Odsjek za anglistiku
Filozofski fakultet
Sveučilište u Zagrebu

DIPLOMSKI RAD

Iconographies of Bestiaries in C. S. Lewis' *The Chronicles of Narnia*

(Smjer: književno-kulturološki, anglofone književnosti)

Kandidat: Petra Pugar
Mentor: dr. sc. Iva Polak, doc.
Akademska godina: 2015. / 2016.

Contents

1. Introduction 3

2. Medieval Bestiaries: History, Structure, Function 3

3. The Narnian Bestiary 8

3.1 Bestiaries and *The Chronicles of Narnia* 11

3.1.1 Aslan and the Bestiary Lion 14

3.1.2 The Talking Wolf – Bestiary's Dark Side 18

3.1.3 Fantastic Animals and Monsters – *Liber Monstrorum* 20

4. Animal Fantasy, Christianity and Anthropocentrism: An Animal Studies Approach to *The Chronicles of Narnia* 25

5. Conclusion 29

Works Cited 31

1. Introduction

The thesis analyses the presence and function of the iconography of bestiaries in *The Chronicles of Narnia* by C. S. Lewis, a novel series which extensively draws on animal imagery. It starts with a short survey of the historical development of the bestiary, a medieval illustrated didactic genre whose purpose was to popularise and spread Christian thought by relying on biblical interpretations of animals. The introductory part also discusses structure and significance of bestiaries in the Middle Ages.

After the initial observation of the complete repertoire of zoonyms present in *The Chronicles of Narnia*, the thesis categorizes the list of zoonyms and singles out those animals which also appear in the medieval bestiaries, including the proto-bestiary *Liber Monstrorum*, an early English translation of the Latin *Physiologus* and the 12-century English manuscript *The Aberdeen Bestiary*. The purpose is to show how this iconography is used in the novel series. In this respect, the focus is put on the lion, wolf and supernatural species, which are the most prominent bestiary-related species in the novel. The proposed analysis demonstrates that these animals have a central function in Lewis' Christian allegory, created by appropriating the established bestiary iconography.

The final part is dedicated to a relatively recent cross-disciplinary theoretical paradigm of animal studies used, among others, for examining the phenomenon of the non-human animal. The purpose is to define the literary subgenre of animal fantasy, its sources and tendencies, and question whether *The Chronicles of Narnia*, as a representative work of animal fantasy, represent an anthropocentric approach to the animal in the context of animal studies.

2. Medieval Bestiaries: History, Structure, Function

The worldview of a person inhabiting the medieval Europe differed significantly from the modern one. Every element of the world around them was perceived as a manifestation of the divine, i.e. of Christian God. The living world, including animals, was not excluded from this visible manifestation of the otherworldly. In fact, it participated in a hierarchy of all the creation, where animals were given a place lower than man, and subsequently further than God. Since animals were physically close to the medieval person, they could be easily used as Christian symbols. According to Willene B. Clark and Meradith T. McMunn, bestiaries or books of beasts are "collections of animal descriptions and lore, both real and fantastic, which

are interpreted as spiritual or moral lessons and often provided with illustrations. Topoi originating in or popularized by the bestiaries are found in diverse media from the Middle Ages to the present day." (1) The bestiary, which contains descriptions of animals combined with doctrinal teaching about their significance, is not a single unified text, but "numerous variants composed of excerpts from many Christian and medieval treatises." (Hassig 5) Taking into account its origins and sources, the bestiary's history can be traced to the antiquity. The earliest source for the medieval bestiary, which provides most of its moral lessons, is the *Physiologus* (the Naturalist) – an Alexandrian text from the second century. Debra Hassig calls it "a Christianized interpretation of ancient animal lore." (6) The translation of the *Physiologus* into Latin, which occurred between the fourth and the sixth century AD, ignited the flame of its extreme popularity during the centuries to come. Although not much is known about its use at the time, it was significant for its "elucidation of certain articles of faith that were gaining doctrinal importance during this time . . . The bestiary animals also provided lessons on morality from which their readers were expected to profit: the stag demonstrated the value of friendship." (Hassig 170-171) In the thirteenth century, as the interest in the encyclopaedia grew, bestiaries started assuming a similar format, which resulted in a decline of the bestiary's moralistic part. (Hassig 173) By the later Middle Ages, the *Physiologus* and its translations were used as a specific handbook (Hassig 170), which points to its popularity and wider readership. As Hassig argues,

> The . . . increase in uses and perceptions of the bestiaries corresponded to an expanded readership. That is, whereas a monastic readership has been generally proposed for the thirteenth-century English bestiaries . . . there is evidence of secular interest in the specific contents of both [Bodleian Library manuscript] 764 and [British Library manuscript] 475I. (176)

Following the thirteenth-century booming reception, there were two major tendencies regarding the bestiary in the fourteenth century. The first one was a "reduction of size, content, and artistic lavishness of the bestiaries" and the second one was "an ideological shift that positioned the genre firmly within the realm of secular literature," owing to the fact that there was an increasing interest in courtly love and secular books at the time. (Hassig 177)

In most cases, the structure of the prose bestiaries which were in greatest circulation in the medieval Europe, including England, contains a non-fixed number of chapters, each divided into two parts, describing a single species. The first part of a chapter presents the physical characteristics of the animal, which is often followed by a description of its typical

behaviour. The second part of each chapter is explicatory and didactic, interpreting the animal's typical behaviour through the filter of Christian teaching. A prominent example can be found in *The Aberdeen Bestiary*, which is, according to Wilma B. George and William Brunsdon Yapp, a second-family bestiary belonging to the subfamily 11A, 1200-1325. (xiii) For instance, the bestiary tigress chases the hunter who took away her cubs, but she is distracted if the hunter leaves mirrors on the ground. She then sees her own reflection and thinks it is her cubs. This is explained as a warning not to be seduced by vanity, because the tigress represents the vain person, while the hunter stands for the Devil. (*The Aberdeen Bestiary*, folio 8v) However, Grover Cronin, Jr. emphasizes the fact that there is a secular aspect and interpretation to the bestiary representations: "the Bestiary represented secular learning as well as homiletic device, and . . . it was, for the most part, taken very literally, at least until the twelfth-century revival of popular preaching." (194) Cronin finds presumably incontestable opinion of scholars such as James Carlill and E. P. Evans, that the bestiary is "subordinate to hermeneutical and homiletical purposes, . . . a mere treatise on theology" unwarrantedly simple:

> The unwarranted simplicity in this view of the Bestiary is immediately betrayed by the introduction of hermeneutics. The naturally close relations between symbolism and scriptural interpretation are even closer with regard to the Bestiary, for much of this strange lore derives from Biblical accounts of creation. (Cronin 192)

Beryl Rowland recognizes the bestiary as one of the first popular works of literature where lessons were taught through both the eye and the ear. Together with the Psalter and the Apocalypse, it was "one of the leading picture books in twelfth- and thirteenth-century England." (16) According to Hassig, "[t]he *mise-en-page* of the English bestiaries . . . corresponds to typical patterns of modest versus luxury manuscripts" which "have large, framed illustrations that usually occupy at least one-third to one-half of the folio, with the text arranged in a single column underneath, or sometimes above and below the miniature." (9) Miniatures that occupy an entire page are rare, and they are usually the ones accompanying entries describing the lion or the elephant, or the ones containing sacred images. Most commonly, the image of the creature precedes the (single-columned) accompanying text (Hassig 9). There are also examples of bestiaries with pages organized in two columns, such as *The Peterborough Bestiary*.

Illustrations are rare in *Physiologus*, but they appear in abundance in the versions translated to the vernacular languages. The twelfth century sees a general increase in the illustrations. Clark and McMunn explain that phenomenon with an increasing didactic function of the bestiaries; illustrated entries were helpful, for instance, to lay-brothers in monasteries, who were often illiterate. (Clark and McMunn 4) For example, the lion is most commonly illustrated in all of its three bestiary natures (Figure 1), which will be described and analysed in more detail anon.

