

**Anthropomorphic Imagery of Animals (Dragons and  
Horses) in the Works of Michael Ende and C.S.  
Lewis.**

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## Abstract

For several centuries, anthropomorphism has been a common feature used in fantastic literature; our interest in giving animals and objects human traits – clothing them, making them talk – has influenced the arts. Hence, animals have been typically used to perpetuate morals and humour the readers. Moreover, anthropomorphism's role in children's literature has made possible to call for its readers' attention to grown-up matters allowing them to maintain a certain distance and explore the concerns at hand without getting too involved.

Bearing that in mind, the purpose of this study is to explore the role of two kinds of anthropomorphic animals, fantastic and real, to see how these animals intervene in the quest and learnings of the heroes and to understand what lessons they might convey to the readers. In order to do so, the following dissertation will contrast and examine two dragons and two horses from three novels; Artax and Falkor from *The Neverending Story* by Michael Ende and Bree and Eustace from C.S. Lewis' collection *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Horse and His Boy* and *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*.

Subsequently, the scrutiny of the relationship between animals and heroes – observing how it develops and affects either the quest, the hero or both - will show that dragons and horses equally serve their masters/friends, function as a guiding voice of reason and encouragement and are incredibly loyal. Furthermore, it is confirmed that anthropomorphism does help morals get through the readers, teaching them about change, death, braveness, among other values.

**Keywords:** Fantasy, C.S. Lewis, Michael Ende, Dragons, Horses, Values.

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## Chapter 1: Introduction

Animal presence is a very common feature in literature, especially in fantastic children's literature as they often use anthropomorphic animals to entertain and educate young readers. Based on that notion, the following dissertation will deal with what anthropomorphic animals, specifically horses and dragons – chosen through a corpus in which all animals from the best known works of fantasy literature were identified (see table 1 and 2 in Appendix), transmit to their readers and how they do it. In order to achieve our results, we will do a comparative analysis of these animals in three novels: *The Horse and His Boy* and *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* by C.S. Lewis which are part of his collection of *The Chronicles of Narnia* and *The Neverending Story* by the German author Michael Ende.

Even though the aforementioned creatures are supposed to portray distinctive and unique anthropomorphic roles, this study will adhere to the premise that their characterization in fantastic literature is very similar, being used as either allies or foes of the heroes with whom they might eventually form a bond that defines their quest.

For this purpose, the contents of the present research will be arranged in four main chapters and a conclusion. The first chapter will try to define the genre of fantastic literature, going through some of its most famous works and then introducing animals in those fantastic works. The second chapter will deal with anthropomorphism and its branch transmogrification. The third chapter will expose the context of the books soon-to-be analysed. And then, in the fourth chapter, based on a contrastive analysis, there will be a division between horses and dragons where we will explore the relationship these animals share with the heroes of the books, finally discussing and putting them into perspective. The final paragraphs of this research will be dedicated to a summarization and further explanation of our findings, also including future lines that should be explored.

### 1.1. What is Fantasy?

The genre of fantasy has been thriving in several fields (i.e. literature, media and the arts) for the last 50 years (Weinreich 1) and its concept has been developed and

defined by several authors and theorists, who wished to explain their works as well as the genre itself. Unfortunately, there has not been an agreement to what defines the genre, some theorists try to explain it using a thematic approach and others decide to do so via a semiotic or structural method (Duncan 2).

It is possible that the thriving of the genre has been a result of the role that fantasy has been playing not only in literature and writing as a whole, but on the contemporary society by criticizing it (Grellet 129) and defying its rules (Stableford 35). To define fantasy it is important to understand that many of the existing definitions share a common ground, but diverge in other aspects. Such a creative and vast subject requires exploring the foundation in which it relies – imagination as both a defence and an attack mechanism.

Indeed, characteristic of the genre is the imaginative process: it dives into the realms of the audience's imagination providing them a sense of exhilaration but also hesitation (Duncan 2; Weinreich 6). Moreover, fantasy often relies on imaginary sets and characters to explore their freedom regarding alternative worlds, rules, characters, animals and other members of the plot (Grellet 129; Stableford 35). However, according to Stableford said “freedom” interferes with the development and acceptance of fantasy, for “the notion of ‘fantasy’ comes ready tainted with implications of unworthiness, of a failure of some alleged duty of the human mind to concentrate on the realities of existence” (35).

Nonetheless, this imaginative process allows each writer to explore their own story as they prefer, which often leads to the inclusion of *magic* and/or *spirituality* (Allen 10; Deszcz-Tryhubczak & Oziewicz 9). Without getting into a debate of whether or not all novels that include either of these options are unquestionably *fantasies*, they become a common resource for writers to explain the unexplainable that attracts multiple writers to fantasy's mysterious essence.

The last factor that will be presented as a part of common ground on fantasies is the *message* of the story. It is necessary to mention that Fantasy literature is drenched in ethics, morality and/or ideologies (Deszcz-Tryhubczak & Oziewicz 13). Dating back to Plato and the Greeks who used literature to explore ethics and the “self of man”, testing the characters by threatening not only their mortality but their immortal souls as well (Weinreich 13), literature has always been a tool for conveying information and sharing belief systems, yet fantasy is capable of achieving this whilst not attacking any organisms or people in specific – thus effectively avoiding censorship.

## 1.2. Famous Works

With the gradual development of the genre some of its various literary compositions have achieved worldwide recognition, such as the iconic works by Lewis Carroll *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1865) and its sequel *Through the Looking Glass* (1871), *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* (1900) by the American L. Frank Baum, the vastly celebrated fantasy works by J.R.R. Tolkien *The Hobbit* (1937) and *Lord of The Rings* (written in stages between 1937 and 1949), the main works soon to be explored in this dissertation, C.S. Lewis' *The Chronicles of Narnia* (1950-1956) and Michael Ende's *The Neverending Story* (1979), George R.R. Martin's *A Song of Ice and Fire* (1996-present) which is divided in several books and is still on the works along with its recent popular TV adaptation named *Game of Thrones* and of course *The Harry Potter Saga* (1997-2007) and *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* (2001) by J.K. Rowling.

