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"Harry – yer a wizard"

Exploring J. K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* Universe

Ed. by Marion Gymnich,
Hanne Birk and Denise Burkhard

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Hanne Birk, Denise Burkhard and Marion Gymnich

‘Happy Birthday, Harry!’: Celebrating the Success of the *Harry Potter* Phenomenon

If there ever was a powerful spell, it was Rowling’s initial incantation when she had Hagrid stating in *Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone* (1997): “‘Harry – yer a wizard’” (*Stone* 42), which was the first spark of a big bang that would bring the Potterverse into being. The publication of the first volume of her *Harry Potter* series (1997-2007) was the beginning of an amazing success story and of a series which has had a considerable impact on academic research. Rowling’s novels have contributed to rendering both children’s literature and the genre of fantasy more popular than ever – for fans, academics and “fan-scholars” (Hillis 2). Moreover, the novels have played a vital role in establishing the notion of ‘crossover/all-ages literature’ as one of the key terms within research in the thriving field of children’s and young adult literature studies. Twenty years after the publication of the first volume, the series seems to be as culturally visible and enchanting as ever – including now both a sequel, *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*, and a tie-in movie, *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them*, released in 2016. By now, the *Harry Potter* universe has been significantly expanded: apart from the original series it also features audio-visual adaptations of the novels, a prequel, a sequel, the online platform Pottermore and further tie-in product(ion)s that keep being revisited by scholars and fans from many different disciplines and countries.

Most of the contributions in this volume are based on papers given at the *Harry Potter* students’ conference held at Bonn University on 4th-5th April 2017. The papers in the collection seek to explore a wide range of different aspects of Rowling’s *Harry Potter* universe and engage with the wizarding world in innovative ways. Using different theoretical approaches to advance the current state of research, the contributions employ a range of conceptual frameworks such as trauma studies, gender and queer studies, postcolonial studies and folklore studies. The variety of themes covered in the volume already indicates the manifold vantage points chosen to analyse and interpret Rowling’s works, ranging from the original series, her short stories on Pottermore to other facets of the *Harry Potter* franchise. The aim of the volume is to highlight the diversity of academic approaches that can be used to analyse Rowling’s world of *Harry Potter* as well as to emphasise its topicality twenty years after the publication of the first novel.

Marion Gymnich’s and Klaus Scheunemann’s contribution “The ‘*Harry Potter* Phenomenon’: Forms of World Building in the Novels, the Translations, the Film Series and the Fandom” focuses on selected facets of the (transmedial) *Harry Potter* phenomenon, such as the depiction of Britishness in the series, the creativity of the translators and the specific challenges they had to face, the ‘Rickmann effect’ and hallmarks of the *Harry Potter* fandom. Corresponding to the manifold aspects identified by Marion Gymnich and Klaus Scheunemann, inter- and transdisciplinary approaches have evolved. Part I introduces some of these approaches by elaborating on the connection between the *Harry Potter* series and its potential sources. In her contribution, Laura Hartmann examines the Black Dog/Grim and the Boggart in the context of British mythology and traditional folklore. She tries to answer the question in how far Rowling used, adapted or transformed certain characteristic features of both creatures and in how far the reader encounters Rowling’s creations. In a similar vein, Franziska Becker,

Denise Burkhard, Julia Stibane and Jule Lenzen address the influence of cultural 'textual resources' (Wertsch) on Rowling's work. Franziska Becker discusses the influence of the Arthurian legend on the *Harry Potter* series (according to the version which can be found in Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae*). The article written by Denise Burkhard and Julia Stibane uses Gothic literary frames as its basis and focuses on Knockturn Alley, the Forbidden Forest, Hogwarts and the Chamber of Secrets as Gothic places in *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* (1998). Using accounts on Druidism, Jule Lenzen explores potential Celtic sources of the Potterverse and tries to correlate Rowling's depiction of wands, spells and shape-shifting with possible equivalents found in historical and literary texts on Druids. There are, of course, many other, not exclusively literary sources, such as cognitive frames or socio-cultural 'concepts' that inform the series. Drawing on Victorian gender roles, Svenja Renzel provides an analysis of the Gaunt family and the 'gendered agency' of its members. While Marvolo and his son Morfin tend to adhere to the classical Victorian stereotype of the dominant male, Merope seems to represent the subordinate, victimised female, who lacks a voice of her own. Naemi Winter examines in how far 'Muggle history' is alluded to in the fictional universe. The foci of her argumentation include the parallels between the Wizengamot and the Anglo-Saxon 'Witenagemots', the incorporation of historical and fictional accounts on alchemy and the Philosopher's Stone as well as the link between Early Modern witch hunts, their medieval roots and the *Harry Potter* novels. Closing the first section, Vera Bub's contribution explores the connection between religious elements/Christian concepts and *Harry Potter* and addresses the notion of an afterlife, martyrdom and immortality as topics central to both.

In Part II, various themes and structures that pervade the series will be addressed. The first two contributions by Michèle Ciba and Carsten Kullmann discuss the representation of terror and racism respectively. Focusing on conspiracy, persecution and terror, Michèle Ciba identifies the correlation between conspiracy narratives and Rowling's novels and analyses fictional reverberations of the increasing topicality of terror and persecution in post-9/11 public discourses. Precisely these mimetic and poietic potentials of literary texts have already been conceptualised by scholars such as Winfried Fluck and Hubert Zapf, who assume that one of the main functions of literary texts is that of highlighting deficits in a society. In many respects, the *Harry Potter* series seems to do just that: it addresses, for instance, the issue of racism and marginalisation by condemning prejudices against the so-called 'Mudbloods', an achievement which Carsten Kullmann addresses in his paper "Of Muggles and Men: Identifying Racism in the *Harry Potter* Series". Drawing on Bourdieu's "Forms of Capital" (1986), in which he subdivides capital into social, economic and cultural capital, Sarah Hofmann uses various examples to illustrate how fruitful and rewarding non-literary concepts can be for the analysis and interpretation of Rowling's novels. Anne Schneider poses a highly innovative and provocative question, namely whether Harry Potter is a criminal and elaborates on the use and function of magical criminal law in the series. Firstly, she reconstructs the Magical Law system as presented in the novels and simultaneously questions its consistency; secondly she locates the Unforgivable Curses within the topography of the system and subsequently attempts to construct a possible defence for Harry. The final contribution of Part II by Denise Burkhard focuses on secrets and forbidden places and argues that Rowling tends to connect mysteries and secrets in *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* with spatiality. She examines the Forbidden Forest, the out-of-bounds third-floor corridor and the Mirror of Erised as places connected with the secrets revolving around Harry's identity and the Philosopher's Stone.

Part III comprises contributions that 'go beyond' the *Harry Potter* series and focus on the new stage play *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*, *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find*

Them, Rowling’s writings on Pottermore.com and fan fiction. Applying a psychological approach to *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*, the paper by Anne Mahler identifies a range of symptoms in Harry that correlate with PTSD. It is also primarily the stage play that informs Marthe-Siobhán Hecke’s paper, which provides a conceptualisation of queerbaiting. Due to her thorough analysis, it becomes clear that the series can hardly be read as an example of queerbaiting, whereas the relationship between Albus Potter and Scorpius Malfoy in *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* does exhibit clear signs of queerbaiting. Employing postcolonial concepts, Alexandra Szczodrowski analyses modes of representation of Native Americans in Rowling’s “History of Magic in North America” (published on Pottermore) and reveals, for example, the influence of dominant historiographies and potentially damaging stereotypes. In her article “The Dark Arts: Violence, Incest and Rape in *Harry Potter* Fan Fictions”, Franziska Göbel engages critically with the potential merits of reading and writing fan fictions that include depictions of non-consensual sex and abuse. She elaborates on why the series invites especially the production of ‘darker fan fictions’ and criticises the terminology that online platforms provide to tag stories, which is often not adequate, especially from an ethical perspective. The final contribution, “The Ever-Expanding Potterverse: *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child – Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them – Pottermore*”, discusses various strategies of internationalisation and diversification of the Potterverse, which implicitly address how the ever-growing *Harry Potter* universe answers to the interests of fans and critics. As the play, the recent movie adaptation, which is only the first of five, and Pottermore already suggest, the Potterverse will continue to expand and enchant fans and readers alike.

In this sense: All the best, Harry, and many happy returns!

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Marion Gymnich and Klaus Scheunemann

The '*Harry Potter* Phenomenon': Forms of World Building in the Novels, the Translations, the Film Series and the Fandom

> "[…] there is no doubt that since the advent of Harry Potter, the concept of an international bestseller for children has taken on a new meaning as well as a new epithet: 'phenomenon'" (Lathey 141).

I. Introduction

Two decades after the publication of *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* in 1997, the success of J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* series has become legendary. As James Russell points out, it "may have started out as a series of thrilling novels for children, but Harry Potter became the quintessential product of the modern American movie industry: an ultra high-budget, transmedia franchise" (392). Three years after the publication of the first volume, the '*Harry Potter* phenomenon' was already well under way: "After 2000, and the publication of *Goblet of Fire* […], the ritual of queuing outside a bookshop the night before the book went on sale became famous" (Sunderland et al. 178). The eager anticipation and media hype that accompanied the publication of new instalments of the series in the late 1990s and early 2000s may seem unusual, at least for novels. Deborah Cartmell and Imelda Whelehan observe that

> it is easy to compare the marketing of the fourth instalment in the Harry Potter series, *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*, released on 8 July 2000, to that of a film. The release of the fourth book was unashamedly promoted according to all the rules of Hollywood's blockbusters, especially those which herald a series of films, like *Jaws*, *Star Wars*, or *The Lord of the Rings*. The release-day was announced months before and was celebrated with queues of customers waiting through the night, hundreds of adults and children attending bookshop events in order to collect their pre-ordered volume (39-40).

The film series based on Rowling's novels has of course also contributed to the '*Harry Potter* phenomenon', and one can safely assume that by now significantly more people around the world have watched the entire movie series than have read all of the novels. Still, as far as one can tell today, for many people the movies have not simply replaced the novels, which continue to be as popular as ever.[1]

There was much speculation about the beneficial effects of the *Harry Potter* series on children's literacy and their interest in reading, but it is still more or less an open question how extensive this so-called '*Harry Potter* effect' on children's reading habits has really been. Scholars such as Steve Dempster, Alice Oliver, Jane Sutherland and Joanne Thistlethwaite claim that the impact may actually have been a bit overestimated, especially since the undeniable length of the later volumes of the series seems to have prevented many young readers from finishing the books or even from reading them in the first place. What Dempster, Oliver, Sutherland and Thistlethwaite noticed in their study, however, is that the experience of read-

[1] As Michael K. Johnson observes, audio-visual adaptations are actually likely to disappoint fans to a certain extent: "Few film adaptations of beloved novels appear without an accompanying chorus of complaints about the film's differences and departures from the source text, often expressed, as Robert Stam has pointed out, in terms that connote moral violations (unfaithfulness, lack of fidelity)" (207).

ing the series on the whole *does* increase young readers' interest in specific genres, i.e., in "fiction that centre[s] on fantasy, magic, action and adventure" (277). *Harry Potter* is much more than children's literature, of course. Children and adolescents only constitute one segment of the *Harry Potter* fan community, and "[o]lder readers have made up a substantial portion of Rowling's audience from the start", as Rebecca Sutherland Borah (346) observes. This is also apparent in the fact that *Harry Potter* has become *the* prime example of 'all-ages' or 'crossover literature'.

The emergence of the global '*Harry Potter* phenomenon' in the late 1990s may partially be accounted for as a consequence of the innovative strategies of communication that accompanied the publication of the series almost from the start and that made use of new media. The first volumes were published at a time when the internet was gradually becoming a widely accessible, everyday medium for many people around the world, which made new forms of communication possible:

> As the novels were being released, the widespread adoption of the internet was accelerating the possibilities for hype and promotion, and Rowling actively used the web to speak to her fans, and provide insights into the writing process. Throughout the early 2000s, the Potter novels were very visibly presented to the public as something J.K. Rowling *was actively and currently doing* (Russell 394, original emphasis).

Since the 1990s, fans have increasingly used the internet to construct an international virtual community, sharing their fascination with the wizarding world in forums or by means of fan fiction.[2] In 2011 Pottermore was established as a platform for representing the franchise, distributing news and additional stories about the fictional *Harry Potter* universe that have an official/canonical status due to being sanctioned or even written by J.K. Rowling (cf. Sharp 112). Since its inception, Pottermore has undergone substantial changes in terms of its contents and functions, whose implications we will discuss in more detail below.

Though communication and marketing strategies are certainly important for the series' global success, the *substance* of the Potterverse, i.e., the wizarding world with its countless memorable human and non-human inhabitants, its picturesque settings and its unique magical artefacts, is at least equally significant for making Rowling's series as popular as it is and for bringing about the '*Harry Potter* phenomenon'. In the following, we will examine various media-specific forms of world building in Rowling's novels, in translations of these texts, in the *Harry Potter* film series as well as on Pottermore and within the fandom, which have jointly shaped the Potterverse as we know it today (and which are still operating in its ongoing expansion).[3]

II. The novels

Somewhat paradoxically, a series whose global fame relies very much on new media has created a fictional world that eschews exactly these means of communication, presenting a community that uses parchment and quills instead of tablets and books instead of the internet. The old-fashioned, quaint atmosphere that is characteristic of the wizarding world seems to be an important factor in the series' charm. In this context, Andrew Blake argues that the mani-

[2] Cf. also Megan Farnel's observation that "the massive scope and scale of *Potter*'s fanbase has a history which is very much intertwined with the rise of the Internet and its increasing adoption in homes during the early stages of the series" (40).

[3] For a discussion of recent developments in the Potterverse, cf. the article by Marion Gymnich, Denise Burkhard and Hanne Birk in this volume.

fold references to the past in the "low-tech magical world, with its Victorian London shopping alley and a Highlands boarding school" (305) correlate with a general trend that started to inform British popular and consumer culture already in the 1980s:

> The very past itself – our sense of 'history' – had been remodelled during the 1980s. The boom years of the 1980s indicated that almost any aspect of the past – including historic houses, Victorian gardening techniques, even opera – could be packaged as luxury consumer items for people with new wealth. With this in mind a younger generation of historians (and museum workers and archaeologists) tried to reinvent the past for present-day consumer culture, and to sell it. […] Museums offered not exhibitions, but simulated experiences of the past. Schools offered simulations of past experience rather than curricula centred on interpretation; pupils would dress up as medieval peasants rather than learn about the causes of the Wars of the Roses. […] The past was also available on the high street. A chain of shops, Past Times, offered copies of historical artefacts such as eighteenth-century maps or Victorian lamp stands, alongside classic novels and videos of televised costume dramas. History had become 'heritage' (306).

The world created by Rowling fits neatly into the approach to the past outlined by Blake. The readers witness Harry, a modern child, immersing himself in a world that allows him to experience a picturesque 'past in the present', which somewhat eclectically draws upon features of different historical periods and where he can star in the role of an Arthurian knight with magical powers.[4] While entering the wizarding world means shedding many of the paraphernalia of modern life, which are repeatedly criticised in references to the various (technological) gadgets Harry's despicable cousin Dudley covets, Hogwarts students do not really have to do without all of the social achievements of life in the late 20th/early 21st century.

Unlike in the periods of the past referenced most strongly in the everyday life of the wizarding world, neither ethnicity nor class are allowed to determine someone's destiny in the wizarding community. As Blake points out, "Hogwarts represents the multicultural contemporary England" (308) and at Hogwarts "the abilities and activities" (ibid.) of a person are generally deemed more important than one's ancestry. The fact that unpleasant characters like the Malfoys are shown to think differently ultimately only serves to drive this point home all the more forcefully. It is evidence of the modern outlook of the series that the fight against evil is also a fight against racial and class prejudices in various manifestations.[5] Attending Hogwarts is a bit like entering a simulation of the past in a living-history museum or perhaps even a theme park or Renaissance fair (with the added bonus of adventure and magic). In this scenario, the protagonist Harry Potter, who embodies modern ideals of justice, equality and agency, can be seen as "a *retrolutionary*, a symbolic figure of the past-in-future England" (ibid., original emphasis).

In the further course of the series, readers find out that many of the potential drawbacks of doing without modern technology can be made up for by magic. Travelling by means of floo powder, a portkey or by Apparating gets you much faster from one place to another than any contemporary Muggle means of transportation possibly could. While communicating via owl mail must appear painfully slow to readers used to (mobile) phones and the internet, the later volumes of Rowling's series suggest that there are alternative, faster ways of communicating in the wizarding world as well; wizards and witches can, for instance, use fireplaces to talk to someone or send your Patronus to deliver a message. Still, even magical devices that imitate the effects of modern technology are by definition profoundly anti-technological, which implies that the nostalgia for a way of life that is less determined by technology and is generally more slow-paced than the one of the *Harry Potter* readers remains essentially intact.

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4 In her contribution to this volume Franziska Becker has a closer look at the Arthurian roots of the series.

5 Cf. the article by Carsten Kullmann in this volume.

The different literary genres and traditions Rowling draws upon may also contribute to a sense of nostalgia triggered especially for many adult readers by the series. Using conventions of the genre of the boarding-school novel, including themes, stock characters and even the traditional plot element of the train journey, the *Harry Potter* series may remind adult readers of novels by authors like Enid Blyton, which they may remember fondly from their childhood.[6] The parallels to Gothic literature, especially classic Gothic novels from the late 18th century with their medieval castles, dungeons and uncanny forests, reinforce the idea of a picturesque representation of the past in the present.[7] In addition, Rowling's series picks up many tropes that are familiar from Victorian classics, such as the figure of the maltreated orphan, who is a staple feature of novels such as Charles Dickens's *Oliver Twist* (1837-39) and *David Copperfield* (1849-50), Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* (1847) and Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* (1847), to name just a few.[8] The trope of the poor, abused orphan, which was employed time and again in Victorian literature to create empathy with literary characters as well as to express social criticism (cf. Reynolds 272-73), is still effective for today's readership, adults and children alike. While the boy Harry Potter, the orphan with magical powers and a dark destiny, might not necessarily be a role model for all young readers, his fate is certainly apt to evoke sympathy. Additionally, values like loyalty, friendship, resilience as well as a sense of justice and fairness seem to resonate with modern readers as much as they did with Victorian ones. The dramatic story of Dumbledore's younger sister Ariana, who was hidden away inside the family's house due to her 'insanity', i.e., her inability to control her magical powers, echoes the Victorian interest in (women's) 'madness'. Ariana can be read as a magical (and younger) counterpart of Charlotte Brontë's 'madwoman in the attic' in *Jane Eyre*, whose unstable psychological condition escalates in destruction which is similar to that caused by Ariana, who ends up killing her own mother in "one of her rages" (*Hallows* 455).[9]

What is even more significant with respect to resemblances between 19th-century literature and the *Harry Potter* series is the similarity between Rowling's narrative style and techniques that are characteristic of Victorian realist novels. Philip Nel argues that "[o]ne of the assets of the Harry Potter books is that, as in Dorothy Sayers' novels, even minor characters are distinctive and seem to have a rich life history of their own" (286). As far as Rowling's approach to the representation of literary characters is concerned, again more obvious predecessors can be found among 19th-century novelists, ranging from Jane Austen and Charles Dickens to Charlotte Brontë, George Eliot and Elizabeth Gaskell. Rowling's novels also share the attention to minute details that is typical of 19th-century realist novels, which more often than not create the impression of presenting a plausible world by means of detailed descriptions of characters and their everyday life. Especially the strategy of providing details about various aspects of material culture (descriptions of clothes, furniture, etc.), is reiterated in the attention paid by Rowling to (magical) objects in the wizarding world. These parallels between tradi-

[6] According to Pat Pinsent, "[t]he use of the train to boarding school is particularly characteristic of the school story of the first two-thirds of the twentieth century" (13), which includes, for instance, Blyton's famous boarding-school series, which "were published between 1940 and 1951" (ibid. 15).

[7] For a more detailed discussion of the impact of the Gothic tradition on *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*, cf. the article by Denise Burkhard and Julia Stibane in this volume.

[8] Cf. Laura Peters's comment on Victorian literature: "One can hardly open a novel by Dickens, the Brontë sisters, or George Eliot without stumbling over at least one orphan" (1).

[9] Ariana's brother Aberforth describes the girl's situation as follows: "'She wouldn't use magic, but she couldn't get rid of it: it turned inwards and drove her mad, it exploded out of her when she couldn't control it, and at times she was strange and dangerous'" (*Hallows* 455). The notion that children's attempts at suppressing magic may lead to disastrous consequences is picked up in the recent movie *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* (2016).

tional realist novels and Rowling's series are a decisive factor in the process of world building, since it is the wealth of details about all aspects of the wizarding world – from its fantastic fauna and flora to its customs and its rich material culture – which plays a crucial role in creating a believable fictional universe. Though the novels contain numerous scenes that highlight dramatic action, a considerable number of pages are dedicated to describing everyday life, which renders this magical world all the more plausible.

'Heritage culture' as it emerged in Britain in the 1980s is not just about recreating the past (typically without the more unpleasant aspects of historical periods). It is also about reimagining 'Britishness' or 'Englishness' in the context of the project of 'rebranding Britain' (cf. Blake 304), which sought to combine the past and the future in a positive reassessment of the nation, fuelling a new patriotism which incorporates a certain amount of nostalgia as well as irony and playful components. Popular music by bands like Oasis which was subsumed under the label 'Brit Pop' in the 1990s,[10] romantic comedies such as *Notting Hill* (1999) and *Love Actually* (2003),[11] the new James Bond movies and the opening ceremony of the London Olympics in 2012 are as much the outcome of a 'new patriotism' as the *Harry Potter* series. One of the features shared by the images of Britishness in these media products is their tendency to celebrate individuality and eccentricity. The *Harry Potter* series with its array of quirky and highly entertaining (minor) characters fits perfectly into this pattern. As the success of products of popular culture like the ones just mentioned has amply demonstrated, the new version of Britishness constructed in popular culture sells extremely well – and not just in the U.K. Thus, it comes as no particular surprise that a series that is extremely British in many respects could turn into a global success.

III. The translations

Even though English is a global language, novels written in English must be translated into other languages if they are to become international bestsellers and the basis of a transcultural hype. This is even more the case for children's literature, since one cannot presuppose extensive linguistic competence in a language other than the child's native language. The year 2017 was marked by the translation of *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* into the 80th language: Scots. This most recent translation by Matthew Fitt already signals that *Harry Potter* is currently not just available in languages like French, Spanish, Russian, Chinese or Japanese, which are spoken by a large number of people. As Lathey observes, "Harry is also playing a part in the revival of politically significant minority languages. A Basque edition was published in 2002; an Irish Gaelic translation by MáireNic Mhaolain […] [was] published in 2004" (149). Further cases in point include the Tibetan translation by Norgy Puchunggal and the West Greenlandic translation by Stephen Hammeken. Beyond that, there are also translations into Latin (by Peter Needham) and Ancient Greek (by Andrew Wilson). All of these translations take part in the world building within the Potterverse for their respec-

[10] Sheila Whiteley, for instance, reads the interest in the music of The Beatles that is apparent in songs by Oasis as a result of "a light-hearted cultural nostalgia for groups whose music inflected social commentary in an upbeat rock style" (265).

