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NARRATING NATURE AND POWER: ECO-LINGUISTIC DIMENSIONS IN *THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA*

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Abstract

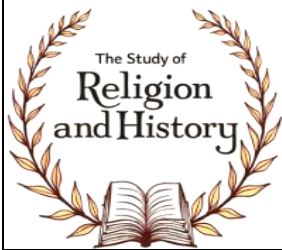
This research paper provides a critical Ecolinguistic analysis of C.S. Lewis's The Chronicles of Narnia, with an emphasis on how nature, animals, and ecological systems are portrayed. The research explores the deeper meanings buried in language choices throughout the series, guided by the goals of analyzing how metaphors, narratives, and discourses construct the natural world within Narnia. The analysis shows how power dynamics are linguistically and symbolically encoded in the text by examining how nature is positioned in relation to both human and nonhuman characters. The study reveals how Narnian language practices reflect larger environmental and ideological frameworks through an interdisciplinary approach that incorporates ecolinguistics and critical analysis.

Key Words: Eco-linguistics, Nature, Power dynamics, Metaphor, The Chronicles of Narnia, Critical Analysis

Introduction

The research examines “THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA” from an Ecolinguistic perspective. According to the International Ecolinguistic Association (IEA) Ecolinguistics functions as a linguistics sub-branch that analyzes the impact of language on relationships between human beings along with other animals and the natural environment sustaining life (2018). Ecolinguistics now defines itself as "an approach of language which examines the complex network of environmental interactions between environments and the languages through their speaking communities" (Wendel, 2005, p. 51). British writer C. S. Lewis created a portal fantasy collection called *The Chronicles of Narnia* with seven published books between 1950 and 1956. The seven books and illustrations by Pauline Baynes in the period from 1950 to 1956 follow the development of Narnia's history through various human characters in this magical world populated by anthropomorphic animals and mythical beings and enchantment.

All major characters reside in real-world reality before magical transport to *Narnia* where they defend the kingdom from evil alongside the lion Aslan except for Sheumis and Loulis in *The Horse and His Boy*. The seven publications in *The Chronicles of Narnia* follow



Narnia throughout time starting with *The Magician's Nephew* all the way to *The Last Battle* while remaining one of the best-selling children's literature pieces with 120 million sold across 47 languages. *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* serves as the main focus of this research because the British author C.S Lewis published it through Geoffrey Bles in 1950. This book belongs to the portal fantasy genre. *The Chronicles of Narnia* (1950–1956) series contains seven books with *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* establishing itself as the initial book release and most famous adaptation.

The biological, physical, and social environments are all included in this context when the term "environment" is used since, as the well-known publications by linguists, including Halliday (2001), Mühlhäusler and Fill (2001), Mühlhäusler and Peace (2006), Fill (1998), and Mühlhäusler (2001, 2003). According to the same line, C.S. Lewis (2015) describes the "the lion, the witch, and the wardrobe in *The Chronicles of Narnia*" as "cognitive structures in the minds of multiple individuals across a culture" of people that affect their thoughts, speech, and behavior".

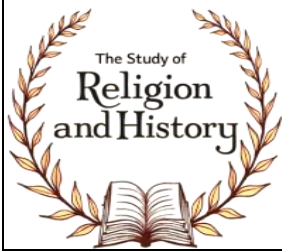
Literature serves as an essential examination point for human-nature interactions because ecological problems are escalating in severity. The research discipline known as ecolinguistics investigates language influences on both environmental ideas and human conduct and cognitive development which produces substantial knowledge for this ongoing discussion. The Ecolinguistic methodology enables researchers to reveal useful and toxic environmental statements embedded within the texts that reveal understanding about human ecological relationships according to Stibbe (2015). Through such literature children learn ethical frameworks about environmental care and animal respect as well as natural stewardship. Through its publication from 1950 to 1956 C.S. Lewis created *The Chronicles of Narnia* which serves as an exemplary examination of nature.

This paper analyzes *The Chronicles of Narnia* through an Ecolinguistic method to study environmental attitude encoding and identity development in language. The study employs Appraisal Theory as described by Martin and White (2005). The analysis emphasizes how the text presents nature as a morally active force that is able to experience pain, rebirth, and even judgment. It also takes into account the spiritual aspects of nature in *Narnia*, especially the character of Aslan, who represents ecological balance and divine connection. This study makes the case that Lewis's *Narnia* not only provides entertainment but also serves as a model for a worldview that emphasizes the close connection between spiritual and ecological well-being by looking at these discursive techniques. By doing this, it creates a rich environment for talking about how children's books can encourage an eco-centric mindset and moral interaction with the non-human world.