## 1.3. Animals in Fantastic Literature

In all of the books aforementioned we can find animal presence, some of them are part of the main characters (i.e. the rabbit in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*) and others work as supporting characters. Before choosing the works and the animals we are about to examine, it is important to distinguish between a *real* animal and a *fantastic* animal and to define the concept of anthropomorphism.

A real animal is the one we have biological proof it exists or has existed (e.g. lion, dog, monkey, etc.) and a fantastic animal is the one that is fruit of the imagination, those which originate in dreams or myths (e.g. dragon, hippogriff, centaur, etc.). Instead of deciding which kind is more important in the story, we should pay attention to both types and see how the author depicts and explores them.

A common animal quality in the fantastic narrative is anthropomorphism. This term involves describing an animal or an object as a human being or giving them human traits (Burke & Copenhaver 207; Grellet 180). Additionally, the action of morphing a human into an animal is called transmogrification, a special branch of anthropomorphism – an example of that will be analysed later on in the book *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*.

As mentioned previously most of the already named books contain animals (J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Hobbit* and *Lord of The Rings*, C.S. Lewis' *The Chronicles of*

*Narnia*, Michael Ende's *The Neverending Story* and J.K. Rowling's *The Harry Potter Saga* and *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them*) which are not solely fantastic or non-fantastic but often co-inhabit the stories like equals. In order to choose the subject of the analysis in such a vast spectrum of creatures and literary works, there were three factors that were taken into consideration.

Firstly, as the two animals that had a larger role and were more common in most fantasy books (see table 1 and 2 in Appendix) were dragons and horses, one of them being a fantastic animal and the other a real animal, it was considered that such comparison would ultimately provide the reader with a clear understanding of the diversity and opposition present in fantastic literature. With this in mind, this paper will focus its attention on the literary analysis of both creatures, trying to put them into perspective, seeking their resemblances and differences and discovering the meaning of their individual roles in the books chosen.

The second factor is the presence of anthropomorphism, a phenomenon that is developed in both *The Chronicles of Narnia* and *The Neverending Story*, and that illustrates the creative process and the power of animals within the chosen works. It challenges the imagination of the reader and grasps their attention. Thereby, this dissertation shall explain and explore this concept by analysing how the plot and perception of animals are influenced when anthropomorphism is introduced.

The last key factor is related to the nature and purpose of the stories. If we look closely at *The Neverending Story* and *The Chronicles of Narnia*, it is possible to recognise the similarity of the plot and story line, where different types of animals help young heroes in a quest-driven adventure, set in a magical land they might be unfamiliar with. The animals become essential characters that the heroes befriend and trust. Both works are directed towards a younger audience and use this approach to entertain whilst conveying meaningful messages.

## **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

### **2.1. Anthropomorphism**

As previously mentioned, a common animal quality in the fantastic narrative is anthropomorphism. It involves describing an animal or an object as a human being or

giving them human traits like bipedalism, voices and even costumes (Burke & Copenhaver 207; Grellet 180). According to Wells an anthropomorphic character can have a gender, an ethnicity and both human and animal traits but that does not mean it is entirely a human or an animal (3).

One of the first recorded instances of anthropomorphism in children's literature was in Aesop's fables (sixth century BCE) who used moralistic animal stories such as "The Tortoise and the Hare" to persuade and educate the audience (Dunn 3). Although nowadays the use of animals and anthropomorphism is frequent in Children's literature, Burke and Copenhaver expressed that before the eighteenth century children had to behave like adults – they would wear adult clothes and work to help sustain their families – and so did not enjoy their childhood. However, as the middle class emerged and less relatives were needed to sustain a family, children could play and read more which lead to the emergence of animals in ethical children's literature (208; Vogl 69).

An example of this new found literature could be Anna Sewell's book *Black Beauty* (Dunn 4). The story was told from a horse's perspective and its goal was to spread awareness of horse abuse, something very common at that time, trying to use its voice to inspire sympathy in the reader. Therefore, by reaffirming anthropomorphism's role in children's literature, it became possible to provide morality and appropriate behaviour guidance to young readers calling for their attention in grown-up matters (Dunn 5).

The use of anthropomorphism and its effects on the readers have been analysed by many scholars whose research culminated in two main points of view. Authors like Ganea, Pickard and DeLoache (cited in Friedman 8) concluded that anthropomorphized animals in literature could become difficult for children to relate to as the use of animals instead of humans causes an increase of distance between the characters and the child. They reason that animals may, indeed, capture children's attention but also weaken the lesson the author is trying to convey. However, Krueger & Krueger (cited in Friedman 6) among other authors believe that is not the case, saying that animals may help readers deal with difficult situations (such as politics, religion, social and/or personal issues) and said distance between the character and the reader allows them to explore these issues in a more comfortable way without becoming too emotionally involved (Burke and Copenhaver 207).



That being said, why should anthropomorphism be used in literature? After extensive research, it is possible to identify five underlying reasons.

Firstly, it is important to acknowledge that anthropomorphism enables a wider range of readers to identify with the different characters. The absence of specific traits such as age, gender or race lift possible barriers between reader and character, allowing a deeper experience of new emotions and promoting a sense of inspiration from a distance (Friedman 6; Dunn 41; Markowsky 460).

Secondly and equally important is escapism, that is, the ability to bring readers into a different world through anthropomorphic animals by putting their imagination to use and creating a new form of reality with the help of an ingenious author (Markowsky 461).

Thirdly, because animals have such diverse characteristics that represent and distinguish them, which the reader is often able to recognise by common interaction or presence in real-life experiences (Friedman 5), authors rely on this feature in order to write and create their stories in a more flexible and personalised way (Markowsky 461).

