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# Reconfiguring the Decentralized and Deterritorialized Human: A Post-Anthropocentric Braidottian Reading of Lewis's *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*

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**Abstract**

This research reconfigures C.S. Lewis's *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* through the theoretical framework of Rosi Braidotti's post-anthropocentric philosophy as articulated in *The Posthuman* (2013). Post-anthropocentrism is a critical stance that challenges the preference of the human subject as central to meaning, ethics, and knowledge, and instead situates the human as one among many interdependent life forms. Braidotti's framework dismantles Eurocentric humanism for its hierarchical structuring of species, bodies, and subjectivities by decentralizing the human as the measure of all things. Instead, she emphasizes on zoe (the impersonal, vital force animating all life), the nature-culture continuum (a non-binary integration of ecological and social realms), and relational subjectivity (identity constituted through multispecies networks). The Pevensie children's transformation from human-centric perspectives to relational ethics reflects post-anthropocentric models of negotiable identities. Through Braidotti's post-anthropocentric lens, Narnia emerges as a proto-posthuman space where nonhuman agency disrupts classical hierarchies. This study advances SDG 15 (Life on Land) by exposing how Narnia's zoe-centric ethics, where Aslan's thaw challenges ecological instrumentalization, demand a radical rethinking of protection beyond human stewardship. Through close textual analysis, this study departs from the traditional, theological and morally allegorical interpretation of Narnia and reframes it as a proto-posthuman ethical landscape wherein the human is not central, but embedded in a web of more-than-human forces.

**Keywords:** Posthumanism, Post-anthropocentrism, Deterritorialization, and Decentralization

## Introduction

C.S. Lewis's *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (1950) opens with four wartime siblings displaced from London, only to discover an enchanted wardrobe that leads them into Narnia, a realm governed not merely by magic but by its own sentient ecologies and nonhuman sovereignties. The novel introduces readers to a world where animals speak with moral precision, landscapes mourn and rejoice, and a lion's breath revives the petrified dead. The main purpose of carrying out this research is to critically investigate the ways in which *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* constructs a narrative of interspecies ethics, ecological restoration, and distributed agency within a post-anthropocentric framework. The study closely examines how human and non-human entities, including talking animals, magical landscapes, and elemental forces, collaboratively shape the

ontological and moral order of Narnia. The research aims to reveal how C.S. Lewis's canonical children's novel, often categorized as Christian allegory, simultaneously opens imaginative space for ecological consciousness and posthuman subjectivity. It seeks to explore how the novel deconstructs the centrality of the human subject and instead promotes a relational ethos grounded in zoe; defined by Rosi Braidotti as the generative vitality immanent in all living systems, to propose new ethical modalities. The choice of post-anthropocentrism as a theoretical framework is informed by its direct relevance to the imaginative world of C.S. Lewis's *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. Post-anthropocentrism, as theorized by Rosi Braidotti in her seminal work *The Posthuman* (2013), seeks to decenter the privileged position of the human subject in favor of a distributed, relational understanding of life and agency. Braidotti critiques the Enlightenment ideal of the human as "the classical ideal of man as the measure of all things, arguing instead for a subjectivity rooted in zoe a concept she defines as the generative vitality of all living beings. For Braidotti, this vitality is not the exclusive domain of rational human subjects but is shared across animals, environments, machines, and even imagined ecosystems. In this study, Braidotti's vision provides the conceptual grounding to reconceive Narnia not as a symbolic landscape of Christian redemption alone, but as a posthuman terrain of shared ethical agency and interspecies interdependence. The Lion Aslan, the speaking animals, and even the thawing forest emerge as actors shaped by and shaping relational subjectivities. As Braidotti maintains that the boundaries between the human and its others have been displaced, blurred and transgressed; this insight is central to understanding how Lewis's narrative deconstructs binaries of human/non-human, nature/culture, and soul/body. The selection of Braidotti's *The Posthuman* as the guiding theoretical framework thus allows for a focused exploration of how post-anthropocentric ethics, relational ontologies, and *zoe*-driven vitality reframe the meaning of agency, resistance, and redemption within the novel. Furthermore, the objective is to foreground how Lewis's portrayal of interspecies kinship and ecological reawakening resonates with the goals outlined in Sustainable Development Goal 15: Life on Land, which emphasizes biodiversity, ecosystem restoration, and the importance of non-human life. This research aspires to amplify the ethical significance of such literary imaginaries and give critical attention to narratives that disrupt anthropocentric hierarchies and envision sustainable, shared worlds.

