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Bachelor Thesis

Human or Horse?

*Anthropomorphic and Zoomorphic Instances in
The Horse Whisperer*



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Abstract

This essay aims to show how anthropomorphism, and also to some extent zoomorphism, is created in Nicholas Evans's novel *The Horse Whisperer*. Through parallel events and the usage of the concepts horse whisperers and horse whispering, a special connection is created between Grace, the main human character, and Pilgrim, the main horse character. This essay argues that their connection grounds for the reader to see the horse anthropomorphically and the human to some extent zoomorphically. With the use of Daston and Mitman's notions of anthropomorphism and zoomorphism, this essay analyses how the concepts manifest themselves in the novel. The definition of horse whisperers and horse whispering within this essay derives from the work of Brannaman and Parelli, this due to their theoretical value and knowledge about horse whispering.

Keywords

Anthropomorphism, Zoomorphism, Horse Whisperers, Horse Whispering, Parallels

Table of Content

| | |
|--|----|
| 1. Introduction | 1 |
| 2. Anthropomorphism and Zoomorphism | 4 |
| 3. Anthropomorphic and Zoomorphic instances in the novel | 10 |
| 4. Conclusion | 22 |
| 5. Works Cited..... | 24 |

1. Introduction

This essay will be dealing with Nicholas Evans's novel *The Horse Whisperer*. It is a novel that deals with broken relationships, trauma and the rebuilding of trust and love. The plot begins with a terrible accident involving a young girl named Grace and her horse Pilgrim. Both Grace and Pilgrim are severely hurt and scarred for life from the accident. Grace's mother Annie decides to try to save Pilgrim so she contacts a famous horse whisperer named Tom Booker. Annie drives Grace and Pilgrim to Tom's farm in Montana in a desperate attempt to save her daughter's horse and to try to connect with her daughter again. Tom begins to rehabilitate Pilgrim and as the story proceeds a love affair is initiated between Tom and Annie. The novel has been somewhat criticized for its "clichéd writing", the too-good-to-be-true characters and an ending that some consider to be "too neatly packaged", but overall the book is popular and "endearing" (Fialkoff 19). The novel has also been made into a popular movie which had its premiere in 1998.

This essay's aim is to show how Nicholas Evans, in his novel *The Horse Whisperer*, uses a number of literary devices, such as parallelism, usage of the concept horsewhispering and similar descriptive words, in order to enhance the feeling of human and animal characters being connected in the novel, thereby creating an opportunity for the reader to see Pilgrim anthropomorphically and Grace somewhat zoomorphically. It is through their connection and through other characters thoughts about their connection, that the reader comes to see Pilgrim anthropomorphically and Grace zoomorphically. When discussing anthropomorphism and zoomorphism this essay will mostly refer to Daston and Mitman's *Thinking With Animals: New Perspectives on Anthropomorphism* since they deal with many different aspects of anthropomorphism, but also discuss zoomorphism to a certain point.

Through the different techniques that are used to represent characters as

parallels to each other and thus make the reader see the special bond between the human and the animal characters, the reader experiences the horse as human in many ways, or at least with human-like qualities. This is what this essay means when it claims that the reader comes to see the horse in an anthropomorphic light. The effect is that when the horse is seen in this way, this allows the reader to accept Pilgrim as an equal to Grace and therefore the reader is more likely to accept that Grace and Pilgrim are paralleled and connected after the accident, but also in their respective healing processes. What Grace goes through Pilgrim goes through and vice versa. Furthermore, just as it is possible to see Pilgrim anthropomorphically it is equally possible to see Grace zoomorphically and this will also be discussed to some extent further on.

As this essay will be dealing quite with the concepts ‘parallel’ and ‘paralleled’ to some extent, a proper explanation of the words is in order. *The Oxford English Dictionary* defines the word parallel as “(of circumstances etc) precisely similar, analogous or corresponding” (“Parallel,” def. 2) but also as “a person or thing precisely analogous or equal to another” (“Parallel,” *n.* def. 1). Paralleled is defined as “be parallel to; correspond to” (“Paralleled, paralleling,” def. 1). I wish to point out that this essay will not use the term “parallel” in the sense of precise similarity, but rather in the sense of analogy and correspondence. In *The Horse Whisperer* Grace and Pilgrim are paralleled in many ways and it is because they act like parallels in many ways the reader comes to see Pilgrim as more humanlike than horse like and therefore more of an equal to Grace.

