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Animal Companions in Anglo-American Literature

Motiv zvířecích dvojníků v angloamerické literatuře

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Abstract

The subject of this bachelor thesis is the motif of the animal double in modern British and American literature of the 20th century in comparison with the genre of contemporary children's and fantasy literature. The thesis will define the concept of doubling in literature (Doppelgänger) and characterise the works of important authors of classical literature who dealt with the motif of doubling (Stevenson, Wilde). The following theoretical chapter will briefly overview 20th-century children's and fantasy literature and introduce modern authors whose work is based on the motif of an animal double or companion (W. Saroyan - *Tracy's Tiger*, P. Pullman - *Northern Lights*). The main focus of the thesis will be the analysis of the motif of animal companions and doubles in P. Pullman's *Northern Lights* in comparison with W. Saroyan's *Tracy's Tiger*. In conclusion, the thesis will attempt to evaluate the significance and role of animal companions and doubles in modern literature, with an emphasis on their function in the literature of the fantasy genre for children and adolescent readers.

Anotace

Bakalářská práce se zaměří na motiv zvířecího dvojníka v moderní britské a americké literatuře 20. století v porovnání se žánrem současné dětské a fantastické literatury. Práce v úvodu definuje pojem dvojnictví v literatuře (Doppelgänger) a charakterizuje díla významných autorů klasické literatury, kteří se motivem dvojnictví zabývali (Stevenson, Wilde). Následující teoretická kapitola zmíní stručný přehled dětské a fantastické literatury 20. století a představí moderní autory, jejichž dílo je založeno na motivu zvířecího dvojníka nebo společníka (Saroyan - *Tracy's tiger*, Pullman - *Northern Lights*). Jádrem práce bude srovnávací analýza motivu zvířecích společníků a dvojníků v díle P. Pullmana *Northern Lights* v porovnání s prózou W. Saroyana *Tracy's tiger*. Práce se v závěru pokusí zhodnotit význam a roli zvířecích společníků a dvojníků v moderní literatuře s důrazem na jejich funkci v literatuře fantastického žánru pro dětské a dospívající čtenáře.

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Table of contents

1	INTRODUCTION.....	1
2	THE DEFINITION OF THE TERM DOPPELGANGER.....	2
2.1	USE OF DOPPELGANGERS IN ROMANTIC LITERATURE	4
2.1.1	<i>The Devil's Elixir, E.T.A Hoffman (1815).....</i>	4
2.1.2	<i>William Wilson, Edgar Allan Poe (1839).....</i>	5
2.1.3	<i>The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde, R. Stevenson (1886).....</i>	6
2.1.4	<i>The Picture of Dorian Gray, Oscar Wilde (1890).....</i>	6
3	TWENTIETH CENTURY CHILDREN'S AND FANTASY LITERATURE	8
3.1	THE DEFINITION OF CHILDHOOD	8
3.2	ANIMAL ANTHROPOMORPHISM IN LITERATURE	8
3.3	AN OVERVIEW OF TWENTIETH CENTURY CHILDREN'S AND FANTASY LITERATURE.....	10
4	INTERPRETIVE ANALYSIS OF TRACY'S TIGER AS A DOPPELGANGER OR ANIMAL COMPANION	13
4.1	ABOUT THE AUTHOR AND HIS WORKS	13
4.1.1	<i>Tiger as a Motif.....</i>	14
4.1.2	<i>Plot</i>	15
4.2	THE MOTIF OF DOPPELGANGERS IN TRACY'S TIGER.....	17
4.2.1	<i>Meet the Doppelganger.....</i>	17
4.2.2	<i>The Tiger as Tracy's Subconscious Self.....</i>	18
4.2.3	<i>The Symbol of Love</i>	19
4.2.4	<i>Suppression by Society (Other Tigers).....</i>	22
4.2.5	<i>The Tiger Hunt</i>	23
4.2.6	<i>Farewell to the Tiger.....</i>	24
5	INTERPRETIVE ANALYSIS OF DOPPELGANGERS OR ANIMAL COMPANIONS IN NORTHERN LIGHTS....	26
5.1	ABOUT THE AUTHOR AND HIS WORKS	26
5.1.1	<i>Influences on Philip Pullman's Work.....</i>	26
5.1.2	<i>Plot</i>	28
5.2	THE MOTIF OF DOPPELGANGERS IN NORTHERN LIGHTS.....	30
5.2.1	<i>Dæmons.....</i>	30
5.2.2	<i>Interaction with the Dæmons of Other Characters.....</i>	33
5.2.3	<i>Dæmons as a Life-force</i>	34
5.2.4	<i>Separation from the Dæmon</i>	34
5.2.5	<i>Pantalaimon, Lyra Belacqua's Dæmon.....</i>	36
5.2.6	<i>Golden Monkey, Marisa Coulter's Dæmon</i>	39
6	CONCLUSION	41
7	BIBLIOGRAPHY	43
7.1	PRIMARY SOURCES	43
7.2	SECONDARY SOURCES	43

1 Introduction

The 20th century saw a notable increase in the production of children's and fantasy literature. Many works published during this period, also known as "The Golden Ages" feature animal heroes or animal companions to the main protagonists. The animals featured often possessed human attributes and traits such as the ability to speak, wear human clothes or even lead a completely humanlike life. This type of narrative is believed to help children understand the story more as they are more likely to relate to something known and maybe even beloved to them. Well-known stories portraying animals behaving like humans or being their companions are for example *The Tale of Peter Rabbit*, *Winnie-the-Pooh*, *Alice in Wonderland* and many others together with the novels *Tracy's Tiger* by William Saroyan and *Northern Lights* from the trilogy *His Dark Materials* by Philip Pullman. This bachelor thesis deals with the interpretation of animal companions and doubles in the last two books mentioned *Tracy's Tiger* and *Northern Lights*.

To understand the concept of animal companions it is important to be familiar with the term Doppelgänger. The concept of the double alone is a difficult one to completely understand as it has an extensive and complicated history rooted in psychological and religious beliefs. However, its literary evolution is what leads us to the motif of animal companions, as the two subjects share the idea of two halves being connected. This bachelor thesis names some of the works from the Romantic literature period in which the motif of Doppelgängers is depicted.

The motif of the animal double or companion in the works of P. Pullman and W. Saroyan is described not only as evil or doomed, as it tends to be in the works of for instance Oscar Wilde or Robert Louis Stevenson, but rather as more complex and even innocent. The analysis of the motif of animal companions and doubles (dæmons in *Northern Lights*) is the main focus of this bachelor thesis. To be able to better understand the inspiration behind the two novels the life and influences of the two authors are also included.

2 The definition of the term Doppelgänger

The term Doppelgänger, which has its roots in the German language, was founded by the writer Jean Paul Richter in 1796 and its literal translation is "double-goer". This term is often used in literature in relation to stories telling of split entities. The concept of Doppelgängers is largely imaginative and thus difficult subject to get a grasp on. The significance of the double rests, among other things, in its qualities to seek escape as well as it provides possibilities to individuals to imagine and duplicate themselves in unlimited ways. The double can be portrayed either as an imagined figure in the form of a soul, a shadow, a ghost or even a mirror reflection of oneself or as a real body usually a twin, a lover or a soulmate. Every form of the double is tightly related to the original subject as it exists as their second half which makes them feel simultaneously both as themselves and the other. The duality therefore reflects contrast as well as similarity between the two characters. In literature, the psychological concept of the double derives from humankind's perpetual incompleteness and split personality as well as noble or even absurd attempts for integration. In prose fiction, the double is used as a fictional, in addition to a literary, device for expressing the experience of self division.^{1 2}

Apart from being a literary motif, the double has its origin in myth and folklore of primitive ancient people, therefore it is also a construct of traditional culture. People then believed in the magical power of twins, the brilliance of reflection, the superstition of shadows and most importantly that the soul of a human is portable. Many religions have their own origin story of two beings, often twins. In Norse mythology, there is a story of two beings called Odin and Ymir and how they create the world. Odin kills the giant Ymir and uses his body to create the universe and his head to create the heavens. From the Bible, we know the tale of how Cain is cast out after killing Abel out of jealousy. Another such story is found in the founding of the city of Rome, where Romulus kills his brother Remus. Although all these stories are far from representing literary doubles, they

¹ Živković, M. (2000). *The double as the "unseen" of culture: Toward a definition of Doppelgänger*. Faculty of Philosophy, Niš, Yugoslavia. In *Linguistics and Literature*, 2(7), 121-128. Retrieved from <http://facta.junis.ni.ac.rs/lal/lal2000/lal2000-05.pdf>

² Gillis, W. (1969). *DOPPELGÄNGER*. *CEA Critic*, 31(5), 7-7. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/44416422>

still provide us with information about the understanding of good and evil in the form of the archetype of duality. The aspect of the evil double marks an instability and irregularity in a mutual exchange between man and nature. ³

Anything that is not common or known to humans is considered evil, even more so if it is different or in some way threatening to oneself. Whether it is a stranger, an outsider, simply anyone whose background is unknown or even someone with special powers is by social ideologies excluded as evil. That is why Doppelgangers were being viewed as evil. However, the perception of the double and thus evil is changing along with various cultural fears and values. There was a great change in concepts of order and madness at the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth century. Its outcome was a profound shift in one's understanding of themselves together with a shift in the definition of the demonic regarding doubles. ⁴

