

AS MAD AS THE POTTER IN THE ATTIC:
GENDERED MADNESS IN THE HARRY POTTER SERIES
BY J.K. ROWLING

by
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Abstract

In the thesis I contrast different discourses on mental illnesses as represented in the Harry Potter series (1997-2007) by Joanne Kathleen Rowling. The first discourse was proposed by Foucault in his early works on psychiatry (“*the game of exclusion*” Foucault, 2006. p.12), the second advocated by the psychoanalyst school and finally I include the official psychiatrico-medical discourse dominant today (APA-TFoDSM-IV, 2000)¹. In the analysis I use the text of the book and occasionally supporting texts, such as the text of the movie versions alongside with related cultural intertextualities.

Studying madness requires answering at least two questions (Foucault, 2006). The first concerns *what is a mental illness* and how to differentiate it from sanity (synchronic or descriptive level), which yields most satisfactory answers using the Foucauldian and the medico-psychiatric approaches. The second question is *how and why* a particular mental illness has developed, in medical terms what is its *aetiology* (diachronic or dynamic level), which in turn is best dealt with using a psychoanalytic perspective.

On the synchronic level of analysis two basic conclusions can be drawn. First, from the Foucauldian “*game of exclusion*” point of view the overemphasis of aggression in madness is salient the series and overt dangerousness becomes a determining factor of insanity, while the distress factor gets virtually ignored. Furthermore even the aggression axis emerges in a distorted form, conflated with a murky scale of good versus evil. Although this dichotomy is inherent to children’s stories, yet it creates a confusing discourse on mental health. The overemphasis of overt aggression has two consequences: firstly psychopathic disorder, the most dangerous mental illness is ignored (or worse even venerated) as it lacks overt aggressive symptoms. Secondly, this overemphasis of the aggressiveness factor conjures

¹ Official handbook of the American Psychological Association, the Diagnostic and Statistic Manual of Mental Diseases.

up the ghost of an age-old female malady, the hysterical woman², discrediting and thus silencing dissatisfied female voices. Nevertheless, from a feminist point of view, the aforementioned lack of the distress factor is more dangerous, inasmuch as it further exacerbates the silencing process always already present in mental illnesses.

The disappearance of the distress factor can significantly weaken women's position, as this axis defines most female-related mental illnesses, namely anxiety and depression. Their representation in the book often trivializes them, thus some of these illnesses run the risk of being entirely ignored – the victims of this mis/unrecognition being solely women. Building on a slightly modified version of Althusser's theory of the ISA (Ideological State Apparatus) I aim to postulate putative future societal consequences.

In my second level of analysis, which concerns the how and why of mental illnesses, I use the theoretical background laid out by the works of various psychoanalysts, among them Sigmund Freud and Carl Gustav Jung. My goal is to trace the inner psychic path, the developmental arc of the heroes and characters of the novels – in their sanity and in their insanity. Taking a gender perspective one finds that male characters' complexes are heavily outweigh the description of female complexes. The entire story of Harry Potter, the protagonist, is built around an extremely complicated web of Father Figures, laden with problems and lack of solutions of the Oedipal Complex, while disturbances of the Electra complex are virtually non-existent, again taking an unconcerned look at women's potential problems.

However, upon closer analysis it seems that the original psychosexual developmental model put forward by Freud (1977) lacks sufficient explanatory power to give a satisfactory account to a plethora of phenomena in the novels. Therefore, based on (and perhaps restricted to) the novel I posit a new complex, not described in Freud's original model. I put forward the idea of a putative Dionysian Complex, appearing during the latency and genital stage. This

² Hysterical understood in the common use of the term, not in the Freudian sense

complex is centred on the ability to identify oneself as a sane and accepted member of the surrounding community as well as to accept one's past heritage, inscribed upon the subject by the core family circle and Significant Others. Using Jungian terms it can be interpreted as the process of healthy individuation – the process of integration of various archetypes of the unconscious. If the tension between the Self (the true personal psychic entity) and the Persona (the image the Subject wishes to project to the outside world) overwhelms the energy of the self-defence mechanisms and the two become irreconcilable, the psyche is ripped apart by this tension. This split takes various symbolic forms in the novel, yet it is always present as an attempt to break away from one's personal past and create a new, psychologically acceptable reconstruction of the identity of the subject. Failure of overcoming the complex is often marked by a voluntary change of name, creating a secret inner self or even changing bodily appearance (mutilation or transformation) and it is represented as a typically male malady, taking women's individuation for self-evident and unproblematic, often ignoring them.

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List of Abbreviations and general notes to the reader

Referring to a particular novel from the series in direct quotes or in citations, I consequently used the part that follows the compulsory title-beginner “Harry Potter and the...”

Therefore, my abbreviations refer to the following books by J.K. Rowling (for exact references please refer to the Bibliography section).

Philosopher’s Stone – Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone (issued as Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone in the United States Edition)

Chamber of Secrets – Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets

Prisoner of Azkaban – Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban

Goblet of Fire – Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire

Order of the Phoenix – Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix

Half-Blood Prince – Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince

Deathly Hallows – Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows

List of most often used abbreviations:

HPs – **Harry Potter series** (all seven books listed above, written between 1999 and 2007, not containing the various spin-offs of the series)

ISA – **Ideological State Apparatus** – by Louis Althusser (1970)

IGA – **Ideological Global Apparatus**

DSM-IV – **Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Diseases, Fourth Edition**

For more information see also the glossary in the Glossary section). A brief summary of the story itself, is available in the Appendix – very brief plot section.

These are mad times we live in! Mad!
(Horace Slughorn)
(from the official Harry Potter trailer for
Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince³)

1. Madness and Harry Potter – why bother?

My aim in this thesis is to examine madness as a gendered construction in the Harry Potter series (HPs) with a psychologist's eyes yet from a literary critical point of view, based mainly on the book series, while integrating parts of the film versions as well, emphasising the intertextuality of the work. In this section I lay out the motivations that urged me to choose this particular topic.

1.1. The Harry Potter phenomenon – a new type of madness?

By the time I realized that it was happening at all (which was in 2007), the craze already invaded the entire world all over, shaking it from its corners, turning the entire universe upside down. All I could do was to wonder what the phenomenon was that drove a huge portion of the Muggle⁴ community – a term at the time unfamiliar to me – seemingly mad, standing in queues in front of bookshops at midnight as if to celebrate a burlesque carnival and ardent to revive a brave new mad world. I pondered endlessly what drove them out on the streets creating an uncanny simulation for a night of a Feast of Fools anew, the Bakhtinian Carnavalesque (Bakhtin, 1941/1984). Something of a contagious evil, some madness had to be locked inside somewhere between the covers, a virus lurking between the black and white marks on the plain white paper. And there it was. There was an entire structured and organized fascinating mad world hidden inside that attracted people as fire

³ Source: YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=96QRVfto7OM&feature=fvst>, Retrieved 2009-05-22. Textual reference also: <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0417741/quotes> Retrieved 2009-05-22.

⁴ Non-magical

attracts butterflies. The question that surged up inside my mind immediately was how many of those queuing in the carnivalesque line are going end up mortally wounded with burns or only just scorched slightly by the flames of madness?

Why would examining the notion of madness in a children's book be worth the effort? Why using a novel? Why choosing a work intended for children? First and foremost, we must not trivialize the importance of the novel as a genre – any story that travels far and wide in the world, enchanting an astounding number of its readers is never *just* a story. It has a life of its own and an unknown impact on the minds of its readers.

There are at least two further reasons that would make the attempt worthwhile. The first one is the fact that madness in its entirety is burdened by a strong taboo as a conversational topic in European culture, spoken of as a mystery in a fearful tone and in low voices. Consequently, even if a child ventures as far as posing questions about madness to parents or teachers, they are not likely to get elaborate answers, let alone very precise, up-to-date scientific discourse-based ones, so for the majority of the population madness has virtually very little overlap in meaning with the scientific terminology of mental illnesses. As a consequence children consider madness as another kind of mystery – a different kind of magic perhaps – and pick up bits and pieces of information from wherever they can – which naturally includes children's literature.⁵

The second reason that would support paying heed to the description of madness in children's books is because ideas on insanity tend to act as self-fulfilling prophecies. Madness is a fluid category, virtually anything can be declared to be a mental illness, as long as the majority of society is convinced of the abnormality of the subject (using Foucauldian terminology, being condemned in "*the game of exclusion*"; Foucault, 2006, p.12). As a

⁵ Yet let us not forget that in real life centralized power shall attempt to impose on them another discourse – the psychiatrico-scientific one, which shall create a basis of labelling. Certainly, a more intriguing question is how much impact the literary work bears on the official discourse and its possible reinterpretation.

consequence if children are encouraged to think of a particular type of behaviour as madness, the behaviour is likely to run the risk of soon becoming one⁶.

1.2. Views on madness – a “game of exclusion” versus an inherent characteristic?

The thesis intends to contrast two different views on madness, the first of which has been alluded to in the previous paragraph. According to this previous one, madness as such does not truly exist, not in the sense as an objective reality pertaining immanently to the subject him/herself would (Foucault, 1976). Madness is abnormality and abnormality is anything that “*the game of exclusion*” (Foucault, 2006, p. 12⁷) ruled out and shoved off the chessboard of society. Based on this theoretical standing, any behaviour the majority of people consider “true” madness is much more likely to be found in a children’s literature as anywhere else, given the fact that the topic is very nearly banned from public discourse and few are those who are well acquainted with the relevant psychiatrico-scientific literature that constitutes the “official discourse” of institutionalized power. Furthermore, these “knowledgeable” power-figure subjects do not necessarily tend to be the same people, who write children’s books – in fact quite the opposite.

Ironically, the second view on madness, which would be the aforementioned psychiatrico-scientific approach, though posing itself as the central power on the issue of sanity, on many occasions seems to do nothing else, but try and catch up with “folk psychiatry”, the unofficial discourse on what should be considered as madness – hence the continuous “revision” of its official handbooks. Nevertheless, this second view of madness, advocated by mainstream psychiatry (for an extensive discussion see Andreasen & Black,

⁶ This phenomenon of conforming to expectations unconsciously is known in psychology as the “Rosenthal effect” or Pygmalion effect, after an experiment conducted in a classroom setting by Robert Rosenthal and Lenore Jacobson (1968/1992). In the experiment children who were labelled as intelligent started to perform better – according to the interpretation of the authors conforming to the expectations of their teachers.

⁷ The term follows a Durkheimian line of thought, with its origins in a particular type of suicide created by “anomie” inherent to societal functioning; Durkheim, 1897/1997

2006; Hales & Yudovsky, 2003; APA, TFO DSM-IV, 2000; Comer, 2007), does all in its power to objectify madness and find a firm ground and a neat division line between normality and abnormality, often ardently denying the Foucauldian view on the game of exclusion.

It is important to remember that the two contrasting views are essentially different on one pivotal point that is often left unsaid: the Foucauldian “*game of exclusion*”, considers madness as a normal functioning of society – a normalized abnormal, and not as a malfunction. In contrast the science-based psychiatric view insists on the abnormality of the functioning of the individual, with the consequent view that madness is a kind of illness, an illness of the psyche, often even tied to the body via the brain and its microbiological malfunctions.

In the thesis both points of view are considered and applied as an analytical tool to the Harry Potter series (henceforth HPs). In the Foucauldian analysis I shall trace the rules of the various games of exclusion that are played out in the novel. Based on Foucault’s seminal works I demonstrate how nearly all those games historically described and presented by Foucault are all present in the novel, as if all the madness through the ages were stuffed into these seven children’s books.

The analysis based on the psychiatrico-scientific view consists of two parts, one of them based on the current official discourse of psychiatry, which is reified in a universally applied handbook called the DSM-IV (Diagnostic and Statistic Manual of Mental Disorders, APA, TFO DSM-IV, 2000). Although the DSM-IV does indicate caveats for cultural differences, it comes in a single flavour and is applied across the board all over the world.

The other psychiatry-based analytic tool for the analysis that is used is dynamic (rather than the static), based on psychoanalytic theories widely accepted in literary analyses. These theories still conserve the idea of the psychic unity of mankind, nevertheless they allow for much more variation and emphasize much more the importance of the development of the psyche. These two psychiatric analyses form two distinct chapters in the thesis.

1.3. *The basis of the analysis*

Taking a Foucauldian perspective as a starting point, one would need to know what the current rules of the “*game of exclusion*” are – what the majority of society would label as abnormal behaviour. Yet how are we to understand the notion of madness as non-professionals see it? On the one hand, if one would like to see how the majority views madness and its gendered nature at present, the most straightforward methodology would be to conduct interviews with laypeople. However, taking into consideration that people are uneasy to talk about the matter openly this seems unfeasible. To complicate matters further, not all aspects of attitudes on madness might be conscious, rendering this method far from perfect.

Another option (no doubt strongly supported by the psychoanalytic school) would be dream or story analysis (see Jung, 1968, 1912/1992, 1956/1977, Freud, 1953, 1977, 2002), however in this case defining madness becomes increasingly open to subjective interpretation. Nevertheless, there is one definite advantage to this approach mentioned already: if one would like to see what madness is to become in a few years time, a well-suited method might be to look at fairy tales and their changes or successful pieces of children’s literature as they contain deep-seated roots of our psychological nature (Bettleheim, 1989). Freud himself believed in the premise that “*there is no essential difference in kind between a psychic text and a cultural text: the same unconscious processes are at work in both*” (cited by Kofman, 1991, p. 56.). I have therefore chosen this latter way, using the most popular piece of children’s literature available today to examine the content of the modern unconscious and the aura of its new psychopathologies. Methodologically therefore I traced the differences between the notion of “mental illness” as described by current scientific discourses and the representation of madness as depicted in the HPs, with a particular emphasis and attention paid to gender in both cases.

1.4. *Leaping the abyss – feminism and gendered madness*⁸

The relationship between gender and madness, a perspective of gendered madness has been established by many authors and discourses (including both the psychoanalytic school and the DSM-IV), however these authors seldom took the psychiatrico-scientific discourse, real-case analysis and Foucauldian theory into consideration all at once in a literary analysis. This resulted in most published works being rather one-sided in their view on the relationship between gender and madness or mental illnesses. Furthermore, none of them attempted to make a predictive statement about future changes in the accepted notion of madness based on our current knowledge of cultural texts – a gap that the thesis intends to fill in.

Feminist works that deal with the relationship of gender and madness abound, among them very engaging and insightful works – yet modern interpretations are frequently missing and psychiatry has changed radically during the past decades. Elaine Showalter in her famous book, *The Female Malady* (1985) gives a thorough and comprehensive analysis of the period between 1830 and 1980 – yet we are nearly 30 years past that period. One of her arguments (Showalter, 1985) for instance, namely that more women are being diagnosed as mentally ill solely because of the high ratio of male psychiatrists can no longer be upheld. Today in Hungary the number of doctors choosing to work as psychiatrists is relatively gender-balanced⁹ (Magyar Pszichológiai Társaság, Vezetőség, 2009) though the number of psychologists is definitely yet again gender-biased – towards women¹⁰ (Perczel F. Dóra, personal communication, 2009). Should the argument hold true, if anything, men would have

⁸ The title is not a reference to, nor has any allusions to the book that is entitled similarly by Pergamit & Durand, 1997.

⁹ According to the homepage of the Hungarian Psychiatric Association (http://www.psychomp.hu/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=77:vezetseg&catid=42:vezetseg&Itemid=60) the leading members count 24 females among them – some of them very famous and well-recognized in Hungary – out of a total of 53. In other words if anything, the reverse is true: psychiatry and psychology in particular is becoming an increasingly feminized branch. (However it is noteworthy that the top executives of the society remained male nevertheless)

¹⁰ The Hungarian Association of Psychologists (Magyar Pszichológiai Társaság) claims that around 60-65% of its members are female. The percentage is higher in clinical sections, as opposed to research sections.

to be diagnosed more often with mental illnesses, a fact we know not to be true¹¹ (Tringer, 2004; Comer, 2000; CDC – National Center for Health Statistics – Mental Health Work Group, 2009).

Phyllis Chesler in her work *Women and Madness* (2005) depicts females held at psychiatry wards as being unrecognized heroes of femininity. As feminism grew more accepted over the years – or at least more tolerated - even if more than a grain of truth is still present in this radical statement, this is unlikely to be true for the majority of female patients. Moreover Shoewalter (1985) clearly pointed out decades before that the romanticization of madness is both problematic and dangerous, as although it sheds positive light on these women, at the same time it denies their suffering.

I believe that the force of “folk psychiatry”, the importance of commonly accepted ideas on madness must not be underestimated, yet discarding the official discourse altogether would be throwing out the baby with the bath water. Disregarding the relationship and differences between folk psychiatry and current scientific discourse would leave us with only half of the story and as the two are so intricately intertwined, it is precisely this relationship that can lead us to new insights on the changing notion of madness and its consequences on the whole of society – existing and future gender differences included.

1.5. *The warped image of gendered madness in the world of Harry*

Potter

Examined from this double perspective of psychiatrico-scientific point of view and folk psychiatry, the HPs gives a warped and twisted representation of mental illnesses in at least two ways: first it often misrepresents gender ratios in mental illnesses and second it seldom gives due credit to therapy, treatment or recognition.

¹¹ At least not in the United States Official Statistics - Hungarian Data are very similar, though unreliable, because of the high number of people choosing to visit private psychiatric consultations, instead of institutionalized ones.

Examining the text from the point of view of madness, the HPs seems to draw a clear (and rather stereotypical) line between female and male mental illnesses (though with occasional breechings of its own categories as I shall demonstrate). The HPs for example presents vastly different gender ratios in the prevalence¹² of certain mental illnesses than is usually recognized in the medical literature or observed by laypeople. Alcoholism for instance is only presented in female characters¹³, whereas WHO (World Health Organization) statistics clearly show that alcoholism is primarily a male-related illness.

What gives rise to much more concern however is the fact that the treatment of mental illnesses is often neglected in the book, particularly true about mental illnesses associated with women (both in the novel and the medical literature), even in clinically severe cases. Depression – or rather its broader category, mood disorders – is the best and at the same time most alarming example, which is accurately mirrored by the novel as more prevalent in females (sometimes one could even say overemphasized) nevertheless its professional treatment or even recognition is virtually non-existent¹⁴. There are several instances of such cases in the novel: depression-related syndromes might be ignored as in the case of Hermione in the *Prisoner of Azkaban*. She opposes Ron and Harry, who in turn start to act as if she did not exist, eventually evoking depression-like behaviour. Both of the boys turn a blind eye to her suffering and pretend not to notice, until a third character, Hagrid warns them openly about it and even then their attempts at reconciliation are rather weak. Another rather ill-suited solution to depression in the novel is to discuss these female problems between self-supporting female groups, as in the case of Nymphadora Tonks, who is supported by Mrs. Weasley (*The Half-Blood Prince*) yet she is ridiculed by various male characters, trivializing the importance of her condition, denying it the status of mental illness altogether.

¹² percentage of occurrence in the population

¹³ One such example is Winky, the depressed house-elf, who drowns her tears of sorrow into goblets of wine or Sybill Trelawney, who disbelieves her own capabilities so much that she takes to drinking to escape from her own image of herself as a failed foreseer of the future – both of whom shall be treated at length later.

¹⁴ The cases I refer to here shall be elaborated on later in the thesis, therefore I do not give extensive reference here, and restrict myself to mentioning the most outstanding cases.

As a consequence in the HPs female mental illnesses are often represented as “whims” to be dealt with inappropriate, untrained professionals, a friend or anyone who is willing to take on the task. Sometimes the task is explicitly appointed to someone who obviously has no competence in dealing with the matter - depression in these cases is often treated as if it was no more than an irksome folly. A typical case would be that of Winky, a house elf, who is sent by Dumbledore to Dobby, another house-elf to get comfort (*The Goblet of Fire*). These creatures possess enormous magical powers, however they are mostly experienced in cleaning and cooking or kitchen work without any training or professional experience in counselling. If we are to consider these cases to form an ideology or merely an example set to children, the possible effects on the society of the future becomes clear.