[11] In Richard Curtis's *Love Actually*, the fictitious Prime Minister (Hugh Grant) even includes Harry Potter in the list of great people embodying Britishness that he uses to put the American President in his place during a press conference: "'We may be a small country but we're a great one, too. The country of Shakespeare, Churchill, The Beatles, Sean Connery, Harry Potter. David Beckham's right foot. David Beckham's left foot, come to that. And a friend who bullies us is no longer a friend. And since bullies only respond to strength, from now onward, I will be prepared to be much stronger. And the President should be prepared for that'" (00:41:45-00:42:20).

tive readership. Translating a literary text from one language into another is an eminently creative act in which a dialogue between two inventories of linguistic signs and conceptual categories is established. This process may of course turn out to be substantially easier with some texts than with others.

Everyone who has read Rowling's novels – regardless in which language – cannot help but notice that they constitute a major challenge for translators. In the following, we will briefly address some of the obstacles translators of the *Harry Potter* series are confronted with, i.e., (i) the *linguistic creativity* of the series, (ii) its *Britishness* (in terms of both linguistic features and cultural references), (iii) the consequences of *addressing children* as the primary target group, and (iv) the *time pressure* translators often experienced. After a succinct discussion of these four problem areas, we will have a closer look at a few examples in order to show how different translators met the challenges. For this purpose, we will draw upon translations into German (by Klaus Fritz), French (by Jean-François Ménard), Spanish (by Alicia Dellepiane Rawson), Italian (by Marina Astrologo), Russian (by Marii Spivak), Latin (by Peter Needham) and Turkish (by Ülkü Tamer).[12]

Similar to many other fantasy novels, the *Harry Potter* series displays a considerable degree of linguistic creativity due to the genre's emphasis on world building. New words coined by Rowling typically refer to the material and social dimension of the wizarding culture and thus contribute to evoking the impression of reading about a 'complete' world that is different from the one the readers live in. Due to their regular use throughout the novels, many of the newly created words soon become familiar to readers, who develop a 'wizarding vocabulary' in the course of the series, which promises to put them in the position of 'insiders' regarding the magical world. Replacing the 'wizarding vocabulary' by 'ordinary' words in a translation just will not do. Translators consequently need to decide whether they want to stick to the terms coined by Rowling or come up with their own creations. While Rowling's term for the wizarding sport – Quidditch – is used in all of the translations we had a look at for this article, translators occasionally prove to be highly creative themselves when transferring a unique term into another language, which means they play a particularly active role in the world building. Jean-François Ménard has, for instance, come up with a felicitous translation for the 'Sorting Hat', coining the word *Choixpeau* by "blending *choix* (choice) and *chapeau* (hat)" (Davies 96). This may perhaps make the German and Italian counterparts (*sprechender Hut*, *capello parlante* = 'talking hat') look a bit conventional in comparison. The German and Italian translations appear to be straightforwardly descriptive, but they actually shift the focus from the *sorting* done by the hat, i.e., a tradition that is very important for maintaining the internal social structure of Hogwarts, to the more obvious magical feature of a hat that is able to talk. This example already illustrates that translations frequently change semantic nuances, even if only subtly.

The word 'Muggle' is probably the most famous among all of the lexemes coined in Rowling's series. This term, which has even been listed in the *Oxford English Dictionary* for some years now, has been left unchanged in a number of translations, albeit sometimes with slight adjustments regarding the spelling in order to provide a better 'fit' in the target language: the German translation, for instance, uses 'Muggel'. In the Spanish translation, italics stress the 'Otherness' of this term (los *muggles*) and others coined by Rowling. Yet even if a word *looks* more or less like the original term on the page, the pronunciation readers will assign to the word is bound to vary to some extent depending on the reader's reference language(s). Thus, the letter <u> in English 'Muggle', German 'Muggel', Turkish 'Muggle', Russian 'mugl' and Spanish '*muggle*' will in all likelihood be pronounced differently by speakers of these lan-

[12] We are grateful to Peri Sipahi for her very helpful comments on the Turkish translation.

guages. Some translators decided to coin a new expression to convey the key concept 'Muggle'. Non-magical persons are referred to as 'Moldus' in the French translation and as 'Babbani' in the Italian one. While new words make both the wizarding world and the literary text look 'exotic', these terms generally do not render the translations difficult to understand, since the original text typically already provides explanations of these words.[13]

The situation is quite different when references to British culture occur in Rowling's novels. Since the series is set on the British Isles and was presumably written with a British target readership in mind, readers who are not familiar with British culture may encounter features that prove to be more or less mystifying. In fact, the pervasive Britishness of the novels[14] has even led to a separate American edition, in which the spelling, the syntax and some lexical items have been adjusted to American English.[15] It is thus in particular due to the overall Britishness of the series that translators of *Harry Potter* have to negotiate

> two basic goals of translation: that of preserving the characteristics of the source text as far as possible, even where this yields an exotic or strange effect, and that of adapting it to produce a target text which seems normal, familiar and accessible to the target audience (Davies 69).

In references to food and various aspects of boarding-school life the Britishness of the series is particularly apparent, but humour and the social implications of stylistic peculiarities may likewise prove to be difficult to translate (cf. Lathey 145). For instance, "[t]he nuances of British social hierarchies as represented in linguistic register are a challenge to any translator" (ibid. 149), which accounts for Hagrid 'losing' his "indeterminate working-class dialect" (ibid. 148) in many translations.

There are numerous attempts to categorise the different strategies employed by translators in order to cope with cultural differences. Eirlys E. Davies provides a useful typology, which includes *preservation*, *addition*, *omission*, *globalisation*, i.e., "the process of replacing culture-specific references with ones which are more neutral or general" (83), and *localisation*, i.e., "anchor[ing] a reference firmly in the culture of the target audience" (ibid. 84). Whether a translator opts for "domesticating or foreignizing" (ibid. 69) a text in the process of translation may depend on a range of additional factors, including conventions for literary translations within the culture(s) associated with the target language, which tend to be historically and culturally variable (cf. ibid.) and which, beyond that, may not be identical for children's literature and general fiction. A comparative analysis reveals that the translators of the *Harry Potter* novels often strike a compromise between maintaining some of the British flair of the original and adapting some of the references to their target culture(s).[16] Whatever course they choose, the translators' decisions have an impact on the world building for their target reader-

[13] The term 'Muggle', for instance, is explained to Harry (and thus also to the reader) as follows: "'A Muggle,' said Hagrid. 'It's what we call non-magic folk like them [i.e., the Dursleys]'" (*Stone* 62).

[14] Cultural specificity in terms of references and linguistic expressions affects both the depiction of the wizarding world and that of the Dursleys, who are presented "as conventional, middle-of-the-road Englanders who live in the suburban conformity that is instantly familiar to most British readers" (Lathey 146). For a more detailed discussion of some of the linguistic features that are relevant in this context, cf. ibid. (146-47).

[15] Alexander Eastwood criticises this Americanisation of *Harry Potter* in his article "A Fantastic Failure: Displaced Nationalism and the Intralingual Translation of Harry Potter".

[16] This is also the conclusion reached by Davies (on the basis of a somewhat different sample of translations than the ones used for the present article): "In general it would seem that each translator has attempted to reconcile the potentially conflicting aims of giving readers a background with some authentic British flavour, yet at the same time avoid overwhelming them with too much that is unfamiliar and undecipherable" (72).

ship. In cases where translators opt for maintaining culture-specific features of the original, they occasionally try to make the text more accessible for their audience by adding explanations.[17] This strategy may very well be a concession to the young readers.

The task of the translator is exacerbated by the fact that children constitute the primary target readership of the novels, which means that "[t]he translator […] faces the challenge of preserving their child-appeal and transmitting it to the child readers of another culture" (ibid. 66). On the one hand, children may perhaps be less tolerant than adults when encountering passages that seem cryptic because they refer to a culture they are not familiar with.[18] On the other hand, translations that retain elements referencing the original culture and/or language may foster intercultural competence. It is certainly not true that children generally prefer stories set in their own reality, as the success of narratives ranging from the *Arabian Nights* fairy tales to fantasy as one of the most popular genres in children's literature indicates very clearly. By reading about a culture that is 'foreign' to them – no matter whether this culture is real or imaginary – children are made aware of cultural differences and learn how to cope with these, for instance by deducing the meaning of unfamiliar cultural practices or lexical items from contextual information. Thus, "the initially foreign effect may dwindle as the item recurs throughout the series" (ibid. 76).

Finally, the problems translators of the *Harry Potter* series had to face in the late 1990s and early 2000s were amplified by "[r]apid distribution" (Lathey 141) becoming one of the goals of many publishing houses authorised to publish translations. In an article from 2005, Gillian Lathey describes the accelerating production of translations as follows:

> Time patterns of translation still vary across the world, but gaps are decreasing as the international Potter effect gains momentum with the publication of each volume. *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* was not published in China until October 2000, a delay of three years from first publication in the UK; for volume five the planned time lapse between publication of the original and the translation was barely four months (142).

The wish of publishing houses to cash in on the *Harry Potter* phenomenon as quickly as possible may be understandable, just as the wish of a readership that does not speak English to finally have access to the latest instalment of the series in their native language. In retrospect, one may perhaps wonder whether some of the translators' choices resulted from due consideration or from time pressure. Be that as it may, a comparative analysis of *Harry Potter* translations proves to be a very illuminating (and entertaining) endeavour and testifies to the ingenuity displayed by the translators of Rowling's novels.

The characters' names, whose meaning has often been commented on by academics and fans alike, are an interesting starting point for such an analysis. Many translations preserve the original names, but there are also some striking departures from this pattern, as the following examples will illustrate. While the name of Harry's nemesis Voldemort has been preserved in all of the translations examined for this article,[19] the last name of Harry's potions teacher is different in some of the texts. For native speakers of English the name 'Snape' presumably conveys "vaguely unpleasant connotations deriving perhaps from the sound-symbolism of the

[17] Davies provides examples from the French translation, such as the explanation of the term 'préfet'/'prefect', which Ménard has embedded in a dialogue between Harry and Ron in the first volume of the series (cf. Davies 77).

[18] This is also what Davies assumes: "young readers are perhaps less likely to be tolerant of the occasional obscurity, awkwardness or unnatural-sounding phrasing which adults, conscious that they are dealing with a translation, may be more accepting of" (66).

[19] In this case, Rowling's linguistic creativity incidentally entails that a character's name "becomes much more transparent to French readers" (Davies 76).

initial *sn-* cluster, which also features in words such as *sneer*, *snide*, *snoop*, *sneak*, *snap*" (Davies 79, original emphasis). Additionally, from a phonological point of view the name 'Snape' constitutes a minimal pair with 'snake' and thus perhaps reminds readers of an animal that tends to be seen as *the* (biblical) embodiment of evil and treachery. The snake is also the heraldic beast of Slytherin House and is consequently associated with both Salazar Slytherin and his heir Voldemort. The abovementioned connotations of the name 'Snape' are bound to get lost in translation. Still, some translators decided to keep the original surname (German, Latin, Spanish, Turkish), whereas others stress this teacher's unpleasant character by giving him a telling name in the target language. While the English name presumably provides a comparatively subtle characterisation, Ménard went for a more obviously telling name – 'Rogue', which "in French means 'arrogant'" (ibid.) – and "the Italian translator, Marina Astrologo's decision to rename him *Piton*, literally 'python', again turns the original hint into something unambiguous" (ibid., original emphasis). The Russian name 'Zlej' is perhaps even more telling, since it is reminiscent of the adjective *zloj*, which means 'evil, malicious, grim'.

According to Davies, "[t]he name of Harry Potter himself tends to be preserved unchanged, and it may have been judged preferable not to alter this name because it is the major identifying label for the series" (75). Still, the Russian translation alters at least the protagonist's first name into 'Гарри' (i.e., 'Garri'). This change is one of several in the Russian text that result from the fact that there is neither the phoneme /h/ nor a letter corresponding to <h>; in other words, in contrast to languages like French and Italian, there is no 'mute h'. Further names affected by this incompatibility of the Latin and the Cyrillic alphabets include 'Hagrid', who is called 'Ogrid' in the Russian translation, 'Hedwig', who becomes 'Chedviga', and 'Hermione', who is 'Germiona' in Russian.[20] Even if Harry's name stays the same in many translations, the cultural connotations of his name may be lost anyway; after all, "for the British audience, the name sounds a particularly banal and ordinary one, which contrasts with the extraordinary qualities of its bearer" (ibid. 75).

While names may be among the first terms that spring to one's mind when thinking about translating *Harry Potter*, there are further difficulties, especially, as mentioned above, with regard to words that contribute to the overall Britishness of the series. On a very basic level, terms of address may already indicate an attempt at either maintaining this Britishness or privileging localisation. The translation by Alicia Dellepiane Rawson systematically uses Spanish terms of address, introducing for instance Harry's uncle and aunt as "[e]l señor y la señora Dursley" (*Piedra* 9) to the readers – thereby losing some of the British flavour. The Italian and Latin translations adopt the same strategy, referring to "[i]l signore e la signora Dursley" (*Pietra* 15) and "Dominus et Domina Dursley" (*Lapis* 1), respectively. The French and Turkish versions, by contrast, use 'Mr' and 'Mrs', and the German translation chooses 'Mr.' and 'Mrs.' as markers of an Anglophone context. The transliteration of the Russian version reads 'Mister' and 'Missis' and thus likewise evokes Anglophone connotations.

A semantic field that proves particularly challenging for translators due to the large number of culture-specific items is food. References to food play a quite prominent role throughout the *Harry Potter* series. Banquets in the Great Hall are among the highlights of the students' life at Hogwarts, and the sumptuous feast Harry enjoys shortly after his arrival signals that the School of Witchcraft and Wizardry is going to be much more of a home for the orphaned boy than number four, Privet Drive has ever been:

> The dishes in front of him [Harry] were now piled with food. He had never seen so many things he liked to eat on one table: roast beef, roast chicken, pork chops and lamb chops, sausages, bacon and steak,

[20] For information on the translation of characters' names in further languages, cf. Davies (75-76).

> boiled potatoes, roast potatoes, chips, Yorkshire pudding, peas, carrots, gravy, ketchup and, for some strange reason, mint humbugs (*Stone* 135).

What is served during the banquet is not modern British cuisine of the kind propagated by Jamie Oliver (for example in his campaign for healthier school meals) but very traditional English food, which may support the nostalgic tenor of the series. While Harry relishes the food that appears in front of him, some readers – especially those who are used to a very different cuisine (or happen to be vegetarians) – may not find all of these foodstuffs quite that appetising. Since references to food that readers are prone to dislike would defeat the overall purpose of the list quoted above, translators may be inclined to avoid a faithful translation in this case. Muslims, for instance, might not be happy about the references to 'pork chops' and 'bacon', while Hindu readers might object to the 'roast beef'. Food taboos motivated by culture and religion are likely to affect translations into languages like Arabic, Turkish and Hindi.[21] This is exactly what can be observed in the Turkish translation, where Ülkü Tamer has translated "pork chops and lamb chops" as "pirzola" (*Taşı* 112), which means 'chops', but is only used to refer to lamb chops in Turkish. 'Bacon' is left out in the Turkish text; instead, there are two terms referring to sausages, "sosis" and "sucuk" (ibid.). 'Socis' is used for poultry sausages, whereas the latter term is the more common one used in Turkish to refer to 'sausage', which may be indicative of a certain localisation. The first item on Rowling's list ('roast beef') has been adopted with minor changes in some of the translations – presumably in an attempt to stress Britishness: there is German "Roastbeef" (*Stein* 136), French "roast-beef" (*Ecole* 125), Italian "roast beef" (*Pietra* 126) and Russian "rostbif" (*Kamen'* 176-77). Other translators opt for what Davies calls 'globalisation' in this case, choosing a somewhat more general expression which corresponds to 'roasted meat': "carne asada" in Spanish (*Piedra* 107)[22] and "kızarmış et" in Turkish (*Taşı* 112). Although the vegetables mentioned in Rowling's list are not likely to cause any major cultural problems, at least not with the languages of the translations chosen here, it is worth mentioning that the French translation replaces "peas, carrots" by "légumes divers", i.e., 'mixed vegetables' (*Ecole* 125), which is a standard item on French menus. Thus, the choice may be seen as an example of localisation.

A particularly intriguing item on the list of foods is 'Yorkshire pudding', a quintessentially English dish, which is bound to be unknown to most non-British children. Thus, it comes as no particular surprise that the French and Turkish translations simply dispense with this item. Moreover, the Spanish "pudín" (*Piedra* 107) is not likely to suggest 'Yorkshire pudding' to Spanish-speaking readers. In the German and Italian translations, however, there are references to "Yorkshire-Pudding" (*Stein* 136) and "Yorkshire pudding" (*Pietra* 126), respectively; in the Russian translation a dish called "jorkširskij puding" (*Kamen'* 177) is mentioned. Presumably, for most readers of the German, Italian or Russian version (especially for children) 'Yorkshire pudding' is unfamiliar, too (or evokes completely wrong associations). Here, the term thus clearly serves as marker of (exotic) Britishness.

In terms of their target audience, the translations into Latin and Ancient Greek differ from the ones discussed so far. While Lathey assumes that these "may be no more than an amusing gag for the learned" (149), teachers might also hope for a somewhat different readership, i.e., young people who might be more interested in reading about Harry's adventures in an ancient language than in studying classical texts such as Cesar's *De Bello Gallico*. There is a tradition of translating English children's classics into Latin; cases in point include J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Hobbit* (*Hobbitus Ille*), Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (*Alicia in Terra Mirabili*), Michael Bond's *A Bear Called Paddington* (*Ursus Nomine Paddington*) and

[21] References to pork and beef may of course also alienate Anglophone Muslims and Hindus.

[22] We would like to thank Andrea König for her helpful comments on the Spanish translation.

A.A. Milne's *Winnie-the-Pooh* (*Winnie Ille Pu*). Thus, children who want to read entertaining texts and practise their Latin have access to quite a lot of reading material. In German schools, translations of the popular *Asterix* comics by René Goscinny and Albert Uderzo into Latin are used quite successfully in Latin classes.[23] Since many young readers of *Harrius Potter et Philosophi Lapis* already know the *Harry Potter* books in their first language, the language barrier might be easier to overcome; they will recognise more easily what they already know in a different language.

Given the special premises for the Latin translation, the culture of the target readership is not that important in this case. Ideally, the text may make readers curious as to how Harry's adventures have been transformed into Harrius's world and, along the way, may make them more familiar with how Latin 'works', for instance with respect to its declension system. The latter may give nouns a distinct 'ancient' touch by producing constructions such as "loco communali Gryffindorensium" (*Lapis* 116) and "Malfoy Crabbem et Goylem contemplavit" (ibid. 124). The impression of 'ancient Otherness' is reinforced by the fact that some of the names have been Latinised (e.g. Harrius Potter, Ronaldus, Fredericus et Georgius Vislius). Others, however, have been adopted without change from the English text (e.g. Voldemort, McGonagall, Albus Dumbledore, Snape, Hermione, Draco Malfoy). Regarding the above-mentioned foods, the Latin version does something special with 'Yorkshire pudding', translating it into "placenta comitatus Eboracensis" (ibid. 100). Here, the Latin name for York (Eboracum) is used, which means that a reference to a local dish is translated faithfully, but still 'disguised' in such a way that even English readers will be hard-put to recognise the term.

IV. The movies

The worldwide fame of Harry Potter does not rest solely on the novels written by Rowling. The filmic adaptations of the series have contributed very much to turning 'the boy who lived' into a well-known fictional figure. Some scholars have argued that Rowling's novels provide very good material for audio-visual adaptations, being quite 'filmic' themselves: "[a]ction sequences, such as the roller-coaster-like ride through Gringotts, the defeat of the troll or the journey through the trapdoor, punctuate the narrative in precisely the way they would be expected to in a film" (Cartmell/Whelehan 43). Still, the novels (especially the later ones) are quite long and all of them provide an amount of detail that no adaptation that is limited to the length of a feature film (or two in the case of *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*) can hope to capture. Thus, the plot has been 'streamlined' to a certain extent in the movies. This meant in particular "emphasizing Harry's journey over and above incidental events" (Russell 398), thus, for instance, reducing other characters' back-stories. Omissions are of course inevitable in adaptations of texts that are as long and detailed as Rowling's. Still, some of the deletions arguably are to the detriment of the world building and/or characterisation.

In Mike Newell's film *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire* (2005), for instance, there are some omissions that affect the impression of the wizarding world in general and the characterisation of Hermione Granger in particular. Although Nel argues that "[p]erhaps the need to condense justifies […] the omission of the S.P.E.W. subplot" (281), the fact that the house-elves have been left out in the fourth movie has several repercussions.[24] The deletion of

[23] We are very grateful to Wolfgang Scheunemann for sharing with us his expertise in Latin and in teaching this language.

[24] Hermione explains the acronym she created for her movement as follows: "'S – P – E – W. Stands for the Society for the Promotion of Elfish Welfare'" (*Goblet* 246).

information on house-elves, who are after all one of the most prominent non-human species in the wizarding world, reduces the complexity of this world.[25] Unlike the readers, the viewers do not find out that even in Hogwarts house-elves are kept as 'indentured workers' – a fact that Hermione discovers in her fourth year at the school.[26] In other words, 'evil' families like the Malfoys are not the only ones who exploit this non-human race. This adds to the ambiguity of the wizarding world, which is – contrary to what some people may assume – not idealised in Rowling's novels. The fact that Muggle-born Hermione is apparently the only one who is outraged by what she considers to be downright "'[s]lave labour'" (*Goblet* 202) and is willing to take action on behalf of the house-elves adds an important facet to the portrayal of one of the series' protagonists. Moreover, her attitude shows that a perspective shaped by an upbringing among Muggles may prove to be progressive. By leaving out Hermione's political activism the film limits the character very much to her role as a potential love interest and 'belle of the ball', which reaffirms traditional concepts of femininity.

Another feature of the film *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire* that reiterates gender as well as national stereotypes is the depiction of the visiting students from Beauxbatons and Durmstrang. Their choreographed entries in the Great Hall, which juxtapose the (supposedly feminine) seductive and dance-like movements of the exclusively female French students with the marching and the athletic Cossack-style performance of the exclusively male Eastern European visitors, are not based on the novel. The reduction of the students of the visiting schools to simplistic gender and national stereotypes suggests that Hogwarts is a more progressive, coeducational wizarding school, where girls and boys are even on the same sports teams. While the movie suggests that the other wizarding schools are not coeducational, the novel mentions at least in passing that both Durmstrang and Beauxbatons are in fact coeducational institutions as well.[27] This also means that Beauxbatons *could* have a male Triwizard champion, which implies that the selection of Fleur Delacour presumably results from her being more capable than her (female *and* male) fellow students. In other words, the novel is more balanced in terms of its approach to gender roles than the movie, which activates both gender and national stereotypes to maximise the differences between the three schools.

As the examples above have shown, changes in terms of plot and characterisation may have a significant impact on the world building, leaving people who only know the films with a somewhat different impression of the wizarding world than those who have also read the novels.[28] Moreover, even people who are familiar with the texts as well as their audio-visual

[25] Some scenes involving centaurs and goblins are likewise missing in the movies or have been shortened, which increases the overall focus on wizards and witches and makes the wizarding world look more homogenous than it is according to Rowling's novels.

[26] What the Gryffindor ghost Nearly Headless Nick tells Hermione about the more than one hundred house-elves who live in the school and take care of all sorts of household chores is also reminiscent of servants in the Victorian period – or of *Heinzelmännchen* in German folklore: "'they hardly ever leave the kitchen by day […]. 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?'" (*Goblet* 201)

[27] At least one female Durmstrang student is briefly mentioned (cf. *Goblet* 283), and the text says explicitly that "around a dozen boys and girls […] emerged from the carriage" (ibid. 269) when the Beauxbatons students arrive.