Ecolinguistics views language as a fundamental social element that belongs to a comprehensive ecological system. The core objective of ecolinguistics involves developing linguistic theory by examining human beings in their collective social setting as well as in their role within the life-sustaining ecological system. Through ecolinguistics linguistic applications become visible for resolving important ecological problems which keep intensifying such as environmental injustice and biodiversity loss and climate change.

Research Questions

1. How are the desirable and destructive relationships with the environment constructed in *The Chronicles of Narnia* through the use of metaphor and narrative framing?



2. How are the ecological philosophies supported or challenged by the depictions of nature in *The Chronicles of Narnia*?

Research Objectives

1. To examine how nature, animals, and ecological systems are portrayed in the Narnian world through metaphors, stories, and discourses.
2. To investigate the connection between language choices and power dynamics with a focus on the positioning of nature in relation to both human and nonhuman characters.

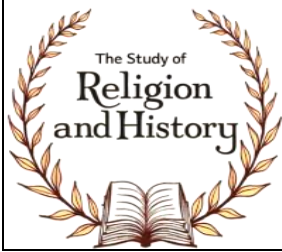
Literature Review

In recent decades, the nexus of language, ecology, and literature has attracted a lot of scholarly attention, especially within the developing field of ecolinguistics. Ecolinguistics, which began as Halliday's (1990) demand that linguistics address global ecological issues, has grown into a framework that critically analyzes the ways in which language either promotes sustainability or ecological degradation. According to (Stibbe, 2015), Ecolinguistics uncovers the "stories we live by"—the profound ideologies and narratives ingrained in language that influence how we interact with the natural world. Appraisal Theory, which was created by Martin and White (2005) and offers instruments for examining how attitudes, judgments, and emotions are expressed in texts, is a significant contribution to Ecolinguistics. In literary analysis, where descriptions of nature, moral alignment, and spiritual symbolism frequently rely on evaluative language, this theory is especially pertinent. Appraisal theory has been used in children's literature to examine how environmental values are presented to young readers in an emotional and ideological manner (Sunderland, 2011).

Because of its imaginative settings and ability to incorporate intricate moral and ecological themes into easily understood narratives, children's fantasy literature in particular provides a unique lens for Ecolinguistic analysis. Fantasy worlds frequently serve as mirrors or critiques of the Ecological problems facing the real world, according to academics like Goga (2008) and Zapf (2016). By fostering empathy for non-human life and promoting eco-centric values from a young age, these books can be effective tools for eco-pedagogy.

The Chronicles of Narnia by C.S. Lewis has garnered considerable attention in this field due to its moral and theological themes, but less so for its ecological implications. Recent research has started to examine its environmental aspects, though. The landscapes of *Narnia* serve as moral markers, flourishing under justice and withering under tyranny, according to Curry (2008), who interprets Lewis's use of nature as a reflection of divine harmony. As stated by Filimon (2011), *Narnia* also offers a type of eco-spirituality in which moral and spiritual order are connected to ecological balance and nature and divinity are intertwined.

Additionally, *Narnia*'s depiction of non-human agency—through talking animals, living trees, and animated landscapes—challenges anthropocentric norms and exemplifies what Plumwood (2002) refers to as a posthuman ecological ethic, which gives non-human beings moral significance, voice, and reason. These depictions speak to contemporary Ecolinguistic concerns about rethinking how humans interact with the non-human world. The explicit integration of Ecolinguistic frameworks with the textual and symbolic analysis of nature and eco-spirituality in *Narnia* is still lacking, despite these contributions. By applying appraisal theory to examine how language in *The Chronicles of Narnia* portrays nature as an



active agent and spiritual force, this study seeks to close that gap and advance an Ecolinguistic understanding of children's fantasy literature.

Research Methodology

This study is based on the branch of linguistics called Ecolinguistics, which examines how language influences when people interact with the natural world. According to Stibbe (2015), Ecolinguistics goes beyond merely summarizing environmental discourse to critically evaluate whether language promotes ecological harmony or ecological catastrophe.