1.6. *On madness and on the methodology of reading it*

The notion of “madness” is a very slippery one, therefore my case analyses described previously (based on the official psychiatrico-medical discourse) are only “cases”, problems from a certain point of view. Madness by any other name (mental illness, mental disorder, craziness, lunacy etc.) would escape precise definition the same way¹⁵. Madness is very apt at avoiding any attempt at a clear definition, changing through time, as proven by Foucault, (1988, 2006) and varying across cultures (see Boddy, 1988 – on Sudanian spirit possession; Bordo, 1993, Mussap, 2009 on anorexia nervosa). Madness, in other words, can be interpreted as a discourse in the Foucauldian sense, “*an entity of sequences of signs in that they are enouncements (enoncés)*” (Foucault, 1970, p. 141.), a cultural construction *par excellence*. In fact, Foucault’s first major work was on the history of madness and its changes across the ages (Foucault, 2006) that shall form part of the historical introduction of the thesis.¹⁶ As the

¹⁵ Sentence structure taken from Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet* “*that which we call a rose/ By any other name would smell as sweet;*” (Shakespeare, 1594/2004)

¹⁶ The word *discourse* itself (in the meaning used here) was introduced in Foucault’s later work, *The archaeology of knowledge* (1972), to denote a set of ideas or thoughts that include our emotions, actions or attitudes and practices that systematically construct the subject and the world of which they speak.

HPs connects to many of the stages of this historical account – in fact it seems to connect to all of them – I shall draw on these similarities, particularly because they often involve a gender aspect, resulting from the power relations that are the fuelling the impetus in the Foucauldian “*game of exclusion*”. History condensed in infinitesimal instances in the HPs further corroborates the claim that the entire fantasy world is a huge leap back to a fantasized past, yet set in the presence, thus seemingly keeping time-space intact yet in fact breaking the Bakhtinian notion of the unity of chronotope to smithereens.

This constant construction and instability seems to invoke its antagonist however, eternal stability of the concept itself. Foucault (1972) himself implies that one can not step out of discourse, (unless into another discourse, which is still a discourse nonetheless), therefore the existence of discourse itself is eternal. Madness as a phenomenon and as a discourse seems to have existed throughout history in all cultures (Comer, 2006) regardless of the exact form it might have taken and the explanation of its existence.

On the other hand, the psychiatrico-scientific literature insists that at least some illnesses have existed since the dawn of mankind, or at least since written records give testimony of the symptoms that are today considered as immanent signs of a particular mental illness. Historical psychiatry often recites Egyptian parchments describing symptoms of epilepsy and the humoral theory of Hippocrates (Spiegel & Fatemi, 2003; Finger, 1994), which explained illnesses by the overabundance of one of the four basic fluids, essentializing and biologizing mental illnesses. At the same time a perpetuation of mental illnesses started with the creation of the four basic personality types: melancholic (in today’s terms mood disorder), sanguine (mania), choleric (hysteria, even at the time attributed to especially in women) and phlegmatic (again related to depression) (Temkin, 1991). Likewise some psychiatry books insist that *acedia*, usually translated as discouragement in Medieval times referred not to mere laziness, but to depression¹⁷. Therefore depression as a generic illness

¹⁷ This theory is further corroborated by the fact that the latin monk Evagrius Ponticus in fact listed eight „deadly thoughts” in the 4th century, among them *acidia* and *tristitia* as well – however this eighth

existed at the time, yet it was considered a sin rather than an illness – yet named by any term, it was seen as an abnormality (Kleinman & Good, 1986; Grauman, C. & Gergen, K.1996).

The thesis does not intend to do justice to the conflict between the two opposing views, instead I shall try to demonstrate how the HPs can be read using either of these interpretations. I shall particularly problematize the questions of essentializing any type of gendered malady and the representations of the gendered games of exclusion in madness.

1.7. Madness, literature and ideology- Pierre Louis Althusser

So far I have not pinpointed the links between theories of madness, literature and real-world societal changes together, leaving the analysis hanging in the upper strata of the Elysian fields, hardly connected to worldly matters, which would be the aim of the thesis. To interconnect these ideas I would draw on the theory of French Marxist theorist, Pierre Louis Althusser.

Althusser (1970) puts the aforementioned idea of eternity of modes of thought or using his own term, ideology – referred to as *discourse* in Foucault’s work – in relief even more poignantly: “*ideology has no history*” (Althusser, 1970, p.63.). However while discourse – as used in the Foucauldian sense – allows for various centres of power, Althusser’s theory presupposes that there is one central discourse, ideology. Even though his theory might seem more rudimentary and in fact he is chronologically a predecessor to Foucault, he is much clearer on how literary works link up with the subjects’ relationship with the real world – the solution according to him lies in ideology. Ideology being the central term – might we say the “magic word” – in Althusser’s theory it deserves to be elaborated on more thoroughly.

Ideology according to the Althusserian definition is the imaginary relationship between an individual and their real-world existence, which is always warped by social interests. This renders the perception of reality inherently inaccurate – Althusser himself is pessimistic as to the future and possibility of improvement, as I’ve pointed out earlier he disappeared in the revised list of Pope Gregory I. (Robertson, J., 1982/2006)

categorically declares that “*ideology has no history*”(Althusser, 1970, p.63.) meaning that no advance in knowledge can bring a real true vision of the world. One ideology follows another, over and over again, not even necessarily more advanced in nature. Therefore ideology – just like discourse – is eternal: there always is, always was and always will be an ideology, regardless of its particular content. The difference between discourse and ideology lies in the optimism of the theory: while Althusser supposes that the truth does exist in principle, yet we are in a permanent losing position in an endless hide-and-seek game in which ideology acts as the mask of the truth. Foucault himself denies that any such thing as the truth should necessarily exist.

The reason Althusser is particularly useful in the analysis therefore is twofold. First of all he is very clear both on the notion of ideology (involving literature as ideology) and its exact functioning and characteristics. As a Marxist he believes in class struggle and starting from this intellectual background he introduces a set of features describing ideology that prove to be very useful in an analysis of gendered madness in the HPs, which are not necessarily as clear in Foucault’s theory. Although Althusser, having dealt with politics mostly, does not deal with gender or madness *per se*, using his theory in interpreting the HPs and madness shall lead to the recognition of not only male dominance in the state apparatuses, but apparently male dominance in the ideological definition of insanity.

Secondly – and even more importantly – his involvement with politics can allow us to make a tentative link between the novel and the real world. The HPs is undoubtedly laden with different ideologies, many discussed at length in other literary analyses (see for example Zipes, 2001; Baggett, D. 2004; Granger, J. 2007), yet ideologies on gender and madness and particularly gendered madness seem to have been neglected so far. Considering the extreme success of the book it is very likely to have repercussions in the real world even – although this is certainly subject to various conditions, among them how long-lived its success shall be. At present we are in the dark as to should it fall into the depths of oblivion soon, in which

case its effects are unlikely to even appear, let alone last long, its ideology getting lost in the mist of times of yore.¹⁸ In sum therefore Althusser is useful as a politician, providing a link and an explanation between real world and literature and as a theorist, describing in detail the working of ideology.

1.7.1. Althusser's notion of literature as a State Apparatus

A possible method of linking the HPs to real world phenomena is by using the theory of Pierre Louis Althusser developed to describe what he calls the different State Apparatuses, the Repressive State Apparatus (RSA – such as the police and military forces, not dealt with here) and the Ideological State Apparatus (ISA – for further discussion also see Chapter 3: In the shackles of the IGA of Harry Potter). The Ideological State Apparatus would serve as the bridge between the different worlds I shall describe: the surrounding subjective, lived reality and the imagined world of the novel, woven into language and revived in the minds of the readers, its patterns reflecting the ideology of its world.

According to Althusser (1971), literature itself can serve as an apparatus to convey ideologies, to which he usually refers to using the term ISA. In the thesis eventually I would like to make a small change in his terminology, renaming it IGA (Ideological Global Apparatus), first of all because the HPs is the most widely read – or seen, or heard of – children's book today all over the world, and secondly because of its international popularity – though evidently British in essence – it would be very difficult to tie it to any particular state.

Undoubtedly it does have many British elements that other cultures are not necessarily familiar with (e.g. the very idea of the boarding school), yet this does not seem to affect its popularity worldwide, albeit it makes the novel seem even more exotic (and for the British, putatively more nostalgic).

¹⁸ Current trends would indicate exactly the opposite outcome, for example if we consider the number of fanfictions written on the novels – the highest number, preceding the Lord of the Rings and Star Wars (Fanfiction Net, n.d.). Though the success of the next cinematic edition is still to be seen, the reaction of fans to postponing the event resonates well with the previous ideas.

1.8. *Worlds apart yet united in madness – the topias in the series*

Having thus stated following the line of thought of Foucault (2006) and Althusser (1970) that the notion of madness and its ideology changes across cultures and across time, it is essential that we take both these factors into consideration in the literary or film analysis of the HPs. This is significant as the books talk of at least 3 different worlds, “cultures” or social systems. The first is those of the Muggles, that I shall call (1) Muggletopia¹⁹. Muggletopia, as a culture of its own does not seem to go through a major change regarding the concept of madness in time. Though Muggletopia is secondary in the novel, therefore its less fine-grained description is hardly surprising, I (and probably most readers) define myself as belonging to a culture very similar to Muggletopia²⁰, therefore many of the assumptions that I rely upon during the analysis of the novel are taken from the ‘real world’ as we know it. This naturally has an underlying presupposition that there is a strong analogy and a shared cultural background with those fictional characters, who are denoted as Muggles in the novel or live from time to time in the Muggle world. In other words many of my claims were formulated as a Muggletopian interpretation of the wizarding world.

Considering the wizarding world however, the discourse on madness is not continuous. There is a sharp caesura when in the last novel (*Deathly Hallows*) a coup d’état occurs by the most feared dark Wizard, Lord Voldemort. Because of the shift in power, the notion of madness is disjointed in time as well, not only in space, between Muggles and

¹⁹ Though taken from the phrase of utopia made popular by the book entitled *Utopia* by Thomas Moore, I did not intend to convey an order in being an ideal place in any of the cases. Originally the word was created by joining the words *ou* (non) and *topos* (space) insinuating that the book deals with a place that does not exist (*Utopia*, Online Etymology dictionary, N.D.). Moreover, in this particular analysis I am only borrowing the Greek term *topos* for place, in order to refer to the different “cultures” different ideology spaces in the novel. This does not entail any connotation of good or bad in the opposition of the different topias or *topoi* to use the correct Greek term - I merely use the term to denote the different spaces of discourse that the novel depicts, without any further connotations on their value.

²⁰ However arbitrary this choice of analysis might seem to be, it is noteworthy how Rowling deliberately seems to conflate her fictional novel with reality, providing additional information in interviews and on her home page (Rowling, n.d.) and on other related pages (Mugglenet [n.d.] and the Leaky Cauldron [n.d.], with both of which she keeps in touch) on when the characters were born, giving the precise date, in case of their fictional death the precise real world date is also established. However, she also hints at their future careers – thereby breaking the chronotopia as a reminder of the fantasy genre of the novel.

wizards²¹. I call the second culture or social system therefore is (2) Pottertopia²² chronologically set in the first part of the HPs. Pottertopia starts with the first book (*Philosopher's Stone*) with the opening scene of a boy who lived and the apparent, but uncertain death of the ultimate evil, who tried to murder him. The boy who lived, named Harry Potter, becomes the protagonist of the novel and his world and culture as a wizard takes over much of the series, enabling Pottertopia to last almost six books out of seven²³. The beginnings of the final social system (3) Voldemortopia is uncertain as the coup d'état itself only happens in the final, seventh book (*Deathly Hallows*), yet the secret plotting behind the back of the wizarding world is apparent from the fourth book on (*The Goblet of Fire*). Voldemortopia as a reigning system however does not remain established for long and it ends with the death of Voldemort at the final, 36th chapter of the last book. Judging from the Epilogue the previous order of Pottertopia is restored completely, and along with it presumably the previous discourse on madness as well.

1.9. *The what and how of madness*

So far, I only spoke of a stationary, motionless image of madness, of defining what madness is and what it is not. However, there are two main ways of dealing with madness as Foucault points out in his *Mental Illness and Psychology* (1976). Over and above the question mentioned already (what is a mental illness and how it should be categorized) the diachronic nature of the illness must be addressed as well, its dynamicity – in other words why and how

²¹ Perhaps it would have been more accurate to borrow the term *chronotopia* from Bakhtin (1981), in order to include time as well. However, this line of terminology would have created neologisms such as Voldemortochronotopia, which felt so awkward that it seemed to add more confusion than the accuracy it would have donated.

²² One could argue that the expression Dumbledoreotopia would have been more accurate as he is undoubtedly the knowledgeable leading figure (or in Althusserian terms, the Absolute Subject) in the beginning of the series, yet firstly it soon turns out that the position of the Absolute Subject is in a shift and secondly again the awkwardness of its pronunciation discouraged me from using the term.

²³ Notably though in the beginning of the first book Harry Potter is ignorant of the fact that he belongs to the wizarding community, until the arrival of the letters from no one – and finally Hagrid in Chapter 4, when he learns that he belongs to the culture of wizards.

that particular illness developed. Therefore, in my attempt to analyze madness in the different topias²⁴ described above, I use a double level of analysis: a **static** and a **dynamic** one.

1.9.1. The HPs as a narration of case studies – what is madness?

The first type of analysis, the static one takes a synchronic point of view based on the modern Muggletopian scientific background – that is to say psychiatric knowledge or psychiatrico-medical discourse – and thus categorizes possible mental illnesses of the characters in the book according to the Muggletopian discourse. This process of categorization is based on one of the two medical handbooks of mental illnesses, presently called DSM-IV-TR²⁵ (2000; – from here on shorthand as DSM)²⁶. The DSM is treated by the medical community just as an anatomical atlas, universal and stable, consequently it has direct translations. In other words it does not allow for different versions adapted for different cultures (although it goes through quite radical changes in time). The DSM forms the basis of all diagnoses in today's world – which is supposed to be nearly synchronous to that of Harry Potter's Muggletopia²⁷.

The wizarding world has a curious lacuna: neither Pottertopia, nor Voldemortopia provides us readily with the necessary data for psychological diagnoses to be possible (for example in the case of major depressive disorder we would need to know data about decreased cognitive abilities in memory, cognition and planning – all criteria according to the DSM). In fact, psychologists and psychiatrists *en masse* seem to be oddly missing from the wizarding community of the HPs, which raises the question whether the not-said in the novel has the theme of madness at its core.

²⁴ I prefer to use the word topias instead of the correct Greek form of topoi to make comprehension easier.

²⁵ The acronym is the abbreviation of Diagnostic and Statistic Manual of Mental Disorders, Fourth Edition, Revised

²⁶ The other widespread manual is the ICD (international classification of Diseases) Manual.

²⁷ According to additional data provided by Rowling on her site at least (Rowling, n.d.)

As a consequence of all the above, the psychiatric categories I provide are sometimes not in total accordance with the Muggletopian descriptions, that I occasionally include in certain cases to illustrate my point. Diagnosis is difficult enough to find even in real world case analyses in possession of a much richer knowledge than what one can gain from a novel. Nevertheless one must keep in mind that establishing psychiatric diagnoses – or any other diagnosis for that matter – is always a rather challenging task.

However the topias in the HPs do provide one thing the scientific DSM categorically refuses to do: a diachronic and dynamic view, a detailed story of all the characters' lives via the power of an omniscient narrator. This view at times reveals the hidden motivations and presumed reasons of mental illnesses, in other words, instead of their static structure, their dynamic organicism. In examining Pottertopia and Voldemortopia I use psychoanalysis to examine the development of the characters in the novel, their changing personality and the connection between their putative madness and their feminine or masculine or even queer (or according to Jung's [Jung and von Franz, 1964] terms, "hermaphrodite") nature.

1.9.2. *The HPs and psychosexual developmental theory – the why and how of madness*

This diachronic view is especially important as the HPs is often considered a Bildungsroman (Anatol, 2003), therefore a developmental theory is essential to explain possible instances of madness. The most adept candidate to such a task appeared to be the theory of psychosexual development by Sigmund Freud (1977).

According to Freud (1977), girls are likely to face more difficulties when it comes to the resolution of the Oedipus Complex, yet the HPs suggests that males always seem to have more problems than females do in resolving this complex. Harry has various Father Figures and yet none, Neville none at all and they are both in constant search for one. The female version of the Oedipus Complex, the Electra Complex seems to be missing altogether.

However, the theory, as applied to the novel does not seem to be flawless: in order to explain certain phenomena, a new tentative complex needs to be posited, overlooked and missing from the theory of Freud possibly because its lack of sexual connotation or late and undefined onset that does not mark a boundary between two consecutive stages. Although according to Freud's psychosexual developmental theory the characters are all in their supposed "latency" period (which lasts roughly from 6-7 years to puberty), therefore void of major difficulties and free from any sort of complexes, in their full capacity of learning, perhaps the only person who manages to conform to this idea is perhaps Luna Lovegood. Almost all of the characters pose themselves the same constantly recurring question even to the point of obsession at times (consider Harry Potter in the *Chamber of Secrets*, who is constantly hearing disembodied voices or Ginny Weasley in the same book, who has gaps in her memory). This question is the very core of the thesis: madness. Although it is possible to interpret this as a search for identity using Erik Erikson's developmental theory (1959), yet in this case a shift in the theoretical backgrounds would render the analysis instable²⁸. As I preferred to remain within the Freudian interpretation, I theorize it as a different complex that has to be resolved in the latency phase or early during the genital phase.

In this complex that I baptized Dionysian complex, a person's own perception of sanity is questioned and in case of a successful resolution, it is finally established. The essential difference between this complex and the previous ones is that having left the core family, peers get foregrounded (N.B. well before finding a pair and sexual partner does). The subject finds him- or herself amidst a multitude of similar yet at the same time subtly different set of other subjects who become the reference point in the question of normality. In other words this complex is no longer concerning problems and identification with parents, but rather about possible identification with peers and symbolically society, not only accepting

²⁸ In this case we would need to apply the developmental theory of another psychologist, Erik Erikson (1959) yet it would be both confusing and misleading as he does not consider mental illnesses as an outcome of this stage, but rather role confusion with a special emphasis on identity crisis, an issue not dealt with directly in the thesis.

the Law of the Father or as Lacan (2007) uses it in his seminars Name-of-the-Father (*le nom du père*), but the Law of the Other (tentatively *le nom de l'autre*). If the Dionysian Complex is resolved successfully, the result is conformity and acceptance, acceptance by others, acceptance of one's own past and inner core characteristics of oneself– and consequently normality.

In the contrary case, failure to resolve the Dionysian Complex leads to outcastness, either enforced or voluntary, and the rejection of the past and inner self urges the sufferer to form a new identity, to carve out a new self. This state of outcastness can take on different forms, not necessarily involving overt madness: the feeling of being different or even special is part of the unresolved complex (as in the case of Voldemort). As the very notion of madness is partly based on social acceptance however, very often the label of madness is attached to those unsuccessful in resolving the Complex.

Although the Dionysian Complex in itself is gender-neutral, and as demonstrated it occurs in both genders (in the examples of Ginny Weasley and Harry Potter), yet judging from the novel overall more males seem to come out of it injured than females (good examples comprise Voldemort or the Half-Blood Prince, more commonly known as Severus Snape). The Dionysian Complex is just a tentative answer to the question that I shall try to elaborate on in the thesis, however it would be worthwhile to test its feasibility in real-life settings as well in a future work.

In sum, the main puzzle whose pieces I endeavour to collect (thus answering the question of *what* is madness) and put together (thus addressing the *how* and *why* of the development of madness) has at its core the issue of gender. Madness as a gendered discourse represented in the HPs also challenges the problem of possible future repercussions in the real-world (Muggle) society. Would a change in the ideology and discourse on “gendered madness” really occur, considering the novels extreme popularity?

*“In order to understand the future, we have to
unravel the past.”²⁹*
*“What we are looking at are memories. [...] This
is perhaps the most important memory I’ve ever collected.
[...] It is also a lie.”³⁰*
 (Dumbledore)
 (from the official Harry Potter Trailer for Harry
Potter and the Half-Blood Prince)

2. Madness through the ages³¹

In order to understand the possible outcomes and changes that may appear in future as after-effects of the novel, it is useful to take a historical and cultural perspective first, to examine closely how madness and particularly gendered madness changes through the ages.

Foucault (2006) gives a comprehensive account of the history of madness, however as he concentrates heavily on power, institutions and the medical gaze, he pays less attention to gender in his major work on madness. His historical account of madness therefore is more gender-neutral than that of Showalter (1985), who examines specifically the interplay between history and gender.

