpoints have debated on the utility of the results of such designs (Runyan, 1982). The origin of this debate was highlighted early on in the works of Lundberg (1926), who posited an early formulation on the essentiality of more statistical methods for

considering the value of case studies. First among these points to be made was the notion that case studies could only be reduced, in importance, as to encompass a single step of the scientific method. Single cases are, secondly, subject to a criterion of scientific significance only when elucidating a pattern in its content. Thirdly, the primacy of the statistical approach is taken as the only pathway for case study research to be viewed as scientific. And so, the generalisability of case study content is questioned regarding its applicability by either the qualitative roots of its dissection, or the statistical analysis to which it is sought to be subjected (Lundberg, 1926; Runyan, 1982).

4.1.3 Case study criticism.

Case studies have often been slandered regarding their value; this slander highlights a collective of issues that address both case study's virtue and limitation as a method (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011; Runyan, 1982). Concern is often expressed about the retrospective qualities of some reports; often subject to the interpretive and perceptive power of the source, which itself could be rife with inaccuracy (Yarrow, Campbell & Burton, 1970).

Lundberg's (1926) account of the quantitative rejection of the case study method has, furthermore, pitted it against qualitative approaches that praise case histories for their value. This rejection seemed to take root, despite the view that case studies do not, in truth, answer to any paradigmatic (or theoretical) orientation exclusively (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011). The underlying subjective facet of the case study provides an in-depth reflection of social experience, which offers a rich introduction to perceptions and interpretations of a life (Denzin, 1978; Runyan, 1982). However, life histories and, in effect, case methodology, was lost to the eye of

behavioural scientists once the positivist disciplines had come to accept the social sciences as proving its scientific rigour (Kóváry, 2011; Runyan, 1982).

From here, then, a question arises about the subjectivity of case study research; a question often linked to the nature of introspective reporting (Nisbett & Ross, 1980). Similar to warnings about retrospective reporting (Runyan, 1982; Yarrow et al., 1970), the risk of relying on introspective reports is dispersed due to more inclusive techniques that use multiple sources for the case study method (Berg & Lune, 2012; Runyan, 1982). Both frameworks of report, thus, appear to constitute only parts of the construction of case studies, which could, therefore, make the value of case studies non-reducible to the limitations set for introspective and retrospective accounts.

Another prevailing issue is the low degree of internal and external validity of case studies (Runyan, 1982). In the case of the former, causal content links cannot be as established easily; in the case of the latter, result generalisation is hampered by the interpretative quality of words, and the lack of large sample sizes, as qualitative research, per definition, seeks to explore phenomena, and to explain them (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011; Ryan, Coughlan, & Cronin, 2007). This approach offers a borrowed term (Geertz, 1973; Ponterotto, 2006) to define the enterprise of ethnography, namely, ‘thick descriptions’, which leads to a deeper understanding of the phenomena being investigated.

This, then, leads to criticism relating to quality control, as case studies are, furthermore, questioned about premises of external validity and overall comparability. Carlsmith, Ellsworth and Aronson (1976, p. 40) expressed clear concern by stating that qualitative research is similar to “building a castle on quicksand”, as the very value of science rests on comparison. Such a

foundation is, however, not provided by a detailed singular account investigated for its richness in data (Runyan, 1982).

Good practice in case study research, thus, serves the purpose of countering its inherent disposition, which could be subject to critique. Yin (1998) highlighted certain research skills in this regard. An *inquiring mind*, as first of these skills, refers to open acceptance of questioning the data collection process and the data it produces. Secondly, an *unbiased account* is constructed through sensing, observing and listening. Thirdly, *adaptability* to both techniques of data collection and the utility of data itself, needs to be assumed. Such flexibility likely requires an *understanding of the issues*, as the fourth skill in this set. The interpretation should commence then, lastly, *without bias* – a good test of which would be a researcher's openness to scrupulous results (Berg & Lune, 2012).

4.1.4 Case study of individuals.

Runyan (1982) conceded to the notion that case studies that consider these limitations may, indeed, provide its suggested value of fuelling or inspiring the making of a hypothesis; Runyan claimed, further, that the notion has a strong incentive as method to make sense of an individual case. Ultimately, the value of the case study should rest on its multitude of purposes, which stretch beyond mere causal generalisation, perhaps even to the idiographic interpretation of a single life. Larsen, Buss, and Wismeijer (2013) explained its value for personality research, and how the case study method can be used to make sense of the lives of remarkable individuals.

Berg and Lune (2012) posited the reasons for enlarging the scope of studying a case. Firstly, a thorough investigation entails the recognition of subject context, which takes into consideration the saturated nature of subjective opinions situated among the perspectives of so

many others within the context. Secondly, much as one considers such contextual importance, so it is worthwhile to realise the interconnected nature of one aspect of a life with other parts. However, in light of subjectivity as influential content determinant (Nisbett & Ross, 1980), triangulation becomes a third consideration that is a noteworthy tool for filtering additional perspectives, in order to solidify findings and merge it with that which is recurrent.

4.1.5 Case study and psychobiography.

Clearly, the case study method is not to be viewed as obscurely considering merely some interpretative, qualitative, retrospective, and subjective elements, that has often caused criticism (Runyan, 1982). As defined by Bromley (1977), case studies constitute a reconstruction and interpretation of a single unit of analysis, whose information is systematically presented to illustrate the life in question. It organises information from sources such as interviews, personal documentation, second-hand accounts, observations, and archival documentation (Runyan, 1982). Selective in its nature, it seeks to understand certain elements in the context from which it is drawn (Bromley, 1977).

The concept has, however, not been consistent, and there is often a relation implied to a type of life history that is merely the entire experiential presentation of an entire life – such as psychobiography – even though the broader methodology itself deserves differentiation (Runyan, 1982; 2012). Runyan (1982) expanded on this view by referring to the lack of reliability that multiple biographical accounts of a particular life story could present. Case studies could be counted among these alternative accounts that could possibly be pieced together – all on a single life.

Case studies are included amongst those methods that organise idiographic information systematically to convey the context and experiences of the unit of analysis (Runyan, 1982). It serves the broader aims of psychobiography by being descriptive-dialogic (Edwards, 1998; Yin, 2009), thereby forming consensus between the descriptive and exploratory findings of a life, and the theoretical underpinnings chosen as the tool for its investigation (Fouché, Nel, & Van Niekerk, 2014). At times, the researcher might be intrigued by the societal behaviour of a single individual, whose complete experiences, motivations, significant life events, and social roles become the focus of attention (Berg & Lune, 2012). Psychobiography can, thus, be seen as a very specific manifestation of the case method, as the method itself is found to incorporate the narrative elements of this unit of analysis (Runyan, 1982). However, through using the single unit of analysis, the psychobiographical case is not merely a single-shot case design, but is quasi-judicial in nature; it involves a developing view of the case by different people with divergent interests, who develop different conclusions on the subject (Runyan, 2005a). This characteristic of the method is clearly evident when the life of an extraordinary individual can be examined by more than one researcher, each using a different theoretical focus. Runyan (2005a) described this as a pattern of reinterpretation, in different context, using different concepts. In contrast stands the possibility of delving into multi-subject psychobiography. Saccaggi (2015) explained how an analysis of a case can be deepened by comparison and contrast to another case, and how the emerging differences and similarities add to the conventionally singular investigation of a psychobiographical subject. She warned, however, that such parallels are not exclusive of the uniqueness inherent in the cases investigated.

4.2 Psychobiography and Related Concepts

Psychobiography shares similar qualities, and much of its origin, with related (but overall different) traditions. Runyan (2005a) explained how the goals and methods of historical sciences, in their critical reappraisals and reinterpretations of events, share a commonality with the study of lives and their progress. As a historiographic enterprise (Ponterotto, 2015b), part of psychobiography's manifestation has been inspired by the examination of how history is written as a kind of narrative praxis (Berg & Lune, 2012). Part of its origin stems from examining the course of a life, with information garnered from the field of life histories (Runyan, 1982), of which the study of an individual life has, until recent decades, remained sparse. Biographical traditions, as one form of life history, have maintained a pretence of objectivity, even going so far as to find root in hagiographic tradition (Elms, 1994), making the interdisciplinary connections with psychobiography uneasy. Nevertheless, the two fields seem capable of informing one another (Elms, 1994; Kőváry, 2011). Among the psychohistorical practices, psychobiography has become a field with considerable notoriety (Fouché, 2015); it seeks to uncover the central themes over the course of a life – all which is made sense of through conceptual psychological frameworks (Howe, 1997; Latilla & Kramer, 2018; McAdams, 1994). The researcher becomes a voice that illuminates the life of the subject (McAdams, 1988) in a field arising from the discipline of hermeneutics and narratives (Cara, 2007).

4.2.1 Biography.

According to Elms (1994), biography can be seen as the holistic account of an individual life, from birth to death, that retains, at most, a factual accuracy in its presentation of subject experiences. In addition, Elms emphasised the perceived objective quality of biographies. Often,

he stated, the ordering of facts is done in conjunction with telling a riveting story. This has led to biographies emphasising difference between over similarity in individuals, conveyed with intuitive style (Fouché, 2015). The biographical author seeks, not only to relay that truthful account that is manifest, but seeks to make the reader aware of possible motives, desires, and thought processes that the subject could possess (Elms, 1994). Since the period of the Renaissance, biographical practice has made use of, for instance, childhood experiences to highlight the unique aspect of a subject and his/her personality. Kris (2000) explained the effect this approach has had on the interpretative value of biographical content, and how the interaction of several factors (e.g., psychological and historical) has influenced the writing of psychobiographies ever since. Emerging personality theories, then, caused a shift in biographical content and style (Elms, 1994).

Biographies that retain a firm positioning of subject in time and place may be seen as good, but Elms (1994) maintained that psychobiography has become indispensable in assuming psychological interpretations of lives that even good biographies tend to stop short of. Though both rely on extensive research to understand a life (Ponterotto, 2015b), biographies that are written competently require a knowledge base of biographical skill-sets and psychology, possibly comparable to the amount of professional knowledge about the subject of choice (Elms, 1994). Thus, biography itself has been executed by practitioners from a wide array of fields, and has, thus, become an unstructured field with little order, often pursued by individuals who thrive in disciplines similar to that of their subjects (Runyan, 1982). Elms (1994) added that a good psychobiographer is any individual capable of empathic interest in his/her subject. In addition, psychobiographers do not always validate their works by comparing them to other biographies. Runyan (1988) stated that the reasons for doing so are based on additional evidence acquired; the

aim to rectify flawed perceptions; or the assimilation of a new theoretical standpoint on both subject and context.

4.2.2 Autobiography.

A narrative identity becomes important for the assumption of autobiographical reasoning (Marraffa & Paternoster, 2015), which facilitates the adaptation of researcher judgment in psychobiographical research. McAdams and Olson (2010) defined *narrative identity* as an assimilated story created from unified constituent autobiographical memories, which offers a meaningful, coherent, and internal view of the self. Marraffa and Paternoster (2015) emphasised the temporal, thematic and casual coherence underlying the systematic ordering of such memories; thus, a cohesive narrative is constructed from an organised past, the themes of significance that have been identified, and a developing self, to facilitate the adaptation to change. Kőváry (2011) highlighted how, through its utilisation by historians, countertransference could be evoked; unconsciously inspiring an array of positive and negative affect that the psychological historian would convey about the subject, based on his/her unconscious reactions to much of the subjective information presented. This phenomenon has formed the basis of the ethical regard of the emotional nature inherent in the discipline and its social contract with participants/subjects that practitioners ultimately obligate themselves to (Ponterotto & Reynolds, 2017). And so becomes salient the danger of over-relying on primary sources for information, a topic that will be elaborated on further in the following chapter.

4.2.3 Hagiography.

Delehaye (1961) promoted the idea that the purpose of hagiographical texts is to edify figures vested with ecclesiastical significance. According to Manis (1994), hagiography has become a term of contempt for poorly researched life accounts that lack objectivity. Hagiography is seen to convey a sense of disapproval to the studies of both sacred and secular figures, because of its subjective idolisation (Ponterotto, 2015b). Traditionally, hagiography was associated with studies of saints and their religious qualities, which assume a critical approach in order to maintain historical accuracy of the icons studied; however, practical hagiography seeks to inspire devotion through exacerbation of saintly traits (Delehaye, 1961). Cunningham (1985) differentiated subgenres in *traditional hagiography*: (a) *passions* seek to make these figures martyrs; (b) *legends* deliver the exposition of the journey to veneration; and (c) *lives* simply posit more factual accounts, which, nonetheless, emphasise the favourable qualities of the figure in focus.

Contemporary hagiography brought with it a change in the venerating accounts, and provide a more secular set of accounts of facts, which are true to historic form (Mitchell & Howcroft, 2015). This paved the way for a more *scientific hagiography*, which seeks out the scruples behind the admiration devoted to these saintly figures. Mitchell and Howcroft (2015) explained how the premise of scientific hagiography is factual objectivity, where the context of veneration is not discounted in the consideration of accuracy. Cunningham's (1985) argument, that the heightened status of these martyrs and legends has the power to inspire great following and devotion, appears to emphasise the importance of historical fact. Delehaye (1961) added that the manifestation of veneration, as opposed to the figure itself, becomes the focus.

Psychobiography came to the fore in an attempt to remedy the lack of rigour such accounts could show (Ponterotto, 2015b), by combining the truthfulness of history with good psychological research practice. Contemporary psychobiographies that resort to the presentation of hagiographies and so-called idealographies, constitute bad practice in the field. Though idealographies are seen to be executed in a lesser degree than hagiographies, idealographies nonetheless overemphasise positive character traits at the cost of more balanced character accounts (Ponterotto, 2014).

Mitchell and Howcroft (2015, p. 392), thus, posited their view of psychohagiographies, where “the researcher explores lives that are established as meaningful in a spiritual or religious context from a psychological perspective”. The practice does not involve the edification of any individual, but explores how individuals define themselves and their motives, and give reasons for their connection to the divine (Lawton, 2012; Mitchell & Howcroft, 2015).

A meaningful pitfall that arises is the immediacy of contact between the psychohagiographer and the implicit consequence of an affective connection that develops in reaction to the individual’s narrative (Lawton, 2012; Meissner, 2003). It appears that the very foundation of psychohagiography is countered by a renewed veneration through an empathetic relationship, which risks imitating traditional hagiography. Mitchell and Howcroft (2015), thus, argued that practitioners should be mindful of the meaning of a lifespan and its implications for transcendental reverence – the influence of historic figures harbour significance far beyond the end of their natural life.

4.2.4 Life history and life story.

Runyan (1982) referred to life histories as appealing accounts that offer a framework of experiences, to which people seem to establish relations on the basis of comparing or questioning the facts of their own existence. He admitted to the popularity of biography, which seemingly falls under the practice of life history. Practitioners have, however, come under the crossfire of controversy about the validity of life account that digress to introspective and retrospective qualities in their style of report (Nisbett & Ross, 1980, Yarrow et al., 1970). Life history can be seen as a method with no particular approach to capturing the wide array of avenues that may be used to study a life (from archival to phenomenological research) and subject matter. The last point made is, thus, of concern here, as the study of a life from birth till death (Runyan, 1982). By delving into historical and cultural settings, social structures, and elements of personality and mental disorders, life histories offer a basis for fuelling the development of theoretical and practical standpoints to comprehending the study of lives (Dollard, 1935; Runyan, 1982). Such accounts offer a set of descriptions, interpretations and evaluations for compiling the texture of a narrative (Runyan, 1982). Reconstructing past accounts do not appear to share the evolving qualities of more subjective and evolving life stories (Cox & McAdams, 2014).

Life stories, seemingly informed by autobiographical elements related to narrative identity (Marraffa & Paternoster, 2015), constitute the powerful memories of the past, combined with an envisioned future that informs a developing narrative self (McAdams, 2001). Psychobiographical analyses aid in structuring models of life stories (McAdams, 1988), in which a life story finds origin through generativity scripts, imagoes, ideological settings, and nuclear episodes; they are then determined by thematic lines and a narrative complexity woven in between. Life stories consist of narrative low and high points, and have the capacity to reveal

benefits in moments rife with negative affect – a so-called narrative redemption (Cox & McAdams, 2014; McAdams, 2001). Unlike life stories, the scope of psychobiographical works can encompass the study of individuals who are no longer living, and can include both published and unpublished material (with the addition of social circle inputs) as possible sources (Elms, 1994; Cara, 2007).

4.2.5 Psychohistory.

Psychohistory, in its approach to history through psychology, has been likened to psychobiography (as subcomponent), and in its approach to biography with psychology (Runyan, 1982, 2012). Anderson (1978) defined it as an approach to investigating and comprehending past behaviour through psychology. And, even though psychobiography can be seen as a tool of psychohistory, they are not synonymous, especially since psychohistory may have its focus on group behaviour (Shiner, 2005) and the contextualisation thereof historically (Ponterotto, 2014; Runyan, 1982, 2012). An example of this focus is the scholarly musings that have arisen on the negative and often destructive aspects of group identity regarding the shaping of significant historical movements, such as acts of war or mass violence; and especially its impositions on individuals within society (Skelly, 2017; Lotto, 2018). The definition has been expanded to the application of psychoanalytic theories to history, which seems to imply a narrow scope for psychobiography, as if it is seen merely as investigating an individual life psychoanalytically (Anderson, 1981; Runyan, 1982). A distinction from psychohistorical definitions becomes necessary, as psychobiography has been seen to make use of a wide array of theoretical content from developmental psychology, social psychology, and other branches that are not limited to the psychoanalytical (Ponterotto, 2014). Psychohistory uses psychology to investigate the past –

from a largely psychoanalytic stance; it may analyse the once famous, study the diversity of family and culture, and seek to uncover the drive of social groupings and how a mass identity may serve to imprison the creation of individual motives and reasoning (Botond, 1991, Skelly, 2017).

4.2.6 Psychobiography.

Historically, discord has been documented between the widely divergent fields of biography and psychology (Elms, 1994), mainly based on method and content. Van Niekerk (2007) emphasised the subjective reporting found in biographical accounts, which highlight uniqueness. Psychology defers, however, any claim of human behaviour to scrupulous scientific evidence (Howe, 1997). Thus, one large difference between biography and psychobiography remains in the utilisation of psychological theory to substantiate claims in psychobiography (Cara, 2007; Fouché, 2015; Fouché & Van Niekerk, 2010). Both disciplines find their source in life histories and life stories – as discussed previously (Cox & McAdams, 2014; Fouché & Van Niekerk, 2010; McAdams, 2001; Marraffa & Paternoster, 2015; Runyan, 1982). With the same biographical tools at its disposal, psychobiography delves into a deeper understanding of individuals, by filtering a historic life through psychological frameworks (Ponterotto, 2015).

Schultz (2005a) suggested the differences between psychobiography and narratives. In essence, psychobiography bases its structure on the subject being investigated, and sees the person as palpable and real in its scrutiny. Narratives often subdue the subject to the story presented, failing to separate the distinct entities. In a search for something “real” (Schultz, 2005a, p. 17), the psychobiographer would, thus, be more flexible theoretically, and not purely bound to utilising narrative-based theories. In fact, by its very nature, psychobiography is

composed of multiple methodologies, and employs theories in a revolutionary way, compared to mainstream psychological study.

Psychobiography still maintains its foundation within the interdisciplinary relationship between psychology and biography (Fouché, 2015). It spans the disciplines of law and journalism too, and addresses the prior's input on privacy rights while utilising the reporting methods of the latter (Ponterotto & Reynolds, 2017; Runyan, 1982). It draws on historiographic and psychologically saturated methods to facilitate an intensive study of a contentious life-story, which is interpreted through established psychological theory (Fouché & Van Niekerk, 2010; Ponterotto, 2013, 2015, 2017; Runyan, 1988). In its historiographic roots, the nostalgia of past events were highlighted for their possible lack of rigour (Berg & Lune, 2012). By its systematic nature, the action inherent in historiography recaptures memories, contexts, people, and events in a systematic manner and, thereby, looks seriously at historic studies.

The aim is the discovery of a central story of life, through a psychological lens, in its entirety, from birth till death (McAdams, 1994). Ponterotto (2015, p.379) offered the most comprehensive definition: "Psychobiography is the intensive life-span study of an individual of historic significance in socio-cultural context using psychological and historiographic research methods and interpreted from established theories of psychology." With a systematic psychology as its tool, it can draw from an array of fields, including personology, developmental psychology, cognitive theories, social psychology, or social learning perspectives (Runyan, 1988).

On the basis of various views, Van Niekerk (2007) summarised the universal traits that distinguish psychobiographical research:

1. Mainly qualitative data constitutes the source tapped by the method;
2. The focus of the method is not the study of episodic constituents, but the longitudinal view that inclusively investigates the life in its entirety;
3. Anonymity is not extended to the life being investigated, as is normatively the ethical requirement for participants in research;
4. Psychobiography delves into the pool of accounts yielded from historians and biographers in order to assemble historical information on the subject;
5. Interest cultivated through the information drives the collection of data, and its inherent value often overshadows collection for the mere purpose of testing hypotheses.

4.3 Historical Emergence and Development

Doubted regarding its rigour and value as a discipline, and its relevance as a psychological science, psychobiography has often been seen as a literary project, instead of a valid and worthwhile psychological application (Du Plessis, 2017). Much of its reputation has been fuelled by Freud's endeavour to analyse the life of Leonardo da Vinci, and, subsequently, Goethe and Moses (Cara, 2007; Elms, 1994; Schultz, 2005a). Described as a 'faux pas' within the movement (Du Plessis, 2017), Freud's project on Da Vinci, nonetheless, made clear the purpose of the new field, which was to uncover the story of a contentious life through critical psychological application (Ponterotto, 2014). Though Freud birthed a new genre, Kőváry (2011) highlighted that criticism is based on Freud's excessive focus on a singular childhood cue in Leonardo's life; his identification with the artist, which makes the work suspect as a continued self-analysis; and his intellectual sublimation of his own unconscious conflicts (Elms, 1994).

Rooted in psychoanalysis, the work, however, served as a catalyst for other psychoanalytic projects of a similar nature in the earliest decades of the 20th century (Ponterotto et al., 2015); among them, works by Erik Erikson on Martin Luther and Mahatma Gandhi. Three broad periods have been identified in historic trends of the psychobiographical approach (Runyan, 1982).

The 1920s and 1930's, the first period, saw the expansion of the field due the works of Allport and Murray (Elms, 1994; Schultz, 2005a), both of whom emphasised the investigation of the complete life of individual units of study (Cara, 2007; Elms, 1994), and document analysis (Runyan, 1982). Within the psychobiographical roots of American personality research (Kőváry, 2011), Gordon Allport was an influential figure, with his revival of a focus on the intuitive German construct of “*verstehen*” to understand a life story. The very concept of a life story was, to him, both substantive, and synonymous with individual personality (Allport, 1961). Furthermore, the investigation of personality could be facilitated by first-person documents (e.g., diaries, letters and autobiographies) and third-person accounts (e.g., biographies and case studies) – a practice still used in consideration of psychobiographical source material today.

Henry A. Murray was yet another American psychologist who delved in personality research and whose major constructive efforts lead to establishing personology (Kőváry, 2011). In studying personality, the generalisability of results became a topic of interest regarding their application to more nomothetic views, which were gaining prominence at the time (Du Plessis, 2017; Runyan, 1982). Kluckhohn and Murray (1948) offered an alternative view on personality structure, by their proposal of three levels of generality, which share an interdependence in describing human personality. An individual could be seen universally (on human nature level) to be alike to all other people; in terms of particulars, individuals are seen along the lines of

group differences; or they can be seen as akin to no one except their own unique individuality (Larsen et al., 2013; Runyan, 1982). Along this view, then, the normative positivist paradigm of the period could find its rightful saturation, by seeking general laws applicable to all people and particular groups (Runyan, 1982). As Larsen et al. (2013) explained, nomothetic approaches have found it difficult to claim singular ownership of the way general traits can be described individually; for idiographic approaches have seemed particularly apt for offering, rather, the description of manifest personality universals in a single individual. History has also attested to the manifestation of idiographic approaches, often in psychological biographies conducted on individuals (Aschieri & Smith, 2012; Runyan, 1982). In following this line of reasoning, Runyan (1982) put forth the notion of a semi-independence that exists among the levels. Psychobiography, as illustration, seeks the applicability of general theories to individuals – a key component of its distinction as a field. This distinction would establish how personology, in part, became one of the most significant foundations of modern psychobiography (Runyan, 2005a).

Beyond the field of psychology, however, the ‘life history method’ claimed increasing affinity of diverse social scientists, and was strong in itself until the Second World War (Runyan, 1982). The work that was produced by psychologists saw a digressing attempt to use a framework other than psychoanalysis; however, the first half of the 20th century still witnessed researchers using psychopathological lenses, opting for the psychoanalytic approach (Elms, 1994; Runyan, 1988). Allport was among these researchers, whose criticism of psychoanalysis as a less eclectic measure, served to highlight the flaws in dominant approaches used to make sense of individual personality (Runyan, 2005a). The popularity of psychobiography, thus, waned for an extended period, in conjunction with the rise of more positivistic methods (Cara, 2007; Runyan, 1982).

Quantitative methodologies seemed to usurp the reign of the brief interest granted to individual life histories; and even though noteworthy studies were produced, the mainstream statistical method garnered the attention of influential sciences of the time (Runyan, 1982). Ironically, it was claimed that the quantitative route of study was finding its application all the more in contemporary psychobiography too (Ponterotto, 2013; Ponterotto & Reynolds, 2017). During what is seen as the second period, the production of psychobiographical studies seemed to dwindle to as few as 6 to 26 publications within a five-year time-frame, until the 1950s (Runyan, 1988). Through the aim is not to generalise, it was the works of individuals such as Erikson (1958, 1969) that continued the existence of the field (Du Plessis, 2017; Runyan, 1982), and which probably highlighted the main criticism levelled against it.

Some views still maintained the existence of the sources from which psychobiography had been derived. Runyan (2005a) offered that life history was, at a time, seen to be synonymous with personality; though he only partly supported such views, as held by figures such as Murray. The history of personality research could not be equated to life history, as the latter stemmed from socio-cultural contexts that were subject to change over time, and led to a much more complex subject of investigation. Runyan (2005a) highlighted how this gave personality a humanistic tinge, compared to the biological views held by the hard sciences.

Kris (2000) elaborated on the biographical tendency of placing undue focus on singular childhood events – an act that was common in the period of the Renaissance. As reported above, Freud offered a perfect example of this fault (Kőváry, 2011) in his examination of Da Vinci's so-called vulture fantasy (where a vulture, later correctly translated as a kite, flew into the artist's cradle, piercing Da Vinci's mouth with its tail). This singular event formed the basis of Freud's psychosexual examination of the artist's childhood, with Freud relating much of Da Vinci's

ingenuity and personal development back to this apparently coherent and formative event (Kőváry, 2011). Kris (2000) explained this conclusion as a search for augury in later behaviour informed by childhood, effectively creating a ‘myth’ surrounding the analysis of an artist. In addition, Freud’s attempt has been criticised as sublimated writing, which starkly opposes Beres’ (1959) effort to reconstruct psychobiographical status. Beres warned against the inherent transpositions of researchers toward their subjects, a practice often rife with misinterpretative value. With the dangers of such a practice still fairly acknowledged, the psychobiographical discipline became marginalised (Kőváry, 2011; Runyan, 2005a). Runyan (2005a) offered a possible explanation for the shift, and gives reasons such as a change in intellectual interests in what constituted the scientific; the type of graduate students that universities attracted at the time; and preferences fuelled by researcher temperament.

A third period witnessed, once more, a growing interest in a rich diversity of studies focussing on life histories – with psychobiography being noteworthy among them (Runyan, 1982). A renewed interest surfaced as early as the 1950s, with the decades thereafter following with a steady increase in studies on historical lives. The latter half of the 20th century welcomed pioneering works of prominent scholars in the field (Alexander, 1988, 1990; Anderson, 1978, 1981; Elms, 1994; Runyan, 1982, 1988, 2005a, 2005b; Schultz, 2005a, 2005b), who re-established methodological approaches, epistemological frameworks, and the overall ontology of the field, which was resurging in popularity (Du Plessis, 2017). Most recently, progress of the field since its revival (Kőváry, 2011) has witnessed the issue of recent best practices, with steps for the psychobiographical research process (Cara, 2007; Du Plessis, 2017; Ponterotto, 2014; Ponterotto & Reynolds, 2013; Schultz & Lawrence, 2017). Throughout the last two decades, methodological guidelines for psychobiographical practice also emerged (Alexander, 1988,

1990; Ponterotto, 2014; Schultz, 2005b), thereby proposing a systematic approach to uncovering a life story.

The revival of the field brought the challenge of saturating it once more in a theoretical and methodological background (Kőváry, 2011). From its psychoanalytic origins to the opposition offered by preference for American personality psychology; and, then, the reincorporation of the narrative element, to place psychobiography in what Runyan (2005a) called the historic-interpretative discipline, the method had to find a home (Cara, 2007) in terms of its underpinnings, so as to maintain its quality and rigour (Ponterotto, 2013, 2014).

In this regard, the 1980s' psychobiographical renaissance spawned a set of trends followed by the field (Du Plessis, 2017). The psychoanalytic tradition has ever remained part of the historic narrative of life stories (Kőváry, 2011), and experienced a similar reformation, with interest in studying individual lives re-emerging. The first trend encouraged the pursuit of developmental theories (Kőváry, 2011, Ponterotto, 2014; Schultz, 2005a), and cultural and social psychology (Runyan, 1988), together with incorporation of expansive psychoanalytic ideas that move beyond simple ego personality constructs and ideas of self-psychology. Secondly, throughout pursuit of the discipline, subject matter has been inclusive of the study of artists, politicians, and theorists themselves (Mayer, 2017; Ponterotto, 2014; Runyan, 1988; Schultz, 2005a). The final trend relates to the notion of qualitative quality, and the reclaiming of rigorous research practice (Du Plessis, 2017), especially since the credibility of life history research could not be maintained in the face of competition from experimental psychology (Kőváry, 2011).

Recent years have seen a continuation of knowledge construction within the field in terms of guidelines of application (Ponterotto, 2017), refining of ethical approaches (Ponterotto & Reynolds, 2017) and a renewed emphasis on the disposal of explanations of behaviour through

the scope of mental illness (Kóváry, 2011). Mayer (2015, 2017), among others, substantiate the last-mentioned point, with a recommendation to use more positive decision-making models (such as through intuition) for the exploration of the lives and behaviours of renowned writers, politicians and artists. Ponterotto and Moncayo (2018) furthermore called attention to the relationship that develops between the researcher and the subject; a topic which had remained largely unaddressed within emergent literature in the field. They contributed with an investigation into how methodological moments and issues of countertransference can be managed throughout the phases of planning, writing, and publishing of psychobiographical research.

The Indo-Pacific Journal of Phenomenology (IPJP) - a running project by its Editor-in-Chief, Prof Christopher R. Stones – most recently welcomed guest editors, Dr Carol Du Plessis and Dr Graham Du Plessis, for an issue of a Special Edition of the IPJP in August 2018 on psychobiography and phenomenology. The edition is considered a first attempt to highlight the alliance to be forged between the traditions of phenomenology and psychobiography (Du Plessis & Du Plessis, 2018). Stones (2016, p. 2) emphasised the “in the moment” experiential focus that is taken by phenomenological research, which taps nuanced subjective experiences instead of the factual description of such experiences; this makes phenomenological research attuned to lived experiences that is constituent of underlying perceptions and emotions that form the whole of such moments. This opened a connection to be made to the underlying focus of psychobiography, which is in essence the exploration of a single exemplary life (Fouché & Van Niekerk, 2010; Ponterotto, 2014) – an area conversant with phenomenology’s almost individualised focus. The special edition sought to highlight emergent scholarship in the field of psychobiography (Fouché, Welman, Nortjé & Van Niekerk, 2018; Latilla & Kramer, 2018;

Mayer & Maree, 2018) where principles of phenomenological research was used to deepen and enrich the studied narratives of individual subjects through psychological theory. Developments such as these expound on the relevance of psychobiography, which has become especially more common to the lexicon of psychology in the last few decades (Du Plessis & Du Plessis, 2018).

Another current project in the making has been, *New Trends in Psychobiography*, undertaken by Claude-Hélène Mayer and Zoltan Kövály, with the hope of securing a primary reference tool for research in psychobiography in fields that have a transdisciplinary scope. In reflection, the method is clearly enjoying a steady upsurge in its value, as the following section will aim to illustrate.

4.4 An Answer to Theory-driven Research

Fouché and Van Niekerk (2010) highlighted the limitations posed by many postgraduate research projects regarding their contribution to the development and expansion of existing theory. They substantiated this claim by referring to the clinical focus of many such studies. Psychobiographical theory is seen to build and enrich the theoretical filter it utilises to uncover a life. Positive psychological constructs, together with developmental concepts and analysis of career theories, are but a few of the subdisciplinary fields that find a deep and extensive utilisation and application of its constructs through the thorough investigation of a life (Alexander, 1988). Dubbed an enrichment of chosen theory (Fouché & Van Niekerk, 2010), the value of theoretical paradigms becomes realised through an *analytic generalisation* (Yin, 2009), where previous findings relating to such theories find a platform for comparison to the results of a studies undertaken. Van Niekerk (2007) accounted for the theory's ability to act as an

informative set of principles by which the researcher gathers data, and later groups relevant data chunks.

It follows that, as much as theory develops the method, so the method develops its own theory. The last three decades has seen the establishment of a guiding set of principles by which subject data is organised and interpreted (Alexander, 1988, 1990; Schultz, 2005b), and by which the approach itself gained a sequenced set of steps and practices (Cara, 2007; Elms, 1994; Du Plessis, 2017; Ponterotto, 2014). It is Du Plessis (2017), in her construction of a step-wise approach, that represented how psychobiography as focus is gaining recognition as an approach. It is through postgraduate interest in the field, in particular, where it is institutionalised (or in the process of becoming thus), and its legitimacy is being fuelled (Fouché & Van Niekerk, 2010; Ponterotto et al., 2015). This becomes even truer, as first encounters with its practice are framed by a comprehensible recipe from which to brew the discovery and exposition of an individual's story.

Robinson and McAdams (2015) advocated for *theoretical exemplification*, in which theory shows a parsimonious and utilitarian quality in its application. The practice seeks an encompassing view of a case by means of establishing meaningful links to the idiosyncrasies that contributed to the individual life, so as to ensure that these idiosyncrasies are not separated from individuality, but customises itself by providing the greater and continuous details of life particulars. Such single-case applications enhance the possibilities of interventions by its illustrative links to the individual (Ponterotto, 2017).

4.5 Psychobiography in the South African Context

Academics at psychology departments in South Africa, in light of the rebirth of the discipline (Kóváry, 2011), instituted a psychobiographical research focus that has been keenly pursued on postgraduate level (Fouché & Van Niekerk, 2010). Burgers was the first to explore the life of a remarkable South African in 1939: the author, Cornelis Jacobus Langenhoven (Van Niekerk, 2007). After a second study was done on the poet, Ingrid Jonker (by Van der Merwe in 1976), psychobiographical writings declined in the country, yet another was done on the South African painter, Gerhard Sekhoto, by Chabani Manganyi in 1996 (Fouché & Van Niekerk, 2010). Fouché completed a study on General Jan Christiaan Smuts in 1999, which has subsequently led to many psychobiographies by researchers affiliated with the University of the Free State, University of Johannesburg, Rhodes University, and Nelson Mandela University – making psychobiography yet another methodological tool to be utilised for the purposes of research in the past decade (Fouché & Van Niekerk, 2010). Unfortunately, South Africa-based works in the field have been relatively few; this appears especially true when we seek work that was done to serve as methodological input for the focus area (Fouché, 2015).

Trends in academic psychobiography was revealed in a presentation relaying the results of a survey conducted on completed psychobiographies between 1994 and 2005 (Fouché & Van Niekerk, 2010). First among these was a trend that connects to the use of a particular theoretical framework, similar to the trend of psychobiographic revival (Kóváry, 2011) as highlighted by Du Plessis (2017). Fouché and Van Niekerk (2010) found the use of Levinson's developmental theory for men and women (1978, 1990) to be rife, followed by frameworks such as Erikson's psychosocial theory (1963, 1968) and Jung's (1950) analytical psychology, Digman's five-factor model (1990), Maslow's (1970) motivational theory, Antonovsky's (1988) sense of coherence,

and even such frameworks as the holistic wellness model (Witmer & Sweeney, 1992), or theories on salutogenesis. Secondly, these studies had mostly focused on white South African figures, much of whom were predominantly male, and the figures seemed to relate primarily to political backgrounds (Fouché & Van Niekerk, 2010). Furthermore, few studies attained the status of accredited research, as postgraduate students were found to favour the discipline for pursuit of completing Master's and Doctoral dissertations and theses.

Shortcomings became clear, which Fouché and Van Niekerk, (2010) translated into a list of obstacles that academics in psychobiographical research may need to overcome. First among these is the need for more elucidating explorations to be undertaken on noteworthy black figures in South African history; and, then, a focus on influential female figures that have dominated political, social and cultural spheres in tandem with their male counterparts. The status of the field could, furthermore, be heightened by exposure, where public marketing and publication could reset it on a course of importance. Such a development could easily create the need for new theoretical frameworks to be envisioned, which are specifically suitable for uncovering the lives of the subjects chosen, as a third challenge to the field. Fouché and Van Niekerk (2010) did not discount the importance of studies that had already been done, thus, highlighting the challenge to, finally, develop noteworthy postgraduate writings on South African icons – and possibly to offer it more credibility and a wider account of the studies that have been finalised (Fouché, 2015).

Considering that the field is still being nurtured, in part, by its supporters, and is, perhaps only now, entering a phase of adulthood in its contextualisation in South Africa, the above shortcomings seem to have a valid substantiation for its existence. The mid 1990s also witnessed a collegial relationship on producing studies in the field developing between Van Niekerk and

Fouché, both of whom institutionalised the focus area at the University of the Free State (Fouché & Van Niekerk, 2010). Trends, thus, reveal that psychobiography in South Africa only progressed through its childhood phase in the 1990s and a later adolescent phase in the 2000s (Fouché, 2015).

Fouché and Van Niekerk (2010) did, however, account for a rise to the challenge for growing the field. This phenomenon is visible, particularly, in increased postgraduate interest in psychobiography as research focus area. Under the supervision of strong local academic minds in the field, the field has flourished and produced considerable and sudden output during 2005 – 2009, initially, even presenting diversity in its choice of subjects in the domains of career and gender. This trend was chronicled in featured publications, such as the *Journal of Psychology in Africa* (2015), rekindling a focus on areas related to the psychobiographical method. Table 4.1 presents a tabulated list of most of the South African master's dissertations and doctoral theses that have had a psychobiographical method as their focus.