The nineteenth century saw more stories revolving around dualism, often inspired by the myth of Faust. It was in these narratives where the origin of the double was revealed. The demonic is no longer a supernatural entity but rather an outlook on personal and social life and an expression of subconscious desire. Writers William Godwin (*Caleb Williams*) and Mary Shelley (*Frankenstein*) were among the first who depicted the double on a fully animate level. The motif of Doppelgangers was humanised, no longer considered supernatural but on the contrary, displayed as an isolated part of the self. This other half can still possess evil characteristics or, until then unusual, good ones. According to Jungian theories, the two halves of oneself are complementary opposites that cannot exist without one another. Jung characterised the double as "a replica of one's own unknown face" and not as exclusively good or bad and the demonic aspect which it receives is because one half is more muted and less good than the other. ⁵

³ Culture Decanted. (2014, July 14). *The semiotics of the doppelgänger: The double in popular culture*. Retrieved from <https://culturedecanted.com/2014/07/14/the-semiotics-of-the-doppelganger-the-double-in-popular-culture/>

⁴ Živković, ref. 1

⁵ Živković, ref. 1

2.1 Use of Doppelgangers in Romantic Literature

The famous German writer Goethe is said to have seen his double. As a young man, he travelled extensively and allegedly saw him on one of his journeys. According to Goethe, the double wore peculiar clothes and rode a horse. Following this event, we can find aspects of doubles from Scandinavian folklore in Goethe's stories, where the double is a future echo rather than a separate entity. These Scandinavian Doppelgangers lack sinister implications and are understood only as future revelations. Another person who allegedly saw his double is writer Percy Bysshe Shelley. He saw his double on the terrace of his house. Shelley said that the Doppelganger even spoke to him. Nearly a month later, Shelley drowned. In this case, it is possible to see the Doppelganger as a harbinger of death, which is one aspect of Doppelganger folklore. A person who encounters his double is bound to perish.⁶

The stories of these two writers may be a case of heautoscopy which in healthcare describes seeing your Doppelganger. These visions are known as symptoms of schizophrenia and epilepsy. There is one known case in which a patient committed suicide after an alleged argument with his double.⁷

2.1.1 The Devil's Elixir, E.T.A Hoffman (1815)

The Devil's Elixir is one of the first stories in which the motif of the double is intertwined with the motif of the Gothic. Many critics and literary reviewers stated that *The Devil's Elixir* is also a mixture of Gothic horror and the grotesque. This characterisation is most evident in the absurdly ridiculous scenes where there is no other possibility but to view them as comic.⁸

The plot of the story is a very complicated one to follow as there is an overwhelming number of doppelgangers who are introduced to readers through an untrustworthy narrator unsure of his own sanity. Hoffmann's dedication to create the story grotesque is

⁶ Erickson, L. J. (n.d.). *Doppelgangers*. Leif Erickson Writing. Retrieved June 28, 2024, from <https://leifericksonwriting.com/doppelgangers/>

⁷ Minerva. (1994). *BMJ: British Medical Journal*, 309(6950), pp. 350–350. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/29724377>

⁸ Blake, H. F. (2023). *The Gothic Novel and Grotesque art: E.T.A. Hoffmann's The Devil's Elixirs*. In A. Alayal (Ed.), *Literature and Image in the Long Nineteenth Century: Speaking Picture and Silent Text* (Unabridged edition, pp. 67-82). Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

what makes it confusing as well. The plot revolves around the monk Medardus and his life full of split identities and incredible events. Medardus starts to question his own identity after an encounter with a Count named Victorin. After Victorin falls off a cliff, Medardus starts to pretend to be the other man. The narrative is then very chaotic as Medardus lives a double life where it is difficult to distinguish whether he acts like himself or the other man. Medardus' life is so maddening both for himself and readers as well. He starts to question almost everything he does as he is not even sure if the actions were done by him or his double. As the story progresses, we come to know that Victorin is in fact Medardus' half-brother. The souls of Medardus and Victorin blend into one after Medardus drinks a potion called the Devil's Elixir.⁹

One aspect of the Doppelganger in the book is its inexplicable manifestation, and another is the Doppelganger's stalking of Medardus by purposefully thwarting his goals. Throughout the story, we do not encounter a double as we know it today, because there is no real Doppelganger. There is a sort of psychic connection between the brothers that makes it complicated for both brothers to recognise their own identities.

2.1.2 William Wilson, Edgar Allan Poe (1839)

In this work, E. A. Poe extended the motif of the double as we know it from the works of E. T. A. Hoffman to a more symbolic function than before.

The story follows a boy named William Wilson who encountered another young male at boarding school who was looking uncannily like him and in addition, had the same name and date of birth. Their classmates think of them as brothers. It only takes a short time before the doubled William begins to oppose the original William by thwarting his desires and plans and creating conflict among them. After some time, our narrator separates from his Doppelganger as he finishes his studies and embarks on a dark path of crime. However, the problem arises whenever William Wilson tries to do evil actions, as his double always intervenes to spoil his plans. At the end of the book, there is a confrontation between Wilson and his double in the form of a duel to death. William Wilson stabs his double, who bleeds and gathers his last strength to utter these last words:

⁹ Blake, ref. 8

" *In me didst thou exist—and, in my death, see by this image, which is thine own, how utterly thou hast murdered thyself.* " (Poe, E. A., *William Wilson*)

The book effectively depicts the splitting of the mind in one person. The Doppelganger is an embodied conscience that haunts the narrator, who represents either guilt or shame. Unable to bear his negative qualities, Wilson and his mind externalised these feelings into the Doppelganger we have come to know.

2.1.3 The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde, R. Stevenson (1886)

The plot revolves around a protagonist named Jekyll, portrayed as gentle and honest, and his opposite double, Hyde. The story gave birth to the now common phrase, "a Jekyll and Hyde personality", which describes people who are split either in personality or thoughts. Sigmund Freud and Carl G. Jung explored the psychological duality of personality that appears in Stevenson's story. Freud saw the story as a conflict between ego and id. On the other hand, Jung describes a shadow personality that represents lower character traits. Barbara Hannah, an associate of the Jung Institute in Zurich, suggested that Stevenson used some points of psychological analysis in his book, which Jung described fifty years later.¹⁰

The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde depicts one of the most fundamental human moral dilemmas: the alternation of good and evil. Through the main character, he narrates the "profound duplicity of life," "man's dual nature," and the psychological split personality that is the pillar of the story.¹¹

2.1.4 The Picture of Dorian Gray, Oscar Wilde (1890)

The Picture of Dorian Gray is a story about narcissism and a struggle with one's moral self. The narrative tells of a man who receives a lifelike painting of himself. Dorian falls deeply in love with the painting, which he believes contains a part of his soul. Dorian's portrait is an example of a mirror double. The idea that he will grow old and ugly while the painting is still a young representation of him does not appeal to him. One day, he utters a wish to exchange fate with the painting, which is then fulfilled. The Doppelganger

¹⁰ Kreitzer, L. (1992). R. L. STEVENSON'S "STRANGE CASE OF DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE" AND ROMANS 7: 14—25: *IMAGES OF THE MORAL DUALITY OF HUMAN NATURE*. *Literature and Theology*, 6(2), 125–144. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23924484>

¹¹ Kreitzer, ref. 10

reflects Dorian's age, habits, and sins, while the real Dorian looks as he did when the picture was painted years ago. His guilty conscience leads him to the point where he decides to stab the painting, which leads to proving his rotten qualities. The stabbing resulted in Dorian's death. He is found on the ground, hideous, unrecognisable, next to the beautiful original painting.¹²

¹² Rogers, R. (1970). *Double in Literature: A Psychoanalytic Study of the Double in Literature* (p. 22). Wayne State University Press. ISBN 9780814314159

3 Twentieth Century Children's and Fantasy Literature

3.1 The Definition of Childhood

Children's literature overcame many obstacles to get to the form we recognise now. Children have not always been able to read beautifully illustrated books combined with catchy and straightforward stories. However, children's literature could not have existed without the invention of childhood.¹³

Before the Renaissance, society viewed children as not so different from adults as they were expected to behave and function the same as grown-ups. This is shown best in the works of medieval painters of that era, who depicted children in the same clothes, with the same posture and even with adult wrinkles. There were no kinds of entertainment for children, so children had no other choice but to occupy themselves with content mainly intended for their older peers. There was no distinction between maturity and childhood, and certainly not between children and adult literature. The arrival of the Renaissance brought the movable printing press, which led to an increase in the production of paper materials, including educational ones. This contributed to the development of childhood as we know it today.¹⁴

3.2 Animal Anthropomorphism in Literature

Anthropomorphism means attributing human characteristics and traits to inanimate objects such as trees, dolls or animals. The representation of animals in literature can be traced back to the earliest forms of storytelling for instance in Aesop's fables. There are several ways in which animal stories are characterised. One such way shows animals that act and dress like humans for example in *The Wind in the Willows*. Another way is shown in *Jungle Book* or *Bambi*, and it depicts animals that talk but otherwise behave naturally.¹⁵

¹³ Fetahagic, S. (2022, December 20). *The history of children's literature*. Piqosity. Retrieved July 1, 2024, from <https://www.piqosity.com/history-of-childrens-literature/>

¹⁴ Fetahagic, ref. 13

¹⁵ Markowsky, J. K. (1975). *Why Anthropomorphism in Children's Literature? Elementary English*, 52(4), 460–466. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41592646>

During childhood, children tend to believe that animals and other non-human entities share the same attributes as humans. There are several reasons why authors of children's literature choose to give animals human attributes in their works. One of the main reasons is that children tend to relate more easily to animal protagonists when the animal is depicted in a manner that is familiar to them, even more, if they wear clothes or talk. Another reason is the desire to escape from reality, which not only children but even adults need from time to time. Such escapes can be perceived not only as means of avoiding reality but also as means of uncovering a new perspective, which the author provides to the reader. There are numerous examples of stories where an animal that possesses speaking abilities helps us gain access to a world we would not have discovered without their assistance. These worlds share many similarities with our own, for instance, the form of their social hierarchy.^{16 17}

