



Doctor Who's Ecocritical Revisit to Narnia*

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ABSTRACT

This article analyses the writers Steven Moffat and Sydney Newman and the director Farren Blackburn's *Doctor Who* Christmas Special episode titled "The Doctor, the Widow and the Wardrobe" (2011) as a retelling of C. S. Lewis's *The Magician's Nephew* (1955) and *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (1950) with cross-references to the two books in the light of ecocritical theory. Employing Jane Caputi's terminology, the article argues that "The Doctor, the Widow and the Wardrobe" is an invocation of the "Mutha," that is, Mother Nature-Earth. The article asserts that as opposed to Digory's ill mother Mabel and not so brave or competent Susan and Lucy respectively in the first and second books and unlike what Father Christmas claims in the second book, Madge, akin to the "Mutha," demonstrates in the episode through her kindness, resilience, and wits that battles do not get ugly when women come to the aid of those that are in danger—be they human or non-human. It illustrates that the books accommodate both arcadian and imperial ecologies whereas the episode offers arcadian ecology as a countermeasure against imperial ecology. This article states that the episode not only condemns wars and ecocide like the two books do, but also refers to the imperialism and colonialism and rectifies the speciesism and sexism in the two books.

Keywords: C. S. Lewis, *The Magician's Nephew*, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, *Doctor Who*, ecocriticism



Introduction

The BBC series *Doctor Who* (1963-1989, 2005-) has achieved almost instant popularity and eventually a cult status not only in British culture but also in global popular culture. While the long-running science fiction series follows an alien called the Doctor and his human companions on their travels in time and space, its narrative plot focuses on humanity, in the sense of being both human and humane. The writers Steven Moffat and Sydney Newman and the director Farren Blackburn's *Doctor Who* Christmas Special episode titled "The Doctor, the Widow and the Wardrobe" (2011) is an ecocritical retelling of C. S. Lewis's *The Magician's Nephew* (1955) and *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (1950). *The Magician's Nephew*, written as a prequel, was the sixth of the seven books of *The Chronicles of Narnia* (1950-1956) to be published whereas *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* was the first to be written and published. Following the internal chronology of *The Chronicles*, however, *The Magician's Nephew* and *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* are respectively the first and the second books. *The Chronicles of Narnia*, a classic mythopoeic and epic fantasy fiction series, traces coming-of-age characters' travels to and in the fantasy world of Narnia and concerns itself with the Ur-plot of good versus evil. In *The Magician's Nephew*, two soon-to-be-teenage children Polly Plummer and Digory Kirke are tricked into travelling from London to other worlds; they witness Aslan, a lion, creating the land of Narnia and do their part to ensure the land's protection from the wicked White Witch Jadis whom Digory brought to Narnia, albeit unintentionally. In *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, Digory Kirke is a middle-aged professor who hosts four children, Peter (13), Susan (12), Edmund (10) and Lucy Pevensie (8). The Pevensie children travel to Narnia through the magical wardrobe in the spare room of the Professor's house in the English countryside. They help Aslan save Narnia from the evil reign of the White Witch and serve the land as its kings and queens until their return to their own world at the end of the novel. The *Doctor Who* episode, like the two books, condemns wars and ecocide, but, at the same time, it brings to light the imperialism and colonialism and amends the speciesism and sexism of the two books by emphasizing the ecological interconnectedness, interdependence and harmonious coexistence of all species. The episode invokes the "Mutha," Mother Nature-Earth, and proposes new ways of being and acting instead of reproducing the Anthropocene like the "intellectual-techno-military-industrial-consumer global complex" does by committing ecocide through misuse of science and technology (Caputi, 2020, pp. 4, 13).