Figure 1. The anonymous illustrator of the bestiary written in the South of England in the second quarter of the 13th century depicts three natures of the lion. When hunted, the lion erases the tracks with his tale (top picture). The cubs are born dead, and the father roars above them three days later, bringing them to life (middle picture). The picture at the bottom illustrates two lions sleeping with their eyes open. (source: Bodleian Library, MS. Bodley 602, folio 1v. http://bestiary.ca/beasts/beastgallery78.htm)

Clark and McMunn argue that the main function of the bestiary illustrations was to "enable the reader to retain [the moral precepts] by fixing a series of images in the mind that could be recalled at will." (20) In fact, the bestiary owes a significant part of its popularity to the "facility with which it might be remembered". (Clark and McMunn 20) It is important to mention that the illustrations follow a "disregard for natural models" (Cronin 197), which is often also found in textual descriptions of an animal's behaviour. Both the authors and the illustrators created images which were considerably distant from the reality they claimed to describe. For example, the illustrated beaver rather resembles a dog, and its bestiary behaviour is chewing off its testicles when hunted (*The Aberdeen Bestiary*, folio 11r), which has little to do with actual beavers.

The bestiary's function in the Middle Ages, according to Rowland, was "to teach the Christian ethic in such a manner that would fix itself indelibly on the mind" (12). The form of the bestiary entries, being simple and direct, easy to read and understand, containing repeatable patterns and "indebted to a technique of Greek and Roman rhetoricians," (Rowland 12) served the bestiary's didactic function. According to Rowland, its "elaborate images, ingenious similitudes, and complex mnemonic schemes" (13) made it easier for the bestiary iconography to be imprinted on the memory of an entire continent.

Significance of the bestiary for its readers changed not only with the passing of centuries, but also with regard to the person reading it. According to Hassig, "in earlier times, the phoenix entry taught readers about the concept of the general resurrection at the end of time" but in the 12th century it may have been interpreted "in terms of specific . . . contemporary issues, namely the resurrection of the flesh and the fate of the body in the grave." (168) Hassig adds that a man and a woman would probably have different understanding of the entry describing the fire rocks. (168) The 13th century and its encyclopaedic approach brought something new to the development of the bestiary: a lack of moralization (Hassig 173), which will continue in the following centuries, and result in secular, love bestiaries, like the one written by Philippe de Thaun. (Hassig 8). This decline in the interest for moral lessons is reflected in the structure of the bestiary as well: there is elaborate grouping and taxonomy. For instance, "Four-footed beasts, birds, reptiles, and fishes were grouped together and presented in that order" (Hassig 173), which was not encountered in earlier versions. Hassig points out that "this implies an interest in listing and defining the creatures rather than communicating moral lessons. In fact, it has been suggested that the bestiary by this time functioned at least in part as a large index of animal names." (173) The encyclopaedic approach, marked by short texts and taxonomy, transformed the bestiary ethics,

removing the Christian aspect and introducing the social. The bestiary's perception and function for today's readership is even further removed, when it keeps on living not only as a separate genre of the past, but also through intertextually connected works such as *The Chronicles of Narnia*.

3. The Narnian Bestiary

The Chronicles of Narnia by C. S. Lewis is a novel series written under the influence of, for example, Homer's *The Odyssey*, Samuel Taylor Coleridge's "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" and medieval Holy Grail stories translated and reworked by Sir Thomas Malory in *Le Morte Darthur*. (Tolhurst 158) In fact, Fiona Tolhurst states that Lewis' "passion for the Arthurian legend was so great that it shaped not only his fictional versions of the medieval past but also his fictional versions of the modern present" (160). Narnian stories are located in worlds which, like in many other fantasy works, resemble the medieval realm, or at least how the modern reader might perceive it. According to David C. Downing, this is visible from the moment when Aslan first appears in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, which is almost a "medieval tableau" because "The Pevensie children see first a royal pavilion of yellow silk with crimson cords and a waving banner depicting a "red rampant lion." . . . This scene, a lion between two leopards holding his emblems of authority, is a common device on medieval coats of arms." (117)

According to Catherine L. Elick, one of the reasons why Lewis chose the medieval society as a model for Narnia is probably the "[m]onarchical government and rigid class structure" together with "the seasonal madness of carnival and its healthful subversions of the status quo," (464) which were all important features of the medieval times, and are echoed in *The Chronicles of Narnia* as well. The parallel with the Middle Ages is manifested not solely in the social relations of the characters (kings, queens, knights, common folk), and the Bakhtinian carnivalesque, but also in the abovementioned worldview. It can be seen, for example, in the fact that the hierarchy in the Narnian world does not change, and when it does, it happens in centuries-long timespans. According to Michael P. Muth, Lewis uses the popular medieval genre of the bestiary in order to recreate this kind of setting and to achieve his Christian allegory. (242)

C. S. Lewis studied and knew the medieval world picture very well, which can be read from his book *The Discarded Image. An Introduction to Medieval and Renaissance Literature*, where he writes: "[a]t his most characteristic, medieval man was not a dreamer nor

a wanderer. He was an organiser, a codifier, a builder of systems. He wanted 'a place for everything and everything in the right place'. Distinction, definition, tabulation were his delight." (10) Lewis' choices were therefore arguably conscious and intentional, and they resulted in having a significant influence on the future development of fantasy.

The Chronicles of Narnia, according to the classification of Tzvetan Todorov[1] belong to the subgenre of the marvellous. Such works do not offer rational explanation for seemingly supernatural elements in a text, which is why the reader's hesitation remains unresolved until the very end. In *The Chronicles of Narnia*, the hesitation refers to the existence of a world on the other side of the closet, a world which is home to talking animals, while the text functions in a way that the supernatural elements exist when one believes that they do. Even though Peter J. Schakel gives evidence that the Narnian storyteller evolves as a character and oftentimes gives indications of not being certain about some details, (76) it is nevertheless a typically marvellous narrator, like Tolkien's, which is

> impersonal and has become an authoritative, knowing voice. There is a minimum of emotional involvement in the tale – that voice is poisoned with absolute confidence and certainty towards [completed] events . . . The reader, like the protagonist, is merely a receiver of events which enact a preconceived pattern. (Jackson 33)

This type of narrator, with its relationship with the text, the reader and history, seems to be the most adequate one to present a story of a pseudomedieval world, where, as Lewis argues, "everything is in the right place" and there is no place for hesitation. According to James Russell, the Narnian space has a utopian nature, which is therefore static. This nature "ensures that no more stories can be told, because there are no longer any conflicts requiring resolution." (64)

Lewis' marvellous Narnian world, according to Greer Watson, is "an example of what might be called an 'otherworldly' secondary world: it is radically unlike the primary world. Such worlds usually have their own geography and history and may have inhabitants of a magical nature." (351) On the other hand, although the world from which the Pevensie children come seems like the primary world, same as Earth, it is only a "quasi-primary" secondary world, "not even a fictionalized representation of the primary world" (Watson 351) because it includes, for example, portals to a world of magic. Frank P. Riga states that the

---

[1] Todorov defines the marvellous in its pure form as a subgenre of the fantastic in which the supernatural elements do not cause a reaction neither among the characters nor the readership. It is not determined by the attitude towards the described events, as much as by the nature of the events. (54)

children coming to Narnia are in fact the marvellous invading the Narnian reality, whereas the implied reader sees Narnia as the marvellous. This results in “luster and richness,” through which “Lewis implies that something wonderful inheres in the ordinary experience of everyday reality.” (27)

The Chronicles of Narnia manage to exist as both a marvellous text and a Christian allegory. When creating the Narnian world Lewis heavily relies on the Christian doctrine, motifs and moral lessons. The religious motifs, according to Schakel, are “embedded in image and story, which the reader experiences imaginatively, not (as in Mere Christianity or Miracles) in concept and logical argument. The full religious significance of the Chronicles depends on viewing them as a unified series and on reading them in order of publication.” (52)

David G. Clark brings to attention a quote from *The Chronicles of Narnia* in which Narnia and the “quasi-primary” Earth are described as a mere reflection of the real world Aslan comes from. Thus, according to Clark, Lewis quotes Plato, whose thought is supported by the Christian theology as well: the visible is a copy, a reflection of the invisible. (Clark 129) Michael Edwards underlines another “platonic” word frequently used in *The Chronicles of Narnia*, the comparative “like”, which relates to “shadow” and “copy.” (122) However, according to William G. Johnson and Marcia K. Houtman, it is not possible to determine “how much else Lewis takes directly from Plato, how much is ‘second hand’ through the Church Fathers, Neo-Platonists, and Renaissance Christian Humanists, and how much is merely an amalgam developed by Lewis as part of his own creative processes.” (86) Like every allegory, *The Chronicles of Narnia* leaves space for more obvious readings and therefore functions as a didactic story for children and adults as well.