**Significance**

This study's significance extends beyond literary analysis into broader ecological and educational discourses. By foregrounding ethical multispecies relationships and environmental entanglements in children's literature, it aligns directly with Sustainable Development Goal 15: Life on Land, which aims to protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss. Literature is a powerful pedagogical tool in this pursuit: by decentering human exceptionalism and cultivating respect for nonhuman life, stories like *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* foster ecological consciousness in young readers. As posthumanism increasingly influences the humanities, re-reading canonical children's texts through this framework invites a rethinking of dominant narratives as well as planetary responsibilities. This research contributes to that rethinking by situating Lewis's Narnia within the critical terrain of post-anthropocentric ethics and sustainable futures.

**Research Objectives**

- To explore the reconfiguration of the human centrality within a post-anthropocentric framework in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*.
- To analyze the representation of ethical landscapes challenging the traditional anthropocentric notions of sovereignty and agency in the selected text.

**Literature Review**

The growing body of posthumanist scholarship in children's literature has profoundly challenged the anthropocentric paradigms that position the human child as the sole ethical and epistemological center. Recent studies foreground how narratives centering animal subjectivity, multispecies relationality, and material agency are instrumental in cultivating post-anthropocentric awareness. This section engages with contemporary works that critique human exceptionalism and explore how children's texts, such as *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, decentralize human authority and reconfigure ethical agency across species. Karin M. Danielsson, in her article "Learning, Liberation, and Posthumanism in The Wind on the Moon" (2025), posits that nonhuman characters in children's literature can function as epistemological equals and ethical agents, not merely as allegorical or pedagogical tools. She argues that the novel's narrative subverts anthropocentrism through nonhuman characters who serve as "teachers and expert aids" fostering bioegalitarian values (Danielsson, 2025, p. 1) . She emphasizes that figures such as the falcon and the puma in Linklater's novel embody a bioegalitarian ethos which entails a commitment to interspecies justice that disrupts anthropocentric narratives of dominance (Danielsson, 2025, p. 3). This insight parallels Rosi Braidotti's theorization of zoe as the dynamic self-supporting structure that denoted "generative vitality" (Braidotti R. , 2013, p. 68), reinforcing the argument that moral and ontological authority in children's texts can be distributed across species. The puma and falcon, for instance, instruct the child protagonists in "empathy, imagination, and empiricism" (Danielsson, 2025, p. 3),challenging the "human monopoly over reason" (Danielsson, 2025, p. 2). This aspect parallels Narnia's nonhuman characters; Aslan's guidance and the Beavers' wisdom similarly decentralize human authority, positioning animals as "rational and agential beings" (p. 4). Crucially, Danielsson links zoo animals to "prisoners of war" (p. 11), a motif echoing Narnia's stone statues and eternal winter as metaphors for fascist oppression. Her analysis underscores how children's literature historically embeds posthumanist critique; a gap this research expands by applying Braidotti's zoe-centric ethics to Narnia's liberation narrative. Cheung, in "Towards a Post-anthropocentric Pedagogy: Children's Reading of Oliver Jeffers's This Moose Belongs to Me" (2024), advances a compelling case for children's literature as a site of ethical reorientation through a post-anthropocentric lens. Focusing on Oliver Jeffers's *This Moose Belongs to Me*, Cheung investigates how young readers reject the logics of "pet ownership" (p. 93) and instead identify the moose as a sentient, autonomous being "with subjectivity to express preferences for anyone or anything" (p. 103). The study challenges the Enlightenment-rooted, Cartesian tradition that dichotomizes mind and body, human and animal, arguing instead that animals are not static characters of instruction but dynamic, narrative participants with ethical and spatial agency. Drawing from observations during a child-reader response study, Cheung reveals that children intuitively resisted the protagonist's entitlement and aligned themselves with the animal's freedom of movement, thereby enacting a form of what she terms "posthumanist literacy" that destabilizes human exceptionalism (Cheung, 2024, p. 100). She positions post-anthropocentricism as an event "envisaging a non-hierarchical way of thinking in the human-animal relationship" (p. 95). This aligns with Braidotti's notion of "collaborative morality" which centers on "affective relationality, not the supremacy of reason" (Braidotti R. , p. 191). Cheung's emphasis on the pedagogical potential of post-anthropocentric narratives strongly resonates with this reading of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, where Aslan, the Beavers, and the thawing land collectively model a zoe-affirming ethic. In their article "Animals and Posthumanist Discourse in Children's Literature" (2024), Sujinah, Isnah, and Kharis assert that the presence of animals in children's literature offers more than moral instruction. They act as critically posthuman entities capable of disrupting hierarchical human/animal binaries; animal characters in children's literature disrupt anthropocentrism by functioning as co-protagonists rather than allegorical tools. They introduce the notion of posthumanist literacy, in which children are encouraged to develop ethical responses to nonhuman life and acknowledging them as "entities of agency, comparable to