The two books and the episode take their characters from “the here and now of sensory immediacy and confusion” (Jameson, 2009, p. 1532). Through defamiliarization, the characters and the readers/audience are able to view themselves and their world from a fresh vantage point. In *The Magician’s Nephew*, Polly Plummer and Digory Kirke go from late nineteenth-century London to the Wood between the Worlds, to Charn, and to the land of Narnia by touching magical rings. The second time they travel to the Wood between the Worlds and find their way to Narnia, they are accompanied by Digory’s uncle Andrew Ketterly, the White Witch, the Empress Jadis, the hansom cab driver Frank and his horse Strawberry. In *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, Peter, Susan, Edmund and Lucy Pevensie, who have evacuated London during World War II because of the air raids to stay with the now old Professor Digory Kirke in his country house, travel to Narnia through a magical wardrobe. Likewise, in “The Doctor, the Widow and the Wardrobe,” Madge Arwell and her two children Lily and Cyril evacuate their hometown during World War II because of the bombings to stay at their Uncle Digby’s country house. The Arwells and the Doctor, a time-travelling Time Lord, an alien species, travel from 1941 Dorset to an alien planet, Androzani Major, and to the future, to the year 5345, through a portal inside a huge Christmas present box wrapped in TARDIS blue paper, TARDIS being the space and time craft of the Time Lords. Moreover, using Madge as their lifeboat, the lifeforce of the Androzani trees evacuate their planet because of the human-caused acid rain. Fredric Jameson avers that war can turn “the familiar into the alien, the *heimlich* [secret] into the *unheimlich* [frightening], . . . the known world, the real, and the everyday . . . into a place of unimaginable horror” (2009, p. 1538). The Pevensie children and the Arwells witness this twice: first in their own world and then in the secondary worlds. Notwithstanding, on Androzani Major it is ecocide, not war, that turns the *heimlich* into the *unheimlich*.

Arcadian and Imperial Ecologies

To use Donald Worster’s terminology, *The Magician’s Nephew* and *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* delineate both arcadian and imperial ecologies. Arcadian ecology embraces a life of “peaceful coexistence with other organisms” as opposed to imperial ecology which champions “man’s dominion over nature” by reason and hard work (Worster, 1977, p. 2; Oelschlaeger, 1991, p. 103). In *The Magician’s Nephew*, Polly, Digory and Frank’s reactions to Aslan’s song and to the creation of Narnia, their relationship with nature and non-human beings parallel arcadian ecology’s “empathetic view of wild nature” (Oelschlaeger, 1991, p. 104). They start singing a harvest thanksgiving

hymn and then enjoy Aslan's singing Narnia into existence with "open mouths and shining eyes." Jadis and Uncle Andrew, on the other hand, do not appreciate it at all. They are more interested in destruction and commodification. Jadis "would have smashed that whole world, or all the worlds, to pieces, if it would only stop the singing" (Lewis, 2002b, pp. 94, 95). In *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, the Faun Mr. Tumnus tells Lucy that Jadis tempers with Narnia's climate and seasons, and for that reason, it is always winter. Tumnus reminisces about the arcadian past of Narnia before the everlasting winter when life in the forest was utter "jollification" with midnight dances, feasting and treasure-seeking (Lewis, 2002a, pp. 17, 20-21). He thus associates peace and mirth with natural ecological order. Since Jadis subjugated Narnia, she has been making the Narnians her spies and slaves, torturing and turning them into stone statues.

Katherine Langrish indicates that "Narnia under the Witch is literally a police state" (2021, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* chapter, para. 30). As a matter of fact, Tumnus is under strict orders to catch and hand over to her any Sons of Adam or Daughters of Eve if he ever sees one in the wood (Lewis, 2002a, p. 24). He gives a fairly detailed and graphic description of what Jadis will do to him if he does not hand Lucy over to her:

"she'll have my tail cut off, and my horns sawn off, and my beard plucked out, and she'll wave her wand over my beautiful cloven hoofs and turn them into horrid solid hoofs like a wretched horse's. And if she is extra and specially angry[,] she'll turn me into stone and I shall be only a statue of a Faun in her horrible house . . ." (Lewis, 2002a, p. 24)

Jadis's wide "dry, grim, stony" courtyard of stone menagerie reflects the lack of flora in her abode with no sound or movement as opposed to "all the grass and waving trees and sparkling streams of the forest, and the blue hills beyond that." Initially, Lucy likens Jadis's courtyard full of stone statues of animals and humans to a museum. However, once Aslan starts breathing the statues back to life, the courtyard looks "more like a zoo" than a museum (Lewis, 2002a, pp. 86, 157, 151-153). In other words, besides the "taxidermized remains" of animals in museums, Jadis's courtyard of stone menagerie brings to mind the colonial zoos and their "ideological functions": "Education, entertainment, and imperial display . . . to reinforce state sovereignty" (Saha, 2022, pp. 13, 178-179). Reminiscent of the imperialist and colonialist museums and zoos, which turn humans and animals into commodities and demonstrate the extent of the imperialist

and colonialist reach, this display of animals and humans petrified by Jadis serves as a spectacle of power as well as fear.