[28] While some scenes have been deleted, others have been written specifically for the movies. At least the first movies, for instance, manifest a certain tendency to insist on physical comedy beyond what is depicted in the books. A case in point is Seamus Finnigan's 'habit' of blowing himself up in the first instalment of the movie series: "When Seamus attempts a spell that should turn water into rum, he causes an explosion, singeing his hair; when he tries the 'Wingardium Leviosa' spell, boom! And his hair is

adaptations are likely to be influenced by the films to a certain extent. The movies inform what many readers imagine characters, places and objects to look like when (re-)reading the novels: "The dominance of perceptual images leads to an overlay with the imaginative image" (Cuntz-Leng 57). This is perhaps particularly apparent with respect to the portrayal of potions teacher Severus Snape, as Vera Cuntz-Leng argues. She claims that the extensive interest in this particular character and his popularity among fans can largely be attributed to Alan Rickman's portrayal of the teacher rather than to the presentation of the character in the first volumes of the series. In the first novels, there was no reason to like Snape, and "[a]lthough fanfiction had been written about Harry Potter before 2001, Snape had been a character of minor interest in the early years of the fandom", as Cuntz-Leng (65) observes. This changed quickly after the release of the first movie when, due to a felicitous casting decision, the British actor Alan Rickman became Snape – or did Snape become Alan Rickman at this moment (cf. ibid. 64)? From this point onward, there was a remarkable change in the fans' attitude towards Snape, who now began to play a much more important role in fan fiction.

With respect to the interpretation of Snape, the relation between the book series and the films is rendered even more complex by the fact that the production of the movies started before Rowling's series had been completed. As Cuntz-Leng points out, "the parallel development of film adaptations and new novels brings both media into an inevitable dialogue wherein the books can react upon the movies and upon fan works – something quite unusual" (56). She assumes that Rickman's portrayal of Snape had an impact on the depiction of 'his' character in later volumes of the series:

> *Deathly Hallows* is – although Snape is physically absent from most of the narrative – the only book in the series that provides us with the full spectrum of Snape's emotional complexity that has been excessively explored through fanfiction: He is greedy, timid, self-confident, arrogant, loyal, happy, in love, mean and unfair, bitter, shy, ashamed, suicidal, angry, desperate, righteous, etc. This corresponds with […] [the] assumption that Rickman's performance as well as the reactions by fans regarding his interpretation of the character influenced Rowling's writing in later books to more easily motivate Snape's ambiguous personality and his key position in the subject areas of love and sacrifice that are at the core of the series' finale […]. Rowling's later novels show a stronger awareness for the romantic and erotic possibilities of the character and ultimately, the Byronic hero archetype becomes decipherable in her text (ibid. 68).

The lasting impact of the late Alan Rickman on the character of Severus Snape is also apparent in the stage production of *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* (2016) in London, in which the portrayal of the potions teacher tries to emulate the appearance of Rickman as well as his very distinctive way of speaking. T-shirts, hoodies, cushions, phone cases, mugs, bracelets and other types of merchandise that refer to Snape's famous (and characteristically laconic) admission that he still loves Harry's mother Lily ('Always') provide further evidence of the character's transformation from an entirely unpleasant, malicious teacher into a romantic hero.

Alan Rickman is not the only charismatic actor who has contributed to the success of the film series. The cast reads very much like a 'who is who' of British actors and actresses, including Richard Harris, Kenneth Branagh, Emma Thompson, Maggie Smith, Robbie Coltrane, Ralph Fiennes and a number of further well-known actors and actresses. Some of the young stars, who have grown up 'in Hogwarts', have moved on to very successful careers on screen and/or on the stage. This seems to be particularly true for Daniel Radcliffe (Harry) and Emma Watson (Hermione). The idea that the cast should reflect the Britishness of the series

singed again. Neither scene occurs in the book, and Rowling's spells have very specific effects when poorly executed – they don't all create smoke" (Nel 278).

(cf. Cartmell/Whelehan 38) has paid off. In the movies the actors and actresses use different regional and social varieties of English, all of which are, however, associated with the British Isles. In conjunction with productions like Peter Jackson's *The Lord of the Rings* (2001-2003) and *The Hobbit* (2012-2014) trilogies and the HBO series *Game of Thrones* (2011-), the *Harry Potter* film series has arguably contributed to establishing varieties of English that are associated with the British Isles as the predominant audio-visual 'language of fantasy'.

There are four different directors behind the *Harry Potter* movies, who, despite their distinctive styles, have all contributed to world building in the Potterverse. The first two movies, directed by Chris Columbus, have been much maligned by critics due to their supposedly strong 'fidelity' to Rowling's books. This impression is partially due to the films' emphasis on world building. Deborah Cartmell and Imelda Whelehan argue that the first instalment "was a film that tried too hard to *be* the book and one which was destined to suffer invidious comparisons with a much more successful book-to-film adaptation in the form of *The Fellowship of the Ring* (2001)" (39, original emphasis).[29] On a similarly disparaging note, James Russell perceives "some obvious 'Hollywood' elements" (397) in the first two movies; he criticises that they display "a relatively bright, accessible, aesthetic: they are upbeat in tone, there is less emphasis on the weather and the seasons, and they are structured according to a familiar children's film template" (ibid.). To a certain extent, the more upbeat tone of Columbus's movies in comparison to the later ones is of course in accordance with the overall optimism of the first novels, which stress the protagonist's enthusiasm for becoming part of a new and exciting world at least as much as the dangers awaiting him in this new environment.

Columbus's first movie has also been criticised for its pace and "cumbersome style" (Nel 280). Especially the depiction of the arrival at Hogwarts has come under fire:

> Columbus' emphasis on sets and effects slows the pace. For example, when the students approach Hogwarts for the first time, the camera shows the castle as boats approach, then shows the first-years looking awed, then lingers on the castle once more, then moves to a close-up of awed students' faces again, and finally moves back to linger on the castle…again. After nearly a minute of switching back and forth between the castle and the children's faces, what began as an impressive sight grows tedious (ibid. 280).

Although Nel may have a point if one applies the conventions of the standard fast-paced, action-driven Hollywood blockbuster, one may venture the hypothesis that many fans of the series actually *want* to relish the memorable moment of beholding Hogwarts for the very first time. After all, Hogwarts has always been substantially more than a mere setting: if Harry Potter is the character that defines Rowling's magical universe, then Hogwarts is the place that more than any other lends the series its unique appeal and that is the centre of Harry's world. This can be seen in the fact that a substantial part of the world building revolves around Hogwarts and its immediate surroundings (i.e., the Forbidden Forest and Hogsmeade). Moreover, the awe-inspiring effect of Hogwarts that is highlighted in Columbus's adaptation echoes traditional Gothic literature, which sought to evoke the sublime with the depiction of old castles. Moreover, the strategy of devoting screen-time to establishing impressive settings seems to be apt to filmic world building in fantasy movies, as, for instance, Peter Jackson's *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy has shown.

The later movies in the film series get increasingly darker and are generally somewhat more experimental than the first two. Alfonso Cuarón's *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of*

[29] In a similar vein, Nel claims that "the attempt to be completely faithful hampers those first two films; recognition of the impossibility of being completely faithful liberates the third, fourth, and fifth films" (276).

Azkaban (2004) is often seen as a major turning point in the series. The movie has been praised for being much more interesting in terms of its aesthetics than its predecessors, drawing, for instance, on "'old-fashioned' techniques, such as the silent-film era 'iris-in' transitional device" (Johnson 209) and incorporating allusions to different filmic traditions, specifically "classic Universal horror films of the 1930s and French New Wave films of the late 1950s and early 1960s" (ibid.). From that point onward, the movies stress the increasing threat by using visual techniques such as "digital color grading" and "darker, low key lighting" (Russell 391). Moreover, Cuarón established a 'modernisation' of the look of Hogwarts in so far as the protagonists are from now on regularly shown wearing modern clothes instead of their black school robes. Each of the films in the series features unique moments as far as the visual effects are concerned, such as the point-of-view shots in *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire* indicating that Harry is being watched by Mad-Eye Moody's magical eye or the embedded narrative of "The Tale of the Three Brothers" in *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows, Part II* (2011), an animated sequence inspired by "Asian shadow plays" (Sibley 163) and the filmic style coined by Lotte Reiniger.[30]

While the directors changed repeatedly, production designer Stuart Craig stayed on throughout the series, which lent the wizarding world a high degree of visual coherence and contributed to the impression of a plausible, 'complete' alternative world.[31] The filming locations chosen for the movies reinforce the Britishness of the series (cf. Nel 276). For instance, "footage of the magnificent Scottish Highlands was filmed for use as establishing shots, inspiration for matte paintings, and digitally composited backdrops" (Revenson, *Places* 10), transporting the notion of Hogwarts being situated in a remote and picturesque location into the movies. The use of the Scottish Highlands as well as of various cathedrals and universities around Britain as backdrop for the film series and/or as inspiration for set designs in Leavesden Studios (near London) endows the film series with a distinctive British look.

The set design also brings across the idea that the wizarding world follows traditions that reach back to the medieval era and is anything but modern with its quills, robes, candles and ramshackle buildings: "Craig and his location scouts searched out universities and cathedrals in England that could represent Hogwarts castle and give it the timelessness that a roughly thousand-year-old institution merited" (ibid., *Places* 8). The Chapter House of Durham Cathedral (= the Transfiguration classroom), the Fourth Form Room of Harrow Old School, Middlesex, which dates back to the late 16th century (= the Charms classroom), and Lavenham, Suffolk, where some of the Godric's Hollow scenes were shot, are among the locations used for the movies (cf. ibid., *Places* 117, 119, 185). Different locations were linked visually by moveable 'Hogwarts-related' items, as set decorator Stephenie McMillan explains:

> 'We had several five-foot-high columns topped by owl-shaped lamps that were portable […]. So between Oxford [University] and Durham Cathedral, for instance, we took our owl lamps with us, placed them in the corridors, and made both places look like Hogwarts' (McMillan quoted in Revenson, *Places* 10).

Though Gothic architecture looms large in the movies, the old-fashioned appearance of the wizarding world derives from references to styles that are associated with different historical periods. The rooms in the Leaky Cauldron, for example, feature a distinct Tudor-style look

[30] "Reiniger was a German-born animator who worked from the 1930s through the 1950s making mostly short films based on fairy tales and classic stories. Her animations were distinguished by their use of hand-cut paper silhouettes and lyrical, elastic movements" (Sibley 163).

[31] Cf. Russell's assessment of Craig's role: "As head of the design team, Craig has constructed the physical spaces of Harry Potter's world and his importance should not be underestimated" (400).

with their "dark, weathered wood panels", "simple, plastered walls" and "a bed with ornately carved bedposts and headboard" (ibid. 22), while the Gryffindor common room is decorated with reproductions of the late-medieval tapestry "The Lady and the Unicorn".

Manifold allusions to the past, which are embedded in the visual portrayal of the wizarding world, create a link with the British heritage industry. Triggering a certain sense of nostalgia for the 'good old times' by showing the wizarding world is apt to reinforce the overall interest in national heritage. The set designers, however, did not aim at historical accuracy, instead often adding a specific, 'magical' touch to the places they created, for instance by exaggerating the "'gravity-defying *lean*'" (Craig quoted in ibid. 24, original emphasis) they noticed in some buildings from the early Victorian period. This architectural peculiarity inspired the design of Diagon Alley, for instance, where the 'lean' has become a bit more intense than it has ever been in Muggle architecture. In other words, while using historical buildings as inspiration, the set designers still created a unique 'magical' look for the wizarding world, which lends this world additional credibility and sets it apart from the Muggle world.

Despite the old-fashioned design favoured throughout the series there are some settings that evoke modern associations. This is particularly apparent in the design of the arena where the Quidditch World Cup takes place in *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*. The description of the "gigantic stadium" (*Goblet* 108) mentions features such as "immense gold walls" (ibid.), "stairs […] carpeted in rich purple" (ibid. 109), "golden goalposts" (ibid.) and "purple-and-gilt chairs" (ibid.), which evokes an old-fashioned opera- or theatre-style edifice rather than a modern sports arena. In this case, the movie departs from both the novel and the film series' preference for historical architectural styles, showing a building that is more in line with a contemporary sports arena and looks 'functional' rather than decorative. Still, the idea of a colossal building providing room for "[a] hundred thousand witches and wizards" (ibid.) is captured quite well in the audio-visual adaptation. That Quidditch is not *per se* a modern thing in the wizarding world is highlighted by the set design for the Hogwarts Quidditch pitch, however, which is reminiscent of a medieval jousting ground.

Another set that stands out in terms of its architecture is the Ministry of Magic, whose tiled halls were inspired by "the London Underground's network of tunnels and stations" (Revenson, *Places* 162) and in particular "'the oldest of the London Tube stations, built in the early 1900s, many of which used an extravagant amount of decorative ceramic tile'" (Craig quoted in ibid.). The emphasis on (biased and entirely unreliable) propaganda that is increasingly associated with the Ministry in the later instalments of the series is visually underlined in the production design: "Craig and director Yates were inspired by Early Soviet Union-style propaganda posters to place a large banner of Cornelius Fudge in the Atrium that watches over the workers" (ibid.). Anti-Muggle propaganda texts were likewise designed to resemble "Soviet propaganda of the post-World War I era, which used primary colors and bold lettering on posters and in pamphlets to be eye-catching and to incite heightened emotions" (Revenson, *Artifact* 149).

As the example of the Ministry propaganda material illustrates, the effect created by the film sets is completed by props. Rowling's thorough attention to detail thus is translated into the movies to a certain extent and arguably accounts for part of the fascination with the adaptations, which achieve a quite compelling visual world building. The attention to detail also meant that "[t]he number of artifacts required for the Harry Potter films is astounding – and not simply the result of being spread over eight films, but rather that some locations needed to be filled up wall to wall! There were twenty thousand goods and products in the windows of Diagon Alley alone" (ibid. 12). The number of objects necessary to decorate the different sets is even more impressive if one takes into account how much effort went into

designing each of these objects. The bottles containing potions and potion ingredients exemplify the achievement of the design team:

> The original five hundred bottles for Professor Severus Snape's classroom in *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* were filled with dried herbs and other plants, baked animal bones from a butcher, and plastic animal toys from the London Zoo gift shop. Then the graphics design team would make the labels, each one handwritten and handcrafted, which included serial numbers, lists of the ingredients, and stains and splashes of liquid (ibid. 28).

The procedure described here clearly emulates the meticulous attention to detail that is characteristic of Rowling's writing style.

Compared to the visual track, the soundtrack in general and music in particular play a minor role in the filmic world building throughout the *Harry Potter* film series. Still, the soundtrack, for instance, occasionally references medieval music in order to support the allusions to medieval culture that are also prominent in architecture. Primarily, however, non-diegetic music accompanies the visual track in order to reinforce the atmosphere and trigger affective reactions on the part of the viewers, which is one of the basic functions of filmic music in general.[32] Moreover, the music may express the emotions of one of the characters, more often than not those of Harry. While the strategy of conveying an impression of the protagonist's emotional landscape by means of non-diegetic music is anything but unusual in and of itself, in this particular case it seems to simulate the regular use of internal focalization in Rowling's novels, which serves in particular to privilege Harry's perspective. The most memorable musical theme from the film series is certainly its title theme: John Williams's "Hedwig's Theme", "a waltz in a minor key" (Nel 288), which links all of the movies (including even *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them*, where it is briefly 'quoted' at the beginning). While the many variations on "Hedwig's Theme" in terms of instrumentation and mood used throughout the movies may endow this motif with very different emotional qualities, a certain amount of "sadness" (ibid.) and melancholy appears to constitute the theme's emotional core. This melancholy echoes the idea of loss, which is a recurring theme of the series.

There are also instances of diegetic music in the course of the series which contribute to the world building. They support the idea that the wizarding world has its own (popular) music and thus is similar to the Muggle world in this respect. While the readers admittedly do not hear much about wizard pop and rock in the course of the series, which tends to focus very much on sports fandom,[33] they learn at least that the wizarding community has its own radio station, popular music and music fans:

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[32] On the impact of filmic music, cf. Hilary Lapedis: "Music is *transformational*. It changes the emotional state of the audience members more quickly and at a deeper level than the more consciously rooted, visual channel" (370, original emphasis).

[33] With respect to the practices associated with sports fandom, the wizarding world is extremely close to our reality. There are, for instance, Quidditch fan magazines (cf. *Hallows* 125) and in the context of the Quidditch World Cup a wide range of merchandise is sold to sports fans: "Salesmen were Apparating every few feet, carrying trays and pushing carts full of extraordinary merchandise. There were luminous rosettes – green for Ireland, red for Bulgaria – which were squealing the names of the players, pointed green hats bedecked with dancing shamrocks, Bulgarian scarves adorned with lions that really roared, flags from both countries which played their national anthems as they were waved; there were tiny models of Firebolts, which really flew, and collectible figures of famous players, which strolled across the palm of your hand, preening themselves. […] Though Ron purchased himself a dancing-shamrock hat and a large green rosette, he also bought a small figure of Viktor Krum, the Bulgarian Seeker. The miniature Krum walked backwards and forwards over Ron's hand, scowling up at the green rosette above him" (*Goblet* 105-06).

> he [Dumbledore] had booked the Weird Sisters [for the Yule Ball]. Exactly who or what the Weird Sisters were Harry didn't know, never having had access to a wizard's wireless, but he deduced from the wild excitement of those who had grown up listening to the WWN (Wizarding Wireless Network) that they were a very famous musical group (*Goblet* 428).

Moreover, the Yule Ball illustrates once more the series' mixture of traditional and modern elements in the wizarding world by starting with a traditional waltz and then moving on to rock. The casting of the band members in the filmic adaptation establishes a link with 'Muggle' popular music since the musicians are "bassist Steve Mackey and front man Jarvis Cocker, both from the band Pulp; Johnny Greenwood, guitarist for Radiohead; and bagpiper Steven Claydon, who played in the band Add N to (X)" (Revenson, *Artifact* 110). Yet even the modern rock song is firmly embedded in the wizarding world by means of its lyrics, which stresses the independence of this community from the Muggles once again.

V. The fandom

In particular in fan fiction, fan art and fan videos the fandom also takes part in world building activities. The countless narratives produced by fans and made accessible on websites such as the-leaky-cauldron.org expand and elaborate the Potterverse in various ways, presenting new interpretations of characters or even altering the premises of Harry's world (e.g. in crossover stories). While these world building activities are indicative of the fans' creativity and their interests, they are not part of the 'canon' and do not aim at creating a coherent world. In definitions of fan culture as 'participatory culture', which follow Henry Jenkins's groundbreaking study *Textual Poachers* (1992), "the distinction between active producers and passive consumers has been reduced or erased because both are now actively engaged as players in the flow of media culture" (Duffett 251). Scholars starting from this assumption are bound to find fault with Pottermore, which does not embrace fiction in which "fan writers do not so much reproduce the primary text as they rework and rewrite it, repairing or dismissing unsatisfying aspects, developing interests not sufficiently explored" (Jenkins 162) and similar forms of participation, which thrive on other platforms. Thus, it comes as no surprise that Pottermore has been chided for disregarding fans' creativity.[34] In the original design of Pottermore, there was still the possibility of "post[ing] comments and art" (Sharp 113). Moreover, the platform offered "a computer-game style walkthrough of *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, [where fans] brew potions, duel, and buy things at Diagon Alley" (ibid.), which promised immersion in the wizarding world.[35]

In the meantime, Pottermore has been completely overhauled and is now much more text-centred than it used to be, but it is in particular this feature which contributes to the expansion of the wizarding world. The new Pottermore focuses very much on news as well as on writing by (anonymous) staff members as well as by J.K. Rowling, who continues to provide new texts that elaborate on the wizarding world beyond the information provided in the novels. There are comparatively few possibilities for interactivity on Pottermore. Visitors are invited

[34] Cf., for instance, Pamela Ingleton, who claims that "Pottermore is entirely built around and based upon all of the *Harry Potter* books, and therefore all creativity and/or interactivity it begets remain secondary to Rowling's oeuvre" (188).

[35] Cf. also Cassie Brummitt's description of the original Pottermore platform: "In its digital, visually-led adaptation of the novels, users travelled chronologically through a timeline of visual 'moments' from the books. These moments were designed as an immersive experience that also enabled particular forms of interactivity: each scene's artwork could be zoomed into, with sound effects and collectible items embedded into the images" (114).

to get sorted into Hogwarts and Ilvermorny Houses; they are also assigned a wand and can discover their Patronus. Recently, there have been attempts to implement new interactive components on Pottermore. In 2017, the 'Wizarding World Book Club' was launched, inviting fans to join discussions on Twitter that focus on a specific theme and novel each week. For the discussion of *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* (1998), for instance, the topics were 'home', 'celebrity', 'phobias', 'myth and legend' (Pottermore Team, "Wizarding World Book Club" n.p.). On 1 September 2017, i.e., the day students return to Hogwarts after the holidays, Pottermore launched an interactive 'Hogwarts experience', which invites fans to discover 100 'hotspots' in a digital version of Hogwarts and its surroundings. Clicking on the 'hotspots' reveals short texts containing information on the wizarding world and quotations from the novels. Similar to the original design of the platform, though on a much more modest scale, the 'Hogwarts experience' is an "attempt to conflate traditional methods of reading with virtual opportunities for participation" (Brummitt 115). In addition to the different types of interactive features mentioned so far, there are also quizzes, in which "the fan practices and interactions become a competitive performance of memory, or knowledge, over the text with other members" (Lee 63). The competitors stay anonymous.

From today's perspective, the Potterverse can be thought of as a vast world-building transmedia narrative whose kernel can already be found in the characters and plot of *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* and which has kept expanding and becoming more and more complex ever since the publication of the first *Harry Potter* novel. The 'core narrative', i.e., the story of Harry's development and his conflict with his archenemy, the dark wizard Voldemort, has proven vital for creating coherence throughout the series. *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* introduces the conflict between Harry and Voldemort, and this conflict culminates in *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* (2007) in an epic battle and the final defeat of the villain. In addition to this core narrative, the novels increasingly introduce ancillary narratives that tend to be character-driven and typically provide background information on characters (such as Dumbledore, Snape or the Gaunt family).[36] While the ancillary narratives have often been curtailed in the film series, they have been cherished by fans (also as starting points for fan fiction). While fan fiction tends to be character-driven and often develops both protagonists and minor characters in ways that depart from the canonical texts,[37] Pottermore sticks to the versions of characters that have been established in the series and adds information (on characters, places, objects) that does not contradict the original information. Moreover, Rowling's texts and Pottermore in general stay true to the narrative style developed in the novels in their attention to detail and thus contribute to the ongoing construction of a coherent wizarding world.[38] In contrast to other franchises (e.g. *Star Wars* or *Star Trek*), where fans more often than not had to purchase magazines or novels to get scant additional information on their favourite fictional world, Pottermore is completely free of charge. Moreover, the countless *Star Wars* or *Star Trek* novels (as well as video games, comics, etc.) are typically not written by the creators of the universe; their status with respect to world building is debatable, since they often convey information that is contradicted in subsequent instalments. If Rowling exerts strict control over her creation, the net result is at least that her fans are provided with reliable and lasting extensions of the original world.

From the point of view of world building, some of the Pottermore texts by Rowling are also interesting in so far as the writer departs from the predominant stance of providing

[36] For a discussion of the Gaunt family, cf. the article by Svenja Renzel in this volume.

