

How does fantasy and mythology influence children's literature?

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Introduction

In this dissertation, I am going to look into the origins of children's fantasy books and how children's literature concepts connect to a mythological basis. I will be looking closely at the origins of mythological and legendary creatures that authors have used for their fantasy novels or books, focusing in particular on the very popular *Harry Potter* series by J.K. Rowling. The series is hugely influenced by mythology and mythological creatures. I am going to explore the origins of mythical creatures, such as if they have historical context, or are original creations of the author in order to write magical stories. I have chosen this topic because I would like to illustrate narrative picture books and fantasy novels. I believe this dissertation, discussing my research covering children's books, young adult novels, mythology, and early literature, will highly influence my practice.

Mythology has existed for thousands of years and most fantasy literature, whether written for adults or children, will have traces of it. Classical Greek mythology has mythological creatures, tales, animals, monsters, folklore staples and magical objects. Mythology is the study of stories and ancient tales of culture, fables dealing with various aspects such as good versus evil, death, and life, animals, cultural values and traditions. It tells stories about the origins of human worlds, as well as supernatural creatures such as nymphs, mermaids, sirens, satyrs, and gods, semi-humans and semi-gods.

C.S. Lewis defines fantasy as "any narrative that deals with the impossible or preternatural." (Lewis, 2013, p. 50) Vijayan and Haider state in *The Existence of Fairytale, Folklore, and Myths in Fantasy* that a fantasy story transports its readers to a disturbing and strange world with its own rules where anything is possible. J.R.R.

Tolkien interprets fantasy in his famous essay, *On Fairy-Stories* as “the making or glimpsing of Other-worlds.” (Tolkien in Flieger and Anderson, 2014, p. 40) In C.S. Lewis's *Narnia*, when the wardrobe opens, it is a wonderful symbol of imagination. Just like opening a book, the children step out the other side of the wardrobe, and something happens to change them and teach them something about themselves when they come back to the real world. (Wall, 2018)

I will be looking at the concepts behind magical creatures and why are they used for fantasy books and films. I am going refer to key thinkers' ideas, such as Jack Zipes's theories about fairy tales and folktales, Bruno Bettelheim's important analysis of childhood stories and fairy tales, and the magical world, myths and legends from David Colbert's essay.

Fiction is fiction, and children's books say a great deal to adults about the relationships of adults to children, or about the concept of childhood at a particular period, rather than portraying actual childhoods. (Hunt, 1994, p. 14)

Children's literature helps to build children's imaginations, teaches them how to find new worlds in books, and can help them to find themselves in literature as they grow up and affect their literature choices as they get older. In children's literature, there are many different types, forms, and genres, such as picture books, fantasy, poetry, fiction, and non-fiction. All these books are aimed at children of different ages, with different literacy skills and levels of language development.

Language, speech, and text are very important in children's books because that is how the child will develop, understand, and interpret language. It helps the child to understand the difference between the real, imaginary, and symbolic worlds. (Lerer, 2008) Traditional folktales and literature feed children's imagination, and help develop creativity. (Bettelheim, 1976) It is often claimed that Romanticism was key to the

beginning of children's literature in the 19th century. As Myers states “the Romantic child is our foundational fiction.” (Plotz, 2001, p. 45)

Chapter 1

Being smart and wise does not just develop like the myth of Athena the Greek goddess appearing from Zeus's head. It must be built up over time. (Bettelheim, 1976)

Only adulthood can help to understand that this wisdom will be gained over time, and in small steps, and from one's experience. When children are very young, literature helps them to learn and experience all this new information. “For a story to truly hold the child's attention, it must entertain him and arouse his curiosity.” (Bettelheim, 1976, p. 5)

To help the child to understand the problems of growing up and overcoming all the difficulties in life such as rivalry with other siblings, the child needs to understand what is reality and what is fantasy, or beyond reality. In other words, his conscious self and his unconscious self need to separate. Stories and fairy tales fit unconscious content into conscious thoughts, enabling the child to deal with it which offers new aspects to his imagination which he can discover alone and hence suggest better directions to his life.

