Chapter Two
The Chronicles of Narnia

C.S. Lewis calls for a balanced respect for the interconnectedness of nature and man. He considers that the man-nature relationship should be guided by a core of ethics to be derived from basic principles undergirded by a respect for the environment. Many writers, scientists and literary critics such as Aldo Leopold, Edward Abbey, John Muir, Barry Lopez, Rachel Carson and Mary Austin have given considerable attention to prescribing respect for the environment and nature at large. Lewis’s attitude to nature is respectful and reverential. The critical appraisal of his stories is based on the fundamental premise that “human culture is connected to the physical world, affecting it and affected by it” (Glotfelty, Introduction xix). By creating an awareness of man’s inter-connectedness with his environment, Lewis encourages his readers to view all living things as having equal value. Respect for the environment that sustains him will prevent man from exploiting it.

Nature is the whole of the physical world. Man is in nature but he acts upon it, thereby emancipating himself from it. The man-nature relationship has become a controversy in many Western countries. There is on the one hand, “a nostalgia for the lost paradise and on the other a primitive fear of natural forces but also the urge to dominate nature, which originated with the
Renaissance” (Bourdeau 10). Nature can be seen as beautiful and harmonious but it also inspires fear in man who has to overcome it in order to survive. Hence, the man-nature relationship has always been ambiguous, nature being seen as both friend and foe. An examination of the man-nature relationship in earlier times paves the way to a proper understanding of the need for a respectful attitude to nature in the present time as represented in the works of Lewis.

In tribal societies, animistic beliefs moulded the man-nature relationships. For animistic cultures, animals, plants, stones and rivers were "inspired – including humans, cultural artifacts, and natural entities, both biological and ‘inert’ ” (Manes 17-18). Moreover, the non-human world, which is filled with articulate subjects, was believed to have the ability to communicate and interact with humans. Hence, the spirit in a tree had to be placated before man could cut down the tree for his use. As animists respected and reverenced nature, they did not exploit nature but took from it whatever they needed for their essential survival on a daily basis after they had communicated their need to the objects in nature. Manes explains that “animism undergirds many contemporary tribal societies, just as it did our own during pre-Christian times [and] the overwhelming evidence suggests the universality of animism in human history” (18). These societies avoided the kind of environmental destruction that is prevalent today. In fact, “many primal groups have no word for wilderness and do not make a clear distinction between wild and domesticated life, since the tension between
nature and culture never becomes acute enough to raise the problem” (18). Consideration and proper regard for nature was thus normal and inevitable.

Towards the end of the medieval period, animism as a coherent system broke down in the western societies for a variety of reasons. The entrance of two powerful institutional technologies, namely literacy and Christian exegesis contributed significantly to the breakdown of animism as a coherent system. Jack Goody and David Abram argue that “alphabetic writing changes the nature of the representations of the world,” because it allows humans to lay out discourse and “examine it in a more abstract, generalised and ‘rational’ way” (qtd. in Manes 18). Thus, written texts stand conspicuously outside nature. Moreover, Christian exegesis established God as “a transcendental subject speaking through natural entities, which, like words on a page, had a symbolic meaning, but no autonomous voice” (Manes 20). Hence, for the church and the aristocracy, during the Middle Ages, “nature was a symbol for the glory and orderliness of God” (20) and no longer a powerful force that man had to reckon with.

Medieval cosmology, however considered all of the universe and space itself as having purpose, meaning and relationship. Each part moved another in the “‘Great Chain of Being’ a depiction of the world as a vast filigree of lower and higher forms, from zoophytes to Godhead, with humankind’s place higher than beasts and a little less than angels, as the Psalm puts it” (Manes 20) and therefore philosophers like Bernardus were
impressed by “a vivid sense of the ageless fecundity, the endless and multiform going on, of life” (Allegory 150) in all of the earth.

This Great Chain of Being, which placed humankind higher than the beasts, has often acted as “a theological restraint against abusing the natural world” (Manes 20), as shown by the words of Thomas Aquinas:

The goodness of the species transcends the goodness of the individual, as form transcends matter; therefore the multiplication of species is a greater addition to the good of the universe than the multiplication of individuals of a single species. The perfection of the universe therefore requires not only a multitude of individuals, but also diverse kinds, and therefore diverse grades of things. (qtd. in Manes 20)

This respect and reverence for nature underwent a change with the coming of the Renaissance. A new configuration of thought namely humanism, converted the cosmological model called the Great Chain of Being “from a symbol of human restraint in the face of a perfect order to an emblem of human superiority over the natural world” (Manes 20). Humanism emphasized faith in reason, the intellect and progress, insisting on the superiority of man over the rest of the biosphere. It was based on the observation that Homo sapiens had reason, while animals and nature did not. Erasmus (1466-1536) who contributed to the revival of classical learning considered reason to be the best guide to life and believed in the humanist “philosophy which recognizes the value or dignity of man and makes him the
measure of all things and somehow takes human nature, its limits or its interests as its theme” (Abbaganano 71).

Humanism paved the way for man’s interests, mainly focusing on scientific and technological progress. According to Manes, humanism came to “emphasize a faith in reason, progress, and intellect that would become the cornerstone of modern technological culture” (20). Moreover, at the beginning of the Christian era, some voices off the coasts of Greece and on the Mediterranean wailed: “‘Pan is dead! Great Pan is dead!’” (Lawrence 70), because men gradually moved into the cities for love of glory and power, the vanity of ideas and “the pomp of argument” (71) and “the father of fauns and nymphs, satyrs and dryads and naiads” (70) was forced to become a fugitive and then an outlaw, “till at last the old Pan died, and was turned into the devil of the Christians” (71). Pan lost to civilized man, and became subdued and then voiceless. As man gained control over his environment, he became the centre of the world, and in the play *Hamlet* man is signified as “the paragon of animals” (Shakespeare 2.2.296).

Francis Bacon (1561-1626) of the sixteenth century considered that nature is to be subdued, her secrets penetrated and harnessed to satisfy man’s desires. He expressed the belief in man’s superiority as follows: “Man, if we look to final causes, may be regarded as the centre of the world; insomuch that if man were taken away from the world, the rest would seem to be all astray, without aim or purpose” (Bacon, par. 3). Rene Descartes (1596-1650), a French philosopher, clearly proclaimed the duality of body and soul but
considered animals as non-sentient mechanical beings. Opposed to him, Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (1646-1716), a German philosopher, stressed the interconnectedness between the living and the non-living parts of the world.

The anthropocentric view considered man as the most significant in creation and that he has “become the sole subject, speaker, and rational sovereign of the natural order in the story told by humanism since the Renaissance” (Manes 21). Anthropocentrism places human beings at the centre and nonhumans at the periphery. It attaches primary importance to human needs and interests. The basic premise of this human-centred attitude is the idea that nature exists only to be exploited by man. Further, it considers man superior to animals for various reasons, including his ability to think, speak and plan.

Another significant name towards understanding man-nature relationship is Keith Thomas (1933), a historian, who mentions in his book *Man and the Natural World: Changing Attitudes in England* (1984) that the early eighteenth century saw the emergence of “attitudes to the natural world which were essentially incompatible with the direction in which English society was moving” and that it “generated an increasing concern to protect birds and preserve wild creatures in their natural state” (qtd. in Garrard 39-40).

Jonathan Bate in his work *Romantic Ecology: Wordsworth and the Environmental Tradition* (1991) “promoted a return to the nineteenth-century conception of Wordsworth as a ‘poet of nature’ ” (Garrard 42). This is chiefly
because Wordsworth’s poetry articulates an “unconscious bond with the land” (42) to be sought out as necessary for the alienated. However, Garrard also understands that Wordsworth’s “enthusiasm for ‘nature’ does not correspond to modern ecological concern” because he is “on the whole, far more interested in the relationship of non-human nature to the human mind than he is in nature in and for itself” (43) as seen in his poem ‘Michael’. The study of the relationship between Michael and nature in the poem helps to understand Wordsworth’s concept of nature. Michael is a shepherd who never experiences the beauty and spirit in nature and so he fails to realize the grandeur and sublime as praised by Wordsworth. Michael treats nature as the basic material for a living. Thus, the poem explores Wordsworth’s reflections on other people’s responses to nature.

Terry Gifford in *Pastoral* (1999) describes pastoral as “a retreat from the city to the countryside” and implies “an idealization of rural life” (Garrard 33). ‘Classical pastoral’ includes two significant distinctions that run through the pastoral tradition: “the spatial distinction of town (frenetic, corrupt, impersonal) and country (peaceful, abundant), and the temporal distinction of past (idyllic) and present (‘fallen’)” (35). An ‘American pastoral’ presents a narrative structure in which “the protagonist leaves civilisation for an encounter with non-human nature, then returns having experienced epiphany and renewal” (49). During the nineteenth century, America underwent rapid growth in technology and Marx Leo in *The Machine in the Garden* (1964) brings out “the contradiction between rural myth and technological fact” (qtd.
in Garrard 49). In fact, David Ray Griffin points out that “the continuation of modernity threatens the very survival of life on our planet” (qtd. in Keller 723).