humans" through narratives that foreground animal subjectivity (Sujinah, 2024, p. 716). This aligns with Rosi Braidotti's call for a stated criterion of a "collaborative morality … emphasis on the collective; acceptance of relationality" (Braidotti R. , 2013, p. 191) which rejects anthropocentric sovereignty in favor of interdependent, multispecies relations. The authors' recognition of animals as active agents who seek ways to "recalibrate the balance, redefining the interaction between animal and human world", resonates with the idea that how Narnian animals, particularly the Beavers, Aslan, and other speaking creatures, participate in shaping ethical decisions and resisting domination. In "Risking Erasure? Posthumanist Research Practices and Figurations of (the) Child" (2022), Murris and Osgood critically interrogate the potential erasure of child subjectivity in posthumanist research, arguing that decentering the human should not mean dissolving "the child" entirely. They contend that "the posthuman figuration of (the) child is not mainstream" and that conventional research continues to rely on "assumptions about child in abstraction" (Murris, 2022, p. 4). Rather than reproducing cartesian constructs of child-as-individual, they advocate figuration which refers to a concept that frames child subjectivity as emergent through complex relational entanglements. As they observe, decentering inadvertently risks a "flat ontology" that elides power dynamics: "Does decentering the child necessarily imply a 'flat ontology' that erases power relations?" (p. 3). This argument resonates with Braidotti's notion of "negotiable identities," which emerge from situated, multispecies relationalities (Braidotti R. , 2013, p. 58). The authors highlight that even as posthumanism disrupts anthropocentric binaries, it must preserve children's political and ethical agency, a stance that reinforces my reading of Lewis's Pevensie children. Just as Murris and Osgood stress that the figuration of (the) child retains ethical visibility, current interpretation frames the Pevensies not as isolated subjects but as participants in Narnia's eco-ethical community, shaped through encounters with Aslan, talking animals, and the living landscape. This approach supports SDG 15's vision of co-existence and ecological justice over human exceptionalism**.**

Zhen Lin and Guofang Li in "A Posthuman perspective on Early Literacy: A Literature Review" (2021) rigorously deconstruct anthropocentric foundations in early literacy education, revealing how traditional developmental psychology positions the child as an autonomous, cognitively linear subject learning in isolation. They maintain that a child is always in a state of intra-act, with human and non-human entities. This paradigm, they argue, promotes literacy as a product of human intention imposed on passive materials. In contrast, they advocate for a posthuman shift rooted in new materialist and Deleuzian assemblage theories, where children and nonhuman entities intra-act to co-create meaning (Li, 2020, p. 71). Literacy is no longer confined to representational textual outcomes but emerges as embodied, affective, and distributed across material engagements. Particularly compelling is their critique of logocentric models, which, they argue, limit children's agency by privileging rational human speech over multimodal meaning-making (Li, 2020, p. 78). This resonates with Braidotti's emphasis on "zoe" and relational subjectivity, underscoring that meaning-making is not human-exclusive. Thus, their work bolsters the argument that narratives like *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* can be read as post-anthropocentric ecosystems where agency is decentered and distributed. Chengcheng You (2020) offers a revisionist perspective on anthropomorphism in children's literature, in "The Necessity of an Anthropomorphic Approach to Children's Literature", arguing that "the world's present state of cascading environmental impoverishment" demands an anthropomorphic approach that is not "inherently anthropocentric" (You, 2020, p. 183). Informed by Derrida's critique of human-animal binaries and the discourse of creaturely vulnerability, You studies "literary animal" and positions anthropomorphism not as a literary flaw but as an ethical opportunity to "imagine constructive interspecies bonds that take us beyond anthropocentrism" (You, 2020, p. 184). He maintains that literary animals normally "illustrate psychological conflicts of marginalized groups" (You, 2020, p. 187) , but this aspect needs revision because non-human species possess individuality and thus they are the "bearers of meaning for themselves" (You, 2020, p. 193). This critical intervention resonates with Braidotti's rejection of "the classical ideal of 'Man'… as the measure of all things"