3.1 Bestiaries and *The Chronicles of Narnia*

All zoonyms mentioned in *The Chronicles of Narnia* are listed in Table 1, categorized into animals that can also be found in medieval bestiaries, animals not found in medieval bestiaries, and fantastic animals, a number of which can be also found in some bestiaries variants.[2] The table puts fantastic animals and monsters in a separate category because they are of special importance for an analysis of a fantastic text. When analysing the zoonyms, the thesis does not make a distinction between the ones that signify animals present in the world of the text and the ones merely mentioned. This is due to the fact that in most cases the same animal is present both in the world of the text and the world of the narration. The numbers in the brackets represent the page where each zoonym appears for the first time in *The Chronicles of Narnia*.

[2] The unsorted zoonyms are the ones not denoting a separate species, but are another name for animals already present in Table 1. They are either more general (beast, wild animals, birds, insects, vulture, lizard, vermin, fish, poultry, beetle, stone monster, fowl), used in a different register (Puss, hog, pajock, moke), more specific than a species (kitten, destrier, charger, Alsatian, St Bernard, bulldog, cat-a-mountain, retriever, rattlesnake, sheep-dog, foal, colt, mallard, hound, wood pigeon, donkey), or male or female of an already mentioned species (hen, cock, mare, vixen, cow, dog-fox). In addition, some are expressions for animals used for food (beef, pork, bacon, ham, venison).

Table 1 Zoonyms in *The Chronicles of Narnia* which can also be found in bestiaries (1st column), zoonyms not found in bestiaries (2nd column) and fantastic creatures or monsters (3rd column) with first page of appearance

Bestiary animals	**Non-bestiary animals**	**Fantastic creatures and monsters**[3]
worm (45)	pony (74)	dragon (46)
dog (46)	guinea-pig (16)	Faun (71)
bull (46)	shrimp (45)	Satyr (71)
horse (55)	fly (54)	Dwarf (71)
lion (63)	rat (62)	Naiad (71), river-god (105)
mole (69)	butterfly (69)	winged horse (85)
stag (69), deer (173)	elk (76)	nymph (95), wood-god (105), (Hama)Dryad (117), Tree-woman (168), spirit of evil trees (180), stone-dryad (187), birch-girl (188), beech-girl (188), larch-girl (188), willow-woman (388), oak-man (388), wood-maid (700)
panther (69)	warthog (77)	Silenus (116)
bee (69)	tapir (78)	Bacchus (117)
elephant (69)	pigeon (85)	centaur (154)
beaver (69)	squirrel (97)	giant (154)
leopard (69)	sardine (116)	unicorn (168)
frog (69)	robin (122)	bull with the head of a man (168)
rabbit (70)	reindeer (123)	giant bat (172)
jackdaw (71)	polar bear (123)	werewolf (173)
owl (72)	trout (143)	Ghoul (173)
raven (72)	thrush (167)	Boggle (173)
bear (76)	bumble-bee (176)	Ogre (173)
boar (76)	kangaroo (188)	Minotaur (173)
badger (78)	seagull (193)	Cruel (173)
eagle (85)	cob (219)	Hag (173)
swan (85)	gnat (222)	Spectre (173)
hawk (112)	lobster (236)	Incubus (180)
fox (112)	chicken (240)	Wraith (180)

[3] The dragon, which is here included in the Fantastic creatures and monsters column, is also present in most bestiaries. This is why it essentially belongs in both columns but is omitted due to repetition. The same is true for the winged horse (present in some bestiaries as Pegasus), the centaur, the unicorn, the mermaid and the phoenix.

wolf (154)	snipe (240)	Horror (180)
pelican (168)	jackal (246)	Efreet (180)
kingfisher (167)	pig (263)	Sprite (180)
snake (170)	dragonfly (269)	Orkny (180)
ape (180)	hornet (288)	Woose (180)
mouse (180)	shark (307)	Ettin (180)
bat (182)	wasp (317)	merman (194), mermaid (194), sea-people (194), Sea-Girl (534)
cat (187)	crab (318)	pavender (332)
hedgehog (190)	shell (319), shellfish (478)	headless man (453)
peacock (193)	anemone (319)	Sea Serpent (478)
sheep (215), Lamb (540)	grasshopper (356)	Monopod (501)
mule (219)	tortoise (372)	bird with human voice (527)
goat (233)	lark (441)	Kraken (529)
magpie (284)	flea (502)	sea-horse (529)
scorpion (307)	albatross (511)	Siren (538)
ass (307)	turkey (514)	Marsh-Wiggle (577)
hare (352)	salmon (514)	Earthman/gnome (614)
mosquito (356)	squid (529)	Tash (711) (human body, 4 arms, bird's head)
goose (360)	snail (536)	goblin (734)
nightingale (369)	peewit (585)	phoenix (764)
crow (403)	centipede (588)	
spider (463)	walrus (615)	
crocodile (468)	pygmy hippopotamus (640)	
whale (506)	water rat (678)	
falcon (530)	sloth (680)	
duck (579)	octopus (753)	
heron (579)		
bittern (579)		
salamander (644)		
ostrich (756)		

As seen in Table 1, the bestiary animals present in *The Chronicles of Narnia* are more numerous than the non-bestiary ones, particularly taking into consideration the species which are both fantastic animals (third column) and present in bestiaries. The narrator often uses non-bestiary animals, contemporary to the implied reader, such as St. Bernard dog, gnat, or flea, for textual needs, most commonly in similes, but also when referring to the reality from which the characters such as the children and the Cabby came to Narnia. The purpose is probably to get closer to the implied reader, who comes from the Earth and shares knowledge of the world with the Pevensie children, and to make a distinction between the narrated text and the text of the dialogues.

It is important to mention that Lewis uses the bestiary zoonyms with more or less freedom; some of these share no more than a mere name with its bestiary counterpart and in *The Chronicles of Narnia* they are given then a set of new characteristics; while others rely on the usual interpretations of animals in bestiaries, such as the connection with the good (lion, Lamb, phoenix) or the evil (wolf, ape). In the first two of the following parts, we will analyse two specific prominent animals, the lion and the wolf. The third part will be dedicated to fantastic fauna and its function in the bestiaries and in *The Chronicles of Narnia* as the generic representation of the monstrous.

3.1.1 Aslan and the Bestiary Lion

In the history of civilization, the lion has always had an exceptionally strong symbolism. According to Boria Sax, other than being the supreme predator of the savanna, this animal is symbolically present since the Palaeolithic; together with other big cats, it occupies a special place among the drawings in the cave Lascaux and it probably carried religious importance for the Palaeolithic person. (173-174) The lion was put on a pedestal as the king of animals of the Sumerians and Babylonians, in ancient Rome and the Christian world, and in the Eastern religions. (Sax 175-176) This animal entered the visual art from these worldviews, and it is especially perpetuated when it becomes a symbol, from art and Zodiac to the contemporary popular culture.