In course of time, taxonomy and evolution gave rise to ecology. The Swedish Zoologist, Carolus Linnaeus in his book *Systema Naturae* (1734) classifies biological organisms into “a categorical taxonomy, or naming system” (Howarth, “Principles” 72). Thus Linnean taxonomy enabled Charles Darwin to study “the relationship between habit and form” and put forth *The Origin of Species* (1859), which constitutes the theory of evolution. In 1869, Ernst Haeckel of Germany studied the relationship between organisms and this served to increase awareness in the growth and development of certain species in man’s environment. By this time, Western nations were undergoing both “rapid industrial growth and environmental loss” (72). Thus industrialisation has caused havoc to the non-human world and resulted in the severing of man’s relationship with the natural world.

Ecology thus entered everyday discourse of species and ranged across many fields such as evolution, behaviour, physiology and literature. The American writer Emerson (1803-1882) in his essay “Nature” (1836) describes the perfection of harmony in the heavenly bodies and the earth and argues that when man enters the forest, “here is sanctity which shames our religions, and reality which discredits our heroes” (*Essays* 327). He adds that as a man walks into the woods, the “incommunicable trees begin to persuade us to live
with them, and quit our life of solemn trifles” (*Essays* 328). In “The American Scholar” (1837), Emerson proclaims:

> The first in time and the first in importance of the influences upon the mind is that of nature. Every day, the sun; and, after sunset, Night and her stars. Ever the winds blow; ever the grass grows. Every day men and women, conversing – beholding and beholden. The scholar is he of all men whom this spectacle most engages. He must settle its value in his mind. What is nature to him? There is never a beginning, there is never an end, to the inexplicable continuity of this web of God, but always circular power returning into itself. Therein it resembles his own spirit, whose beginning whose ending, he never can find – so entire, so boundless. (47)

Emerson calls upon the American public to become aware of the influences of nature on man. He portrays different perspectives on man-nature relationship. Emerson envisions nature as a teacher that instructs individuals who observe the natural world. He emphasises that “the ancient precept, ‘Know thyself,’ and the modern precept, ‘Study nature,’ become at last one maxim” (Emerson, “American” 47-48). It is evident that a greater knowledge of nature results in a greater understanding of self.

Other important names in eco-studies are Mary Austin (1868-1934) and Aldo Leopold (1887-1948) mainly in the nineteenth and twentieth century. Austin recognizes nature as “an undomesticated nature” and she also
teaches her culture “how best to respond in an interactive rather than a hierarchical mode” (Norwood 334). Moreover, she values all life forms in the desert and she shows “how each small piece is integral to that larger whole” (Norwood 331). Leopold in “The Land Ethic” maintains the yardstick of ecological health: “A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise” (262).

The years of Depression and World War II turned ecology even more strongly toward public narrative. Significantly, social discourse ecology defined ethical principles. An American ecologist and writer, Rachel Carson (1907-1964) envisions “an organic, interactive connection between humans and the rest of the biosphere” (Norwood 335). Her landmark work, *Silent Spring* (1962) documented detrimental effects of pesticides on the environment and aroused “a sense of conscience about pesticides that poison ground water and destroy biodiversity” (Howarth, “Principles” 74). By stages, ecology progressed from discourse to advocacy in the 1960s and the stories presented ethical choices that affect land and people. An awareness rose among peoples of different countries of the need to create awareness among the public of the universality of the present ecological crises. Most ecologists nowadays are seeking ways to keep the human community from destroying itself. Rueckert is concerned that the “conceptual and practical problem is to find the grounds upon which the two communities – the human, the natural – can coexist, cooperate, and flourish in the biosphere” (107).
Such was the eco-literary position when C.S. Lewis entered the scene with the publication of *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* in 1950. Lewis’s work, as eco-literature, studies “relationships between things, in this case, between human culture and the physical world” (Glotfelty, Introduction xx) and through the retelling of the events from Genesis to Revelation, Lewis firmly establishes the interconnectedness of all creation.

Although Lewis was chiefly interested in narrating the story of Christ in his own way, the stories can be enjoyed without thinking of the Bible, because “what you get is the eternal battle between good and evil, which is the basic theme of all great literature” (Ramnarayan 3). While the writer dwells on the strange beauty in a divine being named the Great Emperor-beyond-the-Sea, all his works show an equally keen ecological observance. Moreover, Lewis’s work explores the relationship between man and his natural environment as well as expresses values that are “consistent with ecological wisdom” (Glotfelty, Introduction xix).

Lewis interprets the creation story as in Genesis so that it is easily understood as well as attractive and appealing to young children, giving much importance to moral goodness, with ecological consequences. Though the significance of ecological relationship and the interconnectedness of man and nature can be taught through the use of non-fiction books, the use of children’s literature proves to be “an excellent vehicle since stories are vessels that unite facts and concepts. Stories act like a kind of glue that holds ideas together, especially so for children, since they would be too young to
deal conceptually with the abstract” (Sumathy, *Ecocriticism* 119). This is precisely what Lewis has achieved through the seven books in *The Chronicles of Narnia* series.

The theme of man’s reciprocal relationship with the rest of creation begins in *The Magician’s Nephew*. In this narrative, Lewis chiefly shows the contrast between characters who are eco-sympathetic and those who are eco-antagonistic. Characters that show a love and concern for nature are in a position to be involved in a reciprocal relationship. Polly and Digory are two children who are brought up to believe in truth and honesty. Digory recognizes that when Uncle Andrews speaks great but empty words: “‘Men like me, who possess hidden wisdom, are freed from common rules’” (*Magician* 19), the truth is: “‘he thinks he can do anything he likes to get anything he wants’” (*Magician* 20). He also recognizes that his uncle’s experiments that caused the guinea pigs to explode like little bombs are cruel deeds to animals. Like Digory, Polly also reveals a love for animals. When she finds the guinea pig in the World between the Worlds, she says: “‘We might as well leave the guinea-pig,’” and adds, “‘It’s perfectly happy here, and your uncle will only do something horrid to it if we take it home’” (*Magician* 27). Digory accepts her suggestion and states: “‘I bet he would... Look at the way he’s treated us’” (*Magician* 27). As Lawrence says: “whether we are a store-clerk or a bus-conductor, we can still choose between the living universe of Pan, and the mechanical conquered universe of modern humanity” (72). Thus, Polly and Digory are characters whose love for non-
human creatures and nature is a sign of their goodness of heart and their choices are always nature-centred. As John Ruskin says:

. . . the absence of the love of nature is not an assured condemnation, its presence is an invariable sign of goodness of heart and justness of moral perception, though by no means of moral practice, that in proportion to the degree in which it is felt, will probably be the degree in which all nobleness and beauty of character will also be felt; that when it is originally absent from any mind, that mind is in many other respects hard, worldly, and degraded. (29)

Similarly, the Empress Jadis, in the same novel, shows no sympathy for fellow men or animals. She fails to realise that she has to depend on animals or men whenever necessary. Hence she does not have any kindness towards individuals or animals. Instead she exploits them. She considers Uncle Andrew her slave and uses the horse carriage as her chariot. She also uses her whip powerfully, “flogging the horse without mercy” (Magician 55). The horse named Strawberry has never received such painful treatment in all his life and is tortured beyond endurance:

Its nostrils were wide and red and its sides were spotted with foam. It galloped madly up to the front door, missing the lamp-post by an inch, and then reared up on its hind legs. The hansom crashed into the lamp-post and shattered into several pieces. The Witch, with a magnificent jump, had sprung clear
just in time and landed on the horse’s back. She settled herself astride and leaned forward, whispering things in its ear. They must have been things meant not to quiet it but to madden it. It was on its hind legs again in a moment, and his neigh was like a scream; it was all hoofs and teeth and eyes and tossing mane.

(*Magician* 55)

Thus, Queen Jadis’s treatment of the animal shows her own depraved and cruel heart. Her only goal in life is to conquer a world and rule over it with power. F.R. Leavis and Denys Thompson consider that “the Old England . . . of the organic community” has disappeared from memory and it is a difficult undertaking to make anyone realise how “this momentous change – this vast and terrifying disintegration” (73) has taken place in so short a time. The men and women of the present time who like Jadis, set out with the purpose of conquering space and time will soon find out that “their grand inventions for conquering (as they think) space and time, do, in reality conquer nothing; for space and time are, in their own essence, unconquerable and besides did not want any sort of conquering; they wanted using” (Ruskin 30).