Another resourceful feature authors often turn to is humour. By using animals with anthropomorphic characteristics, readers are given more amusing literature while simultaneously being instructed (Burke and Copenhaver 208). Besides, both children and adult readers can appreciate a certain type of human personality represented in the shape of an animal (Markowsky 461; Vogl 69).

Lastly, there is a preference for anthropomorphic animals displayed by children, who tend to find animals more interesting characters than humans (Friedman 6; Dunn 40; Armstrong cited in Dunn 3).

Although this list may not comprise all possible reasons why writers may find it useful – if not entertaining – to use anthropomorphism in their works as it mainly focus on children's literature, it does, however, attempt to explain the most common reasons behind such use. Each author can master and shape their ideas and writings in accordance with the desired impact, taking subtle or complete advantage of anthropomorphism.

## **2.2. Transmogrification**

The boundaries between animals and humans do not end with anthropomorphism since the opposite effect is also possible and definitely worth mentioning. The action of

morphing a human being into an animal, especially if it is a grotesque transformation, is called transmogrification (Burke and Copenhaver 207; Sharma 144). According to Green in her book *Animals in Celtic Life and Myth*, transmogrification is usually used in literature when a character is punished by the Gods for misbehaving and so has to go through life as an animal, usually conciliating their new form with their previous human capacities (192). Besides it being used as a punishment, in Irish mythology, transmogrification could also be used as revenge (193). This kind of transformation was not only incredibly common in early Welsh and Irish vernacular literature (196) but also in fairy tales (Sharma 144).

### **Chapter 3: Context**

In order to make sense of the following chapter, the subsequent paragraphs will deal with the life and facts of Michael Ende and C.S. Lewis alongside the summaries of the chosen books, only then commencing with the analysis of the anthropomorphic animals.

#### **3.1. Michael Ende: Life and Facts**

Michael Ende was born in the Bavarian town of Garmisch-Partenkirchen on November 12 1929, he was the son of the painter Edgar Ende. From early ages he thought he would pursue acting, starting his training as an actor and working as a film critic, but then in the middle of an artistic crisis he started writing. Although not successful at first, being continuously rejected, he finally published his first book *Jim Button and Luke the Engine Driver* in 1960 getting him, later on, the German Award for Children's Literature. In 1979, one of his most famous works was published, *The Neverending Story*, and in 1984 its film adaptation was released causing a great shock and disgust on him, who hurried to remove his name from the project. Unfortunately, he died in a hospital bed near Stuttgart on August 28 1995, a year after he was diagnosed with cancer. He received a total of 41 awards during his life for his artistic work ("Life & Work").

### **3.1.1. *The Neverending Story* - Summary**

*The Neverending Story* tells us about a little fat boy who finds and steals a life-changing book. This book begins with the narration of Atreyu's adventures, a green-skinned boy who has to find the cure for his dying land, Fantastica. Atreyu discovers that the cure for his land lays in the hands of a little fat human boy named Bastian – the boy reading the book – who has to give the Fantastican Childlike Empress a new name. Bastian does so, after a battle with self-doubt, and enters this magical realm. When the boy arrives he goes through the land making wishes as this is the only way Fantastica can flourish again. However, these wishes make him slowly forget the human world and it is up to his friend Atreyu and his loyal luckdragon Falkor to help Bastian find a way home.

From the moment Bastian enters Fantastica, he begins a journey of self-discovery, taking different paths that end up leading him to his final destiny, not only saving the magical realm but his own world as well. The first half of the book deals mainly with the adventures of Atreyu trying to find the cure and the second half with Bastian's adventures after saving the land, meeting new people, creating new stories and trying to find his true self while accidentally forgetting who he truly is.

### **3.2. C.S. Lewis: Life and Facts**

Clive Staple Lewis was born in the Irish city of Belfast on November 29, 1898. At the age of 10 he lost his mother and was sent to boarding school. In 1910 he enrolled at Campbell College but ended up leaving it due to respiratory issues. He served with the British army in WWI but was dismissed after being wounded. At the age of 20 and under the pseudonym Clive Hamilton, he published his first book *Spirits in Bondage*. He was then hired as an English Language and Literature tutor at Magdalen College, Oxford, where he later met his friend and colleague J.R.R. Tolkien. In 1931 he converted to Christianity and subsequently published various religious books. On October 16, 1950 Lewis published the first book of *The Chronicles of Narnia – The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* – publishing the rest of the books with a one year interval from each other. *Prince Caspian: Return to Narnia* was published in 1951, *The Voyage of The Dawn Treader* in 1952, *The Silver Chair* in 1953, *The Horse and His Boy* in 1954, *The Magician's Nephew* in 1955 and finally, *The Last Battle* in 1956.

Years later he experienced health issues and ultimately died on November 22, 1963 at the age of 64 (“About C.S. Lewis”).

### **3.2.1. *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* – Summary**

The third book of *The Chronicles of Narnia* focuses on the return of Edmund and Lucy Pevensie to Narnia along with their annoying and self-centred cousin Eustace Scrubb. The three children are swallowed by a painting of a ship and fall into water, next to King Caspian’s ship – the Dawn Treader. Against Eustace’s will, they follow the king in his journey to find seven missing lords who had been exiled by the king’s evil uncle and find out it has been three years since the last time they were in Narnia. Along with him, King Caspian brings Reepicheep the Talking Mouse, who is picked on often by Eustace and his unpleasant, bullying nature. During this mission, the five companions land on different islands and in one of them Eustace, after running away from responsibilities, witnesses a dragon dying of old age. He then finds its lair and treasure and is turned into a dragon himself after falling asleep on top of the treasure. He immediately starts rethinking his past actions and tries to make up for his previous mean ways. In each of the lands they find new adventures and leave with a new sense of morality, learning important character-building lessons. As the story develops, the team unravels the mystery as they unravel themselves and their values as individuals (those of eavesdropping, greediness, hunger for power, etc.). In the end, Caspian returns to his throne, and Aslan tells Lucy and Edmund that they must return to their world and cannot visit Narnia again because they are getting too old. As for Eustace, his future in Narnia is not disclosed.