The lion’s title is followed by characteristics which we could call generally royal – wisdom, justice, power. These characteristics, as the title of the king itself, seem to echo some ancient time, or a space filled with magic, where animals were adorned with supreme human virtues. It may be unexpected that the European public was introduced to the symbolic lion through bestiaries, which carried forward the ancient symbolism and combined it with

religious interpretation. In C. S. Lewis' *The Chronicles of Narnia*, lion occupies the central role as the ruler of the Talking Animals and its construction reveals some characteristics that come from bestiary tradition.

Traditionally, lion occupies the first place in every bestiary, and the Middle English translation of the *Physiologus* is no exception. Its first 52 verses consist of three stories dedicated to lion. The first one describes a lion standing on the hill. Upon hearing the sound of the hunter or sensing his smell, the lion erases its traces with its tail and runs away. The second story is about a young lion which, after being born, does not come alive until the Sun shines three times, in which moment the cub's father wakes it up with a roar. The third scene described by the bestiary sees a lion sleeping with its eyes open. The stories are followed by explanations which follow the order of the depictions.

Early bestiaries, written before the 12th century, offer explicit biblical interpretations of animals-symbols. It is an exclusively Christian interpretation, a certain kind of exegesis. For example, in the early English bestiary translated from the Latin *Physiologus* of Theobaldus Episcopus (*The Early English Bestiary* 3) we can read that the hill on which the lion stands represents the heavenly kingdom, and Christ is the lion which came down to Earth from that hill. The devil, on the other hand, is identified with a cunning hunter, who despite his cunningness does not know where Jesus came from or how Mary conceived him for the salvation of the human race. The interpretation which follows is even more self-evident: the lion cub who does not wake up three days after its birth, represents Jesus Christ who was lying in the tomb for three days and was resurrected the third day in order to give humans eternal life. Since this is a didactic text, there is a warning at the end of the story, i.e. an instruction for the life of a good Christian who needs to be obedient to the shepherd. In return, the shepherd will protect the good Christian and take care that the herd does not wander away.

One does not have to be a zoology expert in order to realize that reality does not reflect some of these animal descriptions. The medieval listener, however, did not question the validity of the bestiary, which was being used a homiletic device in the sermon. Popular animal tales were appealing to the ignorant people and guaranteed the forming of the congregation. (Cronin 196) C. S. Lewis himself notes this phenomenon when writing about medieval literature:

> medieval zoology strikes us as childish; such zoology, at least, as they most often put into books. For, as there was a practical geography which had nothing to do with the

> *mappemounde*, so there was a practical zoology which had nothing to do with the Bestiaries. (*The Discarded Image* 146)

The bestiary lion was not described physically as some other animals (whose material traits, rather than behaviour, symbolised moral lessons), but the scenes from its textual life are abundant. While the description of the erasure of traces can be plausible, the part describing the three-day long death of the cubs follows its own explanation, i.e. it was written with the intention to fit the interpretation.

The medieval worldview interprets every living being and inanimate thing as a symbol, comprising the lion, whose symbolical interpretation is at least in part motivated not only by the behaviour of the actual animal, but also by its appearance (not described in the bestiary). The result of the complex process of symbol formation enabled the reading/listening[4] public to experience incredible stories, as well as the fantastic ones inherited from the ancient texts which were included in the Christian teachings and transformed into advice for everyday behaviour. One of the consequences was preservation and carrying forward of the classical symbols into the Modern Period.

The first book in Lewis' series, *The Magician's Nephew*, contains the description of the creation of Narnia, which evokes the Old Testament Genesis. According to Downing, "This creation story echoes the book of Genesis, of course. But it is broader than the biblical account," because in *The Chronicles of Narnia* animals are represented as reasonable souls. Downing states that "[a] reasonable soul is one with a moral sense and a rational sense, with free will and the power of speech. In Genesis, this imago Dei, 'image of God,' is bestowed only upon men and women." (73-74) At first, Aslan is at first merely a Voice that separates light from darkness and creates nature and finally animals, some of which are given the gift of speech:

> In the darkness something was happening at last. A voice had begun to sing. It was very far away and Digory found it hard to decide from what direction it was coming. Sometimes it seemed to come from all directions at once . . . Then two wonders happened at the same moment. One was that the voice was suddenly joined by other voices . . . The second wonder was that the blackness overhead, all at once, was blazing with stars. (*The Magician's Nephew* 61)

[4] The bestiary stories were used by the preachers in the homily and thus reached illiterate masses. (Cohen 5)

The reference to the Scripture is clear, and it identifies Aslan with the Creator. The Lion, like the one who the animal symbolically represents, first appears as the Voice, the creating song, the Word that was in the beginning:

> In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth / The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. / And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. / And God saw that the light was good. And God separated the light from the darkness. / God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day. (Gen 1, 1-6)

Nevertheless, the answer to the question why Lewis chose lion to represent the Christian God might be found in the bestiary. The lion is the first animal of the bestiary, standing on the hill above the metaphorical kingdom of heaven, and the bestiary explicitly calls the lion the Saviour. Aslan’s country, unapproachable to mortals, is also on a hill, from which he watches over his dominion. Furthermore, Aslan’s song can be interpreted as the abovementioned device of creation, but it can be linked to the roar of the bestiary lion, awakening the cubs, returning them to life, and representing Resurrection of Christ. Thus, an intricate and complex web is created, connecting the two lions and their respective interpretations. According to Downing,

> Besides the Emperor-Beyond-the-Sea and Aslan, there is no explicit third person of the Narnian trinity. But as Walter Hooper has pointed out, the biblical words for spirit (Hebrew ruach, Greek pneuma) can both be translated “breath” as well, and Aslan expresses his spirit in breathing upon his creatures. It is his breath that transforms chosen animals on the day of Narnia’s creation into Talking Beasts. And it is breath that turns the White Witch’s victims from stone statues back into living creatures. (71)

In this interpretation, Lewis completes the Holy Trinity with Aslan as Christ, his breath as the Holy Spirit and the absent Emperor-Beyond-The-Sea and the God Father. Lewis’ great Lion, however, can be also read as a figure denoting both the Christian god and his son. After being the Creator of Narnia, Aslan becomes the Saviour, sacrificing himself to save children and later returning from the dead because evil, embodied in the White Witch,

cannot hurt him: "Aren't you dead then, dear Aslan?" said Lucy. "Not now," said Aslan. (*The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* 184)

Other echoes of the bestiary lion can be found, for example, in the novel *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* when Aslan revives stone animals enchanted by the White Witch, the first of which being a lion. Moreover, while the bestiary lion uses its tail to erase its footsteps and escape the hunters, Aslan too flees to his country, sometimes remaining there for centuries, until Animals and humans cease to believe in his existence. Finally, the bestiary lion sleeping with its eyes open, while not directly applied to Aslan's character, can be connected with his wisdom.

3.1.2 The Talking Wolf – Bestiary's Dark Side

The antithesis to the kind and honourable lion, not only in Lewis' novel series, but also as a symbol in the history of civilization, is the wolf, where it has been connected with cruelty and fierceness. According to Sax, this stems from the actual danger wolves represented for the early communities: "In early tribal societies the wolf was closely connected with hunting, but later it was often connected with pillage." (267) The greatest influence, in that respect, came from the ancient Hebrews who were primarily organized as herding tribes, and they perceived wolves as a threat to their flocks (Sax 269), as revealed in The Bible. Matthew quotes Jesus, who says: "I am sending you out like sheep among wolves" (Matt. 10:16).