Lewis presents Aslan the Lion as the creator of Narnia who sings the world of Narnia into existence. It is remarkable to note that “the divine being creating this world has not taken a human but a lion form” (Elick 458). By presenting the creator in the nonhuman form Lewis thus wants man to associate with the rest of creation. Lewis has his visitors Digory, Polly and Frank stand on dry land of darkness from the outset. When Aslan sings the stars appear first,
then the sun comes up, revealing the whole landscape: “One moment there had been nothing but darkness; next moment a thousand, thousand points of light leapt out – single stars, constellations, and planets, brighter and bigger than any in our world” (Magician 61). The writer restores to his reader “the richness of our etymological origins” (Coupé 64), keeping alive in the reader’s memory to bring them into awareness of the past and the present meaning of creation. As the glorious song continued, trees, flowers, hills, valleys, rivers and mountains appeared. As the Lion’s song changed and continued, Lewis describes imaginatively the animals being created:

Can you imagine a stretch of grassy land bubbling like water in a pot? For that is really the best description of what was happening. In all directions it was swelling into humps. They were of very different sizes, some no bigger than molehills, some as big as wheelbarrows, two the size of cottages. And the humps moved and swelled till they burst, and the crumbled earth poured out of them, and from each hump there came out an animal. The moles came out just as you might see a mole come out in England. The dogs came out, barking the moment their heads were free, and struggling as you’ve seen them do when they are getting through a narrow hole in a hedge. The stags were the queerest to watch, for of course the antlers came up a long time before the rest of them, so at first Digory thought they were trees. The frogs, who all came up near the
river, went straight into it with a plop-plop and a loud croaking. The panthers, leopards and things of that sort, sat down at once to wash the loose earth off their hind quarters and then stood up against the trees to sharpen their front claws. Showers of birds came out of the trees. Butterflies fluttered. Bees got to work on the flowers as if they hadn’t a second to lose. But the greatest moment of all was when the biggest hump broke like a small earthquake and out came the sloping back, the large, wise head, and the four baggy-trousered legs of an elephant.

(Magician 68-69)

The creator is a nature-loving and nature-respecting personality. Aslan is depicted as one who feels happiness and satisfaction at his creation in keeping with the Genesis statement: “God saw all that he had made, and it was very good” (Holy Bible 1:31). Moreover, the genesis of creation is pictured imaginatively to create an attitude of reverence in the readers. As a writer, Lewis thus adds an environmental dimension to the creation story of the Bible, baptizing the reader’s imagination with a newly awakened sense of glory in terms of the natural environment and a sense of organic community. The creation of the heavenly bodies, plants and trees, and all kinds of animals is evidence of an interconnected community.

Aslan commissions to have a symbiotic relationship in the land of Narnia. The “reciprocal relationships between humans and land, considering nature not just as the stage upon which the human story is acted out, but as an
actor in the drama” (Glotfelty, Introduction xxi) in the works of Lewis explains the fundamental value system when the Lion speaks to the creatures:

“Creatures, I give you yourselves,” said the strong, happy voice of Aslan. “I give to you for ever this land of Narnia. I give you the woods, the fruits, the rivers. I give you the stars and I give you myself. The Dumb Beasts whom I have not chosen are yours also. Treat them gently and cherish them but do not go back to their ways lest you cease to be Talking Beasts. For out of them you were taken and into them you can return. Do not so.” (Magician 71)

This command from Aslan to the Narnians expounds that Narnia is a home not only for humans but also for animals. He wants man to maintain a good relationship with the animals, to treat them with love and cherish them. This implies “the inextricable interconnectedness of all creatures great and small” (Bouma-Prediger 4). Humans are not the only “creatures blessed by God, for birds and fish are also blessed . . . humans and animals share the same house” (Bouma-Prediger 89). It is conspicuous that in the Narnia ecosystem, the human and the nonhuman world live in consonance and in congruence with one another.

Aslan, who is earth-centred, gives his creatures a commission of stewardship. He gives some animals the gift of speech. These animals “who are capable of speech are therefore capable of receiving commands [and] rationality entails responsibility” (Dickerson, Narnia 112). The chief
command of Aslan to his creatures is to be good stewards of what they have been given. They are directed to treat the co-creatures gently and to cherish them with care. This sense of stewardship is supportive of the statement: “The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it” (Holy Bible, Gen. 2:15). Thus, Lewis tries to create “an attitude of care or stewardship” (Orr 92) in man. If the rational animals fail to treat the Dumb Beasts gently, they too would become Dumb Beasts. Lewis intends this as a lesson not only for Narnians but also for the humans. The critic Philip who speaks for the protection of the environment considers that “environmental rape is a fact of our national life only because it is more profitable than responsible stewardship of earth’s limited resources” (qtd. in Commoner 3). In the opinion of Mary G. Wallace “stewardship . . . toward nature is a more appropriate relationship between humans and the environment” (19-20).

Aslan enthrones the Cabby named Frank as the first King of Narnia and gives him instructions that are ecocentred. Lewis stresses the respect and responsibility man has in his dealings with other creatures. He reinforces the need for man’s unity with the rest of the natural world. Similarly S. Campbell considers that “desire to regain it [unity] as central to our human nature” (134). Long before ecocritics became aware that “as children we are in perfect harmony with nature, but then lose that harmony as we develop the barrier of a self” (135), Lewis’s work invokes the need for man’s intimacy with his natural environment:
“Well,” said Aslan, “can you use a spade and a plough and raise food out of the earth?”

“Yes, sir, I could do a bit of that sort of work: being brought up to it, like.”

“Can you rule these creatures kindly and fairly, remembering that they are not slaves like the dumb beasts of the world you were born in, but Talking Beasts and free subjects?”

“I see that, sir,” replied the Cabby. “I’d try to do the square thing by them all.”

“And would you bring up your children and grandchildren to do the same?” (Magician 82)

From the instructions given to the first King of Narnia by Aslan, it is evident that Lewis’s vision for Narnia is an agrarian one. Aslan asks Frank whether he is able to farm the land, to care for the animals and not to enslave them. Moreover, he insists that Frank should teach this to others so that the relationship between man and the natural world may be maintained without any disruption. A concern for nonhuman animals is indeed “a proper part of human life, but we can acquire it, cultivate it, and teach it” (qtd. in Rolston 60) only by understanding that the animals are ‘free subjects’. Further, Aslan emphasizes that the King should have no favourites but should treat all creatures equally. Hence, man and his co-creation are all equally important and should respect the interconnectedness of all creation. The critic Glen A.
Love considers that “an ideology framed in such terms, with the human participants taking their own place in, and recognizing their obligation to, the shared natural world, will be an appropriate pastoral construct for the future” (234).

Lewis’s seven stories in *The Chronicles of Narnia* give importance to the study of the reciprocal relationship between humans and land, and the value of all living things, and “trace the connections among environmental conditions, economic modes of production, and cultural ideas through time” (Glotfelty, Introduction xxi). For instance, the four children in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* give value to the life of the faun Tumnus, who has been imprisoned by the White Witch because he refused to trap Lucy and take her to the evil Witch. Therefore, Peter and Susan decide to rescue the faun in spite of the grave risks involved. Moreover, it is the simple-hearted Lucy who has a feeling that birds can talk in Narnia and she initiates a conversation with the red-breasted Robin:

Then she turned to the Robin and said, “Please, can you tell us where Tumnus the Faun has been taken to?” As she said this she took a step towards the bird. It at once flew away but only as far as to the next tree. There it perched and looked at them very hard as if it understood all they had been saying. Almost without noticing that they had done so, the four children went a step or two nearer to it. At this the Robin flew away again to the next tree and once more looked at them very hard. (You
couldn’t have found a robin with a redder chest or a brighter eye).

“Do you know,” said Lucy, “I really believe he means us to follow him.” (Lion 137)

Lucy, the youngest seems best able to understand the language of birds. When the children decide to trust the bird, they are able to follow it. Thus the Robin leads the children to a beaver who provides them dinner and safety and then leads them to the Lion Aslan who is the only one who can defeat the Witch and save Edmund. Through the stories of Narnia, Lewis thus imaginatively portrays interconnectedness or relationship between the humans and other species as essential for the survival of all creatures. He uses the fairy-tale elements in his stories to excite his child readers’ creative imagination at their deeper levels.