### **3.2.2. *The Horse and His Boy* - Summary**

The fifth book of the series tells us the story of a boy named Shasta who was raised by a moody fisherman that found him floating ashore one sleepless night. The boy constantly wonders about the North as nobody in that land goes there or ever mentions it but his father always tells him to forget about it. One evening a stranger arrives at their house demanding hospitality and tries to buy Shasta from the fisherman so he could be his slave. Overhearing this conversation, Shasta goes to the barn and

starts speaking to the horse wishing he could answer. To his surprise, the horse answers him and says that his ability to talk is a secret as that he had been stolen from his land – Narnia – when he was young and brought up with dumb horses. They plan to escape together that night so they can both go up North and so they do. Later on, running away from a lion's attack they meet up with another runaway girl named Aravis and her horse, Hwin, who happens to be a Talking Horse from Narnia as well. They decide to make the journey together and through deserts, towns and disguises are able to get to King Lune's realm where Shasta helps fight an enemy in a bloody battle and then discovers that his true name is Cor, that he has a twin brother and that he is of noble blood. The horses go forth to Narnia and the boy stays to become a ruler.

With the summarisation of the books done, we can now proceed to the analysis of the chosen animals – horses and dragons – in each story.

## **Chapter 4: Analysis**

Fairy tales do not give the child his first idea of bogey. What fairy tales give the child is his first clear idea of the possible defeat of bogey. The baby has known the dragon intimately ever since he had an imagination. What the fairy tale provides for him is a St. George to kill the dragon. (Chesterton, 73)

As we have seen in chapter 2, there are several reasons why anthropomorphic animals are present in children's fantastic literature. The aim of the following chapter is to see how animals are addressed by the authors and how they influence not only the heroes of the story but also the readers. This chapter will be divided into two – Horses and Dragons – and in each division a short definition and the symbolism of the animals will be given, their analysis will be presented after each division.

### **4.1. Horse**

According to the Oxford Dictionaries the definition of a horse is:

A solid-hoofed plant-eating domesticated mammal with a flowing mane and tail, used for riding, racing, and to carry and pull loads. *Equus caballus*, family Equidae (the horse

family), descended from the wild Przewalski's horse. The horse family also includes the asses and zebras.

Garcon and Nosrati report that the symbolic use of the horse has been present since prehistory (i.e. in cave drawings), being the first written evidence found, somewhere between Iraq and Iran, in the third millennium BC. Due to its many labours towards humankind – from companionship, mobility, agriculture to serving men in wars – the horse has made itself present in the history of literature, getting a very active role in it. Its symbolism varies from culture to culture but there is concordance in that the horse embodies freedom and power (15).

Christians take the horse as a symbol of death while Native American tribes believe they symbolise power and war as those who had horses tended to win more often than those who did not thus having more territories. For the Celts the horse embodies good luck and the white horse is considered sacred (16). On a universal scale, the horse suggests freedom, travel and desires. They are recurrently used in literature and film (17) as either the companion of the hero/villain, a mere carrier or an untameable creature.

The following paragraphs will deal with how the horses are portrayed in the stories, when they first show signs of anthropomorphism, how their relationship with the heroes is and how it is modified throughout the story.

On the one hand, in Ende's *Neverending Story* we meet Artax, Atreyu's anthropomorphic horse. Although he does not play a main role in the story he still plays an important role in Atreyu's character development. He is introduced to us as a small wild horse who can run incredibly fast (51) and the first thing Atreyu tells him is that they are going on a quest and he does not know if they will ever come back (52), which could be a premonition to what happens later on to Artax. The first signs of animal anthropomorphism in Artax are when he answers Atreyu asking him about his hunt and weapons, showing signs of concern (52). We can see more human emotions with the continuation of the book, when he demonstrates fear, bravery, loyalty and depression.

On the other hand, in Lewis' *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Horse and His Boy* although we meet two anthropomorphic horses, Bree and Hwin, we are going to focus on the protagonist: Bree. Bree is introduced as a one of a kind horse in the country Calormen, in the south of Narnia, a land with despicable humans and normal, witless

horses (9). His anthropomorphic features are displayed right away when he presents the ability of speech convincing a little boy named Shasta to run away with him so they can both find Narnia and be free (9); clever thinking as he provides arguments to why they should run away together (9); contempt when Shasta compares riding him to riding a donkey (10) among other human emotions.

Despite both horses – Artax and Bree – being ridden by humans, Bree does not accept his condition as he says he is a “free Narnian” (10) who was stolen as a foal and made a slave (9). Artax, conversely, is at peace with his life, assisting his master as well as he can – even if he does not agree with the boy’s decisions:

Artax whinnied with horror.

‘Are we going in there, master?’

‘Yes,’ said Atreyu. ‘We must find Tortoise Shell Mountain. It’s at the center of those swamps.’

He urged Artax on and Artax obeyed. (Ende 65-66)

Artax usually obeys his master and is not afraid to show his concerns when the quest becomes arduous. When they get further inside the Swamps of Sadness Artax finally tells Atreyu his thoughts about the journey and how it is becoming too dangerous for them:

‘Artax,’ said Atreyu. ‘What’s the matter?’

‘I don’t know, master. I think we should turn back. There’s no sense in all this. We’re chasing after something you only dreamed about. We won’t find anything. Maybe it’s too late even now. Maybe the Childlike Empress is already dead, and everything we’re doing is useless. Let us turn back, master.’ (Ende 66)

Atreyu finds his words odd as he has never seen the animal behave in that manner and worries Artax is sick to which the horse confesses: “With every step we take, the sadness grows in my heart. I’ve lost hope, master. And I feel so heavy, so heavy. I can’t go on!” (Ende 66).

