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**WHAT DO YOU SEE?
REVALUATION OF STANDARDS AND THE HARRY
POTTER SAGA**

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HARRY POTTER

(...)He saw his reflection, pale and scared-looking at first. But a moment later, the reflection smiled at him. It put its hand into his pocket and pulled out a blood-red stone. It winked and put the Stone back in its pocket – and as it did so, Harry felt something heavy drop into his real pocket. Somehow – incredibly – he'd got the Stone.

'Well?' said Quirrell impatiently. 'What do you see?'

J. K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*

RESUMO

Os livros da série *Harry Potter* tiveram seu primeiro volume publicado em 1997 e o último em 2007. Desde o princípio, a série passou a exercer um forte apelo sobre leitores de todas as idades e de todos os lugares. O objetivo desta dissertação é investigar esse fenômeno, a fim de identificar os motivos pelos quais a resposta às obras provou ser tão intensa. O corpus de investigação compreende os sete livros que formam a saga: *Harry Potter e a Pedra Filosofal*, *Harry Potter e a Câmara Secreta*, *Harry Potter e o Prisioneiro de Azkaban*, *Harry Potter e o Cálice de Fogo*, *Harry Potter e a Ordem da Fênix*, *Harry Potter e o Enigma do Príncipe*, e *Harry Potter e as Relíquias da Morte*. Os focos da análise se concentram em três aspectos: a jornada do herói; as diferentes formas de apresentação da ideia de morte; e o tratamento das dicotomias. Como suporte teórico, recorro a estudos sobre mitologia e imaginário, conforme tratados por Joseph Campbell; às considerações morais e estéticas de Umberto Eco sobre conexões entre os reinos vizinhos da Vida e da Literatura; e à abordagem filosófica de Zygmunt Bauman sobre nossos tempos *líquidos* contemporâneos. O trabalho está estruturado em duas partes. A primeira apresenta algumas hipóteses sobre a pronta aceitação da obra por parte do público leitor e expõe a base teórica sobre a qual se apoiam os arrazoados do trabalho, estabelecendo as conexões necessárias com os pontos investigados. A segunda parte contém minha leitura da série *Harry Potter*, centrada nos três itens propostos para análise. Ao final da dissertação, espero que minha análise possa contribuir para a discussão sobre o papel que a série *Harry Potter* desempenha no contexto contemporâneo e também sobre quais paradigmas atuais ela ratifica, questiona ou refuta.

Palavras-chave: Literatura Inglesa – Harry Potter – J. K. Rowling – Imaginário – Modernidade líquida

ABSTRACT

The *Harry Potter Books* had their first instalment published in 1997 and the last in 2007. From the beginning, the series exerted a very strong appeal upon readers of all ages, and from all places. The aim of the present thesis is to investigate this phenomenon so as to identify some reasons why the response to the works has proved so intense. The corpus of investigation comprises the seven books that form the saga: *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*, *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*, *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*, *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*, *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince*, and *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*. The focus of the analysis closes upon three aspects, the journey of the hero, the different approaches to death, and the treatment of dichotomies. As for critical and theoretical support I rely on studies about mythology and the imaginary, especially as presented by Joseph Campbell, on Umberto Eco's moral and aesthetic considerations about the connections between the neighbouring realms of Life and Literature, and on Zygmunt Bauman's philosophical approach to our *liquid* contemporary times. The work is divided into two parts. The first presents the necessary contextualization, poses some hypotheses about the prompt acceptance on the part of the reading public, and exposes the theoretic background on which this thesis is grounded, and establishes the necessary connections with the points investigated. The second part contains my reading of the *Harry Potter Books*, closing on the three items to be analysed. At the end of this argumentative thesis I hope my analysis may contribute to the discussion about the role the *Harry Potter Books* play in their contemporary context, and about which of the current paradigms they ratify, question or deny.

Keywords: English Literature – Harry Potter – J. K. Rowling – Imaginary – Liquid modernity

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All images in this thesis were drawn by Marta from ArtDungeon.net. My most special appreciation to her.

INTRODUCTION



This thesis was conceived in a cool April morning, in 2008. I had just started attending classes at the Master's program and one of the assignments the professor gave us that day was to define the title and the corpus of our theses. At first, it had not occurred to me to write exclusively about *Harry Potter*; my first intention was to approach British Children's Literature, having as exponential authors Lewis Carroll, with the *Alice Books*, and journeying through time to the twentieth century, to reach J. K. Rowling and her *Harry Potter Books*. In my mind, the idea was brilliant and the fact that I would have to read nine novels in detail, apart from all the theory surrounding them, did not discourage me in the least. However, that morning, when we exposed our ideas to the professor, I received a subtle veto. The professor pointed out the time constraints I would face, and the volume of reading, and that planted a seed of doubt in me – after all, two years is not such a long time, having to split the time into studying, working and having a life. Later on, that same morning, I had a conversation with a fellow academic, who then pointed out the possibility of doing what I had first intended to, but reducing the corpus and the approach to *Harry Potter* only, since 1) *Harry Potter* and *Alice* were very different works, with not that much in common, except the arguable label of Children's Literature, and 2) nobody had done it before in the University. I was a little doubtful exactly because of the second reason. I let academic bias take over me for a few moments and thought nobody would be much interested on a thesis about *Harry Potter*, since the saga is not as of yet considered a canon

work of literature. But then, gone the prejudice, I saw a good opportunity arise. My corpus would be better delimited, and I would be able to concentrate exclusively on certain aspects of the work that I would not be able to plunge into, had I chosen to approach it along with the *Alice Books*. So, the thesis was conceived, and the pregnancy began.

During that year, before I actually started writing the thesis, while its notion just drifted on my mind, everything was fine. People would ask me what I was working on, and they would smile when I answered them. Naturally, there was not much to say, only the title of the thesis, the general lines I would approach and that was all. However, when 2009 began and the moment of actually starting work on the thesis presented itself, I saw not everything was flowers. In fact, I realized it was a thorny path I had chosen to follow.

First of all, how was I supposed to approach a literary work that is not even considered canon by most academics? I had my passion for *Harry Potter*, a fan's passion that has nothing to do with its academicism or canonicity. I have read the seven books, watched all the films produced so far, followed the career of its author, read about her and the conception of the books, read fan fiction about the saga, visited a myriad of websites and learnt what other people have to say about it, but never with scholarly interest. My biggest doubt was if I would be able to find anything academic-worth about it, something that went beyond the best-seller label, because to many people, that is what *Harry Potter* is. The suggestion my advisor gave me was: forget about what others say and trust your instincts. That is what I did, then.

But my heart was run over by things such as theory and nomenclature. Because one cannot write a Master's thesis just out of passion – if that were the case, we would have many more masterpieces published, along with much more garbage. One of the first obstacles I came across was nomenclature. Is *Harry Potter* literature or entertainment? Another problem: book stores and libraries classify it as children's literature, but children are not its only readers – in fact, I believe it is more widely read by young adults and adults than by children. So, how was I supposed to approach *Harry Potter*? Also, how to define the story: seven books, seven novels, a saga in seven instalments? These questions have plagued me for a few months, and only little by little have I been able to answer them.

The first thing to establish was what I was *not to do*. I would not, for one thing, worry about the delimitations to separate art and entertainment, or canon and best-selling literature. These issues are not related to the thread I pursue here. Another subject that escapes the range of this research (regardless of how interesting it might be) is the discussion whether the book is to be approached as children's literature or not. This being said about what this thesis *is not to do*, I now introduce the points to be analysed in the discussion carried in the research.

The *Harry Potter Books* were published between 1997 and 2007. These works were created in a time of great changes concerning the ethics, the aesthetics and the moral codes of the shift of the millennium. If we think of the contemporary standard structural pattern of a work of literature, of the aesthetics expected of a contemporary text, Rowling's books will not meet our prospects. Their form is too traditional, if contrasted with Chico Buarque's *Estorvo*, William Gaddis' *Agapē Agape*, or Irvine Welsh's *Trainspotting*, for instance. The contemporary narrative text is meant to be fragmented to the point of pulverization, dismantled, and open to several lines of interpretation; whereas Rowling's stories are so simple and easy to read and to understand that they are either referred to as children's literature, or as "bad literature".¹

The structure of Rowling's books is simple, easy to read and traditional in many ways. The narrative point-of-view concentrates on the truths of the protagonist, in the style of the conventional 19th Century Bildungsroman.² This raises the question to be posed: *What are the reasons for the strong response to the Harry Potter Books on the part of the readers?* For one thing, there is the strong commercial media support, especially after the release of

1 In this line, the most representative name is that of Harold Bloom. As previously stated, discussing the issues of quality in literature escapes the range of this thesis. Otherwise, I would mention that Mr. Bloom – referred to by British author Nick Hornby as "once having been a good critic [HORNBY, 2008]" – has made a lot of money by complaining about the commercial aspects of Rowling's work. While stressing how harmful the *Harry Potter Books* may prove to children, Mr. Bloom issued his own collection *Stories and Poems for Extremely Intelligent Children of All Ages* [BLOOM, 2001]. There, he compiles a number of short masterpieces written by great canon authors who have been dead for more than 70 years – and therefore who offer no copy constraints to him. All Mr. Bloom has to do is write a short introduction and earn a percentage of the selling of each issue. Thus, he saves the children from the harm of reading Rowling and, as a bargain, earns some money out of the polemics as well. It takes an "intelligent" parent to buy Mr. Bloom's selection, indeed!

2 There is so much in common between the *Harry Potter Books* and the Bildungs tradition that Daniel Radcliffe, protagonist in the *Harry Potter* films from 2001 to this date, also played the part of young David Copperfield in the 1999 homonymous BBC miniseries. Charles Dickens's *David Copperfield*, as we know, is the prototypical Victorian Bildungsroman.

the *Harry Potter Films*. But we must consider that this support was only granted to Rowling *because* of the readers' intense response to the appeal of her books. Secondly, part of the success of the works may come from the fact that they are traditional in form: they are not experimental, and it is possible that the readers are starting to miss stories whose plots they may follow. Thirdly, there is always what E. M. Forster says about the importance of the emotional link with a book, and about writers who know how to tell a story. Forster's comment about Sir Walter Scott can apply to our discussion about Rowling:

Who shall tell us a story?

Sir Walter Scott of course. (...) Scott's fame rests upon one genuine basis. He could tell a story. He had the primitive power of keeping the reader in suspense and playing on his curiosity. (FORSTER, 1970, pp. 38-9)

The pursue of the answer as to the reasons for this remarkable acceptance of the *Harry Potter Books* takes us into three lines to be analysed. The Bildungsroman referent invites us to consider the protagonist, addressed here as the Hero of the narrative. The issues respecting the fundamental themes in literature provokes a discussion about the images of Death in *Harry Potter*. And the change in paradigms undergone in our contemporary times leads us to consider the treatment of Dichotomies in the story. These lines of discussion, to be developed in Part One, are related to the title and to the general epigraph of this thesis. Transposing Quirrell's question "What do you see?" to the scope of this investigation, we will try to find out to what extent the traditional ethical and moral paradigms are ratified or reformulated in the *Harry Potter Books*.

As a theoretical support for the analysis of the Hero motif, I rely on the studies on Mythology carried out by Joseph Campbell. *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (CAMPBELL, 2008) analysed the journey of the hero in myth and in literature, and there we can identify the steps of Rowling's protagonist as well: a boy who is assigned to perform an important deed, who has to face mortal perils and deadly enemies, who undergoes the most varied adventures to reach his aim. He is the "Chosen One", as he is called along the saga. Like Ulysses, Perseus, Hercules, and all other heroes, Harry Potter mirrors some psychological stages we all necessarily go through along our lives. Campbell sees them as archetypes of the universal hero, easily identified by most people on Earth.

Since Campbell follows a Jungian line, the section on Death – or on the psychological impact of the fear of death – is also approached on Jungian terms, through the perspective opened to literary studies in *Man and His Symbols* (JUNG, 1968). Another Jungian scholar, Gilbert Durand, with his *Anthropological Structures of the Imaginary* (DURAND, 1999), will help me deal with some of the imagery present in the series.

The discussion on Dichotomies in our contemporary paradigm is, ultimately, a discussion on the beliefs – or lack of beliefs – and on the perspectives and prospects of present-day issues about the ways of development of our society. This line could be approached through several excellent social thinkers, but I have chosen to use some ideas by Umberto Eco, for three reasons. The first is that much of what he says in *Six Walks in the Fictional Woods* (ECO, 1994) is pertinent in the arguments brought about by this thesis; the second is that Eco's ideas can also support the part of the research which respects theories on Reception. And the third is that, because he is such a talented author, there is so much beauty in everything Umberto Eco says and does. Eco presents, in very simple terms, the contrasts and the connections involving the notions of *fictional world* and *actual world*. Such notion of “possibility in impossibility” is not strange to me, neither to any modern reader. Through the influence of the German Schlegel brothers, Samuel Taylor Coleridge introduces the concept of *verisimilitude* to the English reading public, raising the question as to what extent people are aware or not, when they go to the theatre, that they are sitting on the chairs as spectators, and not inside the story (COLERIDGE, 1983). E. M. Forster translates the metaphor into 20th Century language when he compares entering a book to entering the cinema to see a film: one cannot do that without paying the coin. The coin in Forster substitutes for Coleridge's “suspension of disbelief” (FORSTER, 1970).

Umberto Eco's contribution lies in the fact that his analysis concentrates on the regions where these differences become blurred, giving me authority to transit freely between *fictional* and *actual world*. Amazing as it may seem, with all the new media, especially the computer – which replaced the typewriter and continues replacing other instruments, such as the encyclopaedia, the dictionary, the newspaper, and even printed books, people still buy traditional books, made of paper and glue. And when they read them, they allow themselves this exercise of concession, of believing in what is not possible in the actual world, things that we cannot see in our everyday lives. In the case of *Harry Potter*, they

find a mixture of elements, of concepts long gone from literature for being considered old-fashioned, or for not being *en vogue* nowadays. For the most orthodox, or inflexible, clinging to these elements constitutes a series of clichés; the author needed not to have wasted her (and their) time putting them into paper. But for the new reader, who is not used to those things any more, who lost something along the way, they may seem refreshing, they may give new breath and allow him to rethink, to re-evaluate some issues. All these things are related in the implicit pact the reader makes with the author when he starts reading a book. This makes, in the case of *Harry Potter*, some impossible, or unlikely things become possible, or feasible.

Other theoreticians will also be eventually mentioned, but among the thinkers who discuss our contemporary times, the one who proved most helpful for the organization of the paths to follow in this thesis, and whose influence took a much bigger dimension than what was first expected, is Zygmunt Bauman. Bauman's enlightened notions and concepts, and his clear terminology helped me better to understand these strange times we live in. His study on death, and terminology respecting the clash between the morals and ethics of old times of solid modernity versus new times of liquid modernity proved essential for me to feel brave enough to develop some arguments that cross the frontiers between the realms of Life and Fiction. The impression I have is that contemporary critics (and writing a thesis is an exercise on playing the role of the critic) must be constantly aware that we live in a moment of constant revaluation of standards, and that new circumstances sometimes demand new critical procedures, especially in what concerns the limits between the real world and the fictional world, the reader as spectator and the reader as agent, or the author as an entity or as a living person.

We have a very curious generation of readers nowadays, because never in history so many readers wanted to become writers of their favourite adventures. In this time of blurring between the frontiers of the *actual world* and the *fictional world*, we witness the start of the era of *fan fiction*, when fans, especially through blogs, create their own literature, where they (the reader/author/character) enter the books and interfere with their plots, or use the author or the characters in their favourite books as characters in their appropriations.

The special case with *Harry Potter* is that readers want to fill the blanks left by the author in some episodes, because they feel comfortable doing so; *Harry Potter* readers feel they own the saga, they appropriate themselves of the story and feel they 'have the right' to alter it, to include things in it. The number of fan fictions regarding *Harry Potter* and its characters is immense. There are many sites on the Internet with thousands of stories, and they range from one-page short stories to sagas like the original. J. K. Rowling has acknowledged to having read some of them, and admitted to appreciating some better than her own. In this sense, the interaction involving the work and its reading public is not only very intense, but it is also representative of a new stage in the interaction involving the author, the work and the reading public.

The reason why I choose the *Harry Potter Books* as the subject of my thesis is that they are good books to read, with a flowing rhythm and uncomplicated language. I like them, I emotionally respond well to them. And I believe that, if we are meant to spend two years of our lives studying something, we have better choose something that we are fond of. Another reason, perhaps a better one, is that I believe these books are representative of their times. Much of the discussion involving the revaluation of the ethics and of the aesthetics of our contemporary age can be carried out using the *Harry Potter Books* as a suitable corpus of application. My point is that nowadays our traditional critic apparatus may not be enough, is not well-equipped to deal with the latest ways of making Literature. So much that, for the sake of my analysis, I have recurred to one writer, Umberto Eco, and to some philosophers and theorists. One last reason is that the *Harry Potter Books* contain the basic elements of a mythic narrative: a hero who has to prove himself so and go on a quest, in order to find his place in society and save his people from suffering. I was curious to test to what extent the traditional Hero Quest still applies in this new context, what remains and what changes in these new *liquid times* of ours.

I would like now to refer to some delimitation. It is important to clarify that the corpus of this thesis centres on the seven *Harry Potter Books* written by Rowling. The Warner Brothers film saga (which will only be completed in 2011), although widely known and even more popular than the books, will only be mentioned sporadically in one or another comment considered pertinent. It is not the aim of the thesis to use the film as a corpus of

investigation. The same applies to other books written by Rowling, or by her fans, around the saga, or to the myriad of games, RPGs, toys and all kinds of commercial memorabilia.

I would also like to mention that the images used to illustrate this thesis are not taken from the official film website. They have been drawn by a very talented fan, Marta, who owns her own website³. In my opinion, Marta's views on characters and situations are much closer to the books than those portrayed by the Warner films. I would like to present my deepest acknowledgements to her kindness, for graciously granting me permission to use her images in this thesis.

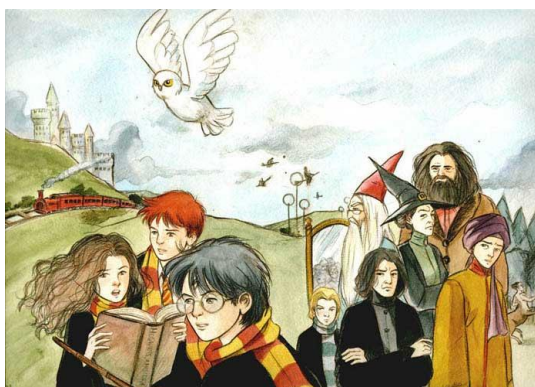
Closing the focus to the *Harry Potter Books* is not enough, because it would not do to write, in the limited space conferred to a thesis, to go deep into seven long books. In this sense, I will use the seven books as one single story-line. I will name it a *saga*, according to the definition offered at the Oxford Dictionary, “2 (mod use) long narrative e.g. a number of connected books (esp novels) about a family, social group, etc.” (HORNBY, 1977). Therefore, when I italicize the expressions *Harry Potter Books*, or *Harry Potter Saga*, or *Harry Potter*, I am referring to the body of the corpora to the research; when I do not, I am referring to the character. Although each novel has its own unit – that is, they can perfectly be read separately – it is only through the reading of the seven, in sequence, that my arguments about the Hero, Death and the Dichotomies can be worked out. When addressing the specific books, I will either call them Book One, Two, Three, Four, Five, Six and Seven, or use acronyms to their names, such as *PS* (*Philosopher's Stone*), *CS* (*Chamber of Secrets*), *PA* (*Prisoner of Azkaban*), *GOF* (*Goblet of Fire*), *OOTP* (*Order of the Phoenix*), *HBP* (*Half-Blood Prince*) and *DH* (*Deathly Hallows*).

The thesis is structured in two parts. In Part One I deal with the *Harry Potter* universe, tracing back some relevant data about the genesis of the work, including some information about the author and how she came with the idea for the saga, as well as the position of the reader in this context, according to Eco's theories. Here I also introduce the theories read, and the critical comments that especially helped me shape terms of the discussion. I deal briefly on each of them, and point out their relevance to this study. In Part Two I offer my reading of the three courses proposed to be investigated (the Hero; Death; Dichotomies).

3 ArtDungeon.net: <<http://www.artdungeon.net>>

My intention, with this research, is to contribute, with my own reading, to the discussion about the *Harry Potter Books* and the part they play in the contemporary questions respecting the *actual world* and the *fictional world*.

1 PART ONE: APPROACHING THE HARRY POTTER BOOKS



In the first part of this thesis, I am going to approach the phenomenon *Harry Potter*, and indicate in what ways the writings of Umberto Eco, Zygmunt Bauman and Joseph Campbell have helped me structure my reading of the saga. Although my major aim is to analyse the literary work, I believe it is important to outline other aspects that help us understand why it has become so popular around the world. In order to do so, it is necessary to investigate a little some of the other areas that it touches, such as cinema, merchandising, advertising and literary criticism. The first section of this part will be dedicated to these themes; the second will approach the author and the genesis of the story, analysing the factors that contributed for her to create *Harry Potter*; in the third and last section, I will talk about the help granted by Eco, Bauman and Campbell.

1.1 The Phenomenon

The *Harry Potter Saga* is one of the biggest phenomena in literature of all times, but speaking of it is somehow polemic. That is so because there are many controversies revolving around the series of books. Maybe the most noticeable one is due to the fact that it is a best-seller, having sold over 400 million books worldwide (according to a report from June 2008), not to mention that it has been translated into sixty languages. Such fact per se would make some people turn their noses up to the series and argue that it has been

written to the masses, using a “magic formula” followed by best-seller writers such as Michael Crichton, Dan Brown, Danielle Steel and others. Well, perhaps this is right. Perhaps J. K. Rowling, a single working mother who had a child to raise, and used her scarce free time to write in cafés in Edinburgh, Scotland, realized that and decided to make a best-seller – but it is not likely. Sarcasm aside, we are aware that wanting to write a best-seller does not necessarily lead to success in the endeavour, although that seems to have been the case with Rowling, whether she has done it consciously or not.

In the present work, this phenomenon is represented by the series of books. The sales numbers are enough to justify the denomination. However, we have other factors that could also justify calling the *Harry Potter Saga* a phenomenon. To begin with, the book series has been transformed into a film franchise, which has also beaten box office records worldwide.

Also, we have the status of the series: it is considered children’s literature, a genre supposedly directed to, obviously, children, and teenagers. Then how can we explain the millions of adults seen in queues all over the world waiting to purchase the books? Why does a children’s book attract adults so much? The answer to these questions might lie on the genesis of the series itself, which I am going to discuss later on this part, and also on the theories of reader-reception that are going to be discussed further.

1.1.1 The Film

As I mentioned before, this thesis is to approach the *Harry Potter Books*. However, since the saga has been transformed into film, and undeniably, cinema has an enormous influence in our lives nowadays, especially in the younger generations, it is important to at least overview what the phenomenon *Harry Potter* means in terms of film as well.

The first *Harry Potter* book was released in 1997 and within a short period, received much positive criticism and had good sales numbers, becoming a success in Great Britain. The author took six years to finish this book, which was started in 1991, but after the success of the first one, she could dedicate herself to writing the saga, so she produced one book a year after that, releasing Books Two, Three and Four in 1998, 1999 and 2000, respectively.

All four books were likewise appraised and had as much success in sales as the first, so nothing more natural than capturing the attention of the cinema industry in Hollywood, which saw great potential in the book saga. The Warner Bros. Studios bought the rights to the story in 1998 and with that, the film franchise started to take shape. I will give more emphasis to this aspect in the next sub-section.

