Charlotte Farrell, "Entry on: The Horse and His Boy (The Chronicles of Narnia, 5) by Ash ", peer-reviewed by Elizabeth Hale, Susan Deacy and Elżbieta Olechowska. Our Mythical Childhood Survey (Warsaw: University of Warsaw, 2022). Link: http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/myth-survey/item/1427. Entry version as of November 04, 2026.

Ash

The Horse and His Boy (The Chronicles of Narnia, 5)

United Kingdom (1954)

TAGS: Faun Gods





We are still trying to obtain permission for posting the original cover.

General information	
Title of the work	The Horse and His Boy (The Chronicles of Narnia, 5)
Country of the First Edition	United Kingdom
Country/countries of popularity	Worldwide
Original Language	English
First Edition Date	1954
First Edition Details	C. S Lewis, *The Horse and His Boy*. London: Geoffrey Bles, 1954, 199 pp.
ISBN	Not applicable for editio princeps
Genre	Children's novel*, Fantasy fiction
Target Audience	Children
Author of the Entry	Charlotte Farrell, University of New England, charlottefarrell@gmail.com
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Creators



Ash, photographed by Nancy J Price, March 2005 (accessed: June 30, 2020). The file is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 Unported license.

Ash (Music Band)

Ash are a three-piece pop-punk band from Northern Ireland. Originally formed by core members guitarist and vocalist Tim Wheeler, bassist Mark Hamilton and drummer Rick McMurray in Downpatrick in County Down in 1992, they were joined by guitarist and vocalist Charlotte Hatherley between 1997 and 2006. They have produced seven studio albums. Wheeler and Hamilton met at school in 1989 and formed an early version of Ash as 'Vietnam'; after disbanding, they recruited McMurray in 1992 to become Ash, named for the first short word they liked in the dictionary.

Their musical style covers indie, rock and pop-punk, and, while not suitable for younger children, often reflects their roots as a young pop-punk band (Wheeler and Hamilton formed Vietnam when they were only twelve). While many of their songs express this youthful exuberance, there are notable exceptions, including many of the tracks on the album *Nu-Clear Sounds* which was written and produced during a period of burnout for the band after touring their first album, *1977*. Wheeler has a wide-range of inspirations for their songs, although not often delving into mythology.

Source:

Liner notes from *Intergalatatic Sonic 7s*

Prepared by Aimee Hinds, University of Roehampton, aimee.hinds89@gmail.com

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Additional information

Translation

The Narnia Chronicles have been translated into 47 languages, see: here (accessed: March 31, 2022).

Sequels, Prequels and Spin-offs

There are two different orders that the books can be read: order of publication and order of narrative chronology. Both orders are listed below, with an asterisk next to the present title.

Publication Order

1. *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*;
2. *Prince Caspian* ;
3. *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*;
4. *The Silver Chair*;
5. *The Horse and His Boy*;*
6. *The Magician's Nephew*;
7. *The Last Battle*.

Chronological Order

1. *The Magician's Nephew;*
2. *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe;*
3. *The Horse and His Boy*;*
4. *Prince Caspian;*
5. *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader;*
6. *The Silver Chair;*
7. *The Last Battle.*

Summary

The Horse and His Boy is set in the 'Golden Age' of Narnia, when the children from the *The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe*, Peter, Susan, Edmund and Lucy, were Narnia's Kings and Queens. In *The Horse and His Boy*, the reader is introduced to Shasta, a boy who lives in Calormen and is the presumed son of Arsheesh. Shasta is fascinated with Narnia and has always wanted to go there. All the people in Calormen have dark skin and many wear turbans including his father, but Shasta is white. It is revealed that Shasta is not the son of Arsheesh but was found when he was a baby and exploited by his supposed father for work. Arsheesh sells Shasta to a Tarkaan lord.

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That night, the Tarkaan's horse begins to speak to Shasta.

The talking horse, Bree, was originally from Narnia but had been kidnapped from Archenland. That night, Shasta and Bree run away together, and travel for weeks through numerous villages. They come across a horse and some lions in the forest. They escape the lions and befriend the horse, Hwin, who is also Narnian. Hwin is accompanied by a girl, Aravis, who is the daughter of a Lord in the province of Calavar. She is running away from an arranged marriage to the evil Ashoshta Tarkaan in a plot orchestrated by her stepmother.

Shasta, Aravis, Bree and Hwin approach the city of Tashbaan and walk through the city in disguise. If they are separated they promise to meet at the Tombs of Ancient Kings. The streets are busy and crowded, with hordes of people parading through the street. In the hubbub, Shasta is thrown from his horse as some Narnian Lords parade through the street. In a case of mistaken identity, the Narnia's take Shasta believing him to be the King of Archenland's son, Prince Corin, who has gone missing.

Queen Susan has a Calormene suitor Prince Rabadesh, but she does not intend to marry him. Edmund fears that they will be taken prisoner in Tashbaan if Susan refuses him. Tumnus – the faun featured in *The Lion, The Witch, and The Wardrobe* – hatches a plan to deceive the Calormenes by hosting them for a feast on their ship to justify their preparation for escape by sea.

The real Prince Corin enters through the window where Shasta is resting. They are very similar in appearance. Shasta escapes through the very window Corin entered, and finds his way to the tombs, led by a cat. Eventually, Bree and Hwin come towards him, without Aravis. When Aravis eventually returns, she explains that her friend, Lasaraleen (Las), was parading through the city and recognised her in the crowd. Las agreed to help Aravis escape. While trying to escape, they crossed paths with the Tisroc, ruler of Tashbaan, Prince Rabadash, and Ashosta Taarkan (who Aravis is betrothed to). The men were having a hushed meeting in a closed room where the women were hiding.