Data Overview

Within a vividly imagined secondary world, C.S. Lewis's seven-part fantasy series, *The Chronicles of Narnia* (1950–1956), combines Christian allegory, mythological elements, and moral instruction. The narrative mostly centers on groups of real-world kids who are taken to the fantastical realm of *Narnia*, where they are asked to aid in bringing about order, thwarting evil, and carrying out long-standing prophecies. *Narnia* itself is presented throughout the series as a dynamic, living setting that is intricately linked to the moral and spiritual well-being of its occupants. The *Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* (1950), Book 1 in publication order, serves as the primary focus of this study since it introduces readers to *Narnia*. The plot revolves around four siblings—Peter, Susan, Edmund, and Lucy Pevensie—who use a magical wardrobe to find their way to the land of *Narnia*. They enter a world ruled by the White Witch, who has thrown the land into an unnatural, never-ending winter, symbolizing both spiritual decay and ecological imbalance. With the return of Aslan, a Christ-like lion figure who stands for divine authority, moral order, and spiritual renewal, nature in *Narnia* is revitalized after actively suffering under the Witch's rule. Spring returns to *Narnia* with Aslan's death and resurrection, signifying the restoration of moral and ecological balance.

The story concludes with the kids vanquishing the Witch, ascending to the throne, and ruling over a period of harmony and tranquility in the country. Animals speak, trees exhibit emotional responses, and the weather reflects moral events throughout the book, all of which suggest that nature is portrayed as communicative, spiritual, and agentive. Because of these factors, the text is a rich source for Ecolinguistic research, particularly when looking at how language conveys values associated with eco-spirituality and environmental consciousness.

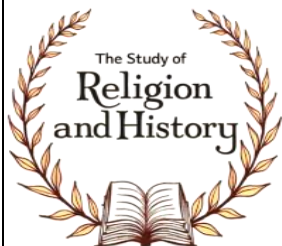
Fantasy books like *Narnia* can serve as a type of "cultural ecology," reflecting and reshaping our perception of the natural world, as suggested by Zapf (2016). Furthermore, through symbolic storytelling and character interactions with the environment, children's literature plays a crucial role in fostering ecological awareness, as noted by Goga (2008). This awareness is given moral and spiritual undertones in Lewis's writing, which turns it into a story of eco-spiritual transformation as well as adventure.

Criteria for Data Selection

This study's primary goal is Ecolinguistic analysis, and it uses two linguistic features stance and evaluation as a technique to examination. Therefore, the primary goal of Ecolinguistic analysis is to uncover the narratives that the characters in "the chronicles of *Narnia*" by relating the chosen excerpts to the environment and the description of various ecological system components.

Conceptual Structure

Story writers naturally introduce themselves to their work by using literary tools and language options to reach their writing objectives through their personal feelings and beliefs.



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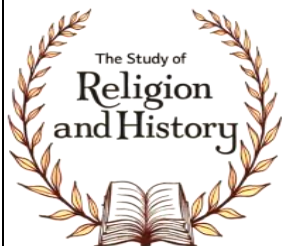
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The "interpersonal metafunction" of language demonstrates how writers communicate with readers according to Halliday thus "interpersonal meaning" contains "a thread of meaning which runs through text to convey writer-reader relationship along with authorial viewpoint about the topic (Eggins, 2004, p. 11). Writing authors participate in this collective group of people who share interpersonal meaning either by using their own statements or creating dialogues between their characters. Hood (2012) explains further , Every time we examine the term "stance" we enter the field of interpersonal meaning according to Hood (2012, p. 52). According to Biber et al. (1999) stance alongside other linguistic tools help writers convey interpersonal meaning in their texts. According to Stubbs (1986) interpersonal meaning possesses such importance because: A speaker or writer incorporates their personal standpoint into every message they transmit. These speakers demonstrate their outlook through each individual linguistic element they use. In accordance with this perspective linguistics should describe these viewpoint markers and establish what they signify (Englebretson 2007 p. 17) .

Munday (2012) explains in this paragraph that stance functions as an expression of individual opinions and attitudes by using speech tone and selecting words and genres together with grammatical elements. This reflects how arguments are constructed and which dialect or language is employed. The understanding of position varies according to circumstances since it can lead to shifting evaluations ranging from positive to negative. Any spoken or written language includes the detected subjective voice of the speaker or writer. A message achieves multiple goals that demonstrate what values are prized by the author or message creator.