2.1. Foucault on madness

Foucault analyzes the history of madness in his early works, such as *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason* (1988) (originally *Folie et déraison: Histoire de la folie à l'âge classique*, 1961), which is a short version of his *grande oeuvre* on the subject entitled “*The history of madness*” (2006). Foucault gives a very broad account of the concept of madness in the Western world, focusing on various aspects such as practices,

²⁹ Source: YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DJkSfeMCh2E&feature=related> , Retrieved 2009-04-12. <http://www.mahalo.com/harry-potter-and-the-half-blood-prince-trailer> Retrieved 2009-04-12

³⁰ Source: YouTube: <http://www.mugglenet.com/app/news/show/2214>, Retrieved 2009-04-12.

³¹ The title is an allusion to a spin-off of the HPs, titled „Quidditch through the ages”, often mentioned in the book and later written by Rowling herself.

ideas, institutions and literature of a given period – in short the discourse on madness, in the Foucauldian sense of the word.³²

Foucault's seminal work on mental illnesses "*The history of madness*" (2006) gives an extensive account on how the interpretation of deviant behaviour and discourse on mental disorder had a vast effect on their treatment – in both senses of the term: medicalized treatment and the attitude of society. Before the medicalization of mental disorders they could be constructed in two different ways: as animal-like inferior behaviour or as witchcraft (in this latter case the structured madness of the Pottertopia is already foretold in Foucault's work).

According to Foucault (2006), it was not before the 19th century that mental disorders and mostly their sufferers came under the protection of the label of illnesses to be cured, rather than deviations to be punished. However, the notion of madness is still not frozen or carved in stone today as we speak, although current changes are more subtle. As an extreme case, the total abolition of the category of madness was also put forward (Szasz, 1960), therefore the subversion of the medicalized discourse is also possible (though not likely to occur according to most medical power-figures). Yet the content, i.e. what is to be considered a mental disorder is at the centre of fierce debates, as the numerous and constantly changing editions of DSM clearly show.

Foucault distinguishes 3 periods of madness in the *History of Madness* (2006), the first being that of the Renaissance, the second the Classical Age, while the third being the development of the modern medical gaze. He insists that even though the treatment and discourse might have changed throughout these three stages, the objectification of madness always served as a type of social control over those unacceptable for society. He insists that the changes in the discourse on madness are far from being a progress of any kind; they are rather a general, ever-repeating circle of a special practice of society, a practice of exclusion,

³² In this work Foucault does not yet use the term discourse in this sense, the concept being fully developed only in *The order of things* (1970). Nevertheless from this point on I shall use the word discourse in the later sense, as the practices, ideas and knowledges about the world that create and construct it.

which follow each other in a kaleidoscope-like random fashion with no definite goal or embetterment. It follows from his account that madness itself is not a coherent and universal category but rather a socially constructed one. Describing the aforementioned periods briefly, I shall draw on some parallels with the HPs.

2.1.1. *The Renaissance Period – the multiperspectived madperson*

During Foucault's first described age, the Renaissance period, two discourses reigned about madness –the tragic discourse and the critical discourse. The tragic included those not understood, such as artists, who were capable of seeing the world differently and experienced a multitude of worlds instead of the one and single world that most people experience.

An interesting and peculiar example of this type of madness appears in the HPs - the Lovegood family – Xenophilus Lovegood and his daughter Luna Lovegood. The Lovegood are extremely fond of dubitable creatures, objects, legends and last but not least conspiracy theories, all of which the rest of society considers at best odd if not outright crazy. Luna is a talking name (as many in the novel), very likely being a reference to lunatic. Judging from the manner of her first description, the attitude of other wizards is hardly surprising. She appears first in a compartment of Hogwarts Express, which seems to have an extraordinary repulsive force.

“Hi, Harry” he [Neville] panted. “Hi, Ginny...everywhere’s full...I can’t find a seat...”

“What are you talking about?” said Ginny, who had squeezed past Neville to peer into the compartment behind him. “There’s room in this one, there’s only Loony Lovegood in here —” Neville mumbled something about not wanting to disturb anyone.

“Don’t be silly,” said Ginny, laughing, “she’s all right.” (Order of the Phoenix, p. 138.)

The introduction of Ginny is not an accident or a slip of tongue – yet from the following lines it becomes clear that her madness is not taken as a dangerous or fearful state,

but rather a curious or eccentric personality. It is also notable that the acceptance functions as if it were a female sisterhood-based alliance – it is only Ginny, who accepts her without further concerns.

Her physical description leaves no doubt that she is not particularly interested in the norms of society, yet it is not an outright refusal (which would need to be considered as an unresolved Dionysian Complex), but rather a lack of interest in the norms of society.

The girl beside the window looked up. She had straggly, waist-length, dirty blonde hair, very pale eyebrows and protuberant eyes that gave her a permanently surprised look. Harry knew at once why Neville had chosen to pass this compartment by. The girl gave off an aura of distinct dottiness. Perhaps it was the fact that she had stuck her wand behind her left ear for safekeeping, or that she had chosen to wear a necklace of Butterbeer corks, or that she was reading a magazine upside-down. Her eyes ranged over Neville and came to rest on Harry. She nodded. (Order of the Phoenix, p. 138.)

Her looks are clearly against all expectations towards women of contemporary (or even past) societies, which surprises or even shocks particularly the boys – Ginny seems to be accepting it with more ease³³. Her “protuberant eyes” and “permanent surprised look” certainly give her an eerie feeling, yet it is rather of calm innocence, as if it was madness defined as not tainted by the closed-mindedness of the world, but extreme openness to various interpretations of the surrounding reality. The clothes she chooses to wear clearly flout the rules of society – possibly indicating her different sense of societal norms.

Ginny certainly is not be afraid of her, yet this does not seem to be the case with the boys.

Luna watched them over her upside-down magazine, which was called *The Quibbler*. She did not seem to need to blink as much as normal humans. She stared and stared at Harry, who had taken the seat opposite her and now wished he hadn't. (Order of the Phoenix, p. 138.)

Harry himself does find Luna more than just strange, as apart from the oddities about her behaviour, such as holding the magazine upside down, his wish to distance himself gives

³³ Although it has to be mentioned that she is in the same year with her, therefore she knows her better than the others

away his repressed fear of the peculiar girl sitting in front of him. In spite of the fact that all students gaze at him, it is this particular gaze that does more than annoy him – it frightens him.

Luna's unblinking eyes undoubtedly invoke a plethora of intertextual references to nightmarish images, among others from horror movies such as *The Ring*, where the girl who does not sleep seems to hide a dark secret and a precisely timed death after 7 days. The image also associates with the girl without a past who passes the nights sleepless with her eyes glowing in the darkness, slowly spreading the plague of sleeplessness and a sluggish erasure of memory to the entire village of Macondo from *Hundred Years of Solitude* by Gabriel García Márquez. These similarities would indicate that danger is not altogether missing from the description from her character, nevertheless she proves to be not only harmless but extremely helpful later on and she is wildly different from Voldemort - thus much closer to the Renaissance idea of tragic madness.

A peculiarity that makes her “madness” so different from that of Voldemort is her humour that emanates from her personality and is reflected from those surrounding her.

You're Harry Potter,” she added.
 “I know I am,” said Harry.
 (Order of the Phoenix, p. 138.)

At this point even Harry succumbs to the fact that Luna – though different – is not necessarily mad and reacts to her casual – though odd – remark with humour, showing that he is more at ease with her, perhaps an influence of Ginny, but perhaps his own independence leading him to this conclusion. The game of exclusion on this occasion has failed – either because of the presence of a sane female refusing to label Luna, or because of her obvious harmlessness – yet she remains integrated into their group.

Summing up the arguments so far remaining in the frame of a tragic Renaissance explanation of madness, we are obliged to say that it is not altogether clear whether she is to be interpreted as mad or not. Considering her name, though in the HPs talking names are not

at all uncommon, and Luna can be easily and almost automatically connected to the word lunatic, this might be misleading, as many names in the HPs deliberately are subversive³⁴.

On the other hand expressions such as dottiness, the presentation of her physical appearance and the numerous allusions to her unusual behaviour and dressing would all point to the opposite conclusion. However, the tension that the fear of madness raises is lifted so soon and so abruptly that it is doubtful whether it would occur to anyone in Pottertopia to send her to a psychiatry ward in St. Mungo's or consultations. She appears balanced, calm and determined – even though the pivot of her balance might be different from those of others. This kind of madness seems to be ungendered, as her father acts in a very similar fashion.

In spite of Luna's unpopularity before becoming friends first of all with Ginny, then with Harry, Ron and Hermione, she soon becomes accepted as a girl with a different worldview, yet no longer an outcast.

Apart from the tragic discourse another discourse, the critical discourse also flourished at the time. This second concept in the Renaissance period was advocated by scientists such as Erasmus and Rablais. According to its main thesis divine reason and human reason are irreconcilable, therefore human Reason shall always seem to be madness in the eyes of God and divine reason shall be seen equally mad in the eyes of humans.

A perfect parallel in the HPs is the irrevocable difference between the Muggle World and the Wizarding World. Just as Mr Weasley is enthralled by *escapators* (meaning escalators – [*Philosopher's Stone*]), the Muggles find it funny the way wizards and witches dress up when they try to imitate them during the World Quidditch Cup (*Goblet of Fire*). The attitude

³⁴ The most famous example being the killing curse, Avada Kedavra, which according to Rowling (2004) comes from Aramaic, and it is the original of *abracadabra*, which means 'let the thing be destroyed.' As Rowling explains "Originally, it was used to cure illness and the 'thing' was the illness, but I decided to make it the 'thing' as in the person standing in front of me. I take a lot of liberties with things like that. I twist them round and make them mine." (J.K. Rowling official Site, n.d.)

of Harry Potter's stepparents towards the Weasley's (visiting them in an attempt to collect Harry and take him to the Quidditch World Cup [*Goblet of Fire*]) or even towards Dumbledore (in his brief appearance at their home in *Half-Blood Prince*) is inimical, yet even so it is swarming with humour because of the incomprehension between the different topias.

Having said that, I must urgently make a disclaimer, as by using the original parallel (human-divine), immediately a hierarchy is implied between the worlds. Even though many criticisms focus on the fact that no matter how much Dumbledore emphasizes the importance of one's choices as opposed to abilities³⁵, magic is an inborn talent, irrevocably present or not, as the case of Petunia Evans/Dursley shows, fervently desiring to become a witch yet for the lack of talent denied to do so.

2.1.2. *Pottertopia's Carnavalesque Lazarhouse – The Azkaban*

According to Foucault's description, in the second period, the Classical Age madness was equated with unreason (Foucault's translators [Khalifa, 2006] and critics often point out that there is a reason the original title includes *Folie et Dérison* as they are not the same. Madness means loosing contact totally with reality [what today would be called psychosis], while Unreason had a reason lurking behind it – however twisted that reason might be). This is the age that Foucault calls the Age of Confinement (using the French term *le grand renferment*). Madness was kept away from the rest of the world for example in the houses that were formerly used to lodge lepers. This was accomplished not only by enclosing them, but also occasionally by chasing the mad outside city walls.

A curious example of this great confinement in the HPs is the Azkaban, the prison of wizards and witches. The Azkaban carries the overtone of the Bakhtinian carnivalesque

³⁵ For example in *The Chamber of Secrets* he reveals to Harry that even though he is a Parseltongue (a person who can talk to snakes) and he has many similarities to Voldemort, the fact that he explicitly asked the sorting hat to put him in Gryffindor makes him different from him as "Which makes you very different from Tom Riddle. It is our choices, Harry, that show what we truly are, far more than our abilities." (*Chamber of Secrets*, p.214.)

(1941) as instead of the fools being locked up, this confinement turns the sane into mad, bearing an uncanny resemblance to the Panopticon (Foucault, 1977) in this sense. However, this creation of fools confined by its walls has a rather different way of functioning.

[George said] “Dad had to go out to Azkaban one time, remember, Fred? And he said it was the worst place he’d ever been, he came back all weak and shaking...They suck the happiness out of a place, Dementors. Most of the prisoners go mad in there.” (*The Prisoner of Azkaban*, p.61.)

The Dementors are the incarnation of the mental illness that we today know as major depression – all happy thoughts, all pleasant memories disappear in a dark and stifling enclosure of suffering. Mental illness comes to be seen as a directed and controlled punishment, whose sufferers generally are thought to have deserved the symptoms.

Curiously enough, when it comes to major depressive disorders in the novel, nearly the same attitude prevails – though not emphasized as being a well-deserved punishment, it is not regarded as a non-deserved, victim-based punishment or self-punishment either, it is rather regarded with a neutral and disinterested tone.

2.1.3. *The congregation of undesirables*

It is particularly striking how Foucault underlines the idea of an overarching category, poorness, illness and insanity replacing the place of the lepers – suggesting that society necessarily needs to expel some members – yet the group chosen can be quite arbitrary at times, not necessarily based on any medical expertise. In some cases the blasphemous, the unemployed and prostitutes fell prey to the great confinement as well, evidently based on ethics rather than medicine. Lazar houses were often converted both in France and Germany to accommodate the poor, bearers of other bodily illnesses and ultimately the mad. As Foucault puts it (2006) „*The game of exclusion would be played again, often in these same places, in an oddly similar fashion two or three centuries later*” (p.8.). In a way, madness

became the true heir of leprosy, although many scholars claimed that this place was first taken by venereal disease.

Azkaban likewise changes its inmates on the overturn of power between Pottertopia and Voldemortopia, in the latter case filling its cells with the broad category of anyone who opposes the Dark Lord or is not pure or at least half-blood. We can only assume that before the onset of Voldemortopia, the inmates were largely there for criminal offences, therefore in this case it is not a sanitary unit that takes over the role of accommodating the excluded, but a penitentiary institution. However it is notable how confinement can take on a double meaning – one can be confined inside, the freedom of movement taken away, or one can be confined outside, the freedom of integration, of joining society denied.

2.1.4. *Failed attempts at voyages to nowhere*

The expression of confinement is not necessarily very exact – many times exclusion is more appropriate to the way the mad were chased out of city walls, and trusted to the care of travelling merchants and pilgrims, who “*drifted from one town to another carrying their senseless cargo*”(Foucault, 2006, p.9.) to uncertain destinations. In fact, as Foucault observes, the journey often took the symbolic meaning of a pilgrimage to retrieve lost reason.

Conversely, in the HPs whenever a journey takes place it is hardly ever to retrieve lost reason – most of the time it is even to loose reason. Voldemort went through his famous transmutation during a mysterious journey, when he was supposed to be visiting Albania among other places and when he came back, an entirely different person, no longer recognizable re-entered the community of wizards, ready to overtake Pottertopia. As Dumbledore’s words in the novel express it:

“Very few people know that Lord Voldemort was once called Tom Riddle. I taught him myself, fifty years ago, at Hogwarts. He disappeared after leaving the school...travelled far and wide...sank so deeply into the Dark Arts, consorted with the very worst of our kind, underwent so many dangerous, magical transformations, that when he resurfaced as Lord Voldemort, he was

barely recognizable. Hardly anyone connected Lord Voldemort with the clever, handsome boy who was once Head Boy here.” (Chamber of Secrets, p. 211)

Therefore journey in this case meant not the journey to sanity, though definitely a journey of change, but a journey into madness and loss of previous past, in the case of Voldemort, irreconcilably.

Foucault emphasizes that often the journey was not taken on firm land, but on water. He insists on the existence of the “*ship of fools*” or *stultifera navi*, that carried a serious meaning for society. According to Foucault “*The ship of fools was loaded with heavy meaning, and clearly carried a great social force*” (p. 11). The prison, the journey, the outcastness (they were confined at the gates of the cities, not let in, yet not driven away) was the threshold, the ultimate liminality – and the inmates were the personification of the “*Passanger par excellence, prisoner of the passage*” (p.11).

Such a character of liminality and eternal passage appears in the Half-Blood Prince of the HPs. Driven mad by fear, a former teacher at Hogwarts, Horace Slughorn spends his life in an unending travel to find not his own reason – as his actions are more than reasonable, taking into account the reigning circumstances at the time – but a peace of mind and solace.

“I imagine that they [the Death Eaters] would want you to turn your considerable talents to coercion, torture, and murder,” said Dumbledore. “Are you really telling me that they haven’t come recruiting yet?”

Slughorn eyed Dumbledore balefully for a moment, then muttered, “I haven’t given them the chance. I’ve been on the move for a year. Never stay in one place more than a week. Move from Muggle house to Muggle house — the owners of this place are on holiday in the Canary Islands — it’s been very pleasant, I’ll be sorry to leave. It’s quite easy once you know how, one simple Freezing Charm on these absurd burglar alarms they use instead of Sneakoscopes and make sure the neighbors don’t spot you bringing in the piano.” (Half-Blood Prince, p. 45.)

Constantly on the run in order to find reason in a world where madness is taking over, Slughorn is the true “*passenger par excellence*” that Foucault describes. Yet he realizes finally that the reason he so desperately seeks is not in the voyage itself, but at the only place that the Death Eaters have not yet dared to touch – Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry.

Yet to our concern it is more important to notice that madness all of a sudden became associated with two other things – on the one hand with danger and on the other hand with curiosity. As Foucault himself observes (concerning danger and fear):

„[But] only after a long latency period of almost two centuries did that new obsession take the place of the new fear that leprosy has installed in the masses and elicit similar reactions of division, exclusion and purification, which are akin to madness itself.” (Foucault, 2006, p. 10)

The mad were often presented and shown as if they were a type of curious and strange element of the human species. This gave rise to another phenomenon: madness incited more curiosity than before – the reason precisely being their confinement. Locked up yet visible behind iron bars the masses of mad could be observed and studied, and they became subjects to the medical gaze.

2.2. *Gendered madness – The Madwoman in the attic descends to the entrance*

Foucault talks about madness focusing on expulsion and oppression, yet he does not focus his attention on gender particularly. Many feminist scholars since then have demonstrated that gender is an important issue in the history of madness.

Madness became harshly oppressive for women from the end of the 18th century and the 19th century on (Showalter, 1985), which Showalter denotes the first psychiatric revolution. She argues that before this period, men could stand as representatives of madness as well, referring to Cibber’s two statues that represented ‘Raving Madness’ and ‘Melancholic Madness’, both male, and both later hidden behind a curtain. The curtain has the potential to carry a double meaning: as an occluding object from the public gaze, it symbolizes possible shame and necessity to hide; however, on the other hand for the insane it offers protection from the others and the punishment.

The curtain in this function appears in the HPs as well, emphasizing the necessity of silencing, distancing and occluding the portrait of a hysterical woman, Mrs. Black (*Order of the Phoenix*). Her hysterical trait consist in that she starts shouting insults whenever people she would not want to see in her house enter, apparently awakened by the noises they make (as the curtain is there in front of her not only to hide and protect her, but also to blind her, shut her off from the real world). She is one of the first people Harry meets soon after entering her house (at the time used as headquarters for the Order of the Phoenix)

CRASH.

“Tonks!” cried Mrs. Weasley in exasperation, turning to look behind her.

“I’m sorry!” wailed Tonks, who was lying flat on the floor. “It’s that stupid umbrella stand, that’s the second time I’ve tripped over –”

But the rest of her words were drowned by a horrible, ear-splitting, blood-curdling screech.

The moth-eaten velvet curtains Harry had passed earlier had flown apart, but there was no door behind them. For a split second, Harry thought he was looking through a window, a window behind which an old woman in a black cap was screaming and screaming as though she were being tortured – then he realized it was simply a life-size portrait, but the most realistic, and the most unpleasant, he had ever seen in his life.

The old woman was drooling, her eyes were rolling, the yellowing skin of her face stretched taut as she screamed; and all along the hall behind them, the other portraits awoke and began to yell, too, so that Harry actually screwed up his eyes at the noise and clapped his hands over his ears. Lupin and Mrs. Weasley darted forward and tried to tug the curtains shut over the old woman, but they would not close and she screeched louder than ever, brandishing clawed hands as though trying to tear at their faces.