Table 4.1

List of South African Master's and Doctoral Dissertations with Psychobiography as Focus

Subject	Researcher	Degree and year	University
1. Cornelis Jacobus Langenhoven	Burgers, M. P. O.	M.A. (1939)	Wits
2. Louis Leipoldt	Burgers, M. P. O.	D.Litt. (1960)	Wits
3. Ingrid Jonker	Van der Merwe, L. M.	Ph.D. (1978)	UFS
4. Jan Christiaan Smuts	Fouché, J.P.	D.Phil. (1999)	UPE
5. Helen Martins	Bareira, L.	M.A. (2001)	UPE
6. Bantu Stephen Biko	Kotton, D.	M.A. (2002)	UPE
7. Balthazar John Vorster	Vorster, M. S.	M.A. (2003)	UPE
8. Wessel Johannes (Hansie)	Warmenhoven, A.	M.A. (2004)	UPE

Cronje

- | | | | |
|-----------------------|----------------|----------------|-----|
| 9. Mother Teresa | Stroud, L. | D.Phil. (2004) | UPE |
| 10. Albert Schweitzer | Edwards, M. J. | M.A. (2004) | UPE |
| 11. Cornelis Jacobus | Jacobs, A. | M.A. (2005) | UPE |

Langenhoven

- | | | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------|--------------|----|
| 12. Karen Horney | Green. S. | M.A. (2006) | RU |
| 13. Wessel Johannes (Hansie) | Warmenhoven, A. | Ph.D. (2006) | RU |

Cronje

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------|-------------|----|
| 14. Christiaan Neethling | Van Niekerk, R. | M.A. (2007) | SU |
|--------------------------|-----------------|-------------|----|

Barnard

- | | | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|
| 15. Ray Charles | Biggs, I. | M.A. (2007) | RU |
| 16. Hendrik Verwoerd | Claasen, M. | M.A. (2007) | NMMU |
| 17. Melanie Klein | Espinosa, M. | M.A. (2008) | RU |
| 18. Herman Mashaba | McWalter, M. A. | M.A. (2008) | UJ |
| 19. Isie Smuts | Smuts, C. | M.A. (2009) | NMMU |
| 20. Helen Keller | Van Genechten, D. | M.A. (2009) | NMMU |
| 21. Jeffrey Dahmer | Chéze, E. | M.A. (2009) | NMMU |
| 22. Emily Hobhouse | Welman, C. | M.A. (2009) | UFS |
| 23. Mahatma Gandhi | Pillay, K. | M.A. (2009) | NMMU |
| 24. Kurt Cobain | Pieterse, C. | M.A. (2009) | NMMU |
| 25. Vincent van Gogh | Muller, R. | M.A. (2009) | NMMU |
| 26. Ralph John Rabie | Uys, H. M. G. | M.A. (2010) | NMMU |
| 27. Ernesto 'Che' Guevara | Kolesky, C. | M.A. (2010) | NMMU |
| 28. Frans Martin Claerhout | Roets, M. | M.A. (2010) | UFS |
| 29. Alan Paton | Greeff, M. | M.A. (2010) | UFS |
| 30. Paul Jackson Pollock | Muller, T. | M.A. (2010) | NMMU |
| 31. Christiaan de Wet | Henning, R. | Ph.D. (2010) | RU |
| 32. Bram Fischer | Swart, D. K. | M.A. (2010) | UFS |
| 33. Desmond Tutu | Eliastam, L. M. | M.Soc.Sci
(2010) | Fort Hare
University |
| 34. Brenda Fassie | Gogo, O. | M.A. (2011) | UFS |

35. Olive Schreiner	Perry, M.	Ph.D. (2012)	UFS
36. Winston Churchill	Moolman, B. A.	M.A. (2012)	NMMU
37. Friedrich Nietzsche	Booyesen, D. D.	M.A. (2012)	NMMU
38. John Wayne Gacy	Pieterse, J.	M.A. (2012)	NMMU
39. John Winston Lennon	Kitching, P. H	M.A. (2012)	NMMU
40. Francis Bacon	Kerr, N.	M.A. (2012)	NMMU
41. Josephine Baker	Eckley, S.	M.A. (2012)	NMMU
42. Rev. James Warren 'Jim' Jones	Baldwin, G. A.	M.A. (2013)	NMMU
43. Martin Luther King	Twaku, U.	M.A. (2013)	NMMU
44. Ellen Kuzwayo	Arosi, Z.	M.A. (2013)	NMMU
45. Helen Martins	Mitchell, D.	M.A. (2013)	RU
46. William Wilberforce	Daubermann, B. P.	M.A. (2013)	NMMU
47. Helen Suzman	Nel, C.	Ph.D. (2013)	UFS
48. Beyers Naudé	Burnell, B.	Ph.D. (2013)	UFS
49. Steve Jobs	Ndoro, T.	M.B.A. (2013)	RU
50. Antwone Fisher	Wannenburg, N.	M.A. (2013)	RU
51. Michael Jackson	Ruiters, J.	M.A. (2014)	RU
52. Richard Trenton Chase	Nel, H.	M.A. (2014)	UFS
53. Martin Luther King	Pietersen, S.	M.A. (2014)	NMMU
54. Steve Jobs	Moore, N.	M.A. (2014)	NMMU
55. John Henry Newman	Mitchell, G. P.	M.A. (2014)	NMMU
56. Dambudzo Marechera	Muchena, K. C.	M.A. (2014)	NMMU
57. Christiaan Neethling Barnard	Lekhelebane, V. A.	M.A. (2014)	NMMU
58. Roald Dahl	Holz, T.	Ph.D. (2014)	UFS
59. Pope John Paul II	Pillay, K.	Ph.D. (2014)	NMMU
60. Glenda Watson-Kahlenberg	Connelly, R. E.	Ph.D. (2014)	NMMU
61. Wilford Woodruff and Gordon Bitner Hinckley	Saccaggi, C. F.	D.Litt.et.Phil (2015)	UJ
62. Winston Leonard Spencer	Human, S. C.	M.A. (2015)	Unisa

Churchill

63. Charlize Theron	Prenter, T.	M.A. (2015)	RU
64. Marie Curie	Roets, E.	M.A. (2015)	RU
65. Bashar al-Assad	Kerrin, C.K.	M.A. (2015)	UJ
66. Vuyiswa Mackonie	Baatjies, V. P.	M.Soc.Sc. (2015)	UKZN
67. Margaret Hilda Thatcher	Marx, M.	M.A. (2015)	NMMU
68. Brand Pretorius	Harwood, C. S.	M.Comm (2016)	NMMU
69. Steve Jobs	Du Plessis, R.	M.A. (2016)	UFS
70. John Lennon	Osorio, D.	M.A. (2016)	UFS
71. Temple Grandin	Wannenburg, N.	Ph.D. (2016)	RU
72. Paulo Coelho	Mayer, C. H.	Ph.D. (2016)	
73. Milton Hyland Erickson	Ramasamy, K.	Ph.D. (2017)	NMMU
74. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf	Manana, S.	M.Comm (2017)	NMMU
75. Coco Chanel	Verwey, L.	M.A. (2017)	UJ
76. Bangabandhu Sheikh	Hoque, A.	M.A. (2017)	UJ
Mujibur Rahman			
77. Steve Jobs	Van Staden, D	MA (2017)	NMMU
78. Gary Player	Futter, T.	MA (2017)	NMMU
79. Theodore Robert Bundy	McGivern K. B	MA (2017)	NMMU
80. Robert Nesta 'Bob' Marley	Willis, L. S	MA (2017)	NMMU
81. John Wayne Gacy	Coetsee, E. E.	PhD (2017)	UFS

Adapted from Fouché, J. P. and Van Niekerk, R. (in press). *Doing psychobiography: The case of Christiaan Barnard*.

NNMU – Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University; RU - Rhodes University; SU – Stellenbosch University; UFS – University of the Free State; UJ – University of Johannesburg; UKZN – University of KwaZulu-Natal; Unisa – University of South Africa; UPE - University of Port Elizabeth; Wits - University of the Witwatersrand

A few events are considered to be instrumental in this awakening. Logistically, many research projects undertaken through South African Departments of Psychology have encountered expansive challenges in their administration and execution, often highlighting the

apparent lack of available academic promoters who could be classified as experts in the field. Fouché and Van Niekerk (2010) shed light on this problem by explaining the sheer popularity of psychology as a discipline for postgraduate pursuit by students. A resultant influx of divergent research topics presents students' need for specific promoters in the subject areas perused, whilst setting forth students' various sampling frameworks to acquire the data sought – often to test clinical hypothesis. To the frustration of postgraduate students, the nature of the topics and its framing of participants propose a wide array of ethical challenges, which often block the development of the research. This hurdle does not even take into account consequential procedural challenges that manifest when eventual permission for study engagement is obtained. Psychobiography, with its unique archival approach to subject analysis, presents a less jarring approach for eventual continuation. It laces the completion of postgraduate studies with a smoothness and administrative ease by its method of data collection and its focus on completed exemplary lives that do not necessarily require the input of the subject when material is publicly available (Fouché & Van Niekerk, 2010).

These developments could possibly have led to the academic institutionalisation of the field in strategic research clusters within different departments, to where experts in the field had migrated, whilst being seen more widely as focus area of the relevant faculty. Fouché and Van Niekerk (2010) pointed out how its recognition (perhaps through its value to theory-driven research) has facilitated its financial support, and, thus, funding for its experts to attend developmental conferences and to enlist aid in the archival research of their subjects. The rationale is highlighted, however, that typical postgraduate studies could do little to enhance, enrich, expand, and refine a theory within a South African context. Muchena, Howcroft and Stroud (2015) pointed out the domesticity of the field, in being housed in only a few tertiary

institutions, and suggested that greater exposure to the public and academic realm through conferences, marketing and the development of formal coursework is perhaps necessary.

Other events that have led to answering the call of the field was the need to raise awareness of respect for and understanding of people from diverse cultural backdrops. Fouché and Van Niekerk (2010) commented on how unique South African narratives have been worth pursuit, with the aim of sharing diverse views and social settings. Fostering openness to such stories also contributed to a focus on character strengths that make up the positive psychology movement, which had an influence on psychobiographic studies, e.g. see Mayer (2017). Heeding the criticisms of its pathographic tendencies of the past (Elms, 1994), life stories experienced a shift, to views that overlap with positive psychological goals. Kőváry (2011) mentioned that case study research, a method that is partly infused in psychobiographical cases, has typically focused on clinical subject matter, which makes the reporting of results subject to the ethical conundrums. Typically, reporting sensitive information could have far-reaching implications for the personal and professional identities of individuals (Ponterotto, 2013; Ponterotto, 2015a; Ponterotto & Reynolds, 2017). Psychobiographical reporting makes the persona being less susceptible to such potential humiliation, as the individual him/herself has usually already died, and the focus is on covering the completed life holistically (Kőváry, 2011; Ponterotto, 2013; Ponterotto & Moncayo, 2018).

4.6 Value of Psychobiographical Studies

Psychobiography has proven itself to be equipped to study outstanding personalities, in a spectrum ranging from anything shy of neurotic, up to innovative souls (Howe, 1997; Kőváry, 2011; Ponterotto & Reynolds, 2013) who represent the spirit of their time. In studying a

completed, remarkable life, regardless if it is saturated in insanity, the study of outliers serves to establish the attention of health practitioners, governing bodies, and academics, to establish concord with the groups with which they render services (Ponterotto & Moncayo, 2018). With this reasoning, the extensive use of health and developmental theories have enjoyed application, but ultimately created a gap in the more complex investigation of individuals (Burnell, 2013; Mayer & Maree, 2013).

Runyan (1988) mentioned how biographers often attempt to reinterpret old findings about a subject; or to build on existing research on a chosen individual. New evidence or source availability facilitate such engagements, but biographers are, nonetheless, subject to knowledge-based criticism, because of their failure to offer a framework of reason for development of novel views on a subject of choice (Elms, 1994; Fouché, 2015). Psychobiography, through goals that overlap, in part, with those of personality psychology, seeks a clear understanding of the individual as unit of study (Runyan, 1988, 2005a), thereby to illuminate the interconnections between constructed interpretations and overarching theories and the evidence of its applicability to the single case. Ultimately, the epistemological basis of a psychobiographical study is less open to criticism of biographies, and clear in its goal of substantiated claims (Ponterotto, 2015b; Runyan, 1988). A more detailed elaboration of the extensive value of the emergent method is given below.

4.6.1 The study of unique individual lives.

Runyan (1982, p.13) argued that much can be gained from the study of individual life histories – an endeavour that has been made out as one of “methodological naïveté”. Partly due to a decline in interest in life history research after the great Second World War, scientific

inquiry became saturated in using quantifiable methods (Cara, 2007; Elms, 1994; Runyan, 1982, 2005a) for the study of phenomena. Runyan (1982), in this regard, vouched for the inquiry into the lives of individuals, which seeks to make known that it makes as a valid contribution to social science, as does experimental inquiry. Ponterotto et al. (2015) expressed the perspective that narratives and individual lives could well represent an epistemological nexus. The very value of narrative studies is, at least, seen to be partnered with quantitative methods for understanding more facets of theoretical applications to individuals, leading to different avenues of research, which can be tested theoretically with statistical rigour.

Kluckhohn and Murray (1948) postulated a three-tiered approach to the generalisation of findings of life stories. Among these, Runyan (1982) highlighted the position of the individual, who presents a level of narratives that is unique to the case being studied. With these levels all being interdependent and autonomous as levels, it is erroneous to assume that what is regarded as universals or true for some groups could be generalised to the level of individual people. Studying individuals is as valuable to the process of investigation as it is in serving merely as a source for hypothesis (a reductionist view, in the past held by supporters of the quantitative approach), and, therefore, deserves procedures to be developed to deal with the subject content – to the same extent as has been devised for the other two levels (Runyan, 1982). The study of individuals can, thus, be seen as a supplementary practice to other scientific approaches to inquiry, each with its own weight in criticism (Runyan, 1982). Interestingly, Robinson and McAdams (2015) cited the sudden emergence, in single-case experimental designs, of results that have not been utilised for application to wider groupings, and, instead, these designs seek only the intra-individual investigation from one case to the next. Such a contravention to the

requirement of generalisation of experimental results could, almost, be seen to correspond with realisations put forward by Runyan (1982) many years earlier.

Claims of superiority by camps of either qualitative or quantitative methodology are also unfounded. In testing correlational hypotheses, experimental and statistical methods do prove to be the method of choice, whilst life history methods have governance over the field of making sense of circumstantial phenomena particular to certain subjects, and their resultant thoughts and emotions (Runyan, 1982). Quantifiable methods offer little regarding the analysis of subjectivity, whilst reducible patterns from phenomena found beyond the individual fall more readily in its scope (Kőváry, 2011).

Contextualisation of psychobiographical research as a focus area has its benefits, by emphasising the diversity to be discovered among the list of influential subjects in different domains of life. Fouché and Van Niekerk (2010) elaborated on both the need and salient benefits of delving into a choice of South African personas, for instance, to facilitate respect for and comprehension of different cultural backdrops and social frames of reference. From politics to the arts and sport, the impact on different career fields and social spheres makes the icons worthy of acknowledgement by a democratic generation. It is these figures, with their unique stories, that paint the different historical backdrops to be uncovered, and investigate the socio-cultural context of a place and time more vigorously (Fouché and Van Niekerk, 2010).

4.6.2 An educational tool.

Kőváry (2011) emphasised the feasibility of psychobiography for educating postgraduate students on a practical level, as aspiring professionals in relevant courses are usually exposed to an intensive theoretical regime that leaves little opportunity to explore self-awareness. Practical

work is framed by a requirement of intensive comprehension about human functioning, even as it applies to self. Psychobiography can, thus, be seen as a training tool (Ponterotto et al., 2015) at least to the extent of facilitating what Anderson (1981) explained as an empathic understanding of the subject – immersing oneself in the contextual setting and state of mind of the person and his/her scruples. Kőváry (2011) framed this argument as a belief that only the in-depth inquiry into a single case over an extensive period of time can facilitate many of the practical competencies expected of students aiming to enter therapeutic work; this is a skill-set that theoretical coverage and statistical approaches, which has primarily been the focus, can hardly foster. Runyan (2005a) used the example of training required of students in personality psychology by Henry Murray, involving the exploration in great depth of a single life over the course of a semester in great profundity. This study entails an agency in profound introspection when investigating the life of another (Kőváry, 2011).

Ponterotto et al. (2015) also highlighted the more general educational value of psychobiography for helping students understand the application of a theory within its range of strengths and benefits, and its limitations in becoming a pathography. A call for a more positive orientation and, perhaps, eugraphic approaches to the subject, has been emphasised, where more complex psychological understanding of a subject – possibly through qualities such as intuition (Mayer & Maree, 2017) – are also among the more diverse considerations of psychobiographical focus. It was furthermore highlighted how the iterative (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011; Ponterotto, 2014) trait of research is enhanced by inspiring questions through life story immersion, and noticing the links between theory and data. Benefits include a theoretical mastery of divergent conceptualisations applied; gains of a method that can be observed being used in conjunction with, and not as an antithesis to, positivistic approaches; and cultivation of interdisciplinary

knowledge, possibly due to a firmer grasp on person and context (Howe, 1997; Ponterotto, 2014; Ponterotto et al., 2015; Schultz, 2005a).

On this line of reasoning, counsellors can reap a unique benefit from psychobiographical practice, in being geared through extensive training in conceptual models (Kőváry, 2011); and a natural affinity for empathetic understanding, which can be monitored with objectivity, which is valued in their roles of scientist-practitioners (Ponterotto, 2017). The value in engagement lies in the refinement of therapeutic skills whilst assuming goals for the psychobiographical endeavour that overlap with those of counselling psychology. Additionally, Ponterotto (2017) made us aware that counsellors can enhance a more public perception of psychological issues, building on the disciplinary image through a growing reader base that has been educated in practice and theory. However, Ponterotto et al. (2015) reflected that this particular benefit has not been included in training curricula that confer the value of the field – a sentiment shared in part by Muchena et al. (2015); which, in their opinion, actually serves to remind students that the discipline has its roots in the value it has for individuals.

4.6.3 The reputation of a soft science.

Runyan (2005a) recounted the influence of Stephen Jay Gould on the hope he came to foster for the future of the social sciences. His conception of historical science, as a study of sequenced events and the processes underlying them (Gould, as cited by Runyan, 2005a), illustrated that historical science could not be subordinate within the traditional understanding of science guided by “the scientific method” of hard, quantifiable variables, categorised results, reductive measurement and predictive quality. Historical events are seen to be difficult to compartmentalise under general laws, thus, calling for another approach to the historic events

and behaviours in context. With its idiographic qualities (Cara, 2007) and roots in historiographic tradition (Ponterotto, 2015b), psychobiography could, in its study of individual lives, have goals that agree with those of the historical sciences, of which the methods have implications for advocating for the value found in advancing the so-called soft-science traditions (Runyan, 1982, 2005a). Despite this, “Most centrally, psychobiography enables us to examine the degree to which more nomothetic hypotheses and findings ‘particularize’ to the life story of an individual person” (Ponterotto, et al., 2015, pp. 466-467). In fact, modern practitioners have opted for melding exemplary historiographic methodology and the contribution of the positivistic sciences, through the very practice of finding an application for empirically validated theories in life history studies (Ponterotto, 2015b).

In fact, contending much of the criticism by mainstream supporters of statistical inquiry in psychology against qualitative case studies in relation to its ability to elucidate the depth and complexity of a subject (Elms, 1994; Runyan, 1982), Schultz (2005a) clarified the value of studying lives by reminding us that case-study methodology is subject to replication, due to the inter-raters, who recontextualise, reinterpret, and reconceptualise the findings of a life in pursuit of different conclusions. This quasi-judicial approach (Bromley, 1977) is fundamental for establishing closer approximations of reliable accounts. Also, by being driven to uncover a life through the extensive use of psychological theory (Elms, 1994), the researcher already gives the method a more objective legitimacy, which narrows the difference in researcher scope based on subjective practices dramatically. This legitimacy is supported by recent amalgamations between phenomenological and psychobiographical practice (Du Plessis & Du Plessis, 2018), where both traditions utilises the prototypical episodes within a life, offering richer descriptions and a greater depth of understanding into individual cases (Latilla & Kramer, 2018).

Robinson and McAdams (2015) levelled the playing field of theoretical validity by indicating that *specificity* (presenting relevance to the comprehension on an individual level) is as important as generalisability, thus, they successfully advocate for the practice of case studies. The purpose of case studies is exemplification of theory, to illustrate theory's link to the idiosyncrasies found at individual level. Furthermore, theory testing through finished lives yields a reward of developmental trends that are inaccessible to longitudinal researchers (Carlson, 1988).

4.7 Critique and Analysis of Psychobiography

Elms perfectly captured much that is to be discussed in relation to critique of psychobiography over its rise to and fall from fame:

Bad psychobiography is easier to write than good psychobiography. Psychobiographies may be written for the wrong reason or no good reason. It may rely on shoddy data or misguided methods or inappropriate theories, or all of those together. Writers have used psychobiography to grind axes from the right, and from the left. Writers have claimed to augment their biographies with serious biographical analysis, when all they've done is to shove famous people into pathological pigeonholes. (Elms, 1994, p. 4)

This statement encompasses many of the errors and methodological pitfalls (described in the following chapter) that psychobiographers fall prey too. Anderson (1981, p. 2) added that, "A marked disparity exists between the execution and potential of psychobiography". Much of Freud's first attempts seemed the initial scapegoat, and an overapplication and abuse of his theory placed a past-trending Freudian biography right up there with psychobiography as a heavily criticised endeavour (Elms, 1994). Kóváry (2011) added how Freud's pioneering effort was, in fact, an intellectual sublimation.

Runyan (1982) and others (Anderson, 1981; Elms, 1994; Schultz, 2005b) highlighted the pitfall of reductionism (see Section 5.3) of childhood experiences, to a foundation of all subsequent arguments to explain adulthood (Kőváry, 2011); loosely established content linkages; and failure to account for historical change as part of the debate. Much of these criticisms had already been illustrated by Freud's major indiscretions, and had led to a powerful statement made by Barzun (1974, p. 46) about the psychohistorian, "his 'tools', his 'method', his 'data' – is indirect and necessarily scant: the patient is absent, and the clues he may have left to his once living psyche are the product of chance . . . the trickle from written remains seems almost negligible". It is, thus, a criticism of inadequate evidence (Runyan, 1982), and in even contemporary times, the psychobiographical endeavour is still regarded as a fledgling art, yet to mature fully (Ponterotto, 2015b) and 'come of age' (Fouché, 2015). Mitchell and Howcroft (2015) also touch on the subject of evidence, specifically on how factual accounts became paramount to combatting the narrative of religious figures and their elevation in status due to tradition. Schultz (2005a, p. 3) was of the opinion, however, that by "taking one lonely life at a time and making sense of that life", an antidotal quality could be found for much of psychology's overall reductionism and radical stance. It is crucial to mention the matter of ethics, where the battle against reductionism is framed under an ethical cognisance (discussed in greater detail in Section 5.9). Ponterotto and Reynolds (2017), by acknowledging the extensive rights of those in journalistic professions or those involved in a biographical scrutiny of a life, admitted that psychologists are obligated to exercise these rights, with additional boundaries imposed by the ethics of their profession.

Diversity in the choice of eventual psychobiographic topics (addressed in the next chapter) had for long also not seen a realisation. Elms (1994) admitted to a gap he himself, and

other writers, have left regarding studies that are ethnically representative, or investigative of the lives of women in history. As expounded in the previous section, Fouché and Van Niekerk (2010) identified the South African manifestation of this particular shortcoming. Despite the knowledgeable reprimands posed for his excessive identification (Kőváry, 2011), with his study on Leonardo, Freud counted among a few who moved beyond their own cultural boundaries. However, evidently, the practice has not received much attention since. Though there is acknowledgement of the indisputable importance of empathetic treatment of the subject (Anderson, 1981; Elms, 1994), there is a simultaneous belief that parcelled accounts that display a gendered or ethnic fit between researcher and subject, do not represent the reputable approach that could help the field gain a momentum in divergent and deepened understanding (Elms, 1994).

Burman (2015), in a contemporary fashion, countered this notion, as history has shown psychology's neglect of significant foreign contributions and practical knowledge – much of the neglect the fault of translation and even chauvinistic ideologies that contribute to a method fetishism, instead of greater reflexivity (Ponterotto, 2014; Tracy 2010). Ponterotto (2015b) strengthened this rebuttal by the flaw of translation, instead of validating source language; a fault first produced, once more, by the pioneer of psychobiography, Freud, in his misinterpretation of the “vulture-fantasy” of Leonardo da Vinci (Kőváry, 2011). Runyan (1988) raised an important point, however, perhaps worth consideration, yet not being an explicit criticism. Many researchers may be driven to investigate a subject due to interest (Elms, 1994; Runyan, 1982; Schultz, 2005a), but a re-examination of literature could yield an altogether different interest in rectifying past accounts with which the researcher disagrees. Research bias (discussed in Section

5.2) may, perhaps, lead to passionate reappraisals that may simply highlight a new set of epistemological errors (Runyan, 1988).

Runyan (1982) also raised awareness of at least four issues pertaining to case studies that have significant bearing on psychobiography. The first concerns an alliance of retrospective reports that have special significance in clinical settings. Countered by prospective follow-up reports, the value of retrospective method cannot be dismissed, as letters, diaries or archival material (as constitutes primary sources) contributes to an understanding of an individual. Secondly, he stimulates, once more, a debate that pits qualitative research defensively against normative quantitative methods that reigned in the period of declining of popularity endured by psychobiography before the 1980s (Cara, 2007; Runyan, 1982). Thirdly, and closely linked to the second, is the issue of the subjective pursuits launched by life history methods, that was seen as an introductory step to the study of a life to glean predominating perceptions before more rigorous investigation. In an era indoctrinated by positivistic approaches, this subjective stance elicited fully-fledged criticism, directed at the source use of, especially (and seemingly, exclusively), introspective reports (Yarrow et al., 1970) – a stance that was rectified later by making introspective reports but one of the many sources to be tapped by life history studies (Runyan, 1982). The fourth issue pertains to the internal validity of case studies, due to its provision of a weak foundation for establishing causal links in its content, and the low external validity, which refers to its properties of generalising to other contexts and people (Runyan, 1982). Availability of method and sources, and the additional motion to correct these issues, imposed as limits, can be seen as ways to remedy the problem – possibly done by considering both polarities of the arguments (introspective against non-introspective, retrospective against non-retrospective, and subjective against objective) in implementing research.

With psychobiography being termed as primarily an idiographic approach (Cara, 2007), Runyan (1982) launched some of the assimilated criticisms that must be noted. Much of these points of criticism seem unprecedented or with fair substantiation, but they, nonetheless, provide a telling account of the struggle to be endured by those who opt for research that classifies as psychobiography.

1. Generalisability of idiographic findings is at the forefront of the dispute, due to the focus of these findings on patterned individuality (Allport, 1961, 1962). This criticism may seem justified, to an extent, though Kluckhohn and Murray (1948) posited that levels of generalisability (universal, group, and individual levels) are as much independent as they are to some degree interrelated (Runyan, 1982).
2. Another criticism propelled to fuel the dominating, yet outdated, positivist view of the time, is that individual cases could be a starting point for research in hypothesis formulation, but that inferences could only be accounted for at group level using statistical means (Runyan, 1982).
3. Allport's (1961, p. 10) claim that "personal patterns of individuality are unique", stimulated defence of the 'uniqueness' of individuals, instead of a greater focus on how individuals are distinct from others (Runyan, 1982). Yet, discarding the term does away with the merit, where 'uniqueness' may simply aim to define individuals based on their very specific context that, in conjunction with their patterned traits, lead to lives distinguishable from others.
4. Perhaps most persuasively, the criticism of uniqueness has the implication that idiographic study might need a more prolific application, so as to encompass a study of every individual to facilitate intuitive comprehension – a practice obviously phrased as 'impossible' (Runyan,

1982). Perhaps that is why it has become feasible to study persons of interest (phrased as an elitism, which has its own critique).

5. Even if we accept idiographic approaches as a way to study lives individually, it has often been labelled as an anti-science stance for its lack of testing more general laws, which are in the realm of the nomothetic (Runyan, 1982).
6. If we contend, then, that idiographic methods hold an allure for in-depth study of individuals, it is, nonetheless, without feasible merit if the methods to implement them are missing (Runyan, 1982). Psychobiography as a field has, however, experienced a proliferation of markers of value (Schultz, 2005a), sequenced approaches (Cara, 2007, Du Plessis, 2017, Runyan, 1988; Ponterotto, 2017a; Ponterotto & Moncayo, 2018) best practices (Ponterotto, 2014) and data analysis tools (Alexander, 1988, 1990; Schultz, 2005b) that make the method seem more structured and powerfully rendered. Even rote application of steps, however, has the danger of restricting vibrancy and innovation (Du Plessis, 2017).

Based on, at least, the last criticism, it stands to reason that past psychobiographers yielded much of the credibility of their explorations into an individual through a theory that demonstrated a wide scope; but a parochial trait dressed many theories that were cross-culturally appropriated to analyse people from many different point of reference (Anderson, 1981; Elms, 1994; Runyan, 1982). Perhaps, most prevalently has been the use of psychoanalytic theory, to the extent of defining psychobiography by the use of its propositions (Kóváry, 2011). Runyan (1982) exposed at least some of the reasons for this association. First, proponents may have believed the theory had special relevance for the unusual mysteries posed by historical lives. Because of this, they, secondly, may have been willing to base interpretations on scant evidence. Thirdly, conceptual practice may have bestowed on psychoanalysis a flexible use suited for idiographic

interpretations that could cater to a wide array of individualised patterns. This may, fourthly, have lead the practitioner, possessing false confidence, to a misconstrued evaluation of biographical evidence, where no grounds for evidence truly existed. Lastly, however, the theory's interpretive value could have fed the iterative cycle of inquiry, leading to new speculations not previously harboured. Runyan (1982) stated that the theory (together with other psychodynamic approaches) does, in fact, have value, more to some, perhaps, than to others, though its premises on the unconscious structure and its dynamics (Anderson, 1981) remain powerful illuminative tools (Ponterotto et al., 2015; Schultz, 2005b). In addition, a more solid theoretical insight into deceased figures and the establishment of connections between psychology and history will always remain influences from the Freudian era (Ponterotto, 2015). Regardless, a contemporary take (Ponterotto, 2017) on the matter substantiates the claim of theoretical narrowness, and the choices of theory that is limiting to a culture, its setting, and its proponents.

Theoretical 'narrowness' and many of the pitfalls discussed in the next chapter, seem to present a common methodological difficulty, which has reductionism as its seed (Anderson, 1981). As has been demonstrated above, the popularity of the psychoanalytic theory illustrates the erroneous and misplaced belief in one-dimension analysis for capturing subject complexity. A second limitation, as Anderson (1981) stated, is the assumption that personality can be explained sufficiently through the ways of the psychology that underlie it, discounting interdisciplinary inputs.

4.8 Conclusion

As this chapter illustrated, much of the emergent field of psychobiography has been pieced together through various sub-disciplinary developments during the course of the 20th century. These developments have seen the rise and fall of preference and validation for the field, launching psychobiography into a renaissance period that, finally, had the outcome of situating the method firmly on a path of development, which saw its steady refinement and conceptualisation. Through the acceptance of criticism of the movement, and recognition of its value and contribution, allowance has been granted to the field to craft its own path to maturity. It is clear, though, that a list of difficulties still persists, despite its growth over the years. Many of these difficulties have been condensed to a set of pitfalls that have been identified and thoroughly investigated over the years, many of which the next chapter will explicate and analyse.

CHAPTER 5:

PRELIMINARY METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

5.1 Methodological Considerations in Psychobiographical Research

As was discussed in part in the concluding section of psychobiographical critique in Chapter 4, the method houses many psychological pitfalls that are worth rumination. Anderson (1981) claimed that practitioners in the field harbour at least a few assumptions regarding the value of applying psychological formulas to analysis of historical icons, however, such premeditations appear to assume, in error, that they cover the full spectrum of life history details. This chapter aims to address many of the considerations to be extended by the method, much of which relates to the common faults of the method and its followers. Thereafter, it aims to place focus on the topic of ethics, which is often a matter of importance that has aptly been described as a “thorny issue” in psychobiography (Ponterotto, 2013, p. 19).

5.2 Research Bias

5.2.1 Discussing research bias.

Elms (1994) proposed that a contemporary biographical account seeks not to adhere to what is considered to be the age-old tendency to flourish on gossip and rumour, which is still often held in relation to the personal pasts of others. Instead, he highlighted the redeeming quality of life stories, which can reveal a life on a surface level, and dive deeper, to identify the mental processes that underlie the behaviour. However, as is the case with numerous reductionist tendencies that have besmirched the lives of historically noteworthy figures (often through the

action of misguided labelling and flawed methodology), it is not an invalid claim that “bad psychobiography is easier to write than good psychobiography” (Elms, 1994, p. 4).

Part of this a notion may be two underlying traits, that Elms (1994) termed *superego-tripping* and *ego idealism* respectively. Both relate to attributional flaws suffered by people, and could find resonance in the roles of both actor and observer among the practitioners of psychobiography. *Superego-tripping*, according to Elms (1994), is a term to describe people who cultivate the perception that life falls predictably into their moralised schemas of the world and its operations. In its failure to describe the full spectrum of this tendency of superego-tripping, *ego-idealism* puts forward the idea of unwavering moral certitudes, which judge the world purely on one’s perceptive standing on how things should be, ideally. Though Elms’s (1994) initial aim was to find a fitting term to describe Foster Dulles at the time (who, as a secretary of state, reprimanded United States morality for its value mission), these same terms could refer to a research bias that can befall any practitioner of psychobiography.

Good psychobiographical practice does not condone attempts to pigeonhole the methodology and ethical considerations according to the moral compass and judgements of correctness as subjectively inferred by the researcher. Elms (1994) illustrated this perfectly in highlighting, once more, Freud’s act of using Leonardo da Vinci as scapegoat for many of Freud’s own theoretical formulations about homosexuality. Powerful criticism has been expressed about his pioneering attempt at psychobiography, which highlights the first major flaw of overidentification with the subject of choice, that is, an effort to sublimate emotions as an extended analysis of the self and for the purposes of theory-building (Kőváry, 2011).

Elms (1994, p. 15) stated, figuratively, that it is not often that the tradition of using a specific subject as the “clay for a specific theoretical brick” is applied, rather, the biographical

subject serves “mainly to keep the theoretical pot bubbling”; thus, highlighting the usefulness in psychobiographical study of fuelling theoretical development that seems to rise and grow, unbidden, whilst, in addition, making us aware of the outcome of a research bias that might spring forth just as unexpectedly. Labelled differently, Anderson (1981) talked of *disparagement*; a term that is reflective of some characteristics of research bias, which convey the researcher’s negative standing in relation to the historic individual, and who uses psychological theory as the vector to slander the subject’s status on the basis of one-dimensional pathological views.

Contemporarily, Ponterotto (2017) issued a warning, like others before him, about falling prey to the allure of a *confirmatory bias*, which leads the researcher down the road of discounting any evidence that does not readily support initially held hypotheses or views regarding the subject being studied. In their objective, scientist role, researchers may, thus, avoid subjectivity, but fall through the dishonest use of source data, by failing to offer an holistic account of an entire life (Elms, 1994), with its emotional high points and low points (Cox & McAdams, 2014). This is no surprise, as Ponterotto and Moncayo (2018) made us aware of the deep connection that the psychobiographer develops toward their subject, through the extended engagement with the details of the chosen subject’s life.

These dangers may be even more prevalent if a researcher almost exclusively uses and uncovers primary source data – which becomes addictive in its own right. Elms (1994) commented on the sheer excitement or denouement to be experienced from finding a subsequent piece of evidence that could either broaden or narrow down the possibility of an idea taking shape. When previously unpublished, such new evidence unearths new perspectives on the subject’s public life, and can be revealing of more latent intentions, ambitions or motives (Elms,

1994). These primary sources often lay bare the innermost workings of the subject's mind, revealing, for instance, memories freighted with affective value. Cox and McAdams (2014) explained how people seek to extract psychological benefit from the episodic low points of their lives and, as a result, construct episodic high points that may revealing of the individual's emotional regulation processes. In this view, memories should be seen, rather, as an expression of present desires and convictions, instead of them presenting accurate reflections of the past (Abella, 2016). And so, Kőváry (2011) referred to the importance of using sources separated from the personal space of the subject, thereby to add value to primary source claims.

This addiction to primary source use becomes a troublesome consideration. Alexander (1988) mentioned that, trifling as it may seem, an awareness of positive scripts and their utility (including energy extended to maintain them) and the coping strategies involved in negative scenes discovered in a person's narrative, offer insights into a subject's life that may prove sufficient for the creation of psychodiagnostic judgements. This seems to be a warning in earnest for practitioners in the discipline of psychology, because such psychologically infused judgements could easily induce immense subject admiration (Cara, 2007; Elms, 1994; Kőváry, 2011), or lead to subtle and procedural denigration (Schultz, 2005a). These judgements had possibly contributed to psychobiography becoming a "dirty word" (Elms, 1994, p. 4) in the mid-20th century.

Runyan (1982) issued another warning in relation to consideration of creating subject accounts; this time, Runyan highlights reconstructive notions displayed by psychobiographers, that border on the practices of hagiographers (Delehay, 1961; Ponterotto, 2014) and the veneration displayed toward the renowned (Mitchell & Howcroft, 2015). *Reconstruction* is deemed by Schultz (2005a) to refer to an overreliance on a singular cue (often to compensate for

a paucity of evidence), and it entails recreating events in the lives of people to such a degree so as to colour the life with a value that remains unsupported by evidence. Most criticism seems to be reserved for the phenomenon of *retrodiction*, and the consequential affects that textual impact and deduction have on past facts, together with the dimming effect of evidence in relaying a life; doing so makes the overarching practice of reconstructive interpretation seem justified (Runyan, 1982; Ponterotto, 2014).

However, the process does not appear to have exterminated subjectivity wholly. Schultz (2005a) did not regard psychobiography under the famed but reducible *deconstructionist* view; in fact, he makes the reader aware, once more, that its practitioners believe the underlying drives to action and processes are very real phenomena that can, at times, be interpreted better by some than by others. This idea is solidified by yet another figurative view on the matter: “People are like poems, and like poems, people may be interpreted in different ways, some even contradictory” (Schultz, 2005a, p. 19). However, Runyan (2005a) made clear that meanings have found their rigour in oversimplification instead, as shown by the pluralities of interpretation.

Carlson (as cited by Schultz, 2005, p. 5) offered an alternative view on the matter. She suggested raising ones blinders upon entering a life, to observe the quantifiable mindsets that dominate a balanced regard for researcher subjectivity; instead, psychobiographers should immerse themselves in the life with its “dead ends and the detours, its accrediting amount of biological data, with subjectivity and presuppositions”. This may seem to be an easy task, as Ponterotto (2017) conceded that thoughts about the subject would already have taken root, whether passionate or denigrating. Yet, it is these very preliminary notions about the life of another that appears to be reminiscent of Erikson’s intonations of the unwilling countertransference that the utilisation of autobiographical sources can facilitate; highlighting in

the historian those initial feelings of great admiration and subject denunciations that are framed as biased accounts, which are void of the desired subject-directed neutrality (Kőváry, 2011; Ponterotto & Moncayo, 2018).