Here their relationship might become clearer to the reader, they are not only a horse and his master, their bond is based on friendship and above all they care for each other’s safety. An example of this being when Artax gives in to the swamps and starts sinking, Atreyu is willing to give up his own safety – through the Gem – so Artax can

be saved. However, the stallion does not accept Atreyu's proposition as he believes it is the boy's duty to continue the quest, even if that means the horse would die:

'You're wearing the Gem, master,' said Artax. 'It protects you.'

'Then I'll hang it around your neck!' Atreyu cried. 'Maybe it will protect you too.'

He started taking the chain off his neck.

'No,' the little horse whinnied. 'You mustn't do that, master. The Glory was entrusted to you, you weren't given permission to pass it on as you see fit. You must carry on the Quest without me.' (Ende 67)

Both are willing to sacrifice their lives so the other can live, showing not only affection for each other but also braveness. Artax then asks his master to leave so he would not see him die and proceeds to thank him (67), the boy nods and continues with the quest on his own, trying to hold on the tears (68).

The relationship between horse and rider differs in Lewis' book. The first sign of this is the title of the story – *The Horse and His Boy* – where the possession changes, as in Ende's book Artax was the boy's horse but the same cannot be said about this one. In addition, Bree always talks down to Shasta saying how he is only a foal (10) demonstrating a thought of superiority towards not only this boy but humans in general. The stallion even mentions he would be ashamed of being seen with the boy in one occasion as Shasta is not yet a skilled rider (17). That thought of superiority, though, does not prevent the horse from forming a friendship and being kind to Shasta as when they meet a human girl and her Narnian horse – Aravis and Hwin respectively – Bree defends (22) and vouches for the boy saying he has been a "good friend" (23).

His acts of kindness are short-lived though, as he soon goes back to his old ways, saying he believes Shasta and Aravis should be considered their humans and not the other way around as both horses – Bree and Hwin – are native Narnians and the children are not:

"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." (Lewis 23)



Bree's attitude stays the same throughout the book, until he is confronted with a lion and instead of helping his peers, he runs away as fast as he can. This action makes him feel ashamed of himself and not wanting to return to Narnia as he believes he is no longer worthy (103). The horse then shows great respect for the boy he considered to be only a foal, saying he was courageous enough to run back and save the girls even if he had never fought in his life or had any good guidance to do so:

"Shasta didn't!" snorted Bree. "At least he ran in the right direction: ran back. And that is what shames me most of all. I, who called myself a war-horse and boasted of a hundred fights, to be beaten by a little human boy - a child, a mere foal, who had never held a sword nor had any good nurture or example in his life!" (Lewis 103)

After the incident, they find a hermit and Shasta leaves to warn the king of Archenland – King Lune – of his up-coming enemies (100) and ends up battling those of Calormen. However, Bree and the girls – Aravis and Hwin – stay at the hermit's house waiting for Shasta to return. When he finally does so, he is presented as prince Cor as he had learned his true identity when he was fighting for Archenland (143). As soon as Bree and the boy see each other, they feel immense joy (146) and decide to go visit Cor's (Shasta) new-found father – King Lune – and only then would the horses depart for Narnia (147).

Bree no longer calls Cor/Shasta by his name but by "Prince Cor" (147) and even though the horses depart for Narnia, their friendship is everlasting as they often go to Anvard to visit their human friends (157).

Although Artax and Bree are both talking horses and have different perspectives towards serving men, Artax accepts his status fully whilst Bree does not and changes it, their relationship with their riders is similar. They do not only use each other as a means to an end but they also value their friendship above all. This can be most visible in Artax's story when he gives his own life so Atreyu can live and proceed with the quest instead of taking the Childlike Empress' jewel for himself and let his master die. In spite of their relationship with the riders being similar, we get to see how Bree's relationship with Cor/Shasta started and how the horse began his journey thinking he was superior to the boy and then changing his ways and starting to value the boy's friendship and even admiring his heroic actions.

## 4.2. Dragons

According to the Oxford Dictionary, a dragon is:

A mythical monster like a giant reptile. In European tradition the dragon is typically fire-breathing and tends to symbolize chaos or evil, whereas in East Asia it is usually a beneficent symbol of fertility, associated with water and the heavens.

The creation of dragons through human imagination was not only an attempt to explain the dualities in human nature – love and cruelty, courage and fear – but also to explain natural disasters like floods, droughts and fires. This blend of fiction and reality sometimes resulted in confusion, creating a thin line between what was fantastic and what was real. And so, contributing to the creation of myths and findings of ‘dragon skeletons’ which were later established as dinosaur skeletons (Allen 51).

As previously stated by the Oxford Dictionary, the understanding of these fantastic creatures is not equal in the East and the West. In China dragons are believed to be sacred, divine. They are said to be the ones who created the first emperors, who were then called “sons of the dragon”, thus making dragons a royal symbol (Brasey 142). They are weather lords who sleep at the bottom of pools during the winter, rising up as rain clouds in the spring. They are very powerful, generally kind and do not have wings, only needing their energy to fly (Allen 52).

Western dragons, on the other hand, are usually known as dangerous beasts that have to be hunted and slain (Allen 54). They are believed to hoard treasures, being either the gold of continuous sunsets and sunrises that make them immortal or, as others say, treasures of dead kings and conquerors. Although these dragons are famous for being deadly and untrustworthy, not all western dragons are bad, there are dragons who help humans and those who are kept as domestic companions (Allen 55) – one clear example of the latter being the dragons from Cressida Cowell book series *How to Train Your Dragon* who turn from wild dragons to helping pets.

The following paragraphs will deal with how the dragons are portrayed in the stories, when they first show signs of anthropomorphism, how their relationship with the heroes is and how it is modified throughout the story.

The anthropomorphic dragon in Ende's *Neverending Story* goes by the name of Falkor. Falkor first meets Atreyu when the latter saves him from Ygramul the many, an innumerable group of steel insects that can take different shapes as they please (83). Falkor is described as a big white luckdragon, the complete opposite of the western snake dragons who guard treasures. Luckdragons are known for singing beautiful melodies and being as light as a cloud – despite their size – thus not needing wings to fly (82). The first time this dragon shows signs of anthropomorphism is the same as the previous stories, when he speaks (92). Although he is weak – after being kept prisoner and poisoned by Ygramul – he is able to wake Atreyu up (who had also been poisoned) and introduce himself, thanking him for saving his life. Atreyu then tells him he believes they only have one hour to live as the poison would take effect but Falkor assures him that they will survive as he is a luckdragon and therefore luck would be on their side (92).