Aravis explains that Rabashash entreated the Tisroc to wage a war with Narnia so that they can seize the land, and Rabadash can ultimately seize Susan by whom he's been rejected. They ultimately plan to invade the royal castle in Archenland in their first step in

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defeating Narnia. Aravis makes her escape to the tombs before she and Shasta, Bree and Hwin embark on their journey across desert to warn the Archenlanders and Narnians of the Tashbaans evil plot.

On their through the desert journey, they coincide with Rabadesh's army. They race ahead on their horses and encounter a lion that attacks Aravis. Shasta helps save her. A hermit in the southern marsh takes them in and Shasta continues the journey alone where he encounters King Lune who mistakes him for his son, Prince Corin.

There is a violent descent by Rabadash and his army on Archenland. An army of Calormenes attack Anvard. A thing with a deep voice begins to walk along beside Shasta, and a talking stag sends news to King Peter that Rabadash's army has invaded Anvard. Shortly thereafter, the Narnian army arrive. Corin and Shasta's likeness is acknowledged. The army of both Narnians and Archenlanders approach Archenland. In battle, Shasta is knocked off his horse.

The perspective shifts to that of the Hermit with Aravis, Bree, and Hwin watching the action through a magical reflective pool of water back at the marsh. Aslan appears before them, explaining that he took the form of the cats and the lions throughout the book to help them on their journey.

The joint army of the Narnians and Archenlanders defeat the Calormenes. The King embraces Shasta as his long-lost son, twin of Corin whose birth name is Cor. The King invites Aravis to live there, too. The King spares Rabadash from death and says he will set him free if he promises never to return. Instead of accepting the generous offer, Rabadash challenges the king. Aslan appears and Rabadash is transformed into a donkey. He can only be healed in the temple of Tash (in Tashbaan). If he is ever to return to the North, he will permanently transform into a donkey.

Cor is the heir over Corin, and Aravis and Cor marry and become King and Queen of Archenland.

Analysis

Lewis's works are notable for their cornucopia of folkloric and mythological influences. In this volume, Christian influences combine with Middle Eastern folktales, visible, but also diluted by the overarching colonialist assumptions of the narrative recognized by

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critics from half a century later.

The presence of Narnian mythological creatures – from talking animals to the return of Tumnus the Faun from *The Lion, The Witch, and The Wardrobe* – reintroduces characters from Greek and Roman myth to the text. In addition, the presence of the twins, Cor and Corin, is an intertextual flourish that could draw connection with Castor and Pollux, and Romulus and Remus from Greek and Roman mythology otherwise not highlighted in this volume.

In this text, good and evil are divided somewhat schematically between the good Northerners, and the bad Southerners. Perhaps unintentionally, this schema aligns goodness with Whiteness (the Northerners) and evil with Blackness or Brownness (the Southerners). As Andrew T. Draper* argues in his discussion of C. S. Lewis and J. R. R. Tolkien, imagining a 'battle between good and evil as a contest between lightness and darkness, or more accurately, between whiteness and blackness' (p. 352) runs the risk of using broad mythic tropes to unwittingly 'catechize younger generations in a Christian faith that is subtly but powerfully enfolded into myths of white superiority.' In this regard, *The Horse and His Boy* is one of the more problematic in the *Chronicles of Narnia*. For example, when Edmund asks Susan if she will marry her 'dark faced lover', Prince Rabadesh. She responds, 'No, brother, . . not for all the jewels in Tashbaan.' (p. 56). While, overall, the books are a product of their time, the conflation of the Prince's dark skin with his being evil is a difficult knot to untie, presenting challenges for educators and caregivers on how to effectively guide children through the complex racial elements when engaging with the text. Indeed, to conclude with Draper's words on the subject, C. S. Lewis's "mythological imaginations invoke a racialized understanding of the world that harbors racist assumptions" (354), and in comparison to the earlier books in the series, this occurs at no greater point than in *The Horse and His Boy*. This is likely an unconscious bias: in his *The Four Loves* (1960), Lewis explicitly condemns racism and Imperialism (pp. 36–38).**

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* Draper, Andrew T., "The Inklings and Race: Whiteness, Mythology, and Jesus", *Inklings Forever: Published Colloquium Proceedings 1997–2016*, 10 (2016), Article 85. Available here.

** To restore thematic balance, the Survey's editors shortened parts of

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	the Analysis unrelated to classical Antiquity.
Classical, Mythological, Traditional Motifs, Characters, and Concepts	Faun Gods
Other Motifs, Figures, and Concepts Relevant for Children and Youth Culture	Adventure Adversity Animals Appearances Child, children Conflict Freedom Gender expectations/construction Good vs evil Intertextuality Journeys Magic Princes and princesses Race Revenge Storytelling Talking animals Transformation Twins Violence War
Further Reading	Colnan, S. D., "The case of twins: A recurrent symbol in classical mythology", *Teaching History* 46.4 (2012): 54–56. Draper, Andrew T., "The Inklings and Race: Whiteness, Mythology, and Jesus", *Inklings Forever* 10 (2016). A Collection of Essays Presented at the Tenth Frances White Ewbank Colloquium on C.S. Lewis & Friends, 352–362. Linkskoog, Kathryn Ann, *Journey Into Narnia,* Pasadena: Hope Publishing House, 1998. Linkskoog, Kathyrn Ann, *Surprised by C. S. Lewis*, Macon: Mercer University Press, 2001.

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