5.2.2 Eliminating research bias.

Elms (1994, p. 19) offered sound advice on the notion of “letting the subject choose you”; a practice arising from a lifelong interest (Ponterotto, 2014), or spurred by the overall attractive nature of a life, it reminds practitioners that the choice of subject inspires commitment . . . or can demand it (depending on the process of decision-making). Schultz (2005b) stated that these subjects exert the irresistible allure of talent or unlikable qualities that the researcher rationalises writing about. In applying Freud’s advice (given, but not self-applied) on avoiding the idolised, Elms (1994) pitted this idolisation (hagiography) against a subject animosity that could possibly equal the intensity of this idolisation, and create an aspired *ambivalence* (Schultz, 2005b), from which to be wholly objective about the achievements, failures, virtues, and faults of the chosen case study (Kőváry, 2011).

Countertransference (Kőváry, 2011, 2015; Ponterotto & Moncayo, 2018), as a defensive reaction by life story writers, can, through its idealisation, make psychobiography “a piece of useless impertinence”, and lead to the “regrettable sacrifice of truth to an illusion,” (Freud, as cited by Abella, 2016, p. 9). Such reactions could, possibly, be staunched by frequent interdisciplinary consultation about the subject with other relevant, knowledgeable figures (Ponterotto, 2017), such as context-specific historians. Recent best practices highlight the *epoche* process of balancing out biased tendencies by refraining from judgement (Ponterotto, 2014), referred to as a *bracketing* process, which may be put into action through the researcher’s own

agency in acknowledging and then writing down thoughts and feelings and including it as material in an appendix to serve as interpretive data in itself (Anderson, 1981; Ponterotto, 2014). Though cognisance of these unconscious reactions is necessary, it can, nonetheless, be seen as more than a mere obstacle. Anderson (1981) raised awareness of the inductive power such reactions might embody in providing a glimpse into feelings harboured by others with whom the historic figure mingled. In the same breath, however, is contained the difficulty of tapping the source of such evoked feelings, and comprehending them to the extent of differentiating such emotions from those emotions possibly experienced by others.

Elms (1994) also warned against choosing subjects for purposes of catharsis or intellectual honesty; choices which are best saved for alternative strategies. Such a practice of projection through the life of another could easily be prevented by following clear guidelines laid down through an initial set of questions to pose to the chosen subject, and which the researcher aims to answer. In doing this, the researcher is coaxed further to foster an empathic connection to the subject chosen, allowing the data to voice an objectivity that psychobiography has been accused of not relaying (Schultz, 2005a). Laced through this process should be the practice of researcher reflexivity (Cara, 2007; Ponterotto, 2014).

Regarding this position of reflexivity, which embodies a controlled empathy and awareness of the dangers of attachment to the historic figure (Anderson, 1981; Elms, 1994; Runyan, 1982; Schultz, 2005a), Ponterotto (2017) offered advice about preparing for psychobiographical research, especially for counsellors. First among these considerations is an understanding and interest that comes naturally in relation to the subject. Secondly, due to the intense practical training endured in coursework, counsellors or practitioners in psychology, in general, come highly prepared with much of the empathetic skill-set, as posited by Anderson

(1981). Lastly, due to the training incorporating the arts of the practitioner-scientist model, previous conflictual encounters of regulated empathy and researcher objectivity have a greater likelihood of remaining balanced (Ponterotto, 2017).

In addition, Elms (1994) emphasised the importance of biographers policing themselves in the use of data, so as lay claim to its honest utilisation. He refers to the unfavourable practice of the researcher emphasising biographical detail that has no significant bearing to other parts of the character; offering speculations that permeate and transcend the allowed boundaries of available data; and offering conclusions on theoretical applications to the subject's life – these are all behaviours that should not be condoned, due to them being unacceptable practices and, overall, unethical.

Runyan (1982) offered a feasible solution for allowing consideration of alternative accounts of a life history, which may prove to be valuable in our search for criteria to improve overall comprehension of the practice. Recent years has seen the steady accumulation of stepwise approaches (Du Plessis, 2017) and best practices (Ponterotto, 2014) that guide, at least, the choice of subject. Du Plessis (2017) elaborated on maintaining cogency in answering a certain set of questions that could validate the eventual choice of subject. To broaden the so-called *horizon of understanding*, questions surrounding the relationship with the subject, the historical significance of the subject, the status of the person, as well as the amount of available data, are to be answered satisfactorily (Elms, 1994; Ponterotto, 2014; Ponterotto & Moncayo, 2018; Schultz, 2005a). Du Plessis (2017) tied this reasoning together in her statement, that the data of the chosen case constitutes as much of the sampling process as the chosen subject him/herself does.

5.3 Reductionism

5.3.1 Explaining reductionism.

By pioneering the psychobiographical trend, Freud was also the first practitioner who suffered from the wide array of criticism expressed about the method – a method that only now finds itself in an emerging adulthood phase of its prolific qualities (Ponterotto, 2015b). Among this criticism was Freud’s excessive focus on Leonardo da Vinci’s “vulture fantasy”, a childhood manifestation that would prove to be an overapplication of a minor detail in explaining much of Da Vinci’s adult life (Kőváry, 2011). The attribution of so much of adult functioning to childhood experience is undue, as Runyan (1982) made clear, and is caused by the partial influence of psychoanalytic traditions (Anderson, 1981; Kőváry, 2011), which often overemphasise the formative importance of childhood. Such an application speaks to the practice of *reductionism*. Almost self-explanatory in its presentation, reductionism refers to adult development and its facets as reducible to residual manifestations from childhood, whether events, thoughts, or developmental milestones as experiential sets (Anderson, 1981; Elms, 1994; Ponterotto, 2014; Runyan, 1982). Refined by an earlier Eriksonian concept, *originology* (Erikson, 1969), decorously given to a similar reductionist tendency, the common pitfall, though acknowledged, paradoxically still poses a considerable threat. Originology is a practice that also seeks developmental causation in childhood conflicts to explain the behaviours of men and women throughout their lives (Elms, 1994; Erikson, 1969; Ponterotto, 2014).

Other manifestations streaked through with such overemphasis include *eventism*, in which the researcher artistically, although unnaturally, argues for the pivotal influence of one episode in a subject’s life, from which all other events relating to the subject’s behaviour and

experiential complexity are determined. To eventism, Runyan (1982) added the *critical period fallacy*, as yet another reductionist practice through which a life story is constructed around a particular developmental phase that is deemed to be of undue, great formative import. It is, however, given that narrative identity evolves from a sequenced sociality with caregivers, eventually being born from an inner space of experience that houses introspection, as the manifestation of self-consciousness (Maraffa & Paternoster, 2015). Such a view seems to convey that one should not discount the agency of the subject under study, nor their voice in describing their own development (Alexander, 1990). Maraffa and Paternoster (2015) described identity construction as giving pause to much of the validity that reductionistic accounts may lay claim to. Originology (and many of the other reductionist pitfalls) seems to be a simplistic way to describe a singular, influential focus point from which both future development and, thus, life story interpretations stem (Anderson, 1981; Erikson, 1969; Runyan, 1982). However, narrative construction seems to be, at least partly, outlined by attachment theory (Marraffa & Paternoster, 2015), which opens up the facilitative field of future personality construction to consider other influential role players in a person's life.

Clearly, doing so broadens the complexity of personality development. Caregivers offer bonds of affection that, in their supportive ontology, influence the capacity of the child to express comprehension of themselves (Marraffa & Paternoster, 2015). This capacity appears to, thus, highlight a sense of agency in the developing child in communicative interaction with the parent, making descriptive accounts formed around a singular pivotal moment, appear less valid. Nonetheless, reductionism persists, perhaps, because of the recreation of a personal past that offers a glimpse into present functioning, and which is supported by findings in developmental

psychology, cognitive psychology, social psychology, and personality research (Cox & McAdams, 2014).

Anderson (1981) also highlighted originology as a façade of reductionism, but introduced awareness of a pathological focus that psychobiographers persist with in their writing. Freud (as cited in Abella, 2016, p. 9) makes the bold statement, that “a pathographical review of a great man never results in an understanding of his importance and his achievements”. Elms (1994, p. 9) seemed to believe strongly that psychobiographers can do much to move from what he terms “explanatory reductionism to explanatory complexity”, and to refocus their passion on healthy psychological functioning, instead of focusing on pathological traits, which seemed to be a fairly popular trend in the first few decades of the 20th century. In fact, much of this focus on abnormality called for a more *eugraphic* approach, after finding that psychobiography and positive psychology have overlapping goals (Fouché & Van Niekerk, 2010).

Wachtel (as cited by Runyan, 1982) supported the hope of this goal alignment by giving a more inclusive view of childhood influence on adult development. Instead of early experience directly shaping adult personality, it is childhood personality that is moulded by such experiences, thereby, in turn, providing a degree of determinism in relation to the possible environments that an individual may encounter as an adult (Sigelman & Rider, 2012). A more adaptive view is supported that is laced with free will, where the future life course as it proceeds from childhood can have multiple outcomes along different determined routes, providing the blueprint for people, behaviours and situations to be encountered (Runyan, 1982).

Elms (1994) refocused his view of functioning firmly on the general trend of clinicians to opt for clinical-diagnostic work in their profession, aligning their involvement in more normative adaptive capacities to other practitioners in the discipline who deal with other variations of

human functioning and development. According to Elms and others (Ponterotto, 2017), practitioners in the psychological discipline, purely by involvement in these more frequent cases of normal adaptation, are exposed to a wide array of experiential evidence. This leaves them trained in providing a more balanced view on broadening strengths and resources, as much as responding to the problems of adaptation for which they are trained. Thus, psychologists deal with what is considered fairly baseline, without the vast profusion of abnormality that most people would like to make the discipline accountable for. Later views even discount the notion of exclusive childhood to adulthood linkages. Instead, however, Runyan (1982, p.208) revived the realisation of *pathography* and of human “foibles and follies” to the exclusion of “normality in creativity” that still plagues the movement of psychobiography.

However, this obvious limitation of focussing on pathology seems to be less the result of the rise of the field of psychobiography, and more the brainchild of developing psychological thought (Ponterotto, 2014), in which the dominant influence of psychoanalysis (Anderson, 1981) permeates the discipline with its emphasis on childhood cues that had a significant influence on later motivations. More contemporary fields, such as positive psychology, have enhanced the prospect of reducible complexity in cognition and emotion (Elms, 1994). Psychobiography as a subfield seems to be merely the victim of an already established tendency, causing modern trendsetters in the field to opt, perhaps, for *expansionism*, which is defined as “a holistic, comprehensive, full-life review of the subject” (Ponterotto, 2014, p. 5) – this view does not seem wholly removed from already-held views of what the field ought to be. Expansionism could prove to be the cure for the already endemic reductionism (Elms, 1994), which is exacerbated by the misperception that an assembly of psychological experts must be involved, who devote themselves, with zealous fervour, to simplification of phenomena for explanatory purposes.

Thus, we find so-called experts who claim with ‘illusionary confidence’ their ability at summarising human complexity and conquering the big secret of human behaviour (Elms, 1994). It is important that we acknowledge that an ever-developing discipline will grow in complexity, and the simplification process is simply an invalid formula for capturing what practitioners find, on a daily basis, in their exposure to new cases of human functioning (Elms, 1994).

Reductionism has further manifestations, which may result in a written portrait of the case that cannot stand as a balanced assessment. Ponterotto (2014) continued to highlight this possibility by referring to the phenomenon of the *idealography*, which is characterised, in part, by traits of the hagiographic tradition. In this sense, psychobiographers are reducing the character and personality of an individual to a simplistic set of reverential aspects that fail to balance the character description (Anderson, 1981; Elms, 1994; Runyan, 1982). Contrastingly, *degradographies* (Ponterotto, 2014; 2017) and *pathographies* (Schultz, 2005a) paint individuals as possessing less of the spectrum of ideal qualities, and slant the image to the level of debasement, either shaming the individual based on rumour (as is the case with degradography), or subjugating the person to a set of diagnostic labels and rationalising by means of mental illness (pathography) (Ponterotto, 2014). Anderson (1981) offered some explanation for this error in the proponents of psychoanalysis – a tradition that was birthed from contact with patients, so, the adherents to the theory would more likely seek to advance those domains related to diagnosis. Schultz (2005a) advocated strongly for avoiding subjecting an individual to pathological symptoms. Such labels assign the enigma that the analysis is attempting to explain a mere denigrating name, thereby adding to a mystery to be uncovered (or diagnosed).

Whether through admiration of a historic figure through idealographic practice; the disreputable behaviour created by gossip; or the seemingly neutral judgement of mental capacity

through analytic labelling, the historic figure is painted in a polarised light with reference to inner mental strengths or shortcomings (Ponterotto, 2014). Doing so often adds to the speculative nature that has been criticised as characterising the field – speculation with no sufficient reasoning regarding the origins of daring psychological claims (Anderson, 1981).

As an element of research bias, *retrodiction*, in Runyan's (1982) opinion, finds relevance to reductionism when one considers how gaps in subject experience can be inferred in order to support a prevalent theme identified by the researcher. As has been mentioned, the researcher's discretion is made clear when considering the later acceptance of retrodictive accounts (Burman, 2015) that have often been found in hagiographies. In making a life renowned by creating a halo-effect through unevidenced accounts, the life is reduced to a famed celebration, instead of an honest appeal to subject faults (Runyan, 1982).

In sum, Runyan (1982) reminded us of the critique that has been directed at the psychobiographical enterprise on the premise of its reductionistic faults. These points of criticism range from reprimanding statements directed at weak evidence of childhood experience, and causal links that have been made to adulthood, to a failure to account for historical shifts in social, economic and political domains, that clearly recreate the milieu of the subject, but remain unacknowledged. In addition, there is the serious error of labelling, found in diagnostic ventures that attempt to explain the complexities of a human experience.

5.3.2 Minimising reductionism.

Schultz (2005a, p. 12) adequately captured the gist of reductionism in vivid imagery of being aware of the inverted pyramid: "Do not rest a great parcel of attitudes on one tiny point. When you do, more often than not the parcel collapses of its own weight". Such a warning

makes clear the error to be found in the art of interpretation and, as Schultz (2005a) claimed, the necessity of recognising that the gestalt of human experience is made up of many constituent driving forces, which each offering different contingencies for development (Runyan, 1982).

In the search for material, especially when the search involves the need to delve thoroughly into unpublished sources only found in archival material, the psychobiographer is confronted with a seductive remedy that could alleviate the omissions found in more public data, omissions that editors subtly and skilfully incorporate in their works. This remedy proves to be yet another obstacle that may seem to substantiate the vocal and powerful claims that researchers have held (Elms, 1994). Runyan (1982) referred to *reconstruction*, the partial recreation of a life that is partly based on reductionist forms, which include *eventism* and the *critical period fallacy*, and which are likely to fill the gaps left by second- and third-person accounts of the subject in question. Schultz (2005a) recommended, firstly, being aware of such interpretations, which often rely on a singular piece of data, and, secondly, being conscientious about asking relevant questions, which would thoroughly contextualise the finding with other information; such contextualisation may support the argument once the importance of the initial piece is deprecated.

Alexander (1990) offered a sound piece of wisdom about the struggle relating to inference that he himself confronted, as to how accurate and certain interpretations (regardless of the method or data source) could be. In this instance, he highlighted a key consideration: the subject itself. More specifically, “from the story description, which aspects were critical in the repertoire of the teller to the particular development portrayed” (Alexander, 1990, p. 37). This statement reinstates conscientiousness within the researcher about reconsidering the critical role played by the subject of study him/herself.

Perhaps, researchers should exercise caution in such an instance, as subject accounts often rely on meaning-making of emotional high and low points. Cox and McAdams (2014) found that emotionally valenced memories could predict present emotional regulation through affective cues. In illustration, negative affect, situationally evoked from an episodic low point, could, in presently revived sadness or despondency, attribute great negativity to the consequences of said event. Contrastingly, an inclination to positive meaning-making of an episodic high point in a life reveals a tendency to follow through with more positive affect, such as happiness, and to predict a more general inclination towards strong emotional regulation. Such findings are, thus, telling of the warning to be noted of the very subjective nature that autobiographical accounts may assume, and which may impose undue emotional inducement to a specific point, which sets the reductionist trap.

Even more contemporary solutions require cognisance regarding their procedures. Du Plessis (2017) posited a step-wise approach to pioneering best practices and guidelines, but warns of limitations if procedures are approached in too linear a fashion. Though a rigorous methodological approach is sought by such bold endeavours as psychobiography, the iterative quality should not be forgotten; if iteration is disregarded, the process itself could be too reductionist in its singular course that does not involve revisiting previous steps. The reductionism, thus, appears to be ignorant about the possible flaw in what seems to be a perfectly ordered sequence of steps.

Anderson (1981) formulated a set of precautions to aid avoiding reductionism. The first precaution involves the notion of thorough research, through which the rigour of an interpretation is counted as only as noteworthy as the evidence on which it is based. The second precaution relates to the “density” of data (Anderson, 1981, p. 5), which Anderson claims is the

foundation of using psychological terminology. The use of disciplinary jargon should be subject to a similar amount of thorough evidence of the content it addresses to substantiate its use. Third is a precaution about the assumption of assigning greater value to the explanatory prowess of the psychological domain for the events in a person's life history, than to the accounts of influential life domains, such as cultural and economic platforms. This warning corresponds then to the last precaution as well, that the psychobiographer maintains acknowledgement that his/her interpretation is a contributory, and not exclusive to the subject interpretations harnessed from other accounts.

5.4 Cross-cultural Differences

5.4.1 Discussing cross-cultural differences.

In claiming that cross-cultural differences could present pitfalls, it is advised to consider culture, first, as a mindset, and second, as an actual collection of ideas and practices specific to a particular group. Regarding the first view, Elms (1994) offered a rose-tinted hope to highlight an apparent, but paradoxically highly subtle, truth about the psychological profession – much of which some do not agree as being applicable to the status and job descriptions of the clinicians who work to uncover mental pathology. He offered the view that many other professionals in the discipline are exposed to an altogether different therapeutic framework of people creatively trying to adapt to very normative life circumstances, instead of showing clear signs of mental disorder. By such reasoning, the very therapeutic hour would be more revealing of psychological fortitude in dealing with the demands of life, training a camaraderie of non-pathologising psychologists who could contribute greatly to a more eugenic (Fouché & Van Niekerk, 2010)

approach to psychobiography. Such an advance could lead to a focus on a 'culture' of studying healthy psychological functioning.

In continuing the view of culture as a mindset, Elms (1994) promoted the idea of letting one's subject do the choosing, and to be aware of those aspirational figures who had impacted one in art and in politics, or in one's career, or had garnered an attractive fascination throughout one's life. This view seems to refer to choosing an emergent figure representative of the time, firmly rooted in the *Zeitgeist* of a period that seems similar to one's own. Runyan describes this approach clearly:

Accounts of their lives have a power to move us deeply, to help us imagine what it must have been like to live in different social and historical circumstances, to provide insights into the workings of lives, and perhaps, to provide a frame of reference for reassessing our own experience, own fortunes, own possibilities of existence. (Runyan, 1982, p. 3)

The second notion for approaching cultural difference is to appropriate it to specific groupings, with their ideologies and praxis. In this line, theoretical choice often falls between the crossfire, where a theorist would – unacceptably – claim the transcendent value of a theory, regardless of the religious, economic, social and political climate (Stone, as cited by Runyan, 1982). Such criticism, Runyan (1982) explained, is not new. Theorists often have opted for a psychological framework that is narrow in its scope (Elms, 1994), and that fails to find a foothold in the particular historical context of the chosen subject. Another fault is assuming that imposing new, emergent theories would, ultimately, convey a thorough application to history. As Runyan (1982) stated, doing so is suggestive of an assumed similarity of cognition, affect and behaviour across times and settings, a generalising quality that would make the study of cultural differences seem void in its goal.

Much of psychodynamic traditions have been considered transcendent in their views, and running the risks explained above (Anderson, 1981). Ponterotto (2014) mentioned two problems with such a stance. The first is the research bias that could readily result in a misappropriation of theoretical elements unto the subject, as displayed thoroughly by Freud's initial error with Da Vinci (Elms, 1994). The second problem relates to the obvious limits imposed by reliance on a single theory to illuminate a complex life (Runyan, 1982). So, though psychodynamic formulations may be correct in assuming the universality of unconscious motives and repressed cognitive experiences (Anderson, 1981), they nonetheless fail to embody the entirety of human experience – as does any application of a singular theory (Ponterotto, 2014).

This disregard of the substantial differences between the different domains of cultural groupings within and across history imply *ethnocentrism* and *temporocentrism*, which are best avoided (Runyan, 1982). The temporal misgivings of a contemporary theory's application to an era removed from that of the researcher, is a common error attributed to psychobiographers (Anderson, 1981). It is something Burman (2015) elucidated on, by investigating the often-invisible ideas and contributions of foreign authors. American conceptualisations have frequently maintained its reign through internalisation, leading to a neglect of authors from other countries and their understandings. Sadly, it is this very neglect that appears to be being swept under the carpet in terms of its importance as an issue, and which feeds the continuation of ignoring international sensibility. Burman (2015) delivered a view that confirms much of the dangers posed by research bias and reductionism, as we run the risk (perhaps through training and normative disciplinary standing) of accepting the history of theory simply in terms of its 'good', instead of considering its limits. In failing to give voice to the balance, how are practitioners of

psychobiography, thus, to approach the wide lay of life and its context honestly and in a measured fashion?

Burman (2015) explained how a disciplinary chauvinism can rule sensibility, often forcing theories into other parts of the world by draping it in few contextualised layers to make it seem appropriated to setting through a form of reconstruction (Runyan, 1982). Indigenised to fit the local need and interest, the neglect of the invisible foreign contribution becomes an injustice in its own right. Cara (2007) recommended using a hermeneutical model, and considers it crucial in interpreting a subject that is absent. By being conscious of differences in time and place, hermeneutic filtering is mindful in taking into consideration the context and its individual. Similarly, Ponterotto (2014) offered enlightenment through his ‘socio-cultural historical context’ best practice regarding the way these temporal and contextual differences worm itself into the interpretive stance to one’s subject. It can be claimed that the time-fixed differences of history to the present might lead to worldviews and principled discrepancies that could pose challenges for psychobiographers in relation to fully comprehending the historical saturation of the subject, especially if the subject is not a contemporary of the researcher.

5.4.2 Addressing cross-cultural differences.

In countering ethnocentric and temporocentric inclinations, Runyan (1982) listed a collection of steps that could serve as remedy for the problem of cross-cultural differences. Firstly, he advised the researcher to become knowledgeable about the socio-historic setting of the individual, so as to familiarise him/herself with the motives, drives, and actions that constituted a life in such a context. Secondly, a firmer comprehension should be supported by a comparative stance of other groupings with which the individual was in contact within his/her particular

locality. The idiographic approach should not be left unattended as a revealing tool into what constitutes the individuality of the subject, and what makes this fascinating individual unique against his/her historical backdrop. Finally, there might well be some psychological theories that transcend its chained utility to certain contexts, and which can be found to have wider applicability. We accept Kluckhohn and Murray's (1948) formulation of a tiered generalisation, and the claim that some psychological frameworks will have a universal application.

Considering culture, social networks, political playing fields, shifting economies, and the influence of religious doctrines as parts of the whole of the subject's context was not always counted as a step of the psychobiographical research process (Du Plessis, 2017), and could thus have limited the trustworthiness regarding an account. It becomes clear that this is a gap that needs to be remedied. Du Plessis (2017) advised that sufficient acknowledgement of a context secures a consideration of its influence in a psychobiography.

A historical map can be drawn with the use of Hiller's (2011) Multi-layered Chronological Chart (MLCC), which offers a contextual data organisational tool that intersects historic events with the biographical subject details. As Ponterotto and Reynolds (2013, p.14) conveniently conclude, "The job of a psychobiographer is to contextualize the behaviour, thought processes, and life decisions of the individual under examination, or in other words understand the 'why' behind her or his behaviour". The use of the MLCC establishes the researcher's focus on the impact of history, whilst fostering a respect for the formative influence the relevant crises identified with the period could have had on the subject (Ponterotto & Reynolds, 2013).

Burman (2015) emphasised the importance of encouraging multiculturalism, a task that seems obvious but not always simple to bring to fruition. Alexander (1990, p. 6) provided a

worthy incentive: “The differences among stories and the uniqueness of each, despite the similarities of structure shared by all lives, provide hope and sow seeds of wisdom through this shared experience”. This point appears to substantiate the value to be found in the individual level of generalisation, and determining how one person could be different from all others (Kluckhohn & Murray, 1948).

5.5 Elitism and Easy Genre

5.5.1 Investigating elitism and easy genre.

History is witness to the birth, decline, and renaissance of the psychobiographical movement (Du Plessis, 2017; Kőváry, 2011; Ponterotto, 2015b), much of which may be encapsulated by both the reasons for, and the latent message apparent in the statement that, “Psychobiography is not only a way of doing biography; it’s a way of doing psychology” (Elms, 1994, p. 5). Regarding the wider perspectives held by many researchers at the time of its revival, Elms (1994) stated that many potentials of the field should be warned about approaching the investigation of a single case and aiming to uncover this singular life. Given the reign of the quantitative method from the 1950s (Kőváry, 2011; Runyan, 1982), it seems completely rational that dominant research doctrine facilitated many of the hesitations caused by these views.

Elms (1994) admitted that psychologists have readily steered away from the contingencies offered by the individual case, reserving their pronouncements for the sake of generalisation. It was Allport (as cited by Elms, 1994) who posited the clash of what is known as the *idiographic* against the *nomothetic*. Idiographic practice utilises existing theory to develop deeper comprehension of an individual, whilst the more prevalent *nomothetic* approach is geared

to promoting general principles, laws and theories (Robinson & McAdams, 2015). Idiographic research, as a practice for investigating the unique, however, faced a severe backlash after being labelled “artistic psychology”, for its strong distinction from the nomothetic and its focus on generalised principles. Allport (1962) later attempted to rectify this error, which seemed to colour the approach as almost elite, by replacing idiographic with a gentler label that would, perhaps, reinstate the image of “the scientist” to the psychobiographical enterprise; thus, the *morphogenic* approach was posed in its stead, in an effort to discern and understand the sequenced process that forms individual personality (Elms, 1994; Runyan, 1982).

The idiographic label stuck, as did the besmirchment of psychobiography (Elms, 1994). Nonetheless, Runyan (1982, p. 167) did give voice to what Allport (1942, 1961, 1962) intended: “The study of individuality requires idiographic methods capable of revealing individual traits or variables and their patterned relationship within the individual.” Allport, according to Runyan (1982), even believed that individuals could be approached through both idiographic and nomothetic methods. Kluckhohn and Murray (1948) suggested three levels of generality that nestle both approaches in terms of their contributions. Whilst nomothetic approaches seek to explain how individuals fit into universals or group context, the idiographic approach is effective in highlighting the truths pertaining to the individual. Thus, a more comprehensive fit would be attained in proving how “[e]very man is in certain respects (a) like all other men, (b) like some other men, (c) like no other men” (Kluckhohn & Murray, 1953, p.53). Runyan (1982) affirmed the place of the idiographic approach to individuals, where idiographic goals draw together the acts of seeking to generalise about, predict, explain, and describe the individual; idiographic methods (like psychobiography) can thus be seen as a means to such an end.

Despite its criticism, the word *idiographic* has been used with variable effectiveness as label, but its meaning appears more comprehensive. Runyan (1982) stated that the idiographic venture not only implies the uniqueness found within an individual, but also the patterned characteristics that piece together such individuality. Latilla and Kramer's (2018) study – *Kiedis's Scar Tissue: A Phenomenological Psychobiography* – exemplified how such patterned characteristics can be studied in greater depth and with enriched understanding through the subjective themes that are revealed through phenomenology, whilst filtering it through the additional layers of psychological theory as is the practice of psychobiography. Teleological now in its scope, idiographic research seeks an in-depth understanding of identity, which is but a product of interrelated processes (Runyan, 1982). Thus, the term reassumes its intended purpose, and fully encompasses the effort that psychobiography prides itself on. It could not be elitist in believing that the study of unique individuals is removed from other efforts; and, in such instances, proving its worth whilst engaging in its practice makes it by no means an easy genre (Elms, 1994; Robinson & McAdams, 2015, Runyan, 1982).

5.5.2 Mediating elitism and easy genre.

Elms (1994), furthermore, elaborated on the difficulty of the genre in mediating the conflicting interest of archivists and researchers, the former of whom are well paid to effectively handle the inquiring natures of the latter. Archival research presents its challenges in the perusal of documents, as handling of manuscripts and note-taking may be limited to certain requirements that force the mental exertion of the researcher in balancing interests with allowances. However, the search for unpublished data is but one part of the iterative process (Elms, 1994).

Many stepwise guidelines (Elms, 1994; Cara, 2007; Du Plessis, 2017) offer sound evidence for articulating the choice of subject, the search for relevant data, and choosing the theory to frame the exploration; however, few such approaches indicate the exact moment at which the surrounding considerations should weave through the cycle (Du Plessis, 2017). This gap complicates the genre in its apparent lack of continuous structure. Here, Schultz (2005a, p. 13) intervened with his commentary on style: “The blend of plodding, generic, spuriously precise, clunkily objective and almost pusillanimous prose one comes to expect with dread of standard research-journal-style writing only undermines the effectiveness of the psychobiographical essay.” In the same breath, Schultz (2005, p. 13) stated that, “we wallow in nuance, never rushing to oversimplification or generalisation”. Maraffa and Paternoster (2015) intervened on the mutable nature of the narrative self, which seems precarious in any final resolution of its structure. This nature then, makes the approach difficult, for especially those who follow a purely narrative-based method that sees the mind to be picked at being as fluctuating as the text to be interpreted (Schultz, 2005a) and the narrated self as a form without guarantee (Marraffa & Paternoster, 2015). Elms (1994) could have been amused, and commented that psychobiography could, obviously, then not follow standards that are predetermined. In fact, both the subjects being investigated and the researcher themselves play a large role in determining how analysis unfolds. Many of these comments strengthen awareness of the meticulous attention to be allotted to psychobiography, which warns the researcher to avoid overstepping the prowess of the research.

5.6 Evidence and the Absent Subject

5.6.1 The question of evidence and the absent subject.

Public data on an individual may be a strong commodity in terms of a historical resource, but the editors of such sources often omit select details that could be of great utility to the researcher (Elms, 1994). Filling the gap of such omissions with reconstructed constituents serves to mislead the psychobiographer, who inadvertently creates new plot twists for future interpretations via the psychological framework. Ultimately, it stands to reason that certain reductionist errors can become common practice under such effects. It is such distortions that often inspire researchers to go beyond the public record, to the more archival titbits that complete the flow of missing narratives whilst cultivating a renewed value stance to the holistic qualities of the subject being studied (Elms, 1982). Schultz (2005b), fittingly, commented that research interest cannot fill the gap of insufficient evidence. Considering the psychological lens through which the evidence is perceived, such evidence should clearly, then, show variation and be psychological of nature for the researcher to continue.

Obviously, depending on the resource base available for a particular researcher, archival research might not always be a possible avenue for the psychobiographer (Fouché & Van Niekerk, 2010), especially postgraduate students who, furthermore, choose subjects separated from their own local context. Alexander (1990) was of the opinion that using the resource should offer a large enough glimpse into the psychological make-up of the individual, for which oral sources may be of special value.

Hermeneutics has been tactfully dubbed as a stance that forms part of those “intangible strategies” for the analysis and interpretation of data (Cara, 2007). Used as a tool to infer the

context from its source, hermeneutics emulates that empathic resonance (Anderson, 1981; Ponterotto, 2014) that is desirable in relation to the unspoken messages of the person being explored. Cara (2007) reminded us that this has importance, especially for dealing with a subject with whom one cannot interact.

Runyan (1982) was of the opinion that the issue of evidence is often the source of critique held in reserve for interpretive accounts that could not answer many of the questions that could be posed to an individual personally. For distortions and omissions that some data poses, especially those data sets presented for the scrutiny of the public eye, scorn is expressed, to the researcher too, who approached the unpublished record to unearth further truths – a dilemma that, if not treated with care, presents with its own ethics (Elms, 1994; Ponterotto, 2015a). Runyan (1982) stated, however, that the topic of adequate evidence by no means precludes interpretations made of other historical figures.

Nevertheless, it would appear that criticism persists on account of source information that remains insufficient for its greater purpose, or rather, which is abused and misinterpreted to glean meaning that it does not clearly convey (Runyan, 1982). What is juxtaposed, furthermore, is the lack of data, to an otherwise vast proficiency of information that requires further filtering. In fact, Elms (1994, p. 22) is of the opinion that the committed psychohistorian would perceive the matter of “too much data” as “an oxymoron”.

Elms (1994), especially, warned against developing an addiction to primary source data, which often presents the as-yet-to-be-known mysteries surrounding the subject. Such research often inspires the search for more data. In relation to, perhaps, the formation of research bias and reductionism, Abella (2016) mentioned how Freud pointed out that memories were less reflective of the past; instead, being a product, perhaps all the more, of present beliefs. Thus, the

psychobiographer runs the risk of dedication of the account being presented, whilst the account does not present an accurate picture of historical facts. It is this very possibility that correlates with what Anderson (1981) identified as the two main disadvantages of the psychobiographer: (a) the inability to glean from the subjects themselves the information to be used, and (b) the inability to test viewpoints deduced from data against the subjects themselves.

5.6.2 Answering the question of evidence and subject absence.

It is the view of this researcher that using mainly public resources in consideration of the chosen subject remains a valid approach, considering the resource base that was readily at his disposal, as well as the separation of context that limited access to much of the written and human resources that could be tapped in investigating the life of the chosen individual. Berg and Lune (2012) claimed that a whole set of experiences and contextual descriptions are open for investigation, and as such, public data in its holistic considerations (open to the criticisms of other readers who came before) may be more reflective, in an objective sense, of the times in which the subject is situated.

Cara (2007) advised on the priceless value that is clearly to be placed on an empathic understanding. Empathy has been addressed by many practitioners (Anderson, 1981; Kóváry, 2011; Ponterotto, 2014; Schultz, 2005a), and is a therapeutic tool that is useful for psychobiographical studies. Cara (2007) simply enunciated the very practical observation to be made between being the researcher who assumes the role of conveying another, as yet, unsung tale to be added in giving voice to the absent subject and the role of empathetic researcher-practitioner. Counsellors may find that this skill, which is so natural to their practical training

and developed experience (Ponterotto, 2017), is a particularly fruitful tool in an approach that may seem to deliver new evidence.

Often, the life may also present with such immense complexity that the reduction of its explanations and descriptions (inclusive of the finer nuances) is particularly difficult. Alexander (1988, 1990), with this line of reasoning, presented his famed *indicators of salience*, which aid in extracting data for the purposes of analysis. He commented that:

[I]f our data sample is large and representative enough of the functioning of the subject, we may also be led to hypothesis concerning the range, magnitude, and frequency of the affects in the experiential life of our subject as well as the cognitive motivational referents to which they are ordinarily attached. (Alexander, 1990, p. 27)

We are, thus, led to inferences regarding prevalent scripts by which the subject functions, indicative of the scenes of struggle that pervade his/her attentive space, if only with a vaguely conscious mind. Schultz (2005b) built on the identifiers posited by Alexander (1988, 1990) with his conceptualisation of *prototypical scenes*, which recapitulate the defining moments of a life in their various guises, making them ‘supersalient’. By identifying such scenes, Alexander claimed that the researcher would be led to the formation of new views, which would be put to the test sequentially (using empathy to denote the truth of a hypothesis, as Anderson (1981) mentioned) and, then, ultimately, to use the scenes to test previous interpretations from which the researcher may have evidenced an element of significance from his findings.

Clearly, the data chosen plays a central role in adherence to many of these data management principles, and judiciously selecting relevant sources could contribute to a consensual validation (Carlson, 1988) of many of the scripts highlighted (Alexander, 1990), and also help avoid the informed consent of relevant individuals in the pursuit of knowledge that move beyond the public record. In contrast with the therapist, Anderson (1981), thus,

commented on the limitations regarding source use imposed on the psychobiographer, though the limitations does not withhold the advantages to be experienced. There is often an extensive circle of informants who are removed from the figure's subjective space that could comment on the life that the particular person had lived. It is also this very life, in its entirety and with its completed chapters, that is available for investigative perusal by the researcher, instead of a single, removed episodic account that cannot be seen in sequence. Lastly, Anderson (1981) made us aware of the well-rounded account that must be constructed of the individual, instead of it being limited to the maladaptive threads that often unravel in the therapeutic situation. As mentioned, the very nature of this study commits itself toward offering a primarily eugraphic perspective of C. S. Lewis, thus, maintaining sincerity in its balanced presentation.

5.7 Inflated Expectations

5.7.1 Identifying inflated expectations

A severe charge listed against the psychobiography movement relates to its focus on analysis to the exclusion of other disciplinary concepts, which reflects a field-centred reductionism; and then, the casual overreach of its interpretations, which fail to consider much of the dynamics of the creative process (Rosenwald, 2012). Anderson (1981) communicated that inflated claims were seldom problematic for psychobiographical practitioners, but that the conscientiousness of critique provoked caution. Previously (refer to section 5.4.1), it had been mentioned (Runyan, 1982; Schultz, 2005a) that researchers have been inclined to exclude other influential factors, such as the political, social, cultural and historic domains, whilst vesting much of that focus in the psychological interpretation. Ponterotto (2015b) highlighted the

informative benefits of an interdisciplinary consultation, which Fouché (2015) advocated as valuable to the field. However, psychohistory has often remained a venture that seems to limit itself through its lack of cooperation. Ponterotto (2017) made a valid point in this regard, in mentioning that the length of time spent in engagement with research (especially archival material) could, possibly, indicate a reluctance to allow others to aid and cooperatively delve into the sources in tandem. In considering the in-depth investment of the researcher in the intricacies that abound in the life of his/her chosen subject (Ponterotto & Moncayo, 2018), such a reluctance is understandable.

Anderson (1981) stated candidly that psychological interpretations should not be seen as substitutes for other explanatory efforts. The premise of psychobiography lies in its definition, as a “biography that makes substantial use of psychological theory and knowledge” (Elms, 1994, p. 4). However, it is useful to remember that no good theory is tautological and, therefore, an interpretation based thereon should be subject to be falsifiable – simply acting as a speculation to contribute to others (Anderson, 1981).

Runyan (1982), furthermore, referred to the age-old clash of nomothetic critique against the idiographic nature that psychobiography so emulates in its aim to explore the unique qualities of a particular individual. Clearly, from its very outset, in the greater climate of finding a footing in a quantifiable scientific community, no psychobiography can claim to be elite in its accuracy (Anderson, 1981).