“Filth! Scum! By-products of dirt and vileness! Half-breeds, mutants, freaks, begone from this place! How dare you befoul the house of my fathers –”

(*Order of the Phoenix*, p. 58)

The screech, as it starts to resonate in the room, slowly filling every corner, as if belonging to a terrible banshee, basically wishes to see one thing: that people she would not like to see there, should not enter her house. This wish seems to be a quite reasonable one, even if we take into consideration that we are dealing with Mrs. Black, who is a fervent supporter of the Dark Side. Yet the emotions the event stirs is alarming and seemingly contagious, unstoppable and even threatens with driving everyone else mad in the house as well, as it is suggested by Harry’s reaction, his eyes turning and his hands closing tight on his ears.

The panic and the chaos she causes reminds the reader of an oncoming Apocalypse particularly when other portraits join in the chorus. Both her voice – shrilling and blood curdling – and her looks – her eyes rolling, her “*brandishing clawed hands*” reaching out apparently blindly to the intruders – are strongly associated with later portrayals of hysteria and the dangerous hysterical woman. She looks very realistic as if truly there in person, not even painted but behind a window, conjuring up the possibility of the real existence of the hysterical madwoman again, as described in the literature of the 18th century (Gilbert and Gubar, 1979).

It is also notable that she is no longer hidden away, not safely locked up in an attic as was the case in *Jane Eyre*. She is right at the entrance, guarding the place that is supposed to be a shelter and home to those within – as if the danger that was once contained in the attic had somehow escaped, not temporarily this time³⁶, but forever. She has installed herself in the entrance to the house, guarding and watching everyone around her, immobile and solid as a rock, all unable to remove her as she magically fixed herself there with a permanent Sticking Charm.

Desperation seems to follow as they seem to be unable to silence her for a long time, all losing their nerves – mostly women, as we’re talking about Mrs Weasley and Nymphadora Tonks - though Harry is there, he is under-age and has no idea of what is happening – until somebody of the opposite sex, a grown-up man appears.

[...]a man with long black hair came charging out of a door facing Harry.

“Shut up, you horrible old hag, shut UP!” he roared, [...]The old woman’s face blanched.

“Yooooou!” she howled, her eyes popping at the sight of the man. “Blood traitor, abomination, shame of my flesh!”

“I said – shut – UP!” roared the man, and with a stupendous effort he and Lupin managed to force the curtains closed again.

The old woman’s screeches died and an echoing silence fell.

(Order of the Phoenix, p. 59)

³⁶ In the novel *Jane Eyre* the madwoman in the attic also escapes from the attic a few times.

The return of the dangerous and hysterical, unsilenceable women is described as a real threat and what is even worse, she can be hardly kept at bay. It takes not even one, but two men to silence her finally – one of them being her own son. The silencing also seems like a rather brutal act, harshly pulling the curtains over her, as if putting a straight jacket on her body enclosing her, stifling the words, pulling a cap over her head or shutting the door in her face. Her behaviour seems to mirror that of the statue of “Raving Madness” – however it is in a female form this time.

2.3. *Foucault, Showalter and literature*

Foucault (2006) points at the link between water and madness for example in *Tristen and Iseut*, where the soul is seen as a bark in 15th century, tossed on an infinite sea of desire – a metaphor that resonates very well with the idea of Freud’s theory – although his sea of desire has frozen into an iceberg already. Foucault (2006) also mentions Shakespeare’s Ophelia, who drowned herself and was considered truly mad (as opposed to Hamlet, who feigned madness to reveal the truth) thus opposing male madness as unreason with the truly female malady, madness. According to Foucault, madness in Shakespeare is often used to reveal truth itself or as feigned madness (e.g. in Hamlet) to find out the truth beneath the surface. Madness in this way is linked to cunningness, the trickster figures and even creativity, sagacity and wisdom – yet this only appears in males as I shall elaborate on it longer in the section dealing with Jung and the Archetype of the Wise Old Man.

Foucault briefly mentions the image of another type of madwoman, bearing close resemblance to a *femme fatale*. He mentions the male destroyer *Lorelei*, who through her beauty and charm embezzles men and leads them to their certain death, as described in Heinrich Heine’s poem, *Die Lorelei* (Heine, 1838/1982). The *Lorelei* is presented as the inverse image of Ophelia, she is the destroyer, rather than the self-destroyer and destroyed,

yet both of them elicit fear and invoke madness as a label from society. In the HPs a the veela form a good parallel to this, who appear at the Quidditch World Cup.

Veela were women...the most beautiful women Harry had ever seen... except that they weren't - they couldn't be - human. This puzzled Harry for a moment while he tried to guess what exactly they could be; what could make their skin shine moon-bright like that, or their white-gold hair fan out behind them without wind...but then the music started, and Harry stopped worrying about them not being human - in fact, he stopped worrying about anything at all.

The veela had started to dance, and Harry's mind had gone completely and blissfully blank. All that mattered in the world was that he kept watching the veela, because if they stopped dancing, terrible things would happen.

And as the veela danced faster and faster, wild, half-formed thoughts started chasing through Harry's dazed mind. He wanted to do something very impressive, right now. Jumping from the box into the stadium seemed a good idea...but would it be good enough? (Goblet of Fire, p.67)

The veela are very similar to the legendary *Lorelei* and the dangerous woman seducing men to their death, their destiny, a motif appearing already in Greek mythology with the sirens. Harry is totally mesmerized by their beauty and grace and he is ready to leap from the top of the stadium, dragged down into the abyss like the men in the boat in the poem of Heine, the boatman who also looks not to the reefs below, but the wonderful woman singing above. Again the beauty of women is portrayed as their treacherous weapon with which they are capable of luring men into their death in spite of their obvious overwhelming power and larger force.

As the chapter demonstrated madness through the ages took on many faces and the process by which madness was created according to Foucault (2006) was the aforementioned “*game of exclusion*” (p.12). The question becomes therefore how the rules of the games are created. In order to describe this process I use the theory of Louis Pierre Althusser and his notion on ideology and ideological apparatuses. Can the rules of the game be discerned in these ideologies – and what are these ideologies exactly? Are these ideologies – along with the novel – just something that is a guest in our world or are they here to stay? From the

gender perspective however the most important question remains: are the ideologies on gender reversible – does it matter in any way that it is *Harry* Potter and not *Harriet* Potter who is the protagonist of the novel?

This year, evil will pass through from their world into our own. [...]

(from the official Harry Potter Trailer for
Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince ³⁷)

3. In the shackles of the IGA of Harry Potter

As Foucault, Showalter and others demonstrated, although the exact meaning of madness changes across time, the eternal is implied in the temporary – that there is, there was and there always will be madness. As an eternal notion in changing forms its definition falls very close to that of ideology by Althusser, according to whom ideology is the imaginary relationship between people and their real conditions of existence (Althusser, 1970).

Indeed many Marxist critiques agree that the HPs conveys a set of particular and pervasive ideologies (Smadja, 2001, Zipes, 2001, Hunt, 2001, Cullinan, B.E., 1981), although none of them addresses madness directly. The criticism often goes against the morals of the story, (for example that it opens with a double murder) and its warped reality, often attacked by religious groups. However, the ideology of madness has not yet been addressed so far in the novel.

3.1. *Althusser on ideology*

Althusser (1969) claims that a steady State Power does not necessarily need to have full-fledged brute physical power; more important in upholding State Power is ideology, the totality of cognitive forms or signifying practices³⁸. Althusser therefore posits two sources – brute force (the army or the police – the Repressive State Apparatus - RSA) and ideology (Ideological State Apparatus - ISA). This Althusserian concept of ideology seems to be useful (Althusser, 1970), though it needs to be slightly modified as formerly clear-cut power boundaries are not neatly stopped at country borders, which is typically true to the ISA, and

³⁷ Source: YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=96QRVfto7OM&feature=fvst>, Retrieved 2009-05-22. Textual reference also: <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0417741/quotes> Retrieved 2009-05-22.

³⁸ From Science, literature and ideology, In: Formalism and Marxism.

therefore can no longer be tied to a single State. Considering that the HPs has been translated into 26 languages (the first version even to Latin and Ancient Greek; [Wilson, A. 2006] and it is on the market in more than 130 countries, (Hunt, 2001) – clearly borders and boundaries no longer apply nor to the novel, neither to the ideology contained within. Therefore I propose to use the term Ideological Global Apparatus (IGA) instead of Althusser’s original ISA (Ideological State Apparatus).

In his original essays Louis Pierre Althusser (1969, 1970) developed a new vision based on Marxist theory, in an attempt to investigate the forms in which the State secures the means of “*reproducing the conditions of its production*” (Althusser, 1970, p. 14). Classical Marxist thought conceived the State as a “*machine of repression*” (Althusser, 1970, p. 10), that uses the State Apparatus to achieve its aim.³⁹ However, concerning the reproduction of labour power Althusser notices that Marxist theory left out a third component from the equation, which can be of crucial importance and he called this missing piece ideology.

„...the reproduction of labour power requires not only a reproduction of its skills, but also, at the same time, a reproduction of its submission to the rules of the established order [...] so that they, too, will provide for the domination of the ruling class ‘in words’.” (Althusser, 1970, p.15.)

Ideology, according to the exact definition of Althusser is “*the sum of those ideas and notions, which (in a more or less organized theoretical form) reflects the imaginary relationship that exists on the one hand between individuals and their environment and on the other hand between individuals themselves, where this reflection is always warped by different social interests*”⁴⁰(from Szigeti et al., 1976). According to Althusser however, ideology is nothing more than a series of “*world outlooks*”(1970, p.18), and upon examining these outlooks carefully as if under a careful and attentive ethnographer’s magnifier lens, we

³⁹ Classic Marxist theory holds that state power is different from the State Apparatus and while State Power can change (e.g. revolutions, coups d’état), the State Apparatus remains the same.

⁴⁰ Definition taken from a Lexicon of Philosophy printed during the communist era in Hungary, translated by Rozalia Ivády

would necessarily come to the conclusion that they are no more real than the myths that any primitive society creates for their self-sustenance.

Ideology as an imaginary relationship with the real conditions of existence, in Althusser's words, "*is nothing insofar as it is a pure dream (manufactured by who knows what power*" (Althusser, 1970, p. 21). Even though distorted forms of reality, ideologies nevertheless remain unquestioned truths. Madness, craziness, insanity or whatever may be the name by which we call it, is definitely one of the ideologies, dreams, myths of society.

Althusser, in recognizing the importance of ideologies, posits the concept of the Ideological State Apparatus (ISA), thereby positing two kinds of State apparatuses. The Repressive State Apparatus (RSA), functions only as a reinforcement, to harness Subjects who are not successfully hailed by Ideology and the state's incarnated entities of ideology, the so called Ideological State Apparatuses, such as schools, family, church or literature – and in modern day, psychiatry consultations.

3.1.1. Ideological recognition

There are a number of differences between the Ideological and the Repressive State Apparatuses. The ISA belongs to the private sphere and functions by interpellating its subject as opposed to the Repressive State Apparatus, which is a part of the public sphere and functions by violence.

Althusser's concept of "*the ideological recognition*" (Althusser, 1969, p.59.) is central to the functioning of Ideology, whereby we cannot but realize the obviousness as obviousness and we "*have the inevitable and natural reaction of crying out [...] 'That's obvious!''That's right!''That's true!''*" (Althusser, 1969, p. 59).

In the HPs it is easily observable when this ideological recognition truly occurs and when it is a repressive apparatus hiding under the name of an ideological apparatus. This "fake appellation" is often the case with Voldemort, who is using repressive means (for

example kidnapping family members (as it happens to Luna Lovegood in the *Deathly Hallows*) to replace the ideological recognition component.

The fact that the ISA works by the interpellation of the subject, or the hailing of the subject is of extreme importance: “*ideology ‘acts’ or ‘functions’ in such a way that it ‘recruits’ subjects among the individuals [...] or transforms the individuals into subjects*”(Althusser, 1969. p. 60). If the hailed individual turns around to heed the call of ideology – which, according to Althusser, is almost always the case – “*by this mere one-hundred and eighty degree physical conversion, he becomes a subject.*”(Althusser, 1969 p. 60.) Yet even before this Interpellation, subjects are almost always already subjects. As Althusser notes “*Subjects work by themselves*” (Althusser, 1969. p. 61.).

Subject has a double meaning: a subject as an individual free to act versus an individual who is subject to some obligation. According to Althusser, “*the individual is interpellated as a (free) subject in order that he shall submit freely to the commandments of the Subject, i. e. in order that he shall (freely) accept his Subjection*” (Althusser, 1969. p. 62.).

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3.1.2. The Absolute Subject

Ideology is determined and given a meaning by the Absolute Subject (to which Althusser often refers to simply as the Subject, with a capital S) – the ultimate guarantor of meaning. All Ideology is centred around its guarantee, who is the Absolute subject, “*occupying the unique place of the Centre*” (Althusser, 1970, p.68). The Absolute Subject is „*the absolute guarantee that everything really is so, and that on condition that the subjects recognize what they are and behave accordingly, everything will be all right: Amen – ‘So be it’*. (Althusser, 1970. p 63.).

⁴¹ There is a glimpse of something that others conceive of as the greatest problem of mankind, which Althusser raises briefly – that of free will and destiny – and one which pervades the entire series of Harry Potter –as I have already mentioned it appears in this particular chapter as well.

It is curious how in the HPs the Absolute subject is always male and judging by the standards of the psychiatrico-medical discourse (the DSM-IV) can nearly always be considered mad. The first Absolute Subject of Pottertopia, Dumbledore is described as a very wise, yet oddly behaving, slightly mad person.

Albus Dumbledore had gotten to his feet. He was beaming at the students, his arms opened wide, as if nothing could have pleased him more than to see them all there.

“Welcome,” he said. “Welcome to a new year at Hogwarts! Before we begin our banquet, I would like to say a few words. And here they are: Nitwit! Blubber! Oddment! Tweak!

“Thank you!”

He sat back down. Everybody clapped and cheered. Harry didn’t know whether to laugh or not.

“Is he — a bit mad?” he asked Percy uncertainly.

“Mad?” said Percy airily. “He’s a genius! Best wizard in the world! But he is a bit mad, yes. (*Philosopher’s Stone*, p. 80)

The gibberish he speaks when starting a feast is only one of his many oddities in the series, yet characters are often heard describing him as mad, but this is always interpreted in a framework that his madness is rooted in incomprehension – as no one really understands his underlying wisdom and carefully laid out plans. He is often viewed as being on the borderline of genius and mad, constantly flipping between the two. It is also notable how similar this behaviour is to that of Luna Lovegood – yet its acceptance in males seems to be higher.

The Absolute Subject of the dark forces in the HPs is Voldemort himself, whose madness would be difficult to deny, although textual references are difficult to come by in the novel, as most people do not even dare speak his name, let alone give an opinion on him. Yet some of the descriptions give this madness away, such as when Muggles, such as Frank Brice, the gardener of the Riddle house ignorant of his power describe him.

Out in the corridor, Frank suddenly became aware that the hand gripping his walking stick was slippery with sweat. The man with the cold voice had killed a woman. He was talking about it without any kind of remorse — with amusement. He was dangerous — a madman. And he was planning more murders — this boy, Harry Potter, whoever he was — was in danger — Frank

knew what he must do. Now, if ever, was the time to go to the police. (*Goblet of Fire*, p. 8)

In the description of Voldemort given by Frank Brice another thing, unconnected to his later status of Absolute Subject stands out: the fact that danger is already equated with madness or at least we are given the impression that it forms a core part of it. Therefore it is with one of the Absolute Subjects in the novel that the notions of mad and bad start to get conflated.

3.1.3. *Can ideology be escaped in the HPs?*

The male gender-bias in escaping voluntarily the apparent true appellations is in fact a result of the phenomenon Dumbledore attributes the greatest power to: love (in this case heterosexual love), which replaces the ideological recognition. The only case where this is apparent is that of Severus Snape, who does not turn around to heed the ideological call of Dumbledore, but because an emotional trauma, a loss of a love object who dies by the hands of Voldemort in spite of his promise. Severus Snape in this instance seems to escape ideology together, seemingly heeding the appellation of both sides yet at the same time neither. However, on closer scrutiny Snape does not escape the appellation of an Absolute Subject – in an alternative analysis he lives in a long-gone world where the Absolute Subject is still Lily Potter – which makes him stand out of the rest of society. Whether we read this mis-recognition or arbitrary recognition madness shall be dealt with in a later chapter.

3.1.4.

The Queen of ISA's

Although Ideological State Apparatuses have a plethora of forms, Althusser lists education and school as the most important ones, followed by family, religion and literature. According to Althusser education has become – since the downfall of the church – the most important ISA, the Queen of ISA's.

Hence I believe I have good reasons for thinking that behind the scenes of its political Ideological State Apparatus, which occupies the front of the stage, what the bourgeoisie has installed as its number-one, i.e. as its dominant Ideological State Apparatus, is the educational apparatus, which has in fact replaced in its functions the previously dominant Ideological State Apparatus, the Church. One might even add: the School-Family couple has replaced the Church-Family couple. (Althusser, 1970, p. 71)

The School-Family couple of ISA is central to the Harry Potter series, a couple so strong that the Queen of ISA's in fact frequently replaces its secondary pair in the couple – the family.

This is taken to the extremes in the HPs as Professor McGonagall says in her opening speech

“Welcome to Hogwarts,” said Professor McGonagall. “The start-of-term banquet will begin shortly, but before you take your seats in the Great Hall, you will be sorted into your houses. The Sorting is a very important ceremony because, while you are here, your house will be something like your family within Hogwarts. You will have classes with the rest of your house, sleep in your house dormitory, and spend free time in your house common room. (Philosopher's Stone, p. 74.)

The Family-School pair of ISA materializes fully in the HPs – it is openly stated that the equation is complete, albeit not with the school itself, but one of its constituent parts, one of the houses the student gets sorted into.

Schools present a good example to another thesis that Althusser posits about the ISA's, namely that they have a material bases, in the case of Hogwarts a very impressive material basis, a beautiful gothic castle surrounded by a huge land and flanked by a forest. However, material in the Althusserian sense is not restricted to its everyday meaning – an object that is composed of atoms and can be touched. Althusser prefers to regard these material bases as “*practices*” or actions that are embedded in the rituals of a larger community.

I shall therefore say that, where only a single subject (such and such an individual) is concerned, the existence of the ideas of his belief is material in that *his ideas are his material actions inserted into material practices governed by material rituals which are themselves defined by the material ideological apparatus from which derive the ideas of that subject.* (Althusser, 1970, p.78.)

In the HPs the practices that bring about material changes are those rituals that are often accompanied by the bodily marking of the subject, invoking the Foucauldian concept of the *docile body*. For example, on joining the Death Eaters it is the Dark Lord Himself who burns the Dark Mark on the skin of each of his followers as an irrevocable sign of their subject position and their acceptance of the Absolute Subject.

3.2. *Only a black swan or long live the ideology?*

The question therefore arises: how many people are going to be appellated by the ideology of the HPs in the real world, how many will bow their head in approval, agreeing with the ‘*So be it*’ statement of Althusser (1970. p 63.)? The answer so far is partly obvious, yet the reasons are not that clear. Harry Potter is undoubtedly the most successful book in children’s literature. The question if this is only a stroke of luck or there is something special in HPs that makes it popular might be a crucial one if we want to apply Althusser’s theory, as

the question of how long the “Harry Potter-effect” will last determines its driving force as an ideology.

The economic success was greater than that of any other children’s books, and despite many critiques voices on its low literary value (e.g. Bloom, 2003, Byatt, 2003; Holden, 2000) the fact remains that the HPs has become the most popular book in contemporary children’s literature. Its economic success has made J.K. Rowling even richer than the queen herself (The Worlds Billionaires, 2007, Harry Potter - commercial success, n.d.), with an estimated 4 billion \$ of income, even though Rowling herself denies this fact (J.K. Rowling richer than the queen, 2008).

Economists often refer to successes that are more a product of chance than anything else – talent, new invention, creativity, novelty – as a black swan. In the case of the HPs this means that any other piece of literature could have been as successful as this particular one was, it was only luck that made it popular a view advocated by Kinsella (2009). On the other hand, I would claim that there is something in the HPs that makes it special, which is the structured logic of madness in the wizarding world that enthrals both children and adults.

Although initially it was intended for an audience of about 10-12 years old children, soon the publishing house discovered that adults seemed to be enchanted by the book not any less than their children, therefore it did not take long for an adult edition to appear (Anatol, 2003). The adult edition contains the same text, yet it is a black and white hardcover format book, its design is more serious as the intention of the publisher was to extinguish adults’ fears of reading the book in public. Yet the question remains why adults became interested in the series, a question that has often been raised, because of the unexpected rise of the phenomenon.