Despite the emphasis on the ecological interconnectedness of all life in Narnia before the subjugation of Jadis, “the only legitimate rulers are those sons and daughters of Adam and Eve who adhere to Christian conceptions of morality and stewardship” (Echterling, 2016, p. 102). Jadis, thus, has no right to be the queen of Narnia, not simply because she is a malevolent usurper, but because she is believed to be Lilith, one of the Jinn, or a giant, because “there isn’t a drop of real human blood” in her (Lewis, 2002a, pp. 41, 48, 67). Carol J. Adams and Lori Gruen accentuate that “basically the Great Chain of Being puts white cis-men right below God at the top of a supposedly ‘natural’ hierarchy, with other humans below them, animals below the humans, plants below the animals, and inanimate things below plants” (2022, p. 4). On that account, in *The Magician’s Nephew*, Aslan appoints Frank, the hansom cab driver, a white English man, as the first arcadian king of Narnia. In *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, Aslan announces that Peter Pevensie, a white English boy, will be the High King of Narnia and his younger white English siblings will rule Narnia as kings and queens. Although Aslan lists among the duties of King Frank ruling over all “creatures kindly and fairly” without having favourites (Lewis, 2002b, p. 129), there is speciesism towards Dumb Beasts and certain species of non-human others such as giants who are claimed to be “[n]ot very clever,” yet some of whom are kind (Lewis, 2002a, p. 158). During the creation of Narnia, Aslan gives the gift of speech to “one pair out of every kind of beasts” he creates, and then he makes a distinction between the Talking Beasts and Dumb Beasts (Lewis, 2002b, p. 116). Regardless, the sons of Adam and the daughters of Eve are to govern all beasts and other non-human beings, be they talking or dumb. As Mr. Beaver, being a Talking Beast, insists when the Beavers and the Pevensie children are about to approach and meet Aslan in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, “Sons of Adam before animals” (Lewis, 2002a, p. 117). Accordingly, when Digory and Polly fly over Narnia on the back of a winged horse, when Aslan shows Cair Paravel to Peter from the edge of a hilltop and Jadis’s castle to Susan and Lucy from the top of a steep hillside, the gaze of the children “is elevated into a superior position whereby landscape . . . is subjugated to the (colonial) gaze” (Lewis, 2002b, pp. 135-139; Lewis, 2002a, pp. 119, 150; Filipova, 2022, p. 100). The children have a “high vantage point or knowledgeable position,” a “commanding perspective,” which Elleke Boehmer also calls “the colonial gaze” (2005, p. 68; Subramanian, 2020, pp. 371-372).

Aishwarya Subramanian maintains that “the secondary world fantasy space” acts as “a repository for colonial desire, as well as a space for the working out of postimperial anxieties” (2020, p. 371). In that regard, Jadis and Uncle Andrew in *The Magician's Nephew* and *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* are the “hostile and unexpected foreign” invaders (Phillips, 2015, p. 67). They share “the same hungry and greedy look.” Neither are interested in human beings or non-human others “unless they can use them; they are terribly practical” (Lewis, 2002b, pp. 62, 71, 116). Along with many other worlds such as Felinda, Sorlois and Bramandin, Jadis destroyed Charn using the secret Deplorable Word, which destroys “all living things except the one who spoke it.” Charn was once “a great city, the city of the King of Kings, the wonder of the world, perhaps of all worlds” (Lewis, 2002b, pp. 60, 59). Langrish points out that the name Charn has “strong undertones of ‘charnel house’” and the Deplorable Word “is an unmistakable metaphor for the atom bomb” (2021, *The Magician's Nephew* chapter, para. 27, 28).