[37] Cf. the article by Franziska Göbel in this volume for a discussion of fan fiction that clearly departs from the vision of the characters in the series.

[38] For more information on the role of Pottermore for the expansion of the Potterverse, cf. the article by Marion Gymnich, Denise Burkhard and Hanne Birk in this volume.

'factual' information on the wizarding world. In her text about vampires, for instance, Rowling speaks in her role as the author of the *Harry Potter* series and comments on her decision to discard her plans for including a vampire among the Hogwarts staff:

> The vampire myth is so rich, and has been exploited so many times in literature and on film, that I felt there was little I could add to the tradition. […] Aside from passing mentions, therefore, the only vampire whom Harry meets in the books is Sanguini in *Half-Blood Prince*, who makes a faintly comic appearance at a party. Looking back through my earliest notebooks, however, I found that on my very earliest list of staff, there was a subjectless vampire teacher I had forgotten, called 'Trocar'. […] Evidently I did not think much of him as a character, though, because he disappears fairly early on in my notes (Rowling, "Vampires" n.p.).

Strictly speaking, comments like the one quoted above undermine the narrative illusion to a certain extent. Instead of contributing to the world building by stressing the 'factuality' of the fictional universe, they redirect the reader's attention to the author's act of creating the universe. What they achieve, however, is maintaining the idea of a communication with the fans by providing them with insights into the production process, which could also be observed in between publication of the volumes of the series (cf. Russell 394).

One of the basic characteristics of fandom is its strong affective dimension; it is "connected to a feeling of 'Heimat': a zone of physical, emotional and ideological safety that fans can call home, which offers them a sense of security, stability and emotional warmth" (Duffett 225). This affective dimension also informs fans' visits at places connected with the fandom in some way or other. In the case of *Harry Potter* fandom there are a number of places that promise to offer a (partial) substitute for the physically inaccessible "*imagined space*" (ibid. 226, original emphasis) of Rowling's wizarding world. These places range from filming locations and exhibitions to the highly commodified Warner Brothers Studies in Leavesden, which opened in 2012. Places that cater to the fans' desire to immerse themselves in the world of Harry Potter keep expanding. In Los Angeles, Orlando (Florida) and Japan the concept of the theme park has been adapted to the *Harry Potter* universe, transforming typical theme-park features such as the rollercoaster ride into *Harry Potter*-themed attractions.[39] In the case of the Potterverse the range of substitute places may even include shops like the ones at King's Cross Station and Heathrow Airport. By decorating shops in ways that reference the wizarding world (e.g. with Gothic arches), even these locations cater to a certain extent to the fans' desire to immerse themselves in the wizarding world. Moreover, the merchandise itself can be seen as fostering immersion (albeit presumably on a comparatively small scale), making it even possible to take objects that evoke the wizarding world home.

Two different types of merchandise can be distinguished on the basis of their relationship to the fictional universe and, thus, their impact on world building. On the one hand, there are products that could be referred to as 'referential', i.e., objects that merely allude to the fictional world or Harry Potter in general. This type of merchandise encompasses items featuring pictures and/or quotations related to the Potterverse in some way or other. Sometimes it even signals a certain ironic distance from the fictional world and/or an awareness of the latter's fictional status in its very make-up. Cases in point include mugs, cushions or T-shirts displaying texts such as 'If you don't get my Harry Potter references then there is some thing Siriusly

[39] According to the news section on Pottermore, a new attraction is scheduled to open in The Wizarding World of Harry Potter, Orlando in 2019, which "is being described as a 'new generation of thrill ride' and will feature 'a new level of storytelling' during the experience. The ride will also feature wizarding world characters and creatures" (Pottermore Team, "New Ride" n.p.). In other words, the attempt to bring parts of the wizarding world into our world may perhaps even have an impact on the standards of theme park design.

Ron with you' or even a 'crossover' reference like 'I never received my acceptance letter to Hogwarts, so I'm leaving the Shire to become a Jedi and take the Iron Throne'. Objects that are associated with 'Muggle' technology, such as *Harry Potter*-themed mouse mats, can also be subsumed under the category of 'referential' merchandise.

On the other hand, there is merchandise that could be referred to as 'mimetic' since it is meant to closely resemble an object from the wizarding world. In these cases, the movies constitute the reference point for verisimilitude, which serves to confirm the audio-visual adaptations in their function as 'official' visual representation of the wizarding world. Examples of this type of merchandise, which reflects most clearly "the decision [by Time Warner] to ignore Rowling's Muggle world and only produce products that come from and are positioned in the magical world" (Beatty 115), include the Marauder's Map, boxes containing Chocolate Frogs (complete with collectible card), replicas of Marvolo Gaunt's ring, Rowena Ravenclaw's tiara and other Horcruxes as well as different wands seen in the films. These items do not express an ironic distance from the fictional world; instead, by virtue of being "marked by verisimilitude" (ibid.), they promise fans immersion "in their favorite story by consuming" (ibid. 116) more or less expensive objects. The significance of 'mimetic' merchandise for the fan is partially the outcome of textinternal processes: the magical artefacts represented by the merchandise have accumulated meaning in the course of the series, which can be decoded by the fan due to his/her knowledge of the texts. Many artefacts that have been endowed with rich layers of meaning in the book and film series by being associated with the characters, their actions, magical properties and memorable moments have inspired *Harry Potter* merchandise. While there are also reproductions of artefacts in other franchises (e.g. the 'One Ring' as *The Lord of the Rings* merchandise), the sheer number of artefacts created by Rowling for the novels and by the production design team for the film series arguably sets 'mimetic' *Harry Potter* merchandise apart from merchandise in other fandoms.

The category of 'mimetic' merchandise also encompasses items such as sweaters and scarves that look like the school uniforms worn by the young actors and actresses in the movies. Fans sometimes wear these in everyday situations without causing raised eyebrows, which is made possible by the fact that the Hogwarts school uniform as displayed in the movies includes 'normal' clothes. Wearing a Gryffindor or Ravenclaw scarf in everyday life sends a signal, revealing one's interests as a fan. Still, this performance of fandom is not what most people would think of as cosplay, which tends to be associated with unusual costumes as well as negative stereotypes about fans and, for this reason, "forms a controversial corner of fandom" (Duffett 292). While donning robes with one of the Hogwarts House crests is likely to be categorised as a form of cosplay (and would draw a lot of attention in a school or workplace), wearing just a House scarf or sweater is presumably more socially acceptable (and will perhaps be deciphered primarily by other fans). Nevertheless, it is still an expression of fandom and a "*playful immersion* in the mythos" of the Potterverse (ibid. 188, original emphasis). Jewellery that is either 'referential' (e.g., a miniature Hedwig or Golden Snitch on a necklace) or 'mimetic' (e.g., a Time-Turner or Deathly Hallows necklace) may fulfil a similar purpose and is comparatively inconspicuous, except for initiates. Just as Xenophilius Lovegood wears the Deathly Hallows necklace in order "'to reveal […] [himself] to other believers, in the hope that they might help […] [him] with the Quest'" (*Hallows* 329), fans may thus reveal their identity as fans to others in more or less subtle ways by using merchandise.[40]

[40] For the connection between fandom and identity, cf. for example the following comment by Chin-Ting Lee: "Identity is an important theme and focus on fandom studies because fans, especially celebrity and media fans, have a strong attachment to an object; they identify, perceive, and understand themselves and other people through a media text or celebrity they like" (56-57).

One of the hallmark features of *Harry Potter* merchandise is its comparatively high degree of individualisation. People can even order a personalised Hogwarts acceptance letter, which has their name and address on it. There is also an intermediate level of individualisation, which manifests itself in house-themed merchandise, for instance in clothes in house colours, featuring one of the house crests. Fandom may be a community-building activity, as internet forums and fan conventions show perhaps most clearly. In the context of fandom as a social activity, one of the functions of merchandise is that of communicating one's fan status to others and thus potentially initiating contact with people who share their interests, as was already pointed out above. By displaying house-themed items *Harry Potter* fans may signal their 'allegiance' and their self-identification in a more specific way than with more 'general' merchandise, potentially appealing to a specific group within the *Harry Potter* fandom.

Among the most recent house-themed products are special 20th-anniversary editions of *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*. For each Hogwarts house there is an edition whose cover features the house crest in the house colour as well as the principal values of the house (e.g. Wit – Learning – Wisdom for Ravenclaw and Pride – Ambition – Cunning for Slytherin). Moreover, the editions contain additional material about the house, its founder, relics, ghost, the common room, famous alumni, etc. While most of this information is based on the series, it exceeds what readers learn in the first volume. That means for first-time readers the house editions contain spoilers or information they do not understand. The Ravenclaw edition, for instance, tells the reader that "Rowena Ravenclaw's daughter Helena stole the diadem out of jealousy of her mother's cleverness. It was found by Lord Voldemort who made it into a Horcrux and kept it hidden for many years at Hogwarts" (*Ravenclaw* xii), thus divulging information that is only revealed in the last volume of the series.[41] This leads to the conclusion that fans who are interested in re-reading the story rather than newcomers constitute the target readership of these editions.

Though merchandise seems to sell quite well, the *Harry Potter* fandom is not entirely about merchandise of course. For many people, being creative is part of their experience as fans. Thus, "homemade pieces" (Beatty 118), which are often associated with memories of when, by whom or with whom they were made, may be more important than merchandise for many fans. The spectrum of homemade objects ranges from decoration for *Harry Potter*-themed parties to self-made wands. Wands, which are the basic equipment of witches and wizards, play a very important role in the series and are complex artefacts (made of different types of wood, containing special cores and differing in terms of their length and flexibility),[42] are available as merchandise. Alternatively, fans may decide to make their own wand. While this type of wand-making strictly speaking does not adhere to the idea that 'the wand chooses the wizard', it certainly does justice to the notion that each wand is unique and has a special relationship to its owner.

[41] In a similar fashion, the Slytherin edition refers to the second volume: "A legend circulated that Slytherin had built a hidden chamber at Hogwarts, a chamber that was home to a monster which would rid the school of half-bloods and Muggle-borns, a chamber that could only be opened by Salazar Slytherin's true heir. It was in Harry Potter's second year at Hogwarts that this legend was proved to be fact" (*Slytherin* xi).

[42] These differences are, for instance, highlighted in the chapter "The Weighing of the Wands" in *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*, where Mr Ollivander describes the wand owned by Cedric Diggory as follows: "'Containing a single hair from the tail of a particularly fine male unicorn … must have been seventeen hands; nearly gored me with his horn after I plucked his tail. Twelve and a quarter inches … ash … pleasantly springy'" (*Goblet* 339). Wands are also discussed in the articles by Sarah Hofmann and Jule Lenzen in this volume.

Figure 1 shows wands that were made by participants at the 2017 Inklings conference in Aachen, Germany.

VI. Conclusion: The Potterverse in motion

The Potterverse provides a prime example of ongoing transmedial world building. The world that has been developed in the Potterverse is amazingly coherent, despite its ever-increasing complexity. This is largely due to the fact that the development of the Potterverse has very much remained in the hands of author J.K. Rowling, in contrast to other successful franchises, such as *Star Trek* or *Star Wars*, which were multi-authored almost right from the start. So far the series of novels constitutes *the* authoritative text in the Potterverse. This is, for instance, evident in recurring references to the novels on Pottermore. The film series has endowed the wizarding world with powerful images of characters, places and objects. Although these images have by now presumably shaped what most fans imagine the wizarding world to look like, the movies do not provide the only authoritative images anymore. In 2015, the illustrated edition of *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* featuring artwork by Jim Kay was published. Since then the second and third volume have likewise appeared as illustrated versions. The illustrations do not try to imitate the movies, but offer a somewhat different vision of Harry Potter's world.[43] In the future, these new images promise to have an increasing impact on readers' imagination, especially since illustrations by Kay also appear on Pottermore and constitute the basis of the most recent edition of *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*: the Kindle in Motion edition. Here, readers may see images 'as wizards see them', i.e., moving around. Twenty years after the initial publication of the first *Harry Potter* novel, which has had a huge impact on the concept of world building within children's literature and its cultural relevance, the Kindle in Motion edition might contribute to yet another revolution within children's literature, which is currently under way, popularising new ways of thinking about text-image relationships and the ways imaginary worlds are created in literary texts.

[43] Cf. the discussion of Kay's illustration of the Forbidden Forest in the article by Denise Burkhard in this volume.

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Part I:
The *Harry Potter* Series and its Sources

Laura Hartmann

The Black Dog and the Boggart: Fantastic Beasts in Joanne K. Rowling's *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* and Where to Find Them in Mythology and Traditional Folklore

I. Introduction

Since "[f]antasy is […] an eclectic genre, borrowing traits" from all sorts of sources, among them myths, legends, and folktales, and at times even "blend[s] seemingly incompatible elements within one and the same narrative", magical creatures from ancient mythology and from folktales can often be found side by side in the numerous alternative universes constructed in fantasy literature and constitute an integral part of the creation of fantasy worlds (Nikolajeva 331). Ursula Bergenthal argues that it is a characteristic of fantasy literature in general to pick up ancient traditions and that rekindling old myths and legends is in fact an essential feature of fantasy literature, which adds to the specific atmosphere created in this genre (cf. 338). In a similar way, Peggy Huey observes that many authors of fantasy novels make use of elements taken from myths, folktales, and legends in order "to add depth and texture to their creations" (65). Statements like these suggest that references to mythology, legends, and traditional folktales are very common in fantasy literature.

Thus, it is hardly surprising that Joanne K. Rowling draws on various elements from legends and folklore in order to establish her own fantastic universe in the *Harry Potter* novels;[1] "[l]egends from all corners of the world […] pervade her alternative universe" as Jay Mansfield (n.p.) puts it.[2] One could even argue that "J.K. Rowling's mythical world […] introduces today's readers to a world grounded in mythology" and traditional folklore; "[i]n doing so, she follows a tradition of other great British authors through the ages" (Huey 65), including, for instance, C.S. Lewis. *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* (2001), written by Rowling under the pseudonym Newt Scamander, and its recent film adaptation (2016) further reinforce the significance of the magical creatures of the *Harry Potter* universe for the latter's overall effect. Many of the beasts and creatures populating the magical world of the *Harry Potter* series can be found in the Forbidden Forest, which serves as the abode of spiders, centaurs, unicorns and other creatures, but even Hogwarts with its unknown corners, spots and passages provides enough space for magical creatures to hide in, ranging from a Basilisk to a phoenix.[3]

In an interview, Joanne K. Rowling commented on her decision to include creatures from many different contexts in the fictional world she has created as follows:

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1 Despite the fact that most critics assign the *Harry Potter* series to fantasy literature, Suman Gupta questions whether Rowling's novels can indeed be classified as fantasy novels in the narrow sense. Gupta tries to apply Todorov's definition of 'fantasy' to the series and concludes that the genre of 'the marvellous' would be a more suitable label for Rowling's creation (cf. Gupta, especially 55-66). Yet, for the purpose of this paper, I will follow the general consensus and consider the *Harry Potter* series as fantasy literature.

2 Cf. also Roger Highfield, who points out that "[t]here are many examples of […] creatures […] found in myth and legend that prowl around Harry's enchanted world" (206).

3 Cf. Mary Pharr, who claims that "Hogwarts itself is a magical locus for magical figures of every degree of sentience and significance" (58).

> I've taken *horrible* liberties with folklore and mythology, but I'm quite unashamed about that […] You know, we've been invaded by people, we've appropriated their gods, we've taken their mythical creatures, and we've soldered them all together to make […] one of the richest folklores in the world, because it's so varied. So I feel no compunction about borrowing from that freely, but adding a few things of my own (Rowling, "Living with *Harry Potter*" n.p.).

On the one hand, this statement shows that Rowling is well aware of her use of folkloristic elements and that she has used them very consciously in her novels. On the other hand, she also stresses that she does not just copy these elements but rather adapts them to her purposes. Following the traditions of the fantasy genre, she is often able to modify, broaden or even transform the beasts' significance, creating her very own versions of more or less well-known beings, which add to the distinctive atmosphere of her novels.

Due to the fact that readers "rarely have a moment to consider the wealth of real mythology, folklore, and history that shimmers just beneath the surface" (Kronzek/Kronzek, xiii), I seek to explore the origin of at least two of Rowling's fantastic beasts in traditional British folktales and how they have been integrated into Rowling's fantastic world. Owing to the abundance of fantastic beasts in the seven novels, I will only focus on two creatures appearing in the third volume, namely the Black Dog and the Boggart. I have chosen these two fantastic beasts as they, on the one hand, play a very important role in *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* (1999), and, on the other hand, they have not yet been subject to extensive research, being arguably among the comparatively little known creatures in folklore. In the following, I will take a closer look at the two creatures' origins in British folklore by focussing on their characteristics and symbolic meaning before analysing the creatures' depiction in Rowling's novel, their functions and potential reasons for departures from folklore.

II. The Black Dog/Grim

The Black Dog or Grim is a beast that is well-known in British folklore and beyond. David Colbert claims that "black dogs appear mysteriously throughout Europe and North America" (43). Katherine M. Briggs provides a more specific location for the Black Dog; she points out that the Black Dog is especially common in folktales from Scandinavia and Britain as well as from Brittany, France (cf. "Black Dogs" 3). The creature's link to Scandinavia and, specifically, to Old Norse mythology is also stressed by Ethel Rudkin, who claims that the Black Dog or Grim "occurs frequently in England and Ireland in places known to be Scandinavian Settlements [sic!]" (131). In fact, the name 'Grim' can be traced back either to Old Norse mythology, as Odin's epithet was *Grimr* (cf. Simpson/Roud, "Grim" 156), or to the "Anglo-Saxon noun *grima*, meaning 'goblin' or 'spectre'" (ibid.).Yet, Rudkin also takes into consideration that the Black Dog might have already been known in places on the British Isles before the arrival of Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian invaders "and that affinities in both Saxon and Danish beliefs strengthened [the Black Dog's] cult" (131) in these areas. Even though the origin of the Black Dog is not absolutely clear, one can at least conclude that references to this creature seem to be most common in those areas in Britain that have been influenced by the culture and folklore of (North and West) Germanic tribes.

In British folklore, there are two main types of Black Dogs: on the one hand, a being "which is nearly always known as the Black Dog" and is always "a normal dog" that "varies in size from normal […] to enormous", and on the other hand, a creature "which is generally known locally as the Barguest, Shuck, Black Shag, Trash, Skriker, Padfoot […] and other names" and is able to shape-shift (Brown, 176 ff.). Despite those differences, both kinds are similar in terms of their appearance; Black Dogs in British folklore "are almost invariably

large black shaggy ones with glowing eyes" (Simpson/Roud, "Black Dogs" 25). David Colbert adds that "[t]hey tend to be larger than usual dogs", "[t]hey may vanish in an instant, or slowly fade from view", and that "[t]heir eyes are almost always described as huge and 'blazing'"; moreover, they only rarely make a sound or bark (43). So, whether it happens to be a normal black dog or a shape-shifter, the beast is always described as huge and rather frightening, with spectral looks and behaviour and, in many cases, eerie eyes. The fact that not all Black Dogs in folklore have these gleaming eyes can be accounted for in connection with the creature's symbolic meaning.

The meaning of the Black Dog in British folktales turns out to be rather ambiguous. Ethel Rudkin, for example, mentions that in some counties "the Black Dog is looked on as a bad omen, ill luck, disaster or death attending its appearance", but that especially in Lincolnshire the Dog is not feared at all (130). This also explains why some Dogs are described as huge and furry, but lack the terrifying eyes: they are benevolent Dogs that were not supposed to instil fear and terror in people. According to Mansfield, the story of the Black Dog as "an omen of forthcoming doom, or indeed the harbinger itself has long been told in North Essex, Suffolk and Norfolk" (Mansfield n.p.). George Beahm explains that a "glimpse [of the Dog] means the victim will die in the short term, perhaps in a few months, but a good look means death is imminent" (10). This ambiguity of the Dog's appearances is stressed by almost all scholars; how the Black Dog is seen – whether it is an omen of death or a protector – depends very much on the region.

Black Dogs, in the guise of frightening beasts or guardians, can be found in many folktales, but also in novels and plays written in the last centuries.[4] The Black Dog as an omen of death appears in several British folktales, such as "The Collingbourne Kingston Black Dog", in which the "huge, gleaming green eyes" of the Dog that was said to bring "ill-luck to all who met him and death to the evil-doer" are described (Anon. 48). Similarly, in "The Boy and the Barguest", the child who encounters the Black Dog dies the following night (Anon. 10). In "Th' Skriker", young Adam sees "a figure which he at once knew […] to be the terrible Skriker, believed in those parts to be always a herald of death" (Anon. 19). The terrifying dog is "covered with a shaggy black hide" and has eyes that "blazed like fire"; eventually, Adam's eldest child drowns (ibid.). However, there are also tales, including "A Good Black Dog", in which the beast is not at all an omen of death, but a guardian and helper (cf. Anon. 13-14). All of these examples show that the idea of the Black Dog as something frightening, specifically

[4] Black Dogs that are described as monstrous and terrifying beasts can be found, for instance, in Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's *Faust: Der Tragödie erster Teil* (1808), Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1898), and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's *The Hound of the Baskervilles* (1901/02). For the idea of the Black Dog as a guise of the devil luring Faust into a diabolical deal in *Faust*, see Goethe, especially "Vor dem Tor" and "Studierzimmer". In *Dracula*, which is partially set in Whitby (Yorkshire), Stoker mentions a huge dog leaving the ship Demeter (cf. 78). As Yorkshire used to be a Scandinavian settlement, it seems possible that Stoker was inspired by local folktales of Black Dogs as an omen of death. In the novel, the dog is not only an omen of death but also a shape-shifter, as Dracula turns into a dog upon his arrival in England. For a detailed description of the black dog in *The Hound of the Baskervilles* see Doyle, especially chapter 14. The depiction of Doyle's hound is very close to that of the Black Dog in folktales. Yet the idea of the Black Dog cannot only be found in fiction, but was also drawn upon by the British politician Winston Churchill to refer to his manic depression (cf. Ghaemi n.p.). In his article on Winston Churchill, Ghaemi talks about the former British Prime Minister and his psychological problems, of which Churchill himself was well aware. He called his inner demon 'black dog' and thus used the term to describe the manic phases of his depression, which to him were very threatening. Churchill's black thoughts brought him, more than once, close to death, since he was afraid of doing something rash and suicidal.

an omen of death, a form of the devil haunting its victim, or, alternatively, a protector have been taken up again and again in British folktales.

The Black Dog is a very prominent feature in *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*, which actually combines the two contradictory meanings of the Black Dog which were sketched above. *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* is the first volume in which the protagonist's godfather Sirius Black, who at times turns into a black dog, appears. Harry encounters the black dog at the beginning at the novel when he is still in Little Whinging. At first, he can only discern "the hulking outline of something very big, with wide, gleaming eyes", which he does not know to be a dog yet, but which he just calls "a big black thing" (*Prisoner* 30-31). He compares it to a dog, though, realising that it is much more "massive" (ibid. 31) than any ordinary animal. Similar references to the dog's size and its looks occur throughout the novel, for instance when Harry recognises the creature on the frontispiece of a book which portrays "a black dog large as a bear, with gleaming eyes" (ibid. 45). The Grim seems to haunt and frighten Harry and materialises from time to time throughout the novel. Harry sees it while playing Quidditch when he suddenly spots "the silhouette of an enormous shaggy black dog, clearly imprinted against the sky" or when he looks out of the window of his dormitory and notices "a gigantic, shaggy black dog" (ibid. 133, 224). At one point, the dog's "gigantic paws", its enormous size, its pale eyes, its jet-black fur and its "inch-long teeth" are mentioned (ibid. 245). The depiction of the Black Dog as a malevolent creature suggests that Rowling's beast closely resembles its counterpart from folklore. Moreover, the black dog in *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* combines the two types of Black Dogs coexisting in British folktales, i.e., the animal and the shape-shifter. Rowling made use of competing images of the creature and mixed them to create her own version of the Black Dog: the initially frightening beast that turns out to be an Animagus and a protector rather than an omen of death. The link with folklore is stressed by the fact that Sirius Black/the black dog even bears the nickname 'Padfoot', which is often used to designate the shape-shifter in traditional tales.