What we must understand is that the fact that a literary work can be transformed into film is a natural development nowadays. Cinema is still considered a new medium in a certain way – naturally, the Internet is not in question here so far, although it does represent a very important medium in my analysis – and up until the beginning of the 20th century, it was not fully developed. With the improvement of techniques, film-makers finally had the chance to transpose into the screen all those images before only seen in their minds' eyes. That is, the concept of image, imaginary, has always been present, but now, the images could take shape and reach a bigger number of viewers at the same time.

The precursors of cinema carried out experiments in the art of making films, therefore, in the beginning, the techniques were more important than the plot – we can refer to the works of Lumière and Méliès in France and Wegener and Wiene in Germany, in the first twenty years of the 20th century. It was in 1922 that a German film-maker, F. W. Murnau, produced an adaptation of Bram Stoker's *Dracula* called *Nosferatu*; in fact, what Murnau did was simply to change the names of characters and places and film the story, because he did not obtain the rights to Bram Stoker's work from his wife. This event can be considered the beginning of film adaptations of literary works. Four years later, Murnau repeated the idea and made an adaptation of Goethe's *Faust*. In the following years, and more and more in our days, the adaptation of literary works into films became common practice, and a new interesting phenomenon appeared.

Murnau's *Nosferatu* was one of the first – it was, at least, the most expressive – of the new gender, and what Murnau did was to input into our minds, forever after his production, that image of the vampire with long fangs, claws and a sinister air. A new archetype was created then; and it was not before the film-making techniques improved a little more that it was replaced. Hollywood created its own image of the vampire with actor Bela Lugosi, the vampire with a seductive air and black cape that transformed into a bat when he needed

to flee. Years later, actor Christopher Lee impersonated the character, giving continuation to Lugosi's legacy. In the end of the 20th century, Francis Ford Coppola acquired the rights of Bram Stoker's *Dracula* and created a new archetype still: a seductive and charming man with mind powers and normal appearance that could transform into animals and drank the blood of virginal ladies to continue living. Actor Gary Oldman played the part, and for many after Coppola's production, the archetype of vampire is the one of Oldman's performance.

This is the new phenomenon I referred to two paragraphs above: the transposition of images from one medium to another generates changes of archetypes. If before one had to read a book in order to create a mental image of a character, now, with the cinema, the image is created for you according to a director's point of view. Murnau and Coppola did it for *Dracula*, and the result is that, if you do not read the book, you have to trust what they picture and carry that image on your mind. How many of us think of *Frankenstein* as the green monster with a big head and pins on each side of his neck? And how many of us actually know that *Frankenstein* is the name of the scientist who created the monster, and that the monster was not in fact green, nor did he have pins on his neck? This is due to the fact that the archetype of the green monster was created by director James Whale in 1931, in his version of the story, as interpreted by the actor Boris Karloff. To those born after 1931, the notion of *Frankenstein* is deeply influenced by Boris Karloff's portrayal, just as much as to those born after 1922 Murnau's *Nosferatu* represents the archetype of vampire.

This is what happens to *Harry Potter*. We have the seven books of the saga, but since the films have been produced practically at the same time as the story was being written, and especially because our era is the one of visual media like cinema, many people, like myself, have first watched the film, and then read the book. I did it: my first contact with *Harry Potter* was when I watched the first film, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, in 2001. After watching it, I became curious about the rest of the story, so it motivated me to read the other volumes – Books Two, Three and Four had been published so far. And I believe that is the case with the majority of the public nowadays, not only in regards to *Harry Potter*, but with many a literary work that has been transposed into film: people tend to watch the film first to see if it will be at their taste, and if it is, or if it leaves too many perceivable gaps, they go to the book. Other works that have been made into films and that

belong to the same genre as *Harry Potter* are J. R. R. Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* and C. S. Lewis's *The Narnia Chronicles*, whose public, especially the younger generations, is formed of people who have watched the films first and then read the books.

1.1.2 The Media

Another characteristic of today's public is the necessity of having other sources of contact with their favourite works: watching the film and reading the book are not enough any more. The public, and notably the youngsters, need as much information about the work as possible; they feel the need to be with the work all the time. Nowadays, this is much easier than before, because we have tools unimaginable in the beginning of the 20th century, such as the Internet, which made an enormous difference in terms of contact, and also the press, which nowadays dedicates more time and material to promote celebrities. In the case of *Harry Potter*, not only the books became objects of desire, but everything around them has received the Midas's touch: the author has become a celebrity, as well as the actors who work in the film franchise, and the films, at each instalment, break box office records worldwide. There are countless sites on the Internet dedicated to the saga, as well as magazines printed every week with news on the author and her current projects, the status of the film production, the whereabouts of the actors and their projects and so on. Also, there are all types of merchandise produced in the occasion of the release of a new book or film: costumes, sticker books, posters and even gadgets such as wands, broomsticks and action figures of the characters. The public goes home not only with the new book, or the images of the new film playing in their minds, but they can also take with them a more physical proof of their fanship.

Naturally, the film franchise was the biggest step into this globalisation of the saga. At first, the idea was to have Steven Spielberg direct the first two films – a major director, one of the most respectable of all times. However, what happens with *Harry Potter* is that, different from *Dracula* or *Frankenstein*, whose authors were already dead when the transposition of medium took place and who, therefore, had no right to opinion, J. K. Rowling is very much alive, and she only sold the rights to her story under certain conditions, one of them being her right to intermission when she deemed it necessary. The first time she exerted this right was in regards to the director of the film. She did not want

Spielberg, she preferred Terry Gilliam, a much less commercial and much more alternative director, in whose filmography we have films like *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*, *Brazil* and *12 Monkeys*, to name just a few. Eventually, a consensus was reached in favour of Chris Columbus, a successful director of commercial hits such as *Home Alone*, the film that catapulted child actor Macaulay Culkin into stardom, and *Bicentennial Man*, a futuristic love story with Robin Williams. Columbus was responsible for the direction of the first two films, which were extremely successful and gave start to the enormous phenomenon we have now, ten years later. Also, another point in which Rowling insisted in meddling with was the screenplay of the films: as far as we know, she is the one who gives it the final “OK” once the screenwriter finishes writing it.

That leads us to another aspect: who influences whom in this writing process? J. K. Rowling started writing the *Harry Potter Books* in 1991 and when they were commercialized, in 1998, she had already finished two books and was on the way to finishing the third. When the first film was released, in 2001, she had already four books published; so, until then, she was the one influencing the writing of the screenplays, making suggestions as to the best ways to transpose certain episodes into the silver screen, and having to accept alternatives and cuts in her story. However, there was a gap of three years between the release of the fourth and the fifth book, which happened in 2003, and in the meantime, two films were released and the third one was already in production. Rowling, as we have just stated, collaborated with the screenwriter in the adaptation of her work, so, would it be possible to outline the influences *she* received from other sources into her story? I am going to discuss about it later on in this thesis, but it is important to stress now that the author, a woman of her time, did not isolate herself in order to write her books, and therefore she must have suffered from interference, at some extent, in what she had first intended to write, and what she ended up writing. Naturally, Rowling's is not openly the case of an artist producing under commission, like many we know have along history – see Michelangelo and the Sistine Chapel, some Shakespeare plays in the 1600s, playwright Tennessee Williams in the USA in the beginning of the 20th century, among others. I honestly do not think this is the case with Rowling, although I admit she has probably changed things along the way in the story, and I will explain why later on in this thesis.

The problem this dilemma brings up is that Rowling was extremely successful in her endeavour: from an unemployed single mother she became a famous best-seller writer. Let us judge by the case with Tennessee Williams, whose writing under commission has deeply influenced his production. He already knew his work would be produced both on Broadway and Hollywood, so he knew which public he would have and what he could or could not write; one of his plays, *Cat in a Hot Tin Roof*, is said to have two endings: one more commercial and in accord to the standards of the time, and another less commercial and more polemic, in which the theme of homosexuality is more explicit. Even though we have had several cases along history in which an artist produces a work under commission, before it was not regarded as something necessarily negative; the problem is when writing becomes a merely lucrative activity and content is put in the background. It is said of best-seller writers that they only write for the masses, not caring for the literary content of their works, and Rowling, for having had so much success in her enterprise, has been placed under this category. Therefore, if she writes books that are so easily “digested” by the public, they must not be considered “good” literature. That is the notion literary criticism tries to divulge, and many authors of our times are known for producing “bad literature”. At the present stage of the discussion it is impossible to generalize about anything; therefore, literary criticism has another problem in their hands.

1.1.3 Literary Criticism

As I said before, and will probably say a few more times along this thesis, it is not my intention to establish the canonicity of *Harry Potter*, or to attempt to change people's minds in regards to that. But for the sake of the analysis, I am considering *Harry Potter* a literary work, not a content-void best-seller, and will proceed to studying it as such.

So, having established *Harry Potter* as literature, at least for the purpose of my analysis, we must go back in time to the beginning of the 20th century to understand the transformations literary criticism has gone through along the century. Russian Formalism, one of the greatest movements seen in literature, took as its task to standardize literature and dissociate it from the personal lives of its authors. They did so because there was a certain moralism in Europe towards the end of the 19th century that preached that a work should or should not be read according to its author, that is: if the author was a “good”

person, he or she should be read; otherwise, his or her works should be forbidden or not recommended. What the formalists did was to radicalise and put into question the text only, setting aside the author and whatever he or she might have done in his or her life. Henceforth, the author could be the best person in the world, but if his or her text was not good, he or she should not be read.

Along the century, after the formalists, texts were analysed by their contents, if they contained certain elements judged necessary for a good literary work. If they did not, or if they sold too much, they were considered as having been written for the masses, and therefore, the author must not be worried about formal elements and his or her text would not be “good”. The criteria were somehow abstract, and the only consensus critics seemed to reach was: the author cannot have it all. That means: if an author writes well, and sells little, he is recognized as such and although he does not earn money from his work, he is acclaimed; on the other hand, if he sells much, it can only mean he does not write well, therefore he should not be recognized as an author worth of being read. Translating this equation to our days: either you are a published author who survives from a side job, or you are a best-seller writer whose work will be the target of criticism.

However, it is very difficult to judge what is good and what is not nowadays, especially after the uprising of pop culture and the change in aesthetics in the 1960s. Once again, the criteria are even more blurred, and it is dangerous to generalize. In my opinion, each case is a case and should be judged separately. We have some contradictory examples along history: Shakespeare, Byron, Williams and Hemingway were acclaimed authors whose works sold very well, showing that an author can have fame and money at the same time; on the other hand, there are some writers who are not considered good, and will never be, but nonetheless they make much money with their work. We also have the case of James Joyce, who was a great writer but died as a poor man, because his works, although being considered masterpieces, never sold enough for him to make a living. And we have also authors who suffer from ups and downs, such as Agatha Christie, a best-seller writer who has been recognized as a great author, but whose works do not fit into one category as a whole: she has written great books, but she has also written many books in which she seems to plagiarize herself, with the sole purpose of making money.

Going back to our subject *Harry Potter*. Once again, I say it is not in judgement its literary content, in terms of what the Russian formalists proposed in the beginning of the last century; even because it is a work produced at the turn of the 21st century, where standards differed very much from those produced almost one hundred years earlier. Its author, Joanne Rowling, or J. K. Rowling as her pen name says, is a woman of her times, influenced by the many media that surround us: the television, the cinema, the Internet, the press. When she started writing the saga, her idea was to produce a work with which people would empathize; a work that would be read by people like her. Nowadays, when an author writes a book, he must, if he does not, have in mind that his work will be released, commercialized, appraised; modern authors know the dynamics of the process of writing and publishing a book. Also, there is always the possibility of having this work translated into a different medium, like the theatre, the television or the cinema. Rowling must not have had ambitions in regards to her work; in fact, all she wanted, as we are going to see in the next section, was to become a published author. Obviously, we all know what happened in her case, but even though it is hard to judge her standards. We have to admit that perhaps she is not so good as her most fervent fans believe she is. However, we also have to admit that perhaps she is not so bad, so “pernicious” as some literary critics like Harold Bloom judge her to be. In my opinion, Rowling is aware, or became aware after the success of her first book, of the process of writing in our days, and she is one of these authors representative of the difficulty that modern literary criticism has nowadays to determine the canonicity of an author, especially when he is a best-seller writer.

1.2 The Genesis

The *Harry Potter saga* is a work that took sixteen years to be finalized, from the moment the author started outlining its first elements, in 1991, until the publishing of its seventh and last volume, in 2007. We have already discussed a little about the phenomenon it became and some commercial and literary implications it has generated, but now it is important to analyse its creation if we want to understand what is behind such phenomenon.

1.2.1 A Word about the Author

In the following paragraphs I will refer to some well-acknowledged facts in the life of the author of the *Harry Potter Books*. Still, perhaps the most interesting among all is the fact that here we have one of those cases where the life of the author is as well-known as the work. In a way, any bio-data about Joanne Rowling is part of this mingling of life, fiction and media business. Rowling's biography has been turned into a Cinderella story, in a process similar to those involving the lives of Princess Diana and amateur singer Susan Boyle. Hers is the plot of the poor young woman dependant on the Welfare State who turns into the wealthiest woman in Britain in 2003⁴ (therefore richer than the Queen). At the moment I write this sentence Rowling is ranked by Forbes Magazine as the richest author in the world, the owner of a one billion dollar, self-made, fortune.⁵ So, as the story goes, Joanne Rowling was an ordinary English girl who, since her early years, enjoyed creating stories. Her first fan was her younger sister, Diane, to whom she told her stories at bedtime, and who encouraged her to elaborate more and more, for her pleasure.

As the girl grew up, her fascination for reading and writing never waned, but everyday issues put her literary ambitions to the background. She eventually went to the University of Exeter, where she studied French and became, thus, a French teacher. As part of her course included a year living in France, she took the opportunity to learn about other cultures and perfect herself in the language, so she went to Paris. There, she met her first serious boyfriend, with whom she moved in as they returned to England.

Jo, as she has always liked being called, started working as an executive secretary, in a job she hated, but which was necessary in order to make money for a living. She lived in London and worked in Manchester, which meant a few hours' commuting everyday; and one day, as she commuted back from work, the idea of Harry Potter came to her.

4 According to the BBC News front page on 27th April 2003, based on *The Sunday Times Richest List*, a ranking of the 1,000 wealthiest people in the UK, which is up-dated every month of April in the *Sunday Times* magazine. Information available at: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/2979033.stm>. Access on April 2, 2010.

5 Information available at: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/2979033.stm>. Access on April 2, 2010.

Rowling claims the idea of the boy wizard came to her as a whole; she could see him in her mind's eye, and from the beginning she knew what it would be of him. She regrets not having had a pen or paper with her at the moment the idea sprang, in the train, but as soon as she arrived home she proceeded to jotting down everything she had seen: Harry's physical description, his origins etc. It was 1991: Harry Potter was born out of her mind's creative random leisure, or boredom, during a train ride.

From that moment, according to the legend, Jo proceeded to adding details to Harry's story and to writing the initial chapters of the adventure. But time was short, and she could not plunge as deeply as she meant into her project, so Harry became something of a pastime. In the meanwhile, her mother, who suffered from an aggressive form of Multiple Sclerosis, passed away, so she went to live in Portugal, where she became an English teacher, and finally found time to write; but then, she met her first husband, a Portuguese journalist, and got pregnant.

Jessica Rowling Arantes was born on July 27th, 1993, and Joanne's whole attention then shifted to the baby. To make matters more complicated, Joanne and her husband divorced, and she had to face the challenge of raising a child on her own. Because of that, she accepted her sister's advice and returned to the United Kingdom, living in Edinburgh, Scotland, where life was cheaper than in England. Joanne filed for unemployment and for a while she was not very sure of what she wanted out of her life. It was then that she decided to try what she wanted the most, but had never had the courage to do: to become a published author.

She dedicated all the time she had between feedings and changing of nappies to *Harry*, in order to have something to present to the publishers. Her famous incursions to various Edinburgh cafés have become legendary: many places in the city claim to have been the birthplace of *Harry Potter*; there are even signs advertising the fact on them. But little did they know that *Harry* was just being polished, perfected, in order to be introduced to the world.

The path was not easy. In the beginning, Joanne had her manuscript rejected by all publishing houses in town. She was very frustrated, but never to the point of giving up; so,

one day, a man called Christopher Little took interest in her tale about the little wizard and decided to represent Joanne. *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* was first published in 1997, six years after its creation, and became an immediate success among British children.

It is interesting to point out that Joanne, or J. K. Rowling, as she became known henceforth, says she never intended to write a book for children. She claims she writes for herself, things she would enjoy reading, but the appeal to the children is inevitable in the story of an eleven-year-old boy who is an orphan and lives with his uncle and aunt until he discovers he belongs to another world, a magical one. The motto is too tempting to the kids, thus its humongous success among them. But it also appeals to adults, who either identify or sympathize with the boy's history and crave for the resolution of his adventures, which become more and more dangerous as he grows up.

In 2007, exactly ten years after the publishing of his first adventure, the publication of *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, the last book of the saga, put an end to Harry Potter's tales by Rowling. The series comprises seven books, a mystic number, but like Baum's *Oz* tales, it leaves behind a host of fans, and such a rich universe, that the *Harry Potter Books* will reach beyond its own time and address and live on through other generations, both through the skilled hand of Rowling, or through the numerous fans who give it continuation on the Internet, writing fan fiction with the *Harry Potter* characters. Which, by the way, is another phenomenon related to the *Harry Potter* generation.

1.2.2 Ingredients for Success

In the previous section I have mentioned the circumstances that triggered the idea for the series, and the conditions under which it was written. But that is not enough to account for the success of the attempt. Probably millions of people have brilliant ideas for writing fiction every day, and thousands of them are now writing books that will never be published, or read by many persons. So, in a sense, more important than resuming the conditions of creation of the *Harry Potter Books* is the investigation of the reasons for their wide immediate acceptance, first in Britain, and then all over the world.

Perhaps one of the reasons for such immediate acceptance is the fact that *Harry Potter* is a saga whose plot approaches many topics pertaining to the human quest. Harry's trajectory, and the ones of other characters along the books, symbolizes the trajectory of a human being: it shows the cycle of life, in which one is born, grows up and dies. In the case of *Harry Potter*, the main character shares some peculiarities with his main antagonist when it comes to his childhood: they were born of parents who somehow abandoned them, having to grow up under the care of others and only finding their place in society at eleven years old, when the revelation of their powers came to surface. Such unfortunate childhood provokes the sympathy of the reader, who hopes there will be a better, if not happy, ending to their probations. The story proceeds into Harry's journey into becoming an adult, that is, throughout his adolescence, with all the challenges and changes that take place in this phase of life: the "discovery" of the opposite sex, the need to prove oneself towards society, the rebellion. Later on, after Harry defeats his enemy, a new chapter of his life begins: he is finally an adult, but we only have a glimpse of this part of his life in the Epilogue of Book Seven, where we can see Harry and his family, nineteen years after the final battle at Hogwarts – that is, he is 37 years old – taking his middle son to the station, so the boy can go to Hogwarts in his turn. Here, Harry's cycle somehow closes, and it shows us that another cycle will begin, the one of his children now. The story ends before the main character reaches old age, but we can only speculate that, like other characters who have reached old age in the story, such as Nicholas Flamel and even Dumbledore, he will face maturity with serenity, seeing death as the next logical step in life.

Rowling's approach to these human issues is similar to the one of another author we are very familiar with: Daniel Defoe. His *Robinson Crusoe* had the same empathy from the readers of his time, perhaps because, like Rowling, he wrote for a capitalist society whose mythical archetypes, before reinforced by the Catholic Church mainly, had started to be neglected or overlooked (LEMOS, 2006). Defoe approached the topic of the cycle of life beautifully, and so does Rowling; only, the society we live in nowadays is even more depleted of mythical symbols than the one of Defoe's time. Religion, represented not only by the Catholic Church, but by any other secular institution, is no longer strong in our Western society, so art, and here in our case, literature, is the medium responsible for perpetuating and, most importantly, recreating archetypes for those generations that lost them along the way. That is what Rowling does: with a simple formulation, she

reintroduces our children to, and refreshes the adults' memories of, ancestral archetypes such as the epic hero, the monster he has to vanquish, and the supernatural forces that surround him.

However, Rowling was not the first author in the 20th century to write fiction that recovered these factors. In Britain, in the 19th century, there was a movement called the Oxford Movement, whose aim was to recover traditional aspects of the Christian faith, subsequently lost, and their inclusion into Anglican liturgy and theology⁶. Two British authors of the beginning of the 20th century, J. R. R. Tolkien and C. S. Lewis, are descendants of this movement, and they deliberately decided to write works that would raise the morals of the individuals in times of war (FRITSCH, 2009). The result of their productions are the widely-known, highly acclaimed sagas *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Chronicles of Narnia*, respectively. Tolkien and Lewis took inspiration from the Holy Bible to create their fictional universes, using myths and images familiar to the Christian universe, in an attempt at bringing back some of these concepts that were on the verge of being lost. Naturally, theirs was a time of war; both Tolkien and Lewis served in the British Army in World War I and were witnesses to its horrors. They eventually became professors at Oxford University, and were part of a literary group called the Inklings. Therefore, they had much in common, at least in terms of knowledge and influences. Tolkien produced his *The Lord of the Rings* between years 1937 and 1949, that is, during World War II and a little after that, and Lewis produced his *Narnia* between 1949 and 1954, after the war was over. Rowling's time is not one that could be considered of war, although we have had a few wars over the world since she started writing her *Harry Potter* in 1991, such as the Gulf War and the Iraq War after the September 11th, 2001 attacks to the Twin Towers in New York. We have other wars happening in the Middle East and Asia Minor, especially religious wars, but none of them mobilizes the British population to the point of needing a moral raise. As we have previously seen, Rowling did try to recover some long-lost values, but I honestly believe her intention was to raise her own morals at a time of personal, inner struggle, and with that she ended up influencing many people.

6 See the entry for Oxford Movement at Wikipedia.org: <<http://www.wikipedia.org>>.

What happens in our days is that, as I said before, books are originators of films, and it was not different with *Harry Potter*. Hollywood made its part to contribute to the everlastingness of Harry: it transformed the book saga into a film franchise, enabling the world to visualize what they could only see in their minds. Naturally, it was not the first time it happened, and it became stronger towards the middle of the 20th century, with companies like the Walt Disney Studios investing on films for the family, that is, films that not only showed “good values”, but also retrieved those mythical elements that were being lost with the weakening of religion. It is said that the executives at Disney saw in Campbell's journey of the hero much potential for their productions, and if we analyse the plots of *The Lion King* and *Mulan*, we can perceive many elements taken from Campbell's studies. Also, another director who was Campbellian before they worked side by side in shaping up elements for his film saga is George Lucas, who used the expertise of the scholar to outline the main plot and many elements of his *Star Wars*, one of the most successful film sagas of all times.

Going back to our subject, *Harry Potter*, it can be said that someone, and unfortunately we do not know exactly who, saw in Rowling's books great potential for this phenomenon so typical of our century, the transposition of a work from one medium to another. This person noticed how Rowling's work represented this retrieval of archetypes and mythical elements, and how much our society needed them at that moment, which coincided with the turn of the millennium. Whoever this person was, he or she sent his or her idea to the right studio, Warner Bros., who hired the right team of producers, who found the appropriate director for the films – as I said in the previous item, Chris Columbus was eventually chosen to begin the franchise, for he had in his curriculum not only commercial successes, but some of these successes were very family-oriented films, such as the already mentioned *Home Alone 1* and *2*, *Nine Months* and *Mrs. Doubtfire*. Also, there was the right musical direction, by the hands of John Williams, composer and conductor of some of the most famous film themes in history, such as the *Star Wars* theme, the *Superman* theme, the *Indiana Jones* theme, and henceforth, the *Harry Potter* theme. All these factors combined, among many others, and the result could only be the one achieved: *Harry Potter* became one of the most successful film franchises in history.