An important mention of the wolf from the Middle Ages is a story from *The Little Flowers of Saint Francis*, a florilegium in 53 chapters describing the life of saint Francis and his company written in the 14th century. In the story, a wolf continually attacks the Italian town of Gubbio, until Saint Francis tames the ferocious attacker and makes peace with it. (Ugolino 48-49) This was, according to Sax, often interpreted as the triumph of spirituality over appetite. However, it was not until the Renaissance that the wolf started to be growingly associated with witchcraft and the Devil. (Sax 269) It probably did little to discourage the extensive hunting of actual wolves. As a result, on the territory of Great Britain, similarly to the most of Europe, wolves were made extinct by hunting between the 15th and the 18th century. (Sax 269)

The bestiaries describe the wolf in more detail than the lion. The elements which describe the wolf include its relationship with man, as well as its behaviour with other animals and its physical appearance. For instance, *The Aberdeen Bestiary* mentions the following

interaction between a wolf and man: if a wolf is the first to see a man, the man will lose his voice and have to take off his clothes. If the opposite happens, the wolf loses its fierceness. Another story, regarding wolf's behaviour when hunting other animals says that wolves live from prey, earth and wind. They are cunning and hunt far away from their lair. A wolf approaches a sheep from upwind so as not to be noticed by dogs. If a wolf steps on a branch and makes a noise, it punishes itself by biting off the offending foot. In a similar fashion, wolves prefers to mutilate themselves in order to escape the trap rather than being caught.

As far as the wolf's physical characteristics are concerned, *The Aberdeen Bestiary* abounds with descriptions. In the first one, the wolf's strength is in its paws and therefore whatever it lays its paws on, does not survive. Its weakness, on the other hand, lies in the loins. A wolf cannot turn the neck backwards, so it must turn its body around to see behind itself. Wolf's eyes shine in the dark and the hair from the tip of its tail can be used for love potions. *The Aberdeen Bestiary* mentions that Ethiopian wolves' manes are multi-coloured and they can leap very high. Wolves mate only twelve days a year and the pups are born in May, with the first thunder. *The Aberdeen Bestiary* adds the assumed etymology of the word wolf, which comes from the Greek:

> the Greeks call it *licos;* this comes from the Greek word for 'bites', because maddened by greed, wolves kill whatever they find. Others say the word *lupus* is, as it were, *leo-pos,* because like the lion, leo, their strength is in their paws, *pes* . . . Wolves get their name from their rapacity: for this reason we call whores lupae, she-wolves, because they strip their lovers of their wealth. (folio 16v)

The bestiary explanations of these numerous wolf stories are, again, connected to the Bible. Wolf represents the Devil, and his prey is mankind. The first thunder in May, when a wolf is born, stands for the first display of the Devil's pride. Wolf's eyes shining in the night are interpreted as the Devil's works, which seem beautiful, but are deceiving. The fact that a wolf cannot turn its neck around represents the fact that the Devil fails to turn back and correct his evil deeds. The story of a man who removes his clothes and a wolf that loses its ferocity is explained as the Devil losing his power when the man is baptized.

Evil made flesh in *The Chronicles of Narnia* appears in numerous forms, one of the most prominent being the White Witch that opposes Aslan in the first and the second book in the novel series. The captain of her wicked army of animals and creatures is Maugrim, an evil

wolf whose name is introduced in the story on a piece of paper the Pevensies find in the cave of the Faun Tumnus:

> The former occupant of these premises, the Faun Tumnus, is under arrest and awaiting his trial on a charge of High Treason against her Imperial Majesty Jadis, Queen of Narnia, Chatelaine of Cair Paravel, Empress of the Lone Islands, etc., also of comforting her said Majesty's enemies, harbouring spies and fraternizing with Humans. Signed MAUGRIM, Captain of the Secret Police, LONG LIVE THE QUEEN! (*The Lion*, *the Witch and the Wardrobe* 136)

As a character, Maugrim functions as an extension and a servant to the White Witch, but nonetheless it is cruel and evil by itself. As one of the side characters, Maugrim's main function is to scare and pray on others. It is blind with hate, preying on Tumnus and the children and in the end gets killed in the battle. Other than "the chief of the Witch's Secret Police," (*The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* 154) names and descriptions used to denote and describe Maugrim in the text are: "the monster, its eyes flaming, and its mouth wide open in a howl of anger" (*The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* 170) and "the great brute." (*The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* 173) This leads to a conclusion that the wolf in *The Chronicles of Narnia* serves as a representation of danger and evil. This is significantly achieved by the tradition of the bestiary, which contributed to the imprinting of the devilish image of the wolf in the consciousness of the Western civilization.

3.1.3 Fantastic Animals and Monsters – *Liber Monstrorum*

At an early point in its development, one of the bestiaries took a parallel road and completely ceased to depict a realistic animal world, at least from today's perspective. *Liber Monstrorum* is a bestiary which focused not on ordinary animals, but on monsters, i.e. marvellous creatures, thought to inhabit exotic locations distant to the medieval person, such as Ethiopia and India. The fact that readers and listeners did not have a way of knowing the truth gave the anonymous author the freedom to describe any kind of creature.

Liber Monstrorum is a bestiary probably written around the 8th century, probably by an Anglo-Saxon scholar, and it is closely tied to *Beowulf*, sharing "a number of curious details with the poem", such as the character of Hygelac. (Orchard, *A Critical Companion* 134) *Liber Monstrorum* is a proto-bestiary from which bestiaries developed later in the Middle Ages. The text of *Liber Monstrorum* is thematically divided into three parts, which distinguishes it from

the later bestiaries because they generally do not follow any topical units and are thus open for new entries. The three parts describe humanoid monsters (monsters in the strict sense, i.e. creatures endowed with both human and non-human characteristics), beasts and serpents. (Orchard, *A Critical Companion* 133) According to Hassig, "Monstrouos Races and other marvels. . . had been popular since Antiquity and were known primarily from the Alexander literature on Eastern wonders and from information recorded by Pliny." and this tradition was especially popular in England, "as evidenced by surviving illustrated manuscripts on the Marvels of the East." (172)

Liber Monstrorum and its sources – "Christian prose sources, chiefly Isidore and Augustine; pagan prose sources, chiefly relating to the heroic exploits of Alexander the Great; and Vergil, including the commentary tradition" (Orchard, *A Critical Companion* 133) – were interesting to the medieval theologians such as Augustine, who made "attempts to answer questions such as why God allowed monsters and deformities to exist and whether these were human and would participate in salvation" (Hassig 172) However, it is worth mentioning that some of the monstrous and fantastic species were present not only in *Liber Monstrorum*, but in the early bestiaries as well. Such creature is, e.g., the centaur. (*The Aberdeen Bestiary*, folio 22r)

A monster in the strict sense is a creature with elements of both the human and the non-human, or in some cases even of different kinds of non-human. *The Chronicles of Narnia* mention such creatures vaguely when describing something unimaginable and frightful: "demons in the shape of beasts . . . monsters that are half men and half beast." (258) When a dragon, which is a monster in a broad sense, is described in *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*, other animals are used for comparison, such as the spider and the bat (463). Since the proto-bestiary *Liber Monstrorum* deals with beings which are 'in between', deformities and anomalies, what is today considered fantastic fauna is also included in *Liber Monstrorum.* It mentions, for example, dragon's tail and teeth when describing creatures such as Dracontopodes.

The existence of marvellous creatures is not contested by the anonymous author and the creatures are introduced with more or less direct expressions such as "Indeed *I bear witness* at the beginning of the work that *I have known a person* of both sexes" (Orchard, *Pride and Prodigies* 259, emphasis mine), or "*they say* there are monsters in swamps with three human heads." (Orchard, *Pride and Prodigies* 277, emphasis mine) This shows that these animals were not perceived by the medieval reader/listener as being ontologically different than the ones described by more "common" bestiaries.

There is an overlapping in the repertoire of marvellous animals and monsters between *The Chronicles of Narnia* and *Liber Monstrorum*, as seen in Table 2 below.