As in many British folktales, the Black Dog in *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* is considered to be an omen of death by many of the characters. This belief is in particular expressed by Professor Trelawney, who is shocked when she recognises the Grim in Harry's tea leaves (cf. ibid. 82-83). She explains to her students that the Grim is "'[t]he giant, spectral dog that haunts churchyards! […] it is an omen – the worst omen – of *death*!'" (ibid. 83, original emphasis). At a later point in the novel, Trelawney sees the threatening omen once again in Harry's crystal ball and maintains that "'[i]t is here, plainer than ever before […], stalking towards you, growing ever closer […] the Gr-'" (ibid. 220). However, eccentric Professor Trelawney is not the only one who believes in the Black Dog; Ron likewise seems to be convinced that the Grim is a herald of death and thus he is shocked when Harry tells him that he has seen a huge black dog (cf. ibid. 85). Ron even tells his friend that his "'Uncle Bilius saw one and […] died twenty-four hours later!'" (ibid.). Hermione, in contrast, is convinced that people just "'die of fright'" when they encounter the Grim (ibid.); in her more rational opinion, "'[t]he Grim's not an omen, it's the cause of death'" (ibid.). Even though Harry tries to dismiss Trelawney's premonitions and warnings, he starts believing in the stories told about the Black Dog because he realises that his encounters with the Grim have nearly been fatal twice (cf. ibid. 137). Ultimately, however, the black dog turns out to be Sirius Black, Harry's godfather – a protector.

In other words, Rowling uses both variants of the Black Dog and presents the Black Dog as a harbinger of death who seems to be haunting Harry at the beginning of the novel, only to undermine this idea later in the novel, when the threatening dog turns out to have been a guardian all along. Hence, what seems to be threatening and dangerous at first transforms into

something helpful and benevolent. Bergenthal convincingly argues that there is a logical explanation (Sirius Black as Animagus) for the supposedly threatening omen which is in accordance with the rules that Rowling set up for her universe (cf. 353). In combining both symbolic meanings of the Black Dog, the novel may potentially achieve several goals. Firstly, readers may realise that appearances may be deceptive and that one should not take for granted what others believe, since other people's beliefs may be distorted and are invariably subjective, being influenced by a person's cultural background and individual upbringing (as is the case with Ron or Professor Trelawney).[5] Katherine M. Grimes picks up this idea and explains that "for a time, the children believe him [Black] to be evil, as their community has told them to believe this" (94). Thus, secondly, the references to the Black Dog also comment on different ways in which members of the wizarding community deal with legends, myths and superstition. Professor Trelawney and Ron represent those wizards and witches who are familiar with legends and beliefs, as they appear to be deeply rooted in their culture. On the contrary, Hermione, whose parents are Muggles, has maybe not grown up with the very same myths. Furthermore, she is a very rational person and does not at all believe in what Professor Trelawney tells her students. Thus, Rowling emphasises that folklore and superstition are closely related to one's cultural background and upbringing as well as to one's own attitude towards the supernatural and mythical.

Another possibility of interpreting the black dog in the novel is to link Sirius' transformations to questions of identity and individuality. Eric Saidel, for instance, points out that Rowling repeatedly addresses questions of identity, i.e., the problem of "what makes [you] who [you] are" or questions concerning "the relationship between one's mind and one's body" (23).[6] The definition of one's identity is certainly one of the fundamental issues in everyone's life, and particularly for children and adolescents reaching puberty, in other words, the primary target group of *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*. Thus, the interpretation of the Animagus Sirius Black in terms of his identity is definitely worth taking into consideration. As the discussion above has shown, the Black Dog, which is well-known from folklore, can be read in a number of different ways in Rowling's novel and turns into a figure that is extremely versatile.

III. The Boggart

Similar to the Black Dog, the Boggart is a recurring creature in British folklore. David Colbert explains that Boggarts "are the same creatures known as 'bogeys' or 'bogeymen' in the United States, 'bogle' in Scotland, and 'Boggelmann' or 'Butzemann' in Germany" (47).[7] In other words, the idea of the Boggart is not restricted to Britain. According to the *Dictionary of English Folklore*, the word "'boggart' was a general term for any supernatural being which frightened people" (Simpson/Roud, "Boggart" 29). Colbert further stresses that Boggarts are "said to be mistreated spirits that have become malevolent" (47), though they "usually aren't

[5] This combination of superstition and rational explanation arguably bears certain similarities with the use of the black dog/hound in Doyle's detective story *The Hound of the Baskervilles*.

[6] In his essay, Saidel discusses the relationship between Sirius Black's mind and body in much detail. For his interpretation and the application of René Descartes's mind-body dichotomy to Black see Saidel, especially 24-25.

[7] Especially the bogeyman or boogieman may be well-known to children (not only in the United States), as the saying "*Be good, or the bogeyman will get you!*" (Kronzek/Kronzek 25, original emphasis) suggests.

very harmful", preferring "to come out at night" to be even more frightening (ibid.).[8] A Boggart can either "haunt any pit or well or lonely lane" or live indoors and behave like a poltergeist (cf. Simpson/Roud, "Boggart" 29). If a Boggart lives indoors, supposedly "the only way to get rid of [it] is to move", which is, however, quite difficult since a Boggart often "move[s] with a household it finds particularly entertaining", as the family's increasing frustration and annoyance drive the evil spirit to even more mischief (Colbert 47-48). A further characteristic of Boggarts in folklore is that they "have the power of shape-shifting", which implies that no one knows what they really look like (Briggs, "Bogies" 23). Consequently, a Boggart might "materialize as a human, an animal, a skeleton, or even a *demon*" (Kronzek/Kronzek 24, original emphasis). These characteristics explain why Boggarts can sometimes be rather frightening, but, first and foremost, they are annoying and difficult to capture.

There are several British folktales that exemplify the characteristics of Boggarts mentioned so far. For instance, in "The Boggart", which is a tale about a farmer and his family from Yorkshire, the spirit is restricted to the domestic sphere and attached to a particular family (cf. Anon. 24-25). The readers are told that the spirit "caused a good deal of annoyance", so that the farmer decides to move (ibid.). Eventually, he realises that the Boggart will follow the family wherever they go, which means they can just as well stay where they are (cf. ibid. 25). This tale vividly illustrates how much annoyance this spirit is able to cause, and it stresses the creature's close connection to a particular family. In addition, "the Boggart never let himself be seen" in this tale, remaining elusive and invisible for its 'host' (ibid.). "The Boggart in Top Attic", which is set in Lancashire, also focuses on a quite annoying Boggart that keeps making noise and frightens the people of the house (cf. Anon. 176-77). Shape-shifting Boggarts occur in stories such as "The Hedley Kow" or "The Picktree Brag" (Briggs, "Bogies" 23). All in all, Boggarts loom large in tales from the British Isles, and it seems to be in particular the elusive nature of this creature that has fascinated people, including, apparently, J.K. Rowling.

In *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* the Boggart plays an important role. The first thing readers as well as the pupils at Hogwarts learn about Boggarts is that they "'like dark, enclosed spaces'" (*Prisoner* 101). Professor Lupin explains that "'[w]ardrobes, the gap beneath beds, the cupboards under sinks, […] a grandfather clock'" and similar locations are favourite hiding places of Boggarts (ibid.). The Boggart Lupin is going to present to his students, for instance, lives in an old wardrobe, though he just "'moved in yesterday afternoon'" (ibid.). During the lesson, Hermione explains that the Boggart is "'a shape-shifter'" which "'can take the shape of whatever it thinks will frighten us most'", and Lupin remarks that the Boggart "'has not yet assumed a form'" as long as it is still unseen, for the simple reason that the spirit "'does not yet know what will frighten the person'" it will meet the most (ibid.). Thus, even experts and scientists in Rowling's magical world do not have a clue "'what a Boggart looks like when he is alone'" (ibid.).[9] However, despite these similarities

[8] Some scholars emphasise that there are also certain types of Boggarts that are friendly and "household helpers" (Kronzek/Kronzek 24; cf. Beahm 13). Sometimes this distinction is indicated by different terms, but there is no consensus regarding terminology. Kronzek and Kronzek refer to the evil spirit as 'boggart' and to the friendly counterpart as 'brownie' (cf. 24), whereas Beahm calls the malevolent Boggart of Yorkshire 'brownie' and the helpful fairy 'boggart' (cf. 13). Moreover, household Boggarts resemble Rowling's house-elves as they "are easily offended" and can be disposed of by being given clothes (ibid.). For the purpose of this paper, however, I stick to the definition of the Boggart as an evil and mischievous creature that is very difficult to get rid of.

[9] Mad-Eye Moody may be an exception to this rule, as he is able to find a Boggart hiding in an old writing desk at 12 Grimmauld Place (cf. *Phoenix* 154), which sparked animated discussions among scholars and fans. The fact that he is able to see the Boggart can be accounted for in different ways: ei-

between the traditional Boggart as it is presented in folktales and Rowling's version, the Boggart in *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* seems to differ at least to some degree from the various versions that can be found in British folklore – or at least she seems to draw the reader's attention much more to the aspect of shape-shifting, which is the Boggart's main feature in the *Harry Potter* series. In British folktales, shape-shifting is significantly less prominent; at best, it is a minor facet of traditional Boggart lore: even though Boggarts frighten people in folktales, they primarily do so by making strange noises or by annoying and pestering their victims and not by assuming the shape of what the victim fears the most. Since legends and folktales are often concerned with people's fears and anxieties or with things they could not explain, it may be concluded that Boggarts in these stories also try to exploit their victim's weak point, yet they do so in a different way. Thus, it can be said that in the novel as well as in folktales, the Boggart is some sort of spirit that tries to frighten people by assuming different shapes depending on the fears of the person facing them.

One of the major differences between the Boggart in Rowling's novel and its counterparts in traditional folktales is that it is definitely possible to get rid of a Boggart in Rowling's magical world. One may even assume that it is not *that* difficult to do so, since Hogwarts students are confronted with a Boggart in their third year. Professor Lupin teaches his students that it is advisable not to face a Boggart alone, since groups bewilder and distract the creature very much so that it does not know on which of its opponents it should concentrate (cf. ibid. 101). Lupin tells his pupils that he "'once saw a Boggart make that very mistake – tried to frighten two people at once and turned himself into half a slug'", thereby losing all its horror (ibid.). He also explains that "'the thing that really finishes a Boggart is *laughter*'" and consequently advises his students to "'force it to assume a shape that [they] find amusing'" by using the spell 'riddikulus' (ibid. 101-02, original emphasis). Especially with regard to this last characteristic, Rowling's Boggart differs from the eponymous spirit occurring in British folktales. By highlighting the transformative power of laughter, Rowling stresses that it is important to face one's fears, whereas people in folktales are often shown to try running away from the Boggart, and maybe also from their fears. Admittedly, even the folktales imply that running away is not the right way of dealing with fear, as the Boggart, which embodies or causes fear, will always stay with its victims and follow them wherever they go. On top of that, the novel suggests that it is much easier to defeat one's fears together with friends than on one's own. Inner strength, friends and the courage to face one's fears can help to overcome them eventually.

IV. Conclusion

In the *Harry Potter* series in general and in *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* in particular Rowling introduces the reader to a wide range of different fantastic creatures, many of which have been borrowed from folktales, myths and legends. More often than not, Rowling has picked up features that can be traced back to older narratives, while transforming the fantastic beasts to a certain extent. The two creatures analysed in this paper show that British folklore has served as an inspiration for her novels, since both the Black Dog and the Boggart are based on beings that can be found in numerous British folktales. In order to create an

ther Moody sees through the desk by means of his magical eye and faces what he fears the most, or he really is able to see Boggarts in their natural shape because of his magical eye. However, the first possibility implies that the Boggart knows that it is watched by Moody's magical eye and transforms into his worst fear even though it is not directly confronted with Moody; whereas the second possibility implies that the Boggart in the desk has not yet had the chance to change its shape as it has not faced Moody directly.

alternative world that is fantastic and still somehow rings true for the reader, Rowling makes use of elements that are fantastic or supernatural, but that are not completely new or foreign to the reader. In this way, she arguably connects the real world with her fantastic universe, making the real world a bit more fantastic and the fantastic world a bit more real.

As the discussion above has shown, Rowling borrowed the Boggart and the Black Dog and many of their features from folktales; yet she made a number of significant changes regarding the creatures' appearance, behaviour or symbolic meaning, which gives rise to complex interpretations of these two beings. After having taken a closer look at the two examples, one can conclude that Rowling, by and large, stuck to the original representations, especially with regard to the beasts' appearance. It is however obvious that she combined different traditional images and thereby created her own versions of these beings. A case in point is the interpretation of Sirius Black/the black dog as an omen of death bringing fear and destruction and as a guardian trying to help and protect Harry. Similarly, the Boggart is described in many different ways in folktales, some of which have been picked up in *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*, while the strong emphasis on the Boggart as a manifestation of fear is largely Rowling's addition to Boggart lore. With regard to the creatures' symbolic meaning, she tends to use the traditional beasts to address topics that are relevant today. As has been shown above, Rowling employs the Black Dog and the Boggart to discuss questions regarding subjective opinions, choice, identity and fear.

Last but not least, the fantastic beasts are one of the ingredients that have appealed to young readers, who are probably fascinated by the appearance of the beasts and their magical powers, but may also learn in an entertaining way how to deal with difficult situations and personal problems by reading about the characters' reactions to the creatures. By contrast, adolescent or adult readers, who are likely to have more background knowledge, may be familiar with the traditions that have shaped the fantastic beasts and thus may be more aware of the subliminal messages implied by the creatures' symbolic meanings and their departures from the older (folklore) versions. It is well-known that readers of every age enjoy reading Rowling's books and may also learn from them. The author's use of fantastic beasts certainly contributes to this overall effect in many respects.

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Franziska Becker

J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter*: A Revival of the Arthurian Legend?

I. The ever-present Arthurian legend

There are some literary figures who have undergone a process of 'culturization', i.e., they appear to have developed 'a life of their own', outside the framework of their original texts, having become a part of the cultural memory.[1] The legendary King Arthur and his famous mentor Merlin are perfect examples of this kind of literary figure. In the *Historia Regum Britanniae* (*History of the Kings of Britain*) from the 12th century, Geoffrey of Monmouth created one of the earliest surviving accounts of King Arthur, which seems to have provided the template for all successive stories about Arthur's life (cf. Fulton 44). Geoffrey of Monmouth also offers an account of the young Merlin, who eventually becomes Arthur's mentor and a wise man and who – similar to King Arthur – is still a prominent figure in today's literature and popular culture.[2] On the basis of Geoffrey's famous works a large number of stories featuring Arthur, Merlin and various Knights of the Round Table have been written from the Middle Ages up until the 21st century, including Thomas Malory's *Le Morte d'Arthur* (1485), the TV series *Merlin* (2008-12) as well as, most recently, the movie *King Arthur – Legend of the Sword* (2017). Apparently, every age drew upon the Arthurian myth in order to express their own ideas, ideals and fears – mirroring the respective *zeitgeist* (cf. Furch 8). Nevertheless, "the essential outlines of the biography were put in place by Geoffrey and have remained up until the present day largely as he set them out" (Fulton 44).

In her *Harry Potter* series, J.K. Rowling seems to have created yet another version of the Arthurian legend with her magical world full of mysterious beasts, cunning enemies and adventurous quests, which is reminiscent of the world of King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table. Rowling even made use of several names that can be traced back to the Arthurian legend, thus drawing the reader's attention to possible parallels. Dumbledore's middle name is Percival, which echoes the name of the knight searching for the Holy Grail in Chrétien's medieval romance, and the name Ginevra (Ginny) Weasley could be seen as an allusion to King Arthur's wife Guinevere. Arthur Weasley's namesake is of course the famous king himself, and Ron's father indeed shares some character traits with the legendary ruler. Though Arthur Weasley is not presented as a particularly authoritative character, he does share the traits of being courageous and generous as well as an inherent goodness with Geoffrey of Monmouth's Arthur (cf. Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History* 212).

Similarities like the ones just mentioned provide a starting point for examining the parallels between the *Harry Potter* series and the Arthurian legend. What are the elements shared by the storylines, and to what extent does Rowling 'resurrect' some of the famous characters of the Arthurian legend in her works? In the following, I will argue that Albus Dumbledore could be read as a version of the wizard Merlin, while Harry Potter might be the equivalent of

[1] Cf. Margolin (453): "[…] it [the literary character] can even undergo a process of culturization, whereby it becomes part and parcel of the general cultural discourse of a society".

[2] Geoffrey of Monmouth lived in England in the 12th century and was bishop of St. Asaph as well as an author of historical chronicles. His most famous works are *The History of the Kings of Britain* (*Historia Regum Britanniae*), *The Life of Merlin* (*Vita Merlini*) and *Merlin, the Prophet* (*Prophetiae Merlini*).

young King Arthur, who seems to stumble from one quest into another. Of the many medieval versions of the Arthurian legend, Geoffrey's *Historia Regum Britanniae* will serve as the main source for the comparative analysis. Yet some further texts – such as Robert de Boron's *Suite de Merlin*, Malory's *Le Morte d'Arthur* and Chrétien de Troyes' works, including *Le Conte du Graal*, – will be drawn upon when this seems appropriate.

II. Merlin and Dumbledore: the wizard and the wise man

A comparison between King Arthur's adviser Merlin and the rather unorthodox but undeniably wise headmaster Albus Dumbledore reveals that these two characters bear a remarkable resemblance to each other, although they are literary figures from very different centuries. Albus Dumbledore, headmaster of Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry, arguably embodies the prototypical wizard in terms of his appearance (cf. Bürvenich 88):

> He was tall, thin and very old, judging by the silver of his hair and beard, which were both long enough to tuck into his belt. He was wearing long robes […]. His blue eyes were light, bright and sparkling behind half-moon spectacles and his nose was very long and crooked, as though it had been broken at least twice (*Stone* 12).

In Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Vita Merlini*, Merlin is also described as an old man, who is almost two hundred years old (cf. Jarman 122), with a rather gaunt physique and silvery hair. This appearance has been seen as being indicative of his special status: "Merlin's hair 'like hoar-frost' reflects the white hair of the perfect anchorite and [therefore] he is blessed" (Frykenberg 1794). Moreover, both Dumbledore and Merlin are endowed with exceptional magical powers (cf. Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History* 206-07). In Merlin's case, these have often been associated with the Celtic tradition: "some scholars have argued that Merlin is a reflection of the ancient druids, the priest-magicians who figured strongly in pre-Christian Celtic religion" (Malcor 4).[3]

In both the *Prophetiae Merlini* and the *Vita Merlini* Merlin is depicted as a prophet using animal images, for instance the image of a boar and the images of a lion and a sea-wolf, to refer to important kings (cf. Geoffrey of Monmouth, *Life* 83). In addition, Geoffrey of Monmouth made his 'Merlinus Silvester' a master of beasts since he has a wolf companion, rides on a stag and commands a herd of deer. To a certain extent, Dumbledore may also be seen as a 'master of beasts' because he commands a loyal animal companion, a phoenix called Fawkes. In *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix* (2003), the fascinating and rare creature (cf. *Chamber* 225) saves Dumbledore from certain death by shielding him from a spell (*Phoenix* 719), which highlights his utter loyalty to Dumbledore. Although Dumbledore, unlike Merlin, is not referred to as a prophet, he is repeatedly presented as knowing significantly more than he admits to. He seems to know about everything that will happen in the near future (cf. Macor 95), which more than once allows him to be in the right place at the right time or to send at least some form of help. In *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* (1998), for instance, Dumbledore sends his phoenix Fawkes to support Harry (cf. *Chamber* 338-39, 356).

The most obvious connection between Merlin and Dumbledore is the fact that both appear as mentors, advisers and father figures to two young men whose fate it is to save their respective worlds. In *Le Morte d'Arthur*, the influential medieval writer Thomas Malory "'portrays Merlin in two important offices: he is the agent through whom God's will and 'grace' are

[3] For a discussion of parallels between the *Harry Potter* series and Celtic Druids, cf. the article by Jule Lenzen in this volume.

expressed, and he is an omniscient strategist who leads Arthur to victory over the rebel kings'" (Wright quoted in Boyle 53). Merlin's gifts turn him into a virtually perfect adviser (cf. ibid. 54). According to Radalescu, "'Merlin's political and strategic advice is the most precious asset for Arthur'" (Radalescu quoted in Boyle 55). He serves as a diplomat, counsellor, strategist, and uses the psychology of love and honour to motivate others (cf. Goodrich 12). All of these attributes and abilities can also be found in the headmaster of Hogwarts. He guides, teaches and protects Harry from evil, but, unlike Merlin, he also makes mistakes (cf. *Phoenix* 727-28). In his role as wise mentor, he gives advice and supports Harry, for example when he recommends not killing Peter Pettigrew since "'the time may come when you will be very glad you saved Pettigrew's life'" (*Prisoner* 459; cf. *Hallows* 380-81). In *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince* (2005), Dumbledore informs Harry about events in Lord Voldemort's past that he feels are of immense importance in order to understand why Tom Riddle has become the person he is now. He tells him about Tom's childhood as an orphan, his time at Hogwarts, his pursuit of the Dark Arts and especially his obsession with the idea of eternal life (cf. *Prince* 79, 186-87, 203-04). However, just like the all-powerful Merlin of the Vulgate *Merlin*, who would eventually become paternalistic and oppressive, reducing the heroes to a state of perpetual childhood (cf. Thompson, "Enchanter" 259),[4] needs to be gradually reduced, so does the greatest and most powerful wizard of Rowling's series (cf. *Prince* 568). By leaving Harry and his friends to deal with Lord Voldemort and his followers, Dumbledore encourages the heroes to reach maturity – similar to Arthur and his knights who eventually have to manage without Merlin's guidance (cf. Thompson, "Enchanter" 259; Rider 7).

As a prophet and magician, Merlin tends to be cast in the non-combatant role of Arthur's adviser in medieval literature. This means that Merlin typically provides advice on what the King should do on the battlefield as well, but does not take part in the actual battle himself (cf. Malcor 4). Unlike his medieval predecessor, Dumbledore is not merely an inexhaustible source of advice, but he also takes part in combat from time to time, as the following passage illustrates:

> Dumbledore flicked his own wand: the force of the spell that emanated from it was such that Harry, though shielded by his golden guard, felt his hair stand on end as it passed and this time Voldemort was forced to conjure a shining silver shield out of thin air to deflect it. […] 'We both know that there are other ways of destroying a man, Tom,' Dumbledore said calmly, continuing to walk towards Voldemort as though he had not a fear in the world (*Phoenix* 718).

In this scene, Dumbledore confronts Voldemort, but in the course of the series there are actually more situations in which the mentor is not present when Harry has to face his archenemy; due to Dumbledore's death, this is of course also true for the decisive Battle of Hogwarts. Still, in this final epic confrontation with evil, Dumbledore appears once more in his role as mentor, at least in Harry's vision.