Myth contains stories of life, history, and science, related to religious or cultural legends, which form the child's social behaviour and create a concept about the world. Mythology comes often from sacred texts – when these religions became less significant and started to lose their power, the texts turned into mythology. (Bettelheim, 1976) Greek mythological stories defined the Greek religion itself. Just like other

modern religions Christianity and Judaism were influenced by Greek religion, the Greeks were influenced by cultures from Crete, Asia and native beliefs. (Cline, 2018)

Mark (2018) states that mythology comes from the Greek *mythos* for story-of-the-people, and *logos* for word, so meaning the spoken story of a people. (Mark, 2018)

Mythology often addresses the most basic questions of humanity: Who am I? Where did I come from? Why am I here? Where am I going? The importance of these stories is not the literal truth or the details of a certain version of a tale. The purpose is to provide the audience with an interpretation of the story for themselves. Scholars Maria Leach and Jerome Fried define mythology as follows:

[A myth is] a story, presented as having occurred in a previous age, explaining the cosmological and supernatural traditions of a people, their gods, heroes, cultural traits, religious beliefs, etc. The purpose of myth is to explain, and, as Sir G.L. Gomme said, myths explain matters in "the science of a pre-scientific age." Thus, myths tell of the creation of man, animals, and landmarks. They tell why a certain animal has its characteristics, such as why the bat is blind or flies only at night, how certain natural phenomena came to be, such as why the rainbow appears or how the constellation Orion got into the sky, and how and why rituals and ceremonies began and why they continue. (1984, p. 778)

Aesop's Fables are good examples of myths in everyday education. The fables were



Fig. 1: *The Tortoise and the Hare*

written in Greek, for adults and children, between the 10th-16th century CE. Over time, stories were changed and maybe not recorded as the first time they were told. Aesop's collection of morality tales numbers 725. They were passed down by retelling person to person, for

entertainment purposes and also to teach life lessons. All the characters are animals in human situations, such as birds, monkeys, foxes, and grasshoppers. (see figure 1.)

These animals display human-like characters especially in speaking and behaviour and have been written to mimic human life. *Aesop's Fables* served multiple roles focused on learning. The fables are about mostly human behaviours or decisions. The fables often merged into the political situations against or criticising the government encouraging the small and the weak to speak up against the strong and the powerful. (Horgan, 2014)

According to Jung and Campbell, psychological myths represent an important journey from the known to the unknown. Usually, these stories involve a hero and a heroic journey where the hero needs to know their fate, their true identity and provide the audience with some important values. Probably the best example of this type of myth is *Oedipus* by Sophocles. The tale of wanting to change or escape your fate impressed the Greek audience and would have inspired fear in those people who were willing to do it. (Jung and Campbell, 1976) In some children's stories limited to the children reader's mind like actions, behaviours, but once a non-human creature, animal, magical creature or half enchanted human is involved, everything can change. These creatures have limitless power and create something different than the everyday world but still connected to it. The children read the stories and feel the fiercest and bravest without endangering their world. It helps to develop the children's inner thoughts and emotions and feel like part of the story, such as Philip Pullman's daemons in *The Northern Lights*. Reading these fantasy books is like playing, which is an important part of a child's development. In these stories, anything can happen, but it can also be hard to separate magic and fantasy from other discoveries and learning the child goes through. In many societies adults believe that children will grow out of this later. This could be interpreted as a belief that childhood is a time of innocence, and the invented creatures could represent traumas later in life that the child finds hard or fears to face.

(Attar, 2016) The important task of stories is finding the way to awake the children's inner creativity and imagination and providing something children can learn, from the brothers Grimm's Fairy Tales through Lewis' *Narnia* and Tolkien's Middle Earth to Philip Pullman's *His Dark Materials*.

Using magical creatures and powerful objects can be a great resource for authors of children's stories. In these stories, the author offers power to the children: ordinary children become heroes, the creatures are stronger, can be larger, and can fly. For older children reading Philip Pullman's *His Dark Materials* or Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland*, things appear differently than in the magical stories for younger children. These authors have opened a magical door for the older readers, to worlds where children are participating in dangerous and magical adventures. In these fantasy worlds full of magical objects and mythological creatures, they can fight battles and defeat non-human enemies. When they are in these fantasy worlds, it can feature very realistic, life-threatening, dangerous, terrifying scenes. Philip Pullman's *His Dark Materials* trilogy is a good example to challenge and involve the readers in fantasy worlds with wars, dreary scenes, drama, hypocritical friends and *daemons*. (Zipes, 2002) All these stories, as mentioned before, are not only for entertainment but also lessons for life, just like mythology. The authors must construct a friendship with the young readers where they can feel in the story someone who understands them. This strategy from the author to teach a serious lesson through the stories builds on the reader's feelings identifying with creatures and monsters against the adult world. Fantasy children's books or stories are filled with vivid fantasy elements and most likely their educational purpose. (Lerer, 2008)