The variety of characters that can be represented is another reason for the use of animal anthropomorphism in literature. Authors can simply introduce a wide range of characters without deeper description in their works when the chosen animal already represents a certain attribute. In *Johnny Crow's Garden* by L. Leslie Brooke, a goose is featured. The narrative is told through a few straightforward words and illustrations, accompanied by the reader's reminiscence of the saying "silly as a goose". If the reader is familiar with such sayings they could picture the whole story without further description.¹⁸

¹⁶ Juliadilla, R., & Noveni, N. A. (2021, September 28). *Understanding the influence of companion animal on child development: A literature review*. *Jurnal Obsesi: Jurnal Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini*, 6(3), 1493-1500. <https://doi.org/10.31004/obsesi.v6i3.135>

¹⁷ Markowsky, ref. 15

¹⁸ Markowsky, ref. 15

3.3 An Overview of Twentieth Century Children's and Fantasy Literature

The twentieth century children's literature is connected with the First Golden Age of Children's Literature, which began around 1865 with the publication of Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland* and ended in approximately 1926 with the release of *Winnie the Pooh* by A. A. Milne. This lovely bear became one of the most beloved children's characters ever. *Alice in Wonderland* on the other hand features the notoriously known character of The Cheshire Cat who smiles from ear to ear. Throughout the book, the cat gives Alice illogical advice and makes it hard for her to find her way in the unknown world. In 1902 Beatrix Potter released *The Tale of Peter Rabbit*. She was the first author to use pictures and colour illustrations to help narrate the story. Until then, illustrations had served only as decoration. The rabbits depicted in the book speak and even wear normal humanlike clothing, yet they live a typical rabbit life. The First Golden Age of Children's Literature marked an overall shift in illustration, as more great authors began to team up with great illustrators. Industrialisation led to improvements in printing, which meant better accessibility for the middle class, whose interest in education was increasing at the time. L. Frank Baum wrote *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* (1900), which was the first American modern fantasy novel for young readers. In this narrative, we get to know the Cowardly Lion. As a lion, he should be fearless as well as majestic but unfortunately for him, he is the complete opposite. One of the key reasons why it is relatively simple to relate to him, especially for children, is that he is self-conscious of his shortcomings. This is a quality that many readers can relate to, as it is a common trait for individuals to focus more on their weaknesses rather than their strengths.^{19 20 21}

The early twentieth century in England is known as the Edwardian era after King Edward the Seventh, who reigned from 1901-1910. During this period, in 1908 Kenneth Grahame released *The Wind in the Willows*, where he continued with anthropomorphic animals. The world that is presented by Kenneth Grahame offers a broad range of animals with their own unique personality traits. The nineteenth century saw a rise in adventure

¹⁹ Sorby, A. (n.d.). Golden Age. In *Keywords for Children's Literature*. Retrieved June 30, 2024, from <https://keywords.nyupress.org/childrens-literature/essay/golden-age/>

²⁰ Tunnell, M., Jacobs J. (2013). The Origins and History of American Children's Literature. *The Reading Teacher*, 67(2), 80–86. doi: 10.1002/TRTR.1201

²¹ Statovci, P. (2017, November 15). Top 10 talking animals in books. *The Guardian*. Retrieved June 29, 2024, from <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2017/nov/15/top-10-talking-animals-in-books>

stories featuring boys as protagonists, such as Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876) and *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1884). These works remain popular among many young readers today. Frances Hodgson Burnett's novels *The Little Princess* (1905) and *The Secret Garden* (1911) represent a notable shift in the focus of adventure literature from male protagonists to girls and their adventures.^{22 23 24}

Around the year 1945 Britain was recovering from the most devastating conflict the world had ever witnessed, The Second World War. The war resulted in several precautions that needed to be made. One of these precautions was the introduction of a rationing system on paper. At the end of the war, there was only one remaining book publisher in Britain, Brockhampton Press, which specialised in children's literature. Publishers started to reprint known pre-war titles because newer books that were created during the conflict did not introduce any new elements.²⁵

The First Golden Age was succeeded by the Second Golden Age, which spanned from the 1950s to the 1970s. During this period, the quality of colour printing improved because of the development of techniques that were able to print larger quantities at a lower cost. The most significant difference between the First and the Second Golden Age is that early children's literature was mostly written from the perspective of an unknown narrator, who observed but did not directly participate in the story of the protagonist. On the other hand, modern authors stepped into the role of the child to achieve greater authenticity within their works. During this period *Charlotte's Web* (1952) by E. B. White was released. The story is about a pig called Wilbur, who lives on a farm, and his friendship with a spider called Charlotte. The animals initially appear to be quite ordinary, with behaviour linked with their species. However, they possess a unique ability

²² Rivera, A. (2018, March 20). The history of children's literature: 19th century to today. *Books Tell You Why*. Retrieved June 30, 2024, from <https://blog.bookstellyouwhy.com/the-history-of-childrens-literature-part-2>

²³ Craig, A. (2015, June 24). *Why this is a golden age for children's literature*. The Independent. Retrieved June 30, 2024, from <https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/books/features/why-this-is-a-golden-age-for-children-s-literature-children-s-books-are-one-of-the-most-important-forms-of-writing-we-have-10340568.html>

²⁴ Golden ages of children's literature. (2015, September 4). *SLAP HAPPY LARRY*. Retrieved June 28, 2024, from <https://www.slaphappylarry.com/the-difference-between-the-first-and-second-golden-ages-of-childrens-literature/>

²⁵ Hanson, C., & Watkins, S. (Eds.). (2017). *The history of British women's writing, 1945-1975: Volume nine* (p. 259). Palgrave Macmillan. ISBN 978-1-137-47736-1.

to communicate with one another. In addition, Charlotte can communicate with humans in the form of messages entangled in spider webs. Other authors who published during this period, such as J. R. R. Tolkien and C. S. Lewis, had to face the consequences and horror of the Second World War. It is a common literary trope for such authors to portray the struggle between good and evil. In 1954, J. R. R. Tolkien published one of the most famous fantasy works ever to see the light of day, a sequel to 1937's *The Hobbit*, *The Lord of the Rings*. For instance, in Tolkien, the figure of Sauron represents the symbol of malevolence, seeking to conquer all Middle-earth. Fantasy was prevalent at the time, with its depiction of beautiful and magical worlds, however with a sense of danger. Figures of protection and guidance can be found in literary works of that time such as in Lewis's *The Chronicles of Narnia* and his Aslan the Talking Lion. These characters served as guardians in the world of evil. Fantasy remains popular even nowadays in works such as *His Dark Materials* by Philip Pullman or the Harry Potter series by J. K. Rowling.^{26 27}

The children's literature has become the most profitable branch of the publishing industry over time. Modern fantasy authors now primarily target young readers as their main audience. The interest of parents of school-age children in new pieces of literature is growing, however, there is also an undying demand for earlier works.²⁸

²⁶ Slap Happy Larry, ref. 24

²⁷ Craig, ref. 23

²⁸ Lerer, S. (2008). *Children's literature: A reader's history, from Aesop to Harry Potter* (p. 8). University of Chicago Press. ISBN 9780226473000.

4 Interpretive Analysis of Tracy's Tiger as a Doppelganger or Animal Companion

4.1 About the Author and His Works

" *The most solid advice for a writer is this, I think: Try to learn to breathe deeply, really to taste food when you eat, and when you sleep really to sleep. Try as much as possible to be wholly alive with all your might, and when you laugh, laugh like hell. And when you get angry, get good and angry. Try to be alive. You will be dead soon enough.* " (Saroyan, *The Daring Young Man on the Flying Trapeze and Other Stories*, p. 11)

William Saroyan was an American writer born in 1908 in Fresno, California, into a family of Armenian immigrants as the fourth child. At the age of three he lost his father, Armenak, to a burst appendix. His mother, who started working in San Francisco after his father's death, moved all the children to an orphanage in Oakland. After five years in Oakland, young William returned to Fresno. He then moved to San Francisco ten years later with his family. Saroyan brought something unusual to the American audience with his extensive background and Armenian ancestry. In 1943, he married Carol Marcus, with whom he had two children, Aram and Lucy. He divorced Carol twice during his lifetime, which may also have caused the estrangement from his children. For the rest of his life, he travelled between an apartment in Paris and a house in Fresno, where he died of prostate cancer in 1981.²⁹

During his lifetime, he wrote several important works, including the play *The Time of Your Life*. This play was one of three that made it to Broadway, but the only one for which he received a Pulitzer Prize in 1940. However, he declined to accept it, claiming that his work was "no more great or good" than anything else he had written. Over four hundred of Saroyan's short stories have been published in nine collected volumes.³⁰

Tracy's Tiger is a short novel written in 1951. It first appeared in the short story collection *The William Saroyan Reader* in 1958. The story is highly metaphorical and

²⁹ Janigian, C. (n.d.). *About William Saroyan*. Forever Saroyan. Retrieved July 1, 2024, from <https://www.foreversaroyan.com/about-william-saroyan>

³⁰ Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopaedia (2024, May 14). *William Saroyan*. *Encyclopedia Britannica*. Retrieved July 1, 2024, from <https://www.britannica.com/biography/William-Saroyan>

humorous, and each reader may interpret it differently. The main character of the novel is a young boy, Tracy, who has an animal companion which is also the subject of this thesis.