In The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe, Lewis depicts a contrast between children who are kind-hearted and those who are selfish or greedy. The kind-hearted walks in affinity with their environment but the others such as Edmund do not. Edmund seems to walk in conflict with his environment. When Lucy first enters Narnia through the wardrobe, she finds herself “standing in the middle of a wood at night-time with snow under her feet and snowflakes falling through the air” (Lion 113). However, she is neither cold nor afraid. Subsequently, she is treated to a lovely English tea and chat with a faun by the fire. On the other hand, when Edmund first enters Narnia, “he did not admit that he had been wrong, he also did not much like being alone in
this strange, cold, quiet place” (Lion 122) and throughout his adventures in Narnia he suffers from the cold. Edmund finds the environment unfriendly and is alienated from his brother and sisters by his selfishness. His interview with the Witch stands “ironically and almost humorously in contrast to Lucy’s with Tumnus, [and] sets up the basic antithesis between greed and pity, egotism and self-sacrifice, which governs the thematic development of the book” (Glover 138). Lucy and Tumnus show friendliness and affection to each other, but the Witch and Edmund do not have such a relationship. Each wants to use the other for his or her own benefit.

While Lucy, Susan and Peter follow the beavers and reach Aslan, the greedy and selfish Edmund takes sides with the evil White Witch and goes in search of her because “he did want Turkish Delight and to be a prince (and later a king) and to pay Peter back for calling him a beast” (Lion 151). Thus, he falls into the Witch’s trap and betrays his brother and sisters. Edmund’s greed, jealousy, and his desire for power are recognized by the evil Witch for she states:

“I want a nice boy whom I could bring up as a Prince and who would be King of Narnia when I am gone. While he was Prince he would wear a gold crown and eat Turkish Delight all day long; and you are much the cleverest and handsomest young man I’ve ever met. I think I would like to make you the Prince – some day, when you bring the others to visit me.”

(Lion 126)
Edmund is ready to betray in order to gain power. Thus, Edmund’s initial distrust of the Robin and his alienation from nature symbolize his inner state. Similarly, the narrative continues to reveal that those who choose to trust nature and those who do not are opposed to each other:

The choice on Edmund’s part to defect initiates his journey to the Witch, paralleled by the children’s journey into spring, and the ironic reversal of his expectations of a reward. He gets dry, stale bread instead of Turkish Delight, and his “reward” is played off against the Beavers’ true meal. Edmund’s policy and guile are appropriately rewarded as is the trust the children place in the Beavers. (Glover 140)

Lewis thus persuades his readers that trust in Nature and love for fellow creatures is central to the goodness in man’s inner being. Similarly, Lewis also teaches his young readers a respect and reverence for all that is good and true in the character of Aslan who represents the omnipotent. The name of Aslan, which represents all that is best in nature and arouses courage or joy in the three children, strangely arouses fear in Edmund:

None of the children knew who Aslan was any more than you do; but the moment Beaver had spoken these words everyone felt quite different. Perhaps it has sometimes happened to you in a dream that someone says something which you don’t
understand but in the dream it feels as if it has some enormous meaning – either a terrifying one which turns the whole dream into a nightmare or else a lovely meaning too lovely to put into words, which makes the dream so beautiful that you remember it all your life and are always wishing you could get into that dream again. It was like that now. At the name of Aslan each one of the children felt something jump in its inside. Edmund felt a sensation of mysterious horror. Peter felt suddenly brave and adventurous. Susan felt as if some delicious smell or some delightful strain of music had just floated by her. And Lucy got the feeling you have when you wake up in the morning and realize that it is the beginning of the holidays or the beginning of summer. (Lion 141)

Edmund alone feels horrified at the sound of the name Aslan, for his mind is already loaded with evil thoughts of the Witch. The Queen’s assurances that she will make him the prince and then the king of Narnia and his obedience to her alienate him from the goodness of Aslan.

Later, Edmund’s change of heart or its turning point is initiated when he first recognises the evil power of the Witch over a merry party of squirrels and feels a deep regret. When the young squirrel explains that Father Christmas had given them food for a feast, the Witch, in great anger raised her wand:
“Oh, don’t, don’t, please don’t,” shouted Edmund, but even while he was shouting she had waved her wand and instantly where the merry party had been there were only statues of creatures (one with its stone fork fixed for ever halfway to its stone mouth) seated around a stone table on which there were stone plates and a stone plum pudding. (Lion 163)

Edmund’s pity for these innocent creatures begins a ‘thaw’ in his snow-covered heart, paralleled by the thaw in the woods so that he can soon hear running water, and streams chattering and bubbling. In this respect, Lewis’s work precedes the works men like David Fraser who are presently attempting to “generate and articulate public concern over animals” (173).

Through the narrative in The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe, Lewis highlights the inseparableness of nature and human nature so that “the natural being of “I” is endowed with an almighty capacity of existence at a harmonious interaction with natural things, the wind, the dew, the cloud . . .” (Lili 124). Once, the boy Edmund’s heart has been kindled with pity for the stone figures, he moves closer to the life in nature and joyfully experiences the birth of spring:

A strange, sweet, rustling, chattering noise – and yet not so strange, for he’d heard it before – if only he could remember where! Then all at once he did remember. It was the noise of running water. All round them though out of sight, there were streams, chattering, murmuring, bubbling, splashing and even
(in the distance) roaring. And his heart gave a great leap
(though he hardly knew why) when he realized that the frost
was over. \(\text{Lion 164}\)

As the frost ends, Edmund’s eyes are opened to observe nature coming alive.
Hence, as persons mature and begin to understand the value of nature, “they
become concerned with their relationship to other people, and to other beings
with whom they are interconnected” (Drengson 109). He now wonders at the
glorious sight of yellow flowers being spread in all directions:

Only five minutes later he noticed a dozen crocuses growing
round the foot of an old tree – gold and purple and white. Then
came a sound even more delicious than the sound of the water.
Close beside the path they were following, a bird suddenly
chirped from the branch of a tree. It was answered by the
chuckle of another bird a little further off. And then, as if that
had been a signal, there was chattering and chirruping in every
direction, and then a moment of full song, and within five
minutes the whole wood was ringing with birds’ music, and
wherever Edmund’s eyes turned he saw birds alighting on
branches, or sailing overhead or chasing one another or having
their little quarrels or tidying up their feathers with their beaks.

\(\text{Lion 165}\)

Consequently, in the stories of Lewis, the interrelatedness of all things human
and nonhuman in creation, evokes “the aesthetic pleasure of quietness and
harmony resulting from the disinterestedness in utility and possession” (Lili 124) and guides the true man to act with integrity. Aslan is the supreme example of this disinterestedness and true justice. Having set the ground rules for Mercy and Justice, he himself will obey it, in the strictest sense.

The narrative keeps the significance of Aslan’s action in perspective because, it is for Edmund’s sake that Aslan suffers. In the scene of sacrifice and redemption which affects Lucy, Susan and the readers so keenly, the Deeper Magic of Mercy triumphs the Deep Magic of Justice and Aslan explains: “‘When a willing victim who had committed no treachery was killed in a traitor’s stead, the Table would crack and Death itself would start working backwards’” (Lion 185). Thus, death loses its power over Aslan. The first important work that the ‘resurrected’ Aslan performs is to rush down at great speed to the Witch’s palace, ransack her fortress, and restore all the statues to life again:

The courtyard looked no longer like a museum; it looked more like a zoo. Creatures were running after Aslan and dancing round him till he was almost hidden in the crowd. Instead of all that deadly white the courtyard was now a blaze of colours; glossy chestnut sides of centaurs, indigo horns of unicorns, dazzling plumage of birds, reddy-brown of foxes, dogs and satyrs, yellow stockings and crimson hoods of dwarfs; and the birch-girls in silver, and the beech-girls in fresh, transparent green, and the larch-girls in green so bright that it was almost
yellow. And instead of the deadly silence the whole place rang with the sound of happy roarings, brayings, yelpings, barkings, squealings, cooings, neighings, stampings, shouts, hurrahs, songs and laughter. (*Lion* 188)

All these creatures follow Aslan to the place of battle where Peter is at war against the Witch. When the Witch and her evil forces have been defeated, peace and joy is restored in Narnia and the four children reign as Kings and Queens of Narnia. During their reign, they enter into friendship and alliance with countries beyond the sea and lived in peaceful co-existence with their environment. They “made good laws and kept the peace and saved good trees from being unnecessarily cut down, and liberated young dwarfs and young satyrs . . . and generally stopped busybodies and interferers and encouraged ordinary people who wanted to live and let live” (*Lion* 194). Thus, Lewis in *The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe* teaches that a sound ecological relationship leads to peace and prosperity.

The novel, which best highlights the interconnectedness between man and animals is Lewis’s *The Horse and His Boy* where the Narnian horses Bree and Hwin appear in equal relationship to their master and mistress, Shasta and Aravis. Shasta is a Narnian boy and Aravis is a Calorman girl. They meet by strange chance and travel together, attempting to escape “the yoke of tyrannous authority” (Glover 159). Both the children and their horses undergo many trials and “tests of obedience, understanding, courage, and loyalty” (Glover 158) and learn many lessons before they reach Narnia. The
narrative explains the notion that a child must face reality and “the knowledge that he is born into a world of death, violence, wounds, adventure, heroism and cowardice, good and evil” (Hooper, “Narnia” 107). It also creates curiosity and wonder towards man-animal relationship.