Chapter 2

If you take myth and folklore, these things speak in symbols, they can be interpreted in so many ways that although the actual image is clear enough, the interpretation is infinitely blurred, a sort of enormous rainbow of every possible colour you could imagine. (Jones, goodreads.com)

Mystical and mythical creatures are legendary creatures from mythology. Many of these mythical creatures have supernatural power. They often represent good or evil and some of them connected to spiritual beings such as angels and religion. Mythical creatures are beyond normal reality. They can be the combination of human and animal, or a clever animal with communicating skills like in *Aesop's Fables*. There is evidence to suggest that some of these creatures may have really existed, however, whether they existed or not, it is clear they played an important part in human society across different cultures. They have been educational and shaped the culture and norms to discipline children. (Ashman, 1997)

Throughout history, creatures like phoenixes and dragons were believed to exist. These creatures have their origins in traditional mythology. In Greek mythology, many of these creatures were sent by the Gods, such as Zeus sent the harpies. In Greek mythology, just like in most children's literature, there is the representation of good and evil. These myths were often created or merged into children's stories like fairy tales and fantasy novels. Mythical creatures were often composed of a part of an animal, half-human or combination of two or more animals. For example, centaurs, mermaids, sirens and harpies from Greek and Roman mythology, and the famous half human and half goat Faun from Lewis's *The Chronicles of Narnia*. The centaur is half man and half horse; mythical beasts with legs and bodies of horses, but with human torsos, arms and heads. (Borges, 2005) They are one of the most famous hybrids in

Greek mythology. There is no one legend about the creation of centaurs. There was a great scientific debate over whether the creatures have existed. In some legend, Chiron was the wisest of the centaurs. Chiron sacrificed his life to Prometheus. He

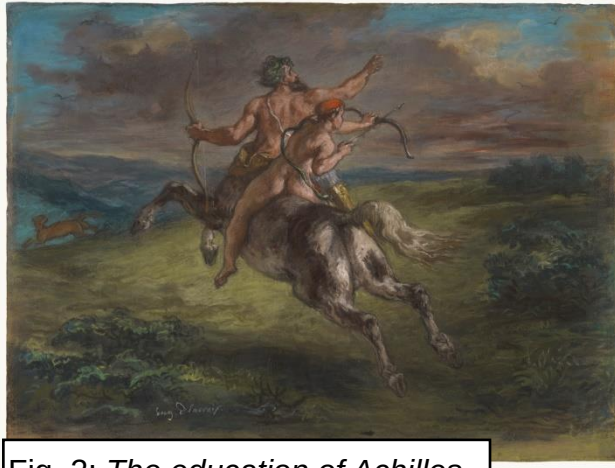


Fig. 2: *The education of Achilles*

was a teacher who taught many Greek heroes like Achilles and Heracles. (see figure 2.) (Maurice, n. d.)

Fauns and satyrs are some of the most popular mythological creatures in ancient Greece and

Rome. The two creatures are half-human and half-animal, however there are some differences between them. Early Greek depictions show that satyr-like creatures were more likely to appear with the legs of a horse, while fauns are more likely to have goat legs. Fauns tend to be more innocent and calmer. They live in the forest and can be good with directions to help travellers. (Brandes, 2015) The composition of two animals wasn't unusual, such as half camel and half leopard. There are different types of magical creatures with main divisions such as birds and serpents such as basilisks, dragons, phoenix and the lake and sea monsters like the Kraken and the Loch Ness. As mentioned above, hybrids were monstrous creatures' composition of several animals and a variety of humanoid creatures. Examples of animal hybrids included a griffin with lion head and wings of an eagle, and a hippogriff, which is the offspring of a horse and griffin. (Haynes, 2016) There is also one more category in mythological and folklore tales: the humanoid creatures with supernatural powers or magical creatures such as dwarfs, fairies, elves, gnomes, goblins, witches and nymphs. Contemporary examples of usage of mythology can be found in J.K. Rowling's *Harry*