As the title implies, the term ‘horse whisperer’ is a central concept to the novel. As Goodwin, et al. state in their work, a horse whisperer is a practitioner of natural horsemanship and is someone that is considered to have a higher ability to communicate with horses than other people and the novel alludes to this idea of horse whisperers. A horse whisperer can seemingly ‘speak’ to the horse in its own language

and can cure horses with problematic behavior without being violent to the horse (Goodwin, et.al 5). What Tom does in the novel is not to speak to the horse, it is rather observing the horse and respond to it rather than ‘speak’ to the horse. However, it can still be argued that Evans uses this idea of horse whisperers in his novel. This is clear first and foremost from the title, but also from the fact that some phrases in the novel are direct quotes from the horse trainer Buck Brannanman. For example Tom’s description of his work: “I help horses who’ve got people problems” is an almost direct quote from Brannaman in his documentary “Buck” (Evans 137). The usage of horse whisperers in the novel is one way to increase the feeling of Grace and Pilgrim having a special connection, as natural horsemanship and horse whispering generally builds on the idea that the horse and its owner or trainer must connect in order to work together in harmony (Parelli 18-19). Horse whisperers generally believe that there is a special connection between a horse and its owner and this essay will discuss how Evans has used these general beliefs to encourage the reader to see Pilgrim anthropomorphically and Grace zoomorphically.

By using primarily Daston and Mitman’s work to discuss anthropomorphism and zoomorphism in the novel and mostly Brannaman’s work to analyze how anthropomorphism is created through the usage of ideas about horse whispering and natural horsemanship, this essay will try to show how the novel constructs the connection between Grace and Pilgrim and how this connection encourages anthropomorphic and zoomorphic tendencies in the readers’ understanding of the two main characters.

2. Anthropomorphism, Zoomorphism and Horse Whispering

“If we are to speak of anthropomorphism in our view of animals, must we not also speak of zoomorphism in our perceptions of humans?” (Latour 137)

The quote above suggests that if we speak of anthropomorphism and animals it is only logical to speak of zoomorphism when it comes to humans. Latour’s rhetorical question implies that there is a strong correspondence between the two concepts and that is why this essay will be dealing with both anthropomorphism and zoomorphism and not only anthropomorphism, seeing that the two concepts are so closely related. It is hard to discuss an animal that seemingly has human qualities without addressing the idea that it might be humans that have animal feelings or qualities. The discussion goes both ways and there are a lot of instances in *The Horse Whisperer* where the reader can argue that the horse might have human qualities, but there are equally many instances where the reader also can argue that the humans are acting like horses.

According to *The Oxford English Dictionary*, anthropomorphism is defined as “the attribution of human form or personality to a god, animal or thing” (“Anthropomorphism,” *n.*) and zoomorphism is defined as something or someone “dealing with or represented in animal forms” (“Zoomorphic,” *adj* def. 1). Both anthropomorphism and zoomorphism can be used to create a sense of a resemblance between an animal and a human in a literary text and this will be discussed more extensively further on. In Daston and Mitman’s *Thinking with Animals: New Perspectives on Anthropomorphism* zoomorphism is also discussed to a certain extent. They claim that zoomorphism is more complex than anthropomorphism and less common than anthropomorphism. Anthropomorphism, according to Daston and Mitman, deals with human traits and qualities projected on to an animal rather than the actual animal itself:

An anthropomorphic text assumes a basic identification, such as a lion and a king, and then, although the subject of discourse is, theoretically, an animal, the text imagines the animal behaving the way the human does, betraying the fact that it is only interested in kings and not at all in lions.

(17)

This suggests that anthropomorphism does not deal with the actual animal itself. Instead anthropomorphism deals only with the human qualities that the animal might have or that the animal has been attributed. This is very relatable to this essay's discussion, seeing that it is interesting how Pilgrim is attributed human-like intentions and feelings when he is in fact a horse. Daston and Mitman claim that zoomorphism is more accurate when it comes to animal feelings and animal behavior, since zoomorphism deals with animal qualities within a human. Daston and Mitman claim that "the bestial qualities imputed to the human usually reveal an observation of animals more detailed (if no more accurate) than that of anthropomorphism" (17). What Daston and Mitman are suggesting is that anthropomorphism does not take into consideration what the actual animal is feeling or doing; it only deals with human qualities attributed to an animal. Zoomorphism deals with animal qualities projected onto a human and therefore according to Daston and Mitman zoomorphism gives a closer and more detailed observation of an actual animal. As this essay will be dealing with how one might come to see Pilgrim in an anthropomorphical way, one must also take into consideration that it is possible to see Grace in a zoomorphic way, since they are connected and their behavior is similar.