Both Merlin and Dumbledore know how and when death will be coming to them. According to Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Vita Merlini*, Merlin foresaw his own death (l. 1521-24), whereas Dumbledore, after having been cursed by Marvolo Gaunt's ring, plans being killed by Snape for the greater good. This will also spare him further pain, since he has only one year left to live (cf. *Hallows* 546-48, 556). There are interpretations of the figure of Merlin which suggest that the magician – similar to the 'once and future king' Arthur – may still be alive. According to some sources, such as Robert de Boron's *Suite de Merlin* and Geoffrey of

[4] For a discussion of the adverse impact of excessive, if well-intentioned, interference in medieval romance, see Thompson's article "The Perils of Good Advice: The Effect of the Wise Counsellor upon the Conduct of Gawain".

Monmouth's *Prophetiae Merlini*, Merlin becomes the victim of a sorceress who casts a spell on him and by this means imprisons him in a magical tomb or confines him in the forest of Brocéliande. The hope that the mentor is not gone for good echoes in *Harry Potter* when the protagonist and his friends at first refuse to believe that Dumbledore is really dead and assume that he merely staged his death to execute a plan, which ultimately will lead to Lord Voldemort's downfall (cf. ibid. 316-17; Granger 137). Yet, in the end Harry and his friends simply have to accept that their esteemed mentor, who was considered to be the greatest and most powerful wizard in the world, is indeed dead (cf. Bürvenich 91).

In addition to the parallels mentioned so far, some of the more ambivalent facets of Dumbledore are also reminiscent of Merlin: both are associated with irrational or even insane behaviour that is linked to the death of a sibling (Dumbledore) or siblings (Merlin). According to the *Vita Merlini*, Merlin retreats into the wilderness after having witnessed the death of his three beloved brothers; he is seized with a fit of madness (cf. Geoffrey of Monmouth, *Life* 32-39, 66-75). Dumbledore, who at one point was under the delusion that he could conquer death and in that way resurrect his parents, neglected his younger, weak and ill sister, which made him complicit in her death (cf. Macor 102). Fortunately, both Merlin and Dumbledore overcome their delusions, albeit with very different outcomes. Merlin ceases being a prophet (cf. Geoffrey of Monmouth, *Life* 135), whereas Dumbledore becomes the generous, considerate and caring headmaster. As Macor points out, "remorse, shame and feelings of guilt induce the adoption of a completely new course of action, which is exactly the opposite of the previous one" (103)[5].

Merlin and Dumbledore also share the experience of having an absent father with a bad reputation. According to the *Historia Regum Britanniae*, Merlin's father was an incubus: "he was received by a devil or semi-demon in the shape of a man, of whom the child has inherited his prophetic powers" (Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History* 168; cf. Rider 3; Goodrich 8). Dumbledore's father, by contrast, was a loving and caring man, but he went after the Muggle boys who had tortured his innocent little daughter and had caused her to become insane. As a result, he was sentenced to spend the rest of his life in Azkaban and was stigmatised in the wizarding community as a 'Muggle-murderer' (cf. *Hallows* 455, 573).

III. Chivalry and bravery: King Arthur and Harry Potter

Both Harry and Arthur are presented as heroic and chivalrous leaders who, up to a certain point, rely on their counsellors. The young king Arthur of Malory's *Morte d'Arthur*, for example, appears to follow the *mirror for princes*, which says that "a king should be ruled by counsel, and Arthur follows this trope closely, allowing himself to be ruled by counsel in the form of the perfect counsellor: Merlin" (Boyle 52). At the beginning of his reign, Arthur has no source of reliable counsel except for Merlin's advice. In contrast to Harry, the young king does not have to choose a course of action from among a number of options presented to him; therefore he has no "opportunity to practice one of the most important duties of a king: choosing which advice to accept" (ibid. 55). Some scholars even argue that stripping Arthur of his power to choose freely and to make decisions on his own amounts to a manifestation of Merlin ruling the king (cf. ibid. 59). Harry, in contrast, does not only rely on Dumbledore as a valuable counsellor but also on his godfather Sirius Black, various members of the Order of the Phoenix and perhaps most of all on his best friends Ron and Hermione, who help him solve every mystery and problem that arises during their quests (cf. Bürvenich 78; Granger

[5] My translation. The German original reads: "Reue, Schuldgefühle und Scham [bewirken], dass ein ganz neuer Weg eingeschlagen wird, der ausgerechnet das Gegenteil des früheren ist" (Macor 103).

119, 128). Nonetheless, Dumbledore's counsel remains particularly important, and in the course of the series it is revealed that the mentor has kept important information regarding the prophecy under tight wraps:

> 'It is time,' he [Dumbledore] said, 'for me to tell you what I should have told you five years ago, Harry. […] I am going to tell you everything.' […] 'Voldemort tried to kill you when you were a child because of a prophecy made shortly before your birth. He knew the prophecy had been made, though he did not know its full contents' (*Phoenix* 735-40).

One could presumably argue that by keeping information regarding Harry's past, his parents and their close friends to himself, Dumbledore is ruling Harry in the same way Merlin has been held to rule Arthur in Malory's *Morte d'Arthur*. However, when looking closely at the relationship between Harry and his mentor, it resembles that of a father being concerned about the well-being of his son rather than that of a schemer seeking to manipulate and rule Harry (cf. ibid. 738). The importance of Dumbledore and Merlin as mentors is stressed when both Harry and Arthur eventually need to make their own decisions and choices. In Malory's *Morte d'Arthur*, once "Merlin is no longer available as his counsellor, Arthur cannot recognize prudent advice" (Boyle 62), since he has never learned to compare differing opinions offered by counsellors and select an appropriate course of action based on divergent pieces of advice (cf. ibid.). Harry is similarly at a loss after Dumbledore's death when he sorely misses the help of his most trusted mentor (cf. Macor 97):

> There were other Horcruxes out there somewhere, but he did not have the faintest idea where they could be. He did not even know what all of them were. Meanwhile, he was at a loss to know how to destroy the only one that they had found, the Horcrux that currently lay against the bare flesh of his chest (*Hallows* 228-29).

When at the end of the *Harry Potter* series and the Arthurian legends, the respective hero has to face his archenemy, this has to be accomplished without the help of a mentor: King Arthur has to face Mordred and Harry has to face Lord Voldemort. The last battle in *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* (2007) is similar to Arthur's final combat, in which he ultimately kills his enemy (cf. Kennedy, "Introduction" xiii). Although Harry seems to die during his battle with the Dark Lord, which is reminiscent of Arthur's fatal wound, he returns from the dead after a short period of time (and an encounter with his mentor):

> 'Then … I'm dead too?' 'Ah,' said Dumbledore, smiling still more broadly. 'That is the question, isn't it? On the whole, dear boy, I think not.' […] 'But I should have died – I didn't defend myself! I meant to let him kill me!' 'And that,' said Dumbledore, 'will, I think, have made all the difference.' […] And both of them had fallen briefly unconscious and both of them had now returned… (*Hallows* 567, 581).

Harry's return from the dead echoes the well-known prophecy that King Arthur will one day return from the Isle of Avalon when his people are in dire need of the 'now and future king' (cf. Kennedy, "Introduction" xiii).

Harry Potter and King Arthur have more in common than having wise mentors endowed with the gift of magic. In his depiction of King Arthur's character traits and deeds, Geoffrey of Monmouth presents "an ideal of beauty[;] a strong and firm moral ethos; and a strong example of courage, moral integrity and human worth" (Zimmer Bradley quoted in Furch 108). Similarly, Harry Potter is presented as an individual with strong moral principles who is a paradigm of courage and a champion of the good cause. In medieval literature, King Arthur is typically presented as the ideal courtly king who displays a whole range of virtues, such as goodness, fortitude, greatness of heart, wisdom, piousness, nobility and, above all, generosity

as well as determination, valour, courage and combat skills (cf. Schuh 73). In a similar vein, Harry is the representative of what is good and relies on his valour, determination and chivalry (cf. Bürvenich 67, 115).

Moreover, both Harry and King Arthur are part of prophecies which turn out to determine their lives. Merlin predicts the birth and destiny of the 'now and future king' and even uses "magic to bring about Arthur's conception" (Rider 2; cf. Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History* 206-07). In *Harry Potter*, it is not Dumbledore who utters the prophecy that will shape the protagonist's life but Divination teacher Sybil Trelawney (cf. *Phoenix* 741). According to her prediction, there will be one boy who will eventually cause Lord Voldemort's downfall:

> *'The one with the power to vanquish the Dark Lord approaches …born to those who have thrice defied him, born as the seventh month dies…and the Dark Lord will mark him as his equal, but he will have power the Dark Lord knows not … and either must die at the hand of the other for neither can live while the other survives …'* (ibid. 741, original emphasis).

Moreover, Arthur is said to have acquired the talent of talking with all animals under the guidance of Merlin, whereas Harry has been able to talk with snakes ever since the Dark Lord tried to kill him and placed a piece of his soul in the boy (cf. Bürvenich 146; Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History* 237).

Furthermore, both protagonists share the ability to handle a magical sword that will obey only the selected. In Arthur's case it is the well-known sword Excalibur, the legendary 'Sword in the Stone', which, for instance according to Robert de Boron's *Histoire de Merlin*, can only be drawn by the Pendragon king (cf. Kennedy, "Introduction" xiii; Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History* 217). The reader of the *Harry Potter* series comes across the Sword of Gryffindor several times, a weapon that, "'[a]ccording to reliable historical sources, […] may present itself to any worthy Gryffindor'" (*Hallows* 109), as Scrimgeour puts it when reading Dumbledore's last will. While Arthur draws Excalibur from a stone, Harry draws his sword out of the Sorting Hat, which has been brought to him by Fawkes, who serves as Dumbledore's messenger in the following scene:

> The Basilisk had swept the Sorting Hat into Harry's arms. Harry seized it. It was all he had left, his only chance. He rammed it onto his head and threw himself flat onto the floor as the Basilisk's tail swung over him again. '*Help me …help me*…' Harry thought, his eyes screwed tight under the Hat. '*Please help me!*' There was no answering voice. Instead, the Hat contracted, as though an invisible hand was squeezing it very tightly. Something very hard and heavy thudded onto the top of Harry's head, almost knocking him out. Stars winking in front of his eyes, he grabbed the top of the Hat to pull it off and felt something long and hard beneath it. A gleaming silver sword had appeared inside the Hat, its handle glittering with rubies the size of eggs (*Chamber* 343, original emphasis).

Later, Harry learns that he was able to retrieve the famous sword from the Sorting Hat because he is a wizard with a noble heart (cf. Bürvenich 146).

Apart from Harry, only two other characters prove to be worthy of the Sword of Gryffindor in the course of the series: Ron Weasley and Neville Longbottom. Ron is the one who saves Harry from drowning in an icy pool while Harry is trying to retrieve the Sword of Gryffindor from the water.[6] By means of this action, Ron displays the values associated with Gryffindor, which are for instance repeatedly referred to in the song of the Sorting Hat: "'*You might belong in Gryffindor, / Where dwell the brave at heart, / Their daring, nerve and chiv-*

[6] Note that John Boorman's well-known movie *Excalibur* (1981), which was very much influenced by Malory's *Morte d'Arthur*, features a famous scene of the sword being retrieved from a lake. Thus, Rowling might have drawn upon imagery that is associated with the legendary sword.

alry / Set Gryffindors apart'" (*Stone* 88, original emphasis). As a result, Ron is eventually rewarded with the sword:

> 'Because you got the sword out of the pool. I think it's supposed to be you.' He was not being kind or generous. As certainly as he had known that the doe was benign, he knew Ron had to be the one to wield the sword. Dumbledore had at least taught Harry something about certain kinds of magic, of the incalculable power of certain acts (*Hallows* 304).

Similar to Ron, Neville shows bravery when confronted with the enemy and is therefore also chosen by Godric Gryffindor's heirloom, which he immediately uses to destroy the last of Lord Voldemort's Horcruxes:

> he drew from its depths something silver, with a glittering, rubied handle – […] With a single stroke, Neville sliced off the great snake's head, which spun high into the air, gleaming in the light flooding from the Entrance Hall, and Voldemort's mouth was open in a scream of fury that nobody could hear, and the snake's body thudded to the ground at his feet (ibid. 587).

The abovementioned scenes showing Ron and Neville wielding the Sword of Gryffindor are also striking in yet another respect, namely in so far as the reader's attention shifts at least momentarily from the hero Harry, who usually is the one accomplishing the task at hand, to another character. A similar shift can be found in Chrétien de Troyes' Arthurian romances, where the king's role "is distinctly more passive: he presides over the Round Table, the focal point of chivalry, and he is the guardian of the traditions and customs of Logres; but his knights are the ones who take up the adventures" (Kennedy, "King Arthur" 71). Although the Sword of Gryffindor, which is reminiscent of Excalibur, is referred to repeatedly throughout the series, one could argue that it is less prominent than some other artefacts, which are also endowed with special properties. Moreover, the true weapon of the wizard is of course the wand. In this vein, the Elder Wand or even Harry's own wand, which is able to perform magic never heard of before (such as acting on its own accord to save Harry; cf. *Hallows* 74), could be seen as possible counterparts of Excalibur.

IV. The quest plot

The quest plot or hero's journey constitutes an obvious parallel between Rowling's series and the manifold Arthurian narratives (cf. Granger 118). In each of the seven volumes of the *Harry Potter* series, the protagonist and his friends stumble into one adventure after another – a pattern that is reminiscent of the typical structure of medieval quests. Similar to the quest for the Holy Grail in Chrétien de Troyes' *Le Conte du Graal*, for instance, Harry, Ron and Hermione try to solve mysteries and riddles (cf. Hendrichs 37), while an evil opponent is waiting for them at the end of each story. Most of the time, it is Harry who has to fight the enemies that are introduced in each of the seven books; time and again, he has to face his archenemy Lord Voldemort (in different incarnations) or one of the latter's followers. In medieval romances, the depiction of the hero's journeys and adventures typically serves to express the hero's development and maturation (cf. ibid.). This is an idea that is inherent in all of Chrétien de Troyes' narratives about the Arthurian heroes, i.e., *Yvain*, *Perceval*, *Erec* and *Cligés*, as, for instance, Pugh and Weisl point out. A similar argument could be made about *Harry Potter*: the process of growing up is reflected in Harry's repeated encounters with the Dark Lord (cf. Bürvenich 120).

But Harry is not the only character who develops in the course of the series. Due to the fact that Ron and Hermione accompany and support Harry on his quests, both undergo similar

processes of maturation. They, too, have to make difficult decisions and live with the consequences of their actions, rarely getting the opportunity of a second chance, as in the case of Ron, who returns to Harry and Hermione during their search for the Horcruxes (cf. *Hallows* 308 ff.). According to Thompson, this is how "heroes fulfil their potential, they must be allowed the freedom to gain both experience and strength for themselves" ("Enchanter" 259). This can be pinned down most clearly in the last book of the series, in which Harry and his friends are trying to find out the truth about the Deathly Hallows: "'But you said it, Hermione! You've got to find out about them yourself! It's a Quest!' […] 'Dumbledore usually let me find out stuff for myself. He let me try my strength, take risks. This feels like the kind of thing he'd do'" (*Hallows* 351). Though the quests prove increasingly difficult in the course of the series, ultimately Harry, Ron and Hermione always prevail and grow more mature in the process.

In the Arthurian romances, the quest pattern is not only associated with Arthur, but also with the various 'Knights of the Round Table', who are shown to embark on individual quests while serving the court. The legendary Round Table arguably has a counterpart in the Order of the Phoenix and perhaps even more in Dumbledore's Army, who are loyal to both Dumbledore and Harry. Founded due to the necessity of continuing practising Defence Against the Dark Arts, Dumbledore's Army develops into a rather chivalrous community, not unlike Arthur's 'Round Table'. In the final Battle of Hogwarts, the secret society plays a crucial role in defeating Lord Voldemort and his Death Eaters (cf. ibid. 461 ff., 586). Yet, both the Order of the Phoenix and Dumbledore's Army are arguably less institutionalised than the Round Table. King Arthur's Knights of the Round Table constitute a group of selected warriors that was formally regulated; Lancelot, for example, was introduced into this 'brotherhood' on All Hallows' Day after he had succeeded in the required test, proving that he was worthy (cf. Goodrich 355).

V. Conclusion

As the discussion above has shown, in the *Harry Potter* series there are several, more or less obvious, similarities with the Arthurian legend. Apart from namesakes, such as Arthur or Ginny (Ginevra) Weasley, the overall setting of an old castle, fantastic beasts, prophecies and magic are reminiscent of the Arthurian quests, which often involved a 'knight in shining armour' rescuing a beautiful damsel or fighting dangerous enemies. Dumbledore bears a number of striking similarities with Merlin, and Harry Potter shares features with the legendary 'now and future king'. Thus, Rowling resurrects these medieval characters and places them in a setting that is contemporary, yet, at the same time, also medieval in some respects. This setting and the character constellation allow her to incorporate aspects of the chivalric code of morals, numerous quests the young hero and his friends have to succeed in and, of course, the archenemy who threatens to kill the hero and to wreak havoc in the world. Furthermore, the series examines the at times complicated relationship between Harry and his wise but rather secretive mentor, Albus Dumbledore, which echoes the legend of Arthur, who also eventually had to face his enemies without the help of his esteemed counsellor. Rowling even included a counterpart of the presumably most famous sword in history, Excalibur, in her series. Similar to Excalibur, the Sword of Gryffindor can be wielded only by a hero with a brave heart and chivalrous mind. In addition, the series presents modernised versions of the 'Round Table' in the guise of the Order of the Phoenix and Dumbledore's Army, which celebrate "chivalry as a foundational value for its potential to elevate" (Pugh/Weisl 49) young readers.

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Denise Burkhard and Julia Stibane

Darkness, Danger and Death: Exploring Gothic Places in *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*

I. Introduction

The success of the *Harry Potter* series is indisputable. There is presumably hardly anyone who has not heard of Harry Potter, the wizard whose adventures have fascinated readers from all around the world over the last twenty years. While only about 500 copies of *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* constituted the first edition in 1997, over 450 million copies of the seven *Harry Potter* novels were in print worldwide by 2013 (cf. TIME staff n.p.). Anne Hiebert Alton argues that one of the major reasons for this extraordinary success "lies in Rowling's treatment of genre, particularly in relation to her incorporation of a vast number of genres in the books" (199), such as the adventure story, the *bildungsroman*, the boarding school novel, the detective story, the quest romance and, last but not least, Gothic stories (cf. Hiebert Alton).

Despite the fact that Brandy Blake claims that "only one novel [*Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*] in this series emphasizes many of the traditions of the Gothic novel" (141), the first two volumes already draw on 18th-century Gothic conventions, especially in their depiction of places. With respect to the images of Hogwarts in the *Harry Potter* series, Garland D. Beasley makes a similar observation and argues that "[a]lthough the Potter series certainly borrows some of its elements from nineteenth-century Gothic, it is [...] far more indebted to the British Gothic of the late eighteenth century and, more specifically, indebted to the castles of those novels" (65-66).[1] In the following, we will claim that Rowling draws heavily on Gothic conventions for creating Gothic(ised) places in *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* (1998).[2] When referring to a 'Gothic place', we assume that this place displays one or more features typically associated with 18th-century Gothic fiction, in particular (1) the idea of a past haunting or resurfacing in the present, (2) secret passageways and a labyrinthine structure, (3) a connection with death, decay and darkness or (4) a gloomy, threatening and mysterious atmosphere (cf. Kędra-Kardela/Kowalczyk 21, cf. Botting 1-2). We will argue that Knockturn Alley, whose name alludes to the adjective 'nocturnal' and thus denotes night and darkness, the Forbidden Forest and its dangerous inhabitants, Hogwarts castle, which has been considered "the most important of the Gothic spaces in *Harry Potter*" (Bayne 268), as well as the titular Chamber of Secrets can be read as Gothic places.

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[1] Fred Botting elaborates on the features characteristic of 19th-century Gothic fiction and explains that "scientists, fathers, husbands, madmen, criminals and the monstrous double" were added, accompanied by a shift in setting towards the "modern city" (2).

[2] For this purpose, we will use David Stevens' observation that "[m]ore recent authors too have emphasised a sense of place as fundamental to their fictions, often borrowing from the conventional gothic stock to do so" (55) and argue that Rowling used Gothic elements to introduce a range of places that are connected with danger.

II. Knockturn Alley

When Harry accidentally ends up in Knockturn Alley, the dark and gloomy counterpart to Diagon Alley, he finds himself "standing in the stone fireplace of what looked like a large, dimly lit wizard's shop" (*Chamber* 42) and is introduced to dangerous objects. Borgin and Burkes, a dodgy and sombre shop, displays a variety of artefacts that are unambiguously connected with the Dark Arts: "A glass case nearby held a withered hand on a cushion, a blood-stained pack of cards and a staring glass eye. Evil-looking masks leered down from the walls, an assortment of human bones lay upon the counter and rusty, spiked instruments hung from the ceiling" (ibid.). The objects on display are both terrifying and repulsive, and the various body parts lend themselves to a reading in the context of Kristeva's theory of Abjection. While some of the objects may be used for torture, others are fatal, as can be seen with the warning regarding the opal necklace Draco discovers when he enters the shop: "*Caution: Do Not Touch. Cursed – Has Claimed the Lives of Nineteen Muggle Owners to Date*" (ibid. 44, original emphasis).[3] This artefact in particular highlights the dangers connected with magical or bewitched items and reinforces the relevance of Mr Weasley's position in the Ministry of Magic in the Misuse of Muggle Artefacts Office. As Tilia Klebenov Jacobs observes, both Knockturn Alley and Diagon Alley "are places where plot points are planted but not where they blossom. [...] As peripheral spaces, the alleys are locations for minor action" (254). They are, however, indispensable elements, and Knockturn Alley is used as a means of foreshadowing regarding the use and function of magical objects in the story. Rowling elaborates on (wizarding) material culture with the episode set in Borgin and Burkes and extends the range of objects both Harry and the reader are familiar with to include those which are not even "likely to be on a Hogwarts school list" (*Chamber* 42); she thereby already points to the potential dangers connected with Tom Riddle's diary, which becomes one of the most significant objects in the novel.

In Knockturn Alley, "Harry learns something of the dangerous dark side of the magic world" (Bayne 267) he is not familiar with so far. While Harry has only been briefly introduced to artefacts linked with the Dark Arts in the form of books in the Restricted Section of the library in *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, he is now standing in "a dingy alleyway that seem[s] to be made up entirely of shops devoted to the Dark Arts" (*Chamber* 45), which already points to the darker aspects dealt with in this novel. The fact that Knockturn Alley is one of the infamous and gloomy parts of wizarding London is made unmistakably clear by references to shops selling shrunken heads or huge, black spiders, as well as by the dubious people Harry comes across in the street. When Harry realises that "[t]wo shabby-looking wizards were watching him from the shadow of a doorway" (ibid.), he instantly "[feels] jumpy" (ibid.) and attempts to find a way out of the dark alley. The experience of encountering people in the street climaxes when Harry comes near an aged witch, who is "holding a tray of what looked horribly like whole human fingernails. She leered at him, showing mossy teeth" (ibid.). Once again, the strong focus on grotesque human body parts dominates the scene and evokes a sense of repulsion. Her leering gaze might even be read in the context of abduction, which is even more strongly emphasised in Columbus's adaptation, when the witch offers "'Come with us. We'll help you find your way back'" (00:15:31-00:15:35).