Potter. In *Harry Potter*, some of the creatures are purely based on Rowling's imaginations such as "dementors" but for example, the Basilisk, or Fluffy the three-headed dog, are modified from folktales and mythology. (see figure 3.) In a Greek myth, Orpheus the great musician wanted to get back his love, Eurydice from the Underworld and he didn't have the strength to fight with Cerberus he played his lyre to tame Cerberus. Cerberus is not the only mythological creature



Fig. 3: Cerberus

that Rowling used another important and significant creature is the phoenix. (Colbert,



Fig. 4: Phoenix Rising

2003) Phoenix in fantasy novels are not only fantastic creatures but they also have their history. The phoenix's history goes far back to the 5th century BCE from the *Histories of Herodotus*. The history of a phoenix that Herodotus was told the phoenix lived in Egypt. He did not have the proof of evidence the existence of phoenix and he admitted he had never seen one, only an image of it. The Phoenix was a sacred bird to the sun covered

in red and gold plumage. (see figure 4.) The early historians suggest the phoenix is different from all the other mythological creatures and that after the phoenix dies, it is capable of being reborn from its flames and ashes every few weeks. (Haynes, 2016) (Lizleafloor, 2019)

The myth says originally the phoenix used to travel around the Earth just like every other bird, but one day, the Sun God gazed upon him. He was so beautiful and the way he sang was mesmerizing. The Phoenix felt charmed by the Sun God and started

to sing to him, so much that the Sun God decided he wanted this bird to live forever. But by the time the bird got older, the bird wasn't singing anymore. The Sun God allowed the bird to build his own nest and rest until the phoenix suddenly burst into flames. In its place, there was an egg that started to hatch, and a new phoenix was born. Through this unusual and beautiful death, the bird became the symbol of immortality and rebirth. (Colbert, 2003)

Fantasy always depends on imagination and the creativity of the author and how far they can set the reality apart from fantasy. The characters and the places are often uncanny, can be on a different planet or underwater. Almost every story includes one or more different non-human creatures based on folklore and ancient mythology.

Chapter 3

Tolkien and Lewis were authors mostly influenced by classic fantasy literature. Their books such as Lewis's *Chronicles of Narnia* series or Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* are full of a whole range of mythological elements and from different traditions and culture, with creatures, unicorns, satyrs and various animals. C.S. Lewis had a powerful influence on later children's fantasy book authors in particular and perhaps the most successful author of the genre, J.K. Rowling. Throughout history, different stories about magical creatures and lands, witches and fairies such as in C.S. Lewis's *The Chronicles of Narnia*, Stephanie Meyer's *Twilight* Saga, Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings*, Pullman's *His Dark Materials*, and J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* found it beneficial to use mythology. All these stories include the magical creatures such as dragons, werewolves, vampires, fairies, trolls and elves. Some of them are based on folklore and mythology, but some of them are the creation of the author. In these stories, the same creatures appear, most of the time with the same superpowers in every story, but they can have a different profile and features. For example, both *Twilight* and *Harry Potter* feature werewolves but with very different appearances. (Berry, 2007)

Authors such as C.S. Lewis or J.R.R. Tolkien were fond of especially the European folklore and myths. Tolkien followed the ancient lines of Anglo-Saxon myths and mixed it with English folklore. He began to develop and write his own mythology. (Berry, 2007) When Tolkien served in World War I as a signalling officer, he witnessed the destruction, desolation that happened there, and after seeing the corpses then



Fig. 5: *Beren and Luthien*

discovered that his schoolboy friends had perished in the battle, Tolkien claimed that he became more interested in fairy tales than before the war. When he saw his wife dancing through some flowers, the image gave him the