(Braidotti R. , 2013, p. 13), and it lends support to reading Lewis's *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* as a narrative where talking animals, far from mere allegorical tools, function as subjects capable of moral reasoning, resistance, and care. You's analysis reinforces the view that such representations cultivate in young readers a form of creaturely consciousness attuned to the ethics of post-anthropocentric relationality. While recent studies have contributed meaningfully to posthumanist readings of children's literature by foregrounding interspecies agency, relational subjectivity, and ecological ethics, few have examined how such frameworks operate within allegorical fantasy texts that are often interpreted through theological or moral paradigms. This study proposes a reconfiguration of the novel through Rosi Braidotti's post-anthropocentric lens, particularly her concept of zoe-centric subjectivity, in order to investigate how the narrative challenges anthropocentric authority and reimagines ethical relations through vitality, shared agency, and trans-species interconnection. By positioning Narnia not as a static backdrop for human action but as an active ecological system animated by ethical co-becomings, this research intervenes in literary and philosophical discussions to offer an interpretation of Lewis's narrative that foregrounds posthuman ecological consciousness and collaborative morality.

**Research Method**

This study adopts textual analysis as theorized by Catherine Belsey in *Research Methods for English Studies* (2013), a method that interrogates how texts produce meaning through their internal structures, historical contingencies, and ideological negotiations. Belsey rejects the notion of texts as transparent vessels of authorial intention or stable truths, arguing instead that meaning emerges dynamically through the interplay of signifiers, intertexts, and the reader's engagement. She asserts, "There is no such thing as 'pure' reading: interpretation always involves extra-textual knowledge. Some of this is general, part of the repertoire of knowledges that constitutes a culture; some of it is personal, a matter of one's own interests or biography; and some is derived from secondary sources" (p. 163). Central to Belsey's framework is the idea that texts are citational, iterating and altering prior discourses while inviting plural interpretations. Drawing on poststructuralist theory, she emphasizes that "meaning is not anchored in anything outside signification itself; and the signifying process supplants it" (p. 176). This approach demands close attention to textual details; patterns, contradictions, and figurative language, as sites where ideologies are both enacted and destabilized. For Belsey, textual analysis is fundamentally empirical: it begins with the text's materiality (e.g., composition, imagery, silences) and poses questions that "the text sets the agenda" (p. 171). Applying this framework, the study analyzes *The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe* through Rosi Braidotti's posthumanist lens, examining how Narnia's decentralized non/human actors challenge anthropocentric hierarchies. Belsey's method guides the interrogation of Lewis's narrative strategies, such as anthropomorphism, spatial allegory, and mythic intertexts, to reveal how the text employs iteration to create meanings "with a difference" (p. 169) dominant discourses of human exceptionalism. Following Belsey's insistence on the reader's role in meaning-making, the analysis also traces how the novel's invitations to interpret hybridity or agency are complicated by its Christian teleology. Belsey's model rejects definitive closure: "The painting does not have to make up its mind. And neither does its textual analyst" (p. 176). Thus, this study embraces ambiguity, treating Lewis's text as a site of "mutual relations of dialogue, parody, contestation" (165) between humanist and posthumanist possibilities. By exposing these tensions, the analysis aligns with Belsey's conviction that textual research uncovers something new, here, it uncovers the destabilization of the anthropocentricism in children's fantasy.

**Theoretical Framework**

In the age of the Anthropocene, when human activity has become a geological force capable of transforming planetary life, literary criticism is increasingly called upon to re-examine the