Similarly, Uncle Andrew represents imperial ecology which sees human beings not as a part of nature, but as its master and controller (Oelschlaeger, 1991, p. 105). His view of the land of Narnia echoes Max Oelschlaeger's very definition of imperial ecology. As far as Uncle Andrew is concerned, Narnia is “analogous to a factory to manufacture an upending stream of products for human consumption” and has “only instrumental and not intrinsic value” (Oelschlaeger, 1991, p. 105). Seeing that the iron bar, which Jadis has torn off a lamp-post in London, brought along and thrown at Aslan in Narnia, falls on the grass, takes root and starts to grow into a lamp-post prompts Uncle Andrew to compare himself to Christopher Columbus and to revel in the “commercial possibilities of this country”:

“Bring a few old bits of scrap iron here, bury ‘em, and up they come as brand new railway engines, battleships, anything you please. They'll cost nothing, and I can sell them at full prices in England. I shall be a millionaire. And then the climate! . . . I can run a health resort. . . The first thing is to get that brute [Aslan] shot.” (Lewis, 2002b, pp. 102-103)

In order to get Aslan shot dead, he plans to bring a big-game hunter to Narnia. Frank's response is “Guns be blowed.” Respectively, Uncle Andrew thinks throwing an iron bar at Aslan “was a spirited thing” whereas Polly stresses “[i]t was a wicked thing to do” (Lewis, 2002b, pp. 101, 102). Uncle Andrew's penchant for imperial ecology and his plan to profit from the death of Aslan align with what Digory's father and Britain at large have been doing in India and the “wonderful news” of the death of Old Great-

Uncle Kirke which means Digory's father, who is now very rich, can retire, and leave India as his mother discloses (Lewis, 2002b, p. 169). Langrish argues that "[a]ll the 'bad' characters in the Narnia books—even the ones who later reform . . .—indulge in fantasies of technology and modernisation." For that matter, "Edmund plans how many cars he will have" and "his private cinema and where the principal railways would run" (2021, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* chapter, para. 37; Lewis, 2002a, p. 84).

Technological Tools for Destruction and Exploitation

Jane Caputi states that "those who are responsible for and benefit from the Anthropocene" are "specifically the ones standing atop an intellectual-techno-military-industrial-consumer global complex" (2020, p. 13). Correspondingly, *The Magician's Nephew*, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* and "The Doctor, the Widow and the Wardrobe" suggest that the burden of "environmental caretaking" falls on the shoulders of human beings who commit ecocide through colonization and through misuse of science and technology (Phillips, 2015, p. 66). Lewis advocates that

Magic and "science" are twins *et pour cause*, for the magician and the scientist both stand together, . . . in so far as both make Power their aim, believe Power to be attainable by a technique, and in the practice of that technique are ready to defy ordinary morality. (2009, p. 475)

As Matthew Dickerson and David O'Hara clarify, Lewis's "real complaint is not with pure science, but with the application of science as a means to power: science not for the sake of knowledge, but as a technological tool for exploitation" (2009, p. 96). For instance, in *The Magician's Nephew*, Jadis uses magic, a substitute for science and technology, to turn people into dust and destroy their worlds, to temper with the climate of Narnia and subjugate its inhabitants. Uncle Andrew experiments on guinea pigs and on Polly and Digory to send them to another world and then to draw them back, using the magic rings he made out of the dust in an Atlantean box. In line with rights theory and utilitarianism, both Jadis and Uncle Andrew "dispense with sympathy, empathy, and compassion as relevant ethical and epistemological sources for human treatment of" non-human and human beings alike (Donovan, 2022, p. 48).

In spite of the fact that he is the magician in the title of the novel, Uncle Andrew actually has "no real Magic" of his own in his "blood and heart" (Lewis, 2002b, p. 70). His

godmother Mrs. Lefay, "one of the last mortals in this country who had fairy blood in her," gives him the Atlantean box a few days before her death, asking him to burn it "with certain ceremonies" and without ever opening it (Lewis, 2002b, pp. 22-24). Nevertheless, Uncle Andrew who, like Jadis, sees himself above the rules by virtue of his intelligence, disrespects his godmother's dying wish and keeps and examines the box and the dust inside it. He eventually manages to usurp the dust, which "had been brought from another world when our world was only just beginning," to make two sets of rings: yellow rings to travel to another world and green rings to come back to earth (Lewis, 2002b, p. 25).