The purpose of this thesis is not to study the film phenomenon, but in the lines of what we have discussed so far, it is important to stress that, nowadays, we have a type of interdependence between different media. The book gives origin to the film; however, the film, if commercially successful, makes people want to go to the original, that is, the source for the ideas portrayed on the screen, so it brings readers to the book. It is a never-ending circle, but a beneficial one; in the case of *Harry Potter*, as I have already mentioned, many people have become readers of the books after they watched the adventures of the boy wizard on the big screen. Rowling has mentioned that, when she wrote about Harry, she could *see* him in her mind; like many authors who have grown up in this film-oriented era, Rowling wrote about a character she could picture in action, and perhaps that is why, once you read the book, you can only wonder how such events would look if they were transposed to the film screen. At the same time, it is also intriguing to wonder what makes so many people not want to wait until the next film and resort to the book to know the resolution of the adventures. This reader is the subject of the next topic, and we will understand a little more why *Harry Potter* has become such a reading phenomenon among people of all ages.

1.3 The Approaches

1.3.1 The Reader between Two Worlds: Umberto Eco

It is not easy to try to define why a book is widely read, and what kind of readers it has. The most common data used is naturally its sales numbers, but those only point to the total amount of copies sold, not indicating who bought them or for whom. A book is categorized as a specific kind of literature at its first reading, by the literary agent or the publishing house, and so it is labelled and commercialized as this or that kind of book. However, some books have a label that readers do not seem to read.

The *Harry Potter Books* have been first labelled as children's literature by Rowling's literary agent, Christopher Little, who told her⁷ that she would never make money writing children's books – which made her take a job as a French teacher in Edinburgh while she finished the first *Harry Potter* book. Therefore, he was the first to categorize her books.

⁷ All the factual information in this part was taken from Shapiro (2000), unless otherwise indicated.

And that is how the series is seen until these days, as much as the author has tried to argue and state that she never had the intention to write Children's Literature, as previously mentioned. That is how the books are usually sold, in the Juvenile section of book stores, and it is in the children's book list that it figures as the main best-seller of all times. But I am an adult, and I read *Harry Potter*. My friends who like it are also adults, and there are many people I know and have heard of who are adults and also enjoy *Harry Potter*; you, readers of this thesis, are scholars, therefore adults and you have read the books. So, we could take from this that *Harry Potter* is a children's book, but it is read by people of all ages. Or by children of all ages.

We might start by considering the term *reader*. For us, it is the person who reads a book, or a person to whom a book is read. Since we are dealing with children's literature, we have to assume that many readers might not have the ability to read yet, but since they are the target public of the story, they will be considered the readers of such story.

One explanation of why *Harry Potter* is a children's book that is read by people of all ages can be taken from Umberto Eco who, in 1994, published a collection of lectures he delivered at Harvard University, called *Six Walks in the Fictional Woods*. In this book, Eco compares fictional works to woods, and discusses some rules, implicit or not, for reading fiction. Eco understands a lot about the ways our contemporary society works, and he also has culture enough to reach back to the classics. Because of this double capacity, Eco affirms that “the basic rule in dealing with a work of fiction is that the reader must tacitly accept a fictional agreement, which Coleridge called ‘suspension of disbelief.’ The reader has to know that what is being narrated is an imaginary story, but he must not therefore believe that the writer is telling lies (ECO: 1994, p. 75)”. *Harry Potter* readers, young and old, accept this agreement, as readers have always done. But that does not prevent them from believing in the psychological veracity of that fictional world. How can we accept that a story is, at the same time fictional and also true? Eco then introduces the notions of *fictional world* and *actual world*:

When we enter the fictional wood we are certainly supposed to sign a fictional agreement with the author, and we are ready to accept, say, that wolves speak; but when Little Red Riding Hood is eaten by the wolf, we think she is dead (and this conviction is vital to the reader's extraordinary pleasure in her resurrection). We think of the wolf as shaggy and pointy-eared, more or less like the wolves one finds in real woods, and it seems quite

natural that Little Red Riding Hood behaves like a little girl and her Mummy like a grown-up, worried and responsible. Why? Because that's what happens in the world of our experience, a world that for now, without too many ontological commitments, we'll call the actual world. [...] It would appear that when reading a work of fiction, we suspend our disbelief about some things but not others. (Idem, p. 77)

The transit of experience from the world of fiction into the world of reality has always existed. Nevertheless, there is a belief underlying this work that the ways in which this process takes place has changed drastically in the last few decades. When Coleridge refers to the need of a “suspension of disbelief” he is living in a time that eventually became known as “The Romantic Era”, a moment when individual perception, and the sense of individuality, are taken into consideration in a way never done before. As to the *Harry Potter* readers, of course they are well aware that the Wizarding World does not exist in the actual world, and that if you go to London you will not find a place called The Leaky Cauldron, through which you will reach Diagon Alley, and be transported to Hogwarts. Even so, in spite of the magic features, characters mainly behave like ordinary people: they give us the impression that they get up every morning, brush their teeth, go to work or school, have fun, talk, fight, sleep. We believe those characters are possible, even if the world they live in is not, because, as Eco also points, there is a certain correspondence between the events in the actual world and the fictional one, and that is what makes the story believable. Another point respecting the fictional and actual worlds is the matter of background. Eco affirms that

it seems that readers have to know a lot of things about the actual world in order to take it as the correct background of the fictional one. [...] On the one hand, [...] a fictional universe can be seen as a small world infinitely more limited than the actual one. On the other hand, [...] it can be considered greater than the world of our experience. From this point of view, a fictional universe doesn't end with the story itself but extends indefinitely. (Ibidem, p. 85)

The reader of *Harry Potter* has enough knowledge of the actual world to place characters and events into geographical spaces, in the correct time, and since the universe created by Rowling is a fictional one, the reader can insert it into the actual world and work with the possibilities offered by the author. Being limited, it can be explored into more detail, stretched at the author's / reader's will.

Readers of *Harry Potter* are also perfect examples of what Eco calls *literary fandom*. This is a phenomenon in which the reader appropriates himself of the story, takes it to the real

world and visits the places the author has mentioned, or celebrates special dates. Of course readers have always interacted with their favourite novels, but usually in a private, silent way, not in the open, collective way in which this happens nowadays. One of the possible reasons for that may derive from the Internet, a new means of communication where people can create communities, pages and blogs, not only to share their interest in one work, but also to address the author of this work sometimes during the process of writing (this happened with Rowling), provoking unprecedented consequences in the process of development of the act of creation. Literary fans also often use their creativity to write derivative fiction based on the main fictional work. Then they can even sell their produce through Amazon, as we see with hundreds of novels based on the fictional worlds of J. K. Rowling, or Jane Austen, for instance. Some decades ago, in times of Structural Criticism, it was very easy to tell the role of the author from the role of the reader. Nowadays, however, the reader can also be the counsellor to the author, or even an author to the second degree, if he writes his own derivative novel.

A second thing to be taken into consideration respecting the new ways to produce works of art relates to the importance of Business in contemporary times. Tourism is one of the great sources of income in the British Isles, and tourism derived from literature occupies a privileged space on top of the list. Literary characters belong in the world of fiction, and living people belong in the actual world. However, people who travel to London can join several literary tours that cross the boundaries between these two realms. We can go to see the London of Charles Dickens, or the London of Jack the Ripper, for instance. If we visit the London Zoo, we will find the Brazilian Boa Constrictor who spoke to Harry Potter in the first Warner film. If you go to Surrey, you will find the row of semi-detached houses where the Dursleys supposedly used to dwell. At King's Cross train station you can take a picture at Platform 9 $\frac{3}{4}$, which was built there for tourists as a memento of the books. Unfortunately, such platform cannot take you into the fictional world, but literary fanship has expanded in such a way that it was incorporated into the architecture of the actual world. There are several guided tours to the places mentioned in the books, as well as sites that show where the films have been shot. Some of the favourite visitation spots are the libraries of Oxford University, where the film library and sanatorium scenes were made,

and Alnwick Castle, in Scotland, which serves as the façade of the castle of Hogwarts in the films⁸.

Although this increase in the blurring of the frontiers between the actual world and the fictional world happens everywhere, the British Isles seems to offer a more favourable ground for this to happen than any other place, for a number of reasons. Firstly, there is something in the nature of the British that makes them fictionalize practically everything, from noises heard in an old mansion to trifling episodes in the lives of the members of their royal family. There is also their expertly tourism industry, which capitalizes on their incredibly rich History and Literature. Eco uses the British as an example of literary fanship when he refers to the readers of James Joyce and the way they celebrate Bloomsday on the banks of the Liffey and in book stores and pubs all over the world. (*Ib.*, p. 84). Readers of *Harry Potter* also know and sometimes celebrate the birthdays of the characters.

In the Introduction to this thesis I mentioned that one of the reasons why the *Harry Potter Books* are so widely read nowadays, regardless of age labels or commercial categories, is that they fill some kind of void in the reader, and we have discussed this in the previous section of this part. However, the books also seem to create more voids, so the reader tries and fills them. Eco says that,

[...] any narrative fiction is necessarily and fatally swift because, in building a world that comprises myriad events and characters, it cannot say everything about this world. It hints at it and then asks the reader to fill in a whole series of gaps. Every text, after all, is a lazy machine asking the reader to do some of its work. What a problem it would be if a text were to say everything the receiver is to understand – it would never end. (*Ib.*, p. 3)

This is even truer if we think of the new generation of readers, who seem to resent being guided in their interpretation by the narrative voice, as, for instance, is the case of D. H. Lawrence's narrative techniques. The new reader needs plenty of space to move, which leads us back to the notion of *literary fanship*, when the reader becomes so involved with the story that he cannot help but wonder what happens at those times in which something was left unsaid, or when the narrative skipped from one event to another without

8 For more information on locations, see IMDB.com: <<http://www.imdb.com>>

explaining much. The reader then tries and fills those blanks, because, as Eco said, the author cannot say everything there is to say about a subject, and what happens with the *Harry Potter Books* is that even the seemingly unimportant episodes generate several possibilities.

Eco also reminds us that

there is another reason fiction makes us feel more metaphysically comfortable than reality. There is a golden rule that cryptanalysts and code breakers rely on – namely, that every secret message can be deciphered, provided one knows it is a message. The problem with the actual world is that, since the dawn of time, humans have been wondering whether there is a message and, if so, whether this message makes sense. With fictional universes, we know without a doubt that they do have a message and that an authorial entity stands behind them as creator, as well as within them as a set of reading instructions. (*Ib.* p. 116)

In this sense, I believe that one of the reasons why people reach for books like the *Harry Potter Saga* is that they seem to beckon with possible answers to fundamental existential questions concerning who we are, what we are doing here, for how long, or where we are heading to afterwards. For a while the readers can use a universe such as *Harry Potter's* and leave reality for this fictional world whose 'message' they have the conditions to decipher. Of course they know that the actual world is more complicated, more filled with contradictions, harder to cope with and probably impossible to decode. According to Eco, we will never stop reading fictional stories because we seek in them a formula either to give meaning to our existence (*Ib.*, p. 139), or to sharpen our mechanisms to deal with levels of perception that reach beyond the set of tools we need for practical material survival.

1.3.2 Art in liquid times: Zygmunt Bauman

Both Eco and Bauman, each one through his specific lenses, seem to be analysing the same kind of society. The comments each makes have helped me to decode my own impressions about the corpus of this thesis. Eco helped me with his arguments about the way the mind of the readers operate when they enter a fictional universe and come out of it. I would have great difficulties in presenting my ideas here if I did not have these two wonderful expressions, "actual world" and "fictional world", borrowed from Eco, to state my points. In the same sense, Zygmunt Bauman presents a contrast between the way things

were some decades ago, in the times of “solid modernity” and the way things are now, in our times of “liquid modernity.” The concept of liquid times and liquid modernity is very useful in the development of my arguments, because I believe the *Harry Potter Books* to be a typical product of liquid times, when things are difficult to grab, but still we feel they are there. The roles (of the reader, of the author) become more difficult to tell apart. The 'old truths' at one time seem to be there (who the *goodies* and who the *baddies* are, among the characters), and then they are not (the theme of the evil within). The great contribution of Bauman is the photographic delineation he makes of his time, especially when he considers the fact that, now that the old capitalized set of moral values has been discarded, our society feels the need to re-evaluate each of them and determine to what extent they still apply, or not. Bauman’s central interest seems to lie in questions respecting the creation of a new ethics, and the urgent need to some sort of moral code to be restored. When Bauman talks about the moral man, much of what he says reminds me of the fictional hero. And this is a puzzling issue in *Harry Potter*. In a world like ours, what can the traditional hero do? The hero fights for what is right and morally appropriate, according to a pre-established and “solid” code of ethics. The hero fights for the right, so what will he fight for in a world where we cannot tell right from wrong? In the section where I deal with the image of the hero, I feel the need to mix the three theoreticians. Campbell contributing with the structural pattern of the journey of the hero, Eco allowing me to shift the discussion back and forth in the realms of reality and fiction, and Bauman helping me separate the threads in the plot of *Harry Potter* that are still rooted in solid ground from the threads that “are liquid”, and therefore escape my attempts to grasp them. Out of the five books by Bauman listed in the bibliography, there is one which proved especially helpful, *Mortality, Immortality and Other Life Strategies* (BAUMAN, 1992), because it addresses the treatment of death in our liquid times. Death is a dominant theme in *Harry Potter*. The books are filled with contradictory hints and references about it. And Bauman’s theories have helped me focus on this discussion in a more practical way on the different formulas that can be identified in the story in relation to this subject. There were three lines selected to be pursued in my reading of the *Harry Potter Books*, one heading towards the journey of the hero, a second towards a discussion on death, and a third dealing of the treatment of dichotomies in the stories. Reading Bauman helped me to allow the discussion to grow in complexity concerning each of the three categories selected.

1.3.3 Myth, Time, Symbol and Archetypes – Joseph Campbell & Co.

Now and then people ask me what my thesis is about. Then I immediately shower them with my answers. I will skip the part concerning the usual defence of my corpus and comment on the part when I tell them that I am using Eco, and Bauman, and Campbell. It is not uncommon that my interlocutor shows surprise – and a certain concerned worry – about the peculiarity of this blend. At this point of the discussion, the only thing I can do is to remind that, if we live in liquid times, when liquid authors write liquid books to be read by liquid readers, I can also feel entitled to write a liquid thesis about that phenomenon. My good friends' concern comes from the fact that studies on Modernity and Post-modernity are usually very closely connected with theoretical approaches intricately related to History, and the Historic perspective of time is one in which events are chronologically placed in an organized time-line. The treatment of time in approaches dealing with the Imaginary, on the other hand, is usually considered as “circular”, or, “a-historical”. I can understand that, but still I feel the need to reach for both things when dealing with *Harry Potter*, because I believe these two, un-blend-able dimensions, are blended in the stories. In the *Harry Potter Books* there is order and there is chaos; there are villains and heroes; and yet there are no villains or heroes. Contradiction, or a plethora of colliding kinds of coherence, make that fictional universe so complex that it reminds us of the universe of the actual world outside. This is the reason why I decided to carry this discussion on two simultaneous tracks. One of them is tuned with the circumstances of our contemporary society, which determine the conditions of production and the aesthetics connected with the creation of a work of literature. The other concerns the analysis of the images that are created through words and build the codes that determine the workings of that specific fictional universe. To discuss this second track I rely on the Studies of the Imaginary, on the basis presented below.

According to scholar Edith Hamilton,

Nothing is clearer than the fact that primitive man, whether in New Guinea today or eons ago in the prehistoric wilderness, is not and never has been a creature who peoples his world with bright fancies and lovely visions. Horrors lurked in the primeval forest, not nymphs and naiads. Terror lived there, with its close attendant, Magic, and its most common defence, Human Sacrifice. (HAMILTON: 1999, p. 14)

In this sense, fear, doubt and attempts at explaining the unknown may be the first things to have triggered human imagination into the creation of the first stories. Primitive men used their imagination to try to explain what happened in their surroundings. This gave birth to the first myths. Hamilton says, “myths are early science, the result of men's first trying to explain what they saw around them.” (Idem, p. 19) Myth was linked to magic, to the irrational, and connected with the notion of religiosity as well. Therefore, the trajectory of literary narrative runs parallel to the approach to religiosity held during the course of development of our Civilization. Our Western literary tradition starts with the Greek sense of religiosity – in a pantheon formed of gods and goddesses made after the image of Man . This literary tradition develops, through Judaic-Christian ideas, to the notion of men created after the image of God, whose perfection is to serve as a model for the improvement of human behaviour.

As a consequence of this trend of development we have all the good things and the bad things in the society we live in nowadays. If I could choose one name and one time to exemplify the state of the art in the treatment of the social, political and philosophical questions which triggered the three paths of theoretical discussion we have in this thesis, I would choose Sigmund Freud, in late 19th Century Europe. Freud’s examination of the effects of this process of civilization upon the individual psyche treats the individual as a whole universe. His disciple Carl Jung, conversely, sees the individual as one atom of the collective body of mankind. Freud’s examination goes *within*, Jung’s goes *outside*. Jung’s studies influence both Joseph Campbell and Gilbert Durand, whose contribution is also important to the development of my research.

1.3.3.1 Symbol and Archetype: Jung

In 1961, psychiatrist Carl Gustav Jung had a dream. In the dream, he dreamt that he was giving a speech about his analytical psychology to a lay audience, and that they were able to understand what he said. This dream led Dr. Jung to put into practice a project long before envisaged by some of his colleagues and collaborative staff: to write a book about his theories to a non-academic public, using terms people outside the area of Psychology could understand. The fulfilment of this dream came in 1964, three years after his death, with the publication of *Man and His Symbols*, a collection of articles produced by Jung's

colleagues, under his supervision. This book introduces us to concepts that are very useful for the purposes of literary criticism. Two of them will be used in my study, the concepts of the terms “archetype” and “symbol”.

According to Jung, in the introduction to the above mentioned work,

The archetype is a tendency to form [...] representations of a motif – representations that can vary a great deal in detail without losing their basic pattern. [...] What we properly call *instincts* are the physiological urges, and are perceived by the senses. But at the same time, they also manifest themselves in fantasies and often reveal their presence only by symbolic images. These manifestations are what I call *archetypes*. They are without known origin and they reproduce themselves in any time or in any part of the world – even where transmission by direct descent or “cross fertilization” through migration must be ruled out. (JUNG: 1968, p. 58)

In other words, an archetype is a representation that could be identified by any person, in any culture, at any given time. In *Harry Potter*, we can find several archetypes, which explains, to a certain extent, why it appeals to both children and adults. Most importantly, it is interesting to remark that *Harry Potter* was written by a British author, having the United Kingdom as scenery: all the action unfolds either at Hogwarts, a castle in the North of Scotland, or at Diagon Alley, in London; or still in any of the dwellings of the characters, all of them somewhere in England or Scotland. That would suffice to justify the identification of the Anglo-Saxon public with the story, but then, how could we explain that a person reading *Harry Potter* in Brazil, whose landscape is so different, shares the same feelings and sensations, and most importantly, sees the same images as any Anglo-Saxon reader? According to Jung, “the symbols are natural attempts to reconcile and reunite opposites within the psyche.” (Idem, p. 90) The symbols will explain why people all over the world understand the story, can see it the way the author has conceived it. In *Harry Potter*, as will be later discussed, we have many symbols of transcendence, which are, according to Henderson, “[...] the symbols that represent man’s striving to attain his goal. They provide the means by which the contents of the unconscious can enter the conscious mind, and they also are themselves an active expression of those elements.” (HENDERSON: 1968, p. 146) Henderson adds to this definition examples of these symbols, such as animals like rodents, lizards, and above all, the serpent, which will be discussed later.

1.3.3.2 The Diurnal and Nocturnal orders: Durand

Gilbert Durand is a French sociologist and anthropologist, a follower of Carl Jung who founded the *Centre de Recherche sur l'Immaginaire* (CRI). In his book *Anthropologic Structures of the Imaginary* (1999), he goes further into the discussion of symbols and the imaginary. Durand states that “symbols must not be judged from the point of view of their form [...] but from the point of view of their force. [...] The literary image is 'more vivid than any drawing', it transcends form and is 'movement without matter'.” (DURAND: 1999, p. 47). That means that a symbol found in literature will endure longer than those found in caves, drawn by pre-historical men, because it can be interpreted in different ways, in different cultures. In order to analyse symbols, Durand proposes the use of a binary set of symbolic orders, that he names as Diurnal and Nocturnal.

The Diurnal Order is concerned with the postural dominant, the technology of arms, the sociology of the magus-warrior-sovereign and the rituals of elevation and purification, whereas the Nocturnal Order is subdivided into cyclical and digestive dominants, the cyclical dominant subsuming the techniques of the container and habitat, alimentary and digestive values matriarchal and nurturing sociology. (Idem, p. 58)

In this sense, the use of Eco and Bauman, in the track of this discussion where I step into the things concerning the actual world (and therefore closer to the historic paradigm we all submit to now) can be considered the side of this thesis which comes closer to the Diurnal aspects of doing literary criticism, if you allow me to put things this way. The interpretation of the images contained in the fictional universe of Rowling constitutes the nocturnal aspect of the research, the part of it that is less rational and more impressionistic, the one to address what is a-temporal in the awe we feel when we read a book to which we strongly respond (see the table in the Appendices and Annexes section at the end of this thesis).

Durand also deals on archetypes. For him, they constitute the link between imaginary and rational processes, and are remarkably stable. Also, in his opinion, what differentiates an archetype from a symbol is the lack of ambivalence in the first. In other words, for Durand, an archetype is universal and unique, whereas the symbol, as mentioned before, gives margin to different interpretations. He extends his discussion by giving his definition of myths, which, in his words,

[...] can be considered as the extension of schemata, archetypes and symbols. [...] By myth we understand a dynamic system of symbols, archetypes and schemata which, under the impetus of a schema, tends to be composed into a story. Myth is already a first rationalization since it uses the connecting thread of discourse, in which symbols are resolved into words, and archetypes into ideas. [...] Just as the archetype promotes the idea and the symbol engenders the name, it may be said that the myth promotes the religious doctrine or the philosophic system or the historical and legendary story. (Ibidem, p. 62)

So, this is the sense in which words such as myth, symbol, archetype, diurnal and nocturnal are to be taken when used in this work. However, we must not forget that the *Harry Potter Books* are written in liquid times, when modern mythology is not necessarily associated with religion (or rather with the institution of the Church conceived as a predominant political force in the two last millennium). To Hamilton, “according to the most modern idea, a real myth has nothing to do with religion. It is an explanation of something in nature”. (HAMILTON: 1999, p. 19) In other words, mythology and religion are not the same, at least not at the present moment, although they may have several elements in common.

In my opinion, the most difficult thing in reading Durand and applying his formula to literary text lies in the fact that we are tempted to add moral and religious judgments of value into the analysis of the images. We have been taught somehow to associate what is diurnal to the notions of “acceptable” and “good” and what is nocturnal to the notions of “sinful” and “evil”. But of course things are not like that, for two reasons. The first is that we are dealing with primitive, basic forces that exist in all of us. The second is that we are applying these concepts – in the specific case of this thesis – to a narrative where the messages conveyed related to the subject of good and evil (or dichotomies) are very confusing.

1.3.3.3 Monomyth and the journey of the hero: Campbell

In section 1.2.2 I have commented on the fruitful partnership between Joseph Campbell and movie director George Lucas, and the practical business made of his theories by the executive staff at Walt Disney Productions. In his last years Campbell’s contribution has been highly admired and recognized. However, things have not always been like that in the life of this American comparative mythologist. Several things that are considered admirable and worthy in liquid times were not taken as such in times of solid modernity.