centrality of the human figure in narrative discourse. Post-anthropocentrism emerges as a philosophical and theoretical framework that decenters the human subject and challenges the Enlightenment-derived belief in human superiority and the hierarchical binaries of human/non-human, culture/nature, and mind/body. Rosi Braidotti, a prominent contemporary theorist, articulates post-anthropocentrism as a constitutive dimension of the broader posthuman condition, one that "introduces a qualitative shift in our thinking about what exactly is the basic unit of common reference for our species, our polity and our relationship to the other inhabitants of this planet" (Braidotti R. , 2013, p. 2). Her theoretical model provides a generative lens through which this study interrogates the anthropocentric legacies embedded even in texts traditionally read through humanist or moral lenses, such as C.S. Lewis's *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. This research is grounded in the critical frameworks of posthumanism and post-anthropocentrism, both of which interrogate the legacy of Enlightenment humanism that posited the rational human male as the universal measure of all value. Braidotti critiques this paradigm in *The Posthuman* (2013), asserting that the classical humanist subject is neither neutral nor universal; it is a specific historical formation. Her critique moves beyond decentering the human to rethinking subjectivity altogether, advocating for an ontology based on zoe, or "the dynamic, self-organizing structure of life" (Lewis, 2009, p. 60). These theoretical insights provide the scaffolding for reinterpreting Narnia not as a moral fable but as a posthuman ecological system. At the heart of Braidotti's posthuman turn is her redefinition of what constitutes a "subject." She replaces the autonomous human self with an embodied, embedded, and relational subjectivity shaped by zoe, the life force that is "generative power that flows across all species" (Braidotti R. , 2013, p. 50). In this model, living matter, including animals, forests, rivers, and even imagined realms, is granted ontological and ethical status. Rather than treating Narnia as a static setting or allegorical device, this reading positions it as a zoe-centric space where vitality is distributed and agency flows through human and non-human alike. Aslan's breath, which reanimates the stone creatures, enacts not just divine resurrection but zoe in action; a metaphysical intervention that revitalizes the ecosystem through shared affect and co-agency. Through Braidotti's framework, the narrative shifts focus from individual salvation to collective becoming. Post-anthropocentrism requires a radical rethinking of ethics, away from autonomy and domination, toward transversal relationality. Braidotti frames this ethical shift as "collaborative morality," grounded not in rational hierarchy but in affective interdependence across beings and systems (The Posthuman, p. 191). This concept finds deep resonance in Narnia's narrative structure: when Lucy and Susan grieve beside Aslan's lifeless body, they are joined by animals and elemental forces that also express sorrow. Mourning is not individualized but shared across species, affirming Braidotti's claim that ethical agency is formed in webs of "mutual trans-species interdependence" (Braidotti R. , 2013, p. 92). The Pevensie children's development exemplify transversal subjectivity, where identity is formed through ongoing, situated relationships rather than abstract universals.

**Discussion and Analysis**

Rosi Braidotti's critical theory of the posthuman is founded upon a rejection of "Eurocentric Humanism" (Braidotti R. , 2013, p. 195) , which historically positioned the Vitruvian Man; the white, rational, male subject, as the universal model of the human. She contends that at the start of it all there is "He: the classical ideal of 'Man', formulated first by Protagoras as 'the measure of all things'… represented in Leonardo da Vinci's Vitruvian Man" (Braidotti R. , 2013, p. 13). Braidotti's posthumanism deconstructs this paradigm, replacing it with a monistic, relational, and vitalistic conception of subjectivity grounded in "zoe*"* (Braidotti R. , 2013, p. 50); the impersonal, generative life force that flows across species and matter. "Living matter – including the flesh – is intelligent and self-organizing… it is not disconnected from the rest of organic life" (Braidotti R. , 2013, p. 60). Within this ontological reorientation, the human is no longer the central agent of meaning and value but becomes one actor among many in a dynamic and ethically entangled world.