Daston and Mitman claim that anthropomorphism exists in several different forms and that one of the more extreme forms is "the attribution of human mental-states (thoughts, feelings, motivations and beliefs) to non-humans" (122). However, this "extreme" form of anthropomorphism is the form that is the most

frequently used in *The Horse Whisperer*. Through the parallel events within the novel and the same emotional words used for both Grace and her horse, the novel encourages the idea that Pilgrim is experiencing human emotions and that Pilgrim has human motives for why he does certain things. By projecting human motives onto Pilgrim the novel has created an opportunity that allows the reader to experience Pilgrim in this “extreme” anthropomorphical way. Daston and Mitman claim that we humans want our pets to have social motivations and that we want our pets to want to be with us, not only because we feed them or walk them. They write: “Anthropomorphism – the ability, in this case, to attribute social motivations to non-humans- is what ultimately enables people to benefit socially, emotionally and physically from their relationship with animals” (127). As the pet itself cannot talk, it becomes open for us to project social motivations onto the pet, thereby creating the perfect friend. An animal cannot express criticism, lie to or judge their owner and therefore the animal becomes the ultimate companion according to Daston and Mitman (127). This applies to *The Horse Whisperer* as throughout the novel other characters speculate what Pilgrim is feeling and this becomes interesting for us as readers when Pilgrim’s feelings are very much alike Grace’s. Through human characters thoughts about Pilgrim, the reader comes to see Pilgrim in an anthropomorphic light and a suitable parallel to Grace.

Moreover, Tyler claims in his paper “If Horses Had Hands” that one of the most frequently used ways of anthropomorphism in literature is “the practice of attributing intentionality, purpose, or volition to some creature or abstraction that (allegedly) does not have these things” (Tyler 269). According to Tyler this is one very common way of using anthropomorphism in literature and is also to be found in Evans’ *The Horse Whisperer*. If the novel did not use anthropomorphism in the way Tyler describes above, it would be much harder to experience some form of connection between Pilgrim and Grace. By applying human intention or human purpose to Pilgrim,

the text makes the reader see him as more than a horse, or a horse with human-like qualities and a more suitable equal to Grace.

The novel also uses horse whisperers and horse whispering in order to enhance the feeling of a special connection between Grace and Pilgrim and Pilgrim might come to be experienced as anthropomorphical through their connection. The novel incorporates different ideas from horse whispering and horsemanship and uses these different ideas to create a special connection between Pilgrim and Grace but also Tom and horses in general. As Tom is a horse whisperer he tends to avoid all form of methods when training a horse that might scare or hurt the horse.

When unable to cope with problem behaviors, some handlers in the past might have been encouraged to use harsh methods or devices, while others may have called in a so-called ‘good horseman’ or ‘horse whisperer’ to remediate the horse” Goodwin, et. al 5.

Goodwin’s description touches upon the idea of horse whisperers that the novel deals with. In the novel Tom seems to have a sixth sense when it comes to dealing with problematic horses and that is what the general idea of horse whisperers seems to be. Another famous horse trainer (or as some would call him; horse whisperer) who uses a lot of natural horsemanship is Pat Parelli and Parelli has much in common with Brannaman as they share similar ideas surrounding horsemanship. Several ideas surrounding horse whisperers and horse whispering come across as anthropomorphic seeing that horse whisperers believe that the horse takes after or parallels its owners’ behavior. Parelli’s book is even called *Natural Horse-Man-Ship* alluding to the idea of horse and man being connected. *The Horse Whisperer* also alludes to this connection between human and horse through the usage of Tom the horse whisperer and general ideas about horse whisperers. In terms of horse-human parallelism, another idea that is relevant to my argument is that before a horse can be trained, the owner or the person

working with a horse must be ‘trained’ or educated. As Parelli states this book is “not a horse-training book; it's a people-training book” (Parelli 7) again alluding to the fact that the person interacting with a horse must be willing to learn and change and become “more horse” to properly communicate with the horse. A quote from the actual novel that uses this idea about horsemanship is the quote from Tom: “I help horses who’ve got people problem” (Evans 137) which also is an almost direct quote from Brannaman: “A lot of the times, rather than helping people with horse problems, I’m helping horses with people problems” (*Buck*). Which one of Parelli or Brannaman who came up with this idea about not training the horse but the owner is hard to determine, since it seems to be a general idea among horse whisperers. Brannaman suggests that in almost all cases where someone has horse-problems, it is not the horse causing the problem but the owner (*Buck*).

When using horse whisperers and horse whispering techniques in the novel, it helps to create the sense of horse and human being connected. “Your horse is a mirror to your soul. Sometimes you might not like what you see... Sometimes you will” (Brannaman *Buck*). ‘Your soul’ refers to the person whom is handling the horse for that moment, it could be the horse’s owner or it could be some other human who is training the horse at that moment. The quote suggests that the horse becomes a mirror to the human’s soul, or that the horse might even become a part of the human. Again it is possible to see this as link this to anthropomorphism since the horse, according to Brannaman “is a mirror” (*Buck*) to the human’s soul. Following Latour, this raises the question whether the human is “a bit horse” too, a point that will be discussed later. Brannaman claims throughout his documentary that the horse follows its owner and that there is a special connection between a horse and its owner.