5.7.2 Dealing with inflated expectations.

Though Anderson (1981) admitted that identifying speculation by the researcher is not enough of an effort, it nevertheless makes a reader aware of the truthful stance of the particular

study, which embraces its interpretive qualities as merely a contribution to other explanations. Thus, cognisance of the limits of a psychological interpretation of a life maintains a sincerity in the study in terms of its value. The researcher approached knowledgeable literary and historic custodians who could elucidate on Lewis's tale and the approach to be assumed with regard to some of the historic details that make up his life.

5.8 Qualitative Criteria

Much of this chapter has emphasised the interpretive nature inherent in the science of psychobiography. In the constructivist paradigm, qualitative research comprises a collection of these arts, of which psychobiography inevitably is one. In such arts are found best practices and guidelines, which Tracy (2010) believed should serve as a pedagogy for new practitioners who approach such methods. However, why could practices be perceived as a pitfall? An elementary answer would be, "Because criteria, quite simply, are useful. Rules and guidelines help us learn, practice and perfect" (Tracy, 2010, p. 838). Thus, the absence of criteria would maintain a gap in developing practice.

Tracy stated that these criteria are telling of the central values of such arts and an organisation of rules could govern dialogue with those quantitative practitioners who seem to be the gatekeepers of the scientific community. More than ever, in the midst of a renewed methodological conservatism that pervades, once more, the funding opportunities provided for exclusively quantitative work (Denzin & Giardina, as cited by Tracy, 2010), a methodology evidenced by its parsimony of criteria could cast its inherent practices in favourable light. About the assumption that researchers should approach specific qualitative criteria with regard to their

purpose and theoretical saturation, Tracy (2010) offered a pedagogical model that set out a set of eight criteria that can be used to assess the value of a qualitative research design.

5.8.1 Worthy topic.

The first of the big-tent criteria is the choice of a **worthy topic**. In classifying this study as psychobiographical in nature, the choice of subject arises from a disciplinary perspective and, largely, the subjective interest of the researcher. Informed by many of the guidelines posited by knowledgeable practitioners (Du Plessis, 2017; Elms, 1994; Ponterotto, 2014; Schultz, 2005a), the subject was allowed to reveal himself within this study through the combined influence of researcher interest, an embodiment of some contemporary spirit that would reflect a similar struggle faced in the historical setting of the subject himself, and the enigmatic nature of the individual, who exhibits a set of qualities that makes us question the developmental processes that he was subject to. Thus, the subject would become relevant to some societal crisis and through his thought-provoking nature challenge his audience to stand out from mainstream conceptualisation (Tracy, 2010).

5.8.2 Rich rigour.

Rich rigour is present in a study that uses a variety of methods to communicate complexity. Such an abundance, as Tracy (2010) explained, finds fruition from the time and effort extended to establish what is termed a *requisite variety* (Weick, 2007, p. 19), or “a need for a tool or instrument to be at least as complex as the phenomena being studied”. In the present study, this tool could very well refer to the psychobiographical method itself, or the constituent parts that form part of its complexity. It stands to reason that rigour is woven in the consideration

of data collection, the sources consulted, and also data analysis (Tracy, 2010); this, in turn, appears reminiscent of triangulation (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). Ponterotto (2014) advocated for a theoretical anchor for the investigation of a subject, a principle that is specific as a ‘best practice’ for its thorough application, but also as a pragmatic consideration of its use. However, Elms (1994) reminded us how the history of the discipline attests to the overuse of psychoanalytic theories to clarify much of human complexity, regardless of how well it might explain emotional conflicts.

Nieuwenhuis (2007) proposed crystallising data in the way it is gathered and analysed. This is achieved by using multiple sources to gain knowledge of the subject. Similarly, the thoroughness of the analysis procedure is controlled by using Alexander’s (1988, 1990) indicators of salience in the extraction of relevant and meaningful data. Ryan et al. (2007) explained the precision of such strategies, through what they termed *procedural rigour*. Tracy (2010) commented on how this type of rigour contributes to face validity through its methodological thoroughness, appearing to present itself together with a great effort by the researcher to reasonably approach the complexity of the subject.

Replacing the understanding developed with more positivistic approaches, *validity* in qualitative research pertains to a knowledge stance assumed by the researcher that is pitted against competing interpretations so as to assure the research’s plausibility (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011); *reliability* in qualitative research refers to internal consistency in observation, and an external consistency with other data sources (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011). According to this same criterion (as alternatives to the positivistic rules of soundness) the usual hallmarks by which qualitative research ensures quality are prescribed: *credibility*, *transferability*, *dependability*, and *confirmability* (De Vos, 2002; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Ryan, et al., 2007).

Credibility (discussed from a different perspective in Section 5.8.3) is one of the main canons of rigour in qualitative research, and acts as a big-tent criterion (Tracy, 2010) for qualitative quality as well. Ryan et al. (2007) elaborated on credibility, as a quality that is established by means of consistency in subject accounts and the eventual researcher account. It implies such a thorough faithfulness to the sources found in the parameters of the study (setting and people), that the research must be seen as valid (De Vos, 2002). Such faithfulness to the knowledge yielded is evidenced by an openness and even a sincerity (as described below) regarding the researcher's feelings and reactive stances throughout the process of inquiry. Strengthened by Ponterotto's (2014) *horizon of understanding* as psychological best practice, Du Plessis (2017) included as step a revision of the research questions surrounding the subject that needed answering, as well as a re-evaluation of the affective position of the researcher towards his subject. Du Plessis (2017) explained this step as a test of internal consistency, that is, a qualitative counterpart practice of the quantitative internal validity (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Confirmability presents a clear line between interpretations and conclusions, and the data set from which they are formulated (Ryan, et al. 2007; Yin, 2009, 2014). Lincoln and Guba (1985) understood confirmability as being akin to objectivity, that is, seeking confirmation of research from other avenues. Confirmability, thus, relates to the method of interpretation and whether it measures what it intends to; it is reminiscent of construct validity in quantitative methodology (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Confirmability would, thus, relate to not only rigour, but a sincerity that facilitates the process (Tracy, 2010).

Dependability suggests an intricately woven practice that includes honesty in the presentation of a report, which serves as a meaningful work of research. Dependability (Ryan et al., 2007) refers to auditability of the research process, found in a step-wise presentation by the

researcher that reveals the methodological and theoretical decision-making utilised to help others follow the researcher's line of reasoning. It offers a significant contribution (Tracy, 2010) when researchers can replicate a study to achieve similar or comparable inferences (Ryan et al., 2007); thus, building on the methodological strengths of such a study, and when expands on the theory utilised. Replication and possible refinement (which are stances of the positivist concept of reliability), however, seem less feasible in the strictest sense of its application, as qualitative approaches emphasise a changing ontology that lead to divergent interpretations continuously being constructed (De Vos, 2002).

Transferability stands across from external validity in quantitative formulations (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), and describes the applicability of findings to other people and other settings (Ryan et al., 2007). Included as part of resonance (explained below), the findings harbour a meaningfulness to the reader, despite readily apparent contextual differences (Tracy, 2010). Transferability concerns itself with the 'particulars' (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011) that, through its thick descriptions, can be transferred and find a fit in other contexts. However, the generalisations for aggregate purposes are not sufficient as an external validity criterion for qualitative research (De Vos, 2002). Robinson and McAdams (2015) also advocated for the *specifiability* of a theory, which does not predict or contrast between groups, but offers prediction at individual level. "Case studies are the answer. A researcher can use case studies to develop, test, exemplify, and apply theory in ways that provide clear and convincing evidence that the theory applies to individual lives in predictive, explanatory, and interpretive ways" (McAdams & Robinson, 2015, p. 2). This makes it clear that the common practice of generalising findings would have less frugality in qualitative research, and that a clear representation of theoretical practice could set the boundaries for other studies to conduct tests

within the same theoretical framework and, thus, transfer its findings simply to different contexts (De Vos, 2002).

5.8.3 Credibility.

Credibility is also listed as a lone-standing criterion within the model, and is evoked by a trustworthy account that gives the appearance of authenticity, which is also attained through data triangulation (Nieuwenhuis, 2007) and thick descriptions (Geertz, 1973; Ponterotto, 2014). Detailed writing clearly reveals quality in the approach to data collection, analysis, and the procedural construal of the findings (Morrow, 2005; Ponterotto, 2014). Credibility pertains to the believability of the account (Tracy, 2010), and whether the events captured and the inferences surrounding them can indeed be found to be plausible; thus, explaining importance of credibility to rigour. Ponterotto (2014) included the use of such thick descriptions to establish verisimilitude, thereby simulating to the reader a bit of history relived through a meticulous approach that includes contextual details and reactional climates.

Unlike quantitative accounts that posit the notion of reliability, qualitative research answers to an altogether different set of principles. Thick descriptions represent the first move towards credibility (Geertz, 1973; Ponterotto, 2014), as the reader is vividly shown, rather than simply told, what constitutes the subject's story, through explicit details that reveal a tacit knowledge assumed to be understood, but which is often unspoken. Tracy (2010) elaborated that tacit knowledge is, perhaps, found in what is said and not said, which seems particularly reminiscent of Alexander's (1988; 1990) indicators, of data revealing a *primacy* or *uniqueness*, or select *omissions* of data picked up in a sudden break of flow. This is telling of the knowledge schemas and hidden principles that could impact the subject's behaviour (Tracy, 2010). Within

credibility, there is a subcategory of principles that aids in integration of credibility into research: *triangulation, multivocality and member reflections*.

Triangulation is a research practice that aims to solidify and validate (Lewis, Ritchie, Ormston, & Morrell, 2014) an account through an investigative stance towards the views put forward by different researchers, and gained from different resources and framed by different theories (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). Berg and Lune (2012, p. 6) explained triangulation as a combination of “multiple lines of sight” that serves as a verification tool, where one element is seen to support or establish convergence (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011) with the other, so as to deepen understanding of the phenomenon. In order to connect these different views on a subject, Denzin (1978, p. 292) highlighted the metaphor, “lines of action”, which permits triangulation through a combination of the following methods:

1. *Data/source triangulation*, which entails using multiple sources of data over time, place and person;
2. *Investigator triangulation*, which seeks the input of multiple observers of the phenomena in question;
3. *Theory triangulation/triangulation through multiple analysis*, which encourages the use of different conceptual frameworks to delineate or explain phenomena; and
4. *Method triangulation*, which is seen as within-method triangulation, and between-method triangulation, which highlight a comparative use of multiple approaches (Berg & Lune, 2012; Denzin, 1978; Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011; Lewis, et al., 2014).

As the psychobiographer moves through the steps of discovery-oriented research, where data is analysed during its collection, the data reveals new findings that motivate inquiry into additional data, that lead to better interpretations than those made before (Schultz, 2005a).

Ponterotto (2014) listed as best practice triangulation of sources and methods as accompaniment of this iterative form of study. Even Elms (1994) vouched for an iterative approach that seeks to eliminate speculative accounts and, instead, increase the accuracy of a record by tying together the actual life story and its interpretation. The steps of the research evolve as required, thereby avoiding prematurely subjugating a life to inferences drawn prematurely (Ponterotto, 2017).

More recent notions of crystallisation (Nieuwenhuis, 2007) present the same idea, but are more consistently applicable to the qualitative movement. Tracy (2010) summarised that crystallisation pertains to the multifaceted view to be brought across by a phenomenon. Instead of using sources to simply concentrate telling evidence, the enlightened view can also be fractured into new facets, which become clear through the process, and which posit altogether new avenues of interpretation and inquiry.

Much of triangulation is captured by the incumbent attention due to *multivocality* (Tracy, 2010), which envelops the desired multifaceted accounts that arise from crystallisation. Multivocality implies an audience that is given in a report to the varied voices that view the same account from different focal points. It eliminates, per definition, a singular bias that can be attained from the ethno- and temporocentrism that so pervade many of the other pitfalls that are encountered in psychobiography (Runyan, 1982).

The last check of credibility is termed *member reflections*, which Tracy (2010) deemed a more inclusive form of convergent actions related to member validations, member checks, and member verifications. Tracy (2010) explained that the practice entails rote customisation of the contextual findings with its members, in order to more accurately reflect their understandings and authenticity. In psychobiography, this would manifest as the practice of comparing biographical and autobiographical material, so as to accept disparate views on the individual,

whilst loyally giving accountability to their personal attributional beliefs. Included as part of member reflections, member checks (Morrow, 2005) finds re-established attention in committing to the psychobiographical best practice by means of creating a *horizon of understanding* (Ponterotto, 2014). Member checks ask of the researcher to offer samples of findings to those being studied; however, using such an act to eliminate possible bias may prove particularly difficult when the subject being studied is deceased (see Section 5.9).

How is a particular narrative account evaluated in terms of its merit above others? Runyan (1982) offered a set of criteria: (a) their logical soundness (perhaps best displayed by a *resonance*, as explained in section 5.8.5); (b) their comprehensiveness in accounting for a number of puzzling aspects of the events in question (*rigour*); (c) their survival of tests of attempted falsification, such as tests of derived predictions or retrodictions (best displayed by tests of *sincerity*, explained in section 5.8.4 below); (d) their consistency of the full range of available relevant evidence (*triangulation*, as explained above); (e) their support from above, or their consistency with more general knowledge about human functioning or about the person in question (*resonance* and *triangulation*), and (f) their credibility relative to other exploratory hypotheses. Furthermore, Alexander (1990) believed that the strategies of extracting relevant data by means of salience, and posing the correct questions to such data sets, helps to form conclusive judgements about the dynamic consistencies found between the pieces of information.

5.8.4 Sincerity.

Drawing together the inclusive purpose of this chapter is the communicated importance of honesty (Tracy, 2010) that surrounds the pitfalls and errors that can be made, and the biases that play a role in reductionist techniques that seem to go unnoticed. Through and through, Tracy

(2010) may have conveyed with this criterion an honesty about the researcher's faults and feelings about the subject, which are often the product of impression. Clearly, much of sincere practice seems to be displayed in *self-reflexivity*, conceptualised as "honesty and authenticity with one's self, one's research, and one's audience" (Tracy, 2010), as a first component of this hallmark of qualitative quality. The researcher uses a skill that is introspective in its quality and evaluative in its stance to redirect attention to his or her suitability for investigating the subject. Ponterotto (2014) considered this element in his best practices for establishing a horizon of understanding. In psychobiography, this type of mindset claims its origin partly from the act of bracketing one's responses (Morrow, 2005), writing them down for the appendices and revealing them systematically through methodological clarifications. Such actions create a middle ground of understanding; a practice that sets the stage for rationalising much of the researcher's reasoning, and so creates a powerful guidance tool for others (readers, practitioners, peer reviewers) in relation to the strong value stances that may arise. *Transparency* is a second component of sincerity; however, this time it displays an openness towards the audience (its readers, inter-raters, etc.) about the steps the research followed, and the possible faults that can be readily admitted to others in relation to the process. Tracy (2010) explained the creation of an audit trail that reveals the intricately woven pattern of successes, limitations, and possible development.

5.8.5 Resonance.

The relevancy of resonance can hardly be discounted, especially in considering psychobiography as a method for evoking what is known as an *empathic validity*. In this regard, Anderson (1981) strengthened the idea, by announcing the importance of the interpretative

approach for laying the foundation for this empathic quality. Resonance is yet another criterion that relates to the meaningfulness of the written piece to its reader (Tracy, 2010). It is a quality that conveys a mutuality with which readers can identify, reverberating with them in significant ways. Through the use of evocative writing that is beautifully pieced together, the author has established *aesthetic merit*, a characteristic that facilitates much of the cognitive and emotional reactions of the reader. Schultz (2005a, p. 8) offered an interesting view: “Compelling psychobiographies begin with a *koan* (i.e., in the Zen tradition, a paradoxical, elusive phrase or episode requiring for its solution a leap to another level of understanding).” Such an aesthetic appeal to writing is believed to contribute to progress in the field of psychobiography (Runyan, 1988). Tracy (2010) continued, and stated that such writing often has a transferability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), or, rather, an applicability to other people in other contexts.

Through the rich descriptions and accessible nature of an account through its sincerity, such a transfer can become feasible for a reader. Elms (1994, p. 15), however, highlighted the aim of respectability coveted by so many psychologists, who shy away from any conclusion from a single case and the “work of scientists in other fields who celebrate detail, diversity and contingency”. In contrast, then, to the more statistical, quantitative generalisation for building knowledge, Stake and Trumbull (1982) mentioned the considerable value of personal experience in what is called *naturalistic generalisation*. According to this view, research seeks not to tell the reader how the case should be seen, but speaks to a set of experiences, to remind the reader how a case can be seen. It is a natural process, and Stake (2005) described an investigation of the ‘particular’ as a method to achieve a better comprehension of the singular case as a bounded system, with its own set of intricacies which is not reduced to a simplistic account due to more positivist generalising practice.

5.8.6 Significant contribution.

Qualitative research, then, makes a significant contribution. Ponterotto et al. (2015) reported a recurrent view, that the practice inherent to psychobiographical research firmly anchors comprehension of the psychological theory employed, whilst expanding its tenets through the inquisitive actions it inspires in its heuristic application to a single case. This agrees with much of what Tracy (2010) seemed to conceptualise. In considering the ambience of the discipline, its status, and its current trends, it stands to reason that research should empower the strengths and seek to negate the criticisms, thereby offering something worthwhile.

Psychobiographical research, with its aim to establish firm rigour in its status within psychology, seeks to expand the value of the discipline (Fouché, 2015; Fouché & Van Niekerk, 2010; Ponterotto, 2014; Ponterotto, 2015b) through its developing methodology, but also through its aim to achieve theoretical saturation of its findings (Robinson & McAdams, 2015). Tracy (2010) explained that this is achieved through a number of standards. The first is the *theoretical significance* of finding a reinterpreted implication for a theory in a new context. Ponterotto's (2014) best practice of theoretical anchoring and specification presented the view that the psychobiographer should open himself to moulding his theoretical stance to the continuously shifting nature of the data yielded about the subject. Secondly, *heuristic significance* taps the explorative potential of research for future reinterpretations. Thirdly, research must have a *practical significance*, which translates into a usefulness of the research. It maintains this usefulness through (a) catalytic validity – research that inspires action through tapping a political frame of mind; (b) tactical authenticity – setting forth an education of participants to show a response of empowerment that further motivates the research; (c) phronetic research –

accumulating a body of knowledge that displays an openness to change; and (d) methodological significance – presenting research in an innovative way that shows growth of the method.

Runyan (1988), in particular, posited an eight-step approach to the advancement of our understanding of individual lives. He believed that these steps tap into at least two standards by which progress in psychobiography will be seen: the comprehensiveness of evidence assembled, and the power of the persuasive nature of the interpretation. Though psychobiography itself may not seek to explicitly engage a political consciousness, and clearly does not seek participant action or feedback (by being an interpretation of a life lived), it does seek to refine its methodological stance through accumulated and saturated practice (Ponterotto, 2015b). This agrees with the notion that case studies may, in fact, thus, prove worthy of theory building and development, instead of being limited to the often-expected affinity to theory testing (Yin, as cited in Kóváry, 2011). Yet, it furthermore resonates with what Yin (2003) coined as *analytic generalisation*. Using an existing theory as frame of reference, the findings of a theory can find generalisation within the results and interpretations of a particular study that it is being compared to (Fouché & Van Niekerk, 2010).

5.8.7 Meaningful coherence.

Meaningful coherence represents a paradox regarding application to psychobiographical study. It implies an agreement with and consistency in methods of data collection and analysis regarding paradigmatic stances and, thus, an approach to the criteria mentioned previously to include in practice only what is applicable. Meaningfully coherent studies (Tracy, 2010, p. 12), “(a) achieve their stated purpose; (b) accomplish what they espouse to be about; (c) use methods

and representative practices that partner well with espoused theories and paradigms; and (d) attentively interconnect literature reviewed with research foci, methods, and findings”.

5.8.8 Ethics.

The ethical criterion stipulates a self-reflexive attempt to be undertaken by the researcher, in which universal *procedural ethics* and *relational ethics* become applicable to psychobiographical research. Ponterotto (2014) emphasised the point of preventing reduction of the subject to a base account of labels; instead, aiming for a balanced description of the subject in question. Tracy (2010), furthermore, highlighted a convergent connection of literary sources that would engage interchangeably with a chosen theoretical framework, which, in this case, implies perceiving the relevant experiences of the case study through the espoused theory. Ethical considerations will be discussed more broadly in the section that follows.

5.9 Ethics in Psychobiography

Ponterotto (2013) commented on the impressive leaps that psychobiography has made to become a mainstay of psychological practice, but admitted that few guidelines have been set out to “navigate the thorny ethical issues that are likely to arise in psychobiographical work” (Ponterotto, 2013, p. 19). Two domains that have contemporarily gained attentive momentum (Ponterotto, 2015b) are the dissection and reformulation of the code set by the American Psychological Association (2002) and in finding greater relevance in the work of psychobiographers. Second has been made possible by access to the health records of long-deceased subjects, for which Ponterotto (2015a) created an actuarial-based model in gaining access. Thus, having considered it to be an opportune time, he postulated an ethical frame of

reference that could shield psychobiographers from the prick of ethical violation. Each of his guidelines will be discussed in conjunction with other ethical stipulations that have arisen over the “renaissance” decades (Kóváry, 2011) of the method. The researcher highlights the applicability of each ethical criterion to his particular study.

5.9.1 Institutional review board.

Ponterotto (2013) referred to personal research that lead him through ethically important moments he had not considered beforehand, such as the transition from initial archival research to tapping the network of his long-time fascination, Bobby Fischer. For this reason, he suggested submitting a proposal to a board for review, an act that could make the researcher aware of not-before-considered ethical infringements. This action becomes especially important if the subject that is to be perused for inquiry is living, or, if recently deceased, social circles have the subject’s interests at heart – reminiscent of Ponterotto’s (2015b) memory interests. In either case, informed consent may be needed, and formulating a reasonable substantiation for such pursuits becomes important (Ponterotto, 2013). In this particular study, the researcher merely aimed to base his study on public sources, which were available in profusion for Lewis’s life. To fulfil the requirements for a Master’s dissertation, the proposal was submitted through the relevant research committee – the Committee of Title Registrations of the Faculty of the Humanities at the University of the Free State – which reviewed the feasibility of the study.

Such actions, through official bodies, such as the Institutional Review Board, constitute adherence to universal rules that categorise, and are termed, *procedural ethics* or *categorical ethics* (Tracy, 2010). Necessitated as procedures to protect the individual being studied, it permits a thorough consideration of ethically important moments that secure sensitive subject

information, does no harm (Elms, 1994), and seeks the voluntary participation of knowledgeable subjects while, in addition, avoiding the reconstructive tendencies discussed in section 5.2.1 (Runyan, 1982).

5.9.2 Faithfulness to the objective research endeavour and respect of subjects and their family members.

The search for subject information often yields a wide array of questions, which lead to questioning of source adequacy (Alexander, 1990). Such probes lead to ventures that often cause the researcher to delve into the close-knit networks of relatives and friends, verging dangerously close to a boundary where subjectivity may cloud scientific practice. Ponterotto (2013) believed that a compromise must be struck between good, objective practice and respect for the privacy of the social networks of still-living or recently deceased individuals (Runyan, 1982), whilst the researcher, all the while, creates interpretations that are deemed credible in relation to the evidence given. In this study, the researcher was of the belief that this was a task easily accomplished, as Lewis had died more than half a century before, and did not have immediate kin that could readily suffer injustices. Also, the psychobiographical study aimed at being eugraphic in its focus, that is, it sought a balanced interpretation of the subject on its outset.

In maintaining the balance between positive and negative facets of the individual's life, a researcher should adopt a particular value stance that acts as a framework to channel much of the empathetic feelings expected to develop toward the subject. "*Relational ethics* involve an ethical self-consciousness in which researchers are mindful of their character, actions, and consequences on others" (Tracy, 2010, p.847). Relational ethics entails respect for the subject's circumstances, and, perhaps, the dissonant referential frameworks from which they stem.

5.9.3 Newly revealed information.

Newly found details on any historical subject are often critical to building the rigour of the discipline, and a reflexive stance (Tracy, 2010) may assist the researcher to manoeuvre through any sensitive information that may present itself. Ponterotto (2013) recommended that newly discovered details, especially if revealing, are subjected to the permission of those affected (including the subject, or if recently-deceased, the subject's relatives). Information that may hold popular standing for the public eye should, rather, be weighed regarding its value as evidence in constructing a biography. Lastly, if critical, such information can and should be presented to the parties in question, and its use motivated. For the purposes of Lewis, the researcher found the vast amount of publicly available material sufficient for forming an interpretation on his psychosocial life. Thus, in addition to the subject being long deceased, the researcher believed that this ethical criterion was satisfactorily negated in its importance.

At this point, reference can be made to the whole argument around subject privacy (Runyan, 1982), postulated by the APA Taskforce (American Psychiatric Association, 1976) after an increase in error-ridden psychobiographies. By formulating ethical stipulations with a temporal component (Ponterotto, 2013), researchers can monitor their actions based on how long the subject has been deceased. Living and recently deceased subject data should be utilised only after informed consent by impacted relatives, whilst, in the former case of living individuals, researchers have no option but to approach subjects themselves to obtain permission. If permission is refused, and perhaps the study is continued, then written reasons from the author are required to substantiate such actions. Regarding the current research, studies on long-deceased individuals do face barriers to implementation, as long as the privacy of subjects' relatives are not infringed upon. Interestingly, the premise of informed consent, as explained by

the American Psychological Association in the early 2000s (APA, as cited by Ponterotto, 2013), was that informed consent was conditional to the assessment of actual distress bound to be caused by the study, for either subjects, or for their relatives. Additionally, deconstruction of the code (Ponterotto, 2015a) has led to questions about subject confidentiality, considering that psychobiographical subjects do not, in fact, remain anonymous.

The unpredictability of information discovery lends itself to the category of *situational ethics* (Tracy, 2010). In this regard, researchers realise that ethics is determined by context and the circumstantial changes that form a part of context. Sound ethical judgement is, thus, required in the course of adaptability, and ethical standards must be continuously tailored to the moments that present themselves iteratively in the course of study. Such a feat requires of the researcher a good amount of reflexivity (Cara, 2007; Ponterotto, 2014), and that the researcher continuously reflects on the possible ethical pitfalls that may arise.

5.9.4 Interdisciplinary input.

A premise is proposed that the historiographic enterprise contains unfamiliar domains to the psychologist, and, thus, an interdisciplinary consultation may be a prudent decision for formulating an account of an individual (Ponterotto, 2013). Often, the psychobiographer may perceive the social-historical context of the subject wrongly, to such a degree as to fail to understand the cultural backdrop of the subject. *Misplaced emphasis* (Alexander, 1990) may be extended to primary source material, leading to a failure to highlight more objective views on the matter. The researcher ensured that source triangulation was constituent to presenting Lewis's life, and he gave a mutual account from both autobiographical and biographical material, and

consulted the subject's contributions to the literary world to highlight divergent facets of his life story.

5.9.5 Tentative labels.

The reductionist trait of pathography remains a serious pitfall, which would find the psychobiographer allocating a diagnosis to the account that seems to substantiate a claim or interpretation (Ponterotto, 2013). Any such label requires a strong rationale for being included in a psychobiography, together with a clear explanation of possible gaps in the interpretation. Ponterotto (2015a) recently highlighted how access to health and mental information about subjects was a daunting process; gaining access to, and reporting on such protected information was best undertaken with a step-based approach (Ponterotto, 2015a) that eases the journey.

Proper ethical adherence is still subject to much debate, and any study is but a personal endeavour that requires of the researcher sound ethical judgement under the circumstances presented (Ponterotto, 2015b). Overall, much of the ethical concerns seem related to the potential for causing harm to close kin, or possibly subjects themselves, if the necessary respect is not shown by the individual studies. Gross ethical misconduct is generally related to invasion of privacy, and interpretation that extends in focus beyond that which is actually offered by the data itself (Elms, 1994; Fouché, 2015). This last point pertains to the parties involved in research, and concluding thoughts on the matter (and on the topic of ethics overall), will be given in the following chapter.

5.10 Conclusion

This chapter was dedicated to discussing the common methodological snares that face practitioners of psychobiography. It discussed the pervasiveness of research bias that appears unconsciously, and the phenomenon of reductionism, which reduces the equilibrium of the subject's status to the reader. The cross-cultural limitations of theoretical practice were highlighted; these limitations often appear in tandem with an elitist view of psychobiographical goals, due to inflated expectations by its overarching discipline. Among limitations were also highlighted the absence of the subject, and the often-problematic endeavour of dealing with the adequacy of evidence. Methods of dealing with these pitfalls became salient in the literature, either as overt practice or inferred researcher solutions. The hallmarks of quality and trustworthiness, being applicable to psychobiography as a qualitative approach, were expansively and thoroughly outlined for their general refinement in the art of the method. The chapter concluded with the ethical infringements to be expected in the field, which were labelled with an attentiveness to their fluctuating relevance. Ethics will be addressed briefly once more in the following chapter, which will describe the method adhered to in the particular study.

CHAPTER 6: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

6.1 Chapter Preview

The previous two chapters discussed the psychobiographical enterprise, and the methodological difficulties arising in its execution. Firm saturation in the considerations owed to the practice facilitates a rigorous attempt to employ the wide research approach and paradigm to which psychobiography answers. This chapter can be seen as an application of the guidelines and best practices that the literature highlights throughout. Care will be taken to note the obstacles, whilst illustrating the line of reasoning that the researcher followed in the overall investigation of the subject of interest.

6.2 Research Aim, Design and Methodology

The study had as its aim an in-depth exploration of the psychosocial personality development of Clive Staples Lewis. It sought to investigate his life psychohistorically by means of the psychosocial theory of personality development. Counted as exploratory-descriptive research, the study sought to become conversant with the individual life through gaining insight into it, whilst simultaneously presenting its details through thick descriptions (Geertz, 1973) of the characteristics, thereby facilitating greater comprehension of the phenomenon (Fouché, 2015; Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011). In this light, the study can be placed within the branch of primarily inductive reasoning (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011).

By following the line of qualitative inquiry, research is iterative in assuming an analytic approach to data that is collected, and involves re-evaluating interpretive versions and formulating new views that lead to altogether different data, which is pursued for the sake of research. In this sense, the collection of information on the psychobiographical subject leads to different interpretations of its latent meaning, giving rise to a search for new sources of data, which leads to a great depth of understanding and new interpretations. Nevertheless, psychobiography is not wholly separated from more deductive methods that seek to test views against accumulated data (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011). Psychobiography makes extensive use of psychobiographical theory to uncover a life, and so the researcher interprets data according to structured conceptualisations that are broadened, tested, and built upon (Robinson & McAdams, 2015; Tracy, 2010).

The thorough and longitudinal exploration of the completed life, and the description of the elements of personality (Carlson, 1988) of a single case, situated in a particular socio-historical context, constitutes the purpose of this study. Such studies are ontologically constructivist-interpretivist in nature (Ponterotto, 2012; Runyan, 1982; Kőváry, 2011) and objectives involve a primarily qualitative approach that seeks dialogue between the accumulated life history of the subject, and the theoretical framework utilised (Erikson's psychosocial theory) in order to discern the personality development over the course of a lifespan.

Idiographic in nature (Cara, 2007), psychobiography seeks to focus on the individualised patterns of personality (Allport, 1961, 1962) that are unique to the historical subject; however, it does not seek generalisation to other cases. Nevertheless, nomothetic trends can be seen in the generalisation of theoretical application. Ponterotto et al. (2015) propose a compromise between idiographic and nomothetic, as contextually-based individuals are better comprehended when

theory nomothetically narrows its application to single cases, which, in its iterative application to subject data, are found to exemplify the theory utilised and stand as testament to rigour in scrutinising a singular life. This approach attains this goal through a process termed *abduction* (McAdams & Robinson, 2015), which entails the research enlisting theoretical support to explain the facets of phenomena, which are manifestations of the particular theory in question. Thus, interpretation gains a foundation for which there is evidence in its presentation of a view on the exemplary life (Carlson, 1988).

Such an intensive undertaking presents a unique set of challenges, which should be acknowledged from the start if many of the methodological pitfalls that have led to bad practice in the field are to be avoided. The previous chapter outlined a number of preliminary methodological considerations, whilst presenting evidenced support for strategies by which many of the errors, such as bias and reductionism, can be minimised.

6.3 The Research Subject

C. S. Lewis was selected by means of a purposive sampling technique (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011; Marshall, 1996), which falls under the overarching concept of non-probability sampling. The researcher based much of his decision to choose this subject on the universality of the subject's personal experiences regarding challenges to his beliefs and establishing faith in a higher power. Quintessentially, the subject's conversion from atheism to become arguably the greatest Christian apologist of his time (Peters, 1985) offers a unique twist to his personal tale. The researcher vested a especial interest in Lewis's dynamic conflicts that were related to his search for "Joy", which he described as "something quite different from ordinary life and even from ordinary pleasure" (Lewis, 1955, p. 17). Lewis's narrative was situated historically and

covered extensively in Chapter 2, and serves as testament to the driving reasons for choosing him as subject. The researcher's interest in this subject was also explained in Chapter 1.

An extensive database inquiry, facilitated by EBSCOhost online; perusal of the library catalogue of the University of the Free State; and knowledgeable inquiry through parties interested in the life of Lewis, yielded a profound number of sources on the subject, much of which also constituted first-person autobiographical accounts that had been publicised. The sources obtained spoke of not only of Lewis's literary skill, but also gave proof of his influential socio-historical role in a war-torn era that was left to remedy the apparent lack of firm beliefs, and the moral uprooting it wrought (Lancast, 2012; Peters, 1985). Lewis (1955, 1960) and his personal telling candidly reveals much of his own development, illustrating not only a sequenced rise to his prominent role in history, but also presenting to the researcher clear proof of the adaptational nature of developmental conflicts in a psychosocial sense.

6.4 Data Collection

Ponterotto (2017) explains that research itself often commences long before the manual commitment to following sequenced steps, because an in-depth glimpse into reading material had already influenced the researcher in terms of initial feelings about the subject to be chosen. Curiosity leads researchers to material, such as diaries, autobiographies, memoirs, letters, speeches and other public or archival sources (Elms, 1994; McAdams & Robinson, 2015; Runyan, 1982) that are acknowledged as sources for their disparate strengths and limitations (Du Plessis, 2017).

Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2011) describe characteristics specific to documentation used in work with case studies. As this research constitutes primarily a review of documented material

(most of which is open to the public), strengths and weaknesses of material are salient. Documentation as resource offers stability regarding access, as it is used frequently; these documents are regarded as unobtrusive; and documentation can well have been assimilated to cover an expansive period of time and encompass different events. As for their limitations, initial retrievability is an issue, as some texts may be difficult to find. Selecting a particular source could lead to bias in interpretation, because evidence may be insufficient (this pitfall was discussed thoroughly in section 5.2.1). Using archival records delivers many of the same considerations, with the additional hurdle that access may be restricted due to the need of protecting the subject's privacy (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011).

In an attempt to garner the most holistic set of evidence regarding the chosen subject, the researcher made use of archival and publicly available information on Lewis, and crystallised findings through the utilisation of primary and secondary resources. The latter refers to third-person accounts, which contain not-wholly-objective perceptions of the case being studied, and which holds the risk of being inauthentic (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). These sources include biographical accounts on the life of Lewis, such as *C.S. Lewis The Man and His Achievements* (Peters, 1985) or *C. S Lewis: A Life: Eccentric Genius, Reluctant Prophet* (McGrath, 2013). Primary sources refer to personal works and literary achievements of the subject. One such source is an autobiographical title, Lewis's well known *Surprised by Joy*, which relates the experiences of his early life and conversion to a more spiritual existence (Lewis, 1955).

Ponterotto (2017) sets out three levels of documentation that promote the validity and accuracy of the quest. In addition, he describes the strengths and limitations of each.

1. First-person documentation presents the benefits of personal outputs by the subject, and offer an honest and unfiltered appraisal of the subject's own views. However, it is the very

personal identification with these perspectives that lace it with a subjectivity that narrows the scope of awareness. Kőváry (2011) refers to the utility of such sources as starting points, with the condition that they are informed, elaborated, and further substantiated by other documentational levels to strengthen its claims.

2. Second-person documents include sources that are once removed from the figure being studied; their intimate connections with the historical subject offers a meaningful glimpse into their lives, though at the cost of exemplifying the figure to a status that has lost its balanced objectivity (Ponterotto, 2017).
3. Third-person documents resemble traditional biographies that are written about figures in history, often by people who may have relied on archival inquiry to shape a narrative about the figure. Such distance in personal exposure likely leads to a desirable objectivity, but a reduced investment in the memory and identity interests (Ponterotto, 2013) surrounding the subject.

6.5 Data Extraction and Analysis

Alexander (1988, 1990) turned his attention to extracting data that was telling of means-end sequences and if-then formulations that revealed a pattern of consistency and predictability by means of a script or schema. Such scripts or schemas have anticipatory value for the individual, and offer a pattern for a life that inspires pursuit of certain states, and avoidance of others. In the treatment suggested, the researcher is likely to prefer extracting those “data of memory” (Alexander, 1990, p.12) that are predictive of data of present functioning, thereby effectively making the link and discovering the pattern.

Alexander proposes two avenues by which the data can be approached. First among these motions is a filtering process, by which data is pursued or disregarded for its significance. Secondly, the data is asked a question. The first, “Letting the data speak” (Alexander, 1990), starts the sifting, through nine identifiers of salience (Alexander, 1988) that serve as rule sets by which data is organised and categorised into manageable units. In addition, it breaks the “conscious communicational intent of the content” (Alexander, 1990, p. 12):

1. First among these markers of salience is *primacy*, which is attached to opening key pieces of data that provide the foundation for other emergent ideas (Schultz, 2005b), whether commentary cliff-hangers or omissions of a sort that lead to fundamental questioning. Primacy finds resonance in data in “the association of first with importance” (Alexander, 1990, p. 13). Foundational in its emergence, primacy offers an origin point for what is to follow, making the reader attentive to introductory communication in explaining what ensues.
2. Secondly, *frequency* entails the importance of repetitive details that do not lose value in the monotony of their presentation. (Alexander, 1988). Such monotony is often found to establish a knowledge structure that is clearly indicative of accustomed patterns that are repeated in the individual’s life. Paradoxically, frequency in occurrence can lose significance if not altered by an absence (or *omission*, as discussed below). Such gaps reset attention onto the prevalent frequented information, which, together with other indicators, reveal less salient, non-sequential occurrences that carry less importance. Schultz (2005b) advises researchers to be alert for obsessions of the subject, which reveal much about its host and the hidden narrative that the researcher wishes to extract.