The horse Bree, from his first appearance, seems to be endowed with courage and wisdom, being a Narnian horse. Shasta has never ridden a horse before and Bree instructs him on how to climb into the saddle and to hold on by gripping the horse’s body with his knees. Bree also shows much common sense when he begins his journey:

And he certainly began their night journey with great caution. First of all he went just south of the fisherman’s cottage to the little river which there ran into the sea, and took care to leave in the mud some very plain hoof-marks pointing South. But as soon as they were in the middle of the ford he turned upstream and waded till they were about a hundred yards further inland than the cottage. Then he selected a nice gravelly bit of bank which would take no footprints and came out on the Northern side. (Horse 211)

Thus begins a boy-horse relationship where the older and wiser animals instruct and comfort the younger human: “Good morning, small one,” said Bree. “I was afraid you might feel a bit stiff. It can’t be the falls. You didn’t have more than a dozen or so, and it was all lovely, soft, springy turf that must have been almost a pleasure to fall on. . . . the riding itself that comes
hard at first” (*Horse* 213). Later, the talking horse shows both patience and affection towards the human by waiting for the boy to recover from his soreness of the previous day’s riding. The horse “nuzzled at him with his nose and pawed him gently with a hoof till he had to get up” (*Horse* 213). Day by day, the boy Shasta and the horse Bree ride northwards and all the time, the animal teaches the human:

These were great days for Shasta, and everyday better than the last as his muscles hardened and he fell less often. Even at the end of his training Bree still said he sat like a bag of flour in the saddle. And even if it was safe, young ’un, I’d be ashamed to be seen with you on the main road. But in spite of his rude words Bree was a patient teacher. No one can teach riding so well as a horse. Shasta learned to trot, to canter, to jump, and to keep his seat even when Bree pulled up suddenly or swung unexpectedly to the left or the right – which, as Bree told him, was a thing you might have to do at any moment in a battle.

(*Horse* 215)

Lewis creates a beautiful and mysterious intimacy between the boy and the animal and this “nourishment of a sense of kinship with all living things” (Bruce 15) encourages his readers to experience nature in a variety of ways. In fact, the boy’s relationship with the animal leads not only to learning horse riding but also to new wonder-filled experiences of his natural environment. Shasta is thrilled to observe trees, bushes, meadows, cliffs and is excited at
“the sound of the breaking waves” of the sea and “the white foam running up
the rocks” (Horse 213). As he is awakened by the warm and fresh air he
“realized that there was no smell of fish in it. For of course, neither in the
cottage nor among the nets, had he ever been away from that smell in his life.
And this new air was so delicious, and all his old life seemed so far away”
(Horse 213-14). The above lines viewed as ecoliterature, reveal “the overall
benefit of the ecological system and does not take anthropocentrism as its
theoretical base” (Nuo 46).

*The Horse and His Boy* convinces its readers that in creation all are
equally valuable, free and independent and yet are interconnected. This is best
expressed by Bree the horse when the girl Aravis objects to the horse-to-horse
conversation:

> “Why do you keep talking to my horse instead of to me?”

asked the girl.

> “Excuse me, Tarkheena,” said Bree (with just the slightest
backward tilt of his ears), “but that’s Calormene talk. We’re
free Narnians, Hwin and I, and I suppose, if you’re running
away to Narnia, you want to be one too. In that case Hwin
isn’t *your* horse any longer. One might just as well say you’re
*her* human.”

The girl opened her mouth to speak and then stopped.
Obviously she had not quite seen it in that light before. (*Horse*
219)
Thus, Aravis’s attitude towards animals is challenged. Her feelings of superiority have to be overcome before they can all travel amicably together in fellowship towards freedom in Narnia.

In Lewis’s work, eco-relationship is sanctified. Love and respect for God the maker overflows into admiration for all of creation. For instance, the boy Shasta’s attitude towards cats in general undergoes a transformation, when he has to spend several nights alone amidst the tombs waiting for Aravis. The sound of a roaring Lion scares him out of his wits and he screams aloud with fear, thinking that the Lion has got him. When he looks round, he is relieved to see that what had touched him was only a cat. The light was too bad now for Shasta to see much of the cat except that it was big and very solemn. It looked as if it might have lived for long, long years among the Tombs, alone. Its eyes made you think it knew secrets it would not tell:

“Puss, Puss,” said Shasta. “I suppose you’re not a talking cat.”

The cat stared at him harder than ever. Then it started walking away, and of course Shasta followed it. It led him right through the Tombs and out on the desert side of them. There it sat bolt upright with its tail curled round its feet and its face set towards the desert and towards Narnia and the North, as still as if it were watching for some enemy. Shasta lay down beside it with his back against the cat and his face towards the Tombs, because if one is nervous there’s nothing like having your face
towards the danger and having something warm and solid at your back. (*Horse* 245)

Thus began a man-animal relationship and Shasta feels comforted by the physical proximity of the cat. Once again, later, when Shasta hears the Lion roaring his fear mounts but there is a sudden relief again when the large cat reappears: “‘Oh, Puss,’ gasped Shasta. ‘I am so glad to see you again. I’ve been having such horrible dreams’” (*Horse* 246-47). The boy at once lay down again, back to back with the cat as they had been at the beginning of the night. The warmth from it spread all over him and Shasta’s friendly relationship with the cat inspires him to make a confession:

“I’ll never do anything nasty to a cat again as long as I live,” said Shasta, half to the cat and half to himself. “I did once, you know, I threw stones at a half-starved mangy old stray. Hey! Stop that.” For the cat had turned round and given him a scratch. “None of that,” said Shasta. “It isn’t as if you could understand what I’m saying.” Then he dozed off. (*Horse* 247)

The passage describes a change of heart or attitude in the boy Shasta. In the above dialogue, he reveals that, after this new experience with the cat, he will always be kind to cats and probably to other animals too. He has learnt to be friendly with animals and understands how animals can provide humans with courage by their presence, as in the *oikos* or the “holistic society in which humans, nature and the sacred were close-knit” (Nirmaldasan 11). Readers soon understand that, the Lion that created fear in Shasta and the cat that
provided comfort and security are one and the same sacred being named Aslan moulding the character of the boy.

When the novel draws to a close, the Lion reveals himself to Shasta by his warm breath and encourages him to “confess” his sad past. When Shasta has revealed that he never knew his parents, but had been brought up by a stern fisherman Arsheesh, had escaped with Bree and was chased by lions, the Lion tells him what in fact had really happened:

“I was the lion.” And as Shasta gaped with open mouth and said nothing, the Voice continued. “I was the lion who forced you to join with Aravis. I was the cat who comforted you among the houses of the dead. I was the lion who drove the jackals from you while you slept. I was the lion who gave the Horses the new strength of fear for the last mile so that you should reach King Lune in time. And I was the lion you do not remember who pushed the boat in which you lay, a child near death, so that it came to shore where a man sat, wakeful at midnight, to receive you.” (Horse 281)

As daylight appears and Lion becomes visible to Shasta, the boy falls down in respect before it. He glances at the Lion’s face and then slipped out of the saddle and fell at its feet. He couldn’t say anything but then he didn’t want to say anything” (Horse 282). Then the Lion, who is the High King above all kings stooped towards Shasta, “touched his forehead with its tongue” (Horse 282) and looking into his eyes, swirled in glory and disappeared.
Thus, in the sacred Lion, Lewis has merged justice and mercy. Aravis is wounded by the Lion for the punishment she had earlier administered to her slave-maid whom she dosed with a sleeping medicine in order to escape. Shasta is rewarded for bravely attempting to rescue Aravis from the Lion and later, the wicked Rabadash also receives punishment for his evil deeds. When the Lion transforms him into a donkey, he learns his lesson, becomes a good person, and is thereby restored to a human form again.

Lewis has extolled the man-animal relationship in *The Horse and His Boy* by giving significance to the intrinsic values of individual species, just as the theologians of recent times are also beginning, “to re-envision God as imminent in creation and view the earth itself as sacred” (Glotfelty, Introduction xxii). In *The Horse and His Boy* more than in any other work, Lewis’s narrative succeeds in instilling animal-awareness in his readers. While the two horses Bree and Hwin successfully relate with the human masters in the adventurous travels, the presence of the Lion, sometimes visibly and sometimes invisibly contributes to the sacred nature of their journey. As the story develops, it is revealed that the Lion has masterminded the safety and direction of their journey all the time.