Most people think of a feel when you touch something or someone and what it feels like to your fingers, but a feel can have a thousand

definitions. Sometimes feel is a mental thing. Sometimes feel can happen clear across the arena. It's sort of an imitation from the horse to come to you. It's not always physical, sometimes it's mental. (Brannaman *Buck*)

Evans also alludes to this idea of a special connection in his novel by creating parallel events between Grace and Pilgrim, which are both physical and mental, which could be connected back to Brannaman's quote above when he talks about imitation and feel between a horse and its trainer or owner.

The novel uses ideas of horse whispering, like the one above, to create a feeling that Grace and Pilgrim are connected. As Brannaman suggests, 'feel is a mental thing' and in *The Horse Whisperer* Grace and Pilgrim are connected, they might be connected in a more extreme way than the one Brannaman speaks of, such as similar behavior even when they are not near each other. Other characters also see this connection and describe them with the same words, thereby creating an opportunity for the reader to experience Grace zoomorphically and Pilgrim anthropomorphically.

The parallel between anthropomorphism and zoomorphism is echoed in Parelli's book. For example the quote: "Most people are inadequate when it comes to horses because they think like people. My goal is to get people to think like horses" (Parelli 8) from Parelli's book *Natural Horse-Man-Ship* hints at the fact that one must try to become, or at least think as, a horse in order to fully understand one. In *The Horse Whisperer* Tom must be able to read Pilgrim's body language and attempt to think like Pilgrim in order to cure him from his post-traumatic behavior and by having Tom think like Pilgrim in the novel is another way of using zoomorphism. This will be discussed more in the next section of this paper.

3. Anthropomorphic and Zoomorphic instances in the novel

As mentioned before, there are many different ways in which one can see the connection between Grace and Pilgrim in the novel. One of the ways that Evans uses to create this sense of connection between the two characters is parallel events within the novel. This section will mostly deal with parallel events between Grace and Pilgrim, but it will also to some extent discuss other parallel events that occur in the novel between other characters which also makes the reader see Pilgrim anthropomorphically, or the human character zoomorphically.

The novel builds on Grace's and Pilgrim's accident the beginning of the novel and it is also after the accident that this connection between Grace and Pilgrim becomes apparent. Their behavior is similar after the accident and their respective ways to recovery are very much alike. It is implied in the novel that Annie somewhat senses a connection between Grace and Pilgrim, but she can give no rational explanation to why she feels that Grace and Pilgrim are connected. Annie thinks: "Quite why the life of a savage horse slammed up in a squalid country stall should seem now so crucially linked with her daughter's decline, Annie had no idea" (Evans 108). As the quote implies, Annie seems to think that there might be connection between Pilgrim and Grace's declining behavior and it is after she has grasped this that she contacts Tom to help Pilgrim recover and hopefully to cure Grace. Tom becomes some kind of healer to them both as in his process of healing Pilgrim, he also heals Grace.

There is even another level of human-horse connection in the novel: "[A]ll three - mother, daughter and horse - were inextricably connected in pain. If he could help the horse, even a little, maybe he could help them all?" (Evans 195). In other words, Tom thinks that Grace, Pilgrim and Annie might all somehow be connected, just like Annie thought that Grace and Pilgrim were connected. Again, the thoughts the characters have

about Grace and Pilgrim's connection invites readers to see Pilgrim anthropomorphically and Grace zoomorphically.

Tom, the horse whisperer, insists on the connection between Grace and Pilgrim through the only demand he has when it comes to treating Pilgrim:

You see, when I work with a horse, it's no good just me doing it. It doesn't work that way. The owner needs to be involved too. So, here's the deal. I'm not sure I can do anything with old Pilgrim, but if you'll help, I'm prepared to give it a go. (Evans 196).

The quote above is another example of how the novel uses some general ideas surrounding horse whisperer, one of these general ideas is that the owner needs to be involved in a horse's training or the horse will eventually fall back into its old habits (Brannaman *Buck*). The novel uses the idea that horse whisperers have about a horse and their owner being connected (Brannaman *Buck*) and the idea that in order to 'cure' or train a horse, the owner must first be taught and trained (Parelli 7-9). The question however remains, *how* is the owner trained? Is the owner trained to communicate with the horse and in effect to become like a horse? The fact that Tom refuses to rehabilitate Pilgrim without Grace could be connected back to how the novel incorporates ideas from natural horsemanship about training the horse's owner before training the horse. Tom must teach Grace to act, understand and almost in a way be horse, for her and Pilgrim to build up their relationship again. By using these ideas from natural horsemanship, the novel has created zoomorphism. Just like Daston and Mitman say, zoomorphism gives us a better observation when it comes to the animal than what anthropomorphism does and by training Grace to understand horses better by in a sense become "part horse" when training Pilgrim, the novel creates zoomorphism.