As a result, Uncle Andrew and Digory are directly, if not solely, responsible for the ecological destruction and tyranny of Jadis in Narnia. If Uncle Andrew had destroyed the box as he was supposed to do, Digory and Polly would not have travelled to Charn in the first place. If Digory had not struck the bell in Charn out of curiosity and childish foolishness, he would not have broken the spell and awakened Jadis. If he had not turned back in the Wood Between the Worlds, he would not have allowed Jadis to thus catch hold of him and follow him and Polly back to London. He would not have eventually led her to the newly created Narnia as "an old evil" (Lewis, 2002b, pp. 72, 111). Hence, "as Adam's race has done the harm," expresses Aslan, "Adam's race shall help to heal it" (Lewis, 2002b, p. 126).

Digory is to help by planting two trees: one in Narnia to protect the land against Jadis for many years and one back home in London together with Uncle Andrew's magic rings to make sure that "no one can use them again." First, Aslan charges Digory with the task of bringing a silver apple, "the apple of youth, the apple of life," from a tree in the centre of a garden in the Western Wild outside of Narnia. Then, Aslan tells him to throw that apple towards a river bank in Narnia and to pluck a silver apple from the tree that grows presently where he has thrown the apple to take home to his mother to heal her. Digory feeds the apple to his mother and buries its core in the back garden of the Ketterly house together with the rings (Lewis, 2002b, pp. 132-133, 150, 154, 161-163, 167-169). Likewise, in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, the Pevensie children are commended as sovereigns for saving "good trees from being unnecessarily cut down" among their other accomplishments (Lewis, 2002a, p. 166).

It is also telling that their means, tools and technology fail the characters when used for selfish reasons, greed, exploitation or destruction. In *The Magician's Nephew* Jadis

slithers into the garden in the Western Wild, most probably climbing over the wall, and steals a silver apple, entirely disregarding the warning written at the gates of the garden, which reads:

*Come in by the gold gates or not at all,
Take of my fruit for others or forbear,
For those who steal or those who climb my wall
Shall find their heart's desire and find despair.* (Lewis, 2002b, p. 146)

The juice of the apple that Jadis steals out of sheer greed for immortality leaves “a horrid stain round her mouth” and turns her face into a “deadly white” as if to mark her for the selfish and revolting deed she has committed. Aslan admits that she will have “unwearying strength and endless days like a goddess. But length of days with an evil heart is only length of misery and already she begins to know it.” Hence, Jadis asks Digory to eat a silver apple, too, so that they can rule Narnia or Digory’s world together, and she will not have to live forever alone (Lewis, 2002b, pp. 149, 162, 150).

On that note, although the apple Digory plucks from the tree that he has planted in Narnia and takes to his terminally ill mother Mabel does not “give endless life” in his world, it does, nonetheless, heal her because it is not stolen. In fact, Aslan bestows it upon Digory or rather his mother Mabel. Aslan tells Digory that “it would have healed her” even if he had stolen the apple. Yet, the consequences would have been so dire that “she would have looked back and said that it would have been better to die of that illness” (Lewis, 2002b, pp. 163, 167-168, 162). Aslan affirms that

“the fruit always works—it must work—but it does not work happily for any who pluck it at their own will. If any Narnian, unbidden, had stolen an apple and planted it here to protect Narnia, it would have protected Narnia. But it would have done so by making Narnia into another strong and cruel empire like Charn, not the kindly land I mean it to be.” (Lewis, 2002b, pp. 162-163)

That is why Aslan asks Digory to fulfil the task of planting a tree to protect Narnia. Not being a Narnian, Digory will not be acting out of selfishness just like he is not being selfish when it is Aslan who tells him to take an apple of youth to heal his mother.

Comparably, usurping the magical powers of the dust in the Atlantean box to travel to other worlds does not enable Uncle Andrew to realize his dreams of commodifying Narnia, either. Instead, as a result of trying exceedingly hard “to make himself believe that he could hear nothing but roaring,” barking, and grunting whenever Aslan or Talking Beasts speak, he turns into a Dumb Beast himself, or “a vegetable, or [a] mineral,” for the Talking Beasts cannot tell what he is at all. He cannot understand the speech of the Talking Beasts no matter how hard they try to communicate and reason with him (Lewis, 2002b, pp. 116-117, 119). Similarly, in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, her knowledge of the Deep Magic from the Dawn of Time does not permit Jadis to actually kill Aslan, then kill Edmund as well, and continue her tyrannical rule over Narnia for good. Jadis demands Edmund’s life in compliance with the Deep Magic, which says that “every traitor belongs to [Jadis] as [her] lawful prey and that for every treachery [she has] a right to a kill.” She declares that unless she has “blood as the Law says[,] all Narnia will be overturned and perish in fire and water.” Knowing too well the Deeper Magic from Before the Dawn of Time besides the Deep Magic, Aslan offers his own life instead of Edmund’s. Since Aslan is “a willing victim who had committed no treachery . . . killed in a traitor’s stead,” he comes back from the dead in accordance with the Deeper Magic, thus ruining Jadis’s scheme (Lewis, 2002a, pp. 128, 129, 148).