idea for the story about the elves Beren and Luthien, and that was the background story of *The Lord of the Rings*. (see figure 5.) Tolkien was a devoted Catholic and referred to religion in his books but he didn't explicitly write about it. The books are theological, philosophical and spiritual but not religious. Tolkien was using fantasy as a way of exposing what he believed was the true message of Christianity, in this case, that ultimately good will conquer evil. (Wall, 2018) C.S. Lewis more likely used the medieval English and French romance style of literature for *The Chronicles of Narnia*. His works are similar to those of other medieval authors, such as Wolfram von Eschenbach, where there is a very thin line between fantasy and reality. Lewis's early childhood imagination was built on what he found in books. Lewis was an atheist who became a Christian. Tolkien impacted on Lewis's religious view and helped him to see Christianity as a story about how the world began what went wrong and what could be done to make it right again. He realized that Christianity is much better understood as a myth, a 'true' myth. Lewis claimed that his immediate Christian conversion was after a long night conversation with Tolkien. He had an interest in how could he tell stories in ways that capture the imagination, at the same time as conveying what the Christian faith is about. As a result, Lewis was equally famous for his fiction and theological writing. When he wrote *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, he wanted to offer it to

people who may not have encountered Christianity in an imaginative space where it could be responded to emotionally. So, he created for Narnia a regal lion who was a great warrior and leader, beautiful and approachable. Aslan was a symbol, speaking imaginatively, of God. However, Tolkien moved on a different line of storytelling and radically different fantasy world and different origins. (Wall, 2018)

Tolkien notes in his essay, *On Fairy-Stories*

The human mind, endowed with the powers of generalization and abstraction, sees not only green-grass, discriminating it from other things (and finding it fair to look upon), but sees it as green as well as being grass. (Vijayan and Haider, 2016, p. 422)

Fantasy writers employ a proportion of mythical legends in their books. In particular, for J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* series, she created a unique and extraordinary magical land fulfilled with myths and folklore. J.K. Rowling has been inspired by both Lewis and Tolkien. She has taken the fantasy genre to unimaginable heights. "Through *Harry Potter*, Rowling ensured establishment of what we call "beyond fantasy". It dared Potter fans to dream beyond the real." (Sen, 2018) She discusses how Narnia shaped her writing as well as historic academic literature. Tolkien and Lewis took stories from the past and engaged with them in new ways and drew together new stories. This is exactly what J. K. Rowling did too. (Wall, 2018) As Rowling says:

I have taken horrible liberties with folklore and mythology, but I'm quite ashamed about that because British folklore and British mythology is a totally bastard mythology. You know, we've been invaded by people, we've appropriated their gods, we've taken their mythical creatures, and we have soldered them all together to make, what I would say, is one of the richest folklores in the world, because it's so varied. So, I feel no compunction about borrowing from that freely, but adding a few things of my own. (Rowling with Fry, BBC Radio4, 10 December 2005)

In *Harry Potter*, J. K. Rowling refers to over 100 species of mythical creature drawn from across the globe. (Harding and Ho, 2017)

World of *Harry Potter* abounds with non-human creatures like werewolves, house elves, centaurs, dragons, trolls, phoenixes, goblins, hippogriffs. These semi-divine creatures also exist in Egyptian, Roman, Greek mythologies, Arthurian legends, and European folklore. She has made a conscious choice in selecting myths, reworking it, and then adapting it into her novel series. (Vijayan and Haider, 2016, p. 425)



Fig. 6: Fluffy

For instance, Fluffy the three-headed guard dog in *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* is a reference to Cerberus from Greek mythology. (see figure 6.) Fluffy was a guard dog, lying on a top of a trapdoor which leads to the Philosopher's stone, just like Cerberus guarded

Hell. Rowling creates twists in the book using the foundation of Cerberus' myth, in saying Hagrid bought Fluffy in the pub from a 'Greek chappie'. This references how Cerberus is a Greek mythological beast. Just like Cerberus, Fluffy's weakness is music.

They were looking straight into the eyes of a monstrous dog, a dog that filled the whole space between ceiling and floor. It had three heads. Three pairs of rolling, mad eyes; three noses, twitching and quivering in their direction; three drooling mouths, saliva hanging in slippery ropes from yellowish fangs. It was standing quite still, all six eyes staring at them, and Harry knew that the only reason they weren't already dead was that their sudden appearance had taken it by surprise, but it was quickly getting over that, there was no mistaking what those thunderous growls meant. (Rowling, 2017, p. 172)

In this case, music from a harp makes the beast sleep, and Harry, Ron and Hermione are able to sneak down the trapdoor to find the Philosopher's stone. The 'Greek chappie' also told Hagrid music is the way to tame Fluffy. (Colbert, 2003)