As discussed above, Tom does not only rehabilitate Pilgrim, he also helps to rehabilitate Grace. This is interesting seeing that not only do Pilgrim and Grace have

similar recovery from the accident, their behavior after the accident is also very much alike. Grace starts to avoid being around other people: “When she got to her own classroom it was as she’d hoped, nobody else had yet come up” (Evans 155), and she also becomes short-tempered. For example: “Robert had put a calming hand on her shoulder and started to say something, but she shrugged him off violently and yelled “No Daddy!”” (Evans 144). Grace becomes distant to other people and she becomes especially angry as soon as Annie mentions Pilgrim or taking Pilgrim to see Tom (Evans 164). Her behavior after the accident is similar to Pilgrim’s behavior. He also becomes violent and avoids any social contact with humans. He is even described as hostile: “Joan Dyer, who hadn’t seen Pilgrim since the accident, was shocked. The scars on his face and chest were bad enough. But this savage, demented hostility was something she’d never before seen in a horse.” (Evans 85). Joan Dyer is by describing Pilgrim as hostile, applying her own anthropomorphical thoughts to Pilgrim. By doing this Joan Dyer is attributing human mental states to Pilgrim and thereby projecting her own anthropomorphic thoughts onto the horse. (Daston and Mitman 122). So in this case anthropomorphism is apparent through the thoughts Joan Dyer has about Pilgrim. Through Joan Dyer’s description of Pilgrim’s hostility, she implies that Pilgrim has human emotions. But since the novel builds on the connection between Pilgrim and Grace, maybe the fact that Grace is also a bit hostile can be seen as zoomorphism? As previously mentioned, Bruno Latour says: “If we are to speak of anthropomorphism in our view of animals, must we not also speak of zoomorphism in our perceptions of humans?” (137). If this connection can be made, Pilgrim’s anthropomorphic behavior and emotions should be discussed in relation to Grace’s feelings and how her feelings might come across as zoomorphic through their connection. Essentially Grace and Pilgrim are portrayed to have similar emotions and feelings as one can see from the previous quotes. Grace avoids people and lashes out at her parents as soon as she feels

the least bit of pressure from them. Pilgrim is more aggressive than Grace and described as being demented and hostile. As they are experiencing very similar emotions one could then look at it from both ways. It is possible to read Pilgrim anthropomorphically and following Latour's suggestion that anthropomorphism and zoomorphism are connected, the reader is also invited to see Grace zoomorphically.

Other examples from the novel that once again bring the reader's attention back to Grace and Pilgrim being connected and the whole interrelationship of anthropomorphism and zoomorphism are the two instances where Annie looks at Pilgrim and sees "the devil" and when she looks at Grace and sees "a monster".

Annie felt a shiver at the nape of her neck and the horse seemed to sense it too, for now he pinned back his ears and leered at her in a toothy, gothic parody of threat. Annie looked into his eyes with their blood-crazed whites and for the first time in her life knew how one might come to believe in the devil. (Evans 94)

Through the representation of Annie's thoughts the reader comes to see Pilgrim in an anthropomorphic light, as it is Annie herself who thinks that Pilgrim leers at her and that she almost can see the devil in his eyes. Thus, in the novel the human character Annie projects her own beliefs and feelings onto Pilgrim and according to Daston and Mitman that is a way of using anthropomorphism, they even claim that it is an extreme form of anthropomorphism (122).

But Pilgrim is not the only one that Annie projects her beliefs onto. "But Annie saw through it, saw the way Grace's face went when she thought no one was looking and saw silence, like a patient monster, enfold her daughter in its arms" (Evans 108). Just like Annie imagines seeing the devil when looking at Pilgrim, she sees a monster taking control over Grace. It is interesting that Annie sees similar things when looking at her daughter and at Pilgrim, first a devil when looking at Pilgrim, then a

monster when looking at Grace. For the reader, the sense of a special connection between Grace and Pilgrim is enhanced through Annie's thoughts. One could also argue that anthropomorphic traits are projected onto Pilgrim when Annie sees the devil when looking at him as 'the devil' she sees might be a similar to the monster she sees enfolding her daughter.

An example of how instances of anthropomorphism and zoomorphism are created is through similarity when it comes to choice of descriptive words in Grace's and Pilgrim's case.

"Don't be stupid. How the hell is she going to decorate the tree on one leg?" ... "I think she could manage it" he said steadily. "Of course she couldn't. What's she going to do, hop around? Christ she can hardly manage to stand up with those crutches." (Evans 81)

In the example above, Annie and her husband Robert are discussing whether or not they should decorate their Christmas tree with or without Grace's help. Annie chooses to say that Grace would "hop around" if she were to try to decorate the tree. The words "hop around" are also used to describe Pilgrim after Tom has tied one of his legs up:

When the horse was still, he slipped the sling of sacking over the hoof and made sure it was snug. The other end was rope and with it he hoisted the weight of the raised hoof and made it fast to the horn of the saddle.