Table 2 Marvellous creatures in *The Chronicles of Narnia* and their equivalents in *Liber Monstrorum* and bestiaries

The Chronicles of Narnia	***Liber Monstrorum***
Bacchus	–
bird with human voice	–
bull with the head of a man	–
Boggle	–
Cruel	–
dragon	dragon's teeth, dragon's tail
centaur	hippocentaur, ass-centaur
Dwarf	–
Efreet	–
Ettin	–
Faun	Faun
giant	giant
gnome	–
goblin	–
Ghoul	–
Horror	–
giant bat	–
Hag	–
headless man	Epifugi
Incubus	Incubi
Kraken	–
Marsh-Wiggle	–
merman/mermaid	sea-girls or sirens
Minotaur	Minotaur
Monopod	Sciapod
Naiad	–
nymph/Dryad/Hamadryad	nymphs
Ogre	–
Orkny	–

pavender	–
phoenix	– (appears in bestiaries)
Satyr	Satyr
sea-horse	two-footed horses in the Mediterranean
Sea Serpent	–
siren	siren (confused with mermaid)
Sylvan	–
Silenus	–
Spectre	–
Sprite	–
unicorn	– (appears in bestiaries)
werewolf	–
winged horse	–
Woose	–
Wraith	–
Tash	–

Since we have so far focused on the two important animals Lewis borrowed from the bestiaries, we will now discuss some of the creatures he appropriated from *Liber Monstrorum*. An interesting example of Lewis' borrowing from *Liber Monstrorum* is a species in the novel *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* which appears to be heavily influenced by the bestiary. Duffers, Dufflepuds or Monopods are described as creatures with only one big leg, living on the mysterious Island of the Voices. When Lucy first sees them (after they are turned visible), they are turned upside-down and look like mushrooms. The "stalks" are their legs and the "umbrella part" is the foot:

> She saw in a moment why they had looked like mushrooms. They had been lying flat on their backs each with its single leg straight up in the air and its enormous foot spread out above it. She learned afterward that this was their ordinary way of resting; for the foot kept off both rain and sun and for a Monopod to lie under its own foot is almost as good as being in a tent. (*The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* 501-502)

Liber Monstrorum offers a very similar description of a creature that is called Sciapod. This fantastic humanoid species, present in Aristophanus and Pliny, is carried into the Middle Ages by the book of monsters:

> And they say there is a race of people whom the Greeks call Sciapods ['shade-feet'], because lying on their backs they protect themselves from the heat of the sun by the shade of their feet. Indeed they are of a very swift nature. They have only one leg each for their feet, and their knees harden in an inflexible joint. (Orchard, *Pride and Prodigies* 269)

Another such fantastic creature in *The Chronicles of Narnia* is the faun Tumnus. *Liber Monstrorum* describes the faun in few words, putting the main focus on its appearance:

> Moreover fauns, who are called thus from their speaking (fando), are wood-dwellers, and have human appearance from the head to the navel (although their heads disguise curved horns in their noses), and the lower part of the two feet and the thighs is represented in the form of goats. The poet Lucan sang that, according to the opinion of the Greeks, they, along with countless other kinds of wild animals, were drawn to the lyre of Orpheus by his song.

The only mention of the faun's behaviour recalls the poet Lucan, in the ancient Greek story of Orpheus, drawing animals to his lyre. Although the faun Tumnus appears in only a couple of scenes in *The Chronicles of Narnia*, he is one of the central characters, and, moreover, the first Narnian creature that Lucy encounters after finding the secret passage in the wardrobe. The Faun's physical description (as focalized by Lucy) is similar to the one found in *Liber Monstrorum*:

> From the waist upwards he was like a man, but his legs were shaped like a goat's (the hair on them was glossy black) and instead of feet he had goat's hoofs. He also had a tail, but Lucy did not notice this at first. . . . He had a red woollen muffler round his neck and his skin was rather reddish too. He had a strange, but pleasant little face, with a short pointed beard and curly hair, and out of the hair there stuck two horns, one on each side of his forehead. (*The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* 114)

Similarly to the Monopods, who are given a new set of characteristics and become characters in their own right, Tumnus is as well released from the bounds of the bestiary tradition and is given a life of his own. He is a bookish person, as Lucy sees from the shelves in his bedroom, where there are "titles like *The Life and Letters of Silenus* or *Nymphs and Their Ways* or *Men, Monks and Gamekeepers*; *A Study in Popular Legend* or *Is Man a Myth?*" (*The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* 116) This is, according to Schakel, an expression of Lewis' personal

love of books (26). Later in the book, he proves himself to be morally aware, repenting as soon as he kidnaps Lucy, following the White Witch's orders. The Faun returns in the last book in the series, guiding Lucy and her siblings in a procession of beings towards Aslan (*The Last Battle* 766), which might be a reminiscence of the bestiary faun, drawn to Orpheus' lyre.

Monstrous creatures *The Chronicles of Narnia* mostly appear in massive scenes of Aslan gathering all his beings, such as the aforementioned scene of creation and the final scene in *The Last Battle*, when all the human and non-human characters appear in a multitude of creatures, giving *The Chronicles of Narnia* a circular form. According to Alan Jacobs, "the diversity of species (from Men to Badgers to Fauns to Centaurs to Marsh-wiggles) is exceeded only by the diversity of personalities," and this diversity is "meaningful only because they are united in purpose and devotion." (212) This scene, based on John's Revelation (Jacobs 212), unites the monstrous creatures with humans and animals.

Since *Liber Monstrorum* is a proto-bestiary, each of its entries contains a description of each monster's appearance, places it inhabits and sometimes its typical behaviour. C. S. Lewis chose to take these descriptions a step further in *The Chronicles of Narnia*, developing creatures such as Monopods as characters. Their function in *The Chronicles of Narnia* is to achieve wonder and amazement of the children characters visiting the otherworldly secondary world of Narnia.

4. Animal Fantasy, Christianity and Anthropocentrism: An Animal Studies Approach to *The Chronicles of Narnia*

No literary work that includes an abundant list of animals can avoid being read through the looking glass of animal studies, and *The Chronicles of* Narnia is no exception. Animal studies is a discipline which arose in the late 1990s as a continuation of the animal rights movement, and its development continues until the present day. (Shaw 5) Paul Waldau defines animal studies as a paradigm that "engages the many ways that human individuals and cultures are now interacting with and exploring other-than-human animals, in the past have engaged the living beings beyond our own species, and in the future might develop ways of living in a world shared with other animals." (1) A discipline which focuses on such an extensive subject as the relationship with another species is necessarily in need of an interdisciplinary approach because "no isolated vocabulary scheme or traditional way of talking, and no single theory or traditional set of generalizations provides the tools needed to accomplish" the animal studies' tasks. (Waldau 9)

Literature possesses unique tools for approaching animal topoi and it can, "like poetry and the visual arts, be extremely sensitive to the diversity and realities of the myriad creatures who share the larger earth community with humans." (Waldau 138) The reason why children's literature, which includes Lewis' *Chronicles of Narnia*, is particularly focused on animals, according to Waldau, is the fact that "the abilities of children to relate to other animals are quite suggestive of native human abilities in this regard—this is one way in which a focus on children teaches adults." (140) Thus, literature, and children's literature in particular, can attempt to go beyond the common anthropocentric point of view and observe the animal outside the traditional spheres of thought. In her reading of Derrida, Ginette Michaud points out that the only thought which does not lay any claim to the animal is the poetic, i.e. the literary thought. (Michaud 46)

According to Bruce Shaw, defamiliarization is one of the key procedures in the depiction of human inadequacies. In this way, the non-human, i.e. the animal, becomes a vehicle of a different depiction of human values, which is why this procedure is used in almost every subgenre of the fantastic. (Shaw 11-12) Shaw is another scholar who connects the phenomenon of the literary animal with Bakhtin's notion of the carnivalesque and claims that the animal is apt for inversions in which – during the carnivalesque dethronement – parody, comical and seemingly jocular are connected with the serious, with the purpose of ironizing the human. (Shaw 14) This opens numerous textual possibilities for the use of the animal as a defamiliarized human self in the fantastic.