3.3. *Other reason's of popularity – a Utopia of structured Unreason*

and a Past that never was

Anatol (2003) considers that the reason why adult readers like the essay is because it takes them back to a nostalgic past, and gives them the feeling of a lost childhood without responsibilities. On the other hand for children the attraction is actually the other way round: they are enchanted by the way three youngsters, just like them, take on serious responsibilities even in the face of death, thereby saving the world. Another reason can be that the HPs melts together various genres in the text as it is a palimpsest, where various genres appear interwoven such as the novel, with a touch of fairy tale, at the same time a boarding school narrative, a detective novel, an adventure story and a fantasy quest tale and last but not least the classical Bildungsroman (Anatol, 2003). As it incorporates a stack of genres that would all be appealing to a certain audience – all of them taken together would indeed account for a mass success.

Smadja (2001) has a different opinion on the reasons of the popularity of the books, where she lists 4 different reasons, among them that they are a series of appealing fairy tales addressing the unconscious and the imaginary (p.4). Secondly, the text is replete with implicit references to the history of the Western World, that adults are either aware of or it evokes faint ideas that makes the book already familiar to them. Thirdly because the HPs allows for young readers the realization of their secret desires via the fictional world of the novel, an unconscious need is fulfilled in reading it. Finally, the fourth reason she cites is that the story has a very strong moral message and includes various pedagogical allusions. This final point is at the heart of the argument of the thesis, examining it from the aspects of the pedagogy of madness.

Although these lists are quite varied, one might add one more the HPs gives rise to the importance of madness as a structured world of Unreason, a world constantly turned upside down, as a neverending carnivalesque. Both Anatol (2003) and Smadja (2001) mention fairy tales, the relationship between secret desires and fantasy and a nostalgia for a Golden age lost in the Britannic past.

In fact there is a continuous appellation to madness, as both sides – the wizarding world and the Muggles – eye each other with suspicion if not with outright hatred, and they are sceptical of the “Other World”, and this process of othering incessantly evokes the connotation of deranged or mad.

In sum, whichever explanation we accept for the popularity of the books, it seems that it is not by mere chance that it became so popular – making it unlikely that it would disappear soon, together with its ideological content. As one of the possible attractions of the Harry Potter books is the madness contained inside them - the question therefore arises, how this madness is gendered.

3.4. *Gender and Harry Potter – what if (s)he had been Harriet Potter instead?*

From a gender point of view it is important that J.K. Rowling was explicitly asked by her publisher (Bloomsbury in the United kingdom) to choose a gender-neutral pseudonym for the publication of the book, as they thought that a female writer would not achieve as much success as a male or even a gender neutral one. The same argument was made about a female protagonist by Rowling herself, who admitted that halfway through the first novel it crossed her mind to change the gender of the protagonist, nevertheless she never did so, although in fact she remained rather controversial on the subject:



1.

Figure A tentative Ms. Harriet Potter

"Harry was born 'almost fully formed,' says Rowling. 'I didn't have to stop and think very hard about my hero.' It's for this reason, the author says, that the star quidditch player of Hogwarts 'isn't a Harriet instead of Harry.' She laughs when she adds that, 'by the time I stopped to wonder, 'Why is it a boy?' it really was too late. He was very dear to me as a boy and, of course, I had Hermione and I love Hermione. And they couldn't do it without Hermione. Well, I feel she's a very strong character, but then she's based on me.' " Richards,n.d.)

"Denise from Blackheath High School for Girls – London: If Harry Potter was a girl, do you think his adventures would have been different?"

JK Rowling replies -> Yes, I do think they would be different. I imagined Harry as a boy from the start, so I've never thought about 'Harriet Potter', but I'm sure lots of things in the books would change, Ron for a start, he'd have to be Ronald." (J.K. Rowling's World Book Day Chat, 2001)

The difference between having a Harriet/Ronaldi and Harry/Ronald would have made a serious difference from the point of view of madness as revealed by the words of J.K. Rowling. If such gender stereotypes such as aptitude in sport can not be broken, it is unlikely that the one on gender and madness would be possible. The fact that Rowling admits that changing the gender of the characters would have made substantial difference underlines that the pattern of madness she included in the novels builds on strong stereotypes as well. Therefore the ideology of gender is firmly built into the novel – which is even explicitly admitted by the author.

“Well, I’m like you Tom. I am different.”⁴²
(Dumbledore)
(from the official Harry Potter Trailer for Harry
Potter and the Half-Blood Prince)

4. The Static comparison – Madness and DSM

The DSM-IV-TR⁴³

In an effort to sail through on the dangerous waters between Scylla of unnecessary stigmatization and Charybdis of leaving serious illnesses uncured psychology and psychiatry have long tried to give an explanation and a structured description of madness. Establishing what can be considered normal and abnormal is essential both in the discipline of psychology and psychiatry to carry out the analysis, yet a disclaimer has to be made in advance that I am balancing on a thin line in this project as in many cases even in real life with much more evidence than can be found in a book, the diagnosis is difficult to establish.

The DSM-I was first drafted in 1962 in an attempt to universalize the psychiatric language and in order to make illnesses more clear-cut, keep subjective decisions to a minimum and introducing a *lingua franca* between psychiatrists in order to be able to communicate about illnesses.

I begin with the analysis of madness as it can be discerned in the novel, or rather novels, as I use all 7 books. The reason to include all books is straightforward: the plot is so complicated, and the protagonists – along with other characters – undergo such radical changes that it would seem a grave error for a psychologist to establish a diagnosis based

⁴² Source: YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fY4DPeBbUbQ&feature=Playlist&p=44FD1727799D0363&index=6>, Retrieved 2009-04-12.

⁴³ Abbreviation for Diagnostic and Statistic Manual, Fourth Edition, Revised version. The versions are essentially fluid and malleable in all cases – in fact homosexuality did not disappear from the manual until 1974, following gay protests between 1970 and 1973 and the research done by Kinsey. In fact the category was smuggled back finally – like many others under a different name: sexual orientation disturbance. In DSM-IV-TR actually cross-gender and transvestite behaviour still figures under the name of sexual identity disorder.

solely on a few, arbitrarily chosen parts. After presenting each category that I found in the HPs as a possible instance of madness I break these rather broad and general categories down and try to fit them into the neat and seemingly fully scientific and seamless DSM-IV categories. In doing so I shall try to contrast the categories given by Rowling and categories from clinical psychology– sometimes drawing on real psychological cases of existing patients⁴⁴ to underpin the validity of the hypothetical “diagnosis”.

As I shall compare instances of madness as it can be discerned in the Harry Potter series (HPs) by J.K. Rowling and the classification of DSM-IV-TR I feel the need to emphasize that I do not consider that either of these discourses should be superior to the other. There are only two instances where I consider the standpoint of J.K. Rowling dangerous, both of them gender issues: the first one being the recognition of female depression as a mental illness. The second one is the flat refusal to accept psychopathy as a mental illness in certain cases, while my last point concerns her reviving the ancient notion of female hysteria that no longer figures in modern discourse. These gender issues form the closing note of this chapter showing the similarity or dissimilarity between J.K. Rowling’s description and the current discourse on mental illnesses known as DSM-IV-TR, paying special attention to discrepancies of gender differences in frequency and severity of mental illnesses.

It is important to establish at the outset, that J.K. Rowling almost always provides an explanation on how and why a certain mental illness has come about, yet this explanation is based on the gradual unfolding of the story and personal experiences of the character in question alone, never digging deeper than the surface – an endeavour that would be difficult to accomplish at any rate as we see the world through the green eyes of the protagonist alone⁴⁵, therefore the feelings, thoughts and emotions of the rest of the characters remains

⁴⁴ These patients are not my own patients – with some of them I did make an interview or took psychological tests, but most of them are case descriptions of colleagues working in the clinical field. These case descriptions often go unpublished; therefore many times I am forced to distance myself from APA publication rules by only citing the names of the authors.

⁴⁵ Except for a few chapters, such as the second chapter in *Half Blood prince* and the first chapter of *Deathly Halows*.

hidden from the possible medical gaze. This is never the case in psychiatry, where a detailed anamnesis or life history – not only including, but even emphasizing the patients’ feelings – is at the core of establishing the diagnosis.

However, in their intent to prove scientific categories, the creators of DSM-IV-TR made all possible efforts to restrict themselves to objectivity – therefore the manual provides mostly behavioral traits for the diagnosis of illnesses. As a consequence one can discern a strong similarity between Rowling’s and the DSM-IV-TR attitudes. Rowling tends to move at a surface level of explanations of mental illnesses based on story-telling, mostly referring to past events as causes, and the DSM-IV-TR likewise explicitly refuses to bring in any deeper explanations. It is noteworthy that the word Statistical is not an accidental choice in the name of the manual – in the intent of establishing psychology and psychiatry as a truly natural science, they resorted to tools of mathematics to reinforce the validity of the diagnoses. After the fierce attacks on psychoanalysis, mainly by the philosopher Karl Popper (1959), they considered that none of the psychological or biological theories has provided sufficient proof so far to establish itself as the most adequate explanation – in other words in psychology none of them has become a dominant discourse. Consequently, DSM-IV-TR only gives a list of observable set of behaviours that are characteristic of the person in question or were typical in the past – which is in its essence the same as the description of the behaviour of the characters in the novel.⁴⁶

4.1. *The basic axes of madness according to the DSM-IV-TR*

It is difficult not to notice how the very first sentence in the HPs conjures up the question of normality. “*Mr. and Mrs. Dursley, of number four, Privet Drive, were proud to*

⁴⁶ My choice of character analysis based on psychoanalysis in the next chapter is a purely arbitrary one from the point of view of DSM-IV-TR, yet I feel it adequate as it has become a dominant discourse in literary analysis, whereas other explanations did not.

say that they were perfectly normal, thank you very much.” (Philosopher’s Stone, p. 1).

However what this normality actually means remains unclear. Would keeping a 10-year-old boy in a cupboard under the stairs replete of spiders and dust be considered normal? Especially in a house, where they have a guest room and their own son has two rooms to himself? It is doubtful whether such behaviour would go unnoticed by Child Protection services. Therefore right in the beginning the opening sentence already tries to turn the discourse around normality and madness. Although Rowling never emphasized this as a core theme in the series from the outset normality is foregrounded as one of the main questions in the novels. Yet by what criteria madness is to be judged is not so obvious at first glance.

Generally in psychology there are four criteria to delineate normal behaviour from deviant or abnormal behaviour (Comer, 2006), but there is never a clear-cut line. These four criteria are deviance, distress, dysfunction and finally danger. As we shall see, none of these alone can constitute a necessary and satisfactory condition to delineate mental illness from mental health. Let me elaborate on these in more detail as they shall form the core in determining instances of differentiating normality from madness – in medical discourse called mental illnesses – in the Harry Potter series.

4.1.1. Deviance

Deviance means essentially a similar notion to that of outcastness from society, the game of exclusion that Foucault (1988, 2006) elaborated, based on some chosen trait. Being different from whatever is considered to be normal in a given society at a given time can earn one the label of madness, although what the important categories of normality are change in time and from one society to another. One of the first caveats of the manual consists in the warning that if the given behaviour is accepted in a culture, then *per definitionem* it can not

considered to be abnormal. However, the manuals are never adapted to the specific culture – they are mere translations, at their core one finds data gathered in the United States, mostly based on middle-class people due to the health insurance system that does not allow lower status individuals to have access to psychiatric treatments. Therefore the categories remain the same, except for the case that they create *exceptions* from the rule in some cases – however they never provide additional categories (such as spirit possession for example) that would be considered a particular deviance from the norm in a different culture. To take our argument closer to the HPs, being a wizard can be considered deviant – however we don't know their exact number of wizards and witches – they are likely to form a very small portion of society and do things, that most people would not do, even if we disregard doing magic. Eating Bertie Bott's Every Flavour Beans could be another example – most people would refrain from the idea that they should eat such things, as they seriously run the risk of picking up a bean tasting of vomit or earwax (Mulholland, 2006). As a matter of fact the Dursleys consider the entire wizarding world abnormal – at least Petunia Dursley certainly does as it becomes evident already in the very first book from the way she talks about her sister when it is revealed that Harry Potter is a wizard. As Harry asks her if she knew before that he was indeed a wizard, the answer pours down on him like a torrent of anger mixed with shame:

Of course we knew! How could you not be, my dratted sister being what she was? Oh, she got a letter just like that and disappeared off to that — that *school* — and came home every vacation with her pockets full of frog spawn, turning teacups into rats. I was the only one who saw her for what she was — a freak! (Philosopher's Stone, p. 34)

However, one can easily consider the wizarding world as an entirely different culture (considering that it has its own social structures, ministry, and most importantly a separate school reserved only for wizard students), a culture different from our own. As in this community being able to do magic is perfectly normal – in fact expected – the argument of Petunia Dursley certainly does not stand ground. Having mentioned the wizarding school,

called Hogwarts, another issue is raised connected to normality and deviance – admission to Hogwarts is based on one basis alone, which is talent in wizarding skills. In our society as well, talented people could be labelled *per definitionem* deviant – they stand apart from the majority of people, be they highly intelligent or extremely talented in music or arts or acting. Yet one would shrink from the idea of considering them abnormal, even though they definitely stand apart from the crowd.

Deviance from the norm also raises other problems – later on in the chapter I shall bring up the question of the mental status of Lily Potter. The mother of the hero of the novel, who essentially committed suicide – an act of obvious deviance. However she did so for a generally noble and well-accepted reason: it was to protect her son, a type of suicide Durkheim calls altruistic suicide. While suicide itself is considered deviant, in this particular case it is not only considered to be abnormal, but even has a positive connotation.

However, all the above can be read the other way round – namely that it is deviance itself that constitutes or creates the norm. What the particular norm of a society or a culture is can often only be inferred from what is punished and what goes accepted or even unnoticed. Punishing aggressive behaviour sets cooperation and timidity as a norm and vice versa in a society where self-fulfillment and competition is highly valued, aggressive behaviour is likely to be looked at with more acceptance. In the HPs the role of punishment becomes evident in the case of two characters, who essentially present the same behavioral traits, yet one of them is considered the ultimate villain (Voldemort) while the other one enjoys extreme popularity (Dumbledore). The difference between them apparently is cruelty and aggressiveness, showing that the norm that Rowling tries to establish in the novel is timidity and cooperation.

4.1.2.

Distress

In real life clinical psychology the most frequent reason for patients for turning up is their own suffering. Distress means negative stress (as opposed to positive stress, which is referred to as *eustress* – experienced for example before important events in the individual's life, such as a wedding). Generally distress provides symptoms such as feeling of unhappiness, misery and unworthiness. The concept is very close to corporeal illnesses, except for the fact that (with a few exceptions⁴⁷) there are no bodily symptoms – the mere feeling of being ill is floating vaguely in the patient's mind without evident medical reasons.

The classic and most often cited case is depression, which is so common that it has come to be called the “common cold of mental illnesses”. Generally speaking, twice as many women fall into this category – certainly true to the category of major depressive disorder, the most severe form of depression – than men (Kuehner, 2003). In the HPs the most evident example would be Nymphadora Tonks, a young and extremely talented witch, who is a metamorphomage⁴⁸ by birth. When the reader first meets the character her hair is of a pinkish colour, that reminds one of bubble gums. She is prone to make jokes and plays with her own abilities to make funny faces, yet one day she turns up with her hair grey, the smile withered from her face, her movements slow and her speech monotonous.

“No problem,” said Tonks, without smiling. From what Harry could see in the darkness, she was as mousy-haired and miserable-looking as she had been when he had met her at the Burrow. (Half-Blood Prince, p 102.)

They trudged up the dark, deserted lane, following the freshly made carriage tracks. Harry looked sideways at Tonks under his cloak. Last year she had been inquisitive (to the point of being a little annoying at times), she had laughed easily, she had made jokes. Now she seemed older and much more serious and purposeful. . (Half-Blood Prince, p 103.)

Her hair colour, her movements, her change since last year are evident signs of some kind of mood disorder, judging from the description of the severity of her symptoms she may well be suffering from a major depressive episode. All characters notice this change, including the protagonist, Harry Potter, yet even he misinterprets her behaviour, attributing

⁴⁷ Hysteria in the sense that Freud uses it, would be a good example of that.

⁴⁸ Meaning a witch who can change her appearance at will – in her particular case this is often restricted to changes in her hair colour that indicate her mood.

the sudden change to her grief because of the death of her cousin, Sirius Black, which she feels responsible for. Yet Harry Potter, far from intending to help her, refrains from speaking to her altogether and hopes to get as far away as soon as possible.

With great relief he finally saw the tall pillars on either side of the gates, each topped with a winged boar. He was cold, he was hungry and he was quite keen to leave this new, gloomy Tonks behind. (*Half-Blood Prince*, p 103.)

It seems that instead of helping her, Harry is afraid of her, as if madness was a stigma that would still incite fear of the madwoman even if she is not in her shouting, screaming hysterical form like Mrs Black.

The fact that the most controversial character of the series, Severus Snape even starts mocking her can not be considered as an improvement either.

“I was interested to see your new Patronus.” [Severus Snape]
He shut the gates in her face with a loud clang and tapped the chains with his wand again, so that they slithered, clinking, back into place.
“I think you were better off with the old one,” said Snape, the malice in his voice unmistakable. “The new one looks weak.”
As Snape swung the lantern about, Harry saw, fleetingly, a look of shock and anger on Tonks’s face. Then she was covered in darkness once more. (*Half Blood Prince*, p.104).

In fact the only person who she seems to talk to is the typical mother-character in the series, Mrs Weasley, who is the only person who seems to be concerned about her condition, inviting her over for dinner and comforting her. Yet it is never suggested that she should seek help either from mediwitches⁴⁹ or in St Mungus Hospital⁵⁰.

4.1.3. *Dysfunction*

⁴⁹ Witches specialized in treating illnesses by magical means

⁵⁰ A hospital reserved for wizards and witches only.

Dysfunction refers to the inability to conform adequately to the environment, to fit in well with expectations. This does not necessarily cause distress in the person experiencing it, rather than that it creates a tension in society, by engaging in certain behaviours that the particular society can not tolerate, or considers them harmful and inadequate. Obviously here the importance of culture must be emphasized again, as different societies might expect different lifestyles just as they expect different norms.

The difference between deviance and dysfunction is that while deviance means nothing less or more than being different (including talented as mentioned) dysfunction always carries a connotation of self-harm and deterioration, due to the fact of being estranged from society, not being able to conform to the rules of society. This alienation does not need to be intentional, for example in many variations of schizophrenia, where the contact with the real world is lost, and as a consequence loss of job, disinterest in social relations and in family relations and finally severe deterioration in lifestyle often occurs without the explicit intention of the person suffering from the illness. One reported case (from Frances and Ross, 2001) is that of Mr D, who, in an attempt to solve the problem of racism, has painted every single thing around him in black and white, including his room, his clothes and finally himself as well. This odd behaviour, along with his hallucinations has gradually led him to drop out of university, then loose his job and finally end up on social aid in a small house in the outskirts of the city.

This strange behaviour might remind us of the Lovegood in the HPs, yet they are more or less accepted in society, in an odd way though but they are functional. This also underlines the importance of cultural differences – what might be functional, working, accepted and getting one ahead in one culture might not be the same in the other.

However, in itself this criterion is inadequate as well: dysfunction contains the notion of self-harm as well, which is often considered not only normal, but even admirable. Lily Potter, who sacrificed her own life – which is not only deviant but also quite dysfunctional in

the strict sense of the term – for the life of her son could be a good example. Other classic examples are famous protesters who demonstrate for political issues or social order by intentional self-starving, such as Gandhi. In the case of the HPs we see Hermione Granger, the sole female companion of the protagonist do the same as a form of protest against the enslavement of house-elves, who are servants at the school, doing menial jobs, without receiving salary or without adequate property rights.

“There are house-elves here?” she said, staring, horror-struck, at Nearly Headless Nick. “Here at Hogwarts?”

“Certainly,” said Nearly Headless Nick, looking surprised at her reaction. “The largest number in any dwelling in Britain, I believe. Over a hundred.”

“I’ve never seen one!” said Hermione.