Pilgrim was now a three-legged animal. An explosion waiting to happen.

... "Pilgrim tried to move and found himself crippled. He lurched and hopped on his right foreleg and the feeling scared him so badly that he jolted and hopped again" (Evans 411).

The instance where Tom ties Pilgrim's leg up is interesting in many different ways. Firstly the choice of words: Pilgrim hops around just like Annie said that Grace would do if she were to decorate the Christmas tree. Describing Pilgrim and Grace's actions

with the same words is one way to increase the feeling of them being paralleled and connected. Another interesting thing with this quote is that Tom, a horse whisperer who does not inflict pain or use violence, chooses to tie one of Pilgrim's legs up in an attempt to *force* him down on the ground. Until then in the novel Tom has done everything to avoid scaring Pilgrim or hurting him. As Parellin argues: "Horses want to feel safe and comfortable. Anything that interferes with that can cause fear and anxiety in a horse" (8). But in this section, the novel does not allude to any of the conventional horsemanship ideas that Tom has been practising up until then. Instead by letting Tom deviate from the horsewhispering he usually practices, the novel creates another opportunity for the reader to see Pilgrim and Grace as parallels. Tom ties Pilgrim's leg up, taking away one of his legs just like Grace finds that she has lost a leg after the accident. By tying Pilgrim's leg up, Tom makes Pilgrim more like Grace, thereby enhancing the connection between them. Throughout the novel Grace and Pilgrim's behavior following the accident have been similar, but when Tom ties Pilgrim's leg up they also become alike in appearance. In order for Pilgrim to become like Grace he must also become part human, seeing that Pilgrim acts as a parallel to Grace, and through this instance of parallelism the novel has created once more a way for the reader to see Pilgrim anthropomorphically.

Tom is another character that projects anthropomorphism onto Pilgrim. Tom thinks that Pilgrim is feeling guilty for not being able to save Grace from the truck. "Maybe Pilgrim even blamed himself for what happened. For why should humans think that they had monopoly on guilt?...Pilgrim had let Grace down" (Evans 256). This quote suggests that Tom thinks that Pilgrim is feeling guilty about the accident, that Pilgrim had 'let Grace down'. Furthermore the quote does not give the reader any clue about what Pilgrim is really feeling, instead it is Tom that decides what Pilgrim might be feeling. As mentioned previously in this paper, according to Tyler

anthropomorphism is “the practice of attributing intentionality, purpose, or volition to some creature or abstraction that (allegedly) does not have these things” (269) and this is what Tom does to Pilgrim. Tom explains Pilgrim’s behavior by saying that Pilgrim is feeling guilt for not being able to save Grace and Tom is thereby attributing intention and volition to Pilgrim. Tom is, by Tyler’s definition, attributing anthropomorphism to Pilgrim. In order for the reader to see the connection and the parallelism between Grace and Pilgrim, the reader must see Pilgrim as more than a horse, or a horse that is capable of human emotions otherwise Pilgrim would not be a suitable equivalent to Grace. But it is also through Grace and Pilgrim’s connection that the reader sees Pilgrim anthropomorphically. What is also interesting with Tom projecting guilt onto Pilgrim is that at some points in the novel it is implied that Grace is also feeling guilt over the accident. This is interesting seeing that it is after the accident that their connection and parallelism begins and these connections and analog incidents might be connected through the guilt that both of them are feeling.

And if the guy hadn’t blown his horn, we’d have done it, we were so close. My fingers were that far away...[...] I saw her face looking up at me, down by Gully’s feet, just before the horn sounded. She looked so little, so scared. I could have saved her. I could have saved us all. (Evans 250)

This quote strongly implies that Grace is feeling guilty for not saving her friend Judith and her horse Gully. Grace is feeling guilty for not being able to save everyone from the accident, just like Tom projects guilt onto Pilgrim to explain his behavior after the accident. It is interesting since it is first after Tom hears Grace recount the accident that he projects guilt onto Pilgrim. Here once more the novel alludes to the idea that horse whisperers have that a horse and its owner has a special connection: “Your horse is a mirror to your soul. Sometimes you might not like what you see...Sometimes you will”

(Brannaman *Buck*). This quote from Buck suggests that horses ‘mirror’ or mimic their owner’s soul, and through Tom’s projection of guilt onto Pilgrim, the novel has used the idea that Buck has about horses mimicking their owner, seeing that Grace is also feeling guilt. One can also draw parallels to what Daston and Mitman say, about attribution social motivations to animals (127). Tom suggests that Pilgrim is feeling guilty, giving an explanation to why Pilgrim is aggressive towards humans after the accident. Tom has applied a human social motivation to Pilgrim, when saying that Pilgrim is feeling guilty for not saving Grace. As previously discussed Tom refuses to treat a horse if the owner is not involved (Evans 196) and he also hopes that if he treats Pilgrim then he might be able to help Grace in the process as well (Evans 195) and this time Tom believes that Pilgrim is feeling guilty for not being able to protect Grace, just like Grace is feeling guilt for not being able to save Judith and Gulliver from the accident.