[3] Even though the object is only mentioned in passing in this novel, it is further elaborated on in *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince* (2005), in which the necklace curses Katie Bell and is used for an attempt to murder Albus Dumbledore.

The presence of Draco and his father Lucius Malfoy in Borgin and Burkes is crucial in terms of their characterisation. Lucius Malfoy tries to dispose of some apparently illegal potions and leaves the owner of Borgin and Burkes claiming that "'if the stories are true, you haven't sold me half of what's hidden in your *manor*...'" (*Chamber* 44, original emphasis). Strikingly Borgin emphasises the term 'manor', which is one of the prototypical settings in Gothic fiction and which allows drawing some conclusions about the manor's inhabitants. Despite the fact that Malfoy Manor only plays a significant role in *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* (2007), it indeed turns out to be a place that is invested with Gothic elements: "The hallway was large, dimly lit and sumptuously decorated, with a magnificent carpet covering most of the stone floor. [...] The two men halted at a heavy wooden door leading into the next room" (*Hallows* 10).[4] The oppressive elements and the lack of light establish a gloomy atmosphere, typically associated with edifices in Gothic fiction, whereas the rich decorations reflect the Malfoys' aristocratic position within wizarding society. Readers of Gothic fiction will recognise Borgin's indirect reference, which indicates that Lucius Malfoy may be a potential villain in the story, one of the Gothic novel's many "evil aristocrats" (Botting 2).

In contrast to Rowling's novel, which does not elaborate extensively on the setting, Chris Columbus's movie adaptation visualises the dingy alley and correlates Gothic elements with the depiction of the spatial. The adaptation features an extremely shabby and dusty shop, with oppressive and dark furniture and a number of dangerous items on display. Furthermore, the scene is dominated by skulls, which establish a connection with death (cf. Columbus 00:14:10-00:15:11). The movie also elaborates on the objects on display: while the 'Hand of Glory' is one of the more harmless objects in the novel and is used for thievery and plundering according to Mr Borgin, Chris Columbus's movie adaptation draws on the dangers connected with the object more distinctly. As soon as Harry touches the hand, it grabs his hand firmly and he struggles to free himself again (cf. ibid. 00:14:55-00:15:06). The withered hand, thus, is not contained in a glass case, and is additionally connected with the disgusting, which is reinforced by its appearance as well as the sound effect following the release of Harry's hand. Even the outside of Knockturn Alley is introduced as the opposite of Diagon Alley: it is "a shadowy, low-lit place for wizards and witches who are down on their luck" (Pheasant-Kelly 67). Both the narrow, muddy path leading down the alley and its dark brickwork evoke the impression of a Victorian side street, which is enhanced by the overall use of dark colours. At the moment when the people in the street realise that Harry apparently is lost, they encircle the protagonist (almost zombie-like) and evoke a feeling of claustrophobia, which subsides as soon as Hagrid appears and the people step back (cf. Columbus 00:15:35-00:15:45). Thus in both novel and adaptation, Knockturn Alley serves as a prelude to the gloomy Chamber of Secrets and introduces both dark artefacts and those potentially buying and selling them.

III. The Forbidden Forest

Apart from Knockturn Alley, the Forbidden Forest is also a dangerous location and a Gothic place. Focusing on settings in Gothic literature, David Stevens claims that "[w]hatever the setting, some form of obscurity or mystery seems to be a common factor" (54). In *Harry*

[4] This introduction to Malfoy Manor bears a striking resemblance to the introduction of Misselthwaite Manor in Frances Hodgson Burnett's children's story *The Secret Garden* (1911), in which oppressive features also dominate Mary Lennox's first impression: "The entrance door was a huge one made of massive, curiously shaped panels of oak studded with big iron nails and bound with great iron bars. It opened into an enormous hall, which was so dimly lighted that the faces in the portraits on the walls and the figures in the suits of armor made Mary feel that she did not want to look at them" (15).

Potter and the Philosopher's Stone, the forest was already introduced as a setting connected with darkness and silence as well as huge trees that evoke a sense of disorientation. In *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*, many of these elements are drawn upon once again and the forest is described as a perilous wilderness, which is an impression that is enforced by the use of a night-time setting for Harry's and Ron's visit. When they move deeper into the forest, they are enclosed by trees and surrounded by utter darkness:

> Then, when the trees had become thicker than ever, so that the stars overhead were no longer visible, and Harry's wand shone alone in the sea of dark, they saw their spider guides leaving the path. Harry paused, trying to see where the spiders were going, but everything outside his little sphere of light was pitch black (*Chamber* 202).

Obscurity adds to the dangers connected with the fairy-tale notion of not leaving the path and makes the Forbidden Forest a place where orientation can be lost easily due to a limited visual range, which is emphasised in the quoted passage. As soon as Harry and Ron start to follow the trail of the spiders leading from the castle into the forest, tension and fear dominate, as can be seen when "Fang suddenly let loose a great, echoing bark, making both Harry and Ron jump out of their skins" (ibid.). The protagonists' fear peaks when Harry and Ron see themselves confronted with a host of "[s]piders the size of carthorses, eight-eyed, eight-legged, black, hairy, gigantic" (ibid. 204) as well as with Aragog, "a spider the size of a small elephant" (ibid. 205). The danger linked with the spiders is aptly captured in Aragog's remark that he "'cannot deny them [his offspring] fresh meat, when it wanders so willingly into our midst'" (ibid. 207), which is a threat to the students' lives.[5]

Similar to the Basilisk hidden in the Chamber of Secrets, Aragog is also a creature from the time when the Chamber was opened before and functions as a witness to contest the version of the story Harry discovered in Tom Riddle's diary. Aragog's account of the incidents is crucial in so far as it reinforces the influence of the past on the present. The giant spider in fact starts his account with an emphasis on temporality, when recounting what happened fifty years ago: "'But that was years ago [...] [y]ears and years ago. I remember it well. That's why they made him leave the school'" (ibid. 205). During the conversation, Harry and Ron receive crucial information regarding the first opening of the Chamber, which helps them to put the pieces together and eventually seek out Moaning Myrtle. Above all, the encounter with Aragog emphasises that Hagrid has been accused wrongly because he, as Harry puts it, "'never opened the Chamber of Secrets [...] [h]e was innocent'" (ibid. 208), which retrospectively clears Hagrid's record.

In Chris Columbus's movie adaptation the Forest is also introduced as a Gothic place and several filmic effects have been used to achieve this impression. In particular the soundtrack is striking, as it not only features the soundtrack the viewer is familiar with from the first movie, but in addition also the sounds caused by the movement of countless spider legs, which increase the sense of unease already evoked by the forest. The uneasy feeling is further emphasised by an observation made by Fran Pheasant-Kelly, namely that the "[b]lue-toned lighting and long shots of the boys emphasize their [Harry's and Ron's] vulnerability as giant tree roots seem to dwarf them" (57). Due to high-angle shots or shots of elements Ron and Harry cannot see, the viewer gets to know the dangers the students are exposed to much

[5] J.K. Rowling's *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* (2001) also lists the Acromantula as an extremely dangerous beast. According to the Ministry of Magic classification it is a "Known wizard killer / impossible to train or domesticate" (xxxv). Just like the entry on the Basilisk, this entry has been annotated in the book, but in this case, specifically the classification level has been expanded, presumably by the arachnophobic Ron Weasley, which emphasises the repercussions of the encounter with the acromantulas.

earlier than the characters: considerably larger spiders (or parts thereof) are shown on screen but remain unseen by Harry and Ron, so that the viewer can already anticipate what will happen in the spiders' hollow (cf. Columbus 01:41:13; 01:41:20). Harry's and Ron's fear is supplemented by claustrophobia as soon as their conversation with Aragog ends and the spiders start to close in on them, first from above, then encircling them from all directions, outnumbering the two students. Moreover, the spiders start to successfully pursue the Ford Anglia, which is reminiscent of the "life-threatening pursuits" (Botting 2) to be found in Gothic literature, for they are able to move as fast as Ron can drive through the forest.

IV. Hogwarts Castle and the Chamber of Secrets

With respect to Rowling's use of Gothic conventions, Hogwarts is highly ambiguous. In *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, Hogwarts castle is introduced as both a home and a dangerous place. For instance, the out-of-bounds corridor and the Forbidden Forest constitute perilous places associated with threat and gloom. Moreover, and on a more general level, the Gothic elements can also be found in Hogwarts' architecture, "specifically in its dungeons (where Snape's Potions classes take place), subterranean passages, hidden entrances, and secret rooms" (Hiebert Alton 203). Simultaneously, Hogwarts "is also a secure and comfortable environment" (Bayne 270) and Harry's first true home. In *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*, Hogwarts gradually transforms from a place of home and comfort into a place connected with danger and threat, which is a transformation that is already hinted at by Dobby's mysterious warning that Harry "'will be in mortal danger'" (*Chamber* 18) if he should return to Hogwarts. Disregarding the warning, Harry manages to return to Hogwarts, where the everyday boarding-school life, which has been extensively elaborated on in the first novel, is increasingly interrupted by mysterious attacks on Muggle-born students and the caretaker's cat. This form of ambiguity can also be found in Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897), in which Jonathan Harker encounters a castle that is not threatening from the start: "It was a welcome sight; for here was a great bedroom well lighted and warmed with another log fire, which sent a hollow roar up the wide chimney" (27). Similar to Stoker's novel, in which the castle soon turns out to be a place of horror,[6] Hogwarts transforms into a sinister and unpleasant place where students are exposed to grave danger. While the dangers in the forbidden third-floor corridor were essentially contained in a particular location (with the exception of the troll escaping from there at one point), the Basilisk cannot be contained. A threatening atmosphere is established as soon as Mrs Norris is found petrified and the writing on the wall indicates that the Chamber of Secrets has been opened. Other than in *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, where monsters and secrets remained hidden from the students most of the time, the second novel incorporates them more directly by including the attacks in the school, which threaten the students' lives. After the first Basilisk attack and the discovery of the terrifying message that the Chamber of Secrets has been opened, life at Hogwarts seems to fall back into its usual routine. At least classes continue more or less as usual, homework seems as important as ever and the upcoming Quidditch game Gryffindor vs. Slytherin occupies Harry's mind. When further attacks occur, however, these everyday routines fade into the background: the Quidditch match is cancelled and safety measures for preventing further attacks are established. In this context, even the question whether Hogwarts should be closed due to severe safety issues is raised, which reinforces the impression that the attacks increas-

[6] Only a few days after his arrival, Jonathan Harker realises that the castle is not as comfortable as it appears to be: "there is something so strange about this place and all in it that I cannot but feel uneasy. I wish I were safe out of it, or that I had never come" (Stoker 37).

ingly affect the entire boarding-school life. This transformation also echoes the idea that the Gothic castle typically combines diverse meanings: "[t]he castle is a labyrinth, a maze, a site of secrets. It is also, paradoxically, a site of domesticity, where ordinary life carries on even while accompanied by the most extraordinary and inexplicable events" (Punter/Byron 261). And indeed, up until Ginny Weasley has been taken into the Chamber, the teachers attempt to keep up the usual school routine (with certain precautions and safety measures) even though several students have already been petrified.

Apart from the dangers set loose in the castle, Hogwarts and the Chamber can be read as manifestations of the past coming back to haunt the present, which is a temporal tension that is emphasised throughout the second novel and that is a stock Gothic element (cf. Botting 1).[7] This temporal connection is first made explicit in Professor Binns's History of Magic lesson, in which he considers the Chamber to be part of a legend. In differentiating between historiography (which he believes to be reliable and factual material) and legends, Professor Binns clarifies that he considers the chamber part of a legend and in fact, "'a very *sensational*, even *ludicrous* tale…'" (*Chamber* 113, original emphasis). Nevertheless, he tells the inquisitive students about the founding history of Hogwarts, including the part that according to the legend "'Slytherin had built a hidden chamber in the castle, of which the other founders knew nothing'" (ibid. 114). Thus the history of Hogwarts castle dates back to a remote past and the present is still shaped by the deeds of ancestors (in this case, one of the founders of the school) that reverberate in the present. The connection between past and present is made even more explicit in the remark that similar incidents occurred before:

> 'And now, at Hogwarts, terrible things are to happen, are perhaps happening already, and Dobby cannot let Harry Potter stay here now that history is to repeat itself, now that the Chamber of Secrets is open once more –' [...] 'So there *is* a Chamber of Secrets?' Harry whispered. 'And – did you say it's been opened *before*? *Tell* me Dobby!' (ibid. 134, original emphasis).

Dobby's hint, which contributes to the increasing mystery revolving around the Chamber, emphasises that the past still affects the present and uncannily even repeats itself. After the first attacks, Hogwarts does not only turn into an unpredictable and dangerous place, but also becomes infused with its local history, with which every student seems to be suddenly preoccupied.

As a magical means of communication, Tom Riddle's diary also embodies the resurfacing of the past in the present moment.[8] It is not only that Tom Riddle answers as a voice from the past, but also that he is able to transport Harry into his memory of the events fifty years ago:

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[7] On a more general level, the mixture of past and present can already be pinned down in a specific achronicity that can be observed in Hogwarts. As Beasley aptly remarks, though "the Potter series is firmly rooted in the modern world, the school itself is lit by torches and candles, heated by fireplaces, and students rely on parchment and quill rather than Windows and Word" (66). Relics of the past are thus very much part of everyday life. This prevailing 'simultaneity of the non-simultaneous' does not only contribute to a unique magical aesthetics of the wizarding world, but also causes aspects of contemporary and medieval frameworks to mutually defamiliarise each other.

[8] As the artefacts in Knockturn Alley already suggest, the second novel deals with objects infused with Dark Magic. Tom Riddle's diary is a prototypical example of a dangerous magical object, because it contains the memory of Tom Riddle, who responds to those writing on the pages of the diary. "Tom Riddle's diary exerts power through its victim's writing and reading, and eventually takes over her [Ginny's] life" (Schanoes 139). Almost as soon as the reader meets Ginny in the second novel, she is deeply influenced by Voldemort's 16-year-old self "'[p]reserved in a diary'" (*Chamber* 227). By writing back and answering to Ginny's worries and anxieties, Tom Riddle gains her trust, uses her to his advantage and supposes that "'the real reason Ginny Weasley's like this is because she opened her heart and spilled all her secrets to an invisible stranger'" (ibid. 228). Schanoes remarks that the way in

> Mouth hanging open, Harry saw that the little square for June the thirteenth seemed to have turned into a minuscule television screen. His hands trembling slightly, he raised the book to press his eye against the little window, and before he knew what was happening, he was tilting forwards; the window was widening, he felt his body leave his bed and he was pitched headfirst through the opening in the page, into a whirl of colour and shadow (ibid. 180).

This scene is crucial to understanding the way in which Tom Riddle's diary works. Instead of simply telling Harry his own interpretation of the story, Riddle shows him memories as though they were Harry's own. By giving Harry the illusion of having witnessed the events surrounding Tom Riddle's capture of the culprit responsible for the death of the girl, the diary shows the events from Tom Riddle's subjective point of view and Harry "accepts the narrator's position of objective authority without question" (Schanoes 140). He does not even remotely consider that the memory may have been manipulated or altered.[9] The diary works with Harry's personal sympathies, causing him to identify with the young Tom Riddle, which in turn makes him believe Tom Riddle's story. Riddle's version of the past and the seemingly indistinguishable combination of objective facts and subjective memories lead Harry to interpret the present in light of what he saw in the past. He is deceived into believing that Hagrid was the one having opened the Chamber and that the spider Aragog is the monster hidden inside it. Leading Harry astray gives Riddle's diary more time to "steadily [consume] Ginny" (ibid.). Thus the past does not only inform and influence the characters in *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*, but actually *consumes* them, invading the present and closing the gap between past events and the present moment.

As was indicated above, the probably most Gothic place in the novel is the legendary Chamber of Secrets itself, which displays a range of features typically associated with Gothic literature. Kędra-Kardela and Kowalczyk observe that "[t]he inseparable features of these edifices [i.e. those typically found in Gothic literature] are secret (underground) passages, dark labyrinthine corridors, trap doors, sliding panels concealing secret chambers, and dimly lit staircases" (21). In this respect, the door to the Chamber of Secrets is significant, as its entrance is hidden in a girl's bathroom. On the one hand, the bathroom is haunted by Moaning Myrtle, the ghost of a girl who died in the bathroom and returned as a revenant, "'determined to haunt Olive Hornby'" (*Chamber* 221). On the other hand, the entrance to the Chamber of Secrets is hidden behind a 'sliding sink' and can only be entered by a Parselmouth; access thus is restricted and an object as ordinary as a sink ensures that the Chamber cannot be accessed by accident. Upon jumping down the pipe, Harry "could see more pipes branching off in all directions, but none as large as theirs, which twisted and turned, sloping steeply downwards" (ibid. 223), which suggests that the pipes form a labyrinth that is continued in the gloomy tunnel leading to the Chamber. The use of a labyrinthine structure at this point reinforces Beasley's assumption that at Hogwarts "the labyrinth is not always meant to allow for daring raids and hair raising escapes, it also serves as a *device for hiding and recovering secrets*, another critical trope of the Gothic castle" (Beasley 69, emphasis added). The close link between labyrinth and secret is reinforced by the fact that Harry discovers the titular Chamber at the end to save the life of Ginny Weasley as well as to fight the true heir of Salazar Slytherin.

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which the diary works is that it "takes in Harry's writing and gives it back as its own, almost literally twisting his words" (140). At first, neither Ginny nor Harry realise the degree to which they are being influenced by the diary, which is evidence of Tom Riddle's cunning manipulation.

[9] Rowling highlights the significance of manipulated memories in *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince*, in which one of the memories Dumbledore has collected has been manipulated by its owner, Horace Slughorn, by partly being fogged over (cf. 346).

The tunnel leading from the pipe to the Chamber displays a strong connection with death and claustrophobic darkness, as can be seen in one of the first descriptions: "But the tunnel was quiet as the grave, and the first unexpected sound they heard was a loud *crunch* as Ron stepped on what turned out to be a rat's skull. Harry lowered his wand to look at the floor and saw that it was littered with small animal bones" (*Chamber* 223, original emphasis). The skulls do not only establish a link with the bones on display at Borgin and Burkes, they also emphasise that the place is associated with death. This association can also be seen in the comparison of the place to a grave, which it eventually will become unless Harry rescues Ginny in time. Dead silence also informs Isabella's escape from Manfred in Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* when she decides to use one of the subterranean passages, where she encounters an "awful silence [reigning] throughout those subterraneous regions" (26) except for gusts of wind. In this respect, the location of the Chamber, which Ron assumes to be "'[u]nder the lake, probably'" (*Chamber* 223), evokes a feeling of claustrophobia, which is even enhanced when the tunnel collapses and Harry is separated from Ron and Lockhart, which eventually results in the typical character constellation of traditional Gothic novels.[10]

As a Gothic place, the Chamber of Secrets is connected with a gloomy and mysterious atmosphere and evokes a feeling of anxiety within Harry, as the description of the hidden Chamber illustrates: "He was standing at the end of a very long, dimly lit chamber. Towering stone pillars entwined with more carved serpents rose to support a ceiling lost in darkness, casting long black shadows through the odd, greenish gloom that filled the place" (ibid. 226). The sheer vastness of the Chamber as well as the shadows caused by the carved serpents contribute to making the place even more eerie, while the gloom and darkness arguably create something similar to Gothic literature's "[n]octurnal settings" (Kędra-Kardela/Kowalczyk 21). Harry's careful steps in the Chamber as well as the impression that "[t]he hollow eye sockets of the stone snakes seemed to be following him" (*Chamber* 226) evoke the uncomfortable feeling of being watched. In Columbus's audio-visual adaptation, the Chamber features as a room in the sewers that is cast in green hues. The colour symbolism is particularly striking since green is the colour associated with Slytherin house – it is hardly surprising then that Harry encounters the Basilisk, a huge snake, in the Chamber.[11] The dangers associated with the place are indicated by its slippery dampness as well as by the stalactites on the ceiling, which are reminiscent of a snake's fangs. Both the novel and the adaptation indicate that the Chamber is a Gothic place, which displays the characteristic aura of mystery while simultaneously establishing a sense of persecution and reinforcing the connection with Salazar Slytherin.

Apart from being a gloomy place associated with utmost danger, the Chamber, like Hogwarts, also displays a connection between past and present in the form of the seemingly

[10] In early Gothic novels, the typical character constellation consists of the hero, the damsel in distress (or victim) and the villain – a triad which can also be found in *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*. Despite the fact that the villain is embodied by Voldemort throughout all seven novels, the hero and the damsel in distress cannot be assigned as easily to specific characters. Some scholars argue that Harry, apart from being the hero, is also cast in the role of the victim, "as he is repeatedly attacked by Voldemort in various guises" (Hiebert Alton 203). Furthermore, he is not the only hero in the story, since it is usually a group of people who contribute to Harry's victory against Voldemort. But if the analysis just focuses on the second novel, the roles can be assigned to specific characters: the damsel in distress, who is "suffering at the hands of the cruel villain" (ibid.), is Ginny Weasley, the villain is Tom Riddle and the brave hero is Harry Potter.

[11] At this point, a connection between Slytherin and Voldemort can be established that reinforces Voldemort's position as the heir of Slytherin: the Basilisk that creeps out of Salazar Slytherin's mouth is reminiscent of the Dark Mark, which is described as "a colossal skull, composed of what looked like emerald stars, with a serpent protruding from its mouth like a tongue" (*Goblet* 115).

corporeal manifestation of Tom Riddle. As a memory "'[p]reserved in a diary'" (ibid. 227), Tom Riddle appears to be "strangely blurred around the edges, as though Harry was looking at him through a misted window" (ibid.). In this context, Christina Flotmann remarks that "[b]y leaving his 'frame,' the diary[,] and turning from a mere memory into something more solid, he blurs boundaries of space and time as well as between the animate and the inanimate" (127). The fact that Riddle will soon be able to leave the pages of the diary suggests that he does not only successfully blur the boundaries but has also found a means to overcome them, which is reflected in the fact that during Harry's and Tom's conversation "Riddle's outline was becoming clearer, more solid" (*Chamber* 233). In highlighting that he is a memory that was created "'to lead another in my footsteps, and finish Salazar Slytherin's noble work'" (ibid. 230), Tom Riddle merges the past, for Salazar Slytherin is his ancestor, and the present, for he acted through Ginny to finish what Slytherin had begun when the school was founded. Riddle even goes a step further and tells Harry that "'Voldemort [...] is my past, present and future'" (ibid. 231) and has access to information that could not have been accessible to sixteen-year-old Tom, namely that he tried to kill Harry twice. Thus Tom, as a relic from the time fifty years ago, constructs himself a legacy and appears as a corporeal manifestation to Harry, defying temporality through the magical means of the diary.

V. Conclusion

Exploring several places in *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* has shown that they can be read in the context of traditional Gothic places, which creates the distinctive atmosphere that contributes to the overall darker theme of the novel. These places are linked especially by the atmosphere and feelings they create; for instance, gloom and the feeling of claustrophobia characterise all places. Rowling uses Gothic places to reinforce the dangers and threat lurking at Hogwarts and spreading over the school. Harry's accidental visit at Knockturn Alley introduces him to the darker part of wizarding society as well as to dangerous and dark objects, which foreshadow the significance of Tom Riddle's diary. In particular the places in and around Hogwarts display a strong connection with the past, as can be seen in the conversation between Harry, Ron and Aragog in the Forbidden Forest, as well as in the local history of Hogwarts more generally. With the opening of the Chamber of Secrets fear spreads in the school, further safety measures are taken and the school becomes an utterly dangerous place. The Chamber itself is the most Gothic place in the novel, which is due to the fact that time and space merge in the Chamber and Tom Riddle is almost able to leave the diary's pages in corporeal form. These places are early examples in the series in which Rowling uses the Gothic mode to establish a sense of peril; later, she also uses a range of other places to create a similar effect, such as Bathilda Bagshot's house in Godric's Hollow or the Shrieking Shack, which provides a complex Gothic topography.