4.1.1 Tiger as a Motif

In many of Saroyan's books, there is a tiger as some kind of functional element. It is no secret that Saroyan likes tigers and that is why he chooses them for his works. *Tracy's Tiger* is not the only book written by Saroyan in which we can encounter a tiger. Whenever you find a Saroyan's tiger, there will always be trouble. No wonder that one of his short story collections is called *The Trouble With Tigers*. Simply put, his tigers do behave abnormally. For instance, in *The Barber's Uncle*, a circus tiger bites off the head of the barber's uncle, which a trained tiger is not supposed to do. Tracy's tiger is no exception, as he is only acting as a tiger, but he is actually a black panther who gets Tracy into problems from time to time. There are several tigers in the narrative. Tracy's tiger is everything. It is love, it is joy, it is a dream, it is Laura Luthy and more. Most importantly, it is something inside Tracy.³¹

The only reason Tracy owns Tiger is because of William Blake and his poem, *The Tyger*, which is directly mentioned in the book during a conversation between Tracy and Dr. Pitzinger. Blake himself could not have predicted that his poem, which has inspired countless readers and authors, would lead Tracy into such difficulties. None of those troubles might have happened if he had never read Blake's poem. However, it would not have been Saroyan's style to have never given Tracy Blake's poem to read. Saroyan is particularly fond of tigers because they are an essential component of his narratives. Without them, the narrative would be incomplete and his story full of rollercoasters would lack its distinctive flavour.³²

³¹ Hilský, M. (1993). *Od Poea k postmodernismu: Proměny americké prózy* (pp. 220-223). Odeon. ISBN 80-207-0459-0

³² Ibid.

4.1.2 Plot

The novel's main protagonist is Thomas Tracy, a boy who has an imaginary tiger which is not real. The animal Thomas owns is, in fact, a black panther, but Tracy does not mind because it is the tiger he has always wanted. At the age of 21, Thomas Tracy moves from San Francisco to New York and starts working for Otto Seyfang in a coffee warehouse. After fourteen days, he applies for a job as a coffee taster at the same coffee company. The position of a coffee taster was the highest one that was possible to get. There is a waiting list for the position, depending on who has worked in the company the longest. Unfortunately, Tracy's attempt failed.

Tracy loved to spend his breaks at work with coffee tasters, and one day a girl named Laura Luthy walked by. Tracy invited Laura to lunch and his tiger played a crucial role in Laura's noticing him. Soon he was invited to Laura's home. The visit did not turn out at all to his expectations. Her mother was very flirtatious, and he found himself all alone in her company, because Laura's father had gone out for ice cream, and Laura herself was searching for her penmanship certificate. On that unfortunate day, he kissed Laura's mother and left immediately afterwards, as Laura had seen the whole thing. Tracy moved back to California after he broke up with Laura. Six years later, Tracy returned with the tiger and visited the familiar locations. Suddenly everyone was able to see Tracy's tiger. When Tracy and the tiger walked out of St. Patrick's Church, the Police were waiting to catch the tiger. The tiger was eventually hit by a bullet and then he escaped into the city while Tracy got arrested. Tracy was told by the police that his tiger was supposedly a panther that had escaped from the zoo. After an extensive conversation with psychologists, Tracy was placed in an asylum in Bellevue, where he also met Laura, who was no longer the same Laura he once knew. After Tracy's hospitalisation, patients began to improve greatly but there was no scientific explanation for it.

Tracy was often visited by one of the police officers in charge of the case, Huzinga. Tracy promised Huzinga that he would help them catch the tiger/panther. All that was needed was to stage an ordinary day of Tracy's from the time when he was still working in Otto Seyfang's warehouse. They managed to get the original tasters and one of the psychologists, Dr. Pitzinger, into the warehouse. Laura was supposed to walk down Warren Street at half past twelve, which she did. Together they headed to a shop where a cage was prepared for catching the tiger. After a while, only Tracy and Laura

came out of the shop and there was no sign of the tiger. The police officers who were watching the whole situation from afar walked into the store and there was no animal, just the empty cage left.

4.2 The motif of Doppelgangers in Tracy's Tiger

4.2.1 Meet the Doppelganger

"Thomas Tracy had a tiger. It was actually a black panther, but that's no matter, because he thought of it as a tiger." (Saroyan, 1951, p. 6)

Right at the beginning of the book, we are introduced to the fact that Tracy, according to the opening lines, owns a tiger.

"When he was three and went by the sound of things somebody said tiger! Whatever a tiger! was, Tracy wanted his own." (Saroyan, 1951, p. 6)

Tracy's pursuit of his tiger began at this moment. A child's imagination knows no bounds and hearing the word tiger as a child caught Tracy's attention enough to want one of his own even though he did not know what tiger meant.

"For years Tracy saw pictures of all kinds of animals in dictionaries, paintings, encyclopaedias, and movies. Among these animals stalked many black panthers, but not once did Tracy think of one of them as his own tiger." (Saroyan, 1951, p. 6)

Tracy had the opportunity to observe a large number of animals over the years, including tigers and panthers. However, none of these animals could be considered his dream tiger. Tracy's decision to see the panther as a tiger may portray his unique view of the world and underscore the idea that our recognition of things is based on how we perceive the world.

"One day, however, Tracy was at the zoo alone, fifteen years of age, smoking a cigarette and leering at girls when all of a sudden he came face to face with his tiger." (Saroyan, 1951, p. 6)

At the age of fifteen, Tracy finally acquired his tiger. That day, Tracy went to the zoo by himself as something unexpectedly captured his attention.

"It was a sleeping black panther that instantly awoke, raised its head, stared straight at Tracy, got to its feet, hummed the way black panthers do ... walked to the edge of the cage, stood for a moment looking at Tracy, then he wandered back to the platform on which it had been sleeping." (Saroyan, 1951, p. 6-8)

"Tracy in turn stood staring at the black panther. He stared five minutes, chucked away his cigarette, cleared his throat, spat, and walked out of the zoo. 'That's my tiger,' he said." (Saroyan, 1951, p. 8)

From the first moment, the panther seemed to sense Tracy's presence. The whole moment seemed strange. The panther wakes up and looks at Tracy, and Tracy looks back. In the moment when they exchanged glances, it was as if they understood each other without words, without either having to say anything. After a while, Tracy decided to walk away and act like nothing had happened, as if he did not care. But when Tracy left the zoo, things seemed slightly different. It was as if Tracy had come to the zoo empty handed but had taken something with him on the way out. It seemed that a part of him was missing before he went to the zoo, and when he left, he was somebody different, like he had found the missing piece of himself.

4.2.2 The Tiger as Tracy's Subconscious Self

Tiger has an ability to control Tracy's actions at key moments in his life, often when Tracy is facing important decisions or crises. Tracy always knows how the tiger will deal with the situation, but he does not always agree with his plans. This means they do not always get along, and situations like this represent conflict between desires, beliefs, or impulses between the two.

"Tracy went back to his work, leaving the tiger fast asleep under Valora's desk. When the tiger woke up and went back to Tracy, Tracy wouldn't speak to it. 'Eyeej,' the tiger said in the hope of breaking the ice. 'Eyeej my foot,' Tracy said. 'That was a nice trick to play on a pal. I thought you were going to kick it around. I didn't think you were going to fall asleep. When he said do you want to keep your job, I thought you were going to say something sensible. You call yourself a tiger?' " (Saroyan, 1951, p. 22)

" 'What do you know about tasting?' Valora said. 'I like coffee,' Tracy said. 'What do you know about tasting?' Valora said again. 'I've done a little in the Tasting Department.' [...] 'When the coffee was good I knew it,' Tracy said. 'When it was bad I knew it.' 'How did you know?' 'By tasting.' " (Saroyan, 1951, p. 12-14)

The first extract above shows one of the conflicts between the two. Tracy is angry at tiger because he took the initiative over his body and left to apply for a promotion to the position of a coffee taster. Even though Tracy wanted the taster job himself, he lacked

the courage to apply for it, whereas the tiger had plenty to spare. Tracy was aware of the Tiger's intentions and trusted him. The worst part about the whole situation was that Tracy only worked at the company for fourteen days. However, the tiger did not even give a good reason to the supervisor why Tracy should get the job. At the worst possible moment, the tiger fell asleep because he lost his curiosity. Suddenly, Tracy just stood there and chose to not participate any longer rather than lose his job completely.

4.2.3 The Symbol of Love

"That is a story of Thomas Tracy, Laura Luthy, and the tiger, which is love."
(Saroyan, 1951, p. 202)

The tiger in Saroyan's work is a very philosophical subject. Each reader can interpret its appearance in his own way. However, at the end of the book, there is a mention of the symbol that the tiger represents, and that is love. Throughout the book, we can follow the romance of Tracy and Laura. Rather than a pure romance, it is Tracy's pursuit of Laura's heart with the help of his tiger.

" 'Lune,' it said. 'What do you mean?' Tracy said. 'Alune.' 'I don't get it.' 'Ah lune.' 'What 's that?' 'Lunalune.' 'Doesn't mean anything.' 'Ah lunalune', the tiger said patiently. 'Speak English if you want to say something.' Tracy Said. 'La,' the tiger said. 'That's almost French,' Tracy said. 'Speak English. You know I don't know French.' 'Sola.' 'Solar?' 'So,' the tiger said. 'Don't shorten the words,' Tracy said. 'lengthen them, so I can figure out what you're trying to say.' " (Saroyan, 1951, p. 30)

Chapter Three introduces us to the fact that it was the Tiger himself who first mentioned the subject of love. We are told that the Tiger would like someone for himself, but unfortunately, he has not had the opportunity to do so yet. So far, only street cats have gotten into his life and that is not a good match for tigers after all. When he has come across a real tigress, he has barely had time to look around.

The tiger does not speak, but he uses sounds normally made by tigers to communicate with Tracy. On the other hand, Tracy speaks to him as an equal, as if he was not an animal. Tiger understands Tracy in most situations, but that cannot be said about Tracy's understanding of the tiger. There are passages in the book where the tiger desperately tries to tell Tracy something, but he just walks away without being understood.