Campbell's doctorate project was rejected by Columbia University because it seemed risky and too unconventional, mixing lines of research that were considered incompatible at the time. From that point onwards, he pursued an independent line of studies and never resumed his academic studies again.

Campbell, another follower of Jung, compares myths from different parts of the world and extracts the patterns that are common to them. In his introduction to *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (first published in 1949), the author claims that "myth is the secret opening through which the inexhaustible energies of the cosmos pour into human cultural manifestations. [...] For the symbols of mythology are not manufactured; they cannot be ordered, invented, or permanently suppressed. They are spontaneous productions of the psyche [...]" (CAMPBELL: 2008, p. 1-2).

The author states that the function of mythology is to supply man with symbols that will carry his spirit forward, as opposed to the fantasies that tend to tie it back (Idem, p. 6). This notion can account for the success which narratives that heavily draw on myth reach upon the reading public in times of moral and ethical crises such as the times we live in now. In my opinion, this is one of the reasons why both Campbell and Rowling have sold so much and become so famous in the last decades.

Campbell investigates images common to all mythologies, especially the ones of the tyrant and the hero. He defines the trajectory of the latter thus: "a hero ventures forth from the world of common day into a region of supernatural wonder: fabulous forces are there encountered and a decisive victory is won: the hero comes back from this mysterious adventure with the power to bestow boons on his fellow man" (Ibidem, p. 23). With this statement, Campbell establishes the path of the mythological journey of the hero, which represents the unit of what he calls the *monomyth*: departure – initiation – return. To Campbell, these three elements can be found in all mythologies, although the specific contents will vary according to the culture the monomyth.

1.3.3.3.1 The journey of the hero

In the process of reading Durand and Campbell for this thesis, I made a number of charts associating images in the saga to the diurnal or nocturnal order, and also associating the movements of the protagonist to the stages presented in Campbell's theory. These structural exercises proved very useful to transform what were first mere impressions into logical arguments, and part of them will be presented in the next section of the work, when I present my reading of the *Harry Potter Books*. The reason why I do not provide a full report of the results of the exercises of applying Durand's and Campbell's formulae is that that would distract me of the main goal of this thesis. In fact, I believe that the application of Durand's and the application of Campbell's theories into an analysis of the saga would be two other different works. Two very interesting works, but I cannot do that now, so I leave that to other researchers. What I can do here is to present a brief abstract of what Campbell (*Ib.*, 2008) has to say about the journey of the hero, which is one of the focuses of analysis in my research.

Despite the local cultural peculiarities, if we have a hero in a piece of literary narrative, we have always the same hero, living the same myth. This may also work as a metaphor to the cycles we go through in the course of our human existence, and relates to the Jungian concept of collective unconscious (JUNG, 1968). The hero's journey is divided into seventeen stages, classified into three categories: departure, initiation and return. They are highly symbolical, and described in a way that reminds us of the kind of impressions we have as we come out of a dream.

In the category *Departure*, we have 5 stages: (1) the call to adventure: this first stage of the mythological journey signifies that destiny has summoned the hero and transferred his spiritual centre of gravity from within the pale of his society to a zone unknown; (2) refusal of the call: refusal of the summons converts the adventure into its negative. Walled in boredom, hard work, or 'culture,' the subject loses the power of significant affirmative action and becomes a victim to be saved; (3) supernatural aid: for those who have not refused the call, the first encounter of the hero's journey is with a protective figure (often a little old crone or old man) who provides the adventurer with amulets against the dragon forces he is about to face. (4) the crossing of the first threshold: with the personifications of his destiny to guide and aid him, the hero goes forward in his adventure, until he comes to the "threshold guardian" at the entrance of the zone of magnified power. (5) the belly of

the whale: the idea that the passage of the magical threshold is a transit into a sphere of rebirth is symbolized in the worldwide womb image of the belly of the whale. The hero, instead of conquering or conciliating the power of the threshold, is swallowed into the unknown and appears to have died.

In *Initiation*, we have six stages: (1) the road of trials: once having traversed the threshold, the hero moves in a dream landscape of curiously fluid, ambiguous forms, where he must survive a succession of trials; (2) the meeting with the goddess: the ultimate adventure, when all the barriers and ogres have been overcome, is commonly represented as a mystical marriage of the triumphant hero-soul with the Queen Goddess of the World; (3) woman as temptress⁹: the seeker of the life beyond life must advance past the woman, surpass the temptations of her call, and soar to the immaculate ether beyond; (4) atonement with the father: the problem of the hero going to meet the father is to pen his soul beyond terror to such a degree that he will be ripe to understand how the sickening and insane tragedies of this vast and ruthless cosmos are completely validated in the majesty of Being. The hero transcends life with its peculiar blind spot and for a moment rises to a glimpse of the source. He beholds the face of the father, understands it – and the two are atoned; (5) apotheosis: those who know, not only that the Everlasting lies in them, but that what they (and all things) really are is the Everlasting, dwell in the groves of the wish fulfilling trees, drink the brew of immortality, and listen everywhere to the unheard music of eternal concord; (6) the ultimate boon: achievement of the goal of the quest. “The gods and goddesses then are to be understood as embodiments and custodians of the elixir of Imperishable Being but not themselves the Ultimate in its primary state. What the hero seeks through his intercourse with them is therefore not finally themselves, but their grace, i.e., the power of their sustaining substance.” (CAMPBELL: 2008, p. 155)

In *Return*, we have six stages: (1) the refusal of the return: when the hero-quest has been accomplished, through penetration to the source, or through the grace of some male or female, human or animal, personification, the adventurer still must return with his life-transmuting trophy. But the responsibility has been frequently refused. Numerous indeed are the heroes fabled to have taken up residence forever in the blessed isle of the unaging

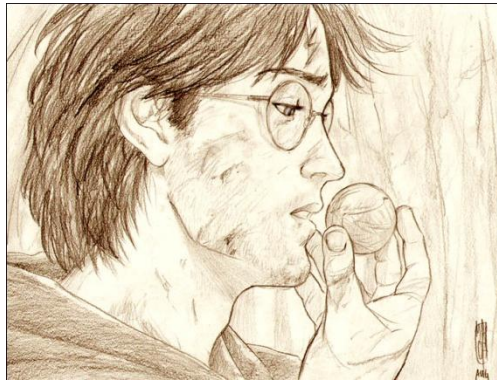
9 As this pattern is also observed in pre-Christian and pagan narratives, we must acknowledge that there is more to the process of demonization of the feminine element than the portions to which Christianity and its Patriarchal system are to blame.

Goddess of Immortal Being. (2) the magic flight: if the hero, in his triumph, wins the blessing of the goddess or the god and is then explicitly commissioned to return to the world with some elixir for the restoration of society, the final stage of his adventure is supported by all the powers of his supernatural patron. On the other hand, if the trophy has been attained against the opposition of its guardian, or if the hero's wish to return to the world has been resented by the gods or demons, then the last stage of the mythological round becomes a lively, often comical, pursuit. This flight may be complicated by marvels of magical obstruction and evasion; (3) rescue from without: the hero may have to be brought back from his supernatural adventure by assistance from without. That is to say, the world may have to come and get him. For the bliss of the deep abode is not lightly abandoned in favour of the self-scattering of the wakened state; (4) the crossing of the return threshold: the returning hero, to complete his adventure, must survive the impact of the world. Many failures attest to the difficulties of this life-affirmative threshold. The first problem of the returning hero is to accept the passing joys and sorrows, banalities and noisy obscenities of life as real, after an experience of the soul-satisfying vision of fulfilment; (5) master of two worlds: freedom to pass back and forth across the world division, from the perspective of the apparitions of time to that of the causal deep and back – not contaminating the principles of the one with those of the other, yet permitting the mind to know the one by virtue of the other – is the talent of the master; (6) freedom to live: the hero is the champion of things becoming, not of things become, because he is.

What we are going to find in this thesis is that the hero in the *Harry Potter Books* is a faithful representative of these stages; naturally, due to the nature of the story itself, and as we will see further in the next part, he does not undergo all the stages of the three categories, therefore I will only develop those found in the saga. However, it is important to point out at this moment, even if I will discuss it into more detail in Part Two, that the ending of the story, although reflecting this liquefying of Literature, does not escape the formula Campbell has so carefully outlined for the hero. The question posed before the release of Book Seven was: should Harry die or should he not? Had he died, some of Campbell's stages of Return would seem not to have been employed by the author. I can venture to say that a great percentage of the readers of *Harry Potter* have never heard of Campbell, therefore they do not acknowledge the concept of monomyth. However, the pressure of the reading public for the author to keep the hero alive and give him a “happy

ending” followed the path proposed by Campbell, in a clear manifestation of what he, and Durand, and Jung, in different terms, called the collective unconscious, thus proving that, however confused and liquid our times might be, some concepts are nevertheless preserved, employed and sought for.

2 PART TWO: ‘WHAT DO YOU SEE’?



The long game was ended, the Snitch had been caught, it was time to leave the air. (...) The Snitch. His nerveless fingers fumbled for a moment with the pouch at his neck and he pulled it out. I open at the close.

Breathing fast and hard, he stared down at it. Now that he wanted time to move as slowly as possible, it seemed to have sped up, and understanding was coming so fast it seemed to have bypassed thought. This was the close. This was the moment.

He pressed the golden metal to his lips and whispered, ‘I am about to die.’

J. K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*.

The title of this section is taken from the general epigraph to the thesis. It refers to my belief that, when we write about a work of fiction, the best thing we can offer is our own reading of the work. In the field of Literary Studies, every thesis or dissertation brings its author’s investigation of the way he or she responds to a certain text, and why. Therefore, the time has come for me to tell about “what I see” in *Harry Potter*. Which leads me to the epigraph above, where Harry reaches the decisive moment in his saga. The

time has come to both of us – he in the fictional world, I in the real world, to do what we have to do – which is something simultaneously very scary and very thrilling. What I judge the most valuable aspects of *Harry Potter* are the ones that respond to the anxieties and needs experienced in our contemporary times. And they come to us, here, wrapped into three questions. First: *What room is left for the hero in our time?* Second: *How is death to be treated in our days?* And third: *What changes and what remains as to the clash of Good vs. Evil, now?* Using Bauman's arguments (BAUMAN: 2007), our era is singular, for never before in history have we seen so many paradigms being broken, or standards being redefined in such a short span of time. Even so, regardless of the present paradigm, the themes we concentrate on are the same that have always existed in Literature, because the Human Being is always the same. The issues that haunt the reader's imagination and captivate our attention and curiosity remain, as if in a different shape.

One peculiarity of our time is the speed with which everything changes. Methods, procedures, even values change so fast and so much that, like Harry in the epigraph above, at moments we lose our breath and may feel as if our time is ending. This clash involving the things that change and the things that do not change is present in the work of fiction I study. This means much to me because, while doing my research, I had this priceless opportunity to consider such relevant issues, moving gradually from feeling and impression towards intellectual argumentation. I also like the idea that these questions refer to the time I live in. In investigating the way things work in the fictional world of Harry Potter I can come to my conclusions about the way Art is created in the present day, and about where I stand within the society I live in. I believe this is what theses, great creations, are intended for.

2.1 One Theme that does not Change: Death

The original plan for Part Two of the thesis was to subdivide it into three sections. The first would deal with the Role of the Hero, the second with the treatment of the theme of Death, and the third with the loss of authority, in our contemporary times, of the well-established dichotomies involving Good vs. Evil. However, when writing the sub-sections, we (my advisor and I) realised they were so imbricate in one another that it would be impossible to keep the walls separating the discussion. So we changed the format so that

the discussion may flow more naturally. I trust the three lines can be followed in a better way now.

2.1.1 Death in the Fictional World: Is there a God in this Wizarding World?

Different people have different ideas about what is going to happen – or not – after we die. The fields of Religion and Philosophy have explored those questions for some millennia, but this is not what my work is about. My intention is to approach this question through the field of Literature. The basic difference is that, in the real world, there are different religious and philosophic possibilities of answers to the question “Is there a creator to the world we live in?” In the fictional world there is no dispute about that: we have the author, the god who creates the universe his characters live in, the god who determines their fate. When we, readers, read out books we also become in a way gods, or authors, we create our own reading. When we write about that, we also become gods, or authors, determining the shape and terms of our piece of criticism.

In the same way that different cultures present different religions, truths and dogmas, different fictional worlds operate in different ways. In respect to the few fundamental questions (who we are, what we are doing here, where we came from, what we are heading to), we have all kinds of fictional worlds, from Philip Roth’s atheistic universe, to James Joyce’s religious-centred-if-but-to-deny-it universe. As to Rowling’s world, things seem as confusing and confused there as they are in the real world. There is no statement made, by any of the wise characters in the saga, about a god to that world. Neither is there an indication of their conviction on what happens to them after they die. We have no answers, only a number of ambiguous indications.

Let us explore now some names in the gallery of dead people we meet in the saga, starting with Harry’s parents. As they died when Harry was still a baby, all he has left is the money in the bank and two or three photographs. The technology used to grant movement to the photographs, the magic in the mirror, and Harry’s imagination, wishes and projections create an idealized image of the missing family he lacks so painfully. In critical moments, throughout the saga, he feels he is being helped by his parents, but there is never a definite answer whether this help was real or just a means to trigger in him power enough for him

to be able to help himself out of the troubles. The message is something like, *if there were no gods or helping spirits to help us, we should have to invent them so as to be able to go on.*

We may not know if there is a god in the wizarding world of *Harry Potter*, or if the people we loved and are now dead are able to see our difficulties from where they are – if they are somewhere – and come to our rescue. But we certainly do have ghosts in Hogwarts School. They are treated as characters as normal as the others. In this sense, death seems a very uncomplicated matter here. One of Hogwarts' teachers, Mr. Binns, is a ghost: students say he was so old that one day, he fell asleep in the teachers' room, died, “woke up” as a ghost, and continued teaching as if he were still alive. There is also Sir Nicholas, or Nearly-Headless Nick, the Gryffindor ghost: he should have been beheaded, but the blade was not sharp enough and, although he died, his head continued attached to his body by a string of skin. He says he stayed with the living as an act of free will, because he was neither prepared to die, nor did he want to part from this world (OOTP, p. 946). Later, in Book Five, after the death of Sirius Black, Harry shares with Nearly-Headless Nick his worry because, no matter how hard he tries to summon the image of his late godfather, he cannot feel Sirius' presence. Nearly-Headless Nick answers that probably the reason is that Sirius was probably not afraid of death. As he was an adventurer, he was probably eager to meet new and different challenges. Not being so attached to this world, Sirius was maybe too far away to feel Harry's call. We also have Moaning Myrtle, the girl's bathroom's ghost. When we first meet her, in Book Two, she seems to fit the traditional pattern of the ghosts who cannot rest until the cause of their untimely death has been discovered. But this is done at the end of Book Two and Moaning Myrtle can still be found in the bathroom in the following books. Things like that make me come to the conclusion that ghosts belong in the fictional universe of *Harry Potter* as any other living character. They add local colour and charm to the narrative, and sometimes offer some kind of comic relief to the darker, heavier side to the questions related to death.

Being a ghost is no serious or complicated matter in *Harry Potter*, concerning the treatment of death in the narrative. The fear of one's personal death does not seem to be the greatest focus of anxiety either. In the wizarding world, people may live to a very long age.

Professor Dumbledore is rumoured to be over 150 years old. Nicholas Flamel¹⁰, aware of the danger the greed for immortality may provoke, is said to be considering destroying the stone, at the end of Book One. According to Dumbledore, Flamel has led such a full and pleasing life in the last 600 years, that the thought of death does not come to him as a great problem now.

Greater than the fear of death, the great difficulty in *Harry Potter* is the fear of losing the ones we love. An external reference to that can be found in a documentary where J. K. Rowling mentions that her mother died while she was writing *Harry Potter*, and after that, “something in the plot thickened and darkened” (BIOGRAPHY, 2008). Rowling also associates the Dementors to the strong depression she fell into after that. In fiction, the counterpart to all this comes in the feeling of fragility associated to the protagonist. The more friends Harry gathers, the more worried he feels about them. The more you like a person, the more you will suffer if you lose that person. The more people you like, the harder you have to strive to feel that each of them are safe and well. That is how Harry becomes the hero, the cause he fights for is to keep the order in the small world of Hogwarts, the kind of order that will keep the ones he loves well-protected. He feels responsible for each of them. At the end of the saga some of Harry’s friends remain alive, such as Ron, Hermione, and Hagrid, who are in many ways Harry’s equals. Among those who die, however, we have the ones Harry looked upwards to as the ones who had the answers to the unanswerable questions: Cedric Diggory, the elder student everyone at school – including Harry – would like to be like in the future; his teachers and models, from god-like Dumbledore, to father-like Sirius Black, to all kinds of teacher and mentors such as Snape, Lupin or Mad-Eye Moody. The way Harry is affected by the death of these people rings a note that is very different to the note connected to death when we consider the ghosts or the fear of one’s personal death. Harry’s life is never the same after the death of Cedric Diggory, which marks the end of one phase of innocence and childhood and triggers another, where the protagonist feels that there is danger, anxiety and uncertainty all around.

10 The character, frequently mentioned in the story as being a currently living being in that fictional world, is drawn out of the famous historical French 14th Century alchemist said to have found the secret of transforming lead into gold (known as the philosopher’s stone), and to have created the Elixir of Life. In *Harry Potter*, the two deeds are turned into one: he who possesses the philosopher’s stone will also hold the secret to immortality.

2.1.2 Fear of Fear

One by-product of the discussion whether *Harry Potter* is a book for children or for readers of all ages is the realization that there is a child inside every adult, at least as far as the theme of Death is concerned. When it comes to the fundamental questions, we are all scary children at some stance. Literature has always dealt with our ancestral fears in a very effective way. Think of the wisdom held in fairy-tales, for instance, where death and all kinds of danger and violence are presented to small children in the crudest possible way. The horrors introduced in the world of fiction, however, are well balanced by the fact that the children usually listen to those stories while they sit on the lap of their parents, in the safe and warm territory of their home. The angst and pain felt by the protagonist is experienced almost as the opposite by the young reader, who feels he is being trained by responsible adults so as to never be cast into such difficult situations as those depicted in the story.

Contemporary grown-up readers still have much of this child in them. They still feel scared at the prospect of the unknown. On the other hand, they are way past the age of innocence. Although they have their children, and nourish them on their laps trying to convey a feeling of order and protection, they are well aware of their limitations. Loving adults cannot always protect the ones they love from suffering, illness or danger. Contemporary 21st century adult readers live in a universe that (in Bauman's terminology) is ruled by Bureaucracy and Business, not anymore by Religion and the State. Therefore, 21st century adult readers are less protected from fear and anxiety than the readers of older times, who had the image of a protective God and a protective King to offer some support in the moments they felt they were unable to solve great problems themselves.

Still, in the world of Literature, there is a kind of additional protection for fear, in the (somewhat still followed) Aristotelian tradition involving structural patterns, in the sense that generally good is expected to defeat evil, and all should end morally well in the end; the hero is to vanquish the monster and, if possible, live happily forever after. Campbell says: "Typically, the hero of the fairy tale achieves a domestic, microcosmic triumph, and the hero of myth a world-historical, macrocosmic triumph. Whereas the former – the youngest or despised child who becomes the master of extraordinary powers – prevails

over his personal oppressors” (CAMPBELL: 2008, p. 30). It should not be different in *Harry Potter*: we have a boy-hero – whom we see growing to become a man-hero – whose main mission is to defeat a monster-like villain, and the result of this confrontation should, logically speaking, be the death of this monster, as in any fairy tale.

As the books were published in yearly instalments, there was a concern among the fans of the series whether or not the protagonist would die at the end. Hints by the author suggested that Harry might, indeed, die, especially after the publication of the fifth book, *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*, in which we finally learn the contents of the prophecy that made Harry who he is,

The one with the power to vanquish the Dark Lord approaches... born to those who have thrice defied him, born as the seventh month dies... and the Dark Lord will mark him as his equal, but he will have power the Dark Lord knows not... and either must die at the hand of the other for neither can live while the other survives... the one with the power to vanquish the Dark Lord will be born as the seventh month dies... (OOTP, p. 924).

Heroes may die or not at the end of their journey. It is not the survival of the protagonist that counts, but the accomplishing of the task. However, omens, or prophecies, are very serious things in literature, a sort of convention which is not to be challenged. If the prophecy says Harry must die, Harry must die. Unless, of course, this can be rhetorically undone, such as in Shakespeare’s *Macbeth*, where readers (and protagonist) realize at the end that the prophecy was correct, but our understanding of it was not. But even serious fixed forms in Literary conventions are now and then challenged, especially the closer we come to our present time. We have, for instance, Machado de Assis’s tale “A Cartomante” (The Fortune Teller), published in 1884, where the whole effect of the story depends on the trust the reader puts in the declaration of the fortune teller. As a proto-modernist, Machado de Assis breaks the late 19th Century reader’s horizon of expectation¹¹, at the dawn of this new age when cultural conventions can be discarded whenever there is a reason for that. This growing sense that there are no ultimate rules to the game increases fear and anxiety, apparently in both worlds, in the world of reality and in the world of fiction.

¹¹ “Horizon of expectation” is an expression borrowed from Reception Theory, coined by Hans Robert Jauss in the book *Toward an Aesthetic of Reception*.

In the work of J. K. Rowling, the end of the story contradicts the omen cast in *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*. The reasons for that can be both, contingent and aesthetic. In my opinion, they greatly result from a compromise with all the people Rowling has to deal with before having the work published. The author eventually submits to keeping her protagonist alive at the end of the last book. Either Rowling had already written Harry's death's scene, which was later transformed into the famous "death scene episode" she dedicates to young actor Daniel Radcliffe; or she could not resist "having the cake and eating it at the same time". Whatever the reasons are, we do have the final happy ending, but before that we also have the death scene. Harry passes beyond the stage of utmost fear, offers himself as a martyr, and not only dies but also has us following him into the other dimension he enters. At this point we readers have the feeling we are finally being offered an answer – if only within that fictional construct – to the questions we have been asking forever: *Do we stop existing or not, after we die?* Harry remains, is transported into another dimension where he meets all his beloved ones, who help him come back to life, fight and win his war. Conversely, as he returns to life, all the old questions return with him: have we really been to that magical place, or was that just a delusion?

In *Harry Potter*, then, as in Tennessee William's two final acts to *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* (as previously mentioned), we are offered different possibilities along the course of development of the plot. There is a good side to that: we fulfil our wish to see the hero well and happy at the end. And there is a bad side to that too: having the cake and eating it makes things too easy, this is not acceptable within the aesthetic Aristotelian agenda. This makes anything possible. If there are not rules to the game, it becomes impossible to define what is right or wrong, or what is good or evil. And this poses the philosophic problem we face in the saga: if we cannot tell good from evil any more (aesthetically or morally), how can we have a hero in it? Heroes champion what is good and right. But how can we define good and right in this new context, where all sorts of ethics are being discarded? On the one hand, Harry Potter is definitely the hero in this tale, and Lord Voldemort is the epitome of evil. On the other hand, when it comes to the Houses in Hogwarts school, and the values each of them represent, Harry comes from the House of Gryffindor, and his antagonist, The Lord of Darkness, from Slytherin. And both houses are said to have their virtues and their weaknesses.