Lewis's novel, though published in 1950, imaginatively anticipates several posthuman concerns. The narrative opens with Lucy Pevensie's accidental passage into the land of Narnia, a realm perpetually locked in winter under the dominion of the White Witch. The frozen landscape and petrified inhabitants signal a world trapped under anthropocentric tyranny, a visual allegory that aligns with Braidotti's critique of the "violence of humanistic normalization" (Braidotti R. , 2013, p. 15). In post-anthropocentric terms, Narnia is not merely a backdrop for human transformation but a participatory agent in its own right. The White Witch's regime exemplifies anthropocentric control over nature: she freezes time and petrifies dissenters into stone. Mr. Tumnus, the faun who initially conspires with the Witch, describes her rule bitterly: "she that has got all Narnia under her thumb. It's she that makes it always winter. Always winter and never Christmas" (Lewis, 2009, p. 16). This artificial domination of seasonal rhythm embodies a rupture in what Braidotti calls the "nature-culture continuum" (Braidotti R. , 2013, p. 2), a model that replaces binary oppositions with immanent entanglement. Similarly, the eventual return of Aslan, the lion-king, catalyzes the reversal of this ecological and metaphysical stasis. Aslan's breath reanimates the stone creatures, and the landscape begins to thaw: "A tiny streak of gold began to run along his white marble back… then the color seemed to lick all over him as the flame licks all over a bit of paper… then the lion shook his mane… and gave a prodigious yawn" (Lewis, 2009, pp. 123-124) . Aslan's restorative agency resonates with Braidotti's conceptualization of zoe, which she defines as "the dynamic, self-organizing structure of life" that stands for "generative vitality" (Braidotti R. , 2013, p. 60). The symbolic reanimation of the stone bodies, read through this lens, constitutes a zoe-centric liberation, replacing petrification and control with movement, multiplicity, and renewal. Post-anthropocentrism also foregrounds ethical relations among species. In Narnia, talking animals and hybrid creatures are not metaphors for human traits but entities with their own narrative agency. When Lucy and Susan accompany Aslan in his final hours, their grief is not elevated above the non-human sorrow expressed by the trees and animals who also mourn. Aslan's sacrifice is communal, a moment of shared vulnerability that reflects what Braidotti calls "transversal subjectivity", which, in posthuman eco-philosophical contexts, functions to reinterpret the "web of interrelations that mark the contemporary subjects' relationship to their multiple ecologies" (Braidotti R. , 2013, p. 98). Another instance of this event is evident through Lucy's care for Mr. Tumnus, Susan and Peter's awe-struck humility before Aslan, and Edmund's eventual moral reckoning, Lucy pleads, "Please—Aslan, … can anything be done to save Edmund?" Aslan responds, "All shall be done … but it may be harder than you think" (Lewis, 2009, p. 94). This moment marks the ethical crux of the narrative, not in the assertion of heroic individuality but in the recognition of collective vulnerability and interdependence; a key trait of post-anthropocentricism. While this narrative dynamic decenters human exceptionalism, it simultaneously demands an ethical recalibration regarding the figuration of the child. Murris and Osgood (2022) problematize posthumanist discourse that risks dissolving the child subject in an attempt to decenter the human. They argue that traditional figuration often abstracts "the child" and that a more nuanced posthumanist approach must preserve ethical and political agency through relational entanglements (Murris, 2022, p. 4). Their concern over a "flat ontology" (p. 3) that obscures power dynamics resonates deeply with Braidotti's "negotiable identities," which emerge through specific multispecies interactions (Braidotti R. , 2013, p. 58). The Pevensie children, in their interactions with Narnia's animate world, provide narrative counterpoints to this concern. Far from being erased or abstracted, they remain ethically visible and active participants within a complex eco-ethical community. Their subjectivity is continually shaped through affective and ethical encounters with Aslan, the Beavers, and other non-human agents, affirming the importance of retaining child subjectivity within posthumanist analysis. *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (TLWW) operates as a subversive site that reconfigues the human subject through deterritorialization; Rosi Braidotti's notion of displacing the normative boundaries of identity and human exceptionalism. From the very moment Lucy enters the wardrobe, she crosses into a zone