The tiger himself was aware that love was an important aspect, so he decided to give Tracy a little push. From their conversation, it is clear that even though the tiger did not say it out loud, love was on his mind the whole time, but Tracy had no idea what he meant. However, then he became aware of it.

"He was trying to figure out what the tiger had said when a girl in a tight-fitting yellow knit dress came walking down Warren Street. She had a great deal of black hair combed straight down. There was so much of it that it seemed to be a mane. It shined with life and crackled with electricity. The muscles of Tracy's tiger became taut, its slim head pushed forward toward the girl, its tail shot straight out, rigid except for the almost imperceptible vibrating of it, and the tiger hummed low and violently, saying, 'Eyeej.' " (Saroyan, 1951, p. 30)

" 'Eyeej,' the tiger replied, as if in pain, its head moving out still farther, while Tracy's own eyes dived into young lady's. The hum and the diving happened at the same time. The girl heard the hum, received the dive, almost stopped, almost smiled, pushed herself tighter against the yellow knit dress, and then danced on, the tiger moaning softly. " (Saroyan, 1951, p. 32)

Tiger's behaviour in this passage can be interpreted as a summary of the feelings experienced by Tracy, our protagonist. Tiger did everything in his power to get the young girl's attention. If it were not for the tiger, the girl would never have noticed our protagonist. Tracy was overwhelmed by sentiments of love. This could be described as desire and lust but the only one who could show it at that moment was his tiger. Tiger gathered the courage that Tracy lacked. When the girl walked by, Tracy was taking a break with the coffee tasters. Peberdy, Nimmo and even Ringert did not understand the sounds Tracy was making because they did not possess a tiger of their own and were not aware of Tracy's.

" 'How's it turning out?' Nimmo asked Tracy on Friday at noon. 'The song?' Tracy said. 'No,' Nimmo said. 'Who cares about the song? How's it turning out with you and the black-haired beauty in the bright yellow dress?' 'Eyeej,' Tracy said mournfully. " (Saroyan, 1951, p. 54)

After Tracy messed up his relationship with Laura, one of Otto Seyfang's employees asked how he was doing. Tiger impulsively answered for Tracy, as it was a sensitive and very painful subject for him.

"Nimmo was on his way in when he heard Tracy moan. He turned, and saw the black haired beauty passing. But with her walked unknown man, obviously not from California, by appearance a bookkeeper." (Saroyan, 1951, p. 56)

After Tracy had told Nimmo about what had happened between him and Laura, the tiger's growl now indicated that something was wrong with the situation. And yes, it was. Tracy took a second hit right after the breakup. He could not bring himself to make a single sound, but that is what the tiger was there for, to help Tracy release his emotions.

"The tiger stiffened when it saw the entrance of the building, for it was there the tiger had stood one whole afternoon staring the way Laura Luthy had gone." (Saroyan, 1951, p. 64)

"Tracy stood on a corner, a block from Saint Patrick's, and watched a small boy and the boy's sister cross the street. The tiger came up beside him. Tracy rested his hand on the tiger's head. 'They might have been mine,' Tracy said. 'Eyeej,' the tiger said" (Saroyan, 1951, p. 64)

Another depiction of Tracy's pain from the breakup can be seen upon his return to New York. In the first snippet, they were located at the warehouse where Otto Seyfang's company once stood. All the consternation can be seen in the tiger, who recalls his last encounter with Laura. In the second excerpt, it is obvious that Tracy is grieving in a situation where he observes small children. Tiger here showed his mindfulness and did the best he could to provide emotional support.

4.2.4 Suppression by Society (Other Tigers)

"Well, he'd had the tiger beside him most of his life, but never before had anything like this happened. Never before had anybody else seen the tiger." (Saroyan, 1951, p. 66)

Tracy's return to New York has caused great unease between people. Suddenly everyone could see his tiger and that was the strange thing about that moment. His return may symbolise his regained confidence, as one of the main reasons he left New York was his breakup with Laura, which could have been to some extent devastating for him. His regained self-confidence could then materialise the tiger itself.

"He found the people there quite mad. He also found that each of them had a tiger: a very troubled one, a very angry one, a most deeply wounded one, a tiger deprived of humour, and love of freedom and fun, imagination, and hope." (Saroyan, 1951, p. 110)

"Nimmo's son was there with a depressed and dying tiger. Peberdy's daughter was there with a terrified tiger that paced back and forth. Ringer himself was there with a tiger that resembled a weary old dog. And Laura Luthy was there, her once magnificent tiger now thin, starved, and pathetic..." (Saroyan, 1951, p. 110)

When his tiger went missing, Tracy was placed into Lunatic Asylum where he ran into lots of familiar faces. He also realised that everyone there has a tiger that acts as a mirror for the person's broken soul. It can be understood that every person has their desires or needs and sometimes they are misunderstood by society and considered to be crazy. The world seems to be very monotonous and when one stands out in some way, it is wrong and needs to be dealt with immediately. What is considered foolishness does not have to be immediately perceived as wrong. It may reflect human uniqueness and specialness which society unfortunately does not want to accept.

"I've been with him the entire time. That was no bull in the papers about Laura Luthy. The doctors said she was dying, and all you had to do was see her to know she was. Well, she's not dying any more. Pingitzer's in there every day talking with both of them trying to figure it out. He says everybody at Bellevue is somebody who lost love somewhere along the line. The ones that love means the most to get sick, a lot of them die. [...]" (Saroyan, 1951, p. 152)

"[...] They're sore because the patients aren't acting the way they're supposed to act. They get, visit one another, help one another, tell stories, dance, sing – and I don't mean in a crazy way, either. I mean in a natural, decent, kind way. Most of them are sad, of course, but not much sadder than people anywhere else." (Saroyan, 1951, p. 154)

The snippet above talks about the fact that many patients have improved since Tracy has been attending the facility. Even Laura was one of those patients. When a person who has a problem gets in touch with people who are in a similar situation or at least understand them, they can handle the situation much better. It is important to know that you are not alone, and that is somehow comforting for each person. On the other hand, the rest of society does not like it because you are not behaving according to their expectations. A person who deviates in any way does not fit into their system.

Having fun can also be a reason why one becomes suppressed by society. We are told that everyone in the institution has lost love at some point during their life and with that probably even the meaning of their life. Today's life is so fast-paced that most people forget to have fun. However, there are some exceptions. Fun can be a form of love for some people, and even if it is not going well, that does not mean there is something wrong with it. Such people need help, not judgment or humiliation. Unfortunately, society tends to perceive these people in a negative light. Most people do not have the time to participate in fun activities, and it bothers them when other individuals do.

" [...]People is pain. People is sick, people is mad, people is hurt, people is hurt people, is kill, is kill self. Where is fun, where is play, where is imagination, where is magic? [...]" (Saroyan, 1951, p. 94)

4.2.5 The Tiger Hunt

"The following day a man went to the Mirror with a black panther shot through head, and the Mirror had the scoop it wanted at last." (Saroyan, 1951, p. 136)

While Tracy was in Bellevue, his injured and ravaged tiger kept roaming the streets of New York. The police were tasked with catching the tiger, but there was no sign of him as he was hiding due to his injuries. During that time, there were a lot of individuals and even corporations who wanted to take advantage of Tracy's situation. The newspaper also offered a reward of five thousand dollars for the eventual capture of a tiger.

"The man, Art Pliley, in a matter of hours received hundreds of 'phone calls at the Mirror mostly from women, several of whom offered to be his bride." (Saroyan, 1951, p. 136)

"He looked, that is, from across the room. He spoke altogether out of turn, too, making a shambles of the whole ceremony. 'That's not my tiger,' he said. 'That's not even a black panther. That's not even a black panther. That's a mountain lion that's had its fur dyed black.' " (Saroyan, 1951, p. 138)

One of these people was a man named Art Pliley. He was not the smartest, but he had a dream. He wanted to be famous and Tracy's tiger was the perfect opportunity to accomplish that. This situation can serve as another insight into how a society can have bad impacts. This man wanted to use the tiger to enrich himself at the expense of Tracy's unfortunate situation. When a person hit the rock bottom, everyone still wants to take more from them, even if they have nothing left to give. Fortunately, it turns out it was not Tracy's tiger.

4.2.6 Farewell to the Tiger

" 'He can get us the tiger,' Captain Huzinga said. 'How?' Chief Bly said. 'Well, it sounds complicated,' Huzinga said, 'but I've had a lot of talks with him, and it's not complicated. I know he can do it.' 'How?' Bly said again. 'First,' Huzinga said, [...] 'There is a place on Warren Street that used to be Otto Seyfang's, a coffee importing house,' [...] " (Saroyan, 1951, p. 148)

When the police and the public failed to capture the tiger, Tracy himself had to come up with a plan. All he needed to do was to recreate one of his typical days at his old job. He needed to go back in time to correct his mistakes, especially with Laura.

"When he was finally sure he had heard the word, he was not surprised, He did not leap to his feet. He did not turn. He said the word back very softly. After a moment he heard it again, and then very slowly he got up and lifted a sack to his shoulder and walked with it. When he put the sack down and turned he saw the tiger" (Saroyan, 1951, p. 186)

When Tracy was in Bellevue, he had time just for himself to think about everything. During that time, he realised what he really wanted in life. His whole life can be described as a roller coaster of emotions since he has been living most of his life in confusion. In Bellevue, he realised he could live without his tiger, and that he does not need one.

He does not need to ask anyone for advice anymore. He simply has matured. The last step that was left to take was to say goodbye to his beloved tiger.