Invocation of Madge as the “Mutha”

In “The Doctor, the Widow and the Wardrobe,” gender and biology emerge as ecological concepts. Indeed, the episode is an invocation of the “Mutha,” Mother Nature-Earth in Caputi’s words. Caputi maintains that the “Mutha” has the power to end or begin ways of being and acting. “Calling the ‘Mutha’ is to refuse to reproduce the Anthropocene and to create something new” (2020, p. 4). By overturning the patriarchal hierarchy and discourse seen in *The Magician’s Nephew* and *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, Madge reflects how ecofeminism offers new ways of being and acting. Believing that “battles are ugly when women fight,” in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, Father Christmas does not give Lucy a chance to prove she “could be brave enough.” His gifts, “tools not toys,” for Peter, Susan and Lucy further emphasize this sexist notion: a shield and a sword for Peter, a bow, a quiver full of arrows and a horn for Susan, and a bottle of cordial and a dagger for Lucy. Susan and Lucy are to use the bow and the dagger “only in great need” as Father Christmas does not want the two girls to fight in the battle. Apparently, Susan needs a bow which “does not easily miss” and a horn which ensures that “help of some kind will come” when blown even

though Peter's sword and shield have no such magical enhancements. So, the "tools" of the girls are intended to compensate for their alleged lack of skills. They are only meant for self-defence, nursing and healing (Lewis, 2002a, pp. 101, 100, 119, 120).

Madge is quite unlike Lucy who runs to Peter, or Susan who almost faints while trying but failing to climb a tree in the face of danger, or Digory's terminally ill, invalid mother Mabel, for that matter. Instead, she is rather like Caputi's "Mutha." Initially, she only wishes to give her children a happy Christmas before telling them that their father's plane is lost over the Channel. In order to fulfil Madge's wish, the Doctor welcomes them as the Caretaker of Uncle Digby's country house on Christmas Eve because Madge found and helped him three years ago on a Christmas Eve. Back then he told her to make a wish if there was anything he could do for her in return for her kindness and care. In a sense, the Doctor is evocative of the White Stag in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* that grants the wishes of those who catch him. Furthermore, Uncle Digby's country house, of course, brings to mind the old Professor Digory Kirke's country house in the same novel, except with a TARDIS in one of its rooms instead of a magical wardrobe to Narnia. The Doctor tells Lily that the TARDIS is his wardrobe which he painted to look like a phone box.

"The Doctor, the Widow and the Wardrobe" firmly advocates for arcadian ecology and clearly condemns imperial ecology. Just like the old Charn, the alien planet Androzani Major used to be "the safest planet" with "naturally occurring Christmas trees" (Moffat & Newman, 2011). In the episode, in the year 5345 the Earth is using science and technology to colonise Androzani Major and to commit ecocide. It employs militarised harvest rangers and uses satellites to spray acid on Androzani trees to melt them down for battery fluid. Representing the "hostile and unexpected foreign" invaders and the "intellectual-techno-military-industrial-consumer global complex," the armed and armoured harvesters want to turn the source (the trees) into resource (battery); they view the Androzani trees as "exploitable resource[s]" (Phillips, 2015, p. 67; Caputi, 2020, pp. 13, 5, 8). Lenka Filipova, likewise, contends that "the development of the empire was most often accomplished via mechanisms of intensive land use and resource extraction . . . at the expense of the health of the local environment, both human and non-human" (2022, p. 94). Hence, the lifeforce of the trees are forced to resort to interplanetary migration and to time travel to escape ecocide through incineration.