A beneficial intimate relationship between man and nature is shown in Lewis’s next novel *Prince Caspian*. In this novel the children Peter, Susan, Edmund and Lucy are magically whisked away to a beach near an old and ruined castle, Cair Paravel where they once ruled as the Kings and Queens of Narnia. There, they notice an orchard, which Peter recognizes:
“Don’t you remember . . . planting the orchard outside the north gate of Cair Paravel? The greatest of all the wood-people, Pomona herself, came to put good spells on it. It was those very decent little chaps, the moles, who did the actual digging. Can you have forgotten that funny old Lilygloves, the chief mole, leaning on his spade and saying, ‘Believe me, your Majesty, you’ll be glad of these fruit trees one day.’ And by Jove he was right.” (Prince 324-25)

Here, Peter reminds them how they had once planted trees with the aid of moles and Pomona herself had put spells on it. Pomona is the goddess of fruit trees, garden and orchards. Lilygloves, the chief mole in Narnia during the reign of the four monarchs who helped them plant the orchard on the north side of Cair Paravel emphasizes that the fruits of these plants would come in handy one day. In fact, it comes true as the Pevensies are nourished from the apple of this orchard on their return to Narnia. Thus, writing in the twentieth century Lewis professes a meaningful, compatible connection between man and his environment that can be beneficial to all. In a letter to Dom Bede, where Lewis discusses their shared love of nature, he comments that “a Christian can see the reason that the [Pantheistic] Romantics had in feeling a certain holiness in the wood and water” (qtd. in Dickerson, Narnia 70).

The results of this view of nature, according to Dickerson, “can be seen in the strange union of Old Narnians: a union of both theists and
pantheists” *(Narnia 70)* in *Prince Caspian* where all work together for the good and health of Narnia, to free the animals as well as the trees and rivers from human tyranny and oppression. This explains why “the demigods Bacchus and Silenus appear without apology in an essentially Christian fairy tale . . . with the blessings of Aslan and on the side of Aslan” (70), in a great feast of victory when the animal and plant kingdom have been redeemed from the environmental hazards:

Then Bacchus and Silenus and the Maenads began a dance, far wilder than the dance of the trees; not merely a dance for fun and beauty (thought it was that too) but a magic dance of plenty, and where their hands touched, and where their feet fell, the feast came into existence – sides of roasted meat that filled the grove with delicious smells, and wheaten cakes and oat cakes, honey and many-coloured sugars and cream as thick as porridge and as smooth as still water, peaches, nectarines, pomegranates, pears, grapes, straw-berries, raspberries – pyramids and cataracts of fruit. Then, in great wooden cups and bowls and mazers, wreathed with ivy, came the wines; dark, thick ones like syrups of mulberry juice, and clear red ones like red jellies liquefied, and yellow wines and green wines and yellow-green and greenish-yellow. *(Prince 413-14)*

Similarly, Baruch Spinoza’s (1632-1677) pantheistic vision “in which every being and object was a temporary manifestation of common substance
created by God” (Bourdeau 11) has its place in Lewis’s environmental vision, for when Aslan feasted the Narnians, he gave special consideration to the needs of the plant kingdom:

But for the tree people different fare was provided. When Lucy saw Clodsley Shovel and his moles scuffling up the turf in various places (which Bacchus had pointed out to them) and realized that the trees were going to eat earth it gave her rather a shudder. But when she saw the earths that were actually brought to them she felt quite different. They began with a rich brown loam that looked almost exactly like chocolate; so like chocolate, in fact, that Edmund tried a piece of it, but he did not find it at all nice. When the rich loam had taken the edge off their hunger, the trees turned to an earth of the kind you see in Somerset, which is almost pink. They said it was lighter and sweeter. At the cheese stage they had a chalky soil, and then went on to delicate confections of the finest gravels powdered with choice silver sand. They drank very little wine, and it made the Hollies very talkative: for the most part they quenched their thirst with deep droughts of mingled dew and rain, flavoured with forest flowers and the airy taste of the thinnest clouds. (Prince 414)

This manifestation of community living where Lewis brings together heterogeneous collections of characters from “all orders of being – humanity,
mythology (Greek, Norse, Christian), the animal world (both talking and non-talking beasts), and other fictional sources (for example, nursery rhyme and fairytale figures) – and have them mingle in festival-like gatherings reminiscent of medieval carnival celebrations” (Elick 455) is the equivalent of the complex and intricate ecosystem described by Meeker:

In a mature ponderosa pine forest, for instance, thousands of highly specialized types of bacteria maintain stable soil chemistry as each type plays its particular role in the processes of decomposition; insects live upon plants and bacteria and are eaten by birds; small mammals breed in the complex vegetation; larger mammals eat certain specific kinds of plants, or prey upon smaller animals; the many highly specialized plants, from small ferns to enormous pines, make up the setting for all other life, provide food and shelter, and in turn depend upon the environmental determinants of weather and geography. It is an unbelievably complicated community in which no individual and no species can survive well unless all other species survive, for all are ultimately dependent upon the completeness of the environment as a whole. (162)

The interaction among the disparate characters in Lewis’s works often results in the suspension of hierarchical barriers and in what Bakhtin calls “Carnivalistic mesalliances” that mingle “the sacred with the profane, the lofty with the low, the great with the insignificant, the wise with the stupid”
(123). The ecological relationship is thus joyously and exuberantly celebrated in Lewis’s novels.

Michael Tobias’s remarks in *Deep Ecology*, that “from the biosphere’s perspective, the whole point of Homo sapiens is their armpits, aswarm with 24.1 billion bacteria” (qtd. in S. Campbell 133). Similarly, David Quammen points out in an essay about all the microscopic creatures that live on and in our skin, “You are an ecosystem . . . a community of flora and fauna” (qtd. in S. Campbell 133). Aldo Leopold’s frequently quoted statement is still the most direct that “we are plain members and citizens of the land-community, not the rulers of the earth” (240) and the children’s stories illustrate this.

Lewis’s community living is the equivalent of the climax ecosystem in nature. Fundamental to all of his writings is the concept of community as an entity. It is an entity that requires work both to form and to maintain. Indeed, a community requires nearly all of the virtues: “To value community, and to live in a way that builds community – which in Kingsolver’s terms means to cooperate – can be seen as yet another vital virtue to healthy environmentalism” (Dickerson, *Narnia* 75). As is obvious to even the most casual reader of Lewis’s writings, community plays a vital role. Whenever Narnia’s (or any of Lewis’s fictional worlds) enemy rises up against her, the human children from Earth arrive to help the Narnian people. For instance, the humans, the talking beasts and the moving woods form one unified community as they rush at the enemy Telmarines:
Have you ever stood at the edge of a great wood on a high ridge when a wild southwester broke over it in full fury on an autumn evening? Imagine that sound. And then imagine that the wood, instead of being fixed to one place, was rushing at you; and was no longer trees but huge people; yet still like trees because their long arms waved like branches and their heads tossed and leaves fell round them in showers. It was like that for the Telmarines. (Prince 406)

Even the river is loosed from his chains (the bridge) by the “Great, strong trunks of ivy came curling up all the piers of the bridge, growing as quickly as a fire grows, wrapping the stones round, splitting, breaking, separating them” (Prince 407) and joins the Narnian in defeating the enemy. Thus, Lewis in Prince Caspian emphasises that man’s interconnection with nature leads to a healthy ecological relationship.

The Voyage of the ‘Dawn Treader’, the fifth novel in The Chronicles of Narnia is “the quest for holiness, the penetration into the mystery of the lamb and lion, mercy and justice, meekness and power” (Glover 151), but it also reinforces man’s relatedness to nature. The sea journey, which begins in the hostile environment of a room in aunt Alberta’s home, leads to a series of eco-adventures. Through Lucy, Lewis focuses on man-nature relationship. When she looks at a picture of a sailing ship on the wall, it appears to her like a “Narnian ship” (Voyage 427) and she becomes absorbed in it “because the ship looks as if it were really moving. And the water looks as if it were really
wet. And the waves look as if they were really going up and down” (Voyage 427). This longing felt by the children Edmund and Lucy for the world of Narnia suddenly brings the picture of the ship hanging on the wall to life:

And by this time either they had grown much smaller or the picture had grown bigger. Eustace jumped to try to pull it off the wall and found himself standing on the frame; in front of him was not glass but real sea, and wind and waves rushing up to the frame as they might to a rock. He lost his head and clutched at the other two who had jumped up beside him. There was a second of struggling and shouting, and just as they thought they had got their balance a great blue roller surged up round them, swept them off their feet, and drew them into the sea. (Voyage 428)

Thus the children’s entrance into Caspian’s travels via the sea painted on the picture, initiates the eco-relationship. Lucy finds herself quite at home in the ship and the motion of the ship named Dawn Treader did not annoy her, “for in the old days when she had been a queen in Narnia she had done a good deal of voyaging” (Voyage 431). While Eustace feels uncomfortable and suffers from seasickness, Edmund and Lucy feel a certain oneness with the sea. The narrative portrays the two children’s attachment towards nature and it also discloses the increasing detachment of Eustace from the sea:
Eustace of course would be pleased with nothing, and kept on boasting about liners and motor-boats and aeroplanes and submarines (As if he knew anything about them, muttered Edmund), but the other two were delighted with the *Dawn Treader*, and when they returned aft to the cabin and supper, and saw the whole western sky lit up with an immense crimson sunset, and felt the quiver of the ship, and tasted the salt on their lips, and thought of unknown lands on the Eastern rim of the world, Lucy felt that she was almost too happy to speak.