Once again Latour’s quote on anthropomorphism and zoomorphism is useful (137) when discussing Pilgrim and Grace’s feelings in connection to each other’s. Through the representation of Tom’s thoughts, the novel expresses zoomorphism and anthropomorphism. Tom is, through his thoughts, suggesting that maybe guilt is not a purely human emotion, that maybe it is an *animal* emotion. One could go even further and say that when Tom suggests that guilt might be an animal emotion, he is also suggesting that when humans feel guilt they are in fact experiencing an animal emotion. This could be an instance of zoomorphism. Just like Latour says, if one is to discuss anthropomorphism when it comes to animals one must also discuss zoomorphism when it comes to humans. The novel encourages the reader to see the connection between zoomorphism and anthropomorphism through Tom’s thoughts and also through Grace and Pilgrim’s connection. As Pilgrim and Grace apparently have a connection it is hard to state that it is only a case of anthropomorphism when projecting guilt onto Pilgrim, since Grace is also feeling guilt, the same emotion as Pilgrim. It is

possible to argue that it also becomes a case of anthropomorphism and zoomorphism in combination.

The ending is in many ways similar to the beginning, there is an accident at the beginning of the novel and then there is an accident at the end of the novel that creates some closure to the whole story. Even if the novel itself has been criticized for its' "too neatly packaged ending" (Fialkoff 19) there is still some things that are quite interesting when it comes to the ending. In any case, what these accidents have in common is the way Pilgrim and Tom act during the incidents. Pilgrim faces the truck and jumps towards it in a similar manner to how Tom opens his arms and walks towards the rearing stallion at the end of the novel, clearly creating a parallel between the events and making a connection between Tom and Pilgrim:

In front of him now he could see the black horse turn to face him [...]

But the horse reared up defiantly before him and the girl was jerked back and fell onto the road. Only briefly did the horse's front feet come down, for in the moment before the truck was upon it, Wayne saw it lift its head and rear again. Only this time it leapt right at him. With all the power of its hind legs, it launched itself over the front of the cab, clearing the sheer face of the radiator grille as if it were a jump. (Evans 25)

Here, it is the truck driver that describes how Pilgrim acts when he is faced with the truck. The use of words is quite interesting; the truck says that Pilgrim reared up towards the truck "defiantly" and that Pilgrim turned to "face him" which makes this quote another example of how the novel has created anthropomorphism. The truck driver suggests through his description of how Pilgrim acted during the accident that Pilgrim made a conscious decision to be "defiant" and that Pilgrim turned to face the truck almost like he was challenging it. Once again Tyler's definition of anthropomorphism fits. What the truck driver does is that he projects volition and

intentionality (Tyler 269) onto Pilgrim and thereby, through the truck driver's thoughts, an opportunity for the readers to see Pilgrim anthropomorphically is created.

Furthermore, when Grace describes Pilgrim's behavior during the accident she also says that Pilgrim "turned to face the truck" (Evans 251). Grace also claims that: "It was crazy, but it was like he wasn't going to allow it. He wasn't going to let this great monster come and hurt us all, he was going to fight" (Evans 251). Grace claims, just like the man who drove the truck, that Pilgrim turned 'to face' the truck and Grace also claims that Pilgrim was going to fight the truck in order for Grace, Judith and Gulliver not to get hurt. Grace is convinced that when Pilgrim turned to face the truck and also reared towards it, this was an attempt from Pilgrim's side to save all of them. She has by convincing herself that Pilgrim really was going to fight the truck in order to save them, attributed human social motivations to Pilgrim and thereby according to Daston and Mitman she has benefitted emotionally from the relationship with Pilgrim.

There are very clear similarities between Pilgrim's facing of the truck and Tom's facing of the stallion at the end of the novel:

What was certain was that Tom could have walked away... Instead, Tom stepped towards him. The moment he moved, as he must have foreseen, the stallion reared up towards him and screamed. And even now, Tom could have stepped aside. Yet on this day, he neither dodged, nor ducked nor flinched, and, once more stepped in closer. (Evans 440).

Just like Grace believes that Pilgrim was trying to fight the truck for her sake, and according to the text, Grace also seems to think that Tom purposely stepped towards the wild rearing stallion. Tom steps towards the moving stallion just like Pilgrim rears towards the truck. Pilgrim rears once, then he jumps towards the truck just like Tom takes two steps before the rearing stallion's hooves hit him. Tom does not try to step away from the deadly hooves of the stallion just as Pilgrim does not try to flee from the

truck. And as we see, Grace even believes that Tom opens his arms towards the stallion:

The settling dust was still too thick for Grace to be sure, but she thought she now saw Tom open his arms a little and, in a gesture so minimal that she may have imagined it, show the horse the palms of his hands. [...] Grace had a sudden vivid impression that it was the other way and that Tom, quite without fear or despair, was somehow this time offering himself. (Evans 441).