Shaw recognizes a significant number of SF and fantasy authors who write animal fable, that have been inspired by old moral fables and reshaped into a more contemporary forms of SF and fantasy. These tales often superimpose animal over human intelligence. (Shaw 5) Animal fantasy is "frequently allegorical and elicit[s] the reader's interest with their moral element and the element of tragedy." (Shaw 18) Other than the fables, animal fantasy also reworks the genre of the fairy tale. Both fairy tales and fables are a useful source because they comprise the already mentioned Bakhtinian carnivalesque moment. While the only characters in the beast fables are animals endowed with human personality traits, the fairy tale is a folktale, including both humans and personified animals. Shaw quotes Tolkien's essay "On Fairy Stories", according to which the fairy tale is driven by the desire to hold communion with other living beings, which implies humans' close kinship with animals. (26) Earlier forms of animal tale often contain explicit or implicit social comment, putting an animal in a privileged position to observe human follies. (Shaw 19)

Animal fantasy in broad terms "does not belong to European literature alone," since "[a]nimal fables are an intrinsic ingredient in the mythology and folklore of the Middle East, China, Southeast Asia and South Asia." (Shaw 18) The Western genre of the novel, however, represents a convenient form for the development of animal fantasy because of its length and suitability for plot and character development. (Shaw 77) Philosophical propositions at the centre of science fiction and fantasy novels can be easily expressed with the vehicle of the animal fable. By using animal characters, these novels question what makes a human being, whether it is intelligence, personality or something else and how the human can be compared to the animal. (77) Animal-human allegories often function as an emphasis of some philosophical dichotomies, such as the relationship of the human and non-human. (Shaw 9-10)

Reading *The Chronicles of Narnia* from the point of view of animal studies, one must look at the relationship and attitude which the novel series establishes with the animal. Does it glorify the animal by presenting it, among others, as an allegory of divinity? Does it convey the medieval-like ambiguity of seeing the natural world both as a divine creation of God and as beings inferior to man in the hierarchy of beings? (Hassig 168-169) Although admitting that, with its meat-filled feasts, Narnia is hardly a "vegetarian Mecca," Michael C. Morris lists examples from other parts of the *The Chronicles of Narnia* showing a respectful and non-exploitative attitude towards the animal:

> Lewis expertly characterizes the cruel nature of Calormene royalty when they discuss hanging idle slaves and sending wornout horses to the knackers in the same casual manner (*Horse and His Boy*, ch. 8). The Christ-like Aslan, appearing in cat form, scratches a boy for throwing stones at a stray cat (*Horse and His Boy*, ch. 6). When Narnia is created, . . . Aslan tells the talking beasts that the animals are theirs to use, but they must be treated "kindly and fairly" (*Magician's Nephew*, ch. 11). (349)

The Talking Animals serve as an allegorical device representing the humans, but Narnia is also home to the other, "ordinary" animals. The discourse related to them is often significantly different, for example when Susan fails to shoot an arrow at a bear: " 'I—I left it too late,' said Susan, in an embarrassed voice. 'I was so afraid it might be, you know—one of our kind of bears, a talking bear.' She hated killing things." (*Prince Caspian* 107) The Talking Animals, especially Aslan, occupy a superior position in the Narnian world and it is wrong to do them harm. In *Prince Caspian*, the novel which is thematically closest to the

issue of human relationship with animals, characters and the narrator often refer to animals with expressions such as "the poor brute knew no better" (*Prince Caspian* 356), which opens up the subject of the perceived animal intelligence and consciousness. Waldau claims that "[e]xperience shows that recognition of multiple kinds of intelligence contributes to our understanding of each other and our nonhuman neighbours, thus enriching each human's awareness and deepening the multiple intelligences already at work." (142) When it comes to the issue of communication with the animal, Jacques Derrida indicates that the generally accepted notions should change, because it is still wrongly "thought that 'the animal' is capable only of a coded message or of a meaning that is narrowly indicative, strictly constrained; one that is fixed in its programmation." (122) The perception of the animal is such that

> not only is the animal held within the imaginary and unable to accede to the symbolic, to the unconscious, and to language (and hence, still following our general thread, to autobiographical auto-deixis) but the description of its semiotic power remains determined, . . . within the presupposition of a code that only permits reactions to stimuli and not responses to questions. (Derrida 124)

In *The Chronicles of Narnia*, the communication with the (Talking) animals is also coded through language, and their perceived and presented intelligence is often judged from the point of view of human cognitive abilities. In fact, the aspect which separates the superior from the inferior animals in the text is, as their name indicates, whether or not they can talk.

According to Michael C. Morris, Aslan's talking beasts have the same rights for moral consideration as humans and other humanlike creatures. However, non-talking animals do not belong to this category because they lack a developed consciousness and cognitive ability. This perceived lack, nonetheless, does not mean they cannot be promoted to the humanlike status or go to heaven. Morris gives the example of non-talking mice that chew away Aslan's bonds and as a reward become talking beasts, ("Middle Earth, Narnia, Hogwarts, and Animals" 351) which could be a sign that Lewis recognizes and takes into account multiple kinds of intelligence possessed by animals. Therefore, the line separating non-talking and talking animals in Narnia is not as clear as it would be expected. If the Lion and other privileged animals indeed represent an anthropomorphization in the function of allegory, i.e., they that they are allegorical representation of the human and the self, then the non-talking animals represent the Other. In that respect, the non-talking animals may simply serve as a

vehicle for easier detection of "desirable" values conveyed by the text. This in turn means that though pushed to the margins of the story, they have an important "ethical" function since they serve as a "undesirable" part of the binary pair.

Another dilemma opens up whether the hierarchy with the Lion as the allegory of God, and the Talking Animals as the allegory of people is an expression of anthropocentrism in the text, or whether it is another critique and representation of the worldview belonging to the age of human egocentrism reflecting the period in which it was written. According to Morris, the political system of Narnia does not adhere to the principles held by modern animal rights activists claiming equal rights for animals. However, it is in keeping "with the ethic of *noblesse oblige* and mercy as advocated by Christian liberationists. . . . The worlds of Middle Earth and Narnia present a positive worldview for Christians or conservatives who have not yet come to any firm conclusions on animal liberation issues." (353) Therefore, the Christian grounds upon which *The Chronicles of Narnia* lie certainly play an important part in determining Lewis' attitude towards the phenomenon of the animal, especially when considering the fact that he is building a medieval-like world with medieval-like values.

5. Conclusion

As our discussion shows, C. S. Lewis has created the characters of his novel series by appropriating and reimagining a series of animals from the medieval bestiaries, and a series of monsters appropriated from proto-bestiaries such as *Liber Monstrorum*. At the same time he plays with the notion of talking and non-talking animals as if to indicate that those animals who have or receive the (human) ability to talk are worthier than the non-talking animals, which raises the issue of anthropocentrism in the text.

C. S. Lewis rewrote the bestiary and incorporated it in his novel series by sharing dozens of zoonyms with the bestiaries, often retaining the symbolism and imagery inherited from the bestiary tradition. Such animals are the wolf, which in *The Chronicles of Narnia* represents the danger and otherness, like the bestiary wolf. The lion, a bestiary Christ-figure, maintains the bestiary symbolism as Aslan, the Narnian great Lion. Other than the 'real' animals, there are a number of fantastic beings and monstrosities, which are borrowed from a proto-bestiary of monsters, *Liber Monstrorum*. Upon entering C. S. Lewis' story, beings such as Monopods, fauns, dragons etc. are given a new set of traits, enriching the ones they already possessed in bestiaries. These fantastic in-between creatures are the general representation of

the monstrous, most often appearing in massive scenes such as the creation of Narnia and the final procession of beings.