"Its appearance was pitiful, even from so far away. It was starved, sick, weak, and wounded. He went back to the pile of sacks, scarcely looking at the tiger, lifted another sack and walked off with it. On his third trip the tiger climbed to the top of the pile of sacks, spread itself flat, to rest there and watch." (Saroyan, 1951, p. 186)

"Tracy and the tiger talked, but this time not with words, not even with sounds, and each of them understood." (Saroyan, 1951, p. 188)

Tiger found Tracy again when he knew things were coming back to normal. Tiger's visage reflects Tracy's past. How confused and fragile he used to be, but that is not him anymore. Both of them knew that this was the end. After a while, Tracy went outside, where Laura was waiting for him. Tiger took his time, but in the end, he also came out. Together they went to a shop where a cage, prepared by the police, was waiting for the tiger. Soon enough only Tracy and Laura came out of the shop as there was no trace of the tiger.

"After a while they saw Tracy and Laura come out and walk away, toward the docks at the end of Warren Street." (Saroyan, 1951, p. 198)

5 Interpretive Analysis of Doppelgangers or Animal Companions in Northern Lights

5.1 About the Author and His Works

Sir Philip Nicholas Outram Pullman is an English writer born in Norwich in 1946. He has written over twenty works aimed mainly at children's audience, but that does not mean that only children read his books. He has also written many short stories, which he calls fairy tales. His first book for children was *Count Karlstein* (1982), followed four years later by *The Ruby in the Smoke*. In 2002, he received the Eleanor Farjeon Prize for Children's Literature.³³

He is best known for his book trilogy *His Dark Materials*, the first volume of which, *Northern Lights*, was published in 1995 (*Golden Compass* in the U.S.), and the second volume was published in 1997 and titled *The Subtle Knife*. The trilogy concludes with the final volume, *The Amber Spyglass*, published in 2000. The books have won countless awards, most notably the Carnegie Medal, the Guardian Children's Book Award, and the Whitbread Book of the Year Award which was awarded for children's literature for the first time.³⁴

5.1.1 Influences on Philip Pullman's Work

It is no secret that Pullman's work was influenced by many prominent authors. An author who had a great influence on both Saroyan and Pullman, who are the subject of this thesis, is William Blake.

William Blake was a poet and an artist born in 1757 in London who influenced Pullman's fictional works to a great extent. In his literary works, Blake preferred to use his imagination, which enabled him to evoke the nature of divine love and sympathy. He was not the kind of author who relied on rational thinking. One of his most famous collections of poems (*Songs of Innocence and of Experience*) deals with the conflict between innocence and experience which Pullman also implemented in his work.

³³ Pullman, P. (n.d.). *About*. Philip Pullman. Retrieved July 1, 2024, from <http://www.philip-pullman.com/about>

³⁴ *Ibid.*

Some of these poems are about a little girl named Lyca. Pullman was likely inspired by these poems, as the heroine of his most successful works is named Lyra, who shares a similar fate to Blake's protagonist.³⁵

During his lifetime, Blake denied the existence of the material world, using his alleged conversations with angels as an argument. Pullman uses various creatures in his works from animals to mythical beings including angels as another possible inspiration. Pullman, unlike Blake, does not believe in these creatures but uses them to represent certain symbols that have been associated with humanity for hundreds of years. By implementing these aspects into his modern stories, he creates a connection between today's audience and all the fantasy works we know today.³⁶

Another author who greatly influenced Phillip Pullman was John Milton. His most famous work, *Paradise Lost*, tells the story of the banishment of Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden. The story begins with the reader's introduction to Satan, who is surrounded by angels who have been cast out of heaven similarly to him. Throughout the book, Satan hatches a plan for revenge but chooses the smarter way rather than risking a war with God himself. Later in the narrative, Satan tries to persuade Adam and Eve to eat the fruit from the Tree of Knowledge, knowing that it was the only thing that was forbidden to them. They first refuse but Satan later returns in the form of a snake. As the snake, he tells Eve that God is just jealous and does not want them to become gods themselves since that is certainly what happens after eating the apple from the tree. Adam and Eve give in to temptation and therefore they face banishment, together with losing immortality because of their sin. After the banishment, Adam and Eve figure as two lost souls with nowhere to go. Pullman's inspiration can be seen in the form of Lyra and Will. These two souls, on the other hand, are untainted and have the world at their feet.³⁷

Pullman was sixteen years old when he came across Milton's work. The most noticeable inspiration is in the title of Pullman's book trilogy, *His Dark Materials*, which

³⁵ Tucker, N. (2017). *Darkness Visible: Philip Pullman and His Dark Materials* (p. 113-120). Icon Books. ISBN 978-1-78578-228-2

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid.

comes from one of the poems in *Paradise Lost*. This poem is even quoted at the beginning of the first book of the trilogy. Both authors introduce readers to worlds full of wonders where the main motif is the battle between good and evil.³⁸

5.1.2 Plot

The narrative begins with the introduction of the protagonist, Lyra Belacqua (later known as Lyra Silvertongue, nicknamed by Iorek Byrnison), a young girl placed in similar world to our own. The girl lives on the campus of Oxford University together with her dæmon Pantalaimon. Lyra and Pantalaimon hide in a closet in the headmaster's room, where they discover that the headmaster of the university is planning to poison Lyra's uncle, Lord Asriel who came to the university to tell scholars about the mysterious substance called Dust that he had discovered during his exploration of the north. Lyra and Pantalaimon intervened just in time to warn Lord Asriel of the poisoned wine.

After some time, children start disappearing around Oxford. One of them was Lyra's good friend, Roger. Behind all the kidnappings was the mysterious group known as The Gobblers about whom many myths were spreading. Then Mrs Coulter appears on the scene. Lyra is so fascinated by her that she decides to move to London to join her. Mrs Coulter promises to teach Lyra everything she needs to know so they can go north together but Mrs Coulter has no intention of doing that. Before she leaves Oxford, the headmaster hands her a powerful device called alethiometer which Lyra has no idea of how it works. She was told not to tell anybody about it. After some time spent in London, Lyra discovers the true nature of her patron and decides to flee. Lyra also wants to go north to find out what the mysterious substance is, just like her uncle, but before she can do so, she runs into the Costas family, who are Gyptians. They are united by the alienation of their boy by the same group that kidnapped Roger.

The Costas family takes Lyra with them. By spending time with them she gets to know the Gyptian culture more closely. She also learns about her real parents. Since she was a little girl, she was told that they had died, but the truth is completely different. Her real parents are Lord Asriel and Mrs Coulter. She also learns of the Gyptians' plan to travel north to rescue the kidnapped children. She convinces them to take her with them.

³⁸ Ibid.

Farder Coram, one of the Gyptians, helps her master the magical device called alethiometer. This device can show its owner both the future and the past.

On their way to the Gobblers' base camp, the Tartars assault Lyra and the group. During the ambush, she is captured and taken to Bolvanger, where she finds out that the Gobblers are separating the children from their dæmons, and that Mrs Coulter is the main person in charge. Lyra tries to free the children, but Mrs Coulter chases them. However, with the help of Lee Scoresby and Serafina Pekkala, they manage to escape. Their next plan is to free Lord Asriel, whom the armoured bears have imprisoned. Unfortunately, an attack by the cliff ghaasts causes Lyra to fall out of Lee Scoresby's balloon, resulting in her capture by the bears just like it happened to her uncle.

In captivity, she meets Iofur Raknison, who claimed the throne of Iorek Byrnison, the bear she encountered earlier in the story. Lyra lures Iofur into a duel with Iorek by promising him that she will become his dæmon. Unfortunately for Iofur, he loses the fight and dies. Lyra, Iorek and Roger rescue Lord Asriel. Lord Asriel is convinced that Roger's separation from his dæmon can open a portal to another world, and it does. Roger dies, and Lyra follows Lord Asriel into the new world.

5.2 The Motif of Doppelgangers in Northern Lights

5.2.1 Dæmons

" 'Why do dæmons have to settle?' Lyra said. 'I want Pantalaimon to be able to change forever. So does he.' 'Ah, they always have settled, and they always will. That's part of growing up. There'll come a time when you'll be tired of his changing about, and you'll want a settled kind of form for him.' " (Pullman, 1995, p. 167)

Dæmons are the physical embodiment of the human soul usually in animal form. Every person in Phillip Pullman's world possesses a dæmon with whom they have an inseparable bond. Dæmons can change their form during childhood, which symbolises the formation of everyone's personality. Dæmons can also change their form according to the situation they are in. When a person dies, their dæmon dies.

" 'Anyway, there's compensations for a settled form.' 'What are they?' 'Knowing what kind of person you are. Take old Belisaria. She's a seagull, and that means I'm a kind of seagull too. I'm not grand and splendid nor beautiful, but I'm a tough old thing and I can survive anywhere and always find a bit of food and company. That's worth knowing, that is. And when your dæmon settles, you'll know the sort of person you are.' " (Pullman, 1995, p. 167)

When a person matures, his Dæmon settles down in one no longer changeable form, which is closest to its owner's personality. This settling symbolises the maturation of a person's character. Dæmon is dedicated to his master, to whom he can provide valuable advice, help and even emotional support.

The settling of a dæmon does not always have to be pleasing to its owner. Everybody dreams of their dæmon being for instance a lion or some majestic creature. Individuals are not able to choose their final form. In the narrative, we get to know a story about one old sailor, whose dæmon settled as a dolphin. The sailor was one of the greatest navigators to ever conquer the sea. His dæmon being a dolphin meant that he could never leave the water. However, he was never happy until his death.

The connection between humans and dæmons is very powerful. Both of them need to always be close to each other, as separating them at a greater distance causes severe stress, anxiety and pain for both. This rule, and in fact necessity, applies only to humans.