The Appraisal Framework

Martin (2000) establishes that the assessment framework defines evaluation across three main areas which include attitude and engagement and graduation. The framework arranges multiple semantic elements that both negotiate emotions and judgements and amplify evaluations and engagement with these assessments.

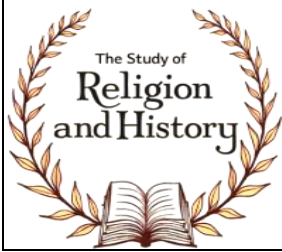


Domain of appraisal	Parameter	Value	Illustrative realization
Attitude	Affect	Using emotional feelings ,response	Cold, lifeless, silent, joyfull, alive ,blooming
	Judgement	An individuals Behavior	cruel,unnatural
	Appriciation	Reaction	aesthetic beauty ,spirituality
Graduation	Force	Elevate ,Lower	Never,always
	Focus	Polished and smooth.	Decay ,renewl
Engagement	Monogloss	The contraction	Deep magic
	Hetrogloss	expansion	

A summary of appraisal resources (Munday, 2012)

This study examines how moral hierarchies are shaped by narratives about nature and considers how these representations affect actual ecological and ethical viewpoints. In actuality, the appraisal theory framework is focused "more on rhetorical effects and meanings in context than on grammatical forms" (Martin & White, 2005).The method focuses on understanding the meanings behind evaluation resources instead of compiling linguistic indicators that express ideas.

The application of lexico-grammatical devices functions as a means to express evaluative and locus meanings in this approach. Attitude forms the basis for understanding the system of defining emotions. The system contains three semantic areas: impact where emotions express favorable and negative feelings, ethics which deals with behavior evaluation through admiration or criticism or commendation or condemnation, and aesthetics where appreciation examines field-based value systems of natural and semiotic events (Martin & White, 2005). The fundamental framework of emotion encoding operates through affect while both other processes serve as feelings institutionalized as propositions. The appraisal theoretical framework depends on attitude and assessment as its fundamental theoretical components which all language studies must integrate for language generation and interpretation processes.



The main limitation of appraisal theory exists in its emphasis on evaluation and expression of postures before identifying definitive markers for these abstract ideas.

Ecology Linguistics Analysis

Narnia represents a sacred living world in which animals interact with each other while nature exists in an active moral state throughout the book. The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe shows Aslan as a divine figure who ties to natural cycles like death and resurrection. A great crack split the Stone Table into two sections as described in the text. These lion occurrences signify that spirituality expanded across all space while the spiritual power symbolized natural green and fresh surroundings. The White Witch's relentless power of winter exposes the ecological imbalance while creating a broken natural connection according to Garrard (2004) in his discussion about ecocriticism through seasonal symbolism.

Ecological Values and Metaphor

Metaphors in Concept

The moral essence of Narnian nature describes the way nature responds through positive and negative actions against characters.

Textual Reference: "Yes!" The speaker behind them uttered their magnificent voice to him. "It is more magic." They looked round. Under the sunlight Aslan stood in all his magnificent magnanimousness with a shivering mane that had returned to overwhelm his size to them.

The text demonstrates how nature possesses spirituality because winter creates dark days of natural disdain until spring arrives with its new colors and blossoming blessings.

The anthropocentric approach differs with "Animals as persons" since talking animals actively participate as agents rather than passive entities. Stibbe (2015; Lakoff & Johnson (1980).

Textual reference "Aslan a man!" Mr. Beaver said sternly. "Certainly not. According to my words he rules all animals in the forest as he descends from the Emperor Beyond The Sea. Has your memory failed you? The title of Wild King belongs to no one else but him. Lion stands as his name reveals which means he is the Great Lion. They say you have forgotten something so I will respond to you," Aslan spoke with serious demeanor. "Tell us of this Deep Magic." A lion named Aslan speaks to explain his knowledge of deep magic that will cleanse Narnia of evil which represents animals being virtuous spiritual elements in this text. The antagonist embodies sterile supernatural elements which turn living things to stone as well as suppress life creation while Aslan provides natural life powers for all living things. Love (2003), Practical Ecocriticism.

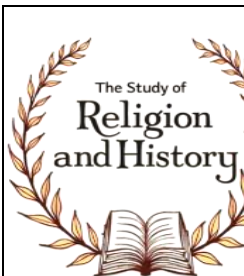
Textual reference "The White Witch?" said Edmund; "who's she?"