It is difficult to say whether the purpose of Lewis' text is a straightforward allegory of Christian worldview or an inventive creation of a secondary/fantastic world. Nevertheless, the novel series manages to be a didactic Christian text, to depict the medieval worldview, to rewrite some iconographies of animals and marvellous creatures from the ancient literature and to function as a work of animal fantasy.

Works Cited

Bodleian Library, MS. Bodley 602. Oxford University Library: Oxford 2003. Web. 11. March 2016.

Clark, David G. *C. S. Lewis. A Guide to His Theology*. Wiley-Blackwell 2007. Print.

Clark, Willene B. and Meradith T. McMunn "Introduction" *Beasts and Birds of the Middle Ages*. Eds. Willene B. Clark and Meradith T. McMunn. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1989. Print.

Cohen, Simona. *Animals as Disguised Symbols in Renaissance Art (Brill's Studies in Intellectual History, Vol. 2)*. Brill: Leiden, 2008.

Cronin, Grover Jr. "The Bestiary and the Mediaeval Mind – Some Complexities." *Modern Language Quarterly* 2 (1941): 191-198.

Derrida, Jacques. "And Say the Animal Responded?" *Zoontologies: The Question of the Animal*. Cary Wolfe, ed. Minneapolis: University of Minessota Press, 2003. Print.

Downing, David C. *Into the Wardrobe. C. S. Lewis and the Narnia Chronicles*. Jossey-Bass: San Francisco, 2005. Print.

Edwards, Michael. "C. S. Lewis: Imagining Heaven." *Literature and Theology* 6.2 (1992): 107-124. Web. 16 May 2016.

Elick, Catherine L. "Animal Carnivals: A Bakhtinian Reading of C. S. Lewis's *The Magician's Nephew* and P. L. Travers's *Mary Poppins*." *Style* 35.3 (2001): 454-470. Web. 16. May 2016.

George, Wilma B. and William Brunsdon Yapp. *The Naming of the Beasts. Natural History in the Medieval Bestiary*. Gerald Duckworth and Company: London, 1991. Print.

Hassig, Debra. *Medieval Bestiaries. Text, Image, Ideology*. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1995. Print.

Jackson, Rosemary. *Fantasy. The Literature of Subversion*. Routledge: London, 1981. Print.

Jacobs, Alan. *The Narnian. The Life and Imagination of C. S. Lewis*. HarperCollins: New York, 2005. Print.

Johnson, William G. and Marcia K. Houtman. "Platonic Shadows in C. S. Lewis' Narnia *Chronicles*." *Modern Fiction Studies* 32.1 (1986): 75-87. Web. 16 May 2016.

Lewis, C. S. *The Chronicles of Narnia*. HarperCollins: London, 2001. Print.

Lewis, C. S. *The Discarded Image. An Introduction to Medieval and Renaissance Literature*. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1964. Print.

Michaud, Ginette. "On a Serpentine Note" *Demenageries: Thinking (of) Animals after Derrida*. Ed. Anne Emmanuelle Berger and Marta Segarra. Rodopi: Amsterdam/New York, 2011. Print.

Morris, Michael C. "Middle Earth, Narnia, Hogwarts, and Animals: A Review of the Treatment of Nonhuman Animals and Other Sentient Beings in Christian-Based Fantasy Fiction." *Society and Animals* 17 (2009): 343-356. Web. 16 May 2016.

Muth, Michael P. "Beastly Metaphisics: The Beasts of Narnia and Lewiss Reclamation of the Medieval Sacramental Metaphysics." *C. S. Lewis as Philosopher: Truth, Goodness and Beauty*. David Baggett, Gary R. Habermas and Jerry L. Walls, eds. IVP Academic: Downers Grove, 2008. Print.

Orchard, Andy. *A Critical Companion to Beowulf*. D.S. Brewer: Cambridge, 2003. Print.

Orchard, Andy. *Pride and Prodigies: Studies in the Monsters of the Beowulf-manuscript*. University of Toronto Press: Toronto, 2003. Print.

Riga, Frank P. "Mortals Call Their Stories Fable: Narnia and the Use of Fairy Tale." *Children's Literature Association Quarterly* 14.1 (1989): 26-30. Web. 16 May 2016.

Rowland, Beryl. "The Art of Memory and the Bestiary" *Beasts and Birds of the Middle Ages*. Ed. Willene B. Clark and Meradith T. McMunn. University of Pennsylvania Press: Philadelphia, 1989. Print.

Sax, Boria. *The Mythical Zoo: An Encyclopedia of Animals in World Myth, Legend, and Literature*. ABC-CLIO: Santa Barbara, 2001. Print.

Schakel, Peter J. *Imagination and the Arts in C. S. Lewis. Journeying to Narnia and Other Worlds.* University of Missouri Press: Columbia and London, 2002. Print.

Shaw, Bruce. *The Animal Fable in Science Fiction and Fantasy (Critical Explorations in Science Fiction and Fantasy, 20).* McFarland: Jefferson, 2010. Print.

The Aberdeen Bestiary Project. Aberdeen University Library: Aberdeen, 1995. Web. 11 March 2016.

The Early English Bestiary based on the Latin Physiologus of Theobaldus Episcopus. Ed. Morris, Richard, Rev. Originally published for the *Early English Text Society [O.S. 49]* N. Trübner & Co.: London, 1872. Web. 10 March 2016.

The English Standard Version Bible: Containing the Old and New Testaments with Apocrypha. Web. 5 March 2016.

Todorov, Tzvetan. *The Fantastic. A Structural Approach to a Literary Genre*. Cornell University Press: Ithaca, New York, 1973. Print.

Tolhurst, Fiona. “Beyond the Wardrobe: C. S. Lewis as Closet Arthurian.” *Arthuriana* 22.4 (2012): 140-166. Web. 16 May 2016.

Ugolino, Brother, *The Little Flowers of Saint Francis*. Tr. Arthur Livingstone. Christian Classics Ethereal Library: Grand Rapids, 2002. Web. 23 June 2016.

Watson, Greer. “Tertiary Reality in Children’s Fantasy.” *Journal of the Fantastic in the Arts* 14.3 (2003): 350-366. Web. 16 May 2016.

Abstract

Animals are an important and omnipresent element in both fantastic and medieval literature. The thesis examines the relationship between the medieval bestiary iconography and the literary genre of the fantastic, specifically analysing the zoonyms present in C. S. Lewis' novel series *The Chronicles of Narnia*. The paper considers contemporary animal studies approach and analyses the phenomenon of the animal in *The Chronicles of Narnia* from that perspective as well. After the introductory presentation of the structure and historical function of the bestiary, a medieval illustrated didactic genre that popularized some Christian interpretations of the animal, the thesis observes the ways in which Lewis uses the bestiary to create a Christian allegory within the fantastic genre. It puts a special focus on the lion, the wolf and the fantastic fauna, i.e. monsters. The lion occupies the first place among the bestiary animals and appears in each of its versions, where the description of physical and behavioural characteristics of this big cat is usually followed by a symbolic Christian explanation. The wolf serves as an embodied antithesis to the lion, being the representation of the Devil in the Middle Ages. This animal repeats its function in the Narnian menagerie through the character of Maugrim, a Talking Wolf and a servant of the White Witch Jadis. Other than the lion and the wolf, Lewis presents ancient monstrosities by using some monsters present in a medieval bestiary of monsters, *Liber Monstrorum*. Fantastic literature relies heavily on such creatures when creating medieval-like worlds, and C. S. Lewis is no exception. The proposed analysis demonstrates that the established bestiary iconography performs a central function in the creation of C. S. Lewis' Christian allegory, and poses a question of whether anthropocentrism is present in *The Chronicles of Narnia*.

Keywords: C. S. Lewis, *The Chronicles of Narnia*, bestiary, lion, wolf, fantastic animals, Christian allegory, animal studies