3. *Uniqueness*, as a third identifier, conveys emphasis through departures from normative behaviour that is nomothetical or baseline for the chosen case study (Alexander, 1988). Such departures manifest in behaviour different from cultural expectations, that break assumed expectations by its precipitant events and consequential response.
4. *Negation* refers to repressed material, which is emphatically discounted in importance (Schultz, 2005b), thereby, paradoxically, surfacing fathomable truths. The premise of this identifier, in some instances, is the countering of the negative facets of a statement, which increases its credibility. Described as statements of “unconscious material making its way to the surface thinly disguised by the cover of unlikelihood or impossibility” (Alexander, 1990, p.16) information relaying negation can sometimes appear in association with statements that are unique or frequent in their verbalisation.
5. *Emphasis* is an identifier that adds attentive value to pieces of information (Alexander, 1988). Made apparent at times by the subject, emphasis can assume a form that is subtle in its appearance. Alexander (1990) posits that the purpose of emphasis, regardless of its subtlety, is to accent some form of communication. Sometimes, a statement may be underlined excessively, thereby making the reader question its importance, thus, termed *overemphasis*. In contrast, *underemphasis* raises scruples about the small amount of importance placed on something of clear value (Schultz, 2005b). *Misplaced emphasis* is indicated, “when means-end sequences seems to stretch credibility limits in that appropriate means are present or implied but not attached to the announced outcome” (Alexander, 1990, p. 273). In each instance, the underlining of an event may harbour no intention – as in some instances when our attention is called to something with good cause – but each scenario creates a renewed focus on the particular communication presented.

6. *Omission* deals with a break in consistency of content and affective flow, which stimulates a probing investigation (Alexander, 1988). It deals with missing parts of the whole. “The use of logical criteria usually follows a sense of unease when a story of sequence of events is being related and steps critical to the smoothness or flow are missing” (Alexander, 1990). Schultz (2005b, p. 47) terms this phenomenon, “an absence of expectable content”. In addition to cognitive content inherent in a message, omission of affect may also rear its head when affective value is removed from a sequenced happening and the emotional value remains unaddressed. This leads the reader to investigate the circumstances surrounding this play of events, and the relevant affective response that was sought.
7. In part, omission may reveal *errors or distortions* as indicators (either factual, or related to personal experience) that represent details that make the reader question authenticity. In violating credibility, the fault may be brought to the attention of the reader, but may otherwise go unnoticed or appear as a slip or misrepresentation of facts related to time, place and person (Alexander, 1990). Lumped together with omission and negation, such errors could reiterate the Freudian concept of “mischievements” (Schultz, 2005b, p. 47), which signify unconsciously motivated slips that harbour significance because of their presence. Regardless of their form (perhaps through another identifier of salience, such as emphasis), Schultz (2005b) advises provisional acceptance of such missteps as meaningful.
8. Statements that carry associative links instead of logical connections to context offer non-sequitural value that is an indicator of *isolation*. Schultz (2005b, p. 46) calls this the “sore-thumb” criterion: a piece of information that contrasts with its surroundings, asking the reader to re-establish the connection that is not made apparent. Partly identified with a practice of “reading in” and the “criterion of ‘fit’” (Alexander, 1990, p.21), the reader seeks

the apparent connector that saturates the data bit within the piece presented. Isolation is an indicator that appears to present discontinuity, and appears to make an unmistakable flow seem amiss with its irrelevancy to the wider idea of information that seeks purchase in mind.

9. Lastly, *incompletion* is coupled with a break in narrative flow, and is perceptible from a lack of causal links evident in a subject's attainment of an outcome in his/her experience of events (Alexander, 1988). In the presentation of outcome-based events, the causal experiences that leads to a climax seem unfinished in part, presenting this indicator in its wake. Incompletion identifies the lack of explanatory means that lead to its end, allowing the story to achieve an outcome before the steps have followed their course (Alexander, 1990). Schultz (2005b) explains that a way to grasp incompletion is to envision it as avoidance of some anxiety or guilt, or a reluctance to follow through with thinking that has such feelings as outcome.

Alexander (1990, p. 24) defines a unit as “a number of consecutive sentences which form an entity through shared content”. Such units are the treasured bits of data sought to reveal commonalities that ultimately lead the researcher to the formulation of related questions. From these bits of data, we form preconceived views on the “range, magnitude and frequency of affects” in the experiences of the subject, alternated by the deeper drives that serve to propel such emotions in the subject (Alexander, 1990, p.6). The static nature of some experiences in the midst of life changes signify importance in relation to the sequences that are governed by these experiences in the subject's life (Alexander, 1990). In this study, Chapter 7 and 8 report on the data sequences that served to explore and describe the life of C. S. Lewis psychosocially.

Schultz (2005b) questions the existence of certain outstandingly salient and singular scenes that seem to illustrate the whole of an individual's life, and all the significant parameters from which it is compounded. Calling them “a blueprint, a kind of personality X-ray to peek

transdermally”, Schultz’s (2005b, p. 48) prototypical scenes instead offer an additional layer by which to label the importance of subject information. Governed by an additional set of pointers, he remarks that, though these scenes could be found to be salient, salient scenes do not achieve the status of being prototypical. Prototypical scenes compact identity into something that is recognisable and demanding of the attention of the researcher (Schultz, 2005b). The pointers are as follows:

1. *Vividness, specificity and emotional intensity.* Describing a scene as analogous to a photograph, Schultz (2005b) conveys how a scene is set out in detail, with its areas of focus, with this layout allowing surroundings to fade into the background gestalt of importance as the foreground is highlighted for its specific characters, dialogue and sights. All of this is framed by an emotionality that creates a powerful affective climate in unison with the force of its attached description.
2. *Interpenetration:* These scenes weave themselves into the flow of activity, settings and personal creations, and permeate and appear readily because of their undeniable significance.
3. *Developmental crisis:* Such scenes often mark the primacy of a situation that a person encounters with a determinative quality regarding the resolution to be arrived at in determining growth, akin to the Eriksonian polarities that procure development.
4. *Family conflict:* These self-explanatory scenes depict conflict, either latent or manifest, within familial surroundings.
5. *Thowness:* Shifting in its nature, Schultz (2005b) describes these scenes of throwness that almost harbours a tint of incredulity that ultimately ‘throw’ the reader off guard, and gain its momentum from its repetitive nature, to counter the surprise. Such scenes contrast with the

normative, and creatively challenge run-of-the-mill thought processes that aim to establish balance in the account. Seen as the crucial component of the identification of a scene, they are “a contrast, an affront, a confrontation with a recalcitrant reality . . . it also tends to raise anxiety levels due to its unexampledness” (Schultz, 2005b, p. 60).

Alexander (1990) also explains the second avenue – the strategy of asking the data a question. In describing this strategy, he illustrates it with an all-encompassing question, “Are there sequential patterns or consistencies or scripts or trait characteristics or value preferences, or ideological stances represented by the author’s imagery which are masked by the persuasive, attention-demanding power of content” (Alexander, 1990, p. 32). Thus, he emphasises that selection of information for further analysis is dependent on the questions posed to the wealth of information; however, this is conditional to a valid line of reasoning regarding the type of question asked. Usually, Alexander (1990) explains, more universal questions relate to the unexplained facets of a completed life that seem to have long been part of the knowledge base accumulated on the said subject. In this study, the researcher opted for questions that reflected consideration of the following:

1. With its exploratory-descriptive aim to discern Lewis’s psychosocial personality development (Erikson, 1963, 1968, 1975, 1980) across his life, the researcher wished to glean which parts of Lewis’s life can be seen as worthy of extraction and analysis in order to present a well-rounded account of Lewis’s life through the lens of this psychological framework. The purpose was to seek those parts that are indicative of developmental crises, and reflective of the adaptational qualities that later lead to successful resolution of developmental states and the eventual attainment of important ego strengths. From the descriptive-dialogic nature of the study, the researcher, furthermore, sought to establish the

relevance the psychosocial theory has for the actual psychosocial development of Clive Staples Lewis as presented in the data. Described more intensively in Chapter 5, the researcher investigated the “resonance” (Tracy, 2010) of the theory, in order to exemplify it (McAdams & Robinson, 2015).

7. Alexander (1988, 1990) portrays much of the strategy suggested by Yin (2009, 2014) for case studies that deal with the reorganisation of data after its inspection and extraction. The first strategy, which prescribes data analysis by means of the theoretical premises and conceptualisations that had been chosen, encompasses Alexander’s identification of salient data units and the questioning of sources that yield more crucial bits of the puzzle. The second strategy proposes the idea of case descriptions through conceptual matrices (Yin, 2009, 2014). Alexander’s (1990) principles were used as they apply to a theory-driven, conceptual, psycho-historical matrix, constructed through the use of Erikson’s theory of psychosocial development. Such procedures adhere to the retrieval, organisation, and categorisation of relevant data inherent in the qualitative process (Ryan et al., 2007).

6.6 Conceptual Frameworks and Matrices

The researcher constructed a data-analysis matrix (Yin, 2009, 2014) as a screening tool for psychobiographical research (Fouché, 1999) to comb the evidence that would be gathered on the particular subject, and to organise the historical data on C. S. Lewis in stage-wise categories corresponding to developmental age-ranges and life events.

In the psychosocial conceptual matrix over the lifespan of C. S. Lewis, historical periods were organised on the vertical axis of the matrix in relation to the horizontal axis (which displays the stages of psychosocial development as formulated by Erikson). The historical periods chosen

reflect the main roles that Lewis embodied, emulating the prevalent theme and shape of his life during that particular period. Furthermore, the historical periods were chosen to correspond to stages of normal development. This was done to obtain greater clarity about how individual variation of psychosocial development is presented by Lewis's case. Table 6.1 displays the eight different psychosocial polarities, which each represent the resolution of a crisis (discussed in Chapter 3) and which served as the means by which emergent data was extracted for analysis from each of the historical periods (discussed in Chapter 2) postulated within the matrix. The matrix sketches an ordered and sequenced representation of Lewis's life, which could, thus, be investigated longitudinally across his life (Carlson, 1988), and engaged in thoroughly through the psychosocial developmental theory as schematic psychological roadmap.

Emerging Adulthood (1916 – 1927) A leap past the watchful dragons (18 – 29 years)								
Adulthood (1927 - 1938) The allegorical defender of the faith (29 - 40 years)								
Middle Adulthood (1938 – 1963) The secret road (40 – 64 years)								

6.7 On the Issue of Quality

Critique launched against the psychobiographical enterprise has been all-encompassing in its crusade, and has its roots in the rise of the positivistic paradigm in the mid-20th century; continuing even now in psychobiography's coming-of-age years in the first decades of the 2000s. The historical development and summary of the criticisms was thoroughly drawn together in Chapter 4, whilst Chapter 5 explained the methodological difficulties that commonly plague the method. The previous chapter had a dual focus; it not only outlined the obstacles to be faced by the research, but investigated the literature to find recognised solutions to address the problems that assail the practitioner. Among these were issues pertaining to criteria applicable to quality qualitative research, or trustworthiness.

Though broader criteria (including the usual hallmarks) for ensuring qualitative quality was described in the previous chapter (see Section 5.8), the case of trustworthiness is generally assessed by a different stance to *validity* and *reliability*. Validity in qualitative research refers to the plausibility of researcher explanations that is held against existing accounts of research (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011); reliability in qualitative research refers to an internal consistency in observation, and an external consistency with other sources (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011). The deduced application of the principles of these criteria (originating in quantitative thought) is given as the hallmarks by which qualitative research ensures trustworthiness: (a) *credibility*, relating to faithfulness to the accounts of the cases being studied; (b) *transferability*, referring to the relatability of findings across settings and people; (c) *dependability*, pertaining to the trust to be extended to research methods utilised for replication; and (d) *confirmability*, referring to

methodological tools that investigate and explore by means of their intent (De Vos, 2002; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Ryan et al., 2007).

Rigour was a salient consideration throughout this research, and it was important to include more general guidelines for maintaining qualitative rigour throughout the study. Burns and Grove (1999, 2001) promote the consideration of three forms of rigour: (a) *Documentational rigour* implies a consistency in the execution of the research process and its reporting within the study itself; (b) *Procedural rigour* makes the researcher attentive of his/her engagement in actual research, for instance, where data is collected, seeking an introspective stance that reduces bias; and, lastly, (c) *ethical rigour* frames the participant consideration that is extended in the treatment and the management of their concerns. The researcher recognised the foundational value of these facets as providing an overarching evaluation of the soundness of the research.

However, this section attempts to address the personal precautions and proactive considerations that applied to the study and that the researcher took. The strategies that were implemented include the following:

1. Ensuring the maintenance of a horizon of understanding (Ponterotto, 2014), which includes sincerity in the researchers standing towards the subject, and displaying an openness to his (the researcher's) reactions throughout research;
8. Cultivating an empathic understanding of the subject (Anderson, 1981), whilst maintaining the necessitated ambivalence (Elms, 1994) to avoid researcher bias; thus, assuming the role of scientist-practitioner that balances good objective practice with the interest of the parties involved;
9. Avoiding the temporocentrism and ethnocentrism (Runyan, 1982) in the application of theory to the specific cultural context of the subject, and opting for the possibilities of expansionism

(Ponterotto, 2014), instead of limiting the subject investigation to the views of a narrow theoretical scope, which is indicative of poor theoretical choice (Schultz, 2005a);

10. Utilising reflexivity for the process of research, to ensure that the researcher adapted to the iterative nature of the research (Cara, 2007; Ponterotto, 2014; Tracy, 2010);
11. Adopting the aim to produce holistic, accurate and balanced descriptions that delve into the idiosyncrasies of the subject and his socio-cultural milieu, thereby avoiding reductionist pitfalls (Anderson, 1981; Elms, 1994; Ponterotto, 2014);
12. Avoiding relying overly on singular cues in the subject's narrative as reference point for elaborate discussion (Schultz, 2005a);
13. Facilitating a eugraphic focus (Fouché & Van Niekerk, 2010) for the study that avoids inclinations to pathography, degradography, idealography and hagiographic practices, through the use of the psychosocial personality development posed by Erikson (1964, 1968, 1975, 1980), which incorporates the successful resolution of developmental crises, adaptively if it does not unfold epigenetically;
14. Setting the goal to exemplify the theoretical framework, whilst ensuring its specificity to the individual (Robinson & McAdams, 2015), which contributes to an analytic generalisation (Yin, 2009) displayed in process of research;
15. Triangulating sources, to substitute and remedy possibly insufficient evidence (Anderson, 1981), which could lead to reconstructive processes (Schultz, 2005a) without verifiable basis in an attempt to rectify the lack of adequate data;

16. Identifying salient and triangulated pieces of data as used by the appropriate data management tools (Alexander, 1988, 1990; Schultz, 2005b) and assimilating them into thick descriptions that adhere to the markers of trustworthiness;
17. Evaluating the overall quality of research through the hallmarks of quality identified by Tracy (2010); and
18. Paying meticulous attention to the detail of the narrative structure (Schultz, 2005a), so as to avoid presupposed inferences that conclude a view before sufficient data has been drawn to support the claim.

Furthermore, Schultz (2005a) supplies the practice with a set of markers by which to evaluate the fit of research to what constitutes good psychobiographical practice: (a) *Cogency* includes the persuasive quality of the report, convincing the reader of the view that it presents. Cogency is implemented through the (b) *narrative structure* (implemented above), which allows meaning-making to imply conclusions rhetorically, and giving room for the interpretations of the reader without predetermined judgements or views being imposed. (c) *Comprehensiveness* frames the saturation of such a structure throughout the research, substantiating the central themes that are illuminated and clarifying their existence. Comprehensiveness is ascertained by (d) *data convergence*, where the various accounts offer support for the existence of a powerful point or claim. Data convergence, thus, establishes persuasiveness regarding the inclusion of a vast number of sources that work to substantiate. It also contributes to including a (e) *sudden coherence* that resolves perplexity and incongruence in the subject's narrative, contributing to what Schultz (2005a, p. 8) describes as "Mystery's elucidation", which is psychobiography's "salutary aim". (f) *Logical soundness* (Runyan, 2005b) is another marker that indicates the absence of contradiction, and creates a logical flow that is apparent in its presentation (Schultz,

2005a). Together with this, Runyan (2005b), furthermore, mentions (g) a *consistency* to be found about general knowledge on human functioning and the spectrum of available evidence (Schultz, 2005a). Lastly, any good psychobiography should be (h) *viable*, being both open to and resilient towards falsification (Schultz, 2005a).

6.8 Revisiting Ethical Engagement

As discussed in the previous chapter, ethics appears to have an overall elusive role when it comes to psychobiography. Ponterotto (2013) refines ethical best practice by the formulation of guidelines to be tapped in the momentary thought-action repertoires that the researcher faces in ethically challenging moments, together with more general ethical considerations that have existed for years (Elms, 1994; Runyan, 1982), but which have been left to the mechanisms of more inclusive guidance to psychohistorians by the American Psychiatric Association (1976). Tracy (2010) rekindles the importance of overall procedural, relational and situational ethics that could offer further saturation regarding the qualitative quality of the research endeavour. The latter, especially, defined the setting and its contingencies as influential to the particularities that ethics could impart to a study.

Perhaps more illuminative, then (in considering context), is the consideration of the parties involved, as an overall ethical consideration. Ponterotto (2015b) refers to infringements of (a) *confidence*, (b) *memory*, and (c) *identity interests*, with each impacting on a different set of people. The first appears to encapsulate trust in the confidential treatment of present and future individuals; the second serves to avoid denigration of subjects in the eyes of their social domain; and the last works to preserve the subject's status among a public following and those who aim to venerate the subject. Given that Lewis passed away over 50 years ago, the researcher would

not jeopardise confidence interests or memory interests, however, the identity interests required careful treatment of information that could besmirch the status of his popularity and the legacy through in his works.

A fair conclusion on the topic would be to validate the idea of *exiting ethics* (Tracy, 2010), which, in qualitative terms, would mean the prolonged, strong ethical stances assumed even after leaving the scene of data collection. For psychobiographers, the iterative nature of research makes this category of ethics particularly important. Tracy (2010) admits that the researcher rarely has control over how, specifically, their research is received. However, awareness of strong feelings towards one's subject, together with the subjectivity that one is tempted to display after new discoveries, means the researcher should permit the necessary and professional treatment of data.

Ponterotto and Reynolds (2017) recently proposed an ethical-decision making model that was used as a final reference point by the researcher of this study. The model proposes a set of six steps:

1. Ethical reflexivity was a conditioned practice, by which the researcher maintained an awareness of the ethical dilemmas that might present themselves in the course of the study, and he remained conscientious of the need to address it appropriately;
2. Ethical guidelines (Ponterotto, 2013) and psychobiographical best practices (Ponterotto, 2014) were continually tapped as resources in the exploration of issues that arose;
3. Balanced considerations were due in terms of the course of action that was most viable to overcome difficulties, and – as was kept in mind – the consultation of an interdisciplinary network would offer divergent options not yet considered;

4. The researcher accepted accountability for the outcome of the decision that needed to be reached about actions taken;
5. The emergence of consequences and its impact on the subject after the study had to be monitored continuously; and
6. Debriefing (through the report) of the emergent ethical situation, afterwards, and its management, could possibly educate fellow researchers and students, to ensure the growth of the researcher professionally.

6.9 Conclusion

It became clear that the task of the psychobiographer is perplexing in its complexity of interwoven considerations, which serve as relative guidelines that are susceptible to the particular study with regards to their importance. Though it was the aim of this chapter to establish transparency regarding the researcher's approach to methodology, trustworthiness, and ethics, the hope is that anyone who uses this research to inform their own, would recognise the pervasively iterative nature of the venture that is described in qualitative projects. In psychobiography, researcher reflexivity is significant, and that the need for and familiarisation with research-informed best practice aids the field in continuing its momentum. The next chapter will present the psychosocial findings and discussions.

CHAPTER 7: PSYCHOSOCIAL FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

7.1 Introduction

With a life divided among the many different roles he fulfilled – as academic, defender of the faith, and literary giant – the life of Clive Staples Lewis (1898 – 1963) was a multi-faceted construction that was divided even further into an outer experience and inner world (Lewis, 1955a; McGrath, 2013; Peters, 1985; Wilson, 1990). It made sense that the consideration of his life from a psychosocial perspective could, therefore, possibly provide evidence of the variable nature development could assume, development in which Erikson (1997) viewed the psychosocial stages as interconnected while each was present “in some form before ‘its’ decisive and critical time” (p.29). This chapter will present the eight psychosocial stages as posited by Erik Erikson (1968, 1977; 1980; 1997) as a lens through which the applicable biographical details of Lewis’s life was analysed. Each section will begin with a brief overview of the main theoretical premises of each stage, after which Lewis’s timeline will be placed within the theoretical progression of psychosocial crises, and the acquisition of ego strengths and/or core pathologies. The chapter will conclude with a discussion of the main trends that became evident through Lewis’s unique life.

7.2 The Life-span Contextualisation of Erik Erikson

The discussion that will follow presents an historical organisation of the details of Lewis’s life within the psychosocial theory of development as presented by Erikson (1959, 1968,

1977, 1980, 1997). Lewis's life will be elucidated holistically (Hoare, 2005; Schachter, 2005) in terms of the prime adaptive ego qualities (or ego strengths) and core pathologies that the resolution of each crisis brought to the fore once development had unfolded from the conflict of opposing forces. The chapter will represent a chronological organisation of the historical periods of the psychosocial developmental framework, though closer inspection will reveal that the outcome of each psychosocial stage (unique to Lewis's life) does not fit neatly into the normative progression of crisis resolution. The sixth stage, for example, in its portrayal of adolescent development, reveals a prolonged and extensive period of moratorium in Lewis's life. As will be discussed, its manifestation was partly due to his struggle to establish synthesis of the disparate parts of his identity, which were informed by themes such as religion, career, and his reserved world of imagination (see Section 7.2.6).

As this discussion will make clear, Lewis's life could, thus, be regarded as not following the normal epigenetic ground plan as set out by Erikson (1968, 1977, 1980, 1997). From the literature, it was understood that the occurrence of a psychosocial stage may occur at a specific chronological age, though it does not preclude individual variation from making the time spent in each stage subject to change (Erikson, 1963, 1997). As the details of Lewis's life were filtered through the psychosocial developmental matrix, all eight stages of development were found to harbour an age-applicable application, at least to some degree. Extracts from his life and works will be provided to emphasise the stage-related fit of biographical information throughout the psychosocial theory.

7.2.1 Trust vs. Mistrust (birth to 1 year).

Within the first year of life (Erikson, 1963) – approximated, instead, to a period that spans between birth and 18 months (Berzoff, 2011) – the predictability of a stable environment that offers a pervasive experience of reliability (Erikson, 1977; Graves & Larkin, 2006; Newman & Newman, 2012) is contrasted with a lack of certainty about the sense of safety to be found in the environment (Davies & Woitach, 2008; Newman & Newman, 2012). From this contrast, the psychosocial conflict of *trust* versus *mistrust* unfolds (Erikson, 1968, 1977, 1980). The crisis establishes a foundational pattern for the successful resolution of other crises, by allowing the individual to acquire a sense of *hope* (Erikson, 1977, 1968, 1997; Gross, 1987) as adaptive ego quality (Newman & Newman, 2012), which becomes a sustaining expression in adulthood (Graves & Larkin, 2006; Roazen, 1976). A greater resolution of the dystonic pole of mistrust would see the development of a sense of *withdrawal* as the core pathology, which would complicate the acquisition of enduring ego strengths in the future (Erikson, 1968; Gross, 1987; Newman & Newman, 2012).

7.2.1.1 An imagination born (1898 - 1900).

Lewis is described as being born from an Ulsterian Protestant background that seemed vested with the moral assurances and manners of his mother's family, whilst he was undeniably in possession of traits distinctive of his father (Lewis, 1955a; McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). This 'Lewisian' character (Lewis, 1955a), together with his Protestant upbringing – that stood in contradiction to traditional Irish culture – made Lewis distinctly 'other': he was regarded as an Englishman in later reference to his life (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). Though little

information is available about Lewis's infancy, his background and the traits that emerged later are, nonetheless, open to interpretation through the psychosocial crisis of *trust* versus *mistrust*.

Newman and Newman (2017) refer to the establishment of a consistency in the environment's capacity to respond to the needs of the infant, which is focused, to a large extent, on the accessibility of a parent's or guardian's care (Erikson, 1963, 1977). Though the literature alludes to little surrounding (his mother) Flora Hamilton's capacity as a caregiver, she was described by her husband (Albert) "as good a woman, wife and mother, as ever God has given to a man" (Lewis Papers, volume 3, p. 120 as cited by Wilson, 1990, Early Days, para. 20). Flora could possibly have been regarded as having been present, sensitive and dependable as a caregiver (Mikulincer, 1998) who contributed to the creation of a stable environment (Erikson, 1977; Graves & Larkin, 2006) for Lewis, who was known as Jack, and his brother, Warnie. This claim is supported further by a statement that her serene love was influential in Lewis's own love and relationships with women (Wilson, 1990).

The literary inclinations of both parents (McGrath, 2013; Peters, 1985) could also be interpreted as a rooted quality that contributed to the predictability of Lewis's environment later in life; he could rely on it on the route to a perception of continuity about himself (Erikson, 1977; Newman & Newman, 2017). His parents' love of reading and of books (Lewis, 1955a; McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990) thus allowed Lewis to develop a "pervasive attitude" (Erikson, 1968, p. 96) about himself and his own reading tastes with his setting being a household with an abundance of reading material (McGrath, 2013), which, in itself, provides evidence of a resourced environment that could satisfy his needs, even if these were to develop only later. It is, thus, this *trust* that probably assumed a more basic nature in Lewis's infancy (Erikson, 1977). Later, it entered the spheres of his childhood, when he had acquired the confidence to explore, through a reliance on

sensory information from the surroundings, which offered safety and predictability in the gratification of his emergent literary needs (Erikson, 1977; Newman & Newman, 2012, 2017). This sense of experience may have later lead to the origins of a rudimentary *ego identity* (Erikson, 1977), suggested by the following description of himself as “a product of long corridors, empty sunlit rooms, upstairs indoor silences, attics explored in solitude, distant noises of gurgling cisterns and pipes, and the noise of wind under the tiles. Also, of endless books” (Lewis, 1955a, p. 9).

His later life alludes to the profound emptiness left by his mother’s death – an observation which may relate to the claim that infants need to feel confident about the caregiving capacity of their surroundings (Graves & Larkin, 2006). This confidence of the child in the stability of the environment is achieved through the establishment of a mutuality between the infant’s sense of immature receptivity and the caregiver’s provision (Erikson, 1977), whilst the child explores through his/her own reliance on sensory information.

Though it is unclear if Lewis’s infant life presented situations that lead to the dystonic pole of *mistrust* (Erikson, Erikson & Kivnik, 1989), it appeared that his father’s personality was regarded as a notorious threat to the sense of safety exuded by the environment (Davies & Woitach, 2008; Newman & Newman, 2012, 2017). Albert was of the breed of Welshman that gave themselves over to the passions of anger and sentiment, and he was prone to argumentation; his father’s own turbulent feelings (Peters, 1985) would make Clive see ‘emotion’ as “something uncomfortable, embarrassing and even dangerous” (Lewis, 1955a, p.2). When Lewis came to experience emotion as a threat (Lewis, 1955a), it is likely that his father’s restless emotions (Peters, 1985) lead to an overexposure to stimulation, and contributed to Lewis’s (even then) infantile sense of wariness (Erikson, et al., 1989).

Newman and Newman (2012) blame the loss of confidence that infants may experience on the mistakes made by caregivers in raising the infants. Though *mistrust* was not explicitly garnered in Lewis' life at the time, something of Albert's personality at a later time, after the loss of the boys' mother, suggests exposure that could have been misperceived by the brothers early in life. Lewis (1955a, p. 20) claims that, "under the pressure of anxiety his tempers became incalculable; he spoke wildly and acted unjustly." Newman and Newman (2012, 2017) elaborate on the potency of personal experiences of frustration, the extent of these frustration which could make the infant vulnerable to experiencing doubt about their own loveableness. This doubt is due to the lack of meaningfulness infants attach to environmental frustrations when an outer sameness in their surroundings cannot be predicted to ensure an inner certainty for the infant (Erikson, 1977).

It is also described how the infant-caregiver relationship risks dissolution due to larger events that remain mostly unforeseen; such as parental death or illness or even social climates, which may disrupt the bond (Newman & Newman, 2012, 2017). Though it occurred later, the death of Flora Hamilton could be described as instrumental to the emotional separation of the children from their remaining caregiver, their father (McGrath, 2013). With the instability of his father's emotions clear from Lewis's impressionable age (Lewis, 1955a), the event of his mother's death appears to have been detrimental to a possibly newly acquired sense of *hope* as ego strength (Erikson, 1982; Gross, 1987; Peterson & Seligman, 2003) which counts on the establishment of basic trust, and the relief from discomfort that risks a danger in its acquisition (Erikson, 1982). Lewis's father's turbulent emotion (Lewis, 1955a) could, thus, have contributed further to the lack of nourishment afforded for the sense of hope and an inherent belief in the face of adversity (Newman & Newman, 2012)

Erikson's (1997) view is that *hope* in infancy transitions into faith later in life, becoming the sustaining expression of hope in old age (Graves & Larkin, 2006; Roazen, 1976). In the caregiving relationship, the hope of infants and the faith of their caregivers interact mutually, each sustaining and influencing the other (Erikson, 1963, 1968; Roazen, 1976). The notion of hope could, thus, not be seen as to having been completely endangered during Lewis's infant years or even later, as Lewis was born into a distinct Ulster background; a context that was informed by the Protestant movement of the time (McGrath, 2013) which placed him within a social milieu of religious influence, which was fuelled further by the fact that his mother was the daughter of a clergyman (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). Further evidence conveyed is that, despite his atheist appeals during his schooling, and during much of adolescence and his early adult years (Lewis, 1955a; McGrath, 2013; Peters, 1985; Wilson, 1990), Lewis later became a great defender of the faith (Lancast, 2012; Peters, 1985). This points to the reinstatement of the influence of the adaptive ego quality of *hope*, which is significant due to an observation by Graves and Larkin (2006), who state that religious faith is infused with a childlike quality of infantile trust that later translates into mature faith.

Lewis's infant life presents little information to support the formation of a core pathology of *withdrawal* (Erikson, 1968; Newman & Newman, 2012) at this stage, though the presenting conditions of the relationship with his father could be seen as possessing a facilitative capacity – especially due to Albert's tendency to respond according to a pattern that was unsynchronised to his sons' needs during the grieving period after the loss of Flora (Lewis, 1955a; McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). However, as the next section will reveal, Lewis's inquisitive and explorative nature did not display the passiveness to his surroundings that Erikson, (1968, 1977) describes as being conducive to withdrawal, nor did caution prohibit the

expeditious growth of knowledge. This analysis, thus, leads the researcher to speculate that the significance of this phase was revisited during the next period of Lewis's life, although not to the degree of seeking renewed resolution.

7.2.2 Autonomy versus Shame and Doubt (1 - 3 years).

Berzoff (2011) allocates this second stage to between 18 months and three years of life. The individual experiences an increasing need for independence and expression, and is faced with the first pole of the present crisis, which involves a sense of *autonomy* (Erikson, 1977; Freiberg, 1987). An adaptive quality of *will* is assumed to exist in the progressive openness displayed regarding the meeting of challenges through a sense of self-direction that surrounds the choices made in social dimensions (Erikson, 1997; Erikson et al., 1986) should the resolution of the crisis nurture success. A negative outcome sees the individual converging more onto feelings that are indicative of the self-consciousness present in *shame* and the uncertainty present in approaching unfamiliar circumstances that is characteristic of *doubt* (Erikson, 1968, 1977; Gross, 1976; Newman & Newman, 2012). Should the individual fall into the pattern of executing meaningless or ritualised behaviours, the core pathology of *compulsion* (Barlow & Durand, 2015) may result and impede development.

7.2.2.1 An imagination born (1899 - 1900).

Not much about Lewis's earliest days gives insight into the resolution of the second stage of psychosocial development. From the previous section it can be inferred, however, that Lewis entered toddlerhood with a sense of *trust*, established by his mother's love, and a sense of *hope*, with mature faith being informed by the religious context into which he was born, and the basic

trust he was developing. Thus, religion was the institution that informed parental faith and facilitated infantile trust (Erikson, 1977; Graves & Larkin, 2006; Roazen, 1976).

7.2.2.2 *A garden of Joy (1900 - 1901).*

It is Newman and Newman's (2012) view that independence is noteworthy when the realisation dawns on the individual that his/her needs cannot always be sufficiently met, or their emotions comprehended, by their caregivers. Lewis's life, in this period, was one he described as "mainly a period of humdrum, prosaic happiness", that "awakes none of the poignant nostalgia with which I look back on my much less happy boyhood" (Lewis, 1955, p. 7). Lewis's description of a fairly ordinary and happy childhood reveals an inkling of a positive resolution of the stage, and also reveals a developmental trend that built on the positive strengths gained from the previous crisis. However, the description does reveal and foretell of the significance that would be emphasised in a period in his later childhood, which would be an impediment to the epigenetic trend he followed throughout his life (to be addressed later). However, Lewis's reliance on his brother's companionship (Lewis, 1955a; McGrath, 2013) – from whom he differed by only three years in age (Wilson, 1990) – could, perhaps, be seen as facilitating an independence that is characteristic of *autonomy* (Erikson, 1968; Newman & Newman, 2017).

Jack and his older brother spent their days lost in both separate and mutual fantasies, and they created stories, places and characters to adorn their fantasies (Lewis, 1955a; McGrath, 2013). This could point to Freiberg's (1987) positioning of a self-control and pride that was exhibited, perhaps, to explore within a trusted environment (Graves & Larkin, 2006). Once more, the success of, at least, the first stage is revealed. As *trust* embodies the foundational importance of these trends, its firmness offers the child the competency to fulfil his/her own needs later

(Erikson, 1968, 1977; Graves & Larkin, 2006; Newman & Newman, 2012). The exact needs of Lewis at this stage remains unclear, however, he does mention later in life, “I fancy happy childhoods are usually forgotten. . . . It is not settled comfort and heartsease, but momentary joy that transfigures the past and lets the eternal quality shine through” (Wilson, 1990, *Early Days*, para. 1). Here, already, it seems as if the pervasive theme of his entire life – ‘Joy’ (Lancast, 2012; Lewis, 1955a; Wilson, 1990) – could have already established an inkling of a desire, which he sought to fulfil later in his life, when the ease of its appearance during his childhood became less accessible.

Lewis regarded his brother as a confidant (Lewis, 1955a), a companion with whom his musings about the people in their surrounding world could be shared; these conversations fuelled their created fantasies. Clearly, observations from their environment were translated into new perspectives within their imaginative worlds, which made the environment influential with regard to development, and their independent encounters of the environment through their fantasies lead to different experiences. From this evidence, Lewis’s life affirms the strong possibility of autonomy having been established. Erikson (1968) was of the opinion that it is a sense of *autonomy* that provides exposure to new experiences related to surroundings, with this setting adding to the shaping of the child. The other factors that served as likely contributors to Lewis’s development of autonomy at this period remain, however, open to further investigation.

Erikson et al. (1986) state that challenges are circumvented by self-controlled direction that is offered by the ego strength of *will*. It could possibly be assumed that Lewis possessed this strength, which poses an autonomous volition, because Jack was able to keep up with his brother who was three years older, and he managed to entertain Warnie, and contribute to his brother’s fantasies (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). The tribulations Lewis faced later with regard to the

death of his mother (Lancast, 2012; Lewis, 1955a; Wilson, 1990) could mean will was prevalent even in his later childhood, for Lewis was seen to maintain a strong sense of self-direction, even in light of the emotional absence of his father (Lewis, 1955a; Wilson, 1990). Newman and Newman (2012) maintain that this was, perhaps, indicative of endurance in the presence of trials.

The opposite pole of the crisis, influenced by the untrained capacity to execute *autonomy* or to discriminate new encounters, is *doubt* (Erikson, 1968, 1977; Newman & Newman, 2012). The sources that address this period of Lewis's life do not refer to any instances in which the self-consciousness that is indicative of *shame* (Erikson, 1963, 1968) led to a decrease in self-confidence regarding his capabilities (Erikson, 1963). It could be speculated that Lewis's relationship with his father, due to what appear to be descriptions of intense emotional fluctuations (Lewis, 1955a; Wilson, 1990), could have contributed to an insecure attachment (Toth et al., 2009) to his father. The literature is not forthcoming with information that presents their father as a main figure of attachment. However, a significance (dawning through Lewis's reflection, as became clear in Section 2.2.3) is to be found in Albert's decision, imposed by his lack of consideration, to pack his sons off to what he thought was an appropriate school (McGrath, 2013). Though Warnie (Jack's brother) was the first to be subjected to the choice of education forced upon him by his father, Albert's choice could reveal what Erikson (1968) describes as a stringent outer influence that inhibits the gradual assumption of control by the individual.

Lewis's autonomous play at the time offers no indication of the core pathology of *compulsion* that could result from a possible familiarity with a sense of self-control (Erikson, 1968; Newman & Newman, 2012). Neither is his companionship with his brother, nor the ability to respond in meeting his older brother's interests in play (Wilson, 1990) is seen as displaying a

precocious conscience (Erikson, 1968, 1977), which is a provisional moral component that facilitates to reign in behaviour at this age. The very routine and ordinariness with which Lewis describes his younger days (Lewis, 1955a) could, on other hand, perhaps, point to a ritualised set of play that contributed to its everyday nature – providing comfort to the boys in their ensconced fantasy world and physical setting that negated threats to the familiarity it gave birth to (Evans et al. 1999; Newman & Newman, 2017). However, these actions of imaginative exploration (if it was present to any great degree at this young age) cannot, sufficiently, be seen to categorise as behaviours marked for their alleviation of anxiety and put the child at risk of pathological ritualised actions (Barlow & Durand, 2015). From the literature it is apparent that the repeated play in which Lewis and his brother involved themselves did not, as warned by Erikson (1982) and Newman and Newman (2012), prove to be an impediment to their development due to the play comprising meaningless behaviours.

7.2.3 Initiative versus Guilt (3 - 6 years).

In the third psychosocial stage, spanning between three and six years of age, a strong sense of selfhood that infuses the child with a predisposition to agency is pitted against inhibitions in action, to create the antithesis of *initiative* versus *guilt* (Erikson, 1997; Berzoff, 2011). Confidence leaves its mark upon the child to utilise imagination as a tool by which to leave an imprint on their surroundings (Erikson, 1968), or else, be inhibited by the internalised moral restrictions imposed by their environment. When a midway is found between that which is considered permissible and that which exists as possibilities for achievement (Erikson, 1968, 1977; Newman & Newman, 2012), *purposefulness* as ego quality is gained from the balanced resolution to energetically pursue curiosity within set bounds. Should the bounds imposed be too

restrictive, and push the child towards a more guilt-ridden sense of agency, then *inhibition* arises as core pathology, and places limits on the child's stock of confidence (Newman & Newman, 2012).