beyond anthropocentric logic. Her entrance into Narnia, a landscape described as “snow under her feet and snowflakes falling through the air” (Lewis, 2009, p. 7), marks a departure from a human-centered world into a vibrant, self-organizing ecology. Braidotti’s concept of “deterritorialized differences” (Braidotti R. , 2013, p. 58) aligns with Lucy’s interactions with Mr. Tumnus, a faun whose emotional and moral complexity resists caricature. He is not a pedagogical tool but an ethical subject for he has become submissive to the evil white witch, he comments that his old father, “would never have done a thing like this.” (Lewis, 2009, p. 15). This dynamic parallels Danielsson’s assertion that nonhuman characters in children’s fiction act as “epistemological equals and ethical agents,” not mere allegorical figures (Danielsson, 2025, p. 1). Lucy’s subjectivity emerges in relational co-becoming with Mr. Tumnus, exemplifying Braidotti’s “expanded relational self” (Braidotti R. , 2013, p. 60). Furthermore, Lewis’s narrative challenges the classical humanist hierarchy as criticized by Braidotti, who rejects “the classical ideal of ‘Man’… the measure of all things” (Braidotti R. , 2013, p. 13). In contrast, Peter must listen to nonhuman agents like the Beavers, who deliver prophecy, political strategy, and moral instruction, skills traditionally reserved for humans. Sujinah et al. affirm this decentralization of human authority, noting that animals in children’s fiction are “entities of agency, comparable to humans” (Sujinah, 2024, p. 716). In TLWW, the Pevensie children are not colonizers but learners, transformed not through conquest but through interspecies contact. This ethical reorientation in children’s literature is further illuminated by Cheung’s (2024) investigation into Oliver Jeffers’s This Moose Belongs to Me. Her child-reader response study reveals how children rejected the protagonist’s logic of ownership and instead identified with the moose’s autonomous subjectivity. Such posthumanist literacy destabilizes the Enlightenment binary of human-animal and reimagines animals as ethical and spatial agents. Cheung’s concept of “collaborative morality,” centered on affective relationality (Braidotti R. , 2013, p. 191), is enacted throughout Lewis’s narrative. The relational ethic embodied by Lucy, Susan, and even Edmund, corresponds to children’s attunement to animal agency, much like the children in Cheung’s study who aligned themselves with nonhuman autonomy. In TLWW, Aslan, the Beavers, and even the thawing landscape model a zoe-affirming ethic that resists human sovereignty and promotes co-flourishing. This theme is reinforced by Zhen Lin and Guofang Li’s conception of posthuman children as “intra-active nodes” in a larger relational web, always learning with and through others, including nonhuman agents like animals, forests, and snow. By treating the wardrobe as a metaphysical threshold rather than a tool of human conquest, Lewis decenters human spatial authority and instead aligns with Braidotti’s claim that the posthuman condition “shifts the parameters that used to define anthropos” (Braidotti R. , 2013, p. 57). One of the most critical interventions of post-anthropocentrism lies in its capacity to reconceptualize ethics, not as a human monopoly, but as a shared responsibility of all life forms. Braidotti’s concept of zoe; “the dynamic, self-organizing structure of life itself stands for generative vitality” (Braidotti R. , 2013, p. 60), is dramatized in Lewis’s thaw motif. When Aslan returns, “A tiny streak of gold began to run along his white marble back” and the once-frozen creatures begin to animate (Lewis, 2009, p. 123). This moment is not merely metaphorical resurrection but the literal return of zoe. The transformation is multispecies and non-hierarchical. “Everywhere the statues were coming to life” (Lewis, 2009, p. 124), suggesting that vitality is dispersed, not centralized in the human body. Relational ethics, in Braidotti’s terms, requires "mutual interdependence and shared vulnerability" (Braidotti R. , 2013, p. 94). In Narnia, ethical action is always collective. Aslan’s sacrificial scene is witnessed and mourned not only by Lucy and Susan but also by animals and dryads and naiads alike. Their shared grief dismantles human-centered pathos and foregrounds affective communion across ontological boundaries. It resonates with Chengcheng You’s contention that anthropomorphism, when deployed responsibly, fosters "constructive interspecies bonds that take us beyond anthropocentrism" (You, 2020, p. 184). Furthermore, Lewis’s narrative consistently highlights acts of care between species. Mr. Beaver’s insistence that Aslan is “he isn’t safe. But he’s good” (Lewis, 2009, p. 59) redefines goodness through vulnerability and unpredictability,

distancing it from human rational control. These ethical encounters are not modeled on mastery or dominion, but on co-flourishing; an embodiment of what Braidotti calls "bioegalitarian values" (Braidotti R. , 2013, p. 68), where all forms of life matter intrinsically, not instrumentally. Symbolism in Lewis's narrative is not fixed in theological allegory but fluidly resonates with posthuman strategies. The most striking example lies in the White Witch's petrification of living beings. Her reign is one of symbolic freezing, literally and figuratively. Her spell enforces a world where "it is always winter in Narnia … but is never gets to Christmas" (Lewis, 2009, p. 31), a condition of temporal and ontological stasis. She turns creatures to stone, transforming animate subjects into inert objects. In Braidottian terms, the Witch is the personification of anthropocentric sovereignty, denying difference and change. In contrast, Aslan's breath restores not just motion but *difference* as Loin's statue comes back to life. This scene is emblematic of Braidotti's zoe-driven ethics; a restoration not of sameness but of multiplicity. As Danielsson notes, characters like the puma in Linklater's text resist "narratives of dominance" (Danielsson, 2025, p. 3), acting instead as moral actors who educate by existing *alongside*, not *below*, the human child. Similarly, Aslan's non-human collaborators, beavers, birds, trees, leopards, are integral to narrative progression and ethical transformation. Even plot resolution resists human exclusivity. Edmund's redemption arc, for example, is enacted not through heroic deeds but through quiet recognition and collective forgiveness: "Here is your brother," said Aslan, "and—there is no need to talk to him about what is past" (Lewis, 2009, p. 101). This restorative justice reflects Braidotti's ideal of "ethical accountability" grounded in collective vulnerability, not punitive power (Braidotti R. , 2013, p. 15). Lewis constructs spatial symbolism that undercuts anthropocentric centrality. The wardrobe, far from being a portal of conquest, is a threshold of deterritorialization. Upon re-entering Narnia, the children find themselves dwarfed by its vastness, governed not by them but by forces they must align with. The natural world is not to be subdued but to be interpreted, responded to, and respected. The forest resists, the rivers aid, the winds communicate. In this way, Lewis dramatizes what Braidotti articulates as "the shifting boundaries between the human and its others" (Braidotti R. , 2013, p. 70). Each Pevensie child becomes a posthuman subject through relational encounters. Edmund, initially corrupted by ego and anthropocentric desire symbolized by his obsession with Turkish Delight), undergoes affective transformation through Aslan's embodied mercy. His return to the siblings is marked not by punishment but integration, a move Braidotti would interpret as a shift from "entitlements to responsibilities". Susan, often criticized in traditional readings, undergoes a quieter transformation. Her emotional response to Aslan's death, "she cried, knelt, and touched his mane," is a somatic act of posthuman mourning which Braidotti contends as "fantasmatic dimension of human–animal interaction" (Braidotti R. , 2013, p. 69). Susan's emotional knowledge complements Peter's militarized leadership, offering an alternative literacy what Lin and Li call a "material and affective entanglement" essential for meaning-making beyond logocentric models. Lucy, the youngest and most intuitive, best embodies Braidotti's "zoe-centric" subject. Her wonder, vulnerability, and openness allow her to forge deep emotional bonds across species boundaries. Her first interaction with Mr. Tumnus is not based on fear or utility but mutual curiosity and compassion. She listens. She believes. Danielsson's description of the puma and falcon as teaching empathy and imagination in *The Wind on the Moon* (Danielsson, 2025, p. 3) parallels Lucy's bond with Tumnus and the Beavers. She grows not by asserting herself over others, but by being changed through connection. Importantly, none of the children return from Narnia as mere extensions of their initial selves. Their identities have been renegotiated and expanded across boundaries of species, gender, and age. As Braidotti observes, posthumanism introduces "new, dynamic and negotiable identities" (Braidotti R. , 2013, p. 58). The Pevensie children are crowned kings and queens not as rulers above nature, but as participants within a larger ecological and ethical polity. Their rule is marked not by domination, but by mutuality. The cheers of "Long live King Peter! Long Live Queen Susan! Long Live King Edmund! Long Live Queen Lucy!" (Lewis, 2009, p. 137) echo not just the coronation of human figures, but the affirmation of post-