Lewis' dragon in *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*, on the contrary, is depicted as a typical western dragon. Lewis' describes it as a long creature with no feathers nor fur, high risen elbows, bat wings, long tail and smoke coming out of its nostrils (65). In this case we cannot talk about anthropomorphism but its' branch transmogrification, a human shape-shifting to an animal through magic or a hand of a God. This story's transmogrification is about one of the main characters – Eustace – who finds a dying dragon exiting his cave, gets a hold of the dead dragon's treasure, falls asleep on top of it and then wakes up as a dragon himself (68). He then has to learn how to live as a dragon, as his mind is human but his body and urges are animalistic. As Eustace can no longer speak, he has to communicate with his cousins through gestures and helps them realise he is indeed their cousin transformed into a dragon (73).

In Ende's story, as soon as Atreyu and Falkor meet, they quickly agree to become partners and search for the Childlike Empress' cure together as Falkor believes he owes the boy his life, after he saved them from Ygramul the many:

'My life belongs to you,' said the dragon, 'if you'll accept it. I thought you'd need a mount for this Great Quest of yours. And you'll soon see that crawling around the country on two legs, or even galloping on a good horse, can't hold a candle to whizzing through the air on the back of a luckdragon. Are we partners?'

'We're partners,' said Atreyu. (Ende 93)

Atreyu then has to leave by himself so he can meet an oracle who would help him find the cure for the Childlike Empress, when he returns Falkor displays great affection calling him his friend and master (136). They then go on with their journey and on the way to find the cure, they meet the Wind Giants (150), who tell them Fantastica has no borders and proceed to fight for power which causes the two friends to get separated (151). Atreyu ends up in a ghost town where he gets himself into dangerous situations, almost getting killed (182). Falkor never stops looking for his friend, even risking his own life after seeing a beam of light under water and going after it despite water being his natural enemy, as dragons only feed on air and heat and can asphyxiate under water:

Falkor didn't know what to do. He didn't even know what the strange blinking under the sea was, or whether it had anything to do with Atreyu.

But he didn't hesitate for long. He flew high into the sky, turned around, and head down, pressing his legs close to his body, which he held stiff straight as a telegraph pole, he plummeted. (Ende 184)

The beam turns out to be the Childlike Empress' gem – AURYN –which saves Falkor from dying in the water and leads him to Atreyu (186), who happened to be almost taken by the Nothing – a darkness that was destroying and consuming Fantastica. Fortunately, the luckdragon is able to save Atreyu, who hugs the animal in relief: “Atreyu said nothing. He threw his arms around Falkor's neck and buried his face in the dragon's silvery-white mane” (187).

Atreyu and Falkor meet the childlike empress and she tells them they have done well on their mission (200) then she leaves them under the protection of three of her invisible servants (210). The next time they appear is after Bastian, the human boy who saved the Childlike Empress by giving her a name, is wandering around Fantastica and finds Atreyu and Falkor watching a tournament together. Which enforces the idea that their friendship is long-lasting as Falkor did not abandon Atreyu after their quest was over. Instead of each going their own way, they decide to stay together so they could look for Bastian and protect him, only then finding out he does not need any protection (297). They stay with Bastian for a while and then start a quest to help a knight save his lady (320). In said journey, Atreyu and Falkor notice Bastian is changing and forgetting who he was in the human world before coming to Fantastica. They confront Bastian and the latter does not take his friends' warning well (346). Later on, a witch – who the gang

captures on the journey – makes things worse as she poisons Bastian’s mind against Falkor and Atreyu, saying they are plotting against him (390). This causes trust issues amongst them and the three friends ultimately decide to go their different ways after a sword battle in which Bastian wounds Atreyu in the chest and Falkor has to come rescue him (425).

The luckdragon and his master - Atreyu - then go away but soon find Bastian again, who is now sorry for what he has done and wishes to go back to his world (490). They decide to help Bastian find the portal to his world and Falkor is the one who translates the water of life that will finally take Bastian home (495). For Bastian to leave, Atreyu and Falkor have to promise to undo Bastian’s wishes and get Fantastica to its previous state, thus beginning a new adventure for the two friends:

‘Falkor,’ said Bastian. ‘How will you and Atreyu finish the stories I have left behind?’

The white dragon winked one of his ruby-red eyes and replied: ‘With luck, my boy! With luck!’

Then he followed his friend and master.

Bastian watched as they passed through the gate on their way back to Fantastica. They turned again and waved to him. Then as the black snake’s head sank to the ground, Atreyu and Falkor vanished from Bastian’s sight. (Ende 500)

The journey of the dragon in Lewis’ book is a temporary transformation as a form of punishment. Eustace begins his adventure as an annoying little boy who does not get along with his cousins (3). In fact, their journey to Narnia is triggered after they start fighting in Lucy’s room, as Eustace hears his cousins – Lucy and Edmund – discuss Narnia and starts mocking them (5-6). They then start seeing a painting of a ship move and get transported into Narnia (7). The cousins land in the middle of the ocean and are caught right away by Prince Caspian who happened to be passing by on his ship (10). Eustace gets sea sick and his cousin Lucy offers him some of her cordial potion, which he first rejects but as soon as he tastes it, he immediately feels better and starts bossing everyone around (21). Eustace does not get on well with the ship’s crew, especially with an anthropomorphic mouse named Reepicheep who he teases for his small size (26).