7.2.3.1 A garden of Joy (1901 - 1904).

A three-year divide between Lewis and his brother allowed Lewis to fulfil his brother's need for imaginative fulfilment from a very young and pliable age (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). It could be inferred that Erikson (1968) would, here, have seen exemplified an *intrusive mode*, with Lewis finding cause to enter into his brother's imaginative and real surroundings. It may be that Lewis displayed a sense of selfhood strong enough to establish separateness (Erikson, 1968; Newman & Newman, 2012) from both his parental figures, and his brother, instead of utilising them as consistent models for imitation (Erikson, 1977; Gross, 1987); an act children at this age engage in with increasing language proficiency (Erikson, 1980). The literature reveals that Lewis and his brother adopted joint, but also individual, fantasies for their entertainment (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990), showing that Lewis would have been capable of maintaining a sense of selfhood whilst modelling his brother's imaginative approach to play. This approach is substantiated further by Erikson's (1968) descriptions of linguistic competencies that enable the child to display greater inquisitiveness. Here, one can highlight the tutelage of Lewis's mother, who started him on the path of French and Latin years earlier (Lewis, 1955a; McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). This newly bred inquisitiveness also incorporated a greater sense of imagination regarding the roles that his developing language skill (and even literary interest) made possible.

With his increasing skills and maturing qualities built on a sense of *autonomy* acquired in a previous age, it is clear that Lewis was likely in possession of a sense of *initiative* (Erikson, 1963, 1997). It is through this initiative that Lewis found it within himself to influence his world by a sense of agency he was likely to have acquired in the previous stage (Erikson, 1968), possibly through his ability to entertain his brother. Lewis may have come to learn that he was, in fact, a causal factor within his environment, and was able to leave the mark of his curiosity and imaginative ideas on it (Erikson, 1968; Newman & Newman, 2012). Lewis's interactions with Warnie, furthermore, reveal a social confidence partial to *initiative* (Dodge et al., 1986), through which both boys could construct harmonised and distinct fantasy worlds and allow for meaningful interchange and engagement in positive and gregarious contact; each was regarded as the confidants of the other despite, their differences (Wilson, 1990).

There are not sufficient details relating to this specific period that would be indicative of a resolution to the opposite pole. However, it is significant that certain factors in the lives of the brothers would be conducive to the regulating influence that is posed by *guilt*. Wilson (1990) describes an almost ideal way of life for the young brothers, who were allowed to be caught up in the patterns of their play – however, this way of life was interrupted by their parent's decision about schooling. The conscience and responsibility that society enforces enters into the child's scope of awareness (Gross, 1987). It is a cognisance that is displayed in Lewis's portrayal of the people present in his surroundings, as caricatures that were, furthermore, also revealed within the boys' fantasy worlds (Wilson, 1990). It is unlikely that this awareness induced within Lewis a great surplus of *guilt* that inhibited his increasing mental capabilities, as Erikson (1977) posits is possible. The role of the opposing pole in this stage remains largely unclear, and it is merely a sense of responsibility and restriction that could appear to have brought the Lewis brothers back

from their imaginative world-views, to their sense of moral conscience (Erikson, 1968; Newman & Newman, 2012).

In a later period of reflection on his childhood, after the tragic circumstances experienced by the Lewis household (Section 2.2.3), Lewis was to say about his father: “Under the pressure of anxiety his tempers became incalculable; he spoke wildly and acted unjustly” (1955a, p. 20). Parents are ascribed the task of modelling conscientiousness (Gross, 1987) during the stage of *initiative*. With *identification* as a central process to this stage (Newman & Newman, 2012), Lewis’s father could, perhaps, have opposed this notion, and induced in his sons a sense of guilt and, perhaps, provided a blueprint for their own behaviour through their assimilation of his behaviours, and an awareness of how they compared to him. These behaviours are, however, merely conducive to conditions of *guilt*, and in the age-related sequence of Lewis’s psychosocial development, it cannot simply be inferred that this convergence toward guilt was the resolution to this stage. The effects of his father’s behaviours remain noteworthy. According to Erikson (1968, 1977), the social spheres of the child hold within their arsenal models of adult behaviour, an *economic ethos* or *ethos of action*, that expose the child to societal functions and ideals that replaces figures emulated in fantasy. Whether Lewis did, in fact, emulate his father (or other figures) is open to speculation, but his proneness to creating imagined parodies of those who surrounded him (Wilson, 1990) is evidence of their influential status, of which he took note.

It is with this line of thought, considering the internalised environmental restrictions (Erikson, 1968; Newman & Newman, 2012) that is brought in balance with what could be achieved by the child (Erikson, 1963, 1968), that Lewis could, perhaps, have exited this stage with a sense of *purposefulness*, defined by Erikson (1978, p. 29) as the “courage playfully to imagine and energetically to pursue valued goals”. One is inclined to see Lewis’s imaginative

personification of his characters, such as those in his *Animal Land* (Wilson, 1990), as expressions of his views concerning his environment, which fell within the bounds of a probably rule-governed reality. Lewis's actions in this period do not, however, explicitly convey the sense of goal-setting that inspires execution to pursue such goals (Scholnick, 1995); neither does it communicate a blossoming inkling of accomplishment (Erikson, 1977).

There is no evidence in the period that suggests the possibility of the core pathology of *inhibition* (Newman & Newman, 2012). As has been mentioned, however, Albert Lewis's fluctuating moods, as displayed in his period of grieving (Lewis, 1955a; McGrath, 2013; Peters, 1985) could be regarded as a guilt-inducing characteristic that is drawn back to Albert's family - a background as a Welshman who gave himself over to the passions of anger and sentiment, and being prone to argumentation (Peters, 1985). It hints of a trait carried by Lewis's father that may have well been present in his make-up, even if to a less severe degree, before his mother's death. It remains open to debate if these descriptions of their father were pervasive enough in real life for Lewis and his brother to limit to their confidence due to what they perceived as a withdrawal of love or, merely, a guilt-inducing act (Newman & Newman, 2012) presented by their father. It could point to the development of Lewis's imagined world as an escape, where *initiative* was no longer put to the test within a social context to yield constructive feedback to the ideas and emotions that contribute to refining social skills.

It could, perhaps, be said that Lewis, in his dispositional outlook, came to a realisation of himself and what he was to forgive in his life, "I could forgive much neglect more easily than the least degree of what I regarded as interference Never at any age did I clamour to be amused; always and at all ages (where I dared) I hotly demanded not to be interrupted" (Lewis, 1955a, p.

135). In the context of the third stage, it is clear that Lewis could have shown himself to be hardly inhibited by outside influences staunching his sense of initiative and imagination.

7.2.4 Industry versus Inferiority (6 - 12 years).

Spanning the ages of six to 12 years of age (Erikson, 1997, Hamacheck, 1990; Schaffer, 2002), and Berzoff (2011) approximating the end of this stage closer to 11 years of age, the individual is faced with the challenge of displaying a sense of *industry*, or else becoming victim to sense of *inferiority* (Erikson, 1977, 1968). The conflict sees the child transcending familiar boundaries through engagement with meaningful production, having assimilated the resources offered by a structured setting independently and cooperatively in order to meet expected demands (Erikson, 1968, 1977, 1997; Kowaz & Marcia, 1991). Comparative appraisal awakens within children a questioning of their acquired skillsets, and when undue recognition or feedback of mediocrity pervade their reference of skill, then the resolution might lean toward the pole of *inferiority* (Erikson, 1977, Newman & Newman, 2012). A past informed by adequacy, which, in its consistent presence, offers the child a sense of readiness for the unrestrained utilisation, without feeling inferior, of the tools he/she is given (Erikson, 1964, 1977) offers a successful resolution that offers *competence* as a pervasive ego quality (Erikson, 1968; Newman & Newman, 2012). Should the child be inclined to passivity that reveals lethargy in the approach to achievement or productiveness, the development of *inertia* as core pathology is risked (Erikson et al., 1989; Newman & Newman, 2017).

7.2.4.1 A seeker in solitude (1904 - 1910).

The period of Lewis's middle childhood marks a significant departure from an almost idyllic existence presented through the investment in made-up worlds in which Jack and his brother rejoiced (Lewis, 1955a; McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). Erikson (1968) marks the end of a period of evolving imagination, but it became clear that Lewis was to continue a significant investment of himself in the construction of an inner world – an act he was left to do without the companionship of his brother, who was sent to Wynyard House in Watford to start his schooling (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990).

Lewis's existence here stands in significant opposition to a major mechanism that underlies the positive resolution of the crisis at this stage – to the pole of *industry* (Erikson, 1968, 1977, 1997; Kowaz & Marcia, 1991). According to Newman and Newman (2012) the investment is toward skill-development, which is facilitated by an increasing interpersonal growth. To Erikson (1963, p. 250), the child leaves behind “past hopes and wishes, while his exuberant imagination is tamed and harnessed . . . he now learns to win recognition by producing things”, all for the sake of a growth that is more impersonal (Erikson, 1977). Yet, Lewis's existence at this stage involved a development that seemed to allow him greater growth into his intrapersonal world. Lewis became “a product of long corridors, empty sunlit rooms, upstairs indoor silences, attics explored in solitude, distant noises of gurgling cisterns and pipes, and the noise of wind under the tiles. Also, of endless books” (Lewis, 1955a, p. 9). The Lewis family had also gone through another major transition – the move to Little Lea (their childhood home retained in memory), which was to be the backdrop of Lewis's and his brother's fantasies (Wilson, 1990). However, Lewis – who was left to his own devices – was, perhaps, unknowingly developing the skill of master parodist (Wilson, 1990) through the caricatures of his imagination over the many

hours spent in the house of memory. Though he himself described his own childhood inventions as rather mundane and simple (Lewis, 1955a), there was fluency to his creations that bespoke of his attentiveness as a reader (Wilson, 1990), already from the age of six, seven and eight. It becomes clear that the boundaries of his known environments were, indeed, being transcended (Boeree, 2006; Stevens, 2008) and his hours spent developing fantasies lead to a meaningful engagement of production (Erikson, 1968, 1977, 1997; Newman & Newman, 2012) and a mastery of the resources that were at his disposal (Erikson, 1997). Kowaz and Marcia (1991) explain Lewis's engagements of *industry* at the time further, by emphasising fluidity in skill with his creations and, therefore, the achievement of a focused application.

From 1905 to 1907, Jack was occupied with reading from a vast collection of books, who were his only companions when he missed Warnie, to whom he would often write (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). This introverted style of life (Lewis, 1955a; McGrath, 2013) seems to mark a contrast to the environmental feedback that individuals seek at this point regarding recognition of their productions or adaptation to the normative utility of the environment by engaging cooperatively (Erikson, 1977, 1997). Jack's desires of the past were not quite forgotten. The memory of a toy garden made by his brother arose once more, when, one day, he laid eyes on a flowering currant bush (Lewis, 1955a; McGrath, 2013):

It was a sensation, of course, of desire; but desire for what? . . . and before I knew what I desired, the desire itself was gone . . . the world turned commonplace again, or only stirred by a longing for the longing that had just ceased . . . in a certain sense everything else that had ever happened to me was insignificant in comparison. (Lewis, 1955a, p. 16)

The marked power of the last sentence, in particular, evoked his preoccupation with a past desire that he was, thus, unlikely to set aside easily. In his autobiography, Lewis illuminates the pervasiveness of this theme further: "that of an unsatisfied desire which is itself more

desirable than any satisfaction. I call it Joy” (Lewis, 1955a, p. 18). Joy would become critical to the meaning given to the plot of his life (Lancast, 2012; Lewis, 1955a; McGrath, 2013).

It is critical at this point to explain that Lewis, perhaps, appeared to embody a great sense of *industry* in the earlier years of this period, which was, however, directed more toward intra-personal goal pursuit in the construction of his inner-world. The literature paints Jack’s brother as the only peer that was allowed access to any contribution to Jack’s fantasy world (Lewis, 1955a; McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990).

The situation changed, however, with the tragic death of Flora in 1908, and the nestled safety of Lewis’s mythical world appeared to cave in (Wilson, 1990). Lewis’s father was also inconsolable, leaving him a disappointment as to the comfort he was expected to afford his sons (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990; Peters, 1985). The additional effect of two other family deaths made Lewis observe that his father’s “nerves had never been the steadiest” (Lewis, 1995a, p. 20). Lewis would fail to forgive his father wholly, and this inability lead to a tenuous relationship that continued well into their later lives (Wilson, 1990). It is at this point that the relative familiarity and security of the family unit as an environment could no longer accommodate the child – Erikson (1977, 1997) claims that recognition of work can only be obtained outside the filial womb. It appears, though, that Lewis was removed from his prosaic existence rather abruptly, and involuntarily. His father’s choice of schooling seemed to damage his relationship with his son further, and removed Lewis further from the comfort of his family (refer to Section 2.2.3).

School becomes the mediator of knowledge acquisition, through the systematic teaching offered by significant others – not discounting negative feedback by peers (Erikson, 1968; Newman & Newman, 2012). A nine-year old Lewis was sent to Wynyard House, in the Watford county of Hertford. The school environment and the erratic and unpredictable headmaster

frequently made Lewis plead for his father to remove him from ‘Oldie’s’ school (Lewis, 1955a; McGrath, 2013; Peters, 1985; Wilson, 1990), as the abusive and oppressive conditions were not conducive to his need for education. It is not lost on the reader that Lewis felt that his academic efforts did not receive the wanted reception, and Erikson (1968) was likely to describe this event as being conducive to an estrangement from his tasks. Lewis’s efforts might, due to the stringency of the headmaster, have felt inadequate with reference to his own abilities, appraising his efforts (as other children would at this age) as mediocre (Erikson, 1963). These conditions could possibly have evoked in Lewis a sense of *inferiority*, developed from this self-appraisal and input (Newman & Newman, 2012). However, it cannot be claimed that Lewis did indeed feel inferior to the extent described by psychosocial development. The background of Lewis’s correspondence with his father involved Lewis actively trying to persuade his father of the doubtful circumstances of his school – which he described as his *Belsen* - after the infamous concentration camp (Lewis, 1955a; McGrath, 2013). These letters provide evidence of a want for better education, and, perhaps, a recognition of his evolving mind (Erikson, 1997). Erikson (1968) addresses the need for skilled educators, who are required for circumvention, and the importance of circumstances that drive a child to a sense of *initiative*, which had, perhaps, been unconsidered through the child’s own learning and exploration. This helps children to move away from the fantasies of play, to the logic practices involved in larger participation. The next stage in Lewis’s life indicated that the construction of his inner world prevailed, despite his changing boarding school experiences (see Section 2.2.2).

We are left uncertain whether Lewis, indeed, reached the end of this stage having successfully resolved the crisis involving industry and inferiority. This standing is furthermore, drawn back to the role and noted absence of Lewis’s father during his time at Oldie’s (Lewis,

1955a; Wilson, 1990). His father had remained oblivious to the circumstances of his sons' unhappiness, partly due to Oldie's apparently convincing rebuttals to any inquiries (Lewis, 1955a). It leaves unaddressed the possibility that a different choice for Lewis's first school might have helped him escape the negativity possible in a schooling environment which was prevalent at Wynyard School.

Erikson (1963, 1978) presents his views on *competence* – the synthesis of the completion of this stage – with reference to a cooperative participation in valued skills. Little of Lewis's world in this period of middle childhood (especially the 18 months spent in Oldie's school) show the social investment that appears to be indicative of this stage. However, a part of Lewis's schooling experience during his 1909 – 1910 experience of *Belsen* does convey that *stable self-esteem* (Newman & Newman, 2012) could, perhaps, have been present. Lewis (1955a, p. 37) comments, "Intellectually, the time I spent at Oldie's was almost entirely wasted; if the school had not died, and if I had been there for two years more, it would probably have sealed my fate as a scholar for good". According to Newman and Newman (2012), consistency regarding one's abilities coaxes the individual towards the pursuit of skill refinement – a behaviour pattern informed by a history of adequacy displayed. Even though, in retrospect, Lewis's comment might convey that he had a firm awareness of his intellectual prowess and skills, and that he was aware that the school could impede his scholarly growth. This awareness was probably informed by Lewis's keen investment in his inner world during his periods of solitude at Little Lea (Lewis, 1955a; Wilson, 1990), during which he adamantly worked to create stories and allegories for the expansion of his fantasies, and his investment in the endless literature that surrounded him (Lewis, 1955a, McGrath, 2013).

Not enough information from this period presents itself to identify in Lewis a core pathology developed as *inertia* (Erikson et al., 1989). Lewis's childhood did not reveal a lack of energy in his striving for accomplishment, and, therefore, this lack could not pose itself a factor that dampened his enthusiasm for productivity (Erikson, 1982, 1997; Newman & Newman, 2017). It could be inferred that Lewis's inability to adapt to the despotic conditions of Oldie's school (Lewis, 1955a, Wilson, 1990) made him less inclined to adapt to the societal (school) demands of his particular setting, though Lewis's commitment to the ideal of being removed from the school (Lewis, 1955a, Wilson, 1990) speaks of a perseverance that certainly does not allude to a passivity (Newman & Newman, 2012), nor to a subjugation to an inhibition developed earlier (Erikson, 1982).

7.2.5 Identity versus Role Confusion (12 - 20 years).

Berzoff (2011) places the phase of adolescence between 11 to 18 years of age, whereas the establishment of *identity* over *role confusion* is extended by other authors to 12 to 20 years of age (Erikson, 1977, Gross, 1987, Hamacheck, 1990). Individuals, moving towards the normative role expectations that await them in approaching adulthood, seek to establish a consistent view of themselves in regard to various experiences, all while being aware of their differences in relation to others (Erikson, 1959, 1968; Kroger, 2005). A pervasive uncertainty may, however, make the individual susceptible to a less powerful self-image (Erikson, 1963, 1968; Newman & Newman, 2012), and *role confusion* may drive the individual to imitation (Freiberg, 1987). Role experimentation (Newman & Newman, 2012), in the form of a psychosocial moratorium (Erikson, 1959), manifests in the individual during this stage; it is a central process that allows navigation to a pervasive identity and an escape from the contradictory value stances he/she may

face (Markstrom et al., 1998; Stevens, 2008). When such ambiguities are evaded successfully, the beneficial outcome of the psychosocial moratorium is the ego strength of *fidelity*, which sees the manifestation of commitment to decisions taken (Erikson, 1978, 1997). A negative consequence of the challenges of adolescence witnesses the rejection and refusal of value creeds that are proposed (Erikson, 1959, 1997), to the extent of development of the core pathology of *repudiation* (Erikson, 1982; Newman & Newman, 2012).

7.2.5.1 A Knock of Logic (1910 – 1916).

7.2.5.1.1 Industry versus inferiority revisited.

The pang of Joy was to grip Lewis once more (see Section 2.2.4), this time in his exposure to Nordic mythology, which was conveyed by an illustration accompanying a translation of one of Richard Wagner's operas – a book series called *Siegfried and the Twilight of the Gods* (Lewis, 1955a; McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). The literature conveyed a significant observation to be taken from this experience: that Lewis possessed an emergent imagination encapsulated in an inner world, which made his boarding school experiences a simple backdrop (McGrath, 2013). It can, thus, be inferred that this tendency that was displayed in Lewis's life – a distinction between an inner world informing his experiences of Joy, and his outer world at the time in Cherbourg (Lewis, 1955a) – could have had a significant influence on his schooling. In fact, this influence presented itself through a noteworthy display of talent in the appreciation of reading, literature and music (Wilson, 1990), as noticed by his masters at Cherbourg during his time there, from 1911 to 1913. Here, praise and reward from an (particularly) educational setting exudes its effect in the development of a sense of *industry* (Erikson, 1968, 1997; Newman & Newman, 2012), which Lewis was still developing.

Furthermore, it is clear that Lewis did not neatly complete the challenges of the previous crises, as his imagination became a significant vector of a world separate from his investment in his surroundings. His escape lay in a well-stocked library, which allowed him to read, undisturbed by the social system reigning outside (Wilson, 1990), and the literary influence of Smugy (Lewis's schoolmaster, Harry Wakelyn Smith), whose lessons were "little outposts of civilization in an otherwise barbarous world" (Wilson, 1990, p. 193). Once more, it can be emphasised that the desires of the past, which had invested Lewis with his boisterous imagination, were not tamed for the sake of more impersonal goal pursuit, as Erikson (1977) aimed to foreshadow. Instead, it seemed that his imagination experienced an interchangeable gain through the academic recognition of his surroundings – evidenced by his masters at Cherbourg, at least.

The crisis, however, repositioned itself during his Malvern school days (1913 – 1914), which he described as a draining experience due to its clubs, pretence and the 'Coll' aristocracy (Lewis, 1955a; Peters, 1985). Nor was there an entertainment that Lewis could reserve for the 'Blood' system – a hierarchical system of status, with the title of Malvern Blood being reserved for those of appealing aesthetics, disposition or even achievement in sports at the school (Lewis, 1955a). Freiberg (1987) mentions that success is informed by a social environment that could distribute recognition unequally, thereby worsening the conflict of which a sense of *inferiority* is a role player. Culture imposes certain valued abilities to the exclusion of others. Newman and Newman (2012) propose that social comparison fosters this type of inadequacy when the efforts of the child are related to those of others and judged as mediocre (Erikson, 1963, 1997).

Clumsiness (see Section 2.2.4) complicated Lewis's pursuit of sport and craftsmanship in an environment where these attributes were valued (Lewis, 1955a; McGrath, 2013; Wilson,

1990). Malvern, with its recognition being reserved for particular characteristics, saw a humbling tool in its caste system (Lewis, 1955a; Wilson, 1990). The feelings of inadequacy, thus, related by Newman and Newman (2012) find expression in Lewis's case, with messages addressing a lack of ability – in which he was, perhaps, not seen as having an affinity to the skills that were deeply valuable.

However, the suppression of Lewis to the pole of *inferiority* could not be made evident, as he was of the belief that the 'Blood system', in fact, made of him more conceited and arrogant (Lewis, 1955a). It is suggested that Lewis's attitude of presenting as a 'prig' excluded him from the learned helplessness (Nelson, 1987; Seligman, 1975) that failure messages could have evoked. The negative critique or rebuttal by his environment due to his arrogance – "that sets one's seniors against one" (Lewis, 1955a, p. 108) – was not overextended to a complete lack of consideration (Newman & Newman, 2012) for his accomplishments and skills. Erikson (1977) states that the schoolchild could start feeling that his worthiness is dependent on factors such as upbringing, race or wealth, and not on a judgement of ability. Though Lewis may have regarded his achievement and recognition at Malvern as dependent on uncontrollable factors – which is seen as indicative of learned helplessness (Nelson, 1987; Seligman, 1975) – Lewis remained keenly aware of his impressions of his abilities in context of his surroundings, which suggests, furthermore, that his resolution of this re-emergent crisis was ever more towards the playing field of *industry*, and a keen awareness of where his scope of *competence* did, in fact, lie. It affirms Erikson's (1964, p. 124) definition of competence, as "the free exercise of dexterity and intelligence in the completion of tasks unimpaired by intellectual inferiority". With this acquired ego strength, Lewis was launched into the struggle of merging his skills to an enduring sense of identity.

7.2.5.1.2 *Emergence of identity versus role confusion.*

Regarding the possibility of the child developing a sense of *inferiority* in the previous stage, Erikson (1968) feared that *identity* may be limited to societal impositions of worthwhile efforts or other factors removed from ability; the limitation could, thus, have far-reaching effects in the present psychosocial stage, by suppressing an individual's potential of who they may be. Lewis's Malvern occupancy would be a short-lived year, with the summer of 1914 providing a short pause before what was to influence his logical mind greatly (Lewis, 1955a).

A visitation to an ill, but recovering Arthur Greeves in mid-April 1914 saw the development of an unforeseen friendship spark in the 15-year old Lewis's life. According to Erikson (1959, p. 102), "The term identity expresses such a mutual relation in that it connotes both a persistent sameness within oneself (self-sameness) and a persistent sharing of some kind of essential character with others." This sharing of his essential character, thus, shows Lewis's taking an important step into the phase of adolescence. The literature mentioned the maintenance of an inner world that was kept separate, yet intact (McGrath, 2013) – or a self-sameness (Erikson, 1959) – during his period at Malvern, and earlier, at Cherbourg. In addition, Lewis found that much of the fantasy that connotes an explanation of this inner world could now be shared, through a blooming friendship that would last the remainder of his life (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). Arthur Greeves would come to share this longing for desire – that Lewis had termed 'Joy' (Lewis, 1955a) – that had been reawakened by the romantic movement in literature, and the 'Northernness' the two friends immersed themselves in through works such as *Loki Bound* and *Myths of the Horsemen* (Lewis, 1955a; Wilson, 1990).

Erikson (1968) signalled the move to identity as an ever-regressing past that comes to stand in the light of uncertain, but impending societal roles that require definition. Lewis's next

phase of education embodied a period policed by the unwavering logic of William Kirkpatrick (The Knock), who became keenly aware of Lewis's literary temperament and dialectical nature during Lewis's private schooling at Bookham (Lewis, 1955a; McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). It was something he advised Albert on when the question of vocation arose in 1916 and, upon further inquiry, The Knock recommended that they consider for Jack the profession of advocate, "the career marked out for Clive by nature and destiny. . . . He has every gift, a goodly presence, a clear resonant voice, an unfailing resource of clear and adequate expression" (Wilson, 1990, *The Great Knock*, para. 41). Lewis (1955a) also gleaned that Kirkpatrick had mentioned his road winding toward that of scholar or writer, and his reluctance to pursuing his father's occupation made the latter choice seem more desirable. The desire to experience a congruency of the individual's uniqueness within societal context (Kroger, 2005), is clear, as Lewis was already seeking a fit of roles that had been established earlier with the opportunities his modern setting offered him (Erikson, 1968, 1977). Accordingly, occupation becomes an unnegotiable factor for consideration – success calls for a unique mark made by the individual, as opposed to a productive career that lacks satisfaction (Erikson, 1968).

Lewis's tutelage under Kirkpatrick (see Section 2.2.4) lead, furthermore, to what Erikson (1968, 1977) regards as broken continuity, due to a period of questioning. Indeed, Lewis was subjected to the well-aged and refined rhetoric of Kirkpatrick, a man who did not to welcome a view unless it was grounded on a firm logical basis (Lancast, 2012; Lewis, 1955a; McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990), thus demanding that Lewis apply critical thinking in preference to intuition – a challenge he was keen to rise to. His 'priggish' contempt, bred into him by the fagging system of Malvern, was to be beaten down with certainty (McGrath, 2013). Here we begin to see the formation of enduring ideas and representations (Gurin & Markus, 1988) that Lewis

developed about himself in the construction of his identity. Peters (1985) describes this period of learning as one characterised by great relief for Lewis. Lewis's awareness of his lack of fit in previous schooling environments was clear (Lewis, 1955a; McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990), and, thus, his intellectual thriving at Great Bookham could be taken as evidence of a competence that Lewis felt was necessary to experience an efficacy in contributing socially (Newman & Newman, 2012). This reconsideration of his competence formed part of establishing an enduring sense of self (Erikson, 1968, 1977).

The old-fashioned approaches of Kirkpatrick taught Lewis the dialectic approach, and it would prove to be a style of argumentation that Lewis adopted in his future role of critiquing literature (Lewis, 1955a; Wilson, 1990). Consolidation of the distinct parts of personality, posited as the main principle of the crisis (Erikson, 1968; Newman & Newman, 2012), was, thus, a probable development during this period under the teachings of *The Knock*, leading Lewis to fulfil a meaningful striving to rise to the challenges posed by his teacher, and adding to the values that Lewis was open to affirm his standing on. This is substantiated by comments Kirkpatrick made through keen observation of his student, "It is the maturity and originality of his literary judgement that remains so surprising. By an unerring instinct he detects first rate quality in literary workmanship and the second rate does not interest him in any way" (Wilson, 1990, *The Great Knock*, para. 15). This observation was not to give stock to the illusion of superiority which Lewis fostered in his earlier schooling; the *Knock* ensured that Lewis was cured of this dispositional malady (Lewis, 1955a). This period saw Lewis's reengagement with past conflicts, of which Erikson (1977) claims the value to lie in the trust invested in a significant other to challenge emerging perceptions – a role Kirkpatrick fulfilled.

Circumstances at that stage were, however, to present Lewis with some conditions conducive to *role confusion*. His inability to adapt or grow accustomed to the Malvern culture (Lewis, 1955a; McGrath, 2013) is an indication of *alienation* (Mau, 1992) to the system to which he was expected to feel an affinity, leading to a lack of identification with the group – and, thus, the Malvern Bloods. The dangers posed by this resolution (Erikson, 1963, 1968; Newman & Newman, 2012) relates to a less powerful self-image, or creating a negative susceptibility to peer influence – which appeared to have spared Lewis. Lewis’s period of education under Kirkpatrick seems to have affirmed in Lewis many of the strengths previously mentioned (such as his mature judgements), especially regarding his strong literary inclinations (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). Kirkpatrick’s teaching meant Lewis was, in 1916, agreeable to the roles society presented to him at the time (and as suggested by Kirkpatrick), leading to a countering of the notions presented by Newman and Newman (2012) relating to the hardships of goal assimilation and forming coherency, instead, leading to the development of a firm self-image. The literature also does not offer evidence of an over-identification on Lewis’s part with certain role models due to a fear, in Lewis, that he would fail to achieve individuality (Erikson, 1968; 1977).

It is, however, not clear whether Lewis managed to fully resolve the crisis of identity, as opposed to role confusion, during this stage. Strong evidence for this point is found in one particular experience, at the Great Bookham train station, where Lewis purchased a copy of George McDonald’s *Phantastes* (see Section 2.2.4) – a book of which the content would stir many of the untouched emotions that had been broiling beneath the surface since his mother’s death (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). Though he was unwilling, Lewis seems to have been forced to reacknowledge previous stages, for the purpose of moving towards an enduring identity (Erikson, 1968, 1977). “All was changed I had not the faintest notion what I had let myself

in for by buying Phantastes” (Lewis, 1955a, p. 209). It is true that Erikson (1959) made allowances for a *psychosocial moratorium* – a process of sifting diverse roles and views that is largely unrestrained, even though it happens during a period given for completion. From the discussion of Lewis’s resolution to the pole of *identity*, it is clear that Lewis was able to consolidate many aspects of himself – although almost exclusively in an intellectual sense. His spiritual autobiography painted a different tale of crisis: “That night [with the book] my imagination was, in a certain sense, baptized; the rest of me, not unnaturally, took longer” (Lewis, 1955a, p. 209). It can be taken that the crisis was revisited later in life, perhaps numerous times, thereby revealing a gradual questioning of a hardened inner self that had already endured significant emotional suffering (Wilson, 1990).

Lewis appeared to be firm in his commitment to at least one view: his perceptions on Christianity. Erikson (1978, p. 28) refers to the emerging ego strength of *fidelity*, “the ability to sustain loyalties freely pledged in spite of the inevitable contradictions and confusions of value systems”. Lewis’ father had nurtured fears of the ‘Gaston’s heresies’, and Kirkpatrick’s influence could have fuelled the dissipation of Lewis’s faith – it was a situation that made him feel that his confirmation in the church was dishonest (Lewis, 1955a; Wilson, 1990). The waning of his belief in God seems to have already started during his earlier schooling experiences (first at Oldie’s and then at Cherbourg – see Sections 2.2.3 and 2.2.4). However, it is during this period that it gained momentous significance, when he relayed, “No word in my vocabulary expressed deeper hatred than the word ‘Interference’. . . . Christianity placed at the centre what then seemed the transcendental Interferer” (Lewis, 1955a, p.199). Erikson (1968, 1977) retains that the accumulation of previous ego qualities and the success of earlier psychosocial stages allow the individual to maintain hope in the principles of certain ideologies and standpoints. This statement

allows a significant questioning into the origins of Lewis's apparent inability to develop fidelity to his faith. A clue may be found in the time his mother was ill. He recalled praying for his mother's recovery, "I accordingly set myself to produce by willpower a firm belief that my prayers for her recovery were successful. . . . The thing hadn't worked, but I was used to things not working" (Lewis, 1995a, p. 21). Lewis's hint about a familiar disappointment at the failure of things seems to enhance what would have already been a major setback of disappointment produced by his failed prayer. McGrath (2013) accounts for the rippling effect this failure of prayer would have on Lewis's later life and his inability to adapt a particular manifestation of the ego quality – *fidelity to values and ideologies* (Newman & Newman, 2012). This inability suggests that the crisis of the fifth stage had remained, as yet, unresolved, as the next phase of Lewis's life would reveal.

7.2.5.2 A leap past the watchful dragons (1918 - 1927).

7.2.5.2.1 Early experiences in intimacy versus isolation.

The psychosocial stage described in Section 7.2.6 presents an overview of the entry of the next set of oppositional forces that Lewis had to face. Much secrecy surrounds the relations between Lewis and Janie Moore, though a great deal of speculation points to evidence suggestive of an intimate connection. "When I came first to the University, I was as nearly without a moral conscience as a boy could be . . . of chastity, truthfulness and self-sacrifice" (Lewis, 1940, p. 31). With his relationship with his father balancing on disrepair and disappointment; questionable visits by Mrs Moore to Lewis, who was recovering in hospital after being wounded in battle; and both Moore and Lewis unbound by moral conventions of the faith (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990), there was little doubt about the romantic turn their connection may have taken. It should

be remembered that Lewis's stationing at Kelbe College with none other than Paddy Moore (Janie's son), lead to the initial contact being established between the two, when Lewis visited Paddy's family when he had leave, instead of his father (see Section 2.2.5). Later on, a promise was forged between the friends that whosoever would perish in the war effort would be left the custodians of care to the family of the other (Lancast, 2012; McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990).

The romantic inclinations would have occurred around the period of Lewis's 19th birthday, a period bordering the transition between adolescence and adulthood and thus the transition from the search for *identity*, to the sharing of *intimacy*. In agreement with Erikson (1968, 1977), the notion of love may inspire a pursuit thereof by the adolescent, but that the purpose it deems to fulfil is for altogether different reasons. An observation of the early manifestations of Jack and Janie's involvements may provide a clue. McGrath (2013) deduces that Mrs Moore (45 years old at the time she met Jack) provided Lewis with a maternal figure, in addition to, perhaps, the excitement of intimacy – a gesture of sympathy that was not uncommonly experienced by men about to leave for the Front. It could confirm Erikson's (1977) view that “adolescent love is an attempt to arrive at a definition of one's identity by projecting one's diffused ego-image on another and by seeing it thus reflected and gradually clarified” (p. 235). Judgment from the literature reveals an earlier curiosity on the topics of love and sex (Lewis, 1955a) which Jack confided in with Arthur Greeves during the period at Great Bookham when Jack was 16 or 17. “Though I have no personal experience of the thing they call love, I have what is better – the experience of Sappho, of Euripides, of Catullus, of Shakespeare, of Spenser, of Austen, of Brontë, of, – anyone else I have read” (Hooper, 1979, p. 424). This line is significant, as it reveals a curiosity that Lewis was keen to explore in order to test his adolescent

views. The crisis left Lewis with only initial experiences of *intimacy* versus *isolation*, and would witness a unique trajectory later in his life.

7.2.6 Intimacy versus Isolation (20 - 40 years)

Following on the development of an identity that provides continuity of experience (Erikson, 1977; Kroger, 2005), the individual seeks to establish a meaningful connection with another, based on the desire to share the facets of this identity for the sake of a deeper connection (Erikson, 1968, 1977; Freiberg, 1987). This is the challenge of establishing *intimacy*, which is experienced over a period from 20 to 35 years of age, when the individual is launched into the first crisis of adulthood (Hamachek, 1990; Shaffer, 2002). The opposite force of the pole sees the development of *isolation*, which involves the development of a reserved inclination when the mutuality of connection threatens an identity undefined by consistency and stability (Erikson, 1977). *Love* results as the ego virtue of this stage (Gross, 1987), when both poles of the presenting crisis extend their influence over a relationship with a significant other (Erikson et al., 1989, Newman & Newman, 2012). A sense of *exclusivity* (Erikson et al., 1989) is experienced when the absence of mutuality characterises the resolution of the crisis, leading to an extensive prohibition within or from a relationship that restricts the individual from feelings of bondedness (Newman & Newman, 2012).

7.2.6.1 A leap past the watchful dragons (1918 - 1927).

7.2.6.1.1 Revisiting identity versus role confusion.

Section 7.2.5.1.2 closed with an incomplete resolution to *identity versus role confusion*. The question of *fidelity* became significant once more in (a) Lewis's stance on spiritual beliefs that were to guide his own behaviour, and (b) the precedence of consideration to be extended to his career. To Erikson (1968, 1977), occupational identity becomes a prime concern of the individual at this stage. Lewis, having devoted himself to acceptance into New College at Oxford University – and later to fulfilling the requirements of a scholarship opportunity at University College when the first did not accept him (McGrath, 2013) – displayed seriousness in his academic career that was not to be perturbed by the preoccupations of the Great War. He commented stalwartly, “You may have my body, but not my mind” (Lewis, 1955a, p. 184). This was his attempt to keep the war bordered off from what was his pressing concern, building a career, at that time, and it included a blissful first term at University College (Lewis, 1955a; Wilson, 1990), which would be a prelude to an uncertain future after the war.

The ego strength of fidelity was significant to Lewis during his involvement in trench warfare in 1917 and 1918. The term, *mattering*, became applicable to his life in military service – and is proposed by Rosenberg and McCullough (1981) as wielding worth in the lives of others. Through a connection to community, individuals, thus, have a buffer against their own experiences (Newman & Newman, 2012). The solidarity experienced and found with his fellow soldiers in the war allowed Lewis to experience a belonging that he had not felt during his Malvern days. “Straight tribulation is easier to bear than tribulation that advertises itself as pleasure” (Lewis, 1955a, p. 218). It became clear that Lewis could have been inclined to experience a sense of *fidelity* with his comrades. His father wanted him to be transferred to an

artillery regiment, and Lewis replied, “I must confess that I have become very attached to this regiment. I have several friends whom I should be sorry to leave and I am just beginning to know my men and understand the work” (Wilson, 1990, *The Angel of Pain*, para. 8). It speaks for many of the developments of the crisis, where Lewis displayed fidelity to a larger ideological creed, probably for the sake of making a meaningful contribution through the ideals of camaraderie, thereby to avoid a negative crisis resolution (Erikson, 1977, 1997; Newman & Newman, 2012).

Largely, then, it appears that Lewis was experiencing a balanced resolution of the crisis, even though his fidelity on some matters, such as faith and spirituality, would probably be revisited. However, it is worth mentioning that the conditions were also set for the display of certain conditions of *repudiation*. Newman and Newman (2012) address the topic of inclusivity of a private and public self, something Lewis (1955a) probably experienced when he failed to assimilate into the ‘Coll’ aristocracy at Malvern (Wilson, 1990). The manifestation of refutation is not merely limited to a failure to gain acceptance into a larger group identity (Newman & Newman, 2012), or Erikson’s (1959, 1997) view on the rejection of a negative identity, which Lewis was inclined to attach to the Malvern Bloods (Lewis, 1955a, Wilson, 1990). Nonetheless, the prior discussion on the more immediate conflict of identity at that time does reveal that Lewis proved to be less inclined to *role confusion*, and, indeed, submitted himself to hatefully refuting of the beliefs that he could not grow accustomed to (McGrath, 2013).