In these lines the speaker expresses Witch's hateful character by demonstrating how Witch believes she dominates *Narnia* when in reality her heart is wicked and she is an evil witch.

Ideology and Conversation

Domination vs. Christian Stewardship

The environmental philosophy of Lewis promotes caring for matters of nature in a sustainable manner rather than destructive treatment. The way Aslan leads his realm combines supernatural guidance with environmental respect. (Santmire (1985), White (1967), and The Historical Roots of Our Ecologic Crisis).

	<p>THE STUDY OF RELIGION AND HISTORY</p> <p>Vol.3 No.1 2025</p>	<p>ISSN P : 3006-3329</p> <p>ISSN E : 3006-3337</p>
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Ecological versus Colonial Discourses

Conflicts between the coexistence of Narnian creatures and human characters as rulers. The writing employs various terms to explain sovereignty and ownership and conquest functions as defined in Huggan's and Tiffin's Postcolonial Ecocriticism (2010).

5. Ecolinguistic Tools

To analyze the text follow the Ecolinguistic assessment framework which Stibbe established (2021). Our current life stories are based on either constructive or destructive ecological narratives. *Narnia* represents nature through its presentation of interconnected systems that connect all living things in addition to its sacred character and its ability to respond to treatment. The language represents nature either in positive or negative ways through evaluations. Identities: Animals, mythical creatures, and humans as ecological agents. The environment reveals some things while making other aspects disappear through its salience effects. Culture-based stories function as the primary source for determining ecological values. Literature can boost either sustainability-focused positive discourses or nature-dominant destructive discourses when done properly.

When the dwarf halted his steps he declared "It's not a simple thaw." "This is Spring. The character asks in dilemma "What are we to do?" (Lewis, 1950, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, p. 144) The dialogue demonstrates positive interaction through which nature escapes all forms of restriction. Spring arrival serves as a metaphor for ecological revival and equilibrium according to strong ecocentric beliefs. Metaphor along with Framing represent significant elements according to Lakoff and Johnson (1980) Metaphors in environmental perception work at an unconscious level to shape how people understand these issues so they must be included in Ecolinguistic analysis.

Textual Example: "Always winter, but never Christmas." (Lewis, 1950, p. 62) During the White Witch's oppressive rule *Narnia* experienced an ecological stagnation that spread naturally and emotionally across the land. Through this metaphor the author shows how natural progression faces exclusion resulting in a world where everything remains static.

Agency and Anthropomorphism (Goatly, 2006; Stibbe, 2015) Ecolinguistics examines the distribution of agency between natural and artificial components of texts regardless of their activity level or passivity. By giving nature animate forms *Narnia* creates unique life in its fictional realm.

Textual Example: "Narnia! Narnia! Narnia! Awake. Love. Think. Speak. Be walking trees. Be talking beasts. Be divine waters." (Lewis, 1950, p. 142) Through this particular statement nature receives both subjectivity and moral agency. The non-anthropocentric view point here serves as core to ecolinguistics because it establishes active landscape entities and active animal subjects.

Findings

Nature takes an active role in *The Chronicles of Narnia* by surpassing the status of passive background elements. The White Witch's governance of *Narnia* serves as a critical ecological metaphor within the narrative framework because the author explains it thus: White Witch continues her control when expanding the statement on page 62 of Lewis 1950: "Never Christmas" followed by "Always winter."

Through this metaphor the writer illustrates how environmental disruption stops vital natural patterns instead of being solely about winter temperatures. According to Stibbe (2015) destructive discourses represent designed systems which disrupt ecological harmony. Winter becomes an unnatural endless presence in this magic-infused land and reveals the author's objection to human exercise of dominance over nature.