After getting dragged into Caspian’s mission with his cousins and visiting some islands, they are hit by a storm (56) and have to stop to fix their ship (59). As soon as

they land and start the reparation process, Eustace tries to avoid his duties by exploring the island by himself (60). After walking for a while, Eustace decides it is time to go back as he does not want to be left alone on that island (61). However, on his way back he gets lost and ends up witnessing the death of a dragon and as rain starts pouring, he enters the creature's cave for shelter and finds its pile of treasure (67). He puts a bracelet on and then falls asleep on top of the treasure, only waking up after some time and discovering he has become a dragon as well:

And secondly, as he bent towards the water, he thought for a second that yet another dragon was staring up at him out of the pool. But in an instant he realized the truth. The dragon face in the pool was his own reflection. There was no doubt of it. It moved as he moved: it opened and shut its mouth as he opened and shut his. (Lewis 69)

His first thought as a dragon was that he was invincible and did not have to be afraid anymore, people should fear him instead. He then starts thinking he could get revenge on Caspian and Edmund but quickly changes his mind as he now wishes to be their friend (70). At this point, Eustace no longer desires to be a dragon, he wants to walk and talk again which makes him feel extremely lonely and, consequently, starting to rethink his ways towards the others:

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. He would have been grateful for a kind word even from Reepicheep. (Lewis 70)

After feeling sorry for himself and crying for a while, Eustace decides to go back to the ship and see the others (70). In the meantime, his cousins and the ship's crew organise a search party to look for Eustace and shortly after leaving the beach they meet the dragon (72). At first they are afraid of the beast but as soon as they understand it is friendly and that it comprehends their speech, they try to figure out who the dragon is. Eventually, they discover it is Eustace under an enchantment (75) and realise the boy's character is changing as he is not only willing to help fix the ship but he also searches the island for food and provides heat when the nights are cold (76). He also starts to get along better with his cousins but especially with Reepicheep, who tries to cheer him up when he feels down about being a beast (77).

Upon the sixth night in the island, Edmund is awoken by the shape of an unidentified person (78). He grabs his sword and approaches the mysterious silhouette only to discover it is Eustace. Edmund greets his cousin telling him how glad he is to see him again, something he had never said or felt before, and asks the boy what happened and how he managed to become human again (79). Eustace then tells him the story of how a lion approached him when he was most depressed and told him to get undressed and enter a well. The boy narrates how he had scratched his scales as well as he could but as soon as he was ready to bathe in the well, his scales had already grown back again and the lion had to be the one to undress him. He describes his undressing as painful but pleasurable:

"So I scratched away for the third time and got off a third skin, just like the two others, and stepped out of it. But as soon as I looked at myself in the water I knew it had been no good. "Then the lion said - but I don't know if it spoke - "You will have to let me undress you." I was afraid of his claws, I can tell you, but I was pretty nearly desperate now. So I just lay flat down on my back to let him do it. "The very first tear he made was so deep that I thought it had gone right into my heart. And when he began pulling the skin off, it hurt worse than anything I've ever felt. The only thing that made me able to bear it was just the pleasure of feeling the stuff peel off. (Lewis 81)

Eustace proceeds to tell his cousin how the lion then pushed him into the well and the relief he felt as he was being transformed into a boy again. The boy apologises to Edmund for his past behaviour and Edmund tells him that at least Eustace was not a traitor (82). Although he still has relapses, Eustace's experience as a dragon made him improve his character which allowed him to form stronger friendships with his cousins and the Narnians (83). In more than one occasion after his transformation, Eustace demonstrates courage, a virtue he did not have before. The first time this happens is when he grabs a sword Caspian had lent him and helps fight a sea monster that was attacking their ship (87) and although he is not successful, his action is considered very impressive and is worth being celebrated (89). This new Eustace might be celebrated by many – in Narnia and in the real world – but his mother is not a fan, she thinks that due to his cousins' influence he has become "commonplace and tiresome" (157).

Despite the fact that Eustace began as a bully, if we compare Lewis' dragon to Ende's, we may notice that both of them are friendly to the characters and are able to maintain a good relationship with their peers. To appreciate the difference between

them, their status and age must be taken into account; Falkor is an adult luckdragon and is portrayed as a peaceful and magical eastern dragon whose voice can produce a wonderful song. Eustace, on the other hand, is a child who starts as a bully that gets too greedy and so is transformed into a dragon, a western, snake-like dragon. Falkor's friendliness and kindness are part of his virtues and he is able to become Atreyu's friend very quickly, whilst Eustace has to learn to not only be friendlier and kind but also brave. He could have taken the opportunity of becoming a dragon to overtake those he disliked but instead, Eustace takes it as a lesson by helping his cousins and the rest of the crew. This action ultimately makes Eustace a better person; thus being able to befriend them.

### **4.3. Discussion**

In the previous chapter we have analysed both horses and dragons from Ende's *The Neverending Story* and two selected stories from Lewis' *The Chronicles of Narnia*. The aim of this following chapter is to put the horse and the dragon into perspective and see if they share any similarities in the role of their stories and what kind of messages they could transmit to the reader.

Although the horses and the dragons do not have much in common, they do share a similar role in the stories. They both serve as loyal companions to the heroes, carrying them around and easing their journey. They are also the ones who encourage the hero to begin or continue their adventures: Artax sacrifices himself so Atreyu can go on with his journey, Bree helps convince Shasta/Cor to run away, Falkor puts himself at the service of Atreyu so he can finish his quest and Eustace, although he is not a dragon at the time, starts the fight that leads them to Narnia.

Through escapism, imagination and humour, these books manage to use anthropomorphism to teach the readers to not only help others and be brave but to also change their ways, making an example of Bree and Eustace, who get lifetime friendships after they stop bullying others and being arrogant.



## Conclusion

On the basis of the information that has so far been provided and explained, this present chapter will summarize such data, highlighting the conclusions that could be derived from this study and will finally suggest other lines that could be pursued in future research.