What arose again, however, is the question whether Lewis did, indeed, assimilate to a greater extent to the social milieu of trench warfare. The preceding background did reveal a sense of comradeship that he wished to maintain, nonetheless, the carnage of war left its mark on those involved (McGrath, 2013). The corpse-ridden battlefield evoked in Lewis trauma (Lewis,

1955a), which left on him a very personal effect by invoking memories of his mother's lifeless body.

He had been set on keeping the war at bay, until it became a reality during his peaceful first term at Oxford in 1917 (Lewis, 1955a; Wilson, 1990), and this reveals Jack was reluctant to show commitment to the cause of war until he could do so on his own terms. Though braving enemy fire (Wilson, 1990) did evoke in Lewis a belonging within his regiment, Jack questioned the greater cause of the war. Newman and Newman (2012) claim that a disconnection from social reality does become possible – represented by another core pathology, *dissociation*. This questioning which was evoked in Lewis, in light of its psychological trauma, lead him to having “‘partitioned’ or ‘compartmentalised’ his life as a means of retaining his sanity” (McGrath, 2013, *The Curious Case of the Unimportant War*, para. 5).

The case of *repudiation* makes its manifestation especially prevalent in Lewis's religious life. Stationed with his regiment, the Somerset Infantry, in the French town of Arras in January of 1918, Lewis wrote “Ode for New Year's Day” as part of his collection of poems, *Spirits in Bondage* (see Section 2.2.5). His poem revealed, “Any idea that the ‘red God’ might ‘lend an ear’ to human cries of misery lay discredited and abandoned in the mud, a disgraced ‘Power who slays and puts aside the beauty that has been’,” (Lewis, 1919, p. 25). *Repudiation* became significant in two regards: (a) a hesitancy to embrace his inner potential (Erikson, 1977) – in an imaginative sense, to consider religion, as would be made explicit in later life by Tolkien (see Section 2.2.5); and (b) the adoption of a negative identity (Erikson, 1959), perhaps considering his stance at the time as atheist. Lewis's views, at that stage, as reflected in his poetry, assigned blame to a God in whose existence he did not want to claim stock (Lewis, 1919; McGrath, 2013).

It is, thus, safe to assume that Lewis, in faith, at least, was to lack resolution in his stance on Christianity, as an ideological stance to which to offer his fidelity. The course of his life would, however, provide evidence of a great turn in faith (see Section 2.2.5), of which the psychosocial significance will be divulged later.

Lewis's return to University College, on 13 January 1919, found him immersed in a peaceful period during which he devoted himself fully to his academic career. A description by Wilson (1990) paints Lewis as a completely committed academic, which gave evidence of his *fidelity* to one aspect of himself and an occupational identity (Erikson, 1977, 1997). In fact, Oxford, in itself, evoked in Lewis a love of the architecture and culture surrounding him (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). The literature suggests that Lewis was impressionable, yet, by the views of colleagues and friends. One good example is what A. K. Hamilton Jenkin said about him:

I learned from him that we should attempt a total surrender to whatever atmosphere was offering itself at the moment, in a squalid town to seek out those very places where its squalor rose to grimness and almost grandeur, on a dismal day to find the most wet and dripping wood, on a windy day to seek the windiest ridge.” (Lewis, 1955a, p. 231)

This is a powerful statement that resonates with the demand that individuals commit themselves to a subculture with a degree of finality, instead of it merely serving as a transitioning tendency to forming an identity (Erikson, 1968). It is, perhaps, the reason why Lewis devoted the next 35 years to his surroundings, through his commitment to an academic career (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990).

Lewis would, furthermore, perhaps, seek an outlet for his verbal proficiency and argumentative spirit (Wilson, 1990) in his continued attempts to fuse the different parts of himself, to fulfil personal strivings and to contribute to the values he considered important

(Erikson, 1968; Newman & Newman, 2012). These strivings were to achieve an occupational identity (Erikson, 1968), regarding which Lewis's career was gaining momentum in terms of his employability – having achieved first-class degree in the Greats, a First in his Honours Moderations, and a Chancellor's English Essay Prize (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990).

At this stage, what Lewis made out to be the Christian myth (Lewis, 1955a) teased at the back of his mind, interfering with his striving to adopt a “New Look” (Lewis, 1955a, p. 234). Here *role confusion* (Erikson, 1968, 1977; Hamachek, 1990) can be seen to make its re-entry – the conflict of values leads to an inability to assume different roles. The struggle that Lewis faced here involved the reappearance of Joy, which was inconsistent and alluring in its empty offer to provide him with something of greater substance (Lewis, 1955a). Instead, he wished to opt for a notion of logic that would rid him of this romanticism. However, his involvement in the English Department, and the people he befriended revived truths that he had experienced when he was young; particularly the truth that fluctuating human nature was, perhaps, best comprehended by the transient imaginations of poets and writers, in conjunction with and not only by means of rigorous logic – conflicts under a particular religious guise (Wilson, 1990). Erikson (1968) comments that the current stage offered confusion that stemmed from the norms imposed by a social setting, and the input from a more knowledgeable network is invaluable, lest the individual succumbs to the finer mechanisms of the crisis that contributes to a negative identity.

However, it was the authors whose writings were tinged by religion that most appealed to Lewis, and the presence of friends of faith (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). This affinity could have subjected Lewis to a sense of *alienation* (Mau, 1992), perhaps because of the absence of a bond in relation to an emerging group identity that he was continually being exposed to

(Newman & Newman, 2012). For Lewis, the ethereal perceptions of religion was something that belonged to a fading generation, as opposed to men like himself, returned from the war and concerned with the immediacy of life (Lancast, 2012; Lewis, 1955a; Wilson, 1990). It is clear that Lewis was experiencing a lack of identification to a larger setting, that contributed to his sense of confusion, and, perhaps, tendencies of *repudiation* (Erikson, 1997; Newman & Newman, 2012). Newman and Newman (2012) theorise that the lack of a common bond or common group identity untethers the individual from social reality, revealing another core pathology, *dissociation*. This became evident through a state of mind named Heavy Lewis, a guarded version dabbled in mystery, and an enigma even to his friends (Hooper, 1991; Wilson, 1990).

Lewis's friend, Owen Barfield, once stated that, "at a certain stage in his life [Lewis] he deliberately ceased to take any interest in himself except as a kind of spiritual animus taking stock of his moral faults . . . Self-knowledge for him had come to mean recognition of his own weaknesses and shortcomings and nothing more" (Gibb, 1965, p.10). This quote expands on the idea of Heavy Lewis. Lewis appeared adamant about what Erikson (1982) would elaborate as a *repudiation*, which would deny a principled set of beliefs that was not receptive of his own views. It is supported by an incident (see Section 2.2.5) that was conducive to the 'New Look' and which led to his revelation that "all romantic longings and unearthly speculations led a man in the end . . . Safety first, thought I: the beaten track, the approved road, the centre of the road, the lights on" (Lewis, 1955a, p. 236). It appears that the crisis of *identity* versus *role confusion* was yet to reach full resolution, and was reserved for another phase of his life (see Section 7.2.6.2). During this historical period, Lewis was simultaneously facing the circumstances presented by the next stage, *intimacy* versus *isolation*.

7.2.6.1.2 *Engagements with intimacy versus isolation.*

Section 7.2.5.2.1 reveals much of the nature of the relationship between Lewis and Janie Moore – at least to the extent of what is known. It is emphasised, once more, that speculation still abounds on the idiosyncrasies of their connection. Nonetheless, Lewis honoured his commitment to Paddy (Janie’s late son) and shared lodgings (which shifted regularly in setting) with Janie and her daughter, Maureen (see Sections 2.2.4 and 2.2.5). Erikson (1977) claims that the crises resolved in the stages that precede the challenge of establishing *intimacy* are put to the test by the strengths that could be gained. Much of Lewis’s character would, in truth, come to stand trial for the many onslaughts he would face in the 35 years he would remain in Oxford after he had resumed his undergraduate studies in 1919 (McGrath, 2013). However, it did not appear as if Lewis was seeking to clarify the developing image he had of himself by establishing a meaningful bond as denoted by Erikson (1964, 1977), nor share his identity in such an important manner. In fact, much of his relationship with Janie is perceived to be mere echoes of an *adolescent love*, as described by Erikson (Section 7.2.5.2.1). By the daily rationing of his time (Wilson, 1990), it was clear that Lewis was devoted to Janie. Regardless, too little factual information supports the assumption that Lewis developed the full force of intimacy. Later information does make it clear that his turn of faith had a noteworthy effect on his relationship with Janie Moore. On these grounds, it could be reasoned that the fearless involvement of one’s identity in a relationship, as stipulated by Newman and Newman (2012, 2017) in their description of intimacy, was possibly not fully present in Lewis’s case. As the next section will make clear, Lewis’s religious identity was a strong constituent of his completed perception of self. Section will 7.2.6.2.2 reveal the continued engagement of the sixth psychosocial stage, after the prolonged challenges posed by Lewis’s identity crisis.

7.2.6.2 *The allegorical defender of the Faith (1927 - 1938).*

7.2.6.2.1 *Resolving identity versus role confusion.*

Section 7.2.6.1.1 revealed that Lewis was still left with residual challenges relating to the crisis of *identity versus role confusion*. The main impediment and delay was, perhaps, presented by the consolidation of his different personas: (a) that of a lecturer, (b) that of a writer and (c) as emerging convert to Christianity (to eventually become an apologist). An undeniable truth was opening itself up to Lewis: the chinks in the armour of his new look; the flaws in his scope of realism; and the temporal egocentrism that denied that which was outdated, had been challenged (Lewis, 1955a). The realisation that would dawn on him was that his reservation surrounding his emotions would be a formidable barrier to overcome (Wilson, 1990). According to Newman and Newman (2012), this *repudiation* could be seen as serving a purpose in filtering through values that this individual cannot as freely accommodate, opening up a commitment to roles and beliefs this individual would aspire to be a part of.

It is evident that the uncertainties caused by *role confusion* with his religious identity were reaching both a climax, and a climactic end. Lewis was on the edge of undergoing a significant transformation: “Total surrender – the absolute leap in the dark, were demanded” (Lewis, 1955a, p. 265). A turning point came in his rereading of the *Hippolytus of Euripides*:

There was a transitional moment of delicious uneasiness and then – instantaneously – the long inhibition was over, the dry desert lay behind, I was off once more into the land of longing, my heart at once broken and exalted as it had never been since the old days at Bookham. (Lewis, 1955a, p. 252)

Lewis came to the realisation that “Joy was the desiring” (1955a, p. 257), and that his longing for it was paradoxical.

I have no rational ground for going back on the arguments that convinced me of God's existence: but the irrational deadweight of my old sceptical habits, and the spirit of the age, and the cares of the day, steal away all my lively feeling of the truth, and often when I pray I wonder if I am not posting letters to a non-existent address. (Hooper, 1979, p. 399)

Lewis was at a crossroads. The correspondence with Arthur Greeves quoted above reveals that Lewis was as yet incapable of taking control of the preoccupations of his warring mind. What is elucidated in this case is the *private self* (as a facet of identity), and that ownership is to be assumed of the thoughts and actions that form part of the individual's reflection (Blasi, 1991; Glodis & Blasi, 1993).

The grounds of Lewis's pensiveness were shared with J. R. R. Tolkien and Hugo Dyson, at a Magdalen dinner in 1929 (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990), which revealed many of the barriers that clouded his view of religion. "He stopped short of understanding Christianity because when he thought about that, he laid aside the receptive imagination with which he allowed himself to appreciate myth and became rigidly narrow and empiricist" (Hooper, 1979, p. 424). Erikson (1968) explains that imagination is a resource that, during the third stage, creates a limitless initiative in the allocation of trust that contributes to an individual's ideals. There was the inclination to regress, where Lewis, both in this instance and in other domains of his life, would use old doors for entering into an investigation of what was novel to him (Wilson, 1990). This notion would appear pervasive and enduring, as Tolkien would observe nearly 30 years later – part of an 'ulterior motive', through which Lewis returned to the egocentric views of his Irish Protestant faith. It can be taken that Lewis, accordingly, encouraged his friends to challenge his perceptions (Lancast, 2012; McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990) – a motion which Erikson (1977) describes as a commitment to reevaluate the conflicts of the past for the sake of establishing familiarity. Lewis's inclination to myth and imagination, thus, merely required an overextension

to the truths of the Gospel, taking the myth of Christ as one that harboured more truth (Hooper, 1979).

Lewis's conversion was complete, and with this conversion, his beliefs seeped into the fabric of his style of writing fantasy, apologetic works, and literary critique in the years that followed (Wilson, 1990, Regress, para. 11). The integral importance of the synthesis of disparate parts of one's identity becomes salient here. Lewis's rediscovered beliefs had inevitable effects on his work. Lewis's life is, thus, evident of a trend that sees the merging of disjointed parts of identity (Erikson, 1959, 1968; Newman & Newman, 2012) that saw Lewis, finally, capable of translating the values of this identity into his writings. Erikson (1959) elaborates through the continuity of experience found through past, present and future selves. This continuity is seen in the insights into the famous September night of 1929, that "promised all the things which Lewis and Greeves had come to label 'It' or 'Joy'" (Wilson, 1990, Regress, para. 7).

It can be assumed that Lewis managed to traverse the obstacles posed by the conflicting fifth stage of *identity* versus *role confusion* successfully, and managed to assume an integrated identity after having developed a fidelity to both a career path, and the longwinded struggle of his system of belief. The relationship with Janie Moore, however, led him to the conditions posed by *intimacy* versus *isolation*, as will be discussed next.

7.2.6.2.2 *Intimacy versus isolation continued.*

Lewis's personal life, at this point, was also presenting with other personal difficulties, exemplified by a consideration to have Warnie move in with him and the Moores. It was a consideration Lewis was open to (Wilson, 1990, Mythopoeia, para. 34), but he had misgivings about the shift of circumstances. The key point of consideration was its impact on his relationship with Janie Moore. Warnie was inclined to speculate about the matter and his

curiosity afforded him a rebuke from Lewis that ended the conversation (Lewis, 1966, p. 12). It can be said that the introduction of Warnie into the household could be seen as a possible contributing factor to creating a context where the grounds of connection that relate to intimacy (Erikson, 1968, 1977) was threatened, perhaps contributing to the likelihood of insecurities (as a result of Warnie's questioning) that lead to *distantiation*. This possibility is enlightened further by a letter to Arthur Greeves at the time, relating that, "I hope, as W. gets broken into domestic life, they may come to do so still more: but in the interval there is a ticklish time ahead and in any case it is a big sacrifice of our" (Wilson, 1990, *Mythopoeia*, para. 34). The content cuts off, and, in addition, Greeves wrote "very private" and "to be burnt" at the top of the letter page, with pages missing thereafter (Wilson, 1990, *Mythopoeia*, para. 34). 'Heavy Lewis' once more portrayed a secrecy that remained significant. It alludes to a sense of the immature notions of an *adolescent love*.

It was mentioned in Section 7.2.6.1.2 that Lewis's renewed contact with the Christian faith caused difficulties for his (suspected) romantic involvement with Janie Moore. Erikson (1963) explains the importance of self-abandon that accompanies a sense of intimacy that is to be established during this stage, as the sacrifice of many individual wants is necessitated for close investment. Perhaps here, above all, is emphasised the significance of Lewis's conversion and its impact on his relationship with Janie (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). This related to, especially, his unnegotiable ideas, as put forward in *Mere Christianity* (Lewis, 1952) and his convictions surrounding celibacy and marriage – which made the speculative nature, in light of lacking evidence, of a relation between a 33-year-old Lewis and 58-year-old Minto all the more evident. For instance, it counters Erikson's (1977, p.239) one dimension of true genitality, as component

of intimacy: that of the “mutuality of orgasm”. Perhaps, in light of his latent struggle (Wilson, 1990), he described an allegory in one radio broadcast:

Faced with an optional question in an examination paper, one considers whether one can do it or not; faced with a compulsory question, one must do the best one can. . . . It is wonderful what you can do when you have to. (Lewis, 1952, p. 101)

It points to an abstinence caused by Lewis’s new convictions, which re-emphasised the distinction between adolescent love and true genitality (Erikson, 1968, 1977) – in which a secure trust and regulated goals extend the scope of *intimacy* beyond mere physical preoccupation. In light of the last observation, it is doubtful whether Lewis could have been seen to have established true intimacy; however, he did not seem inclined to any sense of *isolation* either.

The situation presented by Newman and Newman (2012), where the possibility of sharing a mutually established trust is not unfolding and, perhaps, due to the need for independence, serves as another explanation. Erikson (1977) describes it simply as a fear of identity loss. Seen in reverse, Lewis was not open to sacrifice his newfound religious views for the sake of a passionate inclination he and Janie may have had. Correspondence with Arthur Greeves revealed the hardship of these Christian duties (Hooper, 1979).

Sparse evidence about the exact details of Jack and Janie’s relationship makes much of the presenting argument open to debate. However, subtle hints in Lewis’s narrative suggest that the border of the crisis of *intimacy* versus *isolation* were tested, if, however, unsuccessfully. A sublimated behaviour would have made itself clear to his friends through what could be seen as an apparent “domestic enslavement”, and a verbal bullying of his students, which revealed a repressed sexual nature (Wilson, 1990, *Mythopoeia*, para. 62).

There were, however, other subtle features of Jack and Janie’s relationship that confirm a positive entry, perhaps just stanching, into the crisis of early adulthood. A ration of Lewis’s

daily time was devoted to Janie. An observation on Lewis was that, “there was nothing of ‘the ivory tower’, nothing ‘donnish’, about Lewis’s intelligence. In all his talk, and in his writings, he addressed the sympathetic, lively minded ‘general reader’ or ‘average man’” (Wilson, 1990, *Regress*, para. 30). Mrs Moore was not the typical company of his all-male college gatherings – nonetheless this characteristic proved to be one of her endearing qualities (Wilson, 1990). It seems to connect, in part, with Newman and Newman’s (2012) description of an unreserved immersion of one’s identity in a relationship where caring can act as an emotional buffer, or, perhaps, transcend the hesitations evident in an ego loss (Erikson, 1977). However, it is also clear that Lewis differed a great deal from Mrs Moore on a significant domain – that of intellectual repartee. It was a problem that is emphasised when putting forward the view of Newman and Newman (2012) that surrounded mismatch of individual identifications that result in a lack of intimate connection.

“The great thing, if one can, is to stop regarding all the unpleasant things as interruptions of one’s ‘own’ or ‘real’ life. The truth is of course that what one calls the interruptions are precisely one’s real life – the life God is sending one day by day” (Hooper, 1979, p. 499). This was a reference by Lewis surrounding the household narrative that was playing out at The Kilns. Speculation persisted on the matter of whether Moore’s companionship did indeed offer what Rusbult, Finkel, and Kumashiro (2009) describe as an enrichment of self-actualisation through the support and affirmation of one’s partner. However, it can be affirmed that Lewis was left to fondly reminisce on, among other things, Janie’s pride in the worldly success of Lewis and his work (Wilson, 1990). Warnie thought of Lewis’s dedication as “the rape of J’s life. . . . I wonder how much of his time she did waste” (Wilson, 1990, *Narnia*, para. 66). Janie Moore never did believe she had caused an interruption to Lewis’s life, instead, she believed she was relieving

him thereof. However, the available information suggests that Lewis's relationship with Janie may, indeed, have fallen short of the prospects of true intimacy, a speculation emphasised by the evocation of the great childhood trauma of his mother's death when Minto herself died in 1951 (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990).

7.2.6.2.3 *Early engagements with generativity versus stagnation.*

Evidence from this period also suggests that Lewis was motioning toward investing his hard-found identity in his own life of work. Effectively, Lewis was already starting to assume the challenges of the second adult stage of psychosocial development – *generativity* versus *stagnation* (see Section 7.2.7). This gave a unique shape to this period of his life developmentally; in the span of 1927-1938 Lewis was afforded the experience of navigating three different psychosocial stages interchangeably: that of (a) identity, (b) intimacy and (c) generativity.

Lewis's literary career offers evidence of the impact of events in his life. His rich imagination was unlocked by turning to faith, which influenced his style of writing and his literary critique in the years that were to follow (Wilson, 1990, Regress, para. 11). His insight found through faith,

promised all the things which Lewis and Greeves had come to label 'It' or 'Joy'. These were the pleasures he got from the beauties of nature, from the music of Wagner, from the watercolours of Beatrix Potter, from the books of William Morris, George MacDonald and Wordsworth." (Wilson, 1990, Regress, para. 7)

This period bore witness to a clear display of *generativity*, which "encompasses procreativity, productivity, and creativity . . . of new products and new ideas, including a kind of self-generation concerned with further identity development" (Erikson, 1982, p. 67). Lewis's style of writing became an extension of his identity development, with works such as *The*

Pilgrim's Regress (Lewis, 1933) being a testimony of the interaction of his faith and his inclinations to fantasy producing a very 'Lewisian' tale of discovery (Wilson, 1990). It appeared, through all its allegories, to explain the wistful longing that had saturated his experiences (Peters, 1985).

'Joy', or Sehnsucht (Peters, 1985), showed that it "had never had the experience that [he] . . . once gave it. It was only a wayside pointer to something other and outer" (Lewis, 1955a, p. 276). Lewis began a literary career as writer in full throttle, displaying self-generation through continued productivity of new written works. In this period, these works included *The Allegory of Love: A Study in Medieval Tradition* (Lewis, 1936) and the space trilogy, *Out of the Silent Planet* (Lewis, 1938), *Perelandra* (Lewis, 1943) and *That Hideous Strength* (Lewis, 1945), which displayed his efficiency (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990).

"It brings together Lewis the scholar, Lewis the voracious reader of anything from medieval schoolmen or Italian epic to modern science fiction, Lewis the Christian apologist, Lewis the Irish satirist in the savage tradition of Swift, Lewis the failed Romantic poet" (Wilson, 1990, *The Inklings*, para. 13). From the evidence of commentary left on his works, it is clear that Lewis's concern was directed towards a generative application, to produce in a way that showcased his talents and capabilities (Erikson, 1968, 1977; Graves & Larkin, 2006).

This generative application was expanded in his writing of *The Problem of Pain* (Lewis, 1940), a book that blended two separate aspects of his style (Wilson, 1990): his rhetorical mastery, and his imagination (see Section 2.2.6). It was a test of what was to be his future role as Christian apologist, in which he used his gifts of argumentation and imagination in the service of God (Wilson, 1990) – a synthesis of his turbulent thoughts that had led him to conversion on that fateful September night (Lancast, 2012).

Lewis, furthermore, displayed a proclivity to engage with the average man (Wilson, 1990). Accordingly, during the psychosocial crisis, generativity is displayed when a demand is felt by the middle adult to transfer his/her expertise to a generation who could find the knowledge beneficial (De St. Aubin, McAdams, & Kim, 2004; Erikson, 1968, 1997). In his work as apologist, Lewis used his own door by which to come to considerations of the faith, as a welcoming threshold for others (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). Unknowingly, Lewis was shaping himself to be an accessible voice for those touched by the Second World War (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990), because of the readable view he presented (Peters, 1985), one that was removed from intellectual snobbery. This way of his clearly linked to the expansion of ego-interests (Erikson, 1963, 1968; Graves & Larkin, 2006; Newman & Newman, 2012), where a context-related productivity is utilised for the good of generations to follow – in this case, the young lives that were to be thrown into disarray by the war.

It appeared, however, that Lewis's generative inclinations to a wider audience touched by warfare did not translate back to his native intellectual grounds of Oxford. Lewis's career at Magdalen College was not synchronised with the strides of his literary fame (Peters, 1985). Those in Magdalen circles distrusted Lewis, his daunting manner and the populist stances he assumed (Wilson, 1990). It can be taken that the lack of advancement in his scholarly career were caused by certain conditions for *stagnation* in this period of psychosocial development. The routine approaches become repetitive and redundant, compared to newer and challenging elements (Erikson, 1997). It was tribute by the majority of fellow collegians and faculty members, who displayed their reluctance and jealousy at the celebration of the success of others. Lewis may have been the bully, but was implicitly a victim of his colleagues' view (McGrath, 2013; Peters, 1985; Wilson, 1990).

It cannot be assumed that Lewis was completely inclined to *role stagnation* in this period. Lewis's narrative at this stage did not, for instance, fit into Erikson's (1963) conception of a lack of motive to contribute to the development of others; nor did it link with a limited capacity to invest hope in people. Lewis was seen to adopt a 'crust' that seemed hardened and resolute – "there is something a little disappointing in such a man rejoicing in the limitations of his sympathy" (Wilson, 1990, *The Inklings*, para. 29). In addition, an 'intellectual laziness' began to abound in his style (Wilson, 1990) and meetings. Proof for this approach is his literary taste, which lacked the flavour of 'modern' writing' (Wilson, 1990). It is an observation that connects to Erikson's (1963) view that the signs of stagnation are found in, among other facets, behaviours that appear directed at self-sustaining pleasure. Rational debate was, increasingly, something he found himself bested in, and, interestingly, the simplicities of domestic life seemed to dominate his conversations (Wilson, 1990).

Lewis's life, at this stage, can, thus, be seen to have included meaningful instances of early *generativity* as apologist and author, whilst his academic career at Oxford and aspects of his preferences reveal tendencies of *role stagnation*. It is the researcher's speculation that Lewis's delayed progression through the psychosocial moratorium, together with the unorthodox circumstances of his relationship with Janie Moore (see Sections 2.2.5 and 2.2.6) may have contributed to his premature movement into the next psychosocial stage of adult development. It may appear that much of the energy he should have reserved for intimate connection during this phase, had, instead, been directed earlier towards the advancement of his academic and writing career. However, a more refined investigation on this point should be conducted. The psychosocial crisis of *generativity* versus *stagnation* was only seen to more fully achieve

resolution and progress in the next section in Lewis's life, which shows a chronological alignment of the crisis, together with the particular historical phase of Lewis's life.

7.2.7 Generativity versus stagnation (40 - 65 years).

Seen as an adult extension of a flourishing identity, the seventh stage is witness to an individual's efforts to utilise his/her capacities for creative and productive output of ideas and influences on the environment (Erikson, 1968, 1977, 1982, 1997). In this very long stage, lasting from as early as, possibly, 35 years of age, to retirement (Gross, 1987; Hamachek, 1990), the adult may, in contrast to productivity, establish redundant patterns of functioning that exclude the penchant to challenge – tendencies that display the antithesis to generative resolution, which is called *stagnation* (Erikson, 1997). Generative motives find their expression successfully at the end of this stage through the virtue of *care*, where both products and progeny are nurtured for their sustainment for the future (Erikson, 1982), including the preservation of previously acquired strengths, which, in themselves, also facilitate this characteristic of guidance (Erikson, 1997). Opposing this is *rejectivity*, which is found in inclinations to withdraw from challenges posed by different perceptions, probably for the sake of self-preservation (Newman & Newman, 2012).

7.2.7.1 *The secret road (1938 - 1963).*

7.2.7.1.1 *Engagements with generativity versus stagnation.*

The Second World War revealed that, “all individuals face the ultimate realities all the time, war quickens and sharpens our awareness” (Wilson, 1990, Screwtape, para. 1), as pointed

out in a wartime sermon by Lewis. The war witnessed a disheartened audience in need of those who could offer the stabilities of faith and belief (Lancast, 2012; McGrath, 2013; Peters, 1985). It appeared that Lewis had received a calling, and that his prowess as a Christian apologist would be tested (Wilson, 1990) with a perspective made clear in a manner and jargon that appealed to the comprehension of the common man, instead of opting for the formal obscurities of religion as his dialect (Hooper, 1971). One of Lewis's first motions in this regard was his acceptance of an invitation by the RAF to offer talks at RAF stations across England. His teachings were the creation of his awareness of the position of the listener and their standing to the faith (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). Lewis's actions are seen as evidence of nurturing qualities, the purpose of which was to sustain the environment (Erikson, et al. 1986). It found expression through *generative motives*, of which *desires* to benefit society seek expression through the opportunities available to assume *generative action* – tendencies that witnessed Lewis accomplishing generativity and, thus, making a contribution to the continuity of a society (Erikson, 1963, 1997; Newman & Newman, 2012; Stewart & Vandewater, 1998).

This action is also evidence of Lewis's progress towards the development of *care*. It was mentioned that (refer to Section 2.2.6), in a previous phase of his life, his work as apologist – and his vigorous defence against a questioning of Christian faith – was, in part, informed by his own discovery of faith, for which he used old doors to enter through to new revelations of his faith.

Care is a widening commitment to take care of the persons, the products, and the ideas one has learned to care for. All the strengths arising from earlier developments in the ascending order from infancy to young adulthood (hope and will, purpose and skill, fidelity and love) now prove, on closer study, to be essential to the generative task of cultivating strength in the next generation, for this is indeed the 'store' of human life." (Erikson, 1982, p. 67)

As described by Erikson (1982), the crises of previous stages proved instrumental in the full acceptance of his own faith, and the later communication thereof to others who needed it at the time. This generative care could, thus, be seen to involve mentorship and motivation extended to others (Graves & Larkin, 2006). It was clear from Lewis's capacity to set the experience of ordinary people (with his own) firmly within the Christian faith, to bring home a clarity that validated and comprehended the feelings they witnessed within themselves (Lewis, 1952; Michael, 1993). Erikson (1968, 1997) also reminds of the values of previously acquired strengths, that enable the individual to transfer valuable knowledge to generations to follow. Even institutions, such as the church, felt Lewis's influence and held him in high regard, as related by the writing of a co-founder of the Society of Divine Compassion, Father Andrew: "To me it is one of the most helpful things of this epoch that it produced C. S. Lewis" (Burne, 1948, p. 126).

It is clear that Lewis managed to exhibit the pervasive ego quality that was *care*, whilst continually displaying qualities that were evidence of *generativity*. He was invited by the director of religious broadcasting at the British Broadcasting Corporation to talk about Christianity from the view of the average man in 1941. At the time he excelled, compared to others, at offering an exposition of the ideals of Christian behaviour, and his talks – Broadcast Talks (1942), Christian Behaviour (1943) and Beyond Personality (1944) – were assembled into a compendium, *Mere Christianity* (Lewis, 1952a). Peters (1985) recounted how Lewis, with lucid and analytical genius, managed to enthrall ordinary folk. It displays that productivity and creativity, which have become synonymous with generativity (Erikson, 1977), remain key contributions in his continued literary outputs and work as an apologist.

Within this psychosocial crisis, it can, furthermore, be seen that a concern was nurtured surrounding the products of an individual's talents and works, which display a generative application (Erikson, 1968, 1977; Graves & Larkin, 2006). In reaction to his lectures given on *Paradise Lost*, it was observed that:

Here is evidence of a mind abundantly stocked with reading which the author has enjoyed – effortlessly, intelligently, and selflessly enjoyed – and he wishes to communicate this enjoyment to us. . . . There is a great moral self-confidence and a common sense in the writing. (Wilson, 1990, Screwtape, para. 7)

It gave Lewis momentum, through the act of displaying his emotional influence over others, his persuasion and skills as raconteur of satire, and an excellent parodist (Wilson, 1990). Developments in Lewis's life appear to confirm Newman and Newman's (2012) notion of the individual's desire to leave behind a legacy of resources and skills.

The literature reveals that the wartime period showed itself to be a time of friendship and a time of prosperous success – with a mass readership, an audience enthralled by his words, and teaching opportunities that took him to other universities, to Wales and to Durham – making Lewis host to an experience of life in sharp contrast to the bleak horrors and solemn atmosphere that wartime offered others (McGrath, 2013; Peters, 1985; Wilson, 1990).

Once more, little in the literature suggests that Lewis was inclined to *stagnation* (Erikson, 1963) and even less (if it all) to the mechanisms involved in a core pathology of *rejectivity* (Newman & Newman, 2012), however, it was nonetheless evident that his career at Oxford was being halted. Lewis's success was seen to cloud the amicable judgements within his faculty, but also within the university at large (Wilson, 1990) – as directed, more especially, to his defence of the faith. His notoriety in the field of apologetics tarnished his image among his fellow

collegians (Peters, 1985), and did not subdue his natural affinity to brazenness and the brusque manner he exhibited towards them (Wilson, 1990).

An interesting instance of stagnation is revealed by his personality and habits. It was iconic of Lewis's character that much of his decisions were influenced by the serendipity of circumstance. Wilson (1990, *Smoke on the Mountain*, 48) described this as a "passivity of attitude" that shaped his life. As Lewis alludes in his autobiography, his routine at Bookham, "has ever since served in" his "mind as an archetype" (Lewis, 1995, p. 164).

I would choose always to breakfast at exactly eight and be at my desk by nine, there to read or write till one. If a cup of good tea or coffee could be brought to me about eleven, so much the better. (Lewis, 1995, p. 164)

Lewis also possessed a highbrow stance on Christianity, and consequently he accepted an invitation to the Socratic Club at Oxford (Wilson, 1990). Unrevised beliefs would see him clash in debate with a formidable opponent in philosophy, Elizabeth Anscombe (see Section 2.2.7). The event would have a significant impact on Lewis. Theoretically, it could be made out as an event in which a middle adult became stringent in his approach to identity (Erikson, 1968) and, in the face of a new challenge, stagnation may be revealed when the individual feels pressured to re-evaluate for the sake of adaptation (Newman and Newman, 2012). This could be seen in ripple effects, where Lewis's stagnation may have been revealed due to his reawakened fears and pain in having the truth that he felt in faith, ousted, because his imagination had made him feel present in that other realm, beyond the empiricist view (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). It showed, perhaps, that Lewis was unprepared to face the challenge, confirming the danger of the adult becoming inclined to withdrawal and self-preservation in the light of overwhelming changes, through which they become incapable of tapping resources for different approaches

(Erikson, 1968; Newman & Newman (2012). Lewis was, possibly, exposed in his stagnation, as it appeared less fluid than his success, which assumed a generative nature on other fronts.

A significant restoration of the opposing crisis would, however, unfold. The event of engaging in figurative fisticuffs with Anscombe would sculpt him, both as a writer, and as a person, which reveals that, “This was a contretemps of much graver importance in Lewis’s imaginative life. It was one of those landmarks which, like other Romantic egoists before him, Lewis used as a way of punctuating or mastering experience” (Wilson, 1990, Narnia, para. 21).

Lewis was confronted with every emotional event leading up to his full conversion at Whipsnade Zoo 16 years prior, which had occurred after a dinner with Tolkien and Dyson on the famous September night, which had challenged his beliefs (see Section 2.2.5). That evening seemed to be meaningless in the formation of his perception of God’s existence (Wilson, 1990); but it made him rediscover imagination, as the other way to believe. Here is evidence of the central processes by which a rectification of any possible negative resolution seems possible. This happens through *interactivity*, where an exchange of influence takes place between the environment and the person facilitating an altered view in response to the influence directed towards his context, with the possibility of having a greater impact on the surroundings, in turn (Newman & Newman, 2012).

Lewis’s evocation of a past revelation on that fateful September night (see Section 2.2.6) was dissimilar to the intellectualisation adhered to by adults . . . it was like *Phantastes*, “in which another world opens up to the Dreamer through a piece of bedroom furniture” (Wilson, 1990, Narnia, para. 29). What Lewis, then, yielded was the first outline of Narnia (Lewis, 1950), the chronicling thought that propelled him into the genre he was to be most famous for: children’s literature (McGrath, 2013). Here, we see the mediating process of *creativity* having done its

work. Newman and Newman (2012) suggest that the process involves a digression from established ways, and that conceptions are brought to a new fulfilment by ways of arrangement, its creation, and its dissemination – all for the purposes of satisfying needs more effectively. Despite Lewis's popularity, his days of apologetics had come to a close, and he sought the new way, "further up and further in" (Wilson, 1990, Narnia, para.29).

7.2.7.1.2 *Revisiting intimacy versus isolation.*

It has become clear through the discussion that Lewis's life follows a unique developmental trend. The crisis of *intimacy versus isolation* provided a unique display in Lewis's life. From the discussion on his conversion to the faith, it is apparent that the passionate component of a probably romantic involvement with Mrs Moore was brought into question. However, the literature (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990) reveals that the exact details of this relationship, and the strange arrangement of their co-habitation, did not offer a personal testament that confirmed the many suspicions people held. It could, thus, effectively be said that Lewis never had the opportunity to fully resolve the psychosocial crisis of *intimacy versus isolation* in an earlier historical period of his life.

Developments in his life up to this historical period, now years later, would, however, see him resume the psychosocial stage, if briefly, with another. Enter Joy Davidman. "Years ago when I wrote about medieval love poetry and described its strange half make-believe 'religion of Love' I was blind enough to treat this as an almost purely literary phenomenon. I know better now" (Lewis, 1960, p. 102). It is testament to the very nature of a relationship that would be in stark contrast to the sceptical love or intimacy perhaps pursued with Janie Moore.

The nature of their initial communication left little impression of a romantic nature on Lewis. It was only events that succeeded the first lunch meeting at the Eastgate Hotel in 1951

that set Lewis on a new course (see Section 2.2.7). At successive meetings (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990) Lewis became spellbound to the point of him finding great amusement at her words and asked her to spend the Christmas of 1952 at The Kilns (the home invested in by Lewis, his brother, and Janie Moore), during which Joy shared with Lewis the circumstances of her marriage (Section 2.2.7). The appearance of motives on Joy's side did seem to give good cause for the suspicion expressed by his friends (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990), but Lewis was experiencing the exuberant wiles of a teen after having been transported back to his boyhood in the Narnian saga. This last observation carried increased significance, as it highlighted that Lewis, perhaps, experienced a renewal of the psychosocial crisis, confirmed by his openness to Peter Bayley and Neville Coghill (Wilson, 1990, Marriage, para 19) that, "I am experiencing now what I thought would never be mine. I never thought I would have in my 60's the happiness that passed me by in my twenties". His openness could, perhaps, point to the significant observation by Erikson (1980), that progressive self-assurance inspires a greater desire for meaningful connections (Erikson, 1980). An older Lewis, more established in his sense of self, displayed greater openness to bonding with another. According to Erikson (1968), the course of a strongly emergent identity allows and prepares for the eventual merging of identities with another. Also, values, language and consciousness attain a parallel, made possible by the ego strengths adopted by each in previous stages – in this regard, the literature reveals more details (see Section 2.2.7) about the separate circumstances of Lewis and Joy at the time, that may support this point. Perhaps intimacy became more likely because of views of self-esteem and the self-directed confidence surrounding inner potentials (Newman & Newman, 2012).