By giving consciousness and reason to the trees, the episode underlines the need to embrace the "idea of nature-as-an-organism as an alternative to the idea of nature-

as-a-machine" (Oelschlaeger, 1991, p. 129). The trees are scared and screaming. The Doctor mistakenly tells Lily that the pure life force of the trees leaving them makes it look like "stars coming out" of them and that the trees are singing (Moffat & Newman, 2011). Lily cries, thinking it is beautiful. Cyril contrarily is connected to the trees via the coronet on his head; therefore, he can actually hear them screaming. Later on in the episode, Madge, similar to Digory and the Pevensie children, who take on the burden of ecological protection, saves the Androzani trees from being melted down by helping them evacuate their home planet, for "[t]hey need to travel inside a living thing" (Moffat & Newman, 2011). In that regard, the care of the Arwells for the Androzani trees echoes what Lori Gruen calls "*entangled empathy*," "a particular version of an ethic care that . . . provides a way of thinking about how to develop caring attention towards others" (Adams & Gruen, 2022, p. 41). Because the Androzani trees are sentient, the way the Arwells interact with them also recalls Josephine Donovan's explanation of the "message of the feminist animal care theorists": "listening to animals [the Androzani trees in this case] paying emotional attention, taking seriously—*caring about*—what they are telling us" (2022, p. 48).

Due to the fact that natural fabrics interfere with the scanners of the harvest rangers, Madge manages to outwit them. The rangers cannot tell the difference between wool and side arms, which benefits Madge, who happens to be carrying a revolver in the pocket of her woollen coat. On the same note, the Doctor's sonic screwdriver is useless against the wooden door and the wooden aliens, that is the Wooden Queen and the Wooden King of the Androzani trees. Bearing in mind that, in the two books and the episode, their tools and technology fail the characters who use them for destruction and that this episode condemns war and ecocide, the Eleventh Doctor's sonic screwdriver failing him reminds the audience of the Eighth Doctor's involvement in the Time War (Phillips, 2020, Transmedia traditions section, para. 1). The Eighth Doctor initially "refused to fight and intervened only to help the victims." However, after he "was blamed for the continuing deaths" and for the threat to all reality, he regenerated, albeit reluctantly, into a warrior and "fought on the front line," leading the "Time Lords in battle against the Daleks" for decades. Eventually, the War Doctor used the Moment, a "weapon of ultimate mass destruction," like the Deplorable Word in *The Magician's Nephew*, to commit genocide against both the Daleks and the Gallifreyans, his own species, so as to end the Time War (Tribe, 2017, Gallifrey Falls... chapter, para. 15-16, 19-20). Moreover, Madge's Flight Lieutenant husband Reg and his co-pilot are bomber pilots, bringing death and destruction. Hence, their plane "was damaged, and his instruments failed him" (Moffat & Newman,

2011). It is Madge who lights the way for Reg on an otherwise cloudy, moonless, and starless night and leads him to the country house in time for Christmas when she flies through the Time Vortex with her head full of trees, thinking of home and what she misses most about home, that is, her husband. When Madge asks the Doctor to fly them home, he says that he does not have a home to think of. Like Charn and many other worlds destroyed by Jadis, the Doctor's home planet Gallifrey was believed to be destroyed in the Time War. It was nevertheless revealed later on in the series that Gallifrey was "saved from annihilation by the combined forces of thirteen Doctors" and remained "frozen in a parallel pocket universe" (Tribe, 2017, Preface, para. 5).

Contrary to the rangers, the Doctor and Reg, whose tools and technology fail them, Madge has always been good with tools and gets a bit better with vehicles and technology. She is certainly not good at riding a bicycle or driving a car at the beginning of the episode. Even so, she can drive a giant Androzani harvester towards the end of the episode after taking a quick look at its manual despite being told that it takes years of training to learn how to drive one. This is a substantial advancement from being good with a hair pin as she bragged and demonstrated to the Doctor three years ago while picking the lock of a police box to let him in because he mistook it for his TARDIS. It should be noted that Madge uses tools, vehicles and technology as a means to aid and protect others, not as a means of power to exploit and destroy human and non-human ecologies. She metaphorically and literally disarms the rangers by crying during their interrogation; once they all put their guns down on the ground, she pulls out the revolver from the pocket of her coat and aims it at them to find her children (Frankel, 2018, Hero Mom: The Sarah Jane Adventures chapter, para. 19-20). Carrying the Androzani trees inside her head thanks to the coronet the Wooden Queen puts on her head, she flies a forest through the Time Vortex and saves a whole world along with her children, the Doctor, her husband and his co-pilot all at the same time.