The fact about the discussion of death in *Harry Potter* is that we cannot reach a satisfactory answer as to how Death operates in that fictional universe. There are ambiguous hints about practically everything. Had Harry died at the end of the story, what would have happened to him? Would he stop existing? Would he continue existing? On what condition? Would he keep his memory? Was the place we visit along with him within real, or a mere delusion? In the universe of Harry Potter, as in our real world, we do not find any concrete answers to the two or three questions human beings have been asking ever since they understood that the cycle of life is limited. Much of the success of the *Harry Potter Books* comes from the fact that they address the issue in an ambiguous way, offering several possibilities of perception. Like in Eric Clapton's song "Tears in Heaven"¹², what we want to know is whether or not things will remain the same afterwards, if we will meet again the ones we love and have lost, and if we will retain our memory of the things, places and people we met. But I am afraid it is not in the fictional world of Harry Potter that we will find our answers to all that.

We can pick some elements and traditions from the real world that have been incorporated into the fictional world of *Harry Potter*. There are many references to rituals and literature related to alchemy and secret sciences, and also many references that relate to Christian Culture. Rituals are followed in Hogwarts that relate to religious practices. Wizards and witches are buried and entombed, as in the case of Dumbledore, and there is a memorial or funeral. Children go home for Christmas during the Winter Holidays, and there is mention to Easter too. All those things seem to be used to add atmosphere and local colour rather than to show adhesion to the practices of the institutions referred to. When it comes to facing great danger, characters rely on their own (limited) resources rather than trusting the help of a superior being. The closer we get to that is through Harry's cherishing of the memory first of his lost parents, and later of his deceased friends. He always clings to that in difficult times. And there is also his regard for Professor Dumbledore, whose wisdom, old age, and Druid looks turn him into a god-like image to young Harry. The closer we get to the end of the narrative, the better Harry knows Dumbledore. Being very close to someone, we can better perceive his weak points, and it is very frightening for Harry to

12 Reference to the ballad composed by Eric Clapton and Will Jennings for the film *Rush*. The song relates to the death of Clapton's four-year-old son, Conor, who fell from the window of a tall building in a tragic accident. The lyrics start with the lines, "Would you know my name/If I saw you in Heaven?/Will you be the same/ If I saw you in Heaven?" (CLAPTON: 1992)

realize the limitations in a great man like Dumbledore. Wise, good and powerful as he is, the old Headmaster is not a god, and cannot protect the ones he guards the way he wishes to. This knowledge forces Harry to change his behaviour: he stops acting as the small child who needs to be protected, and starts working as to do his part as a protector as well. First he protects himself, then he progresses into protecting his own group. In the language of the *Bildungsroman* tradition, Harry reaches the full bloom of adulthood. In the language of Joseph Campbell, he reaches his full psychological growth by going through the stages of the journey of the hero.

2.2 The Journey of the Hero

This section of the work is fed on Joseph Campbell's ideas on the monomyth of the 'journey of the hero.' The hero belongs in fiction, and fiction narrates, through images and symbols cast into words, stories that echo the "journey within"¹³ undergone by everyone in the process of psychological growth. In this sense, Harry Potter is one of the "thousand faces" of the same and only, timeless, everlasting, hero. It would take one whole thesis to go through the episodes of the saga, relating the events narrated there with Campbell's formula. I cannot do that here, although I will briefly refer to some of the stages in the following pages. To Campbell, a hero is "the man of self-achieved submission" (CAMPBELL: 2008, p. 11); the one "who has been able to battle past his personal and local historical limitations to the generally valid, normal human forms" (Idem, p. 14).

2.2.1 The cycle of life

As everyone knows, the saga of Harry Potter begins when the boy receives a letter from Hogwarts, the wizarding school, letting him know he has been accepted and is expected to start his studies there in September. That is the beginning of the journey/story for him/us. That is also the beginning of an important cycle in Harry's life. About this ancient human tradition of counting time through cycles, French anthropologist Gilbert Durand posits that "the year marks the exact point at which, in a spatial figure, the

13 Freudian jargon. Although Freud and Jung generate different schools, Freud is mentor to Jung, who is mentor to Campbell.

imagination controls the contingent fluidity of time (DURAND: 1999, p. 273)”. Every time the cycle ends we celebrate our survival, establish new goals for the next starting cycle and evaluate the result of the old closing cycle. The yearly cycle in *Harry Potter* ends and starts in July, the mystic month of the summer solstice, and also the month of Harry’s birthday and the break to a new school calendar year. According to Durand, “what is interesting in the ritual of the calendar is not its content, but its capacity for determining and re-commencing temporal periods. [...] The period regeneration of time hypothesises a new creation [...] a repetition of the cosmogonic act”. (Idem, p. 274) This means to say that every beginning of a novel, in the saga, with the start of a new school year, represents a re-starting, on a new level; the events keep mounting, along each of the novels, month by month, always culminating around May or June, that is, at the end of the school year. Harry usually begins the year at school ordinarily; then things start to happen that end in the confrontation with his enemies in a life-or-death battle. This pattern fits into Campbell’s characterization of the cycles the hero must go through.

In Book One, for instance, the cycle begins a few days before Harry’s birthday, in July, when he receives the letter inviting him to study at Hogwarts school¹⁴. From then on, the boy gathers knowledge and information about his new world, until he learns about his opponent, Voldemort, in an intrigue (related to the Philosopher’s stone) that escalates along the months. At the end of the book/school year, Harry has his first life-or-death conscious confrontation with Voldemort. Although the antagonist’s abilities are highly superior to Harry’s, the boy unexpectedly survives, and this gives start to the next cycle, in Book Two, and thus subsequently for other five cycles, or books. Book Seven is an exception, as it does not begin at Hogwarts, but ends there.

The structure of the seven cycles is basically the same. Accordingly with the *Bildungs* tradition, the story starts with the protagonist as a ten year-old boy, and ends as he reaches adulthood (with a coda showing him years later, when he takes his own children to school). The sum of all fears and difficulties Harry has to face and to overcome helps him shape himself as a self-reliant person. Conversely, if we leave the fictional world and consider Harry’s readers in the *real* world, we find another trait worth considering: Rowling had the

14 A fictional equivalent to a college in the fashion of Eton, a select public school for highly talented upper class children ranging in age from 13 to 18 years old.

care to keep an interval of at least one year between the releasing of each book in the series. As a consequence, there is a especially lucky group of readers who started the first book as pre-teens and ended the last one as young men. To those, Harry's challenges have worked even in a more special way as metaphors for their personal stages of development. They read about Harry's start at secondary school, or taking his GCSEs¹⁵, when they were about to do it themselves. The protagonists in the saga were introduced to issues related to sexual awakening at about the same time these readers were doing the same. In this sense, there is a whole generation of readers who grew up involved in the saga. We have Hogwarts children in the world of fiction; real children readers from the real world; and, if we consider the film series, we can even consider the famous child actors, who spent ten years of their lives in-between the two worlds, inside Leavesden Film Studios¹⁶.

Carrying the discussion back into the fictional realm, if we consider the progression of the cycles, the challenges become progressively heavier, more dangerous and darker, as in the sequence of a spiral movement. Similarly to what happens in the course of a human life-span, from the middle onwards, the number of deaths involving characters who are important to the protagonist increases, until we reach the point where his own life seems the next in line. Harry's losses include the loss of his parents, when he is one year old, and the revelation, at eleven, that he is the target of a powerful wizard; the loss of his protectors, one by one: his godfather Sirius (OOTP), his mentor and school Headmaster Dumbledore (HBP); his friends Mad-Eye Moody and the house-elf Dobby (DH). With each new blow, Harry realizes there is nobody but himself who can protect him, and that the solution is to abandon his hopes of being rescued and start taking mature decisions and looking after himself: "he must abandon the illusion that the shelter of a parent's arms meant nothing could hurt him (HBP, p. 759)". At the end of Book Six, we cross the threshold between childhood and adulthood for Harry.

The danger Harry's enemies represent grows at each new challenge until, at the final stages, the hero is not fighting for his own survival only, but to save his community.

15 The General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) consists of a set of subject-based exams of different levels, that may be used to different purposes. They are compulsory for students who leave secondary schools. (Source to the information: <http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/EducationAndLearning/QualificationsExplained>. Access on 23.04.2010.)

16 Leavesden Film Studios, where *the Harry Potter* movies are shot, are located in Hertfordshire, in England.

Slowly and painfully, he learns to master the skills and strategies which may make him powerful enough to fulfil his role. This relates to the idea of the “loss of innocence”: the stronger Harry gets, and the more he learns, the less naive he becomes. This can be felt when we consider the way he regards Albus Dumbledore, the Headmaster of Hogwarts. Professor Dumbledore is seen by Harry (and by the readers) as wise, intelligent, and powerful. In the first years at school, Harry trusts Dumbledore to have the answers to all questions. The more Harry grows, however, the more visible the old man’s limitations become. As a child, it is very good for Harry to feel the beauty and warmth of his school, the sense of order and protection the power of Dumbledore and the strength of Hagrid grant him. The stronger he himself becomes, however, the more aware he becomes that all protection is limited, and indeed very feeble, and that there are moments when we have to trust our own abilities, so as to survive.

In Book Seven, Harry makes the transition from the magical world into the actual world for the last time. From then on he will have to deal in the world of reality, without the supervision of his professors and mentors. Here we have the beauty and the sadness of it all. The story addresses the fundamental question no living person has the answers to: What is the status of our presence on Earth? Are we protected by external, superior forces that guard us all along? Are we alone and vulnerable? At least once in each book Harry asks this question to Dumbledore, who openly answers that he does not have an answer. At least here we have a great difference from the traditional *Bildungsroman*. Hogwarts is set in contemporary liquid Scotland, where there are no definite rules for the game that is being played. Liquid society has yet to establish the new rules for the game. All former divisions, such as right or wrong, good and evil, all that has yet to be redefined. This can be seen in the differences among the four houses of Hogwarts, or the Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. Each of the houses values different characteristics and abilities, regardless of the moral or ethical consequences of their being put to use in social life. Harry’s house is Gryffindor, and the appraised values of Gryffindor are loyalty and courage. Harry’s antagonists come from Slytherin, the house that values ambition and shrewdness above all. Things are never simple when the houses compete. The plunge into the past of the characters show us that all of them, from Professor Dumbledore, the wisest, to Voldemort, the epitome of evil, are ultimately very similar in their essence. And Harry feels within himself the potential to develop in both directions. Harry is the middle link.

Everything is moveable, and everything passes. The confrontation of Harry and Voldemort, important as it is, is but a repetition of countless previous confrontations. The previous one, set decades back, involved Dumbledore and Grindelwald. The *Harry Potter Saga* ends as we leave the adult Harry at Platform 9 ¾ of King's Cross Station, sending his own children into what will certainly be the next version of the same conflict, into a journey towards their personal processes of development.

2.2.2 Stages to Go through

There are several journeys inside Harry Potter's journey. Like all heroes, he is raised in a common sort of environment, in this case an average middle-class neighbourhood in Surrey, where his gifts are neither admired nor praised. Campbell would signal that as a typical characteristic of the monomyth hero. The boy receives his call, here represented by the letter, and accepts it immediately, for anything would be better than the life he has been living so far. Naturally, his guardians try their best to prevent him from going, but Harry is helped by Hagrid and Dumbledore and reaches his purpose of setting off to school, where he will learn how to be what he is – a wizard. It is there that he also learns about his past: who his parents were, what they did, why he has that strange-looking, lightning-bolt-shaped scar on his forehead.

That is Harry's departure as a hero: his embracing of this new world, full of new opportunities and possibilities. Campbell says that “for those who have not refused the call, the first encounter of the hero-journey is with a protective figure [...] who provides the adventurer with amulets against the dragon forces he is about to pass” (CAMPBELL: 2008, p. 57). In Harry's first encounter he meets Hagrid, the half-giant gamekeeper of Hogwarts whose mission is to retrieve the boy from his relatives' guard and introduce him to this new world. Hagrid takes Harry to Diagon Alley, a Wizarding redoubt in the middle of London, where he can find the tools necessary to get about in the new world: a wand, the sword of a wizard; a cauldron; an owl, which is the symbol of intelligence and knowledge; and, naturally, books, where he will find all he needs to know about this place and how it works.

At the moment Harry moves from the normal world – where he is a nobody – and enters the magical world, he is surprised by the fact that there he is considered a hero. He learns that at the age of 15 months he defeated Voldemort, the most dangerous wizard of all times. The past ten years of his life were everything but heroic, he suffered deprivations and was badly treated around the house, so the perspective of being somewhere where people know his name and treat him with respect is more than welcome by the little boy. At this point, Harry has not yet taken the time to consider the downsides of fame: as much as he is loved by most, he is equally hated by others, especially those who supported Voldemort in the past.

Now it comes to Harry's initiation. Along the seven books of the saga, Harry has to face the most varied challenges in order to stay alive. We find out early in the first book that Harry might have defeated Voldemort, but did not kill him, so Voldemort is trying to come back and finish what he tried to do ten years back: kill the boy. Jung tells us that "the universal hero myth always refers to a powerful man or god-man who vanquishes evil in the form of dragons, serpents, monsters, demons, and so on, and who liberates his people from destruction and death" (JUNG: 1968, p. 68). That is Harry's greatest challenge: to stay alive and escape Voldemort. All the dangers Harry faces are deadly ones; nothing is simple in his life, trouble always seems to find him. From his first year, when he and his newly-found friends Ron and Hermione take it as their duty to protect the philosopher's stone, to his seventh year, when the trio does not return to Hogwarts, for they have to search for the Horcruxes, the challenges they face are always incredibly dangerous. This is their road of trials, according to Campbell (CAMPBELL: 2008): in order to achieve their goal, they undergo several trials, such as the riddles in Book One, and the whole season in a camping tent (in the Forest of Dean and elsewhere) in Book Seven. Harry, as the reluctant hero of this adventure, recognizes, at an early age, that one has to persevere and struggle if he wants to attain his objectives, and that is what he and his friends do, because they do suffer, but invariably succeed.

It is important to point out that Harry does not always accept his challenge promptly. In fact, it seems that there are only a few times he takes the call willingly. At first, in Book One, he feels charmed by the magical world, where everything is new; but as he understands the dangers that this charming new world brings, which are very different

from those of the “real world” he has just come from, he becomes reticent. We cannot forget that our hero Harry spent the first eleven years of his life in our non-magical society, where the role of children is relatively limited; in other words, in our society, children do not usually fight for the rights of a people, the way he learns he has to do in his new magical world. Somehow, in that world, things are not so liquid as in the real world, so, if in normal circumstances Harry would take a stand for something, now he thinks carefully about it and calculates the risks; but again, he is the hero of the story, of his world, so the trials have to be overcome by him, and himself alone.

Harry's return happens all along these adventures, for he survives all of them; not unscathed though, because they leave physical and emotional marks, but his life is indeed intact and even strengthened. The ultimate return is in Book Seven, because now Harry has already destroyed the Horcruxes, which has weakened Voldemort to the point of mortality again, allowing Harry, finally, to kill him. According to Henderson, “those who have to learn to face death may have to relearn the old message that tells us that death is a mystery for which we must prepare ourselves in the same spirit of submission and humility as we once learned to prepare ourselves for life (HENDERSON: 1968, p. 145)”. Harry knows it is a risk he must take, either kill or die, so he faces his imminent death and hands himself over to his enemy, who does not hesitate to perform the Killing Curse on him. Henderson also mentions that “he [the hero] must see himself as if he were dead and entombed [...]. Only by such an act of submission can he experience rebirth (Idem, p. 125).”

As mentioned before, Harry's life, that is, his soul, has been strengthened by the many misfortunes he has suffered, and the Killing Curse murders only Voldemort's soul in Harry, not Harry's. Here we can see a clear representation of many of Campbell's (CAMPBELL: 2008) stages in Return, and I will signal them in italics. The first is that Harry has a near-death experience, meeting with Dumbledore in a kind of limbo, and finding out what was killed at that moment; Campbell (Idem, 2008) called it *rescue from without*, for Dumbledore, who is already dead, comes to aid Harry in his return to the world. Harry eventually returns, *crossing the return threshold*, and with his soul intact and his sacrifice, he has protected everybody, becoming *master of the two worlds*, magical and non-magical, making Voldemort a mere mortal, deprived of his frightening power. Harry finally

manages to defeat Voldemort forever and live as a normal person again, having the *freedom to live* and do whatever he pleases, without a burden on his shoulders any more.

Why does this simple story appeal so much to so many people of all ages? The answer could be in Jung's archetypes, as we have previously seen on Part One of this thesis. The myth of the hero is an example of archetype; according to Henderson, “the myth of the hero is the most common and the best known myth in the world. We find it in the classical mythology of Greece and Rome, in the Middle Ages, in the Far East, and among contemporary tribes. It also appears in our dreams. It has an obvious dramatic appeal, and a less obvious, but nonetheless profound, psychological importance” (HENDERSON: 1968, p. 101). That means to say that, whether you are a seven-year-old child, or a seventy-year-old senior citizen, the hero myth will be imbued in your subconscious and you will relate to it one way or another. We grow up hearing about the deeds of Hercules and the adventures of Perseus; on screen, we watch new heroes with incredible powers help humanity fight evil, such as Superman and Spider Man. The principle behind them all is the same, that is why we can relate to them. Henderson says that,

the battle between the hero and the dragon is the more active form of this myth, and it shows more clearly the archetypal theme of the ego's triumph over regressive trends. For most people the dark or negative side of the personality remains unconscious. The hero, on the contrary, must realize that the shadow exists and that he can draw strength from it. He must come to terms with its destructive powers if he is to become sufficiently terrible to overcome the dragon. I.e., before the ego can triumph, it must master and assimilate the shadow. (Idem, p. 112)

In other words, a hero is someone who is aware of his powers and the responsibility he carries on his shoulders, and he understands he must also cause destruction if he wants to overcome evil. That is what happens to Harry: a child at first, he discovers he has powers he could have never dreamed of, and does not know how to use them at first. As he grows older, he learns how to master them, but he can never use them to harm anyone; one example is, in Book Five, when he confronts Bellatrix Lestrange after her having killed Sirius Black. He uses the Cruciatus Curse on her, a spell that causes terrible pain on the receiver, but the pain she feels is far from terrible, because, as she puts it, one must “mean it” - in other words, Harry must hate the one at the end of his wand enough to want to cause that person pain, and he is too good for that. But later, when he finally faces his

destiny, he understands there is nothing else he can do except to kill Voldemort, to vanquish the serpent, thus coming to terms with his own destructive powers.

At the same time he is terrible, he is pure: Durand says that “the pure, exemplary hero remains the slayer of dragons (DURAND: 1999, p. 162).” Harry is the slayer of dragons (Book Four), serpents (Books Two and Seven) and other terrifying beasts. He also says that “it is because the Sphinx, Dragon and Serpent are vanquished that the hero is affirmed. The serpent thus has a symbolically positive role in the myth of the hero who conquers death. It is not only an obstacle and an enigma, but an obstacle that must be overcome by fate and an enigma that fate might solve” (Idem, p. 309). That is exactly what happens in *Harry Potter*: Voldemort is the heir of Slytherin, the serpent, he can speak with them, his pet is a snake. He chooses to take a serpent's body to host his soul and when he returns to life, although human-like, he has distinctive serpentine characteristics: face “whiter than a skull, with wide, livid scarlet eyes, and a nose that was as flat as a snake's, with slits for nostrils” (GOF, p. 697). Durand says that “the serpent is one of the most important symbols of the human imagination”, and that “it is an archetypological tangle. (...) It's the triple symbol of temporal transformation, fertility and ancestral immortality (DURAND: 1999, p. 305).”

Along the books, we learn Voldemort has undergone physical transformation since he left Hogwarts, and his features have become less and less human and more and more serpent-like. He could have followed any career he pleased, since he was one of the brightest students in his year, but all he aims at is spreading his ideas of purity of the wizarding race. Also, we learn his ultimate goal is to reach immortality, and he goes to any lengths to reach it, even if it means he will have to maim his soul in the process. According to Campbell, “to this very day, the possibility of physical immortality charms the heart of man (CAMPBELL: 2008, p. 161)”. Eventually, he becomes a tyrant, a personification of the serpent, the monster the hero must vanquish to free his world; but this will be further discussed in this part.

In Norse mythology, it is only through death that one achieves triumph. Hamilton affirms that

the only sustaining support possible for the human spirit, the one pure unsullied good men can hope to attain is heroism: and heroism depends on lost causes. The hero can prove what he is only by dying. The power of good is shown not by triumphantly conquering evil, but by continuing to resist evil while facing certain defeat (Hamilton: 1999, p. 314).

She continues by saying that “although the Norse hero was doomed if he did not yield, he could choose between yielding or dying. The decision was in his own hands. Even more than that. A heroic death, like a martyr's death, is not a defeat, but a triumph (Idem, p. 314).” At first, Harry fears death, for he cannot understand why Voldemort wants him dead, he cannot understand what he might have done to provoke this wrath and fear, so he tries to stay away, and when he cannot, he runs away. As he grows older, he realizes the greatest danger may not be death, but fear itself. This is shown in Book Three, when Harry faces the Dementors for the first time: the face of Voldemort is not as scary as a Dementor's face. Living a whole life in fear may prove something worse than death. When Harry learns about the prophecy, the wheels start turning in his head and he finally sees what he must do, and then he embraces his destiny, even if the result is death. “It was important to fight [...]. He must abandon the illusion that the shelter of a parent's arms meant nothing could hurt him (HBP, p. 759).” Harry has a cause – to save the wizarding world from tyranny – and although he is the Chosen One, he is not all-mighty, he needs the others to help him fight. In Campbell's words, “the last act in the biography of the hero is that of the death or departure. [...] The hero would be no hero if death held for him any terror, the first condition is reconciliation with the grave. (CAMPBELL: 2008, p. 306)”

On the other hand, Jaffé affirms that “in fairy tale and myth, the 'victorious hero' is a symbol of consciousness. His defeat [...] means the death of the individual, a phenomenon that appears in a social context as the submergence of the individual in the mass, and in art as the decline of the human element.” (JAFFÉ: 1968, p. 314) To Jaffé, a hero, as a symbol of hope for his people, cannot die; if he did, hope would die along with him. According to this premise, the loss of Harry's cause would mean the end of the hope of a better world to wizards. Dedalus Diggle mentions: “The hopes of the wizarding world rest upon your shoulders”(DH, p. 51). Further on, on page 487 of the same book, Lupin says, “The Boy Who Lived remains a symbol of everything for which we are fighting”. These are just two of the many examples we can find in the books, especially in Books Six and Seven. For those who believed that Harry was the Chosen One, the Boy Who Lived, nobody else

could accomplish the deed. He needs the help of his army; but without him his army is lost to do his deed.

Death is a central notion in *Harry Potter*, and the protagonists' advance through so many wild adventures represents the different stages in recognition and atonement with the idea of death. External to the narrative, we have more than once referred here to the fact that the very work is written while the author is undergoing a process of personal mourning. Also, through the *Bildungs* structure, the books approach the necessity to deal with loneliness and orphanhood. When we discussed the domesticating function of fairy-tales upon future citizens (and readers), we met first the trusting innocent child; who is then vicariously introduced to the notions of danger and violence through symbolic narratives, told to him/her while they are being safely nurtured at home; later to find that they have grown, cannot count on parental protection to the same extent, and have to solve their problems on their own. Further along, they may become themselves the parents who get so worried to realize that the protection they can offer is so limited. The hero, in his journey, climbs each of these stages. As to the things that transcend human limitations, such as the passing of time, the cycle of life, or death, the two characters in *Harry Potter* who are better equipped to deal with such questions are Albus Dumbledore, who represents knowledge, loyalty and wisdom, and Nicholas Flamel, the alchemist who possesses the philosopher's stone. We learn, at the end of the first book, that Flamel chose to destroy the stone and, as a consequence, lose the power to shun death. As to Dumbledore, he keeps silent about his conjectures concerning what happens after death. All we can feel, through Harry's perception, is that Dumbledore is an old man who has led a rich and rewarding life, and seems reconciled with the necessity of dying eventually.