“Well, they hardly ever leave the kitchen by day, do they?” said Nearly Headless Nick. “They come out at night to do a bit of cleaning...see to the fires and so on...I mean, you’re not supposed to see them, are you? That’s the mark of a good house-elf, isn’t it, that you don’t know it’s there?”

Hermione stared at him.

“But they get paid?” she said. “They get holidays, don’t they? And - and sick leave, and pensions, and everything?”

Nearly Headless Nick chortled so much that his ruff slipped and his head flopped off, dangling on the inch or so of ghostly skin and muscle that still attached it to his neck.

“Sick leave and pensions?” he said, pushing his head back onto his shoulders and securing it once more with his ruff. “House-elves don’t want sick leave and pensions!”

Hermione looked down at her hardly touched plate of food, then put her knife and fork down upon it and pushed it away from her. (*Goblet of Fire*, p.118)

Hermione is clearly shocked by the thought that slavery could exist in such a perfect place as she imagined Hogwarts to be. From this point on in the novel she puts down her fork and refuses to eat for a long time until she finds a better idea. She founds the SPEW, the Society for the Promotion of Elfish Welfare – trying to get everyone to wear badges promoting it and raise money for them – which is a more constructive, yet still unsuccessful and slightly odd solution, though at least not dysfunctional. However starving herself is certainly self-harming and therefore *per definitionem* dysfunctional, she can by no means be considered mad based solely on these premises.

The most feared yet least common characteristics of the mentally ill is being dangerous to themselves or to their environment. Even so this is what earns them the practice of exclusion based on fear as Foucault points out (2006) inherited from the lepers. Yet dangerous behaviour in the mentally ill is in fact rather the exception than the rule. Most of the mental ill do not pose any danger neither to themselves nor to the society surrounding them. The most common mental illnesses – depression and anxiety disorders are not at all dangerous – quite the contrary, they feel threatened by the surrounding world and react to this by withdrawing from it completely. Even seemingly frightening mental illnesses such as schizophrenia, which often involves severe delusions, such as persecutory delusion, when the patient is convinced of being chased or hallucinations is harmless in most cases both to the patient and to the surrounding environment.

Danger only appears in a small number of disorders, which moreover have very small prevalence⁵¹, so there are quite very few of them – the most prominent example being antisocial personality disorder. Antisocial personality disorder, formerly called psychopathy or sociopathy involves a curious blend of charm and danger at the same time. The best archetype could be the *femme fatale* such as Mata Hari, who is seductive and at the same time deadly dangerous. In the Harry Potter series, there is a perfect incarnation of classical psychopathy, the main villain and ultimate evil, whose name is rarely pronounced, yet most commonly known as Voldemort. Seductive, charming and an excellent student in his youth, prefect in his house and celebrity among the teachers (with the exception of Dumbledore perhaps, the later Headmaster of the school) is a perfect example. He often manages to convince others to do against their will not by coercion, but by his seductive power and convincing manner (getting Hepzibah Smith to show him two extremely precious objects,

⁵¹ Prevalence is the percentage of the cases that occur in the given population.

Helga Hufflepuff's cup and Salazar Slytherin's Locket – both of which he ultimately steals, killing Hepzibah Smith – *Half Blood Prince*) or winning their confidence gets information (as in the case of Helena Ravenclaw, the ghost of Ravenclaw house, who tells him her most protected secret, merely because he seems so understanding – *Deathly Hallows*). Finally he turns out to be the most dangerous wizard of all times, a cruel and unforgiving serial killer and the chief enemy of the hero, Harry Potter.

The only discrepancy between reality and this fictional figure might be that most psychopaths present these qualities at the same time, they are best depicted as a type of evil tricksters and typical spies – as the aforementioned Mata Hari – even though the only recognized spy in the HPs (called Severus Snape, a triple agent) is difficult to argue to belong to this category.

4.2. *Normality contrasted with madness*

My intention in the previous chapters was to demonstrate that there is no clear solution, no neat division line between abnormal and normal behaviour. Based on the criteria listed above and the categories provided by DSM-IV-TR usually doctors and psychologists try to balance these different aspects. There are various drawbacks to this categorization, one of them being that the diagnosis sometimes runs backwards, reversing blindly until it accidentally seems to hit the right category. Most patients receive more than one diagnosis, before either being given a final one – in psychiatric practice often based on what medicines work best for the patient – and it is not uncommon for certain patients to collect a plethora of diagnoses.

In the imaginary wizarding world remedy to mental illnesses seem to be lacking – at Hogwarts school there is no school counsellor to turn to. The only hospital called St. Mungus only treats psychosis-type delusions. One case of this would be the complete loss of memory in the case with Gilderoy Lockheart, a very seductive teacher, whose own Oblivion charm turns against him (*Chamber of Secrets*). Another psychosis type illness is the unfortunate case of the Longbottom, whose complete loss off contact with reality occurs as a result of extreme suffering (*Order of the Phoenix*) Alice Longbottom, the mother of Neville Longbottom, seems to be unable to recognize her own son and gives him chewing gum papers as presents, clearly not recognizing the oddity of her action.

In the HPs it seem that everything else bar these serious psychoses are either officially ignored or put under the scope of the law (as it happens with psychopathy), such is the case with the followers of Voldemort, the so called Death Eaters. However, upon closer scrutiny one can find the traces of many more illnesses – however the question remains whether these

can be considered illnesses at all, taking into account whether they are accepted behaviours in the culture of the wizarding world. My tentative goal is to discover these subtle illnesses that meet some of the criteria listed above, and which often include a gender aspect – many times correctly, but in other cases mistakenly.

*“Every day, every hour, this very minute in fact,
dark forces attempt to penetrate these walls”⁵²*
(Dumbledore)
(from the official Harry Potter Trailer for Harry
Potter and the Half-Blood Prince)

5. The Potter in the attic - categories of madness and its distortions

During my analysis my aim was to find the main axes that characterize the HPs by examining those, who could potentially be considered mad and whether this in the series can in any way be equated with *the dark forces* used to describe Voldemort and his allies.

The task of finding these potential subjects is rather difficult given that there is no single steadfast method that could pin down madness that is inherent to the HPs. One technique employed is examining the instances that other characters expressed verbally if someone is mad, a fool (an adjective curiously often used by Voldemort both to himself and to others), lunatic, mental, crazy, nuts, etc. Yet by employing this technique one very soon finds that virtually everyone in the novel is mad, bar some of the supporting characters. This already shows the alarming sign that adjectives referring to one's mental integrity are often used excessively and without the necessary precautions in the novel. Therefore all instances when these verbal expressions seemed more of an emotional outburst than a real opinion had to be excluded from the analysis.

However, those who are evidently considered mentally ill, are not always verbally labelled so – a statement particularly true about Voldemort, who is feared to such an extent that even his name is erased from the vocabulary of the characters, let alone references to his mental status. Therefore I also employed another technique, examining the actions and attitudes of the characters in the broad sense to see if someone was seen by many to stand out

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Source: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fY4DPeBbUbQ&feature=Playlist&p=44FD1727799D0363&index=6>, Retrieved 2009-04-12.

of the line, to be peculiar – the judgement whether this can be considered madness however is undoubtedly subjective.

After identifying the subjects to be analyzed, I tried to find a corresponding DSM mental illness and finally I made an attempt to group the cases into meaningful categories that would reflect similar axes as the ones encountered in the DSM.

As a result the following description is already clustered and particular individuals might appear under various headings, as mental illnesses are not exclusive, in fact they are very likely to co-occur.

5.1. *Dangerous Evil - cruelty, injustice, and aggression*

In the wizarding world, this seems to be the main criterion for officially being declared mad is being evil, cruel and aggressive, which are all considered as signs of madness. As mentioned before these cases are in fact very rare, yet they seem to be very much overrepresented in the wizarding world⁵³. However, an enormous change is brought about in discourse on normality in Voldemortopia, once Voldemort, the ultimate evil wizard seizes power and brings an entirely different construction of the world with a brand new definition of what it means to be normal and abnormal. Yet as this is only a relatively brief period in course of the story, and very few mental illnesses can be discerned that would fit either the DSM-IV-TR categories or the criteria described above, it can be considered as a type of conscious Othering – the exclusion of muggle-born⁵⁴ wizards, much better described by the Foucauldian idea of “*the game of exclusion*” (Foucault, 2006, p.12). The use of DSM seems

⁵³ Although it is important to point out that as we do not know the exact number of wizards, this is more of a conjecture than a fact.

⁵⁴ Muggles is a general term for people who lack magical power altogether. Sometimes however in muggle families a wizard or a witch is born, which is accepted in the first six novels of the series while Dumbledore is the Absolute Subject, yet this attitude it is completely rejected with the coming to power of Voldemort.

inappropriate and superfluous in these cases, as in this period “abnormality” is more closely related to crime than to mental illness – therefore this part shall not figure in the analysis.

5.1.1. *Antisocial personality disorder - The Dangerous Evil reformulated*

The disorder already mentioned forms an interesting chimera of charm and evil at the same time, flavoured with enormous wit and the ability to manipulate others. However, this remains the most dangerous of all mental illnesses – taking into account that most serial killers belong to this category the fear that they elicit can be easily understood.

The name of Voldemort is the one that immediately springs to one’s mind, and indeed he is a perfect example of psychopathy⁵⁵. However, there is one person, who is generally ignored as belonging to this category and in the imaginative world of Rowling achieves fame and good reputation solely because he defeats another dark mage in a duel, who is against Muggles and the entrance of Muggle-born children into wizarding school, an idea that he himself advocated as well for a long time, before changing his mind on the subject. In other words he achieves salvation through the prevention of Othering, nevertheless the main motto of his life “for the greater good” remains a phrase that he seems to be unable to steer away from. Interestingly this phrase is carved above the entrance of the prison, where his former ally and later defeated enemy is slowly consumed, finally defeated by Voldemort himself. This person is none other than the wise and much adored headmaster of Hogwarts wizarding school, Albus Dumbledore. It is only at the end of the series that we find out that Dumbledore is not quite what he seems to be – he is a calculating machiavellist trickster figure, who seems to show little empathy - if at all – even to his supposedly most beloved student, the hero himself, Harry Potter, whom he has guided all through the series and acted as a Father Figure

⁵⁵ The nomenclature of the illness has changed through the various editions of DSM, today’s official term is Antisocial Personality Disorder, however formerly it has been called psychopathy and sociopathy as well. Opinions differ, yet most professionals consider that these three are the same illness.

for him during his six years spent at Hogwarts. In the meanwhile he was – or seems to have been perfectly aware of the fact that Harry’s death is inevitable, without knowing whether his revival shall finally be possible. The only reason he seems to have been concerned about him and keeping him alive at all costs is to get him destroy all the Horcruxes⁵⁶ that Voldemort created – himself, Harry Potter included.

5.1.2. *Autoaggressive behaviour - Killing oneself slowly*

Aggression can not only be directed outwards – or using Freud’s terms projected outside – it can also be turned towards oneself, resulting in self-punishing behaviour. In the novel there is a magical enchantment that actually forces some of the creatures, the house-elves, to punish themselves. House elves are curious creatures inasmuch as they possess extremely powerful magical skills and can do many things that even wizards cannot (for example dissapparate⁵⁷ in the area of Hogwarts School, which is supposed to be prevented by special protection charms) yet they can not overcome their slavery – and even if they do, sometimes it is not for the better.

Autoaggressive behaviour in the real world has an uncanny resemblance with that of the house-elves – the most common way is self-cutting, causing deliberate injuries, without the explicit intention to die. However this practice is most common in teenagers, and it is not an explicitly imposed punishment – although the exact mechanism that forces house elves to behave in such a manner is never explained in the novel – nor how they came to be slaves while in the possession of such powerful spells. One of the house elves in the series, Dobby is the helper of Harry Potter, who inspired psychologists to coin the name of a new phenomenon, the *Dobby-effect* (Nelissen and Zeelenberg, 2009), which refers to the

⁵⁶ Magical objects that conserve a part of the soul of their creator, so that as long as there are Horcruxes, the person can not be killed.

⁵⁷ Displace oneself from one place to another by the use of magic

willingness of people to give money to charity purposes if they cheated in a game before – as a type of self-punishment behaviour.

5.1.3. *Suicide – a voluntary end to life – always altruistic*

Although there are various instances of suicide in the novel it is questionable if they can be considered as suicides if we are to stick to the exact definition of the DSM-IV-TR that in order to consider an act a suicide the main purpose has to be a voluntary action that leads to death. Neither James Potter nor Lily Potter, the parents of Harry Potter choose to die of their free will– they sacrifice themselves to protect their son, who is able to become a hero precisely because of this self-sacrifice. However, Durkheim differentiates three types of suicide, namely altruistic, anomic and egoist – and the act of Lily and James Potter fits in well with the definition of altruistic suicide.

A very similar event seems to reappear in the final and closing chapter of the book, when Harry himself decides to sacrifice himself by going straight to Voldemort, whom he intended to kill during most of the 7 books, fully aware of the fact that upon meeting him, he is facing certain death. Yet he is not re-enacting either the Father Figure or the protecting mother as his main aim is not to sacrifice himself in order to protect anyone – his intention is to destroy his enemy, Voldemort upon realizing that he is the last Horcrux, holding the last but one magical piece of his splintered soul, that needs to be destroyed so that he can be killed definitely.

There is another case that often goes unnoticed exactly because the warped perspective of the fight of good and evil in the HPs, where two other characters' death could be considered a suicide, although based more on aggressive and criminal reasons (what Durkheim would call anomic suicide), should it not so happen that they are fighting on the Dark Side – Voldemort, the ultimate evil and his companion, not less cruel though lacking the

wit and cunning of Voldemort, Bellatrix Lestrange. In the final battle at Hogwarts School, however many others they seem to have defeated, these last two characters finally stand alone in the middle of a crowd, surrounded by their enemies, who are moreover protected by the same charm that protected Harry Potter himself of death, therefore it is impossible to harm or kill them. The outcome is unlikely to be anything else than certain death, yet they do not give up fighting – especially not Voldemort, who continues to oppose Harry in spite of all the information he divulges him on his hopeless situation. In spite of all reason he decides to fight Harry, as if forgetting the obvious fact that he was unable to kill him with the same wand a few minutes before, using the same spell, therefore it is unlikely that he should succeed now, having failed twice before. Even if he would have managed to kill Harry Potter, which he was so ardent to achieve, the entire staff and students of the school are surrounding him, making his survival ultimately unlikely. His act could even be considered a heroic effort, had he not been depicted along the cruel-cooperative axis chosen by Rowling to define madness as an evil and merciless character – yet as things are he is considered psychotic – someone who lost touch with reality completely.

5.2. *Psychoses - the loss of contact with reality*

Rowling's other broad category seems to be psychoses – the complete loss of contact with reality, including hallucinations, compulsive behaviour and serious delusions. There are few cases in the novel some of which are not necessarily mental illnesses.

5.2.1. *Asperger Syndrome – The anthropologist on Mars – Luna Lovegood*

Asperger syndrome essentially is the less severe version of autism, and people suffering from it, find it difficult to understand other people in general – they consider them rather unpredictable and confusing and they rarely ever realize their own social dysfunction. In the HPs Luna Lovegood is intended to be a good-hearted yet in some sense insensitive

person, with a touch of unrealistic thinking, which grants her the label of psychoses. She wears her heart on her sleeves – she always says what she honestly thinks about people and their relationship, without sugaring the pill and she rarely realizes if she commits a faux pas, or makes an embarrassing comment on some of his best friends. She is a Cassandra-like person in the sense that in many cases she speaks the truth (though not necessarily about the future), but as she sometimes has quite extravagant ideas on the world, few are the ones who believe her – making it difficult to decide whether she truly belongs to the category of psychosis at all.

The main characteristic, that is very telling is that she never really speaks to other students until she meets Harry and his friends, even though she belongs to Ravenclaw house, the house where the most intelligent and clever people belong. Although she does not feel it difficult to engage herself with people, which contradicts the label of Asperger syndrome. However, Rowling clearly intended her to be an archetype of madness – hence her name Luna – yet she is more of an estranged and comical character, which might be the reason that she does not really fit very well into any of the DSM-IV-TR categories. Moreover Asperger syndrome – just like autism – is an extremely gendered illness – males outweigh females by 10 to 1 (Comer, 2005), which subverts reality as no other student seems to present such symptoms.

5.2.2. *The tragical psychosis – Alice Longbottom*

Under the Cruciatus curse of Bellatrix Lestrange, a follower death Eater of Voldemort, the parents of Neville Longbottom went mad – meaning that they lost their contact with reality completely. They no longer remember who they are, their son or what happened to them. Although both parents suffered the same fate we only see Alice Longbottom in the *Order of the Phoenix* indicating that the tragic psychoses in the HPs is a feminine one.

5.2.3. *The comical psychosis – Guilderoy Lockheart*

Guilderoy Lockheart could as well be categorized under narcissistic personality disorder as well, as he is extremely self-centered and eager for fame, so eager that he resorts to stealing the heroic deeds of others and declares them to be his own and after casts an Obliviate curse on them, so that they do not remember what had happened to them or what they had done. This way he glorifies himself, yet his final Obliviate curse rebounds back up on him, erasing his memory to the point of forgetting who he actually is. It comes across as comical, as he sits in his hospital bed, and considers everyone who comes close as a fan who would like to get an autograph. Although the delusion is neither more nor less serious than in the case of Alice Longbottom, the situation is laden with humour and does not have the smallest hint of tragedy behind it.

5.3. *Female malady – revived or survived?*

5.3.1. *Mood disorders - The ignored, yet serious –*

Nymphadora and Winky

Mood disorders, that are among the most frequent mental diseases are ignored in general throughout the series. Its lifetime prevalence⁵⁸ is around 35% (Gottlib & Hammen) though the figures vary, depending on which subtype of depression forms the bases of the figures. The most severe case, major depressive disorder varies between 3% (Japan) and 17% in the US (WHO, 1991, Andrade et al, 2003). The general average across countries is 8-12% (Kessler et al, 2003, Kessler et al, 2005). Clearly, it is not genetically coded, but rather socially constructed and constructed such that it affects women twice as often as men (Kuehner, 2003). Nevertheless it seems to be hushed up and silenced in the series. Unlike in

⁵⁸ in other words, how many people are affected at least once in their lives

the cases of severe psychosis treated in St Mungo's hospital, there is no room for those with mood disorders. The aforementioned fading Nymphadora Tonks, whose hair turns from lively pink to a grayish colour, her movements and speech slows down, never gets any professional help, as if the series were suggesting that this problem is an essential characteristic of women, and is rather a passing condition than a mental illness. Not being considered a mental illness, the general opinion is that they should self-heal themselves in some sort of female rituals and not seek professional aid at all. This seems rather worrying as the rate of suicide is astonishingly high in mood disorders, particularly in major depressive disorder that whose symptoms Nymphadora Tonks seems to present.

Winky the house elf suffers a similar fate upon being "freed", separated from his male master to whom she is still very much attached. She seeks solution in alcohol, and none of the other house elves seem to be happy to help her, moreover they even despise her for the lack of work, laziness and untidiness around her. The only person, who seems to care about her is Dobby, another liberated house elf, who tries to fill in the aching gap of the missing psychotherapist in the novel – as we see with quite little amount of success.

5.3.2. *Borderline/Histrionic Disorder - The return of the hysterical woman – Mrs Black*

Surprisingly the image of the hysterical woman seems to be impossible to erase from literature, although its representation has faded into an old painting that is shadowed and silenced by a curtain. She does not have the symptoms of hysteria in the sense Freud uses the word, she seems to be the shadow of the madwoman in the attic, the stereotypical representation of a hysterical madwoman, shouting insults at people coming in her house. However the painting is not in the attic, but right at the front of the door of the house as if guarding it, instead of being hidden. The hysterical woman was not only brought back to life – even though it is a half-life only as she is dead and it is her painting that acts for her – she is

also the guardian of the gates, she is foregrounded and emphasized, always presented as the culprit and a menacing problem for society, because of giving her voice and refusing to hide her opinion.