Professor Dumbledore's phoenix Fawkes is linked to original phoenixes - the Egyptian bird of the Sun - reborn from their ashes. In the fictional novel world of the *Harry Potter* series a phoenix accompanied the famous wizard Dumbledore. Fawkes is an intelligent and loyal bird who helped others in the magical world several times *Harry Potter*. Modern additions to the phoenix myth say the tears of the phoenix have healing power, just like in *Harry Potter*. In the novel, the description of the phoenix is like the original mythological birds: large swan sized magical birds, scarlet red and gold plumage with golden beaks and very hot gloomy and golden feathers on their tail. (Cowell, 2013) There is a legend that it is hot to touch the phoenix's tail, but in *Harry Potter*, Fawkes can control the temperature of his tail and choose not to burn people.



Fig. 7: Study for the phoenix

For example, in *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* or Albus Dumbledore when he escaped from the Ministry. In the series, the J.K. Rowling gives lots of magical power to the phoenix, contrary to

historical myths. In the *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* the phoenix is immune to the glaze of the basilisk, which would normally kill anyone. He can disappear and reappear in his flames similar to wizards. In Rowling's wizarding world Fawkes is extremely loyal to Dumbledore, just like the Egyptian phoenix is loyal to the Sun God. The phoenix is willing to share this devotion towards someone else who needs help, just like Harry needed help to slay the Basilisk in *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*. (Aeschlimann, 2017) (Graves, 1960) Despite all the phoenix's magical power in *Harry Potter*, there are other similarities we can discover between

the phoenix in J.K. Rowling's books and the historical scarlet bird. (see figure 7.) The myth of the phoenix has lasted throughout history, from the Bible, to Hans Christian Anderson, to J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter*.

Centaurs appear in the *Harry Potter* books and many other films and books. In the *Harry Potter* novels, they are probably the most enigmatic monster. J.K. Rowling's centaurs, Firenze and his companions, live in the Forbidden Forest. Rowling says "they prefer to live apart from wizards and Muggles alike." (Colbert, 2003, p. 55) Both old and modern adaptations shown that centaurs prefer to live in forests. This fits with the myths. According to these legends, centaurs come from the mountains of Greece and had a very mixed relationship with the local people. In most fantasy novels, centaurs are generally noble and wise, having a strong interest in astrology and archery. Firenze's appearance in *Harry Potter* as a Hogwarts teacher is connected to mythology.

Through the mist came a face Harry had seen once before on a dark, dangerous night in the Forbidden Forest: White-blond hair and astonishingly blue eyes; the head and torso of a man joined to the palomino body of horse. (Rowling, 2003, p. 527)

Like the Hogwarts centaurs, in *The Chronicles of Narnia* by C.S. Lewis centaurs are wise and noble creatures. However, they are powerful warriors and healers faithful to the High King of Aslan, the Lion in Narnia. Oreius is leading Aslan's army against the hordes of the evil creatures led by the White Witch. (Nelson, 2018) (Colbert, 2003) The description from Narnia helps to shape in our imagination what a centaur would be like in Narnia

...and at last, breaking and trampling the thickets, there came in sight the noblest creatures that Caspian had yet seen, the great Centaur Glenstorm and his three sons. His flanks were glossy chestnut and the beard that covered his broad chest was golden-red. He was a prophet and a star-gazer and knew what they had come about...As soon as Glenstorm had spoken everyone felt much more serious." (Lewis, 2015, p. 71)

C.S. Lewis also used mythological creatures in his stories such as satyrs, centaurs and the faun, Mr Tumnus. Lewis's faun, called Mr Tumnus, appears in his first Narnia book, when Lucy Pevensie first reaches Narnia through the wardrobe. This can be found at the end of the first chapter *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*:

[...] a very strange person stepped out from among the trees into the light of the lamp-post. He was only a little taller than Lucy herself and he carried over his head an umbrella, white with snow. From the waist upward 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 because it was neatly caught up over the arm that held the umbrella so as to keep it from trailing in the snow. He had a red woollen muffler around 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. One of his hands, as I have said, held the umbrella: in the other arm, he carried several brown-paper parcels. What with the parcels and the snow it looked just as if he had been doing his Christmas shopping. He was a Faun. (Lewis, 2015, pp. 14-15)