It is after coming so close to Dumbledore in perception – and as a consequence becoming aware of his master's own limitations – that Harry mounts to the stages of hero, and then martyr. By deciding to sacrifice himself, if necessary, to destroy Voldemort, he ends up killing this fraction of the villain inside him, because Harry is one of the Horcruxes. In this sense, the fact that the part of Harry that dies is the part that belongs to Voldemort (through the Horcrux), the enigma of the prophecy is solved in a cheerful way: the Horcrux inside Harry is destroyed, but he still manages to remain alive. The bad omen was actually a

misguiding riddle, in the fashion of the three omens cast by the Weird Sisters in Shakespeare's *Macbeth*.

Campbell has something interesting to add to that,

his consciousness having succumbed, the unconscious nevertheless supplies its own balances, and he is born back into the world from which he came. Instead of holding to and saving his ego, as in the pattern of the magic flight, he loses it, and yet, through grace is returned. [...] Whether rescued from without, driven from within, or gently carried along by the guiding divinities, he has yet to re-enter with his boon the long-forgotten atmosphere where men who are fractions imagine themselves to be complete. He has yet to confront society with his ego-shattering, life-redeeming elixir, and take the return blow of reasonable queries, hard resentment, and good people at a loss to comprehend. (CAMPBELL: 2008, p. 186)

All these things happen to Harry in the story: he dies as a martyr, is guided by Dumbledore into the after-life experience, and through grace is returned with his boon, which is the salvation and protection of the whole Wizarding World from Voldemort. In this sense, to the progression mentioned by Campbell, from boy-hero into man-hero, we can also add the progression from hero into martyr. Martyrs are heroes who die for a cause as important and as noble as the eternal clash between Good and Evil. They may even be rewarded with a return from the realm of death. This is a very ancient tradition in Literature. We can think of the Arthurian legends, where Arthur, 'the once and future king' is not dead, but sleeping in the island of Avalon, and will come back whenever England needs him. This myth is older than Christianity, as can be proved by so many Norse and Oriental stories. In the Norse Pantheon, for instance, there is a special place in the land of the dead for the heroic warriors, the Valhalla. At special occasions, such warriors are allowed to interfere in earthly matters. The same happens with the Irish Fianna¹⁷ warriors, and probably in so many other cultures as well.

In Part One, we discussed the set of conditions under which the author wrote the saga, and the different reasons why one, some or all of these reasons may have led the protagonist to remain alive at the end of the story. In Part Two, we also considered the possibility that the prophecy about Harry's death might be interpreted as a riddle, to account for the passage

17 Originally, the word Fianna stood for small independent groups of Irish outlaws. With the time, they grew to be associated with the legend of Fionn MacCumhaill, a mythic Irish hero who now stands as one of the symbols of the Irish Nationalist Movement. According to the messianic myth (like Arthur in England or Don Sebastian in Portugal), MacCumhaill and his Fianna warriors are asleep in Fort Grianan (County Donegal), to wake up to take in arms whenever Ireland may need their help.

“neither can live while the other survives” in the omen. If Voldemort, the villain, dies, there is no room left for the hero. Therefore, Harry must resign the role of the hero to grow up normally and embark in a common life, doing things as getting a job, getting married, breeding a family, joining the cycle of life as all “common people” do. But these are probably the things that all heroes and heroines do after the “and they lived happily ever after” part of the story.

2.3 Dichotomies

2.3.1 “What’s in a name?”

Shakespeare, in *Romeo & Juliet*, uses this sentence to illustrate the insignificance of a name when we deal with deep, true feelings; it is common knowledge that the main reason Romeo could not be with Juliet is that they belong in enemy clans, as his “name” is Montague and she is a Capulet. In this case, a name, a word, something that should be just a sound, grows into such a strong predicament that it separates the two lovers, regardless of the patent truth that “that which we call a rose by any other name would smell as sweet”¹⁸.

A name is not only something socially important. It is also significant when it comes to mythology. Durand mentions the “all-powerful nature of names” and the “isotopy of visions and the spoken word” (DURAND: 1999, p. 151), giving examples of tribes in which the warriors have names in the form of mottoes, which convey power when pronounced by the chief. Accordingly, “the spoken word, the equivalent of Power, is then clearly isotopic in numerous cultures with light and heavenly sovereignty” (Idem, p. 152). That means to say that a name is a symbol of force, a confirmation of strength for the bearer, and as a consequence should not be uttered lightly.

That is the case with *Harry Potter*. The villain in the narrative, born Tom Marvolo Riddle, attributed to himself the powerful name Lord Voldemort, and transformed it into something to be feared by everyone, an anagram created from his original name (TOM MARVOLO RIDDLE = I AM LORD VOLDEMORT, CS, p. 337). With the creation of the name, there came along a myth that the mere sound of the name, when uttered, might

¹⁸ *Romeo & Juliet*, II, ii, 1-2.

bring about evil consequences. When we, readers, learn about Voldemort's existence, in Book One, wizards and witches refer to him as “He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named,” or “You-Know-Who.” Voldemort has grown so powerful that the mere thought of his name could cause fear and discomfort. Our hero Harry Potter, new to this world, cannot understand why people are so frightened by a name, and he never does, for he is one of the few who never falls into the habit of calling the villain by his epithets; Harry always calls Voldemort by his fabricated name, and, in Harry's case, the result is a positive one, as if he refuses to attribute that degree of power to a creature he is not convinced is so powerful after all.

As the novels progress, other characters start acting as Harry does. Professor Dumbledore, who has never been impressed by Voldemort's power either, believes that “fear of a name only increases the fear of the thing itself” (PS, p. 320). Dumbledore, Harry and their friends are the exceptions in the Wizarding World, because not even Voldemort's fieriest followers, such as Bellatrix Lestrange, or Lucius Malfoy, dare say his name: they call him “the Dark Lord”, a clear allusion to the villain's ambitions of being known as the most powerful dark wizard of all times, or as Lucifer himself. Anyone caught speaking their Lord's name “in vain” is severely punished.

However, in Book Seven, Voldemort decides to use this disrespect to his advantage. He puts a curse in his own name, a jinx, called *taboo*, which tracks the person who has spoken it and leads him/her to him, so he can dispose of the person at his will. Eventually, that is what makes Harry and his friends get caught. (DH, p. 490-491).

Harry Potter has a very curious selection of names for its characters. Rowling claims that she has “borrowed” some of the names from the guest book at St. Luke's Church, where she attended religious service in Tutshill, Chepstow, England, when she was a little girl. There are names that are full of meaning: Peter Pettigrew means, “grew petty”; Remus J. Lupin, with *Remus* alluding to one of the founders of Rome, who was fed by a female wolf, and *Lupin* being Latin (*lupus*) for “wolf”. Sirius Black, Harry's godfather, an animagus, had a black dog as his animal image, and Sirius is the Dog Star in the Canis Major Constellation. Professor Minerva McGonagall takes after the Roman goddess of wisdom and her surname pays homage to Scottish poet William McGonagall. The

Malfoys' last name comes from the French *male foi*, bad faith, just as as the Lestranges, means "the strange ones", and so many others. I am personally drawn to the matter of names because they help us, readers, trace a profile of the characters and understand their actions. The villain Voldemort, for example, creates his name from an anagram, forming a name translated into French as "flight of death" (*vol de mort*). This makes perfect sense when we consider the character, for those who embark in his journey are definitely taking a flight to death. Likewise, the characters above all act according to their denominations: "the petty one", "the wolf", "the dog", "the wise one", and so on.

2.3.2 Words of Good and Words of Evil

Harry Potter, like any fairy-tale construct, is build out of the opposition of two forces, good and evil. Harry is presented as what Durand names the "enlightened boy" – the ray symbolizing light, as Harry is marked with a lightning-bolt scar. Voldemort, the enemy, is represented as a serpent, with all the symbology associated with that image. However, at the same time the images are presented to us, they are also somewhat subverted, or questioned, as if the story is inviting us, all the time, to consider whether the old codes are still valid or whether the dichotomies have collapsed. The hero stands for good, the villain stands for evil. Still, nobody is purely good or evil in the Wizarding World. An example of this is found in the character Albus Dumbledore. He is old as a wise man, white-haired and long bearded as a druid, as Michelangelo's patriarchal God in the Sistine Chapel, as Blake's Urizen, and so many names which stand for Good. Even his first name, Albus, means "white" in Latin. However, in spite of how thrilled we are when he changes the numbers so that Gryffindor can be the champion house for the year, we have to acknowledge that that was not the proper behaviour to be expected from a fair headmaster. In Book Seven we range back to Dumbledore's distant youth to realize that, as happened to Tom Riddle, and to Harry Potter too, there were several moments when Dumbledore stood at a crossroads: depending on the course they took, each of these three characters might have ended in the circumstances of the other two.

In general terms, nobody can be only good or only evil. The main characters in the novels are presented in this light: nobody is perfect, they all have something they wished they had not done, but this is life. Whether we live in the fictional Wizarding World or in our actual

world, we will be faced with choices between good and evil everyday; what will make us tend to one side or the other are exactly the choices we make. In fact, the characters in the saga are quite like the people who populate our world nowadays, where we live in an era in which there are no clear boundaries separating good from evil.

2.3.2.1 Harry Potter vs. Voldemort: One and the same?

Along the novels, the similarities between the hero Harry Potter and the villain Voldemort are constantly pointed. Much in their stories is similar: the way they were orphaned at an early age; how they discovered they were different and did not belong to a regular world; the influence their actions has upon other people, for instance. Harry, a little boy of eleven, finds out why he bears that scar on his forehead, a constant reminder of the tragedy that fell upon him when he was only fifteen months old: a powerful Dark Wizard killed his parents and tried to kill him, but somehow the spell backfired. The question in Harry's mind, since he learns of it all, is: why?

From Book Two onwards, Harry is haunted by the fear of becoming as bad as Voldemort, for he starts discovering the many similarities between the two of them. As much assured as he is by his protectors that such things are mere coincidences, the suspicion keeps nagging him until it comes to surface in full force in Book Five, when Harry starts having glimpses of what the villain is doing, and feeling Voldemort's emotions at times. Harry fears that this is a sign that he is becoming evil like his antagonist, and is extremely worried, until he discovers that the reason is that both have a connection - one which must be either shut off or discouraged – and this puts his mind at relative ease.

In Book Seven, the avid reader can confirm the suspicion that arises in Book One: Harry has a part of Voldemort's soul inside him. If Voldemort is evil, does it mean that Harry is also evil? It is then that the similarities become differences. In Book Six, the author enlists many contrasts between Harry's life and Voldemort's: Dumbledore shows Harry, through images in the Pensieve, parts of Voldemort's life story, and that makes Harry understand why the villain has turned out the way he did. Not only there is a part in Harry which is evil, there is also a part in Voldemort which is not. Voldemort comes from an old family of dark wizards and witches, whereas Harry comes from a family of regular yet powerful

wizards and witches. Voldemort's mother died just after giving birth to him, leaving him at an orphanage to be reared, while Harry had all the love his parents could give him until they were murdered; in the words of Dumbledore, “Merope Riddle chose death in spite of a son who needed her [...] she never had your mother's courage [...]” (HBP, p. 311). Growing up with his aunt, uncle and cousin was not the most desirable experience a child could have, for they did not like him and feared his “freaky” behaviour, but still they gave him shelter and nurtured him into adolescence. Voldemort grew up in the orphanage; although he was amidst other children, he did not have friends, for the others feared his self-sufficiency. Harry does not have real friends until he enters Hogwarts, where he finds Ron and Hermione, his best friends for life, among others; the same happens with Voldemort, but the difference between his friends and Harry's is that while people gravitate around Harry because of who he is, for admiration and respect, Voldemort's so-called friends followed him because of his power: “as [Voldemort] moved up the school, he gathered about him a group of dedicated friends [...] This group had a kind of dark glamour within the castle. They were a motley collection; a mixture of the weak seeking protection, the ambitious seeking some shared glory, and the thuggish, gravitating towards a leader who could show them more refined forms of cruelty.” (HBP, p. 428-429). Voldemort became obsessed over his parentage, until he discovered his father was a Muggle (a common person, not related to the Wizarding World). After killing him, Voldemort began his quest for power and immortality. Harry, on the other hand, wants to know about his past to understand who he is, and to learn about his roots.

Ultimately, what happens is that Harry is human, so he makes mistakes, and he possesses a very human characteristic which is regret. On the other hand, Voldemort has given up his humanity, so he regrets nothing, because he feels nothing. He was deprived of love from birth and never knew anyone to supply him with the feeling. As Harry sees Voldemort's tale unfold, he sees the physical transformation the villain has gone through: from a beautiful boy who looked just like his Muggle father, his features became less and less human. Dumbledore tells Harry that Voldemort, like a true tyrant, who fears those he oppresses, has chosen his enemy and made him the person who would be most dangerous to him (HBP, p. 602); Harry, on the other hand, is protected by his ability to love, because he can see Voldemort's mind without damage to his soul, but the opposite is not true (p. 603). In other words, what makes Harry different from Voldemort is his ability to feel, to

love, especially. Durand says that “the meaning of all the symbols of this mythical set is related to the drama, if not the martyrdom, of a saviour who is allied with Good against monstrous theriomorphic Evil” (DURAND: 1999, p. 354). Harry is aware of his role as a martyr, and that is also something he fears. According to Campbell, “the hero of yesterday becomes the tyrant of tomorrow, unless he crucifies himself today (CAMPBELL: 2008, p. 303).” In other words, Harry would rather die than become a tyrant like Voldemort, and that is why he ultimately sacrifices himself.

2.3.2.2 The tyrant-serpent

According to Campbell,

The figure of the tyrant-monster is known to the mythologies, folk traditions, legends, and even nightmares of the world; and his characteristics are everywhere essentially the same. He is the hoarder of the general benefit. He is the monster avid for the greedy rights of “my and mine”. The havoc wrought by him is described in mythology and fairy tale as being universal throughout his domain. This may be no more than his household, his own tortured psyche, or the lives that he blights with the touch of his friendship and assistance; or it may amount to the extent of his civilization. The inflated ego of the tyrant is a curse to himself and his world. (Idem, p. 11)

In *Harry Potter*, Voldemort plays the role of the typical tyrant/monster, whose power is meant to spread through his whole civilization: he is known all over the Wizarding World, and generates chaos everywhere he goes. He also chose the serpent as the animal to represent him. According to Durand, “the serpent shares with the seed the qualities of burying itself in the ground and changing its skin.” (DURAND: 1999, p. 68) That is what happens to the villain along the story. As previously mentioned, Voldemort changed his physical appearance, going from a lovely little boy to a non-human-like creature; in this process, his resemblance to a reptile increased dramatically. The explanation we have in the books is the fact that he tried with all his might to achieve immortality; Campbell mentions that “to this very day, the possibility of physical immortality charms the heart of men” (CAMPBELL: 2008, p. 161), and this is so in *Harry Potter*. In Book Six, as Dumbledore and Harry study Voldemort’s story, they see the lengths the villain goes to achieve such triumph. The ultimate resource is the creation of something that Rowling calls *Horcruxes*, objects which contain part of a person's soul. Campbell also mentions something similar, saying that “another image of indestructibility is represented in the folk idea of the spiritual 'double' – an external soul not afflicted by the losses and injuries of the

present body, but existing safely in some place removed” (Idem, p. 150). Voldemort learns how to create a Horcrux at some point while still at Hogwarts, supposedly around his 17th year of age (HBP, p. 437-441); in order to do so, the creator must commit an act that rips one's soul apart, namely, murder. Voldemort's first murder is the one of his own father, followed by that of his grandfather; from then on, we lose track of the victims. Voldemort creates seven Horcruxes and hides them very well, thus becoming virtually immortal. In spite of having suffered physical damage, he can go back to life by restoring one of these pieces of soul into an empty vessel or body – which he does in Books One and Four, until he finally obtains a full body in Book Four.

Voldemort undergoes physical change to become the villain he is, having to split himself into doubles. This is an old notion, which can be found in many well-known pieces of literature, such as, for instance, Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, or Robert Louis Stevenson's *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, where we find physical deformity as a synonym of evil. Characters in Stevenson's novel have difficulty in describing Mr. Hyde, for his appearance is so strange, he is so deformed, that the only adjective they agree with using is 'evil'. Later on in that novel, Dr. Jekyll reveals that Mr. Hyde is his 'purely evil side'. Voldemort also wants to be recognized as purely evil, he wants people to fear his appearance, to fear the mere mention of his name. But the reason why it is not realised, especially with Harry, might be in the moment the saga was produced. Our century, and the end of the last one, saw major transformations in notions and values and concepts, one of them being that of evil. Bauman defends that we dream of a secure world, where we know “what is what, what is where and when one should expect something to happen” (BAUMAN: 2007, p. 94); a perfect world in which there is some evil, but it is confined and closely watched and guarded. However, this is just a dream. Reality shows us that evil is everywhere, so we grow up learning how to protect ourselves and those we care about from it, and that is what happens with Harry; that is why he does not fear Voldemort the way he should: he recognizes evil in him, but he knows that what made Voldemort into what he is is not pure evil, for it does not exist. If Voldemort were pure evil, he would disregard social conventions and act purely according to his instincts, which does not happen: he has a sense of old-fashioned chivalry in him, as shown in two occasions. The first, in Book Four, when Harry confronts him at the end, and he tells Harry there are duelling rules to be followed; the second, in Book Seven, when the battle at

Hogwarts ensues, Voldemort follows some protocols of war, such as allowing the enemy time to retreat and gather their dead.

2.3.2.3 Voldemort as a villain

Campbell explains that “the tyrant is proud, and therein resides his doom. He is proud because he thinks of his strength as his own; thus, he is placed in the role of a clown, mistaking shadow for substance; it is his destiny to be tricked. The mythological hero, reappearing from the darkness that is the source of the shapes of the day, brings knowledge of the secret of the tyrant's doom” (CAMPBELL: 2008, p. 289). In *Harry Potter*, we have a tyrant so drown in self-assertion that he believes his own lies and forgets the fact that there may be other people who are as powerful as himself, for “they have powers he knows not” (OOTP, p. 924). Dumbledore and Harry, in taking the trouble of learning about the facts about their opponent, put the pieces together as to where to start searching for Voldemort's fragments of a soul, which will lead to the tyrant's inevitable doom.

As a wizard, Voldemort knows much more than Harry does. In his knowledge, there are moments when he seems to be as experienced as Dumbledore, with the difference that the latter has learned, with age, not to allow himself to be carried away by his pride. Voldemort wants to leave his mark in the world through the damage he provokes. He does not intend to reach immortality through his descendants, possibly because they would carry on his abhorred Muggle genes. Zygmunt Bauman refers to the liquid idea of immortality as associated to notoriety. Conquering immortality means achieving notoriety through one's deeds. In *Mortality, Immortality and Other Life Strategies*, Bauman defines the act of a murderer as a plea for immortality: “a murderer is at the extreme of survival, because he wants to kill so that he can survive others; he wants to stay alive so as not to have others surviving him (BAUMAN: 1992, p. 34)”.

Harry also matches the role of the hero in liquid times, as defined by Bauman, because he has the sense of responsibility for the Other. Bauman says: “heroes and moral people are both called to sacrifice their lives; to die for a cause which is nobler, loftier, more worthy than their own self-preservation. [...] For a hero, that cause is the continuation or promotion or triumph of an idea: that of a nation, of a race, of a class, of progress, of a

'way of life', of God, sometimes of 'man as such'. [...] Death itself becomes the cause for the hero of a cause (Idem, p. 209)'' Harry learns about his fate, embraces it and with that, he assumes the role of the hero, knowing also that he will do whatever he has to do to for the sake of his cause.

2.3.3 Of Heroes and Martyrs in a Liquid World

We have been dealing, so far, with a range of different contributions so as to the role and function of the hero. Campbell, as above mentioned, differentiates between the boy-hero, who fulfils his personal quest, and the man-hero, who fulfils the collective task of his community (CAMPBELL, 2008, p.30). Edith Hamilton sets the discussion one step further when she relates the function of the hero and the function of the martyr (HAMILTON: 1999, p. 314). If we think of the image of the martyr, and consider Harry's disposition to die as one, when he decides he will put away his "fear of fear", we can consider what Gilbert Durand has to say about this expiatory exercise,

it is the settling of an old debt to the deity in the case of the expiatory sacrifice, the payment of a bill for a favour already received in the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and an advance payment in propitiatory sacrifice. Through the play of equivalences this transaction effects a substitution, a doubling that becomes a vicarious repetition by means of which the sacrificer or the sacrificed becomes master of time past and future by setting his debts. (...) The essence of sacrifice thus resides in the sacramental power to control time through a vicarious propitiatory exchange. Sacrificial substitution makes possible, through repetition, the exchange of the past for the past. [...] Through sacrifice, man acquires 'rights' over destiny, and thereby possesses 'a power which will control destiny and modify the order of the universe to man's liking'. (DURAND: 1999, pp. 299-300)

That means to say that Harry, in offering himself to Voldemort, is sacrificing in order to settle a debt, to exchange his past for the future of the wizarding world. At the point in the book when Harry surrenders to Voldemort, he still does not know he is a Horcrux himself, that is, he possesses a piece of Voldemort's soul inside him. Before reaching the discussion about Harry's decision to sacrifice himself for his group, it is time we consider the motif of the Horcruxes.

Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows has a curious title. The "deathly hallows" are objects that once belonged to Death as a personified entity, and that were given to three brothers in recognition for their bravery – the story is known as "The Tale of the Three

Brothers”. The first hallow is an unbeatable wand, the Elder Wand, which is capable to overcome any other wand; the second is a stone, the Resurrection Stone, which may bring people back from death; and the third is a cloak, the Invisibility Cloak, which renders the wearer undetectable. Word is that he or she who gathers the three objects will become Master of Death, for they will be able to shun it forever. Harry's mission in this book, along with finding the Horcruxes, is to find the Hallows, for they will help him fight Voldemort: the Hallows will allow Harry to become Master of Death, thus overcoming it and being able to escape from the hands of Voldemort. Voldemort is also after one of the Hallows, the Elder Wand, because he trusts that, with it, he will finally manage to defeat Harry – which he could not do either with his own wand or by borrowing wands from other wizards. “For the first time ever, [Harry] and Voldemort were united in wanting the very same thing (DH, p. 479)”. Both Harry and his readers recognize a change in the pattern here: usually, along the books, Voldemort is after Harry, and Harry trying to avoid him, but now, both men want the same object, and for the same purpose, which is to kill the other.

The journey of the hero Harry Potter, written in the last decade of the 20th century, has much of the tradition of the 19th century *Bildungsroman*. The fact that the traditional use of the *Bildungs* is not tuned to fashionable trend nowadays may account for some of the lack of regard serious criticism has shown for the saga. In a sense, this genre seems an anachronism, because the *Bildungs* deals with issues of identity, and criticism addresses issues of identity in a different way now. Our locus of perception is different from that of the 19th century. Since then, we have been through one and a half centuries of discussions related to identity, point of view, otherness, Euro-centricity, fragmentation, and all the rest. The curious thing about this is that, in spite of it all, the *Harry Potter Books* successfully seem to resume the old formula, and are eagerly read by 21st century citizens. Although it is not the aim of this thesis to deal on the psychological and social healing powers of literature, I have to acknowledge that they are to be accounted if we consider the Harry Potter phenomenon.