As the quote suggests, Grace seems to think that Tom might have even 'offered' himself to the stallion. Tom opens his arms and lets the stallion hit him with his hooves, just like Pilgrim rears towards the truck and lets the truck hit him. One can argue that Tom is not the only one to 'offer' himself, but that Pilgrim also offers himself in order to save Grace. There might be several different reasons to why Grace seems to think that Tom offers himself, but what the novel suggests is that one of the reasons is to save Grace, just like Pilgrim according to Grace and Tom tried to save her when he jumped towards the truck. What is interesting with how Tom and Pilgrim act, is of course the similarity in their actions. Anthropomorphism and zoomorphism are once again apparent through their similar behavior. Does Pilgrim act like Tom or does Tom act like Pilgrim? It goes both ways. It is very arguable that Pilgrim acted like Tom, or acted with certain human intentions according to Grace. Just like previously discussed Grace seems to think that Pilgrim had the intention to save Grace from the truck when he 'turned to face it', and by projecting this intention onto Pilgrim she also projects her own anthropomorphic thoughts onto him. But Grace also thinks that Tom had the intention to offer himself when he walked towards the stallion, which could be seen as Grace's own projection of zoomorphism onto Tom if one were to say that Tom acts like Pilgrim and not vice versa. Just like Daston and Mitman claim, anthropomorphism focuses on the human traits within an animal whilst zoomorphism focuses on animal traits within a human

(17) and the matter of Pilgrim behaving like Tom is becomes much more interesting if we turn it around and look at it from the point of Tom behaving like Pilgrim. As both Tom and Pilgrim behave so alike, it becomes hard to determine whom is behaving like who, but what is sure is that it is impossible to discuss the anthropomorphism projected onto Pilgrim without discussing the zoomorphism projected onto Tom. Both Tom and Pilgrim are protecting Grace and one could argue that being protective is an animal characteristic, as most animals feel the need to protect their young or protect members of the pack. Would then Tom being protective in a similar manner to Pilgrim suggest that Tom is being protective because he is part animal in the moment? Maybe that would be to push the discussion a bit too far, but it is still interesting to discuss Tom's offering at the end of the novel in context to Latour's rethorical question. But through the representation of the clear parallels between Tom's and Pilgrim's behavior in their respective accidents, some traces of zoomorphism are suggested when it comes to Tom's part, as a parallel to the anthropomorphism on Pilgrim's part.

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, the aim of this essay has been to show how the novel, through Grace's and Pilgrim's connection, grounds for the reader to see Pilgrim anthropomorphically and to some extent also see Grace zoomorphically. This paper has claimed that Grace's and Pilgrim's connection is built up through the usage of parallel events and similar descriptive words within in the novel. An instance of parallelism in the novel is the example of how Pilgrim and Grace both behave after their accident. Their behavior becomes very much similar and the reader comes to see their connection through their similar behavior. Other characters, such as Annie, are also used in the novel to reinforce Grace's and Pilgrim's special connection. Through Annie's thoughts, another way to see the connection between Grace and Pilgrim is created. She uses similar descriptive words when first looking at Pilgrim and then Grace, which enhances their special connection.

This essay has further claimed that the usage of Tom, as a horse whisperer, and his ideas about horse whispering and horsemanship, were used to further create a connection between Grace and Pilgrim and in effect, to make the reader see Pilgrim anthropomorphically and also to some extent see Grace zoomorphically. As this essay has discussed, many general ideas surrounding horse whispering deal with how an owner is connected to their horse and this paper has discussed how these ideas are portrayed in *The Horse Whisperer*.

Other readings of *The Horse Whisperer* do not provide any comments on the anthropomorphism or the anthropomorphic instances in the novel, instead most other readings focus on the human characters relationships to each other and Tom and Annie's love affair. Despite there not being any studies conducted in the area, Daston and Mitman's book: *Thinking With Animals: New Perspectives on Anthropomorphism*

has provided enough information for this essay to have built a theoretical framework surrounding anthropomorphism and zoomorphism. Together with Brannaman's and Parelli's works surrounding horsewhispering, this essay has been able to discuss how different literary devices, such as the usage of horse whispering in the novel, parallel instances and similar descriptive words, were used to make readers see Pilgrim anthropomorphically and also to some extent see Grace zoomorphically. This essay could be seen as a stepping stone for even more specified studies, one could look even more into the connection between anthropomorphism, zoomorphism and horse whispering or look at some discrepancies in the novel, for example: nature versus city, or being a mother versus having a career.

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