Throughout the story, we meet other advanced civilisations that are somewhat different from the humans. The first is the armoured polar bears known as panserbjørne, which, unlike human beings, do not have an embodied soul in the form of a dæmon. Instead of that, they wear heavy armour made of iron which reflects to some extent their soul.

" '[...] *The witches have the power to separate themselves from their dæmons a mighty sight further'n what we can. If need be, they can send their dæmons far abroad on the wind or the clouds, or down below the ocean. [...]* ' " (Pullman, 1995, 164)

Another civilisation are witches, who are powerful and magical creatures with a deeply rooted connection to nature. At first glance, they have an indistinguishable appearance from humans. Witches live in different tribes, as they are not united, and their dæmons are in the forms of birds which indicates their independence, freedom and option of choice. For example, Serafina Pekkala, one of the main witches in the narrative, is often depicted with this ability, which allows her to send out her daemon, a beautiful gray goose, without having to be physically present.

"It was such a strange tormenting feeling when your dæmon was pulling at the link between you; part physical pain deep in the chest, part intense sadness and love. [...] Everyone tested it when they were growing up: seeing how far they could pull apart, coming back with intense relief. [...] The pain in Lyra's heart grew more and more unbearable, and a sob of longing rose in her throat. [...] Then she was through the gate, scrambling over the icy mud toward him, and he turned into a wildcat and sprang up into her arms, and they were clinging together tightly with little shaky sounds of unhappiness coming from them both." (Pullman, 1995, p. 195)

An example of how painful separation can be for both humans and dæmons is the moment that happened between Lyra and Pan. In the part of the book where this takes place, the protagonist Lyra encounters the polar bear Iorek Byrnison in one of the Nordic villages, Trollesund. Iorek Byrnison was originally a noble bear who had been exiled from his tribe for murder. Lyra knows in her heart that Iorek would be a valuable ally in their mission to free the kidnapped children. The moment Iorek notices them, Lyra gets scared to approach the bear, but Pantalaimon has a different opinion, so he decides to take the responsibility into his own hands by proceeding towards Iorek by himself. The bond that exists between the dæmon and the human acts as a sort of magnet that cannot be

easily broken and the fact that Pan has moved forward makes Lyra forcefully drawn to him because of their connection.

"As Lyra held her breath, she saw the servant's dæmon (a dog, like all servants' dæmons) trot in and sit quietly at his feet, and then the Master's feet became visible too, in the shabby black shoes he always wore." (Pullman, 1995, p. 5)

"There's sixty men with rifles, and they got a couple of larger guns, sort of cannons. They got fire throwers too. And... Their dæmons are all wolves, that's what it says.'" (Pullman, 1995, p. 205)

Dæmons reflect the nature of their person and often social status. A person who works as a servant has a dog as their dæmon because dogs are known for their obedience and loyalty, similarly as soldiers have wolves who are relentless in battle and well organised across a wolf pack that reflects the battle formations of soldiers. However, a person of higher status may have a dæmon in some noble form in the case of Lord Asriel and his snow leopard.

The dæmon is almost always of the opposite sex to its owner. This philosophy is based on Carl Jung's theory that opposites attract. Only by combining these two parts, the whole will be made. Jung defined two terms, one for men and one for women. In the life of the male sex, the individual spends their whole life trying to find their missing part in the form of the anima, and the life of the female sex, the individual searches for the animus. Unfortunately, according to Jung, this connection cannot be achieved. Consequently, everyone must accept the fact that something important is missing within themselves.³⁹

"Bernie was a kindly, solitary man, one of those rare people whose dæmon was the same sex as himself." (Pullman, 1995, p. 124)

The preceding snippet tells us that exceptions are made. In the story, we are introduced to a pastry cook named Bernie Johansen, who is a half Gyptian. This shows us that not everything follows the established rules. It is not certain how and why this happens. One theory comes to mind and that is the person's sexual orientation.

³⁹ Tucker, ref. 35, pp. 102-103

A possibility is that if a person shows affection towards the same sex as themselves it can be reflected also on their dæmon.

5.2.2 Interaction with the Dæmons of Other Characters

" 'You captured some Gobblers?' said Farder Coram. Jacob nodded, and cast his eyes at his dæmon. It was unusual for dæmons to speak to humans other than their own, but it happened sometimes, and she spoke now. 'We caught three Gobblers in Clerkenwell and made them tell us who they were working for and where the orders came from and so on. They didn't know where the kids were being taken, except it was north to Lapland.... ' " (Pullman, 1995, p. 145)

In the world created by Phillip Pullman, there are some rules regarding dæmons that everybody should follow. It is unusual for people to interact with dæmon that is not their own and vice versa. People are allowed to talk with dæmons of others, but it does not happen. However, some exceptions can be made. In the snippet above we get to know a boy named Jacob who is seriously wounded after a conflict with the Gobblers and uttering words is simply too painful for him. In this case, his dæmon in the form of a ferret served as his speaker and told the others what happened to them.

"Dæmons might touch each other, of course, or fight; but the prohibition against human-dæmon contact went so deep that even in battle no warrior would touch an enemy's dæmon. It was utterly forbidden. Lyra couldn't remember having to be told that: she just knew it, as instinctively as she felt that nausea was bad and comfort good." (Pullman, 1995, p. 142)

The extract above tells us that interaction between dæmons is tolerated but there is an unspoken rule that everybody should follow and respect. Whereas talking is not forbidden or somehow restricted, touching is. Lyra is naturally familiar with this rule as it is shown. This moment was preceded by Lyra's contact with one of the prettiest dæmon she had ever seen. Her name was Sophonax, and her owner was Farder Coram, who helped Lyra to master the alethiometer. Sophonax according to the description was a large golden-eyed cat, richly furred with golden brown fur. Lyra admired her as she longed to touch her fur but deep down knew that she was not allowed to do so. All that was left for her was observing and admiring her from the distance. The whole idea serves as a metaphor for the respect of personal boundaries.

5.2.3 Dæmons as a Life-force

" 'Who are they?' 'Warriors half-killed. Being alive is one thing, and being dead's another, but being half-killed is worse than either. They just can't die, and living is altogether beyond 'em. They wander about forever. They're called the Breathless Ones because of what's been done to 'em. ' " (Pullman, 1995, p. 108)

There are some very mysterious creatures in Lyra's world and one of them are The Breathless Ones. She learns about them from a Gyptian woman named Ma Costa after a conversation with her.

" 'And what 's that?' said Lyra, wide-eyed. 'The North Tartars snap open their ribs and pull out their lungs. There's an art to it. They do it without killing 'em, but their lungs can't work anymore without their dæmons pumping 'em by hand, so the result is they're halfway between breath and no breath, life and death, half-killed, you see. And their dæmons got to pump and pump all day and night, or else perish with 'em. ' " (Pullman, 1995, p. 108)

We do not get much information about them in the book. The details that are provided to us as readers are just the tip of the iceberg. Tartars use this method to enemy fighters who do not die immediately after being slashed on the battlefield. Individuals who receive this procedure are doomed to eternal punishment and it serves as a reminder of being defeated. Their dæmons from that moment are the only thing that keeps them alive but still ashamed.

5.2.4 Separation from the Dæmon

"The consul said, 'I have heard the phrase the Maystadt process in connection with this matter. I think they use that in order to avoid calling what they do by its proper name. I have also heard the word intercision, but what it refers to I could not say.' " (Pullman, 1995, p. 171)

"The little boy was huddled against the wood drying rack where hung row upon row of gutted fish, all as stiff as boards. He was clutching a piece of fish to him as Lyra was clutching Pantalaimon, with her left hand, hard, against her heart; but that was all he had, a piece of dried fish; because he had no dæmon at all. The Gobblers had cut it away. That was intercision, and this was a severed child." (Pullman, 1995, p. 213)

One of the main themes of the book is the separation of human being, specifically children, from their dæmon which represents part of the human soul. This act is known as intercision, a very inhumane and cruel procedure performed by the General Oblation Board led by Mrs Coulter. Separation violates a person's freedom and integrity. Such interference and oppression can also be traced in today's world in the form of totalitarian regimes. The intercision leads to a physical and emotional destruction within the person. So much so that it even can cause death. Tony Makarios was one of many, who were a subject to the intercision. At the time Lyra found him, he was all by himself hidden in a shed, holding a frozen piece of fish as a reminiscence of his dæmon. He had nothing else as he was separated from his parents by the Gobblers and his emotional support was also gone. He was in shock and the only thing he kept repeating was the name of his dæmon, Ratter, as he was looking for him. Lyra and her friends wanted to help him, but the boy had little chance of surviving. The situation escalated when the boy fell asleep and they took the fish out of his hands, thinking it was just food for him. The boy died peacefully in his sleep from all the trauma he suffered.

"The Magisterium decided that Dust was the physical evidence for original sin." (Pullman, 1995, p. 372)

Intercision in Northern Lights serves as a powerful tool for control and manipulation of people that has profound ethical and moral implications. The Magisterium, which is responsible for establishing the Oblation Board, believes that dust is associated with sin. By separating a person from their dæmon, they believe they can make them rid of the sin and make them cleansed. One of the main objectives of the Oblation Board is to create a society fully subordinated without resistance.