5.4. *The shift in the axes of madness*

It seems that in the representation of mental illnesses Rowling seems to create the axis of cruelty versus compassion as a main defining factor, putting danger in the first place – which in fact is very rare in current psychiatric discourse as it is mostly dealt with by law. Though her characters at times fit in very well with current psychiatry discourse, she judges them arbitrarily on another axis, which is Othering or acceptance of difference as the example of the contrast between Dumbledore and Voldemort shows. There is an interesting opposition between autoaggressive behaviour and suicide – while the first is imposed forcefully by an unknown magic on creatures who are virtually more powerful slaves than the masters they obey, - although at times a very strong emotional bond is formed between them – as is the case of Winky, the second, suicide is always presented as a heroic act – at times foolish and on other occasions for the sake of salvation, but always with a touch of heroism. Both involve a certain lack of potential to act or to choose, yet self-destruction is always altruistic or egoistic in the case of suicide while it is anomic in the case of autoaggressive behaviour of the house-elves. Neither seems to be gendered, though often women's self-sacrifice is taken as more of a tragedy, than men's which reflects the military system of traditional patriarchal societies.

However, Rowling seems to fail to create a truly mad character of Luna Lovegood, whose very name indicates a benevolent lunatic, who according to the DSM-IV-TR would either not get a diagnosis at all, as she is more eccentric than mad (in the sense that she is functioning perfectly well in the society she lives in). It would be very difficult to force her

into the only category possible, which is moreover characteristic of the opposite sex, as it is generally much more prevalent in boys than in girls.

Nevertheless the most interesting detail and difference between the two discourses arises in the not-said, in the silenced part of the book. The common cold of mental illnesses, depression seems to have no need for remedy at all, it is depicted as a malaise of women, natural to them that can be solved easily in all-women circle witchcraft talk, but certainly does not merit the attention of mediwithces or places in hospitals. This subversion is rather frightening, as although mood disorders are shown to be on the rise and very often the diagnostic criteria is so wide that everyone bar the happiest could slip and fall through accidentally into the pool of mental illness, the depiction of major depression as natural or in no need of treatment is frightening as this very illness has the highest rates of comorbidity with suicide. The return of the hysterical woman, symbolically hidden though no longer in the attic but behind a curtain that she herself may unveil as it seems also gives rise to worries, conjuring up the ghost of hysteria once again, depicting women as irrational and dangerous harpies, whose fury and anger is only hidden by a thin veil that can burst open at any minute.

*"Years ago, I knew a boy, who made all the wrong choices."*⁵⁹

(Dumbledore)

(from the official Harry Potter Trailer for Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince)

6. The dynamics of the heroes - psychoanalysis as a developmental theory

After having considered the static and synchronic view of mental illnesses let us turn now to dynamic ones. Psychoanalysts I shall be quoting, Sigmund Freud and Carl Gustav Jung emphasize all too heavily the importance of the difference between genders (Freud in particular). Gender-bias in madness has always been there in all cultures throughout history, mostly to the disadvantage of women (Showalter, 1985). Yet the psychoanalysis of Freud tried to essentialize madness under the umbrella term *hysteria* as a characteristic trait of women.

It might seem a daring task to tackle Jung and Freud at the same time, but considering that their ideas largely overlapped and they were very close friends until a disagreement on the function of the unconscious drew them apart, I feel it not only necessary but even compelling to deal with both of them at the same time since instead of being contradictory, they complement each other.

In contrasting Jung and Freud one should keep in mind that though both were psychoanalysts they had vastly different opinion on femininity and masculinity. In Jungian terms femininity and masculinity are not subordinate categories, but rather complementary, as he advocates psychic balance in the first place – in order to have a healthy psyche the feminine and the masculine must be balanced. In fact, Jung hardly ever talks about sex – he is more interested in the mythical and the spiritual side of human nature, therefore he is often described as being closer to German Romanticism (Boynton, 2004).

⁵⁹ Source: YouTube: <http://www.mugglenet.com/app/news/show/2214>, Retrieved 2009-04-12.

Freud on the other hand is associated more with Enlightenment thinking (desperately struggling to create the science of the mind) (Boynton, 2004). His efforts do not concentrate on balance but rather to free the mind from constant attacks of the Unconscious and superstition to restore the autonomy of the Ego. To put it crudely, “*Freud Wrote about sex, Jung had it.*” (Boynton, 2004).

The mysterious mixture of gender in Jung and above all their balance is only a truly feminist issue if one considers one of these binaries superior to the other – in which generally masculine is the undoubted winner (de Beauvoir, 1973⁶⁰), however Jung himself never stated such. In order to establish healthy mental functioning, one needs to have the feminine soul (Anima) and the masculine soul (Animus), present in each individual regardless of sex to be in a perfect balance. Suppressing either would lead to psychic problems. Therefore from a Jungian approach what needs to be proven is if the protagonists and main characters have a balanced integrity of their Anima/Animus and Self/Shadow.

Freud posited two distinct descriptions of the human soul, a structural and a topographic model (for an integrated illustration of the structural and the topographical model see Figure 2). His topographic model is often seen as the greatest contribution to Western thought, even though in fact many other scholars have been talking about the subconscious or unconscious processes in the mind, the most prominent amongst them being William James, who elaborated his idea in a book entitled *The Psychology of Suggestion... (1898)* although only a year earlier than the book of Freud, *The interpretation of dreams (1899)* has appeared. In this sense the contribution of Freud was not at all in discovering that there is an unconscious sphere of thinking, but rather trying to study it in a scientific or systematic way.⁶¹ Freud posited therefore that the unconscious has a logical structure that can be

⁶⁰ According to her famous phrase “One is not born a woman, one becomes one” with which she emphasizes how subordination occurs slowly and unnoticed, to the point where from an essentially bisexual child a sexed being is born that in its self definition always includes „woman” though no doubt a man would not do the same as being human always already (toujours déjà; Derrida,) means being a man.

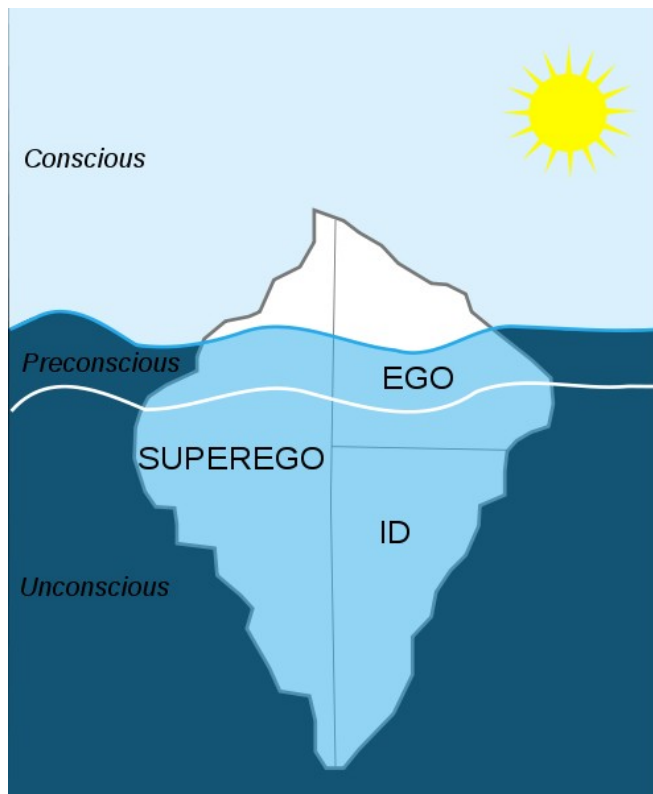
⁶¹ The scientific nature of Freud’s claims are highly debated, mainly by the philosopher Karl Popper, who declared that Freud’s theory is not falsifiable – and as such it can be true, but not scientific.

analyzed and studied – his primary methods of studying the unconscious were what he considered unintentional or unexplainable acts, such as slips of tongue, humour and last but not least the royal road to the unconscious, dreams. He posited that the human soul consisted of three parts: the conscious (what we are aware of in a given moment), the pre-conscious (the contents of which are not on our minds at the moment, but can be brought up to the sphere of consciousness at any time) and finally the unconscious (the “black hole” of the psyche that swallows all unacceptable contents and moreover contains our deepest desires – its content can not surface directly, only in transposed forms so as to defend the conscious self). The “swallowing” of unacceptable contents is referred to as repression into the unconscious, one of the various defence mechanisms that can be used to impede threatening or unwanted memories surfacing to the conscious sphere. The act itself – repression – is not a conscious one, therefore the person will not have a memory neither of the content repressed nor the process of repression itself.

Freud later distinguished three types of unconscious, the descriptive unconscious, merely referring to inner psychological states or thoughts that are beyond one’s awareness. The dynamic unconscious however denotes the very mechanisms that produce the elimination of traumatic memories from the conscious, of which many exist, though Sigmund Freud never described them systematically, leaving this task to her daughter, Anna Freud, who finally settled on establishing four levels of defence mechanisms, progressing from the extremely pathological (Level 1 Mechanisms) to the everyday healthy defence – or rather coping – mechanisms (Level 4 mechanisms). Repression is a Level 3 defence mechanism, therefore it does not form part of the most dangerous ones.

The structural model (Freud, 1923) declares that fundamentally there are three parts that largely determine one’s actions, the Id (*das Es*), which wholly belongs to the Unconscious sphere, and contains the basic drives, the Eros or libido, the love and life drive and the *Thanatos*, the Death drive. The Id functions on the pleasure principle, thus is

fundamentally hedonistic and claims immediate satisfaction of its needs. This is thwarted by the image of the menacing Father emerging during the Oedipal conflict that drives the child to interiorize the norms of society, thereby forming the Superego, which functions on the perfectionism principle and seeks to conform completely to societal rules. Clearly, these two opposites would make any action impossible, therefore a third component, the Ego emerges, to balance between the needs of these two distinct structures, as a mediator.



2. Figure The iceberg model of Freud – depicting both the structural and the topographical model of the psyche.

Nevertheless, one must not forget that Freudian psychoanalysis, apart from describing a structural (which refers to his notions of Id, Ego and Superego) and a topographic structure (denoting his ideas of the unconscious, pre-conscious and conscious) of the psyche, also has firm basis as a developmental theory. During this development the stages have a pre-determined rigid order and each of them is clearly considered to be superior to its predecessor

and a fixation in one of them is a sign of unresolved problems in the unconscious, with its particular symptoms and behavioural patterns.

Regression is one of the defence mechanisms that can be employed if the conscious sphere is threatened by the rise of an unwanted memory from the unconscious, which manifests itself in falling back various stages in psychosexual development. Moreover unresolved problems in any of these psychosexual developmental cases can cause fixations.

These fixations can take an active or a passive form in some stages. In early childhood the Oral Stage is dominant with two possible fixational patters: an aggressive fixational pattern would be causing damage by constant chewing of objects, such as end of pens. In the passive fixation type it manifests itself more as smoking, eating, or kissing, also predominant are personality traits such as passivity, immaturity, gullibility and manipulative personality (a good example of how Freud interprets seemingly contrasting elements belonging to the same category, evoking many criticisms on its scientific nature).

In the anal stage (1,5-3 years) there are two possible fixational patterns as well: anal retentive personalities are obsessed with order, thus they value organization and excessive neatness to a high degree. On the other hand anal expulsive personality types have quite different personal characteristics: they are often not only brave but reckless and careless, defiant and as an opposition to anal retentive personalities they are rather disorganized.

6.1. *The Oedipus Complex – a crucial division line*

In the following stage (3-6 years) the child is confronted with the fact that there are two different sexes and that there is no choice between them, therefore whichever sex is assigned to them they have to accept it. Here Freud deviates slightly from the interpretation of Jung in the case of females, though they are in total agreement on the mechanism of the Oedipus complex, a task that children need to resolve in order to become a healthy adult.

During the Oedipus Complex the male child's libidinal energy is projected onto the mother – in other words he becomes obsessed with the mother, often fantasizing about marrying her. However the child knows that this is impossible as a potent and powerful Father Figure is in the place he himself strives for. Hence his desire to kill his father in order to be able to marry his mother – yet he also knows that this would raise the anger of the all-powerful male Father Figure who would punish him by castrating him, therefore he develops a fear of castration. In order to deal with the situation he identifies with the father and accepts the rules imposed on him. This acceptance at the same time means the acceptance of the societal order and its rules, therefore creating the Super-ego, which entails the need for intermediation, hence the formation of the Ego also happens in this period. In girls a different process occurs, which Freud calls the female Oedipus Complex (and not Electra Complex, which is Jung's term). However, Freud was both unsure and reluctant to phrase his ideas clearly on this subject. According to his original idea, girls develop an initial homosexual desire for their mother, yet upon perceiving that she is already committed to the father, they have to displace their libidinal energy to males – initially the Father. Obviously castration complex would be difficult to argue in their case, which Freud replaces with penis envy and later a displacement of the penis to that of a baby – essentially claiming that girls desire having a baby from their father, preferable a boy, into whom they could project their own fulfilled desire of possessing a penis.

Therefore according to Freud girls find themselves in a more difficult situation than boys as they have to cope with two problems: first of all displacing their desire to the other sex (as children before the Oedipus complex are considered bisexual – both attracted and attached to the mother, whom they see all-potent) and she also has to accept her lack of penis and displace the source of sexual joy from her clitoris to her vagina. As Slipp (1993) points out interestingly Freud never even mentions the idea of matricide in this case – even though he expresses that girls are angry with their mother as they blame her for their apparent lack of

penis and also desire a baby from their father, which would be essentially taking the place of their mother. Because girls do not go through the ordeal of identification with the father and consequently accepting his rules and societal order, Freud supposed that their Super-Ego is less developed than that of men.

Jung in his theory of female psychosexual development takes a different approach, renaming it Electra Complex. He claims that the process is almost the same as in males yet it is reversed – as if reflected in a mirror. The Greek mythology from which the name derives however is a bit lopsided compared with the idea of Jung: Electra, a young woman asks her brother to kill his mother as a revenge for her mother's plot to kill their father, Agamemnon. The distortion lies in that Jung intends to claim that basically the same mechanisms operate in the Oedipus complex as they do in the Electra complex, however the side-story of revenge and the use of the brother to ask to perform this revenge does not necessarily fit into the picture.

Jung also takes a slightly different approach to the issue of mental illnesses or complexes, first of all by positing more than Freud does (Oedipus Complex, female Oedipus complex and castration Complex) and secondly by creating the idea of the Collective Unconscious, differentiating it from the personal unconscious, positing that it is the collection of all the knowledge shared by the entire human species, stored in our racial memory. This collective Unconscious contains various archetypes, which are usually arranged in pairs such as the Self (denoting accepted characteristics of our personality) and the Shadow (unaccepted traits) or in case of females the Self – Animus (male characteristics) pair, as he advocated that both are present in every individual. Jung foregrounds the importance of the balance between these pairs and highlighting that imbalance – or in other words the suppression of any of the (nearly) always doubled archetypes of the collective unconscious – leads to well definable complexes. The question from a gender perspective remains, whether complexes as Jung

described them – mainly maintaining the Freudian Oedipus complex (1962) and Electra complex⁶² (Jung, 1970) – are successfully resolved or not in the characters.

Taking the developmental perspective it must not be left unmentioned that the story itself is a Bildungsroman⁶³ with a peculiar touch that there is not only one central character, a single protagonist who is depicted in the swirl of changes (although one must admit that Harry Potter's change is put into a sharp relief opposed to secondary characters) as opposed to *David Copperfield* by Charles Dickens or *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte [Brontë](#). As we are introduced to the characters at the age of 11⁶⁴ by definition they are far beyond the age by which the Oedipus Complex is supposed to have been resolved and supposedly they should have reached latency period (Freud, 1962) and after this period with the onset of puberty characters should be stepping into the next psychosexual stage, that is the genital phase.

According to Freud from the onset of puberty – in fact mostly unspoken of and well hidden in the HPs, only semi-present in budding relationships, nervous laughs and occasional outbursts of emotion – the genital stage, the final phase of sexual development should begin.

Any disruption in this process or any unresolved task that are preset for each psychosexual developmental stage creates what Freud (1962) termed “fixation”, which results in the Freudian notion of “psychopathological infantilism”. The symptoms of these psychopathological infantilisms clearly create a ladder of maturity, on which gender contrasts can be analyzed in terms of superiority and inferiority. However, Freud openly admitted that he does not, and in fact he can not understand women (Freud, 1933) – nevertheless his work

⁶² Jung preferred to use the term Electra complex, while Freud kept to his original idea of feminine Oedipus attitude (Freud, 1962) in order to emphasize that the two processes are identical in the sense that this is the crucial point when the bisexual bodies split into different directions by resolving this complex in the phallic stage.

⁶³ Although – particularly in the case of Hermione – it can also be termed as an Erziehungsroman (even though by many literary scholars Bildungsroman and Erziehungsroman are considered to be if not the same, tightly related (Baldick, 2004) and a precursor of the later psychological novel – which does indeed seem to appear in the 7th book) At the final test, in the ultimate dénouement of the 7 book series it is not only the morals, but also knowledge of the characters that is thoroughly put to test. Erziehungsromans are best exemplified if we compare this novel to “Geschichte des Agathon” (1767) by Christoph Martin Wieland, that emphasises the hero's spiritual and intellectual growth, not just a journey towards an integrated personality and morality..

⁶⁴ Except for the first episode of the *Philosopher's Stone*, where Harry appears as a baby.

on hysteria and feminine sexuality is abundant (e.g. Freud, 1900/1977, 1905, 1906, 1909) – a phenomenon that might be just a compensatory mechanism for his admitted ignorance, yet certainly undermining his claims on the analysis of female characters, which sometimes read with a critical eye (such as in the case of Dora, [Freud, 1905]) might even seem outrageous or at best ridiculous in its assumptions on female nature to contemporary women.

The HPs is heavily laden with psychoanalytical meanings – the question remains to be seen whether women are still not understood or misunderstood, or whether they can be analyzed in a way that puts them on an equal footing with men?

*“Today the world knows him by another name –
Lord Voldemort”⁶⁵*
(Dumbledore)
(from the official Harry Potter Trailer for Harry
Potter and the Half-Blood Prince)

7. The magical journey from madness to sanity: there and back again – the psychoanalysis’s tale on the HPs⁶⁶

The psychoanalytic theory of Freud and Jung can readily be applied to the HPs – in fact many of the figures readily lend themselves to the analysis. It is notable though that these figures are still almost exclusively male ones – Electra complexes are difficult to find in the series, as if the incomprehensibility of women has not lessened in the past 50 years.

7.1.1. *The psychodynamics of Harry Potter – a triple unresolved Oedipus conflict.*

There is a fundamental problem with Harry Potter according to the psychoanalytical approach: his Oedipus complex is not only unresolved but it even seems irresolvable as he is incapable of identifying a Father Figure, having lost his own father at a very early age, when he was only one year old.

The wound on his forehead, lightning-shaped, could be argued to be a symbolic castration by the Dark double of his father a real Father Figure – although the age does not quite match – nevertheless it is this scar that shall give rise to the death drive in him to the nearly irrepressible Thanatos, that urges him throughout 17 years to find the dark double who

⁶⁵ Source: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fY4DPeBbUbQ&feature=Playlist&p=44FD1727799D0363&index=6>, Retrieved 2009-04-12.

⁶⁶ The subtitle is a partial intertextual reference to Tolkien’s fantasy novels “*The hobbit- or There and Back again*” (Tolkien, 1937) and “*The Lord of the Rings*” first part “*The fellowship of the Ring*” (Tolkien, 1954)

caused the immature castration. However, at the same time the scar creates a link (as well as a wound) that ties him to this darkly Father Figure until the time of his death. Just as the castration in Harry's life is real (though symbolic), the killing of the Dark Double of the Father Figure becomes real in Harry's life.

Nevertheless, after the double murder of his parents, throughout his life he remains haunted by the chase for the lost Father Figure and the Great Mother archetype is a central line in the story. Missing both the Father and the Mother archetype from a young age (as his step-parents can hardly be regarded as one) would not lead to a complex in itself in the Jungian balance-complex terms (missing both antagonist archetypes creates a certain balance), however the root of the problem seems to be restricted to the Father figure. Even though it is first his mother's scream that rings in his ear, in the novel he never actively searches for or tries to bind himself to a new maternal figure, unless we consider the compensation of Mrs Weasley as a replacement of the missing Mother archetype in Harry's life.