anthropocentric belonging. Thus, character development in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* serves as a narrative tool for enacting Braidotti's posthuman ethics. Each arc reflects a departure from anthropocentric logic; rationalism, individualism, control, toward affective, embodied, and interspecies entanglement. Lewis, intentionally or not, imagines a world where human centrality dissolves into relational ecology, where identity is always becoming, always shared.

## Conclusion

This study has reconfigured *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* through Rosi Braidotti's post-anthropocentric framework, revealing a narrative that transcends traditional humanist allegory. By decentering human exceptionalism and foregrounding zoe, relational subjectivity, and ethical entanglement, Lewis's Narnia emerges as a speculative space where non-human agency and interspecies bonds shape the moral landscape. The Pevensie children's transformations illustrate negotiable identities, formed through affective alliances rather than hierarchical dominance. Aslan's breath, the sentient forest, and the mournful trees offer vital interventions into anthropocentric discourse, embodying Braidotti's call to affirm life's interconnectedness. In drawing from posthumanist literature and theory, this paper demonstrates that children's literature can function as an ethical blueprint for rethinking subjectivity, justice, and co-existence. Ultimately, Lewis's fantastical world anticipates a post-anthropocentric imaginary, one in which human beings are not rulers, but participants in a vibrant, more-than-human continuum.

## Delimitation and Study Forward

This research is delimited to exploring post-anthropocentrism within the theoretical boundaries set by Rosi Braidotti's *The Posthuman* (2013) and focusing exclusively on C.S. Lewis's *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. The study specifically engages with Braidotti's notions of zoe-centric subjectivity and relational ethics, thus excluding other posthumanist frameworks and broader cultural contexts. Future research can expand on this work by applying diverse posthumanist theories across various cultural narratives beyond the European context of Narnia. Additionally, scholars are encouraged to explore alternative theoretical variables and cross-cultural interpretations to deepen the understanding of post-anthropocentric ethics in global children's literature.

## Conflict of Interest and Ethical Standards

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest with any organization related to this research. Furthermore, no unethical practices, including plagiarism or any other forms of academic misconduct, were involved during this study. All research was conducted in adherence to the highest ethical standards.


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## Authors' Contribution

Yasra Sani, as the first and corresponding author, was responsible for the conceptualization and drafting of the manuscript.

Miss Sobia Sikander, as the second author, provided supervision, feedback, and suggestions for revisions throughout the research process.

Mahpara, as the third author, reviewed the manuscript and suggested minor changes to enhance the overall clarity and coherence.

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