5.2.5 Pantalaimon, Lyra Belacqua's Dæmon

"Her dæmon's name was Pantalaimon, and he was currently in the form of a moth, a dark brown one so as not to show up in the darkness of the hall." (Pullman, 1995, p. 3)

Pantalaimon is the dæmon introduced to us in the greatest detail throughout the narrative, as he is the dearest companion of the protagonist of the story, Lyra Belacqua. In the book, he is most often addressed only by a shortened version of his name, Pan. The name Pantalaimon and the term dæmon is of Greek origin. Pantalaimon means "all-merciful". The first documented use of the word from which the daemon derives is attributed to Socrates, who once used the term daimon, as a link between a conscience and his guardian angel. Historically, this name is known in association with Saint Pantalaimon (also referred to as Pantaleon) who was a martyr and powerful healer who used the name of Christ to heal those in need. His medical practice was not only devoted to orthodox healing but there were also his attempts to heal human souls. There may be a similarity to Pantalaimon of Lyra, who throughout the story tries to be a protective and spiritual guide even in the darkest moments to our protagonist.^{40 41}

"Pantalaimon was cleverly in his most inexpressive shape, a moth, and couldn't betray her feelings; and she was sure she could keep her own face innocent." (Pullman, 1995, p. 94-95)

"Pantalaimon became a wildcat and scanned the dark all around with his night-piercing eyes." (Pullman, 1995, p. 98)

Since Lyra herself is as sly as a fox, the same rule applies to Pantalaimon. Since the girl is still just a child her daemon can shape-shift as he pleases. Sometimes he does it out of boredom and other times it has a practical purpose. After a while, when Lyra moved from Oxford to London, Mrs Coulter hosted a party. During the event, she managed to escape due to her discovery of Mrs Coulter's nature. She was required to talk with various individuals. In one of these conversations, lying was required from her.

⁴⁰ Tucker, ref. 35, p. 102

⁴¹ Chlumský, J. (n.d.). *Sv. Pantaleon či Pantalaimon. Catholica.cz*. Retrieved June 30, 2024, from <http://catholica.cz/?id=3376>

Pantalaimon as her trusted servant did not disappoint. By assuming the form of his favourite moth, he was able to hide any possible displays of emotions.

Another very preferred form of Pantalaimon is the wildcat, which he uses for purely practical reasons. Pan is aware that cats are known for their good eyesight. One of the times he chose this form was when they were wandering around London at night after escaping from Mrs Coulter.

"When Lyra went to bed, Pantalaimon whispered from the pillow: 'She's never going to the North! She's going to keep us here forever. When are we going to run away? 'She is,' Lyra whispered back. 'You just don't like her. Well, that's hard luck. I like her. And why would she be teaching us navigation and all that if she wasn't going to take us north?' 'To stop you getting impatient, that's why. You don't really want to stand around at the cocktail party being all sweet and pretty. She's just making a pet out of you.' " (Pullman, 1995, p. 85)

Pantalaimon was the first of the duo to recognise that Mrs Coulter was not who she claimed to be. Lyra was blinded by her irresistible charm and did not trust Pan, while she thought she had good intentions with them. It took her some time to figure it out.

"Pantalaimon, padding on wildcat paws beside her, felt the same joy as she did to be in the open air, even if it was murky London air laden with fumes and soot and clangorous with noise." (Pullman, 1995, p. 99)

After successfully escaping from Mrs Coulter's flat, they find themselves in the centre of a busy and polluted London. There was an equal and sincere joy in both, which indicates how strong the bond between them is, for they were no longer under Mrs Coulter's watchful eye and supervision.

"And then Lyra began to feel truly nervous. She kept close to Ma Costa, and Pantalaimon became as big as he could and took his panther shape to reassure her." (Pullman, 1995, p. 113)

Without Pantalaimon's assistance, Lyra would have faced significantly greater challenges. Tony Makarios has lost his demon, Ratter, which provided him with not only emotional support in challenging situations. Fortunately, no such thing happened to Lyra, and Pantalaimon is around throughout the whole narrative to offer her such comforting treatment.

"Pantalaimon was whispering in Lyra's ear. 'While she was here, her dæmon was coming out of our bedroom. He's been spying. He knows about the alethiometer!' Lyra felt that that was probably true, but there was nothing she could do about it." (Pullman, 1995, p. 92)

Pantalaimon is indispensable to Lyra when it comes to observing her surroundings when she does not have as much time or space to do so. Since she's the one who does most of the talking and interacting, Pan has time to observe things that his human half simply overlooks. When Lyra left Oxford, she was given an alethiometer by the headmaster, which she was not supposed to tell anyone about, not even her future patroness Mrs Coulter. She hid the alethiometer as best she could, but Mrs Coulter and her monkey suspected that she was hiding something. The device had just been hidden in her room, and Mrs Coulter had just taken advantage of it and sent her daemon to spy on it.

5.2.6 Golden Monkey, Marisa Coulter's Dæmon

"Mrs. Coulter,' he said, 'this is our Lyra. Lyra, come and say hello to Mrs. Coulter.' 'Hello, Lyra,' said Mrs. Coulter. She was beautiful and young. Her sleek black hair framed her cheeks, and her dæmon was a golden monkey." (Pullman, 1995, p. 65)

The golden monkey is the dæmon of Lyra's mother, Marisa Coulter. The name of the animal is not told throughout the narrative, with the character being referred to only as the golden monkey. The monkey had golden fur that reflected the beauty and grace of its human owner. At the beginning of the narrative, the monkey is depicted as a relatively passive character. However, as the plot progresses, it becomes obvious that he exhibits a striking resemblance to Mrs Coulter, displaying a similar capacity for calculation, malevolence and ruthlessness. In the story, Marisa Coulter tries to hide her manipulative tendencies and desire for absolute control of everything behind her exaggerated kindness, but unfortunately for her, the monkey's presence often betrays her true nature.

"Pantalaimon flew to the floor and instantly became a polecat, arching his back against her little white ankle socks. Encouraged by this, Lyra said: 'But it won't be in the way. And it's the only thing I really like wearing. I think it really suits—' She didn't finish the sentence, because Mrs. Coulter's dæmon sprang off the sofa in a blur of golden fur and pinned Pantalaimon to the carpet before he could move. Lyra cried out in alarm [...] as Pantalaimon twisted this way and that, shrieking and snarling, unable to loosen the golden monkey's grip." (Pullman, 1995, p. 86)

Mrs Coulter uses her golden monkey to assert dominance over others, especially Lyra since she is just a child. One such case can be observed between Mrs Coulter and Lyra, who insisted on carrying a shoulder bag where the alethiometer was hidden. She always had the bag near herself and never let it out of her hand. Mrs Coulter was aware that Lyra was withholding something from her and used her dæmon as a means of coercion.

"However, she was keen to show that she did know some things, and when Mrs. Coulter was telling her about electrons, she said expertly, 'Yes, they're negatively charged particles. Sort of like Dust, except that Dust isn't charged.' As soon as she said that, Mrs. Coulter's dæmon snapped his head up to look at her, and all the golden fur on his little body stood up, bristling, as if it were charged itself." (Pullman, 1995, p. 82)

As has already been said, the monkey often betrays his owner with his expressions throughout the story. One such example can be seen when Mrs Coulter teaches Lyra about the principles of the universe and the planets. They got to the topic of particles and Lyra came across a substance called Dust. Mrs Coulter had not assumed that Lyra was aware of the term Dust however, she did not allow her own surprise to be evident. On the other hand, the monkey did the complete opposite and Lyra noticed the unordinary behaviour of the monkey.

The symbolism of the monkey as a representation of Satan can be traced back to the Middle Ages. According to Bernard Silvestri and his description from the 12th century, the monkey is an image of a disfigured and evil person. The monkey is also associated with sin and represents depraved individuals who are devoted to do evil. From this period onwards, the monkey was also depicted with a tamer, which in our narrative is Mrs Coulter, who commands the monkey.⁴²

⁴² Royt, J., & Šedinová, H. (1998). *Slovník symbolů: kosmos, příroda a člověk v křesťanské ikonografii* (p. 152). Mladá fronta. ISBN 80-204-0740-5

6 Conclusion

This bachelor thesis focused on the motif of the animal companion or double in British and American children's and fantasy literature. In the theoretical part, the concept of the double was defined along with a characterisation of the works of major classical literary authors who dealt with the motif of the double such as Stevenson and Wilde, which provide us with a greater understanding of the concept of the Doppelganger as well as the animal companion.

The thesis also presented a brief overview of children's and fantasy literature of the 20th century, highlighted important works in which animal heroes were implemented, and explained the concept of childhood as a turning point in literature. After all, without childhood, there would be no children and, therefore, no literature aimed at this audience.

The backbone of the whole thesis is the analysis of animal doubles or companions in the works of William Saroyan and Philip Pullman. An animal companion reflects the characteristics of its human counterpart. It assists them in decision-making, in difficult situations or even serves as emotional support. The main difference between the Doppelgangers in *Northern Lights* and *Tracy's Tiger* is that the motif of Doppelganger in the first-mentioned work has predefined laws and patterns, which they follow. The Doppelganger is presented to us by the author himself in great depth and there is not much room for assumptions of what else could the Doppelganger be representing. In William Saroyan's work, a double can be anything the reader perceives. The author has only brought out one possible interpretation of his double throughout the book and that is love. His double is therefore open to the ideas and most importantly to the imagination of anyone who picks this book up.

As a result of the analysis, it was found that the motif of Doppelgangers not only enriches the story but helps with understanding of the worlds and especially the characters that appear in the works. In literature for children and adolescent readers, the implementation of a double or companion in the narrative serves as a literary device of guidance and protection, resulting in better identification and understanding of the main protagonists. Such doppelgangers help young readers better understand the world around them and listen to their own emotions.

Unlike Doppelgangers in children's literature, the psychological doubles serve to express deep inner conflicts, and darker sides of the personality and are an aspect of horror. They usually represent the repression of a person's psyche, their fears or feelings of guilt. The role of imagination is an essential element for Doppelgangers. Both kinds of doubles are of imaginative origin, and that is the thing that unites these worlds.

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