However, the unresolved Oedipus Complex remains and can contribute heavily to forming a plethora of neuroses. Can we argue for the existence of such neuroses? If we evaluate his Superego functions it might be argued that he is a regular rule-breaker and causes constant annoyance to the teachers, apparently not being able to identify with the rule of the Father – as if uncertain whose this rule should be. The closest relative and most obvious replacement would be Vernon Dursley, his step-father, who is present at the age in his life when the Oedipus conflict should be resolved. However as both him and Petunia, his wife are extremely unkind to Harry, it is near to impossible that his psychosexual development should be resolved by desiring an unloved and unloving step-mother and a despised Father Figure with whom he would have next to no chance of identifying himself, considering that the entire family alienates him completely as the Other, as if he belonged to a different race entirely.

It is far too late according to psychoanalytic theories that suddenly a plethora of people arrive in Harry's life who could serve as Father figures – around the age of 11, the resolution of the Oedipus Complex is questionable at the least. One must note one odd thing about the 11-year-old Harry even before he discovers that he is a wizard, which is the lack of any symptoms of neuroses and the relatively normal, even calm behaviour, which is striking taking into account the circumstances.

The first Father Figure to arrive is Hagrid, who introduces him to the wizarding world, taking him away from the place where the complex could not be resolved and acting as a mentor and protector at the same time in a world completely alien to Harry. Even before arriving to Hogwarts he already meets a second possible Father Figure, Albus Dumbledore, the Headmaster of the school and clearly corresponding to the Jungian archetype of the Wise Old Man.

When confronted with the task of being sorted into his house, the only thing he asks for is not to be sorted into Slytherin, as if to keep away from the Dark Father figure, who caused his premature castration. It is possible that it is his unconscious wish to be sorted into the same house as his second Father-Figure would be that makes the sorting hat shout out Gryffindor after a long pause of contemplating his dark double Father Figure and the talents he passed onto him as if he was a real biological father.

A curious example in the book for pairs of Father Figures is eye colour – taking a different pair of possible antagonistic Father Figures we find that both Hagrid, a positive Father Figure to Harry and Severus Snape, an negative one (until the dénouement in the 7th book) Father Figure, the Punitive and Revengeful Father have coal black eyes, yet from the outset it is clear that the blackness in their eyes is as different in the deep psychic strata as it is similar on the surface level, as it is described in the *Philosopher's Stone*.

Snape finished calling the names and looked up at the class. His eyes were black like Hagrid's, but they had none of Hagrid's warmth. They were cold and empty and made you think of dark tunnels. (p.89)

Therefore Rubeus Hagrid, the gamekeeper and Severus Snape, the potion Master can be considered doubles or (using more literary terms) foils in the series for various reasons: the wit and high position of Snape, alongside with his Death-Eater past and his apparent hatred of children certainly contrasts him with the apparently simple but extremely benevolent and loyal and children-loving (in fact any small or large creature loving) Hagrid. These two figures seem to run parallel to the Dumbledore- Voldemort pair of Benevolent Father Figure and Dark Father Figure.

The final solution for Harry seems to be a literal resolution of the Oedipus conflict: killing two Father Figures (Dumbledore and Snape). Although the death of Snape is the result of inadvertence or lack of action while he kills willingly the remaining one (Voldemort). After battling not only with Voldemort, the Dark Lord for 7 years, but also his unresolved Oedipus conflict, he finally literally kills the person who caused his castration complex in the first place.

Taking a Jungian perspective Harry can be argued to have a balanced Self-Anima personality based on several reasons: he is very much attached to his mother and it is her scream that remains his lasting memory, only much later does he hear his father's voice. The long-lasting unresolved Oedipus complex also indicates that he could not identify with any male personality and therefore his masculinity is dubious.

7.1.2. *The case of Neville Longbottom – in search of a Father Figure*

Neville – similarly to Harry lost his parents at an early age, yet his problem is exactly that of the opposite – growing up under the constant vigilance of his stern grandmother, he lacks a Father Figure altogether. For some reason he does not consider Albus Dumbledore a Father Figure either. A curious turn comes in the *Order of the Phoenix* when with Harry

starting to give all of them lessons in Defence against the Dark Arts, he starts to regard his fellow student a kind of a Father Figure, and later it is him who follows his steps and finally kills Nagini, indicating an unconscious identification. In doing so he destroys the last but one Horcrux, the last magical object containing Voldemort's soul, keeping him alive, with a sword that appears in the sorting hat only to Harry alone before in the novels.

7.1.3. *Possible unresolved Oedipus Complexes – Voldemort, Sirius Black and Severus Snape*

All the above characters had abusive fathers just like Harry (as a step-father), yet all of them seemed to have solved the Complex in a different way. Voldemort realized the complex in its real-world form (N.B. just like Harry did), bringing the unconscious world into the real world – having killed his father whom he loathed openly, while Sirius Black fled from his home at the age of 16 to take shelter at the Potters' where he was always welcome. It is likely that he replaced his own father with the father of James Potter for a Father Figure.

The most interesting case is that of Severus Snape, who seemingly chose Voldemort as a Father Figure, but as we learn it was finally not him he was loyal to and not even Dumbledore. He chose a feminine Father Figure as it appears from his adoring, rather than sexuality-laden love for her, and as if identified with her, he liked and excelled in the same subjects.

7.2. *The Dionysian Complex – in search of sanity*

According to the developmental theory of Freud, the period of 7-10 years is the period of latency, where learning and acquisition of knowledge is undisturbed by the fluctuation of the energies of the psyche – however this is clearly not so, and his categorization of children older than 11 as being in the genital phase misses out on an important complex, since it concentrates solely on the dyadic and sexual aspects of the personality. It is arguable whether

all mental problems can be traced back to sexual roots – that of Voldemort for example needs further elaboration. Therefore I would posit a new Complex – perhaps only present in the novel and not in real life – the Dionysian Complex, which consists in the integration of the self into society and the social network surrounding it.

7.2.1. *Why Dionysus?*

The Dionysian complex is named after the Greek God Dionysus, God of madness (among a plethora of phenomena – he's also a deity of theatre, wine, feasts, etc.), a divine entity of dubious origin and apparently in possession of various personalities. Although this plurality is true for most of the Greek Gods, he remains the one most often associated with madness and self-imposed outcast status from society – moreover not only mad himself, but bringing madness on those in alliance with him as well. A Complex with madness at its center could hardly bear a different deity's name.

7.3. *The Dionysian complex – the case of Voldemort*

One of the often occurring accompanying animals of Dionysus are snakes, among many others. In the case of a Dionysian complex the Self can not accept itself and its past and therefore tries to reject it, creating a new self and in the case of Voldemort a new name, a new body and a new discourse in the world around him.

This transformation is a snake-like behaviour, done furtively while away on a mysterious journey. When he returns he gains an entirely new personality, name and appearance with a wild ambition to conquer the world.

7.4. *The Dionysian complex – the case of the Half–Blood Prince*

Severus Snape has done two things that might launch such a crisis that would lead to a Dionysian complex in his case, however only one of these happened before he took on the

name of the Half-Blood Prince, which he later abandoned - indicating that he finally resolved the Complex and rebuilt an acceptable self reconciled (if not happy) with his past. The case that might have set free the crisis was calling the girl he loved Mudblood (an extremely rude and offensive term to refer to wizards who come from a Muggle family). The refusal of her forgiveness was a major break in his psychic development, however solving this crisis might have entailed quite a high price: his personality up to then described as awkwardly pleasant and somewhat fearful turned into a threatening, aggressive one, his heart of iron filled with hatred, the only emotion he ever seems capable of being is hatred. However, his appearance and his name finally remained the same.

The second possible crisis definitely happened after he left his alternate name of *the Half-Blood Prince* behind, which was the unintentional assistance to the killing of Lily Potter by Voldemort. Although this was the point of a definite break in his character, already alluded to in the first part, if it is to be considered a failure to resolve the Dionysian Complex, it is not the typical case – no change in bodily appearance or name or even denial of the past are apparent. However, his multitude of personalities indicate that his psyche is far from being an integrated individuated whole.

An intriguing question would be his Patronus – if that has changed shape, symbolically this could mean a fundamental mental change in his character and thus an indicative that an unresolved Dionysian Complex has sunk into his unconscious. His Patronus is known to be a doe at the end of the series, as it appears in the *Deathly Hallows* and as such it is the same as the Patronus of Lily Evans, the girl she loved almost obsessively. However, we do not know if his Patronus- if he was at all capable of producing one at all – was something different before.

7.5. *Tentative cases of the Dionysian complex – the marauders and*

other Animagi

The following cases of the Marauders and various Animagi are not as clear-cut in the novel, as no real evidence is provided in the book about their childhood experiences, only secondary information sources are available and those are scanty as well.

The Marauders refers to four friends – one of whom is a werewolf – Remus Lupin – therefore a shapeshifter without choice, forced into other bodies and under another name by external forces, by the light of the full moon – therefore it is arguable if he might be considered a sufferer of a Dionysian complex. Nevertheless he is the one who incites the other three to become Animagi – wizards who possess the ability to change into the form of an animal voluntarily. James Potter had the ability to turn into a stag and was a reputed school bully, very similar to Sirius Black, who had the same ability but his animal form was a dog.

The third Animagus is Peter Pettigrew, whose past is entirely hidden in the novel – it does not even get revealed as much as that of Severus Snape. However, the fact that he has the ability of turning into a rat and that he betrays his friends indicate that probably the form of an Animagi indicates the hidden bush soul or psychic animal brother of the person (see Jung, 1968).

The fact that the Marauders change shape *at will* and that their name is not blotted out – though they all do have nicknames, yet that is true for many children – indicates that even if they had problems resolving this complex, it was most probably temporary and finally resolved.⁶⁷

Similarly, we are in the dark about the case of Minerva McGonagall, the only known female Animagus (or Animaga?) who can turn into a cat, but she is yet another character

⁶⁷ One can argue that this only holds for James Potter as Sirius Black and Peter Pettigrew remain in an alien form to their natural one for most of their lives – incapable to integrate their past life, their present Self into the fabric of society.

without a past in the novel. Her importance lies in the fact that she is the only woman, who is known to be able to do this – it is not at all clear whether this indicates her masculinity and her gender-subversive nature in the novel or this hides a personal unresolved complex in the past.

The cat she can turn into does not endow her a name, nor a personal history – yet should this theory hold true, she would be the only woman to whom this putative complex can actually be attributed to, that would relieve the tension from the appearance in the novel that this is solely a male problem – or only recognized as a problem for males while women go through this unnamed and unmentioned.

It's Over. (Severus Snape)
(from the official Harry Potter Trailer for
Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince⁶⁸)

8. Conclusions

It seems that in the HPs mental illnesses are strongly gendered: the threat and fear that the return of the dangerous, medusa-like hysterical woman incites is condensed into a single figure: that of Mrs. Black, even emphasizing that she is more dangerous than ever before. This suggests that in Pottertopia the image of the hysterical woman (understood in its common meaning, and not the Freudian, i.e. mute or lame) is returning to life, perhaps indicating a newborn fear of the Phallic aggressive woman in society. Curiously, this might even be a possible side effect of the feminist movement itself, sublimated to a single figure in the novel.

On the other hand we find that depression and anxiety disorders get seriously neglected in the HPs and its ideology clearly denies the necessity of any sort of medical help in these cases. Before condemning this phenomenon, one has to consider seriously if this would end up in being a good or a bad effect, keeping in mind that sometimes the criteria for mood disorders – one of which is depression – is getting so alarmingly broad that virtually anyone can be labelled mentally ill. Nonetheless, the cases described in the novel seem serious enough in terms of personal suffering to be worth paying attention to. One of the side effects of anxiety and depression, retreating into the protection of alcohol becomes described (and distorted) as a typically female illness in the HPs, however in Muggletopia (i.e. in reality) the case seems to be exactly the contrary.

⁶⁸ Source: YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=96QVfto7OM&feature=fvst>, Retrieved 2009-05-22. Textual reference also: <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0417741/quotes>

From a dynamic point of view we see that the solution of the Oedipal complex in boys is very much emphasized while the Electra complex is left in the unsaid, virtually non-existent. Whenever a mental illness-related phenomenon occurs, in men it is immediately projected back into the past, whereas with women it is either ignored or explained by internal frailty or immediate environmental causes, without reaching back to a distant past.

My own proposal of a tentative new complex the Dionysian Complex (the question of self-acceptance and integration to the community) is extremely intriguing, however it is still controversial and further research would be fruitful in examining it in depth.

9. Glossary

PEOPLE OF THE HPs UNIVERSE

- **Muggle:** people lacking magical power
- **Wizard/Witch:** people possessing magical power
 - **Muggle-born:** a wizard or a witch who comes from a Muggle family
 - **Mudblood:** rude expression for a wizard or witch who is born to Muggle parents
 - **Half-blood:** a wizard or witch born to a muggle and a witch or a wizard
 - **Pure Blood:** A wizard or witch born to a wizarding family
- **Squib:** a non-magical person, born into a wizarding family

Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry – the school apparently all magically endowed children attend – though its attendance is only compulsory in the era of Voldemortopia

Dark Arts: harmful magic, usually used by the Death Eaters, however reputedly just because a wizard does not use them, it does not mean that he or she can not as it is pointed out on various occasions in the novel.

Unforgivable Curses: curses whose use would result in a life sentence of imprisonment in the prison of the wizarding world, named Azkaban

1. **Avada Kedavra:** the killing curse – emits a green jet of light and supposedly stops the heart. There is no counter-curse to defend oneself against it, yet one can dodge it.
2. **Crucio:** The Cruciatus Curse: the curse is aimed to torture its sufferer and inflicts nearly unbearable pain.
3. **Imperio:** The Imperious Curse: forces the cursed person to obey the commands of a wizard.

Quidditch: a popular sport among wizards, played on broomsticks.

Animagus: a witch or a wizard with the ability to turn into the form of an animal

Dementors: hooded black figures, emanating sadness and despair and ultimately sucking out peoples' souls referred to as the **Dementor's kiss**. There is a notable similarity to the effect of their presence and the symptoms of depression – as if they were depression personified.

Patronus charm – a protective charm against Dementors that takes the form of a silvery animal, which is very often indicative of the personality of the caster of the spell.

10. Appendix – very brief plot summary of the HPs

10.1. *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*

The hero of the series named Harry Potter, a neglected and battered boy of 11, finds out that he is a wizard and he is invited to Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. He learns that his parents' death was not due to a car accident as his aunt and uncle had told him, but it was a murder – they were murdered by the most dangerous dark wizard at the time, named Voldemort, whose name is a taboo in the wizarding society.

At school Harry befriends Ron Weasley and Hermione Granger, who shall accompany him until the very end of the series as his best friends. Together they start on the quest of finding out what secret is kept under a trap door guarded by a three headed dog in the third floor of the school. Soon they find out that it is the Philosopher's Stone and they also presume that it is Voldemort, who is after the stone to resurrect himself. They suspect Severus Snape, the Byronic antihero of the novel of being an accomplice of Voldemort in trying to steal the stone.

At the end of the book Harry has to face a challenging task and fight against Lord Voldemort himself, who is attempting to regain his life using the Philosopher's stone. Much to Harry's surprise however it turns out that the accomplice is not Severus Snape, who was in fact trying to shield him from the attacks of the real servant of the Dark Lord, Professor Quirell, a mediocre wizard. Nevertheless, Harry's trust in Severus Snape remains shaken and is not restored until the Epilogue of the last book.

As Harry faints in the final battle, therefore it is unclear how Voldemort fails to retrieve the stone (though there is a hint at the fact it is the work of Albus Dumbledore, the greatest wizard of the time). The Stone is ultimately destroyed, yet Voldemort manages to flee.

10.2. *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*

In the second year in Hogwarts a series of mysterious attempted murders sets off, supposedly by a monster hidden in a secret chamber, built by one of the founders of the school, Salazar Slytherin, a chamber only the true heir could open.

The chamber of Secrets was opened 50 years before by Voldemort himself, who at the time was named Tom Riddle. His memories were kept in a diary that Ginny, Ron Weasley's sister finds and later gets into the hands of Harry, who – in an attempt to unravel the mystery finally meets Tom Riddle again and fights the mysterious monster, a giant Basilisk snake and defeats Lord Voldemort (or Tom Riddle) anew with the help of the Phoenix of Dumbledore.

Harry's double nature is revealed again as it turns out that he can speak parseltongue, the language of snakes that very few wizards are capable of, the only known ones in history are in fact Voldemort and Salazar Slytherin, revealing Harry's dark side and possibly ominous nature. Nevertheless, the fact that the Phoenix comes readily to the aid of Harry indicates that he is a true Gryffindor – brave, loyal and honest.

10.3. *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*

Harry is supposed by all to be in danger of being attacked and killed by Sirius Black, a purported follower of Voldemort, who escaped from the famous prison of wizards named Azkaban. However, by the end of the series it turns out that it was not Sirius Black who betrayed Harry's parents to Voldemort, but Peter Pettigrew, believed to have been killed by Sirius himself, yet alive and hiding as a rat in the pocket of an ancient wizarding family, the Weasley's. This time Voldemort does not appear in the series in person and Harry does not have a fight with him directly, yet a premonition comes from the divination teacher, Sybill Trelawney, that with the escape of Peter Pettigrew, Voldemort will again regain power.

10.4. *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*

Harry is chosen to be a competitor in the Triwizard Tournament, a dangerous contest between different schools of wizardry. After many ordeals he has to face Voldemort the first time in person, as he is revived in flesh and blood body by using Harry's blood, the bones of his father and the limb of his servant, Peter Pettigrew. Harry fights valiantly with Voldemort, an evidently more powerful wizard. This time he is saved by his long-dead parents because of a mysterious connection of the two wands, which conjures up the ghosts of those killed by Lord Voldemort, who protect Harry until he flees.

10.5. *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*

The return of Voldemort is disbelieved by the ministry and a rupture becomes evident for the first time between the School and the Ministry, the latter refusing to believe that Voldemort is alive again, calling both Harry Potter and Albus Dumbledore liars.

Nevertheless Albus Dumbledore manages to gather together the Order of the Phoenix, whose aim is to fight against Voldemort and his forces. Harry – not being let into the order – founds Dumbledore's army, a student organization essentially with the same aims, teaching students how to fight against the Dark Arts.

The school in the meanwhile gets under the control of the Ministry represented by Dolores Umbridge, who tries to prevent the students learning practical skills in fighting against the Dark Arts, teaching only theory. Both Harry Potter and Albus Dumbledore get into a conflict with Dolores Umbridge, making clear for the first time the discordance between the Ministry and the school, the latter becoming represented more and more clearly as the real source of power.

In a final fight with the Death Eaters in the ministry of magic for a prophecy about Harry and Voldemort, Sirius Black is killed, which turns Harry against Bellatrix Black, the

most loyal follower of Voldemort. By the end of the series it becomes clear that Harry and Voldemort are truly mortal enemies as “*neither can live while the other survives*”.

As the Ministry arrives while Voldemort in person is still there, his return can not be denied any longer, no matter how reluctant the minister would be to accept it. Nevertheless the opposition between the School and the Ministry can not be remedied.

10.6. *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince*

Voldemort – now no longer in hiding – starts an all-out attack on the wizarding community and his former enemies. The past – though always important for Harry personally– becomes increasingly relevant as in order to find out Voldemort’s secret of so far mysterious longevity and apparent immortality, Dumbledore and Harry continuously travel back in memories to find out how Voldemort can be destroyed. The fight gets fiercer and the Ministry proves to be incapable to defeat Voldemort.

By the end of the series it turns out that Voldemort uses an extremely dark spell for achieving immortality – that of creating Horcruxes, magical objects in which he hides splinters of his soul. While the Horcrux is intact, the men, whose soul it contains can not be destroyed or killed. As a rite of passage Dumbledore takes Harry to recover one of the Horcruxes of Voldemort. Retrieving the Horcrux proves to be extremely difficult and Dumbledore arrives back extremely weakened. At the same time – with the help of Draco Malfoy, an archenemy of Harry from the first book and by now a Death Eater himself – Bellatrix Lestrange, Fenrir Greyback and other Death Eaters enter the castle to kill Dumbledore. Nevertheless in the last scene it is not them, but Severus Snape, who kills Dumbledore.

The final book depicts the quest and destruction of the 7 Horcruxes, with a final battle between the School and the Ministry – now completely overtaken by the powers of Voldemort.

In the dénouement Harry sacrifices himself in order to make Voldemort mortal, as it turns out that he is one of the Horcruxes. However, Harry is revived and defeats Voldemort himself, restoring previous order to the magical world. In the final scene, the epilogue, Harry is depicted as an adult in an ideal world, where evil is no longer a threat.

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