Fantasy is undeniably an art form with which each individual may or not connect, but that provides an extraordinary experience. Anthropomorphic animals and creatures in fantasy do not only play their role as animals but are a symbol of much more. They can represent our role models, our parents and/or our friends. They allow us to identify with certain situations and teach us different moralities and ways to deal with the reality we live in (e.g. the death of loved ones). They also attack social constructs, people in power and even challenge individuals to criticise and defy themselves.

Despite the friendships having different beginnings, the horses and the dragons, in the books analysed, bond in such a way with their heroes that it causes them to have a long-lasting relationship. As of the roles they portray, a pattern might be noticeable in each book. Ende gives the horse and the dragon a similar role: they both serve the hero and not only help him finish several quests, but they also advise and care for him. In Lewis' books, a theme of redemption can be detected as the horse and the dragon start their stories displaying arrogant behaviour but through their journeys, they both learn to improve their character and treat others with more kindness.

In addition, the horses display some of the symbolism that is normally attributed to them: freedom and travel. Both stallions lead their boys to freedom through travel: Bree is able to provide freedom from slavery to himself and Shasta/Cor, and Artax provides it to Atreyu in an internal way, liberating him from his past life and launching him into a new life full of adventure.

The dragons, on the other hand, do not have much in common as they have completely different stories and races. Falkor is a typical eastern dragon, a powerful, very lucky and kind dragon who does not need wings to fly due to his incredibly lightweight. And Eustace is a typical western dragon, a dangerous, bat-like flyer who eats raw animals. They are indeed contraries, both physically and personality-wise, as Falkor has the mind of a friendly, ancient and wise dragon whilst Eustace, being a child

himself, has to try to control his greediness and become a better person, shedding all his dragon – or evil – layers so he can be worthy of becoming a little boy again.

Nevertheless, if we join the two categories – both the horses and the dragons – and put them into perspective we can see that our dragons and horses are actually very similar. They are loyal, helpful, either as a wise and encouraging voice or a reliable ally and most importantly, they are equally willing to put their lives in danger for their human friends.

All in all, the animal presence in fantastic literature is quite relevant as it is through them that many lessons can be transmitted and learned – especially in Lewis' novels where each story has a moral to improve the person's character. The anthropomorphic characteristics in these stories are a way to help young readers to distance themselves from reality and take some matters lightly, while still capturing the morality of the events. It is likely that even adults appreciate this method, by being able to reflect on situations and actions they may encounter and have always been unable to deal with. And when these type of issues are at matter, using animals can be more beneficial and eye-catching to the reader than using human characters.

While working on this literary research, a lack of papers and books about the origins of animals' presence in literature, anthropomorphism and especially transmutation became obvious. This may suggest that more research of those subjects should be done.

Consequently, and dealing with the present dissertation, I would recommend three future lines for the enhancement of this research. On the one hand, it would be fitting to analyse the role of other animals like the lion in both books as they also influence the heroes and are a majestic presence that have power over nature. Secondly, the fate and quest of the child hero vs the adult hero, to see how their adventures and relationships differ. And finally, it would be interesting to see how anthropomorphic animals are displayed in fantastic children's literature contrasted with fantastic adult literature.

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# APPENDIX<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> I would like to acknowledge and thank Cristina Macía's help in establishing the corpus of the Fantastic Literature

NON-FANTASTIC ANIMALS	Horses	Bears	Birds	Dogs	Lions	Serpents/Snakes	Other
<i>J.R.R. Tolkien</i> ( <i>Middle Earth</i> )	X	X	X	X	X	X	Wolves, Eagles, Crows, Etc.
<i>J.K. Rowling</i> ( <i>Wizarding World</i> )	X	X	X	X		X	Owls, Rats, Cats, Etc.
<i>C.S. Lewis</i> ( <i>Narnia</i> )	X	X	X	X	X	X	Bat, Ape, Beaver, Etc.
<i>Philip Pullman</i> ( <i>His Dark Materials</i> )	X	X	X	X		X	Rats, Foxes, Etc.
<i>Michael Ende</i> ( <i>Fantastica</i> )	X		X		X	X	Buffalos, Giant Turtle, Mule, Etc.
<i>George R.R. Martin</i> ( <i>Game of Thrones</i> )	X	X	X	X	X		Cats, Ravens, Etc.
<i>Lewis Carroll</i> ( <i>Wonderland</i> )	X		X	X	X		Ape, Rabbit, Cat, Etc.
<i>L. Frank Baum</i> ( <i>Oz</i> )	X		X	X			Chickens, Zebras, Crabs, Etc.
<i>Rick Riordan</i> ( <i>Percy Jackson</i> )	X			X			Wolf, Cattle, Etc.
<i>Ursula K. LeGuin</i> ( <i>The Earthsea Cycle</i> )	X	X	X	X	X	X	Sheep, Cats, Etc.

Table 1. Non-Fantastic Animals in Fantastic Literature.

FANTASTIC ANIMALS	Dragons	Centaurs	Werewolves	Pegasi	Hippogriffs	Trolls	Other
J.R.R. Tolkien (Middle Earth)	X		X				Mûmakils (oliphaunts), The Watche, Great Beasts, Etc.
J.K. Rowling (Wizards World)	X	X	X	X	X	X	Thestrals, Unicorns, Etc.
C.S. Lewis (Narnia)	X	X		X			Bugbears, Caiporas, Unicorns, Etc.
Philip Pullman (His Dark Materials)							
Michael Ende (Fantastica)	X		X			X	Shapeshifters (Ygramul), Gnomes
George .R.R. Martin ( <i>Game of Thrones</i> )	X						Krakens, Direwolves, Ice spiders, Etc.
Lewis Carroll ( <i>Wonderland</i> )	X						Gryphon
L. Frank Baum ( <i>Oz</i> )							Winged- Monkey, Kalidahs
Rick Riordan ( <i>Percy Jackson</i> )	X	X		X		X	Blemmyae, gryphon, unicorns, Etc.
Ursula K. LeGuin ( <i>The Earthsea Cycle</i> )	X						Otak

Table 2. Fantastic Animals in Fantastic Literature