(*Voyage 437*)

Further, Lewis in *The Voyage of the ‘Dawn Treader’* resolves Eustace’s need for eco-orientation. Eustace who utterly dislikes insects, bees and natural life forms, needs to be converted. He is “pretentious, petty, spiteful, and selfish” (Starr 2). Eustace’s ‘fallen’ nature is revealed when his selfishness keeps him from helping others to repair the damaged ship and he walks away by himself when the ship reaches Dragon Island:

Nobody was looking – they were all chattering about their ship as if they actually liked the beastly thing. Why shouldn’t he simply slip away? He would take a stroll inland, find a cool, airy place up in the mountains, have a good long sleep, and not rejoin the others till the day’s work was over. He felt it would do him good. (*Voyage 459*)
Quite soon, he finds himself in a strange place where a dead dragon is surrounded by diamonds and jewels. Eustace’s greed and dragonish thoughts prevail and he fills his pockets with diamonds and puts a diamond bracelet on his arm. Then quite tired, he sleeps, but wakes to find that he has become a dragon. His initial reaction to this is one of relief as he claims that there “was nothing to be afraid of any more. He was a terror himself and nothing in the world but a knight (and not all of those) would dare to attack him. He could get even with Caspian and Edmund now” (Voyage 466).

Eustace does not realise his plight until he begins to feel lonely and recognises his need for others. He now realises:

He wanted to be friends. He wanted to get back among humans and talk and laugh and share things. He realized that he was a monster cut off from the whole human race. An appalling loneliness came over him. He began to see that the others had not really been fiends at all. He began to wonder if he himself had been such a nice person as he had always supposed. He longed for their voices. (Voyage 466)

With much difficulty the grief-filled Eustace makes himself known to the others. At first his friends are astonished and then confused as to how to deliver him. To his great surprise and comfort, it is Reepicheep, his former enemy, who speaks words of encouragement to him:

The noble Mouse would creep away from the merry circle at the camp fire and sit down by the dragon’s head, well to the
windward to be out of the way of his smoky breath. There he would explain that what had happened to Eustace was a striking illustration of the turn of Fortune’s wheel, and that if he had Eustace at his own house in Narnia he could show him more than a hundred examples of emperors, kings, dukes, knights, poets, lovers, astronomers, philosophers, and magicians, who had fallen from prosperity into the most distressing circumstances, and of whom many had recovered and lived happily ever afterwards. (Voyage 472)

Through fictional characters such as Reepicheep, Lewis holds up “models that anything can be accomplished; size, skill, ability, and anything else that the world holds up as valuable cannot constrain what God has willed to achieve” (Bates 10). Many adventures later, Eustace’s redemption becomes complete when the Lion Aslan leads him to the top of a mountain and ‘undresses him’ from his dragon skin and turns him into a normal boy again.

*The Silver Chair* like the other Narnian books is suffused with moral teachings, which “grew out of the telling and are as much a part of the narrative as scent is to a flower” (Hooper, “Narnia” 112). This fantasy novel enables its readers “to cross an imaginative frontier” (Tixier 139) into a land called Narnia and rejuvenates the readers’ understanding of their role on Earth. It also helps them to enter the eco-spiritual world of talking beasts, birds and nature. The relationship that Jill and Eustace have with Aslan and
the Talking beasts is made to appear as normal and as equally desirable for lasting happiness.

The narrative in *The Silver Chair* opens abruptly near the gym of Experiment House which is a progressive, co-educational school with rules and regulations representative of “the epitome of Lewis’s abhorrence for modern education” (Glover 163). Jill and Eustace are seeking to escape from the rough treatment dealt to them by the other children. They escape through a door into that mysterious place where:

> The sound of Edith Jackle’s voice stopped as suddenly as the voice on the radio when it is switched off. Instantly there was a quite different sound all about them. It came from those bright things overhead, which now turned out to be birds. They were making riotous noise, but it was much more like music – rather advanced music which you don’t quite take in at the first hearing – than birds’ songs ever are in our world. Yet, in spite of the singing, there was a sort of background of immense silence. That silence combined with the freshness of the air made Jill think they must be on the top of a very high mountain. (*Silver* 553-54)

In this new place, When Eustace pulls Jill back roughly to prevent her from falling over a cliff, Jill is at first irritated by his treatment and later feels despise for his fear of heights. However, when she looks over the cliff she understands his fear:
And imagine yourself looking down to the very bottom. And then imagine that the precipice goes on below that as far again, ten times as far, twenty times as far. And when you’ve looked down all that distance imagine little white things that might, at first glance be mistaken for sheep, but presently you realize that they are clouds – not little wreaths of mist but the enormous white, puffy clouds which are themselves as big as most mountains. And at last, in between those clouds you get your first glimpse of the real bottom, so far away that you can’t make out whether it’s field or wood, or land or water: further below those clouds than you are above them. (Silver 554)

This description creates in the readers a response of awe at objects in nature, which they would not care for otherwise: “the artificial odor and thrumming are rejected in favour of field, wood, land, and water” (Glover 168). Lewis brings his readers in tune with their environment. As Eustace falls over the cliff and the Lion Aslan blows him over into Narnia, the children enter a world where talking animals, birds and other animals co-exist with man as equals.

In this world of Narnia the children have to learn to obey Aslan’s instructions carefully so that they can rescue Prince Rilian from his captor. The two children face many trials on their way and their faith is tested before they reach the end of their salvation. In fact, the movement of the plot is from “the warped fantasy of an educational theory to the reality of Lewis’s
imaginary world where truth rules” (Glover 163). In the world of Narnia, when the two children obey Aslan and carry out the tasks, they become the tools to the restoration of King Caspian’s kingdom under the rule of Prince Rilian. The owl community takes counsel and that decides the Marsh-wiggles may be able to help the children. The Marsh-wiggle named Puddleglum agrees to take the children on a journey to find and rescue the Prince.

The central confrontation is between Prince Rilian’s rescuers and the demonic enchanter who is the Queen of the Underland. The Queen has conquered the mind of Rilian by her magical brainwashing and eradicated his knowledge of the world of Narnia. Through Prince Rilian, she hopes to rule over Narnia one day. The Witch uses her power for evil and Lewis shows “the domination and exploitation of indigenous peoples in the witch’s control of the Underland and its inhabitants, gnomes” (DuPlessis 203). In the Underland, according to Manlove, the earthen men, “work silently without animation, in virtual darkness, the vegetation is sickly, and whole caverns are full of motionless, sleeping creatures” (qtd. in DuPlessis 203). These slaves of the evil Queen appear to have lost their feelings: “in one respect they were all alike: every face in the whole hundred was as sad as a face could be. They were so sad that, after the first glance, Jill almost forgot to be afraid of them. She felt she would be like to cheer them up” (Silver 614).

Lewis shows in The Silver Chair a world where evil may enter and death can bring sorrow. The natures of the temptations which confront the children on their quest are most subtle in the form of self-deception and the
confusion of appearance and reality. The children fail to understand the first three clues because they are “tempted to confuse their own desires with their task” (Glover 165). It is through the courage and wisdom of Puddleglum, an animal creature of the wet marshland that the earth children are able to complete their tasks and attain safety or salvation. When they first meet him Puddleglum shows exceptional kindness. He catches a few eel, prepares an eel stew and feeds them. As the plot develops this marshwiggle warn the children against going to Harfang because “he didn’t know what a giant’s idea of being ‘gentle’ might be, and that, anyway, Aslan’s signs had said nothing about staying with giants, gentle or otherwise” (Silver 591). Against Puddleglum’s counsel the children are drawn in by the luxurious food, and the comfortable beds at Harfang. Only next day, Puddleglum recognises they had been given food prepared from talking animals:

This discovery didn’t have exactly the same effect on all of them. Jill, was new to that world, was sorry for the poor stag and thought it rotten of the giants to have killed him. Scrubb, who had been in that world before and had at least one Talking beast as his dear friend, felt horrified; as you might feel about a murder. But Puddleglum, who was Narnian born, was sick and faint, and felt as you would feel if you found you had eaten a baby. (Silver 608)

Thus Lewis evokes sensitivity towards animals that can speak and think like humans.
Later Puddleglum saves them again from the Witch’s enchantment by his great sacrifice. When he realises that the smoke from the fire is dulling their consciousness, he thrusts his foot on the fire to put it out. Puddleglum knows that “it wouldn’t hurt him quite as much as it would hurt a human; for his feet (which were bare) were webbed and hard and cold-blooded like a duck’s” (Silver 632). However, “he knew it would hurt him badly enough; and so it did. With his bare foot he stamped on the fire, grinding a large part of it into ashes on the flat hearth” (Silver 632). This animal proves his concern for the safety of the human children.