Fig. 8: Lucy and the Faun in Narnia

Mr Tumnus has a reddish, blushing red face, black hair, horns and pointed beard, and stands on goat's hoofs. (see figure 8.) Possibly Lewis deliberately chose to use Roman fauns over the Greek satyrs because of their innocence. However, seduction is still a feature of the satyr. This appears when Mr Tumnus tries to seduce Lucy to come to his

cave for tea, then tells her stories about fauns and nymphs, then plays on his flute which makes Lucy want to go to sleep. We need to consider that Mr Tumnus, after all, breaks down and confesses weeping that he is the servant of the White Witch and feels very bad about it. (Christopher, 2016)

Rowling's beasts are not all fictional in the wizarding world. Rowling not only used the creatures from mythologies, but used many other objects, plants, and characters which were based on real legends and myths, in her books.

Fairies, goblins, werewolves, and monsters are main constituents of fairy tales, and Harry Potter series abound with these creatures. In spite of this, one cannot categorize the Harry Potter series as fairy tales; it would be more accurate to claim that a few elements of fairy tales can be traced in them. In Harry Potter and Chamber of Secrets we see, a flying car, Harry Potter and Lord Voldemort speaks a mysterious language (parseltongue), and a big talking spider. In Harry Potter and Half-Blood Prince, the Headmaster, Albus Dumbledore must drink a potion, a magic potion, because fairy tales usually involve magic. (Vijayan and Haider, 2016, p. 420)

In the *Fantastic Beasts* series, the audience is introduced to several different species and strange creatures from weird looking lions, winged horses and strange furry or even invisible animals. While some of these creatures have been inspired by living animals, some of them are just too fantastic and magical to exist in reality. However, it could also be the case that those fantastic beasts lived on the Earth before humanity. The first traces of animals go far back such as 3.5 billion years and over that hundreds of million years, there was only this time when these fantastic animals were described living in water, land or air. Not many records show these fantastic creatures' existence in real life, only their fossil remains.

In *Fantastic Beasts*, Newt Scamander arrives in New York, in 1926, with a suitcase full of fantastic beasts. But where are these fantastic beasts coming from? They arrive, not just in New York but in the magical land of children's literature, novels and films/movies. (Stephan Lautenschlager, 2018)

Conclusion

This dissertation aimed to examine mythology and mythological concepts behind fantasy children books and particularly looking into authors such as J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis and J.K. Rowling. It can be assumed that the mythological world made huge impacts on children's literature and myths have been adjusted and improved in modern children's literature. The boundaries between what is real and what is fictional in these stories are blurred, but they seem to connect very well for the reader and author. These implications prove that authors have always used mythology as a foundation of fantasy novels, shaped them into their way and wrapped them around mythological creatures to create a fantastic and magical place where we can be anything and anyone. Bookshops are stocked fantasy tales by authors such as J.K. Rowling, Philip Pullman and classical fantasy authors like J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis and the Brothers Grimm and some of them illustrated by great illustrators like Jim Kay's illustrated version of *Harry Potter* series or *The Chronicles of Narnia* by Pauline Baynes.

But after almost two years of work, seven days a week, Kay's illustrated edition of *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* is a triumph – a book so alive it seems to jump, explode and slither out of your hands as you read. (Wood, 2015)

These books and acclaimed authors made children's literature to one of the most popular literature and made a major impact on children's imagination. (Zipes, 2002)

The dragons, unicorns and hippogriffs of the *Harry Potter* universe which perform a significant role in J.K. Rowling's magical world and remind the reader that we are in a

magical place. It is an outstanding book that proves children's literature not only for entertainment but it was meant to instruct as well.

Fantasy novel authors, just like J.K. Rowling, C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien are inventors and archivists of magical beasts filling up their novels with these classic monsters such as trolls, elves, centaurs, mermaids, witches, with folklore like dragons and with their inventions such as Rowling's dementors. There are many collected creatures in the novel less known than other monsters such as boggarts or grindylows but the vast majority of these beloved stories came from Ancient times and built them into the modern fantasy world.

Harry Potter is an excellent example of how children's novels have been adapted throughout history.

In conclusion, fantasy stories go a long way with magical manipulation but what it makes the difference again it is love, it is a sacrifice, it is loyalty and that is a deeply theological theme for all of them. In every society of every culture, there is the practice of magic or understanding of the supernatural. (Wall, 2018)

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