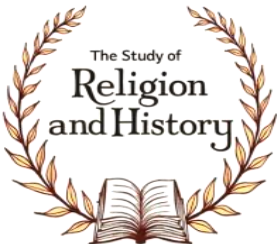
The metaphors describing Aslan's comeback emphasize natural restoration according to the following imagery: Every passing second the regions covered in snow became smaller as the regions covered in green expanded further (Lewis, 1950 p. 145). The story of seasonal change turns into a metaphor for ecological rebirth, illustrating how the land heals when equilibrium is restored, symbolized by Aslan. These metaphorical changes have a significant impact on how readers view environmental health and destruction, according to Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) metaphor theory. Lewis elevates animals above mere literary devices by giving them thought, voice, and agency. In addition to being allies, characters like Mr. Beaver and Aslan serve as narrative authorities, offering moral and tactical direction. **"Aslan is moving."** (Lewis, 1950 p.74)

Mr. Beaver's brief statement initiates the thawing of winter and ecological healing in addition to Aslan's return. This application of animal speech is a prime example of Goatly's (2006) contention that anthropomorphism can be constructively employed to subvert human supremacy and advance ecological consciousness. Similarly, the ultimate reversal of anthropocentrism is Aslan's role as a nonhuman but divine figure. Despite being a lion, he has the most power. His presence brings moral and environmental equilibrium back, demonstrating that ecological power can be held by nonhuman entities.

Lewis creates a moral and ecological hierarchy through lexical patterns and framing, wherein those who are in harmony with nature—Aslan, the talking animals, and the trees—hold true power, while those who manipulate or take advantage of nature—such as the Witch—are portrayed as corrupt.

For instance, the Witch is said to possess a **“wand that turns creatures to stone”** (Lewis, 1950, p. 127), a metaphor for the death or silencing of ecological life. Aslan's power, on the other hand, is healing and life-giving, reiterating Stibbe's (2015) concepts of constructive discourses that uphold ecological values. We can observe that language in *Narnia* actively reflects and upholds ecological power dynamics by applying Fairclough's (1995) Critical Discourse Analysis. Nature is not only something to be admired or subdued; it is a component of the moral framework of the entire world. Morality breaks down when nature suffers. Justice thrives when nature does.

Objectives	Key Findings	Scholarly Support
Metaphors, stories, and conversations	The seasons in Narnia represent ecological balance and disruption, and metaphors direct moral-ecological comprehension.	Lakoff and Johnson (1980), Stibbe (2015)
Power dynamics and linguistic decisions	Power belongs to entities that share ecological values, and nature is portrayed as a moral agent.	Goatly (2006), Fairclough (1995), and Stibbe (2015)

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Limited Textual Range

The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe (Lewis, 1950), the first book in the Narnia series to be published, is the only subject of this study. The exclusion of the other six books restricts the generalizability of findings across the larger Narnian narratives, despite the fact that this text contains rich ecological and symbolic material. Future research could benefit from examining recurrent ecological metaphors and ideologies throughout the entire series, as Stibbe (2015) highlights that Ecolinguistic meaning frequently evolves over longer narrative arcs.

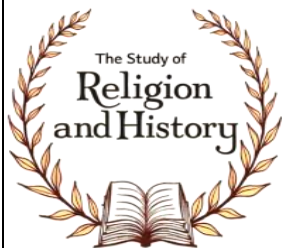
Conclusion

To sum up, this research paper examines “the chronicles of Narnia” in the perspective of Ecolinguistic analysis. Aslan's control over the environment in *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* serves as a critique of human exploitation of nature as well as a symbol of divine authority. His arrival highlights the link between ecological prosperity and benevolent leadership by transforming Narnia from a place of perpetual winter to a vibrant spring. Aslan is positioned as a ruler whose control over nature reflects colonial ideologies, but this portrayal also fits with imperialistic ideas. By showing Narnia's demise due to its exploitation, *The Last Battle* delves deeper into the effects of environmental deterioration. This devastation highlights the importance of stewardship and respect for natural resources while serving as a warning about the practical effects of environmental neglect.

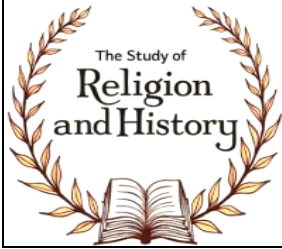
Furthermore, anthropocentric and instrumental viewpoints are reflected in the series' hierarchical depiction of nature, in which non-human/ animals frequently assist human characters. This dynamic illustrates how narratives can uphold prevailing societal norms and values by reflecting societal power structures. In summary, Lewis's personal convictions are woven into the larger imperial and environmental discourses of his era in *The Chronicles of Narnia*, which presents a complex tapestry of ecological and power dynamics. We can better appreciate the text's intricacy and its commentary on the relationship between nature, power, and societal constructs when we are aware of these layers.

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