We have a rich set of incongruity in the saga. Sometimes we, readers, feel this comfortable sensation that there is order in the universe and that everything is kept well under control. At other times, we experience things through the perception of our hero/protagonist, and

freeze to realize that he is as much at a loss as we are, not having the least idea which button to press so as to make the machine of the plot work. But this also belongs in the journey of the hero. The hero never knows that he is the hero. We, the readers from the world of reality, do, because we see Harry's name in the title of the work, and because the author has chosen the line of the plot connected to Harry Potter to tell the story from. But she might as well have woven the story of Albus Dumbledore, or Neville Longbottom, or Hermione Granger, or Cedric Diggory, because everyone is the hero of one's own story, we all undergo journeys that are subdivided into three stages: *departure*, when we receive the call to an adventure; *initiation*, when we face trials in order to accomplish a mission; and *return*, when we fulfil the aim and are set free to start on a new plot.

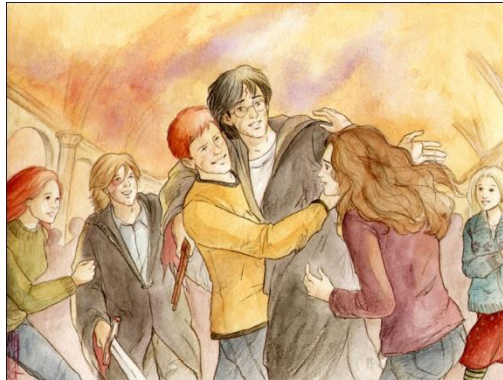
What interests me in respect to *Harry Potter* and the issue of the hero is that the saga addresses the subject in a way that Claude Lévi-Strauss would define as “a scandal.”¹⁹ On the one hand, Rowling's reversal into the 19th century's use of the *Bildungs* may be taken as a technical drawback. Philosophically, rhetorically and aesthetically, so much ground has been covered, from Dickens to Joyce, from Joyce to Naipaul, that Harold Bloom's sarcastic sneering at Rowling's becoming a millionaire by the use of an old cliché might be explicable – were it not for the inconsistencies, subtleties and complexities implied in the fictional universe of *Harry Potter*. Appearances may deceive us: ‘things open at the close’.

In the pages above we have mentioned the stages of the boy-hero, man-hero, and we have used now the word “hero” and then the word “martyr” to refer to two different stages of detachment and commitment on the part of the protagonist of the *Harry Potter Saga*. To close this discussion, I would like to refer to a complaint made half a century ago by Professor E. M. W. Tillyard, in the posthumous book, *The English Epic and its Background* (1966): in Christian times there is no room left for the hero, because now we have the image of the martyr to substitute for the image of the hero.

19 The Social Anthropological Method is a great contribution of Lévi Strauss's. As a scientist, he refuses to discard an element in a research just because that element was not expected to be there, or should not be there. Instead of interpreting a strange thing as “a mistake”, Lévi Strauss prefers to name the fact “a scandal”. This means that he recognizes there is something to it, that the incongruity exists for some reason, although this reason is not on the agenda of the experiment being carried out at the moment. Labeling something a scandal works as a reminder that something interesting has been found, which might prove useful in the future, and therefore is worthy of being investigated at some other time.

After reading books by Zygmunt Bauman, I would add that things are now much more complicated than they were in Tillyard's time. In liquid modernity, the era of Religion and the State has been replaced by the era of Bureaucracy and Business. This leads us into the following predicament: heroes fight for *right*. Who can tell what is right and what is wrong, in liquid times? Martyrs die for a cause they consider *good*. What is good and what is evil in liquid times? Until a new ethics is created, all values and definitions which seemed to work so well some decades ago do not apply any more. How can Harry offer himself to die as a sacrificial lamb to a cause, if there is no cause to die for? Voldemort never manages to convince us readers that he is more than a pathetic, yet very dangerous, lonely mistaken man with his ego quite deformed. It is as if the total randomness of Bauman's liquidity has leaked into the fictional universe of *Harry Potter*. Christian moral, ethical or religious values simply do not apply in the same way in liquid societies. At least not until a whole set of concepts has been re-evaluated and redefined, until a new code of ethics is devised. At the present moment, incongruities start to show when we keep the track of the journey of the hero as proposed by Campbell. Campbell's hero, like a student from the House of Gryffindor, is righteous, chivalrous and fights for right. But "right", "chivalry" and the standards of "goodness" belong in the previous, Judaic-Christian system in the real world, and in the Aristotelian system in aesthetics. They are yet to be tested in these new liquid times. Now you see it, now you do not: in some respects man and fiction have always been the same, and always will. In other respects, every single basic truth is to be redefined from the start.

CONCLUSION



All journeys eventually come to an end. So did Harry Potter's journey; so does mine now. At this moment I feel like a hero: my journey was hard, filled with obstacles and decisions to make before I could feel the mission was fulfilled. Now it is done, and here is the boon I present to the world. Consequently, to tie the ends, let us cast a final look at what has been done.

In the Introduction, as important as to establish what was to be done was to state what I was not going to do, such as discuss the implications of the term “Children's Literature”, or its relevance to this research. Well, but I ended up doing that. Not as an aim to be reached, but because it came naturally, as a point in the discussion. Regardless of the tones of appraisal, specificity or prejudice that can be connected with that expression, I here acknowledge that *Harry Potter* belongs in the field of Children's Literature. In the discussion held in Part One I suddenly found myself deciding that the label truly fits (especially if you believe that we can have children of all ages). For what is it that differentiates children's literature from other kinds of literature? Superficially, not much; the subdivisions and nomenclatures are virtually the same. But the spirit is different. Lerer (LERER: 2008) points out a certain medievalism in children's literature, a tendency to employ medieval images, that is not found in “regular” literature. This medieval influence is obvious in the *Harry Potter Saga*. From the setting – a castle in Scotland – to the

bestiary – unicorns, dragons, giant spiders – or the rituals – duels, pacts; not to mention the force underlying the whole story, Magic rites, *Harry Potter* is an heir to pieces of the Middle Ages in Europe that belongs in our days, in a fusion of elements that make us sometimes forget this is a contemporary saga whose plot develops in our contemporary times. Maybe that is why it is so easily labelled as Children's Literature, because children effortlessly fall into their imaginary worlds and lose themselves in them, forget where they are and live as if the new universe were theirs. In this case, it is easy to explain why teenagers and adults do the same when they read the *Harry Potter Books*: they/we recover the pleasure of childhood and exercise our imaginations the way we used to do many years ago, when we knew better.

In the Introduction I also made a point not to worry about the canonicity of the saga, and there I again undermined my own plea. Now, all I have to say about that is that perhaps nowadays *Harry Potter* leads the Children's canon, if that sort of thing exists. As for the Traditional Western Canon, the saga is too traditional in its form, and it is a best-seller. Of course the best-seller of today might become or not the canon of tomorrow. This happened to Shakespeare, the popular sensation of the 1600s in England. From the status of best-seller and entertainment, two centuries afterwards, due to the directions and the events that took place in history, politics and means of communication, Shakespeare ended up at the centre of the English-speaking Canon. The truth is I do not particularly care about that. What matters is that people have always loved Shakespeare's plays, and when I say that I am being comprehensive: from the lowest to the highest in the social scale. At his time, there were probably many who turned their noses to his works, who called him a fraud – some people still do that nowadays – but Shakespeare stood tall and is now used as an example of best-seller-turned-into-Canon in theses all over the world, including this one. The requisite of subsisting through time is perhaps the hardest to be reached when we consider the Canon. People's love of Shakespeare's play inscribed his name into immortality. There are also people who love J. K. Rowling's creation, but we do not know for how many generations this love will last, or what twists fashion, taste and aesthetics will be exposed to in the next years, decades and centuries. The first requisite is to remain alive, in the memories and in the bookshelves of people. In this sense, I hope my thesis can work as my contribution to this end. We could have, in a few years, the *Harry Potter Saga*

as the first recognized canon work of Children's literature, where we have many good and famous works, but none which openly has such a status.

Conversely, there are many things I said I would do in the Introduction, and which I did indeed. For instance, I proposed to discuss the relationship between the fans and the saga. What a fascinating time we live in, when a fan has the power and the opportunity to help decide the destiny of his/her favourite character! I am quite sure that never before in history the reactions towards the plot of a book affected the author so much as now, especially in the case of *Harry Potter*. The Internet has contributed immensely to bringing people closer together, to bridging the spaces between people, allowing an easy flow of communication among strangers. Using the well-known metaphor, everyone is just “one click away”, even famous people who were somehow “unavailable” before. At each new instalment of *Harry Potter*, fans would show their support or express their dislike through letters or emails, and even give suggestions to the author about what to do next with this and that character. As much as Rowling has claimed to have had the whole story conceived in her mind before even putting it to paper, it is impossible to know how much the opinion of the fans has influenced the author, even if unconsciously. We have discussed the fact that we will never know the reasons why the hero does not die at the end of the mythic cycle of his journey. Was that the end proposed by the author when she first conceived the work? To what extent did the reader's attachment to the protagonist, and the enthusiasm in the conversations on-line, alter, or not, the original project? In many ways, we are witnessing a structural change in the concepts involving narrative. When we discuss Literature, we talk about the role of the reader. When we discuss the media, we talk about the role of the fans. In the case of *Harry Potter*, and in this thesis, I have the feeling that the words “readers” and “fans” can be used interchangeably. I suspect that because the readers became fans they became so attached to Harry and his friends that they made it impossible for the author to finish the saga otherwise. Not to speak about the many other agents that nowadays influence the process of creation of anything, works of art included. What would happen to the toy industry and to the millions of jobs involved in the process had not the saga finished in a pleasant way?

So far, we have been discussing the closing of the story. But there is also the issue about the chapters previous to the last ones, which are in many ways the climax to the whole

saga, and the part in which, to my taste, Rowling's narrative ability reaches a level which was never attained before in the saga. That is where we have the Death Scene, and, again, we will never know to what extent the plot was following the determined natural flow intended by the author, or was changed for external reasons. Daniel Radcliffe, the actor who plays Harry Potter in the film franchise, and who became close to the author, expressed his wish to perform a scene of death. The fact is that limits between the creative act and public influence are not clear any more, because now we enter the times of foggy collective collaboration.

That leads us into another enticing feature, the response of the readers to the books. In Part One we comment on Eco's nomenclature (ECO: 1994) that lends us a name to refer to what has happened with the *Harry Potter Saga* along the years. That name is *literary fandom*. *Harry Potter* fans have raised this expression to unprecedented heights. They behave according to Mr. Eco's description: they know the names of all characters, their family trees, their dates of birth, their likes and dislikes; most importantly, they celebrate significant dates of this universe in the real world, in the fashion of what happens on June 16th with James Joyce and Bloomsday. In the same line, we now have the celebration of Harry Potter's birthday, on July 31st. Fans hold conventions in which a series of events related to activities described in the books take place, such as the Sorting Ceremony, the ceremony at the beginning of the school year in which students sit on a stool and the Sorting Hat is placed on their heads, thus deciding to which House the student belongs to. And so it goes with "flying lessons", Potions classes, among others, not to mention Quidditch championships²⁰. This new means of interaction involving fans/readers and the media is becoming more and more frequent in our time. We are all used, by now, to the reunions involving the *Star Wars* fans, who hold conventions all over the world. Or the *Star Trek* fans, who even learn Klingon, a dialect spoken by an alien race in the films, and which is the second most spoken artificial language in the world. Not to mention the influence of authors as Tolkien or Jane Austen in the new mediatic and literary creations of the last decades.

20 A Quidditch championship was held in my home town, Porto Alegre, in Brazil, in November 2009, and there will probably be a second one this year.

But resuming the *Harry Potter* line, the peculiarity of a *Harry Potter* convention is that it appeals to people of all ages. We can see whole families attending these conventions: while the children have fun in the games and attractions, parents delight in the expositions of materials, buy memorabilia, and eat especially-made snacks. In other words, the *Harry Potter* “literary fanship” is something that has transcended the concept of being a “reader”, embracing also those who are around him or her, and blurring the traditional limits that separate the world of fiction from the world of life. With this last simile I again borrow from Umberto Eco’s definition of the concepts *fictional world* and *actual world*. *Harry Potter* fans bring things that happen in a fictional world into our actual world. Which is just as well, because the fictional world has also mirrored the pertinent aspects of the actual world, anyway.

When J. K. Rowling created this fictional universe inside our own, she probably did not fathom that the opposite was going to take place. I believe the first sign came with the production of Fan Fiction by the fans, a clear demonstration of how at ease fans felt towards the story, so much that they felt entitled to play with it at their will. Readers become fans, and fans become authors. As mentioned in Part One, fans feel comfortable filling in the blanks left by the author, or prolonging situations, or even creating alternative endings to some story lines. Next there came the above-mentioned fan meetings, which turned into conventions. And now, we have the ultimate gift: Universal Studios in Florida, United States, have built a theme park called *The Wizarding World of Harry Potter*, which opened on June 18th, 2010. That is another way of bringing the fictional world into the actual one. People will be able to visit Hogwarts and attend classes; they will have a meal at the Three Broomsticks Pub and taste the infamous Butterbeer; they will shop for candies and trinkets at Zonko's Joke Shop. Once again, the limits between fiction and reality will be put to test, and the new generations will not know what came first, if the park or the books. Not to mention the kaleidoscopic dimension of this play: the Florida Hogwarts echoes the Film Hogwarts, which echoes Oxford University; the visiting public joins in mock magic rituals which refer to fictional representations of ancient traditional historic rituals, and so we go, endlessly in and out of the thin borderline that separated the fictional world from the actual world, as defined by Eco.

But let us resume the track of the things that were done in this thesis. Besides the support granted by the beautiful essays written by Umberto Eco (ECO: 1994), I also had the help of five other important theorists to shape my research. The first was Seth Lerer (LERER: 2008), with his insight on Children's Literature mentioned at the opening of this Conclusion; the only addition I want to make is to say that Lerer's text was responsible for changing my opinion in what respects Children's Literature. In fact, his study "lifted the veil" of prejudice off my eyes and abbreviated my ignorance towards this rich new field. His ideas helped me accept the fact that *Harry Potter* belongs in the realm of Children's Literature and must be proud of that.

Next came the contribution of Carl Jung (JUNG: 1968), who made me feel authorized when speaking about matters of images, imagination, archetypes and symbols. Jung and his disciples helped me in the sense that, through their studies, I began to understand the notion of universal, elemental images, the archetypes, which are so present in *Harry Potter*. The imagery in the *Harry Potter Books* are the ultimate reason why, as far as the mechanisms of the human mind are concerned, the limits between the actual world and the fictional become irrelevant. What accounts for the fruition of this reading experience is the reality of perception. The historical bases to the rituals performed in the books, whether Rowling's grounds to do this or that are rational, emotional, or even economic, these become petty details that simply do not count if we address the books in Jungian archetypal terms.

When I refer to Jung's disciples, I mean predominantly two names. The first of the two is Gilbert Durand (DURAND: 1999), who contributes for the ideas brought by Jung with his analysis of Diurnal and Nocturnal Regimens. After reading Durand's *Anthropological Structures of the Imaginary* (1999), I could not resist the impulse of making a list of the Diurnal and Nocturnal images I met with in the text. It took some time for me to overcome the first stages of associating the concepts of Diurnal and Nocturnal with the images of Day and Night, at first; and then with the notions of Good and Evil. No matter how much aware we are of the fact that things are not divided or separated into good and evil – they are both things simultaneously - it is difficult to break with the dichotomies we are so used to in literature and in daily life. But eventually I got to understand that "diurnal" is not necessarily good, or associated with the day; it rather relates to our disposition when we

are awake, performing our role in the social group and behaving according to the laws of society and civilization. The nocturnal regimen, on the other hand, evokes our perceptions when we are alone and unguarded, such as when we are asleep and dreaming, performing according to the rules of nature and not according to social rules. I also spent a long time trying to decide whether the *Harry Potter Books* are predominantly diurnal or nocturnal. Of course they are both things, yet I still have the feeling that the diurnal aspects of the narrative are the ones that make it so important to us.

The other disciple of Jung's who proved most valuable to the study of the protagonist as the hero of the narrative was Joseph Campbell (CAMPBELL: 2008). In Campbell, Psychology gives way to its sister Mythology. Campbell's ideas, applied to *Harry Potter*, reveal how deeply the saga is influenced by the many mythologies that spring from British folklore. Of course we feel the presence of the Greco-Roman elements, but the most striking imagery emerges from ancient Celtic and Norse traditions. Pinpointing what features in the saga belong in which specific mythological tradition would be a delightful exercise, but that would escape the scope of this thesis. For that reason, the focus of my attention closes on the study of the protagonist, Harry Potter, the typical epic hero invested with touches of modernity. Potter fits perfectly into Campbell's definitions: he comes from nothing, discovers his magical gift at an early age and along with it, the burden he has to carry, which is to free his people from a monster-tyrant. He undergoes the three stages of the monomyth proposed by Campbell – initiation, departure, return – and in the end, presents his world with a boon, which is its liberation. In this sense, Harry is classical. And he is also modern because, according to Campbell (CAMPBELL: 2008), it is not society that leads him to duty, but the opposite: he takes it to himself to perform his deeds, acting not only as a hero, but also as a leader.

The last theorist to contribute in my research is Zygmunt Bauman, whose reasoning reaches the core of this thesis. My intention was to analyse three key elements in the *Harry Potter Saga*: the journey of the hero, the approach to death and the treatment of dichotomies, under the light of current studies on social paradigms; my purpose, stated in the title of the thesis, was to re-evaluate standards based on these three elements. Before I dig into Bauman, outlining these elements proved a much more complicated task than what I first imagined. *Harry Potter* may not be considered canon literature, but it does present

many elements worthy of analysis, and such analysis can be performed through so many different approaches, that what first seemed to be shallow proved to be extremely deep when looked at closely. Using Eco's metaphor, *Harry Potter* is deep woods, with dense vegetation and rich in specimens. Therefore, it was necessary to open a way into these woods and to crop a few branches.

I first approached the journey of the hero, because *Harry Potter* is a Bildungsroman, that is, it is centred around the formation of one specific character, Harry Potter, who is also the hero of the story. Campbell, Jung, and Durand helped me outline this hero and verify if he could really be considered as such. Those theories, applied, generated satisfactory results. Still, one question remained: what can we do with the classical hero in the 21st Century? How is it that the classical hero still applies in our crazy contemporary times? Why do not people get tired of such a predictable kind of hero? The next challenge was to explain why this formation novel that tells the story of a hero still captivates so many fans in our new *fluid* times. "Fluidity" is a metaphor created by Zygmunt Bauman. He proposes that our times are those where forms do not solidify because they melt before being cast, thus giving way to other forms that do not have time to solidify either, and the limits of one combine with the limits of the other, in such a way that it is almost impossible to ascertain something with one hundred percent of surety. This liquefying of forms contributes to the diffusion of the collective and the creation of a false sense of community; that is, one will claim to do something in the name of others, but his motives are entirely individual. We do not live in isolated communities any more, but in networks, where one person knows another person, who knows someone else, who knows somebody else, who knows you, but no one actually knows the other; we can resort to one another when necessary, and only *if* necessary. However, one notion that has not been lost, and even seems a little utopia, is the idea of the hero. The hero continues to be the one who defends the others, who is willing to sacrifice himself for the others. In a time when heroes are mistaken for idols, Harry Potter comes along as a representation of all the qualities necessary in a hero: in the last years of the 20th century, he is the hero who takes as his task to "do the right thing", to defend his people against oppression. His society is very medieval in customs, but at the same time, modern in thought and attitude: all this society thinks about is to save and protect itself. In Book Six we have an example of that: at the beginning, when the students are returning to Hogwarts for another school year and they notice many classmates are missing, the

explanation provided is that parents do not want to expose them to any risk, so they prefer to take their children away than encourage them to stand up for themselves. Also, the whole Wizarding world knows who Harry Potter is and what he is supposed to do; even so, only a few encourage him to carry on, the others recommend him to flee. Thus, the successful reception of the hero Harry Potter by the reading public can be explained in terms of this longing our society has to have someone to stand up for us, to face the fight in our names. In this era of relationship sites, where one only knows people in virtual reality, what people want is to have someone in flesh and blood they can look up to. In fiction, Harry Potter serves this purpose.

Bauman proved also very useful in providing me with a point of intersection where the three paths I have chosen to develop converge. These paths are the Journey of the Hero, Death, and Dichotomies. And Bauman's help comes from his approach to the times we live in nowadays, our *times of liquid modernity*. This notion makes us look at the old things through a new perspective. All this made me reconsider the Hero, Death and Dichotomies.

The hero represents our ideal of man's best possible actions and reactions when dealing with the unknown and with the things we fear. Among the things that are unknown to us and that we fear, Death represents the utmost danger to cope with. As to dichotomies, they are the key tool to the philosophic reasoning used during the development of our Western process of civilization. Western methodology to knowledge is to divide something into binary opposite pieces to study, analyse and understand it. Or so it was, before the new liquid times.

After surrounding the object (*The Harry Potter Books*) through several different angles, my advisor and I chose our questions respecting Death in this way: how is death conceived in *Harry Potter*? In that fictional world, what happens to people after they die? The answers we got range from: "It depends" to "We don't know."

In my opinion, when the *Harry Potter Books* were published they were immediately bought by so many people because they dealt with these three fundamental aspects, the Journey of the Hero, Death and Dichotomies. The plot of the saga shows the journey of our little hero as he embarks into the search of answers to these existential questions, answers

that we, the readers, are also so eager to find. We buy the books because we want the answers. No matter how often so many wise characters in the story tell us that they have no answers to offer, we readers keep expecting to find something. It is as if the books have a double message, an explicit “no” hiding an implicit ‘yes’.

In Part Two, I made a point to list and examine every single death in the story, as you can see in the Appendices and Annexes section at the end of this thesis, to verify what message it conveys concerning the existential answers pursued. Eventually, I got to the conclusion that the answer I did not want to listen to is the obvious one, that there is no answer. The books leave doors open to different answers, but they do not show where those doors lead to.

Some people die fighting, for example Cedric Diggory, who is killed in front of Harry, and comes back to help him fight Voldemort at the end of the book. Also Sirius Black, Remus Lupin, Albus Dumbledore, and Severus Snape return in the last battle to help Harry do what he must do. Such scenes echo Nordic and Celtic mythologies, where the realm of the dead is divided in different regions. In one of them we find the warriors who have died in a battle, and become guardian spirits to their people. According to myth, they may return whenever they are most needed. One of the many instances of this archetype of the Dead Warrior is found in the Fianna warriors in Irish mythology (DEANE: 1986, p. 76.). Contrary to what might be expected, however, there are other characters who die in combat and never return, and characters who die naturally, of old age, like Professor Binns, who becomes a ghost. Once more we are left without an answer to this riddle.

Another way of putting this is to say that we have to accept the fact that we will not be rewarded with answers at the end of the journey. The goddess creator to the *Harry Potter Universe*, the author of the saga, is just another person living for some decades on the planet and asking the same questions that are asked in both worlds, the real one and the fictional one. By reading *Harry Potter* we will not learn how we became human living beings, if we are here by chance or on purpose, if we are an accident of nature or if we have been created; nor if after we die we will go on existing, on what terms, or what.

Still, there are things we can learn from the narrative, through the characters presented as the wise ones. Among them, Dumbledore is the one we respect the most. He is old, prudent, intelligent, and relatively judicious. The things he teaches Harry invite the protagonist – and the readers – to accept life as it is. “Acceptance” is the key-word when we deal with the cycle of life. At the close of Book One, Dumbledore tells Harry that Nicholas Flamel is so well tuned with the movements of the cycle of life that has chosen to destroy the philosopher’s stone. The historic Nicholas Flamel was an alchemist born in the 14th Century, said to have found the secret of turning all things into gold with the help of a chemical substance known as the philosopher’s stone. The stone became later a symbol in alchemy that represents the power to rejuvenate (BURT: 1885, p. 150). In this sense, the historic Flamel is brought into *Harry Potter* as a fictional character, a wizard who has remained alive and strong for centuries due to the power of the philosopher’s stone.