This intimacy was later strengthened by Lewis's deepening affection for Joy Davidman, and he later felt himself inclined to an openness of personality that he had not known before,

which he compared to the early days with Minto; he also enjoyed an honesty surrounding him and Joy's relationship (Schofield, 1984). It became clear that intimacy was entrenching itself in his life. "Within this intense dyadic context, the partners experience the openness to communicate their innermost feelings and are rewarded with the responsiveness and excitement with which the other person accepts these gifts of trust" (Newman & Newman, 2012, p. 468). This responsiveness was even seen in a gesture as simple as hand-in-hand walks that they enjoyed on her visits to Oxford (Wilson, 1990).

The truth of their intimate connection is further supported by findings that suggest emotional and cognitive stimulation that supplemented the intimacy that had revealed itself, "Her mind was quick and muscular as a leopard. It scented the first whiff of cant or slush, then sprang" (Lewis, 1961a, p. 6). Lewis also found himself enchanted by her company, in contrast to the denouncement of his friends of her unguarded tongue and the fervent manner of her company (Wilson, 1990).

Douglas, her son, would later come to share, "There was never two people alive in the history of the world more in love than Jack and Joy" (Gresham, 1988, p. 127). Douglas's is, perhaps, the most direct pieces of third-party evidence given on the nature of their relationship. Lewis also described, in *A Grief Observed*, that,

For those few years," they "feasted on love; every mode of it – solemn and merry, romantic and realistic, sometimes as dramatic as a thunderstorm, sometimes as comfortable and unemphatic as putting on your soft slippers. No cranny of heart or body remained unsatisfied. (Lewis, 1961a, p. 9)

It is a statement that appears to relay the vast dimensions of the pervasive ego quality of *love*, further defined by Sternberg (1988) along the lines of passion and its physical explorations, intimacy with its emotional affinities and inputs; and commitment. The last, in particular, is

displayed in early gestures, such as the financial support extended by Lewis when, in 1954, Joy's living arrangements seemed to echo his own of years past, or paying her boys' school fees; or their marital union in order to counter her deportation to America (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). However, it is perhaps Lewis's decision to remain devoted during her dire hours that relays the most secure evidence of his commitment. "I wish you would pray very hard for a lady called Joy Gresham and me . . . I am shortly to be both a bridegroom and a widower, for she has cancer", was his communication with someone at the time (Wilson, 1990, *Smoke on the Mountain*, para. 33). Perhaps his devotion to her was clearly proven through this correspondence, which shows him consciously pursuing the situation despite the circumstances and conditions that presented themselves (Peters, 1985). Lewis was on his way to being confronted with the last of the psychosocial crises. However, this challenge was presented in a more vicarious sense, and before its prescribed time. The premise of the last psychosocial crisis will be described in Section 7.2.8.

7.2.7.1.3 Early confrontation with integrity versus despair.

Meaning-making from a past life make up the primary goals of the stage of *integrity* versus *despair*, with reflections devoted to shifting roles and relationships of the past, and past achievements (Newman & Newman, 2012). It is a characteristic that displays a particular appropriateness for Lewis, so inclined to enter new avenues through old doors (Hooper, 1979; Lewis, 1955; Wilson, 1990). In particular, his last few months could, in retrospect, be seen as the experience of a cycle that would end where it started – in the context of the 'Little End Room' (refer to Section 2.2.3) while in the company of his remaining companion, his brother (Wilson, 1990). It was to be evident of a period characterised by glimpses of memory, and, perhaps, even

serious rumination (Newman & Newman, 2012). He spent his days in the bed that Joy had slept in and reminisced about the memories caught up in the rooms of their home:

As he sat there with a book on his lap, Lewis could not fail to remember the scenes of a past existence: Paxford egging Minto on to buy the dud wireless set; Minto, still in the days of her vigour, feeding the fowls, exercising the dogs, amusing the evacuee children; shy, kind June Flewett coming up behind him in the study and kissing him on the back of his head; or much earlier, in the late 1920s, Bruce MacFarlane and another Fellow of Magdalen calling at the house unannounced. Lewis had hovered, and not gone to the door. Maureen had answered it. He had watched the Fellows walk away, clearly astonished to discover that Jack the archetypal bachelor was sharing his house with two women. Whatever the real secret was, they never penetrated it. Nobody would ever quite know, truly know, what he had shared with Minto in those early days. The poor P'daytabird [the boys' name for their father] certainly knew nothing of it. Sometimes, in the glass, Jack saw his father's face staring back at him, and all that world came back – of hot days in Strandtown, when their heavily tweeded father led the two boys indoors for steaming roast meat. 'Well, boys, this is grand.' (Wilson, 1990, Last Years, para. 49)

Lewis was presented by conflicts of this stage, most notably, by the death of Joy Davidman a few years before, and in the few years of life that was remained to him thereafter. The instance of his reflection on the past also explicated the central process in the mediation of his presenting psychosocial crisis, *introspection* (Newman & Newman, 2012). It revealed itself, in Lewis's case, through an *instrumental reminiscence*, where coping resources were drawn from an inspiration in one's past – a tendency Lewis displayed to be reminded of the "Little End Room" while in the presence of his brother (Wilson, 1990).

It appeared that *integrity* in the face of death could be a conflict Lewis first experienced vicariously, through the death of his wife. It was a motion through which he had to make peace with an inalterable past, and honestly recognise and integrate the notion of *despair* (Erikson, 1963). It is seen, especially, in a reference to a holiday spent in Greece (see Section 2.2.7), "Joy knew she was dying. I knew she was dying, and she knew I knew she was dying – but when we heard the shepherds playing their flutes in the hills it seemed to make no difference" (Dorsett,

1983, p. 140). The pole of integrity is described as not denying the facts of life, and reflecting on death with less trepidation (Newman & Newman, 2012). It was a tendency not limited to the event of her death, but also his own life approaching its end. Lewis, despite the experience of Joy's passing, did not reconcile himself with the thought of the end. Death was a thought strengthened by his faith, but he was accepting of it as his final days drew nearer (Peters, 1985).

Another conflict proposed by Erikson (1963) is concern about declining health imposing restrictions. Lewis had, for instance, planned a trip with Douglas to Ireland to visit to Greeves, but failing health landed him in the Ackland Nursing Home on 15 June after a heart attack (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). Later development would make him feel a strong inclination to leave his prestigious position at Cambridge, and later, to appoint someone to take care of his administrative matters (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). It can be said, however, that the literature did not present with instances in which Lewis came to question the purpose of his life (Krause, 2004; Reker, 1997), but that, perhaps, the flow of his experience was seen when Jack ventured through the shifts brought along by grief, healing and renewed despair, and such faltered cohesion clothed itself in a truthfulness and vulnerability in *A Grief Observed* (Lewis, 1961a). The almost vicarious experience of death through Joy's own death allowed him to gain meaningful insight into a stage he was soon to enter himself, and the book captures the essence of bereavement, which is a universal feeling, and the need of grief to be experienced. Overall, this was probably indicative of his attainment of the pervasive ego quality of *wisdom*. Through the vicarious experience of the possible crisis caused by the loss of Joy Davidman (Lewis, 1961; McGrath, 2013), and his own years adding to the tally that led him to his own end, he appeared to have integrated his sense of *despair* into the stage, while honestly offering his acknowledgement of the inevitability of changes brought about by age (Erikson et al., 1989).

It is not unlikely that Lewis's cathartic process of writing *A Grief Observed* had its inclinations in *despair*, as was revealed by the challenge that was posed to his faith. The authenticity that had to be acknowledged in light of Davidman's death made it astonishing to Lewis that, for instance, the 'realness' of God's good nature should have no proof (Wilson, 1990). Lewis kept the faith, however (Attenborough & Eastman, 1991), but not without a sense of conflict towards God, which revealed itself in a deeply pious and introspective self in the book (McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990).

A sense of *disdain* (Newman & Newman, 2012), as arising core pathology, may have been seen, in part, in his period of sorrow. It appeared that, in his mourning, he converged on the behaviours of his father, being inconsolable to the point where he proved to be an embarrassment to Davidman's boys (Wilson, 1990). It is an observation that refers to a lack of adaptability in thinking, failing to display a receptiveness to comprehending and, thus, allowing a rising contempt to create distance between themselves and outside concerns, and a snub to the care and patience that could be afforded others (Erikson et al. 1986; Newman & Newman, 2012, 2017). Overall, it did not overshadow the integrity of Lewis's own passing.

7.2.8 Integrity versus despair (65 - death).

Reconciliation of the past allows individuals to approach the finite nature of the years remaining to them with a sense of *integrity*, while not laying themselves bare for inclination into *despair* that results in a cynical regret of an unalterable past that has not yielded its potential (Erikson, 1968, 1977). A negative resolution would see the adult succumb to the mechanisms of *disdain*, narrowing their sense of care and receptivity to be extended to the remaining concerns in their lives (Newman & Newman, 2012). Should this cynicism be escaped, however, *wisdom*

facilitates a healthy integration of despair into the consideration of a life lived, where the cycle “weaves back on itself in its entirety, ultimately integrating maturing forms of hope, will, purpose, competence, fidelity, love and care, into a comprehensive sense of wisdom” (Erikson et al., 1989, pp. 55-56). As was highlighted towards the end of Section 7.2.7.1, Lewis experienced characteristics of the last stage of psychosocial development in a historical period that preceded its prescribed chronological onset. The next section will conclude and draw together the features of the unique developmental character of Lewis’s life.

7.3 Conclusion

The discussion above presented a unique view of the way the stages of psychosocial personality development unfolded over the subject’s life. For the sake of chronological fit, the historical periods of Lewis’s life were approached for investigation according to the corresponding psychosocial stages as they presented an age-based synchrony. This adhered to the structure proposed by the organisation of the psychohistorical conceptual matrix (as presented in Section 6.5 and which is revisited in this section). Initially, the researcher’s intention sought not to limit the sorting of historical periods in the subject’s life according to the chronological timespan assigned for the resolution of each particular psychosocial crisis. Instead, the researcher aimed to organise it according to the themes of the crisis itself, regardless of the age at which the subject would have found himself at. Doing so, however, would have had implications for the more accurate portrayal as longed for by the conceptual matrix.

Most salient in the above findings is that Lewis’s life managed to present a unique progression throughout the proposed trajectory of psychosocial development as put forward by Erikson (1959, 1968, 1977, 1982, 1997). From its outset, the basis of psychosocial theory sets

forth the inherent mechanism of an epigenetic ground plan (Erikson, 1963, 1968, 1980) that appears to bind individual development to a systematic principle. Stages, thus, unfold according to their temporally ascribed period of ascendancy, in order to meet progressively significant challenges. It is to be reiterated at this time that it was also Erikson's (1997, p.29) view that "each part exists in some form before 'its' decisive and critical time normally arrives and remains systematically related to all others so that the whole ensemble depends on the proper development in the proper sequence of each item". This was seen during, (a) Lewis's teenage years, between 18 and 20 years, when he had experiences similar to that described as adolescent love and, thus, an early confrontation with *intimacy* versus *isolation* within the 1916-1918 period; (b) early adulthood, between 29 and 40 years, with an early approach to *generativity* versus *stagnation* in the 1927-1938 period; and (c) the end of Lewis's life, when his vicarious experience of the last psychosocial crisis displayed an earlier manifestation of the challenge than its predetermined theoretical onset.

Lewis's life presented with other historical periods in which the ascendancy of the crisis, and its predicted outcome, did not seem to be wholly bound to the time-bound epigenetic that Erikson (1977), Hamacheck (1990), and Berzoff (2011) appear to suggest. The first among these was the crisis that pitted *intimacy* against *isolation*. Lewis appeared to experience a premature inkling of adolescent love in what is suggestive of intimate relations in the literature (McGrath, 2013, Wilson, 1990). His relationships with Janie Moore aroused speculation as to its true nature already at the age of approximately 19 (see Section 7.2.6.1); it is explicated as an extended exploration of meaningful identity that seeks not the true mutuality indicative of the stage (Erikson, 1968, 1977). Though it is suggested that many characteristics of intimacy could have presented itself in the role of Janie in Lewis's life – such as his unwavering devotion to their

‘family’s’ financial situation and the daily ration of time set aside for her company that proved so different from that of the male college circles in which he mingled (Lewis, 1955a, McGrath, 2013, Wilson, 1990) – the arising literature remains without undeniable evidence that the nature of their relationship was indeed romantic in nature. It leaves the research with indications of the crisis being entered, but not resolved. The arising significance of this was revealed nine years later, when Lewis, in a much later period of his life (extending approximately from his mid-50s to his early 60s) found true mutuality with Joy Davidman (see section 7.2.7.2.1).

Joy would, ironically, be significant to the extent of launching him, possibly vicariously, into an another early onset of a crisis – this time, of *integrity* versus *despair* - as her own looming end and eventual death awakened within Lewis’s a great rattle of the faith and security of his beliefs, after being confronted with his own inevitable passing (Lewis, 1961; Wilson, 1990). The stage reveals sparse information on Lewis’s consideration of his own death, leaving it to the statement that Lewis did not use her death to reconcile to his own end (Peters, 1985), with the main challenge, rather, being indicative of his declining health and how his worsening condition had consequential effects on other domains of his life (as is elaborated in Section 2.2.7).

Furthermore, the logic of psychosocial theory appears to follow that a regression to previous psychosocial stages is not possible, as the stages build on one another and become integrated in order to yield a value from its systematically developing functions (Erikson, 1963, 1977; Newman & Newman, 2017). Though Jenkins et al. (2005) do mention the possibility of difficulties arising when the conflicts of a stage are not handled successfully, the individual is not precluded from reevaluating the stages previously progressed through when a different expertise arises later in life (Newman & Newman, 2017). This adaptability of the epigenetic plan (Sigelman & Rider, 2012) did reveal itself significantly during Lewis’s life – first in the stage of

industry versus *inferiority* (see Section 7.2.4), revisited during adolescence; then, more noticeably, in *identity* versus *role-confusion* (see Section 7.2.5) revisited in young adulthood; and, later, in *intimacy* versus *isolation* (see Section 7.2.6), revisited during middle adulthood.

The discussion above on the revaluation of previous stages present in his life revealed itself several times in the questioning of trust he had left at the death of his mother (when Lewis was already facing the new challenges of *industry* versus *inferiority*). The pervasive trauma of this life event (Lewis, 1955a, McGrath, 2013, Wilson, 1990) would be evident in his lifelong search for Joy (Lancast, 2012; Lewis, 1955a) – a significant outcome, considering the relation it had in his rediscovery of the faith, and, thus, a final resolution to his identity in young adulthood. In line with this point, the delayed nature of integrating the various parts of his sense of self proved to be an extensive psychosocial moratorium (Erikson, 1968), which was almost exclusively bound to the forging of an occupational identity for many years of his career at Oxford (Peters, 1985; Wilson, 1990), whilst the consolidation of his faith and its central purpose in his life revealed itself to be the final necessary chapters to the nuclear conflicts of that particular stage of *identity* versus *role confusion*.

This stands in line with the utilised theory, where the reinterpretation of previous stages merely serves when the patterns of earlier life reappear to inspire a reconsideration of the resolution of its conflicts, possible with the insight gained in development since the onset of the particular period (Newman & Newman, 2017). Erikson et al. (1989) offer a valuable insight on the matter of reemerging themes, claiming that its intensity and frequency makes it noteworthy for development. The linkages here, thus, reveal an undeniable pattern, where Lewis's questioning of happiness at the death of his mother (in which all sense of warmth, happiness and security in his life seemed to fade (Lewis, 1955a)), the elusiveness of a desire, which is the desiring (“stirred

by a longing for the longing that had just ceased . . . in a certain sense everything else that had ever happened to me was insignificant in comparison” (Lewis, 1955a, p. 16)), the loss of faith and, then, his inevitable conversion (“Total surrender – the absolute leap in the dark, were demanded” (Lewis, 1955a, p. 265)), all fall along a golden thread of reasoning that is the central theme of his entire life – Joy. This made the extensive discussion and the re-emphasis of the crisis of adolescence instrumental to understanding the shape of his life and to the events that were to possibly follow.

From the discussion prior, it appears that Lewis braved the conflicts inherent to each psychosocial stage, even in its revalidation, to adapt the pervasive ego qualities on which to build forth in his lifespan progression. The discussion yielded the presence of facilitative conditions for a resolution towards the dystonic poles of the crisis in many cases, and, perhaps, towards the adoption of core pathologies. No sustained traits relating to these were, however, evident in his forward momentum throughout his life.

Though the shape and revaluation of Lewis’s life presents a complex example of the adaptability of psychosocial development, it is the researcher’s belief that the subject stands as an example of how a nuclear crisis still demands resolution, even if delayed. Most evidently, a final piece of Lewis’s life is found to provide a conclusive, holistic consideration in the final stage of life. Within the last few months of his life, testament is to be found in the experience of a cycle that would end where it started – in the context of the ‘Little End Room’ – spent in only the company of Warren, where leisure hours were enjoyed for its freedom from labouring academics, and lost in the books from which was derived pleasure (Wilson, 1990). It is reminiscent of the cyclical nature evident of ego strengths, where the cycle “weaves back on itself in its entirety, ultimately integrating maturing forms of hope, will, purpose, competence,

fidelity, love and care, into a comprehensive sense of wisdom” (Erikson et al., 1989, pp. 55-56). Lewis could, thus, have seen a similar pattern into which Joy was reminiscently woven in key periods of his life, bringing him back to the place of its origin in childhood, and at which instance, “Time’s winged chariot bore him away” (Lewis, 1966). Table 7.1 presents the revisited psychosocial conceptual matrix that sets out Lewis’s lifespan over the course of seven historical periods (as indicated in the rows, left) as they fall into the eight psychosocial stages posited by Erikson (presented in the columns).

Table 7.1

The Matrix of Psychosocial Personality Development of the Historical Lifespan of C. S. Lewis

Historical periods of Lewis's life	Psychosocial stages of development							
	Trust vs. Mistrust (birth to 1 year)	Autonomy vs. Shame and Doubt (1 to 3 years)	Initiative vs. Guilt (3 to 6 years)	Industry vs. Inferiority (6 to 12 years)	Identity vs. Role Confusion (12 to 20 years)	Intimacy vs. Isolation (20 to 40 years)	Generativity vs. Stagnation (40 to 65 years)	Integrity vs. Despair (65 years and older)
Infancy (1898-1900) An imagination born (0-2 years)								
Early Childhood (1900-1904) A garden of joy (2-6 years)								
Middle Childhood (1904-1910) A seeker in solitude (6-12 years)								

Adolescence (1910-1916) The knock of logic (12-18 years)							
Emerging Adulthood (1916-1927) A leap past the watchful dragons (18-29 years)							
Adulthood (1927-1938) The allegorical defender of the faith (29-40 years)							
Middle Adulthood (1938-1963) The secret road (40-64 years)							

7.4 Chapter Summary

This chapter aimed to explore the psychosocial development of C. S. Lewis and the relevance of the psychosocial theory of development through which to regard his life span holistically – the Wagnerian Romanticist, the man transported by imagination, the defender of faith, the dialectician of great form, and the man ever in search of Joy (Hooper, 1979; Lancast, 2012; Lewis, 1955a, 1966; McGrath, 2013; Wilson, 1990). A brief exposition of each crisis was relayed before its eventual application of fit to the historical periods of Lewis's life. In conclusion, the pervasiveness in the main theme of Lewis's life was speculated for its relevance in substantiation for the flexibility which is to be found in the resolution of nuclear conflicts in psychosocial development. The developmental process described by Erikson (1963, 1997) could, thus, not only be seen to refer to the succession of stages, but is highlighted in the sense that the different growing parts are interrelated by existing to a degree before its temporally ascribed epigenetic ascendancy (Erikson, 1997), to re-emerge later in an individual's developmental cycle (Graves & Larkin, 2006). The next chapter sets forth to deliver a conclusion to the psychobiographical study, whilst taking stock of its limitations and providing recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER 8:

CONCLUSION, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 Chapter Overview

This concluding chapter sets out to bring a close to the psychobiographical investigation by revisiting the aims that the researcher hoped to accomplish, and therefore highlighting the main findings of the study that helped to achieve this purpose. Acknowledgment will be given to the researcher's final reflections on the study, which are informed by the enclosed value of having undertaken this investigation, and by offering a transparent recognition of its limitations. Recommendations are then given for future research endeavours of a similar nature. Lastly, the researcher's thoughts and motivations are shared reflexively in order to tinge the research effort with a sense of meaning and purpose that reaches beyond the scope of psychobiographical practice.

8.2 Revisiting the Research Aim

This research had as its aim to execute a psychosocial developmental exploration into the life of Clive Staples Lewis. It was a thorough and longitudinal exploration of a completed life, and a description of the elements of personality (Carlson, 1988; Larsen et al., 2013) of a single case, situated in a particular socio-historical context that, furthermore, constituted the purpose of this study. The study can be regarded as an exploratory-descriptive research study, in which the rich historical detail of Lewis's life was explored for the sake of offering a description of its developmental trajectory. This description was undertaken through the lens of psychosocial

personality development, conceived as a developmental framework by Erikson (1959, 1963, 1968, 1977, 1988) in order to enable a descriptive-dialogic elaboration of Lewis's life, in which the researcher was shown to become conversant with the details historical details thereof. This was for the purpose of offering thick descriptions to facilitate a greater comprehension of the unique shape of Lewis's historical life (Fouché, 2015; Geertz, 1973; Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011; Ponterotto, 2006). It is an approach characteristic of inductive reasoning in research (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011) in which insight can be gained into the applied use of the psychosocial view of development by investigating a single case. The iterative nature of research leads to a cyclical reinterpretation and re-evaluation of the findings, in which new perspectives could ultimately be yielded, and built upon, to improve the rigour of study into a single case.

8.3 Overview of Key Findings

It was the researcher's aim to explore how psychosocial development and specifically the principle of adaptation explained by Erikson's theory would apply to an application to the historical progression of Lewis's life. The exploration revealed the possibility of acquiring enduring adaptive ego strengths despite a delay in or late acquisition of some in earlier stages. In allowing for the adaptive aspects of development, key themes that shaped the order of biographical information that structured Lewis's life could, thus, be identified.

The findings show that Lewis faced particularly significant challenges in forming an enduring sense of identity, which was probably eventually resolved through a reconnection to a sense of faith. Furthermore, his experience of intimacy followed a non-normative development that was, in part, experienced in his young adult life, but then reserved in full for his later years. Overall, Lewis did manage to resolve the eight psychosocial crises and exit with the adaptive ego

qualities. However, each stage presented with circumstances that allowed for the challenge posed by both the syntonic and dystonic poles, and also the possible complications of a core pathology that was likely to be accrued. Evidence was not forthcoming on the debilitating influence of such characteristics, and Lewis was, instead, regarded holistically along the lines of delayed or extended challenges (and even the early experience of some), that were posed by nuclear psychosocial conflicts at different stages of his life – all of which eventually witnessed their balanced resolution.

8.4 Value of the Study

Psychobiography (as mentioned in Section 4.7) was discussed for its efficacy in studying a variety of individuals, ranging from the neurotic to the extraordinary (Howe, 1997; Kőváry, 2011; Ponterotto & Reynolds, 2013), who embodied the spirit of their time. Being clear in its goals of substantiated claims of personality (Ponterotto, 2015b; Runyan, 1988), psychobiography has proven to be valuable in a number of regards. First, it is valuable through the study of unique individuals, which adds to the establishment of theoretical rigour in tandem with quantifiable methods (Runyan, 1982; Ponterotto et al. 2015). Secondly, its educational value is highlighted, especially as a training tool to facilitate many of the practical competencies expected of students aiming to do therapeutic work, and refining theoretical understanding (Kőváry, 2011; Ponterotto et al., 2015; Ponterotto, 2017). Thirdly, with its idiographic qualities (Cara, 2007) and roots in historiographic tradition (Ponterotto, 2015b), psychobiography could, in its study of individual lives, have goals that agree with those of the historical sciences, of which the methods have implications for advocating the value found in advancing the so-called soft-science traditions (Runyan, 1982, 2005a). Schultz (2005a) adds that case study methodology is open to replication,

meaning that findings can undergo reinterpretations and recontextualisations for the sake of different conclusions. The practice of case studies was advocated by Robinson and McAdams (2015) who claim that specificity (comprehension at an individual level) is equal in importance to generalisability, because a theory is evaluated by its capacity to study characteristics at individual level.

The main premise of value of the study was the execution of a psychohistorical investigation into the life of C. S. Lewis. It is the first study of this nature to be conducted, with the aim of gaining psychological insight into this significant figure, who proved to be complex in the structure of his person, and the fulfilment of his many roles, which were influential to altogether different groups of people. The comprehension of such complexity through a developmental theory of personality offers an inductive view of how a prevalent life theme unfolds to the achievement of greater and enduring meaning. From the study, it became clear that Lewis embodied three distinct roles that were meaningfully intertwined in his long search for 'Joy', and the repeated importance as a theme throughout his life: (a) his dialectic approach as lecturer that bred in his pupils a sense of logical argumentation; (b) his accessibility as a voice for the defence of the faith, where his speeches and broadcasts as apologetic spoke to the rattled belief of the common man; and (c) his work as writer, which emphasised truths through the lens and perspectives adopted in his own life.

The linked nature of these roles and the inevitable consequences they had for his life provided a unique slate upon which to engrave an application of a developmental perspective as posited by Erikson. In consideration of the turmoil caused by the Second World War, an understanding of remarkable individuals who inspired their social spheres through charisma, appears invaluable. When taking cognisance of how such personalities may change the shape of

the perceptions that leave people disenfranchised from their institutions of belief in the face of modern challenges, the accessibility of unique characteristics that counter such instances could prove a great asset if it is understood developmentally.

In improving the views reached through inductive inquiry, the researcher obeyed the iterative stance (as was mentioned in Section 8.2) so as to ensure that the collection of information on the psychobiographical subject lead to different interpretations of its latent meaning. The value inherent in this was that searches for new sources of data could be inspired, which lead to a greater depth of understanding and new interpretations of the biographical nuances and uncertainties that formed Lewis's life history. In addition, this refined comprehension aided in structuring his life according to the psychosocial theory of personality development with greater accuracy.

Psychobiography makes extensive use of psychobiographical theory to uncover a life, where the researcher interprets data according to structured conceptualisations that are deemed to be broadened, tested, and built upon (Robinson & McAdams, 2015; Tracy, 2010). It was explained (in greater detail within Section 7.3) that Lewis's life reveals a unique development along the stages of Erikson's theory. The rigour of the theory was informally validated for its accommodative value in psychosocially pinning the crises Lewis's faced in their seemingly delayed progression; it revealed the possibility of acquiring enduring adaptive ego strengths despite their delay or late acquisition. The researcher explored how Erikson's theory allowed the individual to revisit the crises of the previous stages later in life, despite the apparent lack of fit of this life to the progression of these crises chronologically. This information added to the body of knowledge, which expanded the understanding of how Erikson's views are accommodative of cases contrary to usual development. It is resonant of a view of Elms (1994), that the application

of a psychologically predictive perspective to one life at a time allows for its particular significance to be revealed, similar to the way quantitative inquiry would test its validity.

Also, it showed that psychosocial crises could be extended, and that the integral role of environmental interaction is not to be discounted in its influence on the resolution of challenges faced at each stage. Through the application of the theory on a unique case that does not neatly fit the normal experience of developmental crises that systematically unfold according to a temporally-bound course, the diverse relevance of Erikson's theory was presented to add to its existing usefulness as a theoretical framework for longitudinally exploring a life and placing its periods in context.

Furthermore, the research expanded upon the method inherent in psychobiography, as it did by accentuating the applied significance to be found in the theoretical framework used. Methodologically, the patterned quality of a life was dissected by extracting and prioritising relevant pieces of data through Alexander's (1988, 1990) indicators of salience. Two proposed avenues were used for this approach. First among these was a filtering process by which data was pursued or disregarded for its significance. "Letting the data speak" (Alexander, 1988, 1990) started the sifting, by means of nine identifiers of salience, which served as a rule set by which data was organised and categorised into manageable units. Secondly, the data was asked a question to determine further their selection in offering a consistency of interpretation from the wealth of possible themes. Questions were, thus, asked to determine which parts of Lewis's life needed to be extracted and analysed to give an inclusive account of Lewis's psychosocial personality development (Erikson, 1950, 1964, 1968, 1974, 1980), so as to fulfil the exploratory-descriptive aim. In addition, Schultz's (2005b) prototypical scenes were utilised, where salient

scenes within Lewis's life compacted his identity into an additional recognisable layer of information in the interpretation of his life and personality.

Alexander's (1990) principles were used and applied to a theory-driven conceptual psycho-historical matrix constructed through the use of Erikson's theory of psychosocial development. The investigation of Lewis's life was made more systematic by utilising this conceptual framework and matrix, as formulated by Yin (1999), where the organisation of his lifespan longitudinally according to set periods could provide a structured view of growth that allowed for the methodical application of the psychosocial theory on the components extracted for analysis.

8.5 Limitations

According to Joan Erikson, "Apart from the infant's arrival date such variety exists in the timing of human development that no age specifications could be validated for each stage independent of social criteria and pressures" (Erikson, 1997, p. 105). It is an observation that was clearly seen to have an impact in this research. When applied to Lewis, his life presents with a distinct variation in his movement through the psychosocial stages. The demarcation of the stages according to age-related duration – as was mainly informed by Berzoff (2011) and Hamacheck (1990) – proved, additionally, to delimit the wider scope of application that focuses mainly on the crisis faced by the individual, and its ultimate resolution.

Newman and Newman (2012, 2017) highlight that a consideration is due to how individuals experience different trajectories along a predicted line of normative development, because of the very nature of the dichotomy in crisis resolution that each stage presents. In Section 3.4, the individual variation of development was highlighted as one of the strengths that

affords it a status as a rigorous developmental perspective. It is a statement that is emphasised because the theory recognises that human adaptation forms a central process to mediate the interactive synthesis of biological and societal influences (Sigelman & Rider, 2012). Positive and negative poles accumulate in its influence on the individual over a lifespan – with society simply offering the conditions to contribute or detain the process – leading people to different development outcomes across their lives (Newman & Newman, 2012, 2017). Thus, the binding of the theory to a chronological presentation of its stages, and the way it unfolds, draws attention away from the credit to be given to a fluid consideration of individual progression.

Chapter 5 illuminated many additional pitfalls that befall the psychobiographical study through its method and choice of subject. Such shortcomings can be elaborated on from a theoretical nature, by recognising that purely biographical or historical explorations into a case – highlighting perspectives along social, political or economic dimensions – cannot be displaced by psychological interpretations (Anderson, 1981; Ponterotto, 2015b). Thus, this research presents but one interpretation along the lines of the psychosocial theory, and is merely to be seen as substantive to other interdisciplinary and multi-theoretical perspectives. Despite the great amount of time expended in delving into archival material for the sake of knowing one's subject (Ponterotto, 2017), it is the interdisciplinary cooperation in research that heightens the value of the field and the research being done (Fouché, 2015; Ponterotto, 2015b). In addition, this cooperation is expansive of the scope of application of the psychosocial developmental perspective. However, it does not exhaust the investigation of Lewis's life along the line of Erikson's theoretical propositions and revisions of the theory.

8.6 Recommendations

From the above, it is salient that the rich depth of understanding to be drawn from Lewis's historical life could be enhanced by the inclusion of multidisciplinary perspectives. From the perusal and rigorous engagement of written primary and secondary resources of the subject's life, the diversity of detail that abounds at key moments of Lewis's development presents with deeply poetic and subjective detail. Such elaborations diverge from the primacy that is placed on necessitated detail to use a psychosocial perspective, but it appears critical in a deeper appreciation of the key themes that shaped his narrative. It is the researcher's view that continued biographical investigation (untinged by theoretical influence) remains a valued endeavour for uncovering the historical life of Lewis and adding to the discourse of its themes. Furthermore, multidimensional viewpoints could elucidate the political, economic and social context in which the subject lived further, which would prove invaluable for understanding the impact of environmental influences. As was seen in Chapter 3 and Chapter 7, the interaction with social factors is deeply engrained in the creation and influence it exercises on the psychosocial crises presented. A wider scope of investigation, thus, adds to the knowledge base to be tapped along its dimensions to refine a psychological exploration into Lewis's life.

Tapping the additional explanations to be gained from the study of Lewis is a worthwhile endeavour for consideration of the iconic importance of similar figures in history. Cognisance of the turmoil that exists in contemporary society is telling of the potential for unrest that exists in many parts of the world, if not already having evolved to that level through some political, economic, social or religious instigation. This potential to unrest places incalculable value on the abilities possessed by unique figures, such as Lewis, who are or were capable of charismatically reflecting the views of the disheartened masses and giving voice to their conflicts. Furthermore,

in explicating how such figures access the stances of beliefs that these people harbour further heightens our understanding of possible antecedents and influences that inspire wider societal events that shape the course of history.

A study that elaborates on the development of characteristics that lead to such remarkable influence within one's embedded context can, thus, be seen for its utility in emergent fields of study within the discipline of psychology (e.g., positive psychology). The psychosocial theory of development, with its dichotomous approach to staged crises, bears witness to a realistic perception of the interactive influence of the individual and the environment and the eventual gain in adaptive ego crises that constitute unique and extraordinary personalities that are emulated for their societal value. The researcher, thus, recommends that revised versions of the theory be applied to the subject, as it transcends the period-bound perceptions of Lewis's adaptive qualities and modernises the outlook on the importance of his values, personality, and views. Additionally, though original versions of the psychosocial theory may possess chronological similarities to the major generational outlook safeguarded and preserved in Lewis's time (and thus reflecting a more accurate application, psychologically and historically), its contemporary relevance can, possibly, be questioned. This can be countered by including newer views that reflect an awareness of developmental trends, and the continued rigour of Erikson's adapted views.

Another recommendation seeks to counter the limits set by the chronologically bound application of the psychosocial theory to historical periods. Though the division of the stages into set age ranges assisted in the organisation of biographical information to dissect for its psychological significance in every stage, it presented a rigidity that jeopardised the focus on a fluid investigation of the crisis itself and the way in which it was resolved. Also, it negated the

intentional vagueness with which the psychosocial stages were originally formulated by Erikson. Though the scope of the current study was taken into consideration as a first baseline psychobiographical investigation into Lewis's life, his complexity revealed that the adaptive trajectory of Erikson's stages requires a more refined investigation. Here, the researcher emphasises the argument by referring to the non-normative shape of Lewis's life, as was made clear in Chapters 2 and 7.

Furthermore, the utilisation of the psycho-historical conceptual matrix presented the organisation of salient data prevalent from each formulated historical period in Lewis's life according to the psychosocial stages and their demarcated age ranges of development. Digression from the format of discussion in Chapter 7 would have caused complications for the continued utilisation and purpose of the matrix, and, thus, the applicable benefits arising from its inclusion in the methodology.

8.7 Final Reflections

Clive Staples Lewis became known to the researcher at an impressionable age, during which fantasy literature was a great source of stimulation and enjoyment. *The Chronicles of Narnia* appeared to fuse the realms of mythology and spirituality in such a way as to communicate familiar themes of faith that resonated with the researcher's Christian upbringing, whilst, in addition, offering a novel and imaginative outlook on age-old views. During adolescence, the rereading of these classic tales proved to provide great comfort to the researcher's own religious qualms and questioning of his faith, affirming that the realm of the spiritual is not bound by an entry through old doorways represented by tradition. The researcher,

thus, sought to uncover the life story of the author who could offer such creativity, by creating an imaginative realm of ‘supposals’ that reflected the deeper truths of meaning, purpose and belief.

An initial glimpse into the subject’s life revealed the multidimensionality of his personality, displayed by the diverse roles he embodied: as celebrity in the literary field, but also as lecturer, and as defender of the faith. The progression of his life while accumulating the formative experiences that lead to these roles proved to be an ideal topic for a developmental study. It was the researcher’s inkling that Lewis was in possession of a complex self-concept that had been hard won in terms of its adaptive and inspirational qualities, and vigorously defended from its notorious aspects and qualities, which made him less reputable and popular. His tendency, throughout his life, to construct an inner world removed from his external circumstances, as a means of finding reason, meaning and inspiration, also resonated with the researcher’s own deeply valued life perspectives and introspective nature. Existentially, the researcher, thus, found that he was capable of vesting a great personal interest in discovering the shape of Lewis’s life further.

However, the life of the subject was far removed historically from that of the researcher, and, therefore, the researcher required a firm sense of mindfulness regarding the contextual differences that abound when the interaction of the individual and society is considered. Lewis, for instance, managed to witness the tragedy caused by two World Wars during his life, which impacted deeply on people’s enduring systems of belief, to the extent of re-evaluating the importance indebted to philosophical views and practical ways of life (partially informed by a generational difference). Lewis was also firmly entrenched in a setting of strong homogenous Western thought, evermore infused by the academic institution to which his career and life routine was bound for the majority of his life. This lay in stark contrast to the life of the

researcher, who was raised in a culturally diverse society that is fairly heterogeneous along the lines of religion, race, and culture. Contemporary difficulties also posit stark variations in terms of the academic views popularised and expanding in the modern age. Lewis was, for example, shown to flourish in an Oxford career during his early and middle adulthood, in which literary appreciation abounded as a style of textual study; whereas the shape of his Cambridge career in later life saw him challenged to adapt to a style of textual critique that demanded a more rigid analysis and scrutiny of content and style. His career displayed the disciplinary shifts that presented within a single lifetime, and thus the degree of significance that is to be afforded as a point of awareness in the development of academic discourse.

Above all, the researcher felt drawn to the repeated theme of 'Joy', as a desiring and longing that preoccupied Lewis's life in key formative moments. It served to be an existential theme that weaved its way through his history, tying together the nuclear crises he was faced with in their complexity and delayed resolution. This sense of longing was given a reminiscent quality to attach meaning to notable events of crisis and questioning in his life. Lewis managed to infuse it with an overarching significance and poetic meaning in affording the shape of his spiritual existence, and instinctively displayed his capacity to convey deep truths through imagination and deeply embedded (but often forgotten) convictions. It is the researcher's belief that an understanding of such processes of self-discovery could hold immense value for expanding knowledge on identity construction and self-authorship. Additionally, it validates the credit to be given to the enduring effects of past events and experiences, and its impact on emergent perceptions of the self in a diverse culture, both as a tool for preservation of beliefs and values, and in continuity of self-comprehension.

The exercise of psychobiographical investigation provided the researcher with a great sense of contentment. Lewis's stylistic tendencies and vibrancy in autobiographical reflection; the transparency of his writings, informed by his own personal experiences; and his capacity to evoke passionate accounts from those who knew or studied his life, were all accumulative reasons that convinced the researcher of Lewis's significance in history and persuaded the researcher that Lewis was an ideal subject of study.

8.8 Chapter Summary

The concluding chapter sought to draw to a close the psychobiographical study of Clive Staples Lewis. It sought a return to the aims of the research, and provided a synoptic backdrop for the revision of findings. Lewis's inner world offers a bountiful surplus of depth that evades the scope of the presently concluded study. A consideration of its limitations and inherent value allowed for the investigation into recommendations for future studies on Lewis – an endeavour which the researcher hopes to contribute towards.

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