Towards the end of the novel, the reunion of Jill and Eustace with the talking beasts of Narnia when they are rescued from their underground hole is again representative of man-nature relationship at its best. The rescue operation is carried out jointly by all the animals. The moles help to dig out the children and “even the fauns made themselves useful by carting away the earth in a little barrows, and the Squirrels danced and leaped to and fro in great excitement though Jill never found out exactly what they thought they were doing” (Silver 653). This wonder of joyous cooperation recalls the truth that “we are plain members and citizens of the land-community, not the rulers of the earth” (qtd. in S. Campbell 133).

The Last Battle, the final novel in The Chronicles of Narnia series, also presents ecological relationship between man and nature. The first ten chapters unfold the old, familiar Narnia and describes how the ape Shift deceives all the animals. It reflects the decaying contemporary civilization
against the splendid and marvellous setting of Caldron Pool, which is a scene of natural wonder:

The great waterfall pours down into it with a noise like everlasting thunder, and the River of Narnia flows out on the other side. The waterfall keeps the Pool always dancing and bubbling and churning round and round as if it were on the boil, and that of course is how it got its name of Caldron Pool. It is liveliest in the early spring when the waterfall is swollen with all the snow that has melted off the mountains from up beyond Narnia in the Western Wild from which the river comes. (Last 670)

Unfortunately, the skin of a dead lion floats down this river and when Shift the Ape gets hold of it, he dresses the donkey Puzzle in the lion-skin and deceives other animals into thinking that this is Aslan the Lion King. The evil and greedy and old Ape named Shift is painted as an animal “capable of guile and deception” (Glover 181). In Shift, Lewis envisages man’s greed and his subsequent callous treatment of animals. The ape manipulates Puzzle to fetch bananas and oranges and later he commands the squirrels to bring him nuts. He commands the Head squirrel to deliver nuts: “‘Twice as many. And they’ve got to be here by sunset tomorrow’” (Last 683). This hard and unpleasant order serves as “terrible news” (Last 683) for the poor squirrels as the nuts they have hoarded for the winter has already been eaten by Shift.
Thus, the story unravels the pathetic decadence and the need for ecological redemption. This novel also reflects Lewis’s dislike for certain kinds of scientific and economic progress: “when it produced what he regarded as essentially inhumane conditions in which a man could no longer claim the freedom to be himself, to work for himself, to have his privacy, to be an individual and not part of a herd” (Glover 180). The ape appears wise but is greedy and cunning so that Puzzle, the ass is compelled to become its slave, and Lewis clearly points out “a society which has the capacity to be led by clever fools to its own destruction” (Glover 181). The ape takes sides with the people of Calormen who are exploiters of the natural world.

In the Ape’s behaviour Lewis demonstrates the anthropocentric man who involves in self-indulgence and attempts to enslave other creatures. Moreover, in his boastfulness the Ape claims to be the only intellectual personality with whom Aslan prefers to speak. With arrogance and egotism he declares: “‘I’m a Man: You’re only a fat, stupid old Bear. What do you know about freedom? You think freedom means doing what you like. Well, you’re wrong. That isn’t true freedom. True freedom means doing what I tell you’” (Last 685). The liberty of the free subjects of Narnia is overthrown by the dogmatic dictatorship of the ape Shift. Finally, Shift is found to join hands with Tisroc, the King of Calormen, in executing the judicious plan of slavery. The Calormenes are anthropocentric and rule over the helpless animals of Narnia with cruelty. Narnian free subjects like horses, bulls and donkeys are forced to work under the Calormenes. Further, moles, rabbits and dwarfs are
made to work in Tisroc’s mines. When the animals begin to protest against the enslavement, he cunningly announces: “‘You won’t be slaves. You’ll be paid – very good wages too. That is to say, your pay will be paid into Aslan’s treasury and he will use it all for everybody’s good’” (Last 684). However, the Ape actually means to use the profit himself, for he adds: “There’ll be oranges and bananas pouring in” (Last 685) and thus his own greed will be satisfied.

Further cruelty against the animals is seen when the animals are overworked and beaten. When the horse is pulling the log and it becomes stuck in the mud, the Calormen worker loses his patience and shouts:

“Get on, son of sloth! Pull, you lazy pig!” cried the Calormenes, cracking their whips. The horse was already straining himself as hard as he could; his eyes were red and he was covered with foam.

“Work, lazy brute,” shouted one of the Calormenes: and as he spoke he struck the horse savagely with their whips. (Last 680)

The cracking of whips and the forced labour is an unmistakable image of slavery. The poor talking horse replies: “‘Fool and tyrant! Do you not see I am doing all I can?’” (Last 680). The traumatic scene of the Narnian horse being whipped drives King Tirian and Jewel, the unicorn, to slay the two Calormenes. The scene conveys “the feeling of a moral order falling apart; no one is any longer sure what is right and what is wrong” (Walsh, “Parallel”
55). Then when man and beast are not in a beneficial relationship, they are ready to harm one another.

As the ecological relationship breaks down, wanton destruction and deforestation takes place. When the Calormen workers begin cutting down the talking trees, the Dryad begins to wail: “‘Woe, woe, woe!’ called the voice. ‘Woe for my brothers and sisters! Woe for the holy trees! The woods are laid waste. The axe is loosed against us. We are being felled. Great trees are falling, falling, falling’” (Last 677). The voice belongs to a Dryad who is the nymph of a beech tree. This Dryad begs the king to come and save the trees: “‘Justice, Lord King! . . . Come to our aid. Protect your people. They are felling us in Lantern Waste. Forty great trunks of my brothers and sisters are already on the ground’” (Last 677). In the “Narnia genocide” (DuPlessis 124) that follows, Lewis pictures the peril and torment felt by the trees as they are felled:

“A-a-a-h,” gasped the Dryad, shuddering as if in pain – shuddering time after time as if under repeated blows. Then all at once she fell sideways as suddenly as if both her feet had been cut from under her. For a second they saw her lying dead on the grass and then she vanished. They knew what had happened. Her tree, miles away, had been cut down. (Last 677)

Thus by bestowing voice to voiceless elements of creation such as trees that are suffering from human domination Lewis evokes pity and fear in his audience. Articulating trees and animals by expressing their pain realistically,
engage the reader’s feelings for nature. The above passage shows a sense of
turbulence involved in the act, as well as the ‘waste’ which denotes the loss of
goodness. Moreover, by representing the trees as being inspirited, Lewis
suggests the sacredness of trees and other plants, “with a terrible beauty that
almost makes the heart ache” (Hooper, “Narnia” 116).

The description of the new Narnia, which is the true Narnia, helps
readers to gain new insights into the land of unlimited glory. The fruits seen
in this land can never be equalled to the fruits of any other world:

What was the fruit like? Unfortunately no one can describe a
taste. All I can say is that, compared with those fruits, the
 freshest grapefruit you’ve ever eaten was dull, and the juiciest
orange was dry, and the most melting pear was hard and
woody, and the sweetest wild strawberry was sour. And there
were no seeds or stones, and no wasps. If you had once eaten
that fruit, all the nicest things in this world would taste like
medicines after it. But I can’t describe it. You can’t find out
what it is like unless you can get to that country and taste it for
yourself. (Last 742-43)

The children have the joy of discovering the sense of liberation by entering
into this deeper country: “The new one was a deeper country: every rock and
flower and blade of grass looked as if it meant more. I can’t describe it any
better than that: if ever you get there, you will know what I mean” (Last 760).
Lewis thereby creates in his readers an increased awareness of the glory and majesty of nature which is worthy of respect and reverence.

Thus the gospel of ecology as expressed by Lewis conveys the need to respect interconnectedness between man and his environment, with the understanding that “plants and animals are extremely diverse and complicated groupings of living things which exist in a relatively balanced state with one another and with their nonliving environment” (Meeker 162). The writer persuades his readers to be eco-sensitive, to reject a self-centred life and partake of community life where man and nature exist peacefully together. The gospel of biocentric equality that “all species are intrinsically equal and therefore have an equal right to life” (qtd. in Garrard 103) encourages man to recognise the true worth of all life forms and to refrain from abusing it or exploiting it. When readers begin to grasp the ecological position as presented in the stories, they can be persuaded to follow it in their own lives. A genuine realization that man is in fact sustained and nurtured by his environment will guide him to restrain from exploitation.