The physical semblance of Albus Dumbledore clearly evokes the image of the druid. In Celtic tradition, the old druid represents the final stage in personal development respecting the cycle of life (BAGGOT: 2002, p. 84). The old druid’s energy is so well-balanced with the energy of the earth that he willingly accepts to have his energy diluted and melted with the energy that surrounds him.

In the end, the contribution of the *Harry Potter Books* to this discussion, in my opinion, is the acknowledgment that one must come to terms with Fear. This is the great victory achieved by Harry at the end: he learns how to deal with the things he fears most. This is what his counterpart, Voldemort, is not able to do. Voldemort loses himself by splitting his personality into so many fragments, whereas Harry fights towards unicity, towards becoming “one”, which is also an allegory to the search of identity encrypted in the *Bildungsroman* tradition.

Harry Potter is a saga that springs from death, in two dimensions. In the fictional world, Harry is assimilating the fact that he is an orphan. The same seems to happen in the real world, respecting the author as a person²¹. The saga was conceived by the author in a turbulent period of her personal life, when her mother was suffering from a devastating

21 Here I use the expressions “fictional world” and “real world” in the sense proposed by Umberto Eco, as established in the Introduction of this thesis.

disease and the aura of death loomed over. This enriched Rowling in many metaphors, into the “spirit” of the saga. Within the narrative scope, Harry Potter becomes a hero because of his journey through death. He is simultaneously haunted and protected by the death of his parents. In a sense, it is his arch-enemy, in attempting to kill Harry, who empowers him towards becoming a hero. Early on, the boy discovers he is a target and has to fight for his life, and when he is older, he discovers his burden is nothing more than the death of his enemy, or his own. Killing and dying are common things in this universe: killing is the way the “bad ones” get rid of the “good ones”, who die, or not.

Bauman helped me analyse the dichotomy present in the saga. From the very first pages of Book One, we understand there are two opposing forces in the Wizarding world: good and evil. Such forces are determined at school, in the case of those who attend Hogwarts: out of the four Houses the students are divided into, three are considered “good” – Gryffindor, Ravenclaw and Hufflepuff – and one is considered “evil”, in the sense that as a consequence of the values they pursue, Slytherin produced the greater number of dark wizards. But such disposition of forces is controversial. In a time like ours, if the aim of a people, or of a government, is to end evil and defend good, where is the definition of what is good, or evil, to whom? Sometimes a very good person – because he or she is a good person – may prove a weak leader and fail to provide for the needs of the people. Otherwise, why would the existence of such a house be allowed? Is Harry Potter, the main character of the saga, who belongs to Gryffindor, to be considered “good” simply because he belongs in that house? And what do we do with the fact that the hat’s first suggestion is that Harry enter Slytherin? The whole range of symbols in the story evolve around this issue, such as the scar Harry carries on his forehead, a lightning bolt, a symbol of light; his nobility, the inability of doing anything hideous without a severe crisis of conscience afterwards – see the Sectumsempra spell episode in Book Six. On the other hand, we have the representation of evil in his antagonist, the villain of the saga, Voldemort, who, as we learn on Book Six, has always shown a tendency for cruelty and for judging himself superior to others; when time came for him to go to Hogwarts, it was only natural that he was placed in Slytherin, where he could develop his potential. Naturally, two such antagonistic characters are bound to have much in common, which is the case in *Harry Potter*, where it is made clear that what sets them apart is one's ability to love and the other's lack of feeling. Harry loves his friends and adopted family, the Weasleys, to the

point of sacrificing himself for them; Voldemort commands that his followers sacrifice themselves for him without the least remorse. But there is also another characteristic that not only helps setting them further apart, but also shows how current this topic of dichotomy is to us: Harry, the hero, is a flexible human being. According to Bauman, “the individual must be able to deal with his choices and change tactics or styles at short notice, abandon commitments or loyalties without regrets, pursue opportunities according to their availability” (BAUMAN: 2007, p. 4). Harry is one of these individuals, because the world he lives in forces him to decide on his course of action just before taking it, not leaving room to much planning; as well as the alliances he is forced to make to achieve his goal. On the other hand, Voldemort represents that evil we fear, that force that has nothing of human left in it any more and that we wish we could contain. We can go back to the question I posed in the beginning of the paragraph: if the aim is to end evil and let good prevail, why does not anybody do something to stop evil? In *Harry Potter*, Voldemort, is evil personified, which makes things very easy: destroy Voldemort and everything will be well again. And Harry manages to stop him. But then, with the coming of the next generation at the end of the last novel, we are reminded that he has not stopped evil in a general way, the cycle is starting again. Dichotomies exist because one force depends on its counterpart to have a meaning. In liquid times, nothing is pure, and the *Harry Potter Saga* helps us see it. The mere existence of Slytherin proves that good and evil not only must co-exist, but that they are relative concepts and that one depends on the other to take its stand. The limits between them are liquid, they melt together; alliances change all the time, and before we can form a judgement, the notion has liquefied again.

And here we reach the uppermost dichotomy: Good versus Evil. Once more we are frustrated in the search of a simple answer to the question proposed: what is the “truth” concerning the opposition “Good” versus “Evil” in the fictional universe of *Harry Potter*? The message we get is ambiguous. The general frame of the narrative, if analysed through the tools we get from Campbell, show the traditional binary opposition where we have the traditional hero, Harry Potter, and the traditional villain, Voldemort. As we examine things closer, though, the matter is more complex than that, from the episode with the Sorting; to the fear both Harry and Dumbledore share about the evil inside themselves; to the memories Dumbledore has of a time when there was hope for Voldemort. Voldemort’s denial to comply with the cycle of life and his frantic quest for immortality is what dooms

him. Bauman (BAUMAN: 1992) affirms that immortality was, in the past, a concept that compelled people to reproduce, thus producing heirs, who would carry on the genes and the legacy of the family one step further into immortality. Now, the quest for immortality has become one of notoriety: I will only be immortal if I do something extraordinary in this life, therefore being recognized for it. This crave is so intense that it leads people into disproportionate reactions, such as fighting a hopeless fight, for instance, investing all their money in beauty treatments and aesthetic/cosmetic surgeries, as if that would grant them eternal youth. Voldemort, in *Harry Potter*, wants both things: to be acknowledged as the most powerful and terrible dark wizard of all times; and to live forever, through the separation of the parts of his soul. If we consider this character in the light of Bauman's thought, Voldemort is at the extreme of survival. He will be remembered as a murderer, it is only through the depriving of other people's lives that he will remain. And instead of generating an offspring, he only manages to subdivide himself into smaller, and weaker, fragments of one soul. All the things Voldemort strives negatively to achieve, and fails²², Harry reaches apparently "by chance", maybe because he is well tuned with the movements of the cycle of life. He wins the battle, becomes the most famous wizard of his generation, allows nature to pursue its course and, at the end of the saga, we see him as a father allowing his children to start their own journey.

The last point I would like to raise is that we must not forget that this thesis is written from inside the scope of Literature, more than Philosophy or Religion. Therefore I find it important to say something about the writing and publishing practices involving a popular saga as this, in our *liquid times*. Consider the author preparing her books for publication and receiving thousands of suggestions from her fans on the Internet; being approached by Warner Bros.'s screenwriters, directors, producers, and the like. It is impossible to know what remains from Rowling's original project and what has been changed, and why. Consider, for instance, the long-expected end of the narrative. Was the protagonist to die at the end, or not? In terms of the archetypes presented in the narrative, that would not matter much, in Jung's or Campbell's terms. The hero may die or not, as long as his quest is successfully carried out. Also, if we think of the *Harry Potter Books* as children's literature, protagonists in children's literature should not die at the end of the story. Or, at

22 In this sense, Voldemort does what Macbeth does, in Shakespeare: instead of allowing the natural flow of the cycle of life to take place, they hopelessly strive to change the flow of the river of life. In this sense, Voldemort lacks the wisdom Dumbledore and Flamel seem to have.

least, they did not die in the times of *solid modernity*. Nowadays, however, this has become quite possible to happen. In *Bridge to Terabithia*, for instance (by Katherine Paterson, 1977), Leslie, the female protagonist, dies in an accident near the end of the book, exactly as she crosses the bridge that separates the world of reality and the world of fiction. This can mean that, in *liquid times*, nothing can be trusted any more, not even the safety and happiness in children's books and in the world of make-believe.

As to keeping the hero alive at the end of the saga, we will never know the weight of each of the elements that led Rowling to do things that way. To what extent that was the original intention kept or redirected? To what degree did the fact that the readers pleaded Harry's case influence the author? Surviving is another symbol of our times. When he decides to fight until death for that in which he believes, Harry Potter approaches the status of the martyr, the one willing to sacrifice for his people. This in a way redeems him, and might justify his getting a second chance. Bauman (BAUMAN: 1992), in search of a new ethics for morality, claims that sacrificing for the other, dying in the name of the other, is the ultimate proof of morality. In this sense, the lesson *Harry Potter* presents us with is that, for a great deed like that, one deserves to be rewarded; in his case, the reward is a second chance to live. If the intellectual, sociological, philosophical dimensions of this idea did not strike the author, maybe the prosaic non-rational effects of the same phenomenon did: money. Perhaps the film franchise has determined that a lighter ending to the saga would provoke a higher selling of the satellite *Harry Potter* products, or make the audience readier to buy their tickets to the next film sagas to follow this first, such as *Spiderwick*, *Twilight*, and whatever may come next.

In terms of Literature, the conclusion I come to is that the same necessity of re-evaluating standards – moral, ethical or aesthetical standards – that we experience in personal life and in society is present in our subject, the writing of literary criticism. We are not prepared as persons to deal with the ever-changing rules of the game. Neither are we as teachers, translators or literary critics. This seems to be a process of “learn while you do”, when things are so different from the way they were some decades ago, in times of solid modernity, when it was so clear what we could do and what we could not do, for instance, when writing a thesis or a literary essay. The truth is, now I am at least as excited as I am scared of the fact that there is so much freedom for us as readers, as critics, as writers. Our

world is liquid now, either because it progressively became thus, or because it has always been liquid, only that before we chose to see it as solid. When I think about the world of writing and authors, I have a feeling it has probably always been so *liquid*.

After all, what do we see in this *Harry Potter Universe*? Allow me to go back to the general epigraph that opens this thesis. It was chosen primarily because of my wish to investigate the appeal of the saga to people of all ages. It was only later I realised it answered to several aspects of my quest. There we have the Philosopher's Stone, representative of Death or, conversely, the quest for immortality, a solid form; the mirror, symbol of dichotomy, showing what we are or what we wanted to be; and Harry's triumph in obtaining the Stone, the triumph of the cycle of the Hero. It does not matter if we are in the *actual* or in the *fictional* world, for the quest is the same. The saga has crossed the barrier of the millennium, therefore it presents features of the old-fashioned ways to write a story, as well as modern ones; it is at the same time *solid* and *liquid*, like a mirror, like the Philosopher's Stone.

In short, although I would love to go on writing forever, it is time to stop. I am aware there are many things I left behind, but, as little as it may seem, I said all I had to say for now. This is my boon. This thesis is my contribution to the discussion about the contemporary forms of writing literature. This is just the beginning. I hope other researchers around the world will pursue these questions further, in their own way, with their own favourite corpus of investigation. As I have said time and again in several parts of this thesis, the path was rather thorny; using Eco's metaphor, the woods I entered were thick and obscure, like the woods around Hogwarts school. I believe the hardest part was having to neutralise what people usually think when the words "Harry Potter" are brought into a conversation. But I am very glad with the outcome of this adventure. This thesis is my personal feat, the input I present as I close my journey with the hero Harry Potter – a journey that makes me feel like a hero as well. I hope you have enjoyed reading it, no matter to what level, and I also hope it will serve as a tool for many more to come.

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APPENDICES AND ANNEXES

Appendix A

DIURNAL AND NOCTURNAL ORDERS AS FOUND IN THE <i>HARRY POTTER BOOKS</i>						
Orders	Diurnal		Nocturnal		Harry Potter	
Structures	Heroic		Dramatic		Antiphrastic	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - idealisation - diaereticism - symmetry - polemical antithesis 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - systematisation - dramatisation - historicising - partial cycle or total progressism 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - doubling - viscosity - sensorial realism - miniaturisation 	
Principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - exclusion - contradiction - identity 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - causality (final and efficient) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - perseveration - analogy - similitude 	
Dominant Reflexes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - postural dominant (manual) - sensations at a distance (sight, hearing) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - copulative dominant (rhythmic) - sensorial supports (kinetic, rhythmomusical, etc.) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - digestive dominant (coenaesthetic) - thermic supports - tactile, olfactory, gustatory 	
Verbal Schemata	Distinguish		Link		Mix	
	Separate ≠ mingle	Rise ≠ fall	Mature progress	return	Descend, possess, penetrate	
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - idealisation - symmetry - systematisation - historicising - doubling <p style="text-align: center;">(pred.) NOCTURNAL</p>	
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - identity - causality - perseveration - similitude <p style="text-align: center;">(pred.) NOCTURNAL</p>	
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - manual - sight - kinetic <p style="text-align: center;">(pred.) DIURNAL</p>	
					(pred.)	
					NOCTURNAL	

“Epithet” Archetypes	- pure ≠ sullied - bright ≠ dark	High ≠ low	Forwards future	Backw ards past	Deep, calm, warm, intimate, hidden		- pure ≠ sullied - bright ≠ dark - future - past (pred.) DIURNAL	
Tarot	sword	(sceptre)	baton	denary	Cup		Wand (pred.) DIURNAL	
Substantive Archetypes	- light ≠ darkness - air ≠ miasma - heroic weapon ≠ bond - baptism ≠ stain	- summit ≠ abyss - heaven ≠ hell - chief ≠ subaltern - hero ≠ monster - angel ≠ animal - wing ≠ reptile	- fire-flame - son - tree - seed	- wheel - cross - moon androg yne - plural God	- microcosm - child - Tom Thumb - Animals within animals - colour - night - mother - receptacle	- dwelling place - centre - flower - woman - food - substance	- light ≠ darkness - heroic weapon ≠ bond - summit ≠ abyss - hero ≠ monster - wing ≠ reptile - fire-flame - child - animal within animal (pred.) DIURNAL	
From Symbols to Synthemes	- sun - azure - eye of the father - runes - mantra - weapons - closure - circuncision - tonsure	- ladder - staircase - Bethel - steeple - ziggurat - eagle - lark - dove - Jupiter	Calendar, Arithmology, Triad, Tetrad, Astrobiolgy	-Initiation -“twice- born” -orgy -	Sacrifi ce dragon spiral snail	- stomach - swallower and swallowed - kopolds, dactyls - Osiris - Dyes - Crystals - Melusine - veil - coat	- tomb - cradle - chrysalid - island - cave - mandala - boat - basket, sack - egg - milk, honey	- runes - weapons - closure - staircase - initiation - “twice-born” - Philosopher's stone - sacrifice - dragon - veil

			Philosoph er's Stone -Music	bear lamb, hare spinnin g wheel tinder box churn	- cup - cauldron	- wine - gold	- cup - cauldron - tomb - cave - egg - triad (Harry, Hermione, Ron) - calendar (pred.) NOCTURNAL
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Appendix B

List of deceased characters in Harry Potter

Source: HP Lexicon (www.hp-lexicon.org)

Caused by Death Eaters:

- Edgar Bones and his family (PS4).
- Benjy Fenwick: member of the Order of the Phoenix in the 1970s (OP9).
- Gideon and Fabian Prewett: it took 5 Death Eaters to kill them (PS5, OP9).
- Marlene McKinnon and her family (PS5, OP9).
- Mr. Thomas: Dean Thomas's natural father (JKR).
- 12 Muggles killed when Peter Pettigrew blew up the street "with a single curse" during his escape into the sewers (PA3, 10). It was covered up in the Muggle news as a gas explosion.
- Bartemius Crouch, Sr., murdered by his son (GF)
- Broderick Bode: wounded by Death Eaters and killed by Macnair while he was recuperating at St. Mungo's.
- Sirius Black: killed by his cousin Bellatrix Lestrange (OP).
- Emmaline Vance: "nastily" murdered by Death Eaters in the first weeks of the Second Wizarding War (late June or early July 1996) (HBP1); Severus Snape claimed to Bellatrix that he was the one who betrayed her (HBP5).
- Amelia Susan Bones: murdered "nastily" by Death Eaters in the first weeks of the Second Wizarding War (late June or early July 1996) (HBP1).
- At least 12 Muggles ("a dozen cars") killed in Brockdale Bridge accident (HBP1).
- Igor Karkaroff: body found in a shack with the Dark Mark over it (late June or early July 1996). Amazingly, he survived slightly over a year after breaking away from the Death Eaters (HBP6).
- 5-year-old Montgomery child, killed by Greyback in April 1997 when he "got carried away." (HBP22)
- Gibbon: killed by another Death Eater who aimed at Lupin and missed (HBP29).
- Dumbledore: murdered by Severus Snape (HBP28).
- Hedwig
- Rufus Scrimgeour
- Bathilda Bagshot
- Dobby
- Fred Weasley
- Remus Lupin
- Nymphadora Tonks
- Colin Creevey
- Hannah Abbott's mother (HBP11).

Caused by Voldemort:

- * Moaning Myrtle (indirectly by Basilisk)
- * his father & grandparents
- * Hepzibah Smith
- * Frank Bryce
- * Susan Bones' grandparents (BN)

- * Dorcas Meadows (OP9)
- * Lily and James Potter
- * Bertha Jorkins (Wormtail with Voldemort's wand on Voldemort's orders)
- * Cedric Diggory (Wormtail with Voldemort's wand on Voldemort's orders)
- * Charity Burbage
- * 'Mad Eye' Moody
- * Gregorovitch
- * Gellert Grindelwald
- * Severus Snape
- * Harry Potter

Other deaths:

- * Nearly-Headless Nick (Gryffindor's ghost, died semi-decapitated)
- * Professor Binns (died in his sleep, of old age)
- * Ariana Dumbledore (accident with Magic)
- * Luna Lovegood's mother (accident with Magic)
- * Ted Tonks (captured and killed by Ministry people)
- * Wormtail (his silver hand choked himself to death)
- * Vincent Crabbe (caught by Fiendfyre during the Hogwarts Battle)
- * Bellatrix Lestrange (killed by Molly Weasley)
- * Voldemort (killed by himself, when his spell against Harry backfired)

Annex 1

De: "marta" <artdungeon@yahoo.co.uk>
Para: "Lisia Nunes" <lilica1176@yahoo.com.br>
Assunto: Re: A request about your Harry Potter art work
Data: quinta-feira, 24 de setembro de 2009 16:52

Hi Lisia,

thanks for writing. You have got my permission to use my illustrations for your thesis, as long as they are credited to marta/ArtDungeon.

Best of luck with your thesis. Will it be in Portuguese or English?

-marta

On Sep 10, 2009, at 12:49 PM, Lisia Nunes wrote:

> Hi, Marta!
> My name is Lisia Nunes, I'm from Porto Alegre, Brazil, and I have
> been a fan of your Harry Potter art work since 2003 or 2004, I'm not
> very sure when I first visited your website! hehe
> I would like to make a request about your art work. I'm writing my
> Master's thesis on Harry Potter (its tentative title is "What do you
> see? The literary appeal of Harry Potter") and I was wondering if
> you would give me permission to illustrate it using some of your
> images. The reason I chose you is because, of all art work I've seen
> on the net, yours is the one that, in my opinion, better represents
> the Harry Potter characters the way "they are supposed to be".
> I haven't finished writing the thesis yet - actually, I have just
> started - and will only defend it around June next year, but if you
> could give me an answer as soon as possible, I'd be extremely happy.
> It is obvious that you will be credited and your name will be on the
> illustrations.
> Thanks in advance!
> Love,
> Lisia xoxo

Annex 2

De: "Nazneen Nawaz" <Nazneen@colmangetty.co.uk>
Para: <lilical176@yahoo.com.br>
Assunto: RE: To Ms. J. K. Rowling - I am writing a Master's thesis on Harry Potter
Data: quinta-feira, 13 de maio de 2010 06:57

Dear Lisia

Thanks for your email asking for JK Rowling to provide words of encouragement towards your thesis on the Harry Potter saga.

Unfortunately, Jo will not be able to take this - due to an extremely busy work schedule, she isn't taking anything on at the moment and is concentrating on the initiatives that she is already involved with.

I am sorry for the disappointing news, but thanks for thinking of her.

We wish you all the very best with the thesis.

Regards

Nazneen Nawaz
Colman Getty Consultancy
28 Windmill Street
London
W1T 2JJ

www.colmangetty.co.uk<blocked::http://www.colmangetty.co.uk/>

Winner of the PR Week Specialist Consultancy of the Year award, 11th in PR Week's Top 50 Consumer Consultancies and 14th in its top 25 Public Sector Consultancies

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From: Lisia Nunes [mailto:lilical176@yahoo.com.br]

Sent: 12 May 2010 14:28

To: info

Subject: Fw: To Ms. J. K. Rowling - I am writing a Master's thesis on Harry Potter

Dear people at Colman Getty & Christopher Little Literary Agency,

My name is Lisia Nunes, I am from Porto Alegre, in the South of Brazil, and I am finishing my Master's degree in English Literature at Rio Grande do Sul Federal University. The subject of my thesis is the Harry Potter saga, it is called "What do you see? Revaluation of Standards and the Harry Potter Saga", and I am in the final stages of enriching and revising it.

I would like to get in touch with Ms. Rowling, in order to send her my draft copy, in case she is interested in reading it. Her appreciation would be very important to me, even if all she could send were some kind words of encouragement.

Thank you very much for your time, and hoping to hearing from you soon,

Lisia Nunes
Porto Alegre - RS – Brazil

Annex 3

De: "Lucy Rogers" <LRogers@christopherlittle.net>
Para: <lilical176@yahoo.com.br>
Assunto: RE: To Ms. J. K. Rowling - I am writing a Master's thesis on Harry Potter
Data: sexta-feira, 21 de maio de 2010 07:04

CJL/lar/0001
By email: lilical176@yahoo.com.br
21st May 2010

Dear Lisia Nunes,

Thank you for your email of the 12th May asking if it would possible for J K Rowling to read your university thesis, the subject of which is the Harry Potter series.

We are delighted that you have chosen to include J K Rowling and her work in your studies, but are very sorry to say that due to a particularly busy schedule, charitable commitments and the demands of her young family, Ms Rowling is currently unavailable and unfortunately will not be able to respond to you personally or provide any feedback.

We know this will come as a disappointing response, but hope you understand that due the vast number of similar requests she receives from all over the world, it has sadly become impossible for her to not to turn people down.

We are sorry again for not being able to help you further on this occasion, but would like to wish you the best of luck with your thesis.

With best wishes

Yours sincerely

Lucy Rogers

The Christopher Little Literary Agency

From: Lisia Nunes [mailto:lilical176@yahoo.com.br]
Sent: 12 May 2010 14:26
To: pr@colmangetty.co.uk
Cc: Info
Subject: To Ms. J. K. Rowling - I am writing a Master's thesis on Harry Potter

Dear people at Colman Getty & Christopher Little Literary Agency,

My name is Lisia Nunes, I am from Porto Alegre, in the South of Brazil, and I am finishing my Master's degree in English Literature at Rio Grande do Sul Federal University. The subject of my thesis is the Harry Potter saga, it is called "What do you see? Revaluation of Standards and the Harry Potter Saga", and I am in the final stages of enriching and revising it.

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Thank you very much for your time, and hoping to hearing from you soon,

Lisia Nunes
Porto Alegre - RS - Brazil

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For more information please visit <http://www.messagelabs.com/email>

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