That is why her children and the Androzani trees turn to Madge for help rather than the Doctor. Appropriately, Cyril insists: "We wait for Mummy. Mummy always comes" (Moffat & Newman, 2011). Correspondingly, the Androzani trees believed in a prophecy foretelling the coming of their saviour. The Doctor and the audience assume that the Wooden Queen means the Doctor when she, using Cyril's body, says, "Your coming was foretold" (Moffat & Newman, 2011). Yet, both the Doctor and the audience are proven wrong when the Wooden Queen declares that the Doctor is not the one as he is weak whereas Madge is strong and puts the coronet on her head. As far as the Androzani trees are concerned, Cyril and the

Doctor, that is men, are weak whereas Lily and Madge, that is women, are strong since the latter are respectively actual and potential child bearers. Madge, being a woman and a mother, is strong enough to be their mothership. The Doctor explains that it is "[t]ranslated from the base code of nature itself" (Moffat & Newman, 2011).

Akin to Mary Daly's definition of divinity, Madge is a "form-destroying, form-creating, transforming power that makes all things new" (1985, p. 43; Caputi, 2020, p. 191). Accordingly, following their forced time travel and inter-planetary migration to Earth in the head of Madge, the lifeforce of the Androzani trees find peace among the stars and shine happily. As Valerie Estelle Frankel stresses, the reason why the Androzani trees choose Madge has to do with her nature, too, as she has always "[b]een taking home strays" (2018, Hero Mom: The Sarah Jane Adventures chapter, para. 23; Moffat & Newman, 2011). Reg used to follow her home from the dairy where she worked until she agreed to marry him. She takes care of the Doctor and invites him to her home at the beginning of the episode. Ultimately, she leads her husband and her co-pilot back home to Uncle Digby's country house by Christmas morning at the end of the episode.

Madge plays the role of Aslan and a Mother Ship to the Androzani trees, and Mother Christmas, as the Doctor dubs her, to her family, to the family of her husband's co-pilot, to the Doctor and the Ponds. She gives the Doctor his "[h]umany wumany" moment by insisting that he must be with his friends on Christmas and thereby causing him to shed tears of joy for the first time upon reuniting with the Ponds at the end of this episode (Moffat & Newman, 2011). As a matter of fact, Madge exhibits both aspects of Father Christmas portrayed in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. When the Doctor meets her for the first time before the war breaks, she is "funny and jolly" like the "Father Christmas in our world." The second time the Doctor sees her, she has received a telegram informing her that her husband's plane was lost during World War II. That is why she is rather solemn like the Father Christmas in Narnia (Lewis, 2002a, p. 99). It is significant that both meetings take place on Christmas Eve, too.

Conclusion

With its amended retelling, the *Doctor Who* episode invites the 21st-century readers and re-readers of *The Chronicles of Narnia* to pay a visit to Narnia once again on Christmas. In addition to offering amendments to the speciesism and sexism of *The Magician's Nephew* and *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, "The Doctor, the Widow and the

Wardrobe” also points to the current ecocide committed by the “intellectual-techno-military-industrial-consumer global complex” through defamiliarisation, through the ecocide committed on the alien planet in the future, which is reminiscent of Aslan’s warning at the end of *The Magician’s Nephew* (Caputi, 2020, p. 13). Aslan cautions that human beings in Polly and Digory’s world “are growing more like” Charn and that “some wicked one” might use “a secret as evil as the Deplorable Word” or Uncle Andrew’s magic rings “to destroy all living things” (Lewis, 2002b, p. 164). Such a retelling of *The Chronicles of Narnia* in a long-running science fiction television series with a cult following like *Doctor Who* “may help raise,” as Clare Echterling suggests, “eco-citizens who are attentive to history, imperialism, and social environmental justice” by displaying and condemning the ecocide committed by “lingering forms of imperialism” and neo-colonialism (2016, p. 112). The *Doctor Who* episode champions arcadian ecology as a remedy against current and possible future forms of imperial ecology and neo-colonialism. It offers and inspires ecologically-conscious, humane and empathic actions, decisions and solutions.

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