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Jule Lenzen

Parallels between Celtic Druidism on the British Isles and in Ireland and the Magical World of the *Harry Potter* Novels

I. Introduction

From today's perspective, Druids tend to be associated with magic, and perhaps most of all with the mystical festivities held at Stonehenge, such as the winter and summer solstices. Yet, they were also prominent figures in ancient Celtic culture, as Ó Hógáin points out in his study on Pre-Christian Ireland: "The Celts have men called *druides*, who concern themselves with divination and all branches of wisdom" (81, original emphasis). This description already suggests that a comparison between magic in the *Harry Potter* series and the Druids' skills may be fruitful. Various articles on Pottermore indicate that J.K. Rowling was aware of Celtic myths and legends when writing the *Harry Potter* series. In her entries on cauldrons, for example, she mentions both "[t]he four mythical jewels of Ireland" and "[t]he Thirteen Treasures of Britain", and even specifically the cauldron of the giant Dyrnwch (cf. "Cauldrons" n.p.), which is part of Welsh folklore. Similarly, in her comment on the Sword of Gryffindor she refers to the legend of King Arthur (cf. "The Sword of Gryffindor" n.p.), which has its roots in Irish and Welsh folktales. The article further refers to "the Sword of Nuadu, [which is] part of the four legendary treasures of the Tuatha Dé Danann" (cf. ibid.), an ancient Irish tribe which is also mentioned in connection to the Druids. In addition, the Druidess Cliodna, featured on one of the Chocolate Frog cards Harry gets on his first journey to Hogwarts (cf. *Stone* 78), is based on an actual Druidess in Irish mythology, as Colbert points out (cf. Colbert 255-57).

In the following, I will explore a number of features of Rowling's series that may have been inspired by what is known about Celtic Druids today. Rather than focusing on the quite esoteric modern Druids, who can be seen at Stonehenge every year, this paper will draw upon the image of the Druids as represented in ancient Celtic literature in order to identify possible similarities with the representation of wizards and witches and specifically their ways of practising magic in the *Harry Potter* series. The ability to practise magic in and of itself constitutes the first obvious link between the Potterverse and Druids, who were believed to be endowed with magical powers: "The simplest, and yet the most telling, evidence for the supernatural skills of the druids in ancient Ireland is furnished by the word for druidry itself, *druídecht*. This (in modern spelling *draíocht*) has always been the ordinary term in Irish for magic" (Ó Hógáin 81, original emphasis). Some studies already address the connection between Rowling's works and Celtic mythology. In *Harry Potter*: *The Sorcerer's Companion to Harry Potter*, for example, Kronzek and Kronzek connect the Banshee with early accounts from Ireland (cf. 19-20). Similarities to cauldrons in Celtic mythology have been analysed as well (cf. Colbert 52-54; Kronzek/Kronzek 32-34). But there is next to no research on the comparison between Celtic Druidism[1] and *Harry Potter* so far.[2] This paper will try to fill this

[1] The term 'Celtic Druid' will be used in this paper to refer to the Druids in Scotland, Ireland, Wales and England.

[2] Colbert, in his work *The Magical Worlds of Harry Potter*, provides only a rather general and short overview of the Druids (77-78).

gap by examining parallels between Celtic Druids on the British Isles and in Ireland and the magical world of *Harry Potter*. Of course, it is anybody's guess whether or to what extent Rowling has actually built the magical world of *Harry Potter* on accounts of Druidism. Still, a certain Celtic influence seems entirely possible, especially since she is known for her intertextual references and her knowledge of many different ancient cultures and cultural customs,[3] and some of the parallels to Celtic Druidism are striking.

II. A short introduction to historic Druids

For an analysis of Celtic Druidism, first of all the term 'Celt/Celtic' needs to be clarified. It is a term that proves to be problematic given the fact that the people who are subsumed under this label never referred to themselves as 'Celts'. Instead, the term was imposed upon them by others, primarily the Romans. Thus, there are no clear-cut boundaries between who is a 'Celt' and who is not.[4] This paper will focus specifically on the Druids on the British Isles and in Ireland, i.e., the region where the *Harry Potter* novels are set. Most references to Druidism can be found in Irish literature, which is why this paper primarily uses these accounts. For some of the features that will be mentioned in the following evidence from other Celtic areas, for example information on the Gaulish Druids, will also be drawn upon.

A major problem when studying the Druids is the overall lack of historical sources. The dearth of historical evidence has given rise to a considerable amount of myth-making, as Piggott stresses:

> What, however, can also be constructed is that very dangerous thing, a past-wished-for, in which a convenient selection of the evidence is fitted into a predetermined intellectual or emotional pattern. […] There has also been a process of manufacturing Druids-as-wished-for going on since classical times (16).

This also means that all sources associated with the Druids available today have to be regarded with extreme caution, as not all of them are based on scientific facts. Many of the original sources written by the Druids or their people were destroyed in the course of Christianisation, leaving scholars mostly with external accounts. This means that the sources may be tainted by the wish to legitimise the act of 'civilising' Celtic tribes. Little to no accounts from the 'Celts' survive from the original period of Druidism that this paper is dealing with, i.e., 600 BCE-500 CE. Nevertheless, there is a high number of literary sources that were transmitted orally for some time before Christian scribes wrote them down (cf. Birkhan 464), which did not happen before the 6th-8th century (cf. ibid. 467). These texts are where most accounts of Druidism can be found. More precisely, these are ancient Irish or Welsh myths and legends, though the majority of accounts is situated within the Irish context. These stories can be found in the Ulster and Fenian cycles, the Táin and the Mabinogion as well as in many others.[5] As most references to Druidism can be found in ancient Irish literature, this paper will primarily focus on these sources.

It seems very unlikely that Rowling was inspired by the historical sources depicting the original Druids (due to the scarcity of source material); moreover, it proves to be extremely

[3] Cf. such works as Colbert's *The Magical Worlds of Harry Potter*: *A Treasury of Myths, Legends and Fascinating Facts* (2003) or Granger's *Harry Potter's Bookshelf: The Great Books behind the Hogwarts Adventures* (2009), which explore various possible inspirations the magical world of *Harry Potter* draws upon.

[4] For a detailed discussion of the problems associated with the term 'Celt/Celtic', see Birkhan (32-51).

[5] For an extensive discussion of the literary sources of 'Celtic' myths and legends, see Birkhan (468-74).

difficult to differentiate between truthful accounts and what Piggott calls "Druids-as-wished-for" (16). In *The Druids*, Piggott distinguishes different types of sources on Druidism: firstly, archaeological evidence; secondly, classical sources such as accounts by the Greeks and Romans; and thirdly, "the development of ideas about the Druids originating in the antiquarian speculations of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, rapidly becoming part of the background material […] of scholars […] [and] of imaginative writers and artists, and latterly developing into a folk-lore of its own" (ibid.). He further mentions "the surviving fragments of an originally oral tradition in the Celtic vernaculars, transmitted by medieval scribes and scholars" (ibid.), which was hinted at above already. The first two types of sources deal mainly with Druidism in Gaul. In the following, I will, due to a lack of historic sources on Druidism in Celtic Britain and Ireland, also use these references to provide a more complete picture of the Druids.

The historic Druids held many different functions in ancient Celtic society and had a high standing; they even ranked above the kings. They had religious functions in the community, and they were judges (cf. Meid 101). According to Ó Hógáin, Druids might have inherited the function of the shaman from even older traditions, being, as they were, "an intermediary between the society and the mysterious powers of destiny" (73). He identifies three different types of Druids, i.e., poets, prophets and druids/magicians, which he subsumes under the term 'the wise man' (cf. ibid. 72). In the classical sources they were also associated with divination and star-study. As mentioned before, most accounts on Druidism can be found in literary texts, and it is certainly possible that Rowling has drawn inspiration from some of these sources, as was pointed out in the introduction.

As a starting point for identifying further parallels, Spence's *History and Origins of Druidism* and *The Magic Arts in Celtic Britain* as well as Bonwick's *Irish Druids and Old Irish Religions* have been consulted. However, since these works were originally published in the late 19th century (Bonwick) and in the 1940s (Spence) and given the fact that both Spence and Bonwick drew upon even older sources (from the 17th and 18th centuries), their works may be tainted by the practice of creating their own folklore around Druidism and not checking their sources (cf. Piggott). This should be kept in mind when reading the following hypotheses. As far as possible, their accounts have been checked against other, reliable sources on ancient Celtic Druidism, to avoid confusion regarding the trustworthiness of Spence's and Bonwick's work. As will become apparent, the picture they draw of Druidism is one that bears remarkable similarities to the magical world in the *Harry Potter* series.

III. Wands and spells

In the *Harry Potter* novels, wands and spells are the basic tools of the true wizard. The casting of spells typically requires a wand in *Harry Potter*, as long as one is a wizard or witch.[6] Although underage magical incidents, where children make things happen without really knowing how they are doing it (cf. *Stone* 47), show that magic is possible without a wand, the wizards in the *Harry Potter* novels are not able to channel their magic and perform certain spells without their wands. The significance of the wand becomes apparent in Harry's reaction when Hermione accidentally destroys his wand during their flight from Voldemort in *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*:

> He had spilled his own blood more times than he could count; he had lost all his bones in his right arm once; this journey had already given him scars to his chest and forearm to join those on his hand and

[6] House-elves, for example, do not require a wand to practise magic.

> forehead, but never, until this moment, had he felt himself to be fatally weakened, vulnerable and naked, as though the best part of his magical power had been torn from him (*Hallows* 286).

According to the available accounts, Druids also make use of wands, even if these are not mentioned every single time Druids are referred to as casting a spell. Still, MacBain observes with respect to the use of wands: "The Druidic wand plays an important part, a blow from it causing transformation and spells […]. It must be remarked, too, that the wood used for wands and Druidic rites and fires was […] the yew, hawthorn, and more especially the rowan tree" (MacBain quoted in Spence, *Magic Arts* 27). This observation also alludes to another significant parallel to *Harry Potter*, as the wands in the Potterverse are also made of different types of wood. Here, the list of wand woods is quite long, however, and is not limited to yew, hawthorn and rowan, although it includes those three (cf. "Wand Woods" n.p.).

A further interesting similarity between Druidic wand-lore and Rowling's series is the notion that there may be wands with special properties. With respect to Druidic wands, Spence claims that they "sometimes [take] the form of a symbolic branch of crescent shape from which little tinkling bells [depend] […] [,] an imitation of the 'silver bough,' the magic apple-branch borne by the god Manannan" (Spence, *History* 147-48). He characterises this particular type of wand as a peace-bringing wand. Although wands in *Harry Potter* do not vary that much in terms of their shape, the idea of a wand with special powers is picked up quite prominently in the Elder Wand. While the wand mentioned by Spence is associated with peace, the Elder Wand is famous for its bloody history; when it is won from its previous owner in order to make it change its allegiance this often results in the former owner's death (cf. *Hallows* 334-35).

With regard to the powers of wands, there seems to be a strong connection with water in the case of Druids in Irish literature (cf. Ó Hógáin 76); there are instances where Druids are said to cast water from their wands or to create springs (cf. Bonwick 61). Although there seems to be no special connection between water and the wizard or witch in *Harry Potter*, there is at least a spell that provides water: the Aguamenti Charm (cf. *Prince* 537). It is noteworthy that water, which plays such a vital role in Druidism, proves to be an exception to the laws that govern magic in the world of *Harry Potter*: it can be produced 'out of thin air', while food cannot, as Hermione explains in *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* ("'[One cannot] make good food out of nothing! You can summon it if you know where it is, you can transform it, you can increase the quantity if you've already got some'", 241).

Another spell mentioned by Spence in connection with the Druids that appears to have parallels in *Harry Potter* is 'fith-fath' or 'fath-fith', which, according to MacCulloch, causes invisibility (cf. MacCulloch quoted in Spence, *History* 149) and is associated with Druidism specifically in Ireland and Scotland (cf. Spence, *Magic Arts* 59-60). Many readers of *Harry Potter* will think of Harry's Invisibility Cloak in this context. Harry's cloak is an exception, as it is one of the Deathly Hallows, but there are also further, more ordinary invisibility cloaks in *Harry Potter*, which have been created by casting a spell on them. According to Xenophilius Lovegood, the two spells causing invisibility are the 'Disillusionment Charm' and the 'Bedazzling Hex' (cf. *Hallows* 333). The use of the spell 'fith-fath' by Druids is also referred to in Birkhan, although not to cause invisibility, but for casting a magical fog (cf. 500).[7] Spence therefore rightly states that he could not find an account of the use of fith-fath in literature to cause invisibility, contrarily to MacCulloch's claims (cf. Spence, *History* 149); although fith-fath in its different forms is attested in many Celtic literary accounts (cf. Birkhan 477, 500, 930), it is never mentioned as a spell to cause invisibility – it rather employs different meth-

[7] Druids are not mentioned explicitly in the passage, though; instead, the spell is connected to the Túatha Dé Danann.

ods to disguise oneself, as for example the transformation into animals or creating fogs. Additionally, Spence also mentions the transformation processes connected with fith-fath and the Druidic processes of transformation or shape-shifting, which will be discussed at a later point in this paper.[8]

There are further types of Druidic spells that resonate in the Potterverse. The Druidic Magical Fires (cf. Spence, *History* 164-65), for instance, have counterparts in the Potterverse. The *Harry Potter* series in fact features several spells that create fire, for example 'Incendio' (cf. *Goblet* 46). Furthermore, readers learn at one point that "[c]onjuring up portable, waterproof fires was a speciality of Hermione's" (*Chamber* 138). What is more, there is the wall of fire that Albus Dumbledore conjures up as a defence against the Inferi in *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince* (cf. 538-39). So magical fires are a recurring feature in the *Harry Potter* series. This, strictly speaking, already concerns the next section, where more spells will be discussed in connection with Magical Battles.

Spence also refers to a procedure by the Irish Druids called 'Satire from the hilltops'; this involves special rituals and is meant to satirise a king (cf. Spence, *History* 150). The 'Satire from the hilltops' could for example cause the appearance of "blotches upon the face" (Spence, *Magic Arts* 61). Ó Hógáin explains that if an Irish Druid in his role of a judge made a wrong decision, blotches would appear on his face; if he satirised someone in the wrong way, this would also happen to him (cf. Ó Hógáin 77). This procedure refers to the poetic abilities of Druids mentioned by Ó Hógáin. A remarkably similar spell – called 'Furnunculus' – is employed by Harry in *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*: "Goyle bellowed and put his hands to his nose, where great ugly boils were springing up" (*Goblet* 262).

The examples addressed so far show that spells and the use of wands were closely linked in Celtic Druidism, which suggests an obvious parallel to the Potterverse. Beyond that, the notion that the wands were made of specific woods and that there were wands with a special reputation can also be found in the *Harry Potter* series, especially with respect to the Elder Wand. Moreover, when regarding a selection of spells in Druidic lore, there are also striking similarities, although they cannot always be translated into a spell in *Harry Potter*. Given the fact that Druidism in ancient Celtic literature already involved a strong link between water and magic, it is especially noteworthy that wizards and witches in Rowling's series can create water out of thin air.

IV. Magical battles

Spells, curses and hexes are regularly employed in battles and duels in *Harry Potter*, ranging from duelling practice to the Battle of Hogwarts. The Druids are said to have often been involved in battles as well, and Diodorus Siculus, the Greek historian (1st century BCE), even refers to their involvement in historic battles in Gaul (cf. Ó Hógáin 81). One specific spell attributed to Druids in various texts in connection with battles results in casting a dense fog for the purpose of concealment (cf. Spence, *History* 146). Despite the fact that there is no similar spell in the *Harry Potter* novels, Peruvian Instant Darkness Powder can be used "to make a quick escape" (*Prince* 116) and thus appears to have a quite similar effect. The idea of magically induced concealment is also reminiscent of the Druids "sending heavy snowfalls and thick darkness upon [someone]" (Spence, *History* 146).[9] The Druid Brochan for instance allegedly conjured up a storm and darkness to prevent St. Columba from travelling (cf. Bon-

[8] The form of this spell also illustrates the interrelation between poetry and Druidism, as stated by Ó Hógáin (72).

[9] Spence here actually refers to fith-fath (cf. the section on wands and spells above).

wick 30-31).[10] Another story that deals with a Druidic battle even features a flying, 'evil' Druid, called Mog Ruith:

> Then did Mog Ruith call for his dark hornless bull hide and his white-speckled bird headpiece and his Druidic instruments, and thus accoutred, he flew upward into the air […]. In the firmament he was encountered by Cormac's Druid Ciothruadh, but Mog Ruith's power was the stronger (Spence, *History* 164).

This may remind readers of *Harry Potter* of Voldemort, who is able to fly without the help of a broom (cf. *Hallows* 56). However, in the Celtic story the other Druid is likewise able to fly; in other words, the ability to fly without a device is not necessarily associated with evil in Irish folklore.[11]

The reference to flying is not the only element of the battle mentioned above that can also be found in Rowling's series. The description of the battle the passage above is taken from is also concerned with two fires that have been lit by the Druids fighting each other. As mentioned already in the previous section, there are many spells connected to fire in *Harry Potter*, but there is no reference to two fires battling each other. However, there is a hellish fire that cannot be extinguished by wizards, namely the 'Fiendfyre', which consumes one version of the Room of Requirement in *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* (cf. ibid. 507-10). Another kind of magic connected to the fire in this battle is the following: Mog Ruith crafts a 'magical ball' from shavings of the shaft of the soldiers' spears and butter, "chanting a spell the while to the effect that the angry flame he was about to let loose might subdue that of his enemy. He then cast the magical ball into the fire, where it exploded with a thunderous report" (Spence, *History* 165). There are several spells that cause explosions in *Harry Potter*, as for example 'Expulso' (cf. *Hallows* 138) or 'Confringo' (cf. ibid. 279), but none of them requires such an elaborate procedure as the one ascribed to Mog Ruith.

Moreover, Bonwick adds to Spence's version of the story mentioned above a passage in which the other Druid says "a charm with his mountain-ash stick" (Bonwick 61), which reinforces the notion of a magical battle similar to those in *Harry Potter*. There is no evidence for this in the original story, but there is a reference to a wand being used by a Druid at an earlier stage in the story (cf. Ó Duinn 33). During the battle, Mog Ruith uses his 'devastating breath' to turn three druids into stone, a procedure that is reminiscent of the spell 'Petrificus Totalus' in *Harry Potter* (cf. *Stone* 198), which, however, is produced with the help of a wand. Mog Ruith, moreover, uses his breath to create "a great black cloud which rained down blood" (Spence, *Magical Arts* 165), an event for which no equivalent can be found in *Harry Potter*.

V. Shape-shifting

As already pointed out above, one of the uses of wands by the Druids involved transformations, i.e., shape-shifting. Shape-shifting is a prominent feature regarding the depiction of Druids in ancient Irish literature, and it also plays a major part throughout the *Harry Potter* series. In Rowling's novels, there are different magical ways of changing one's shape, i.e., the magic practised by the Animagi, the Metamorphmagi as well as Transfiguration and Polyjuice

[10] The source of this account is presumably a Christian text, which needs to be regarded with caution as Druids were likely to be seen as 'heathens' in this context, resulting in unfavourable assessments of them and their doings (cf. Bonwick 24).

[11] Severus Snape is also able to fly without any magical device; yet he seems to have learned this from Voldemort (cf. *Hallows* 482).

Potion. In the following, the different processes of changing one's shape will be analysed and compared with what can be found about shape-shifting in ancient accounts of Celtic Druids.[12]

According to Spence, shape-shifting Druids in Irish literature can assume any form they want. Moreover, they are also able to cast spells upon others, "so that they [appear] in forms unlike themselves, or in animal or even inanimate shapes" (Spence, *History* 148). Bonwick adds that Druids could also transform men into trees (cf. 83). As mentioned above, Carmichael states that the spell 'fith-fath' is also used to "transform one object into another" (Carmichael quoted in Spence, *Magic Arts* 60). In *Harry Potter*, Animagi, as defined by McGonagall, are "wizards who could transform at will into animals" (*Prisoner* 83-84). They can also transform themselves back into their human shape again. Dumbledore adds to this in his elaborations on "Babbitty Rabbitty and her Cackling Stump" in *The Tales of Beedle the Bard*: "Animagi make up a small fraction of the wizard population. Achieving perfect, spontaneous human to animal transformation requires much study and practice, and many witches and wizards consider that their time might be better employed in other ways" (*Tales* 80). Unlike Druids, Animagi can only transform into one specific animal, not into many different ones. Moreover, it typically takes a long time to achieve this ability, and it cannot be achieved by the mere flick of a wand. By contrast, the Welsh bard Taliesin allegedly could assume any shape he wanted, be it "a vulture upon a rock, an eagle, 'the fairest of plants', the wood in the covert, the word of science, the sward itself" (Spence, *History* 149). Neither Druids in Celtic accounts nor Animagi in *Harry Potter* require a spell to shape-shift. Metamorphmagi have abilities that are similar to those of Animagi; they "'can change [their] appearance at will'" (*Phoenix* 51) and do not need a wand or a potion to do so. Yet, in contrast to Animagi, they have been born with this special ability.

For Druids, the transformation process which involves changing others into animals or inanimate objects requires the use of a spell, as in the well-known Irish story "The Children of Lir", whose title characters "were said by ancient Irish bards to have been changed by a Druidic wand […] into four swans" (Bonwick 245). The "druidical fairy wand" (Joyce 6) is also referred to in the *Old Celtic Romances*.[13] This feature of Druidic transformation is reminiscent of the Transfiguration classes in *Harry Potter*. In these, inanimate objects are changed into other objects or into animals: "Then she [Professor McGonagall] changed her desk into a pig and back again. […] [T]hey [the students] were each given a match and started trying to turn it into a needle" (*Stone* 100). Although the Transfiguration lessons do not involve transforming the wizard or witch him-/herself, the process taught by Professor McGonagall does rely on the same elements as magical transformations described in Celtic literature: a spell, a wand, animals and inanimate objects. Still, the idea of casting a spell on oneself in order to change one's shape (or at least part of it) is drawn upon when Victor Krum transforms his head into that of a shark during the Triwizard Tournament in Harry's fourth year at Hogwarts

[12] The obvious parallel between the shape-shifting of Celtic Druids and Animagi and Metamorphmagi in *Harry Potter* has also been noted by Colbert (cf. 23, 30). He does not explore the similarities with respect to the processes of transformation, however.

[13] P.W. Joyce claims to have translated the *Old Celtic Romances* from Gaelic, "from the manuscripts of Trinity College and of the Royal Irish Academy" (vi). For the sources of his work, see Joyce viii. However, his claim of a translation "for literary […] purposes" (ibid. vi) suggests a free translation, meaning that from an academic point of view it has to be regarded with caution. Moreover, writing in the 18th-century tradition, his work may represent an instance of 'Druids-as-wished-for'. "The Children of Lir", an Irish legend, however, which is quoted here, exists in other sources as well (cf. Birkhan 682). Joyce's work has been consulted as the story is alluded to in the same way in the other three main sources used for this paper (Spence, *The Magic Arts of Celtic Britain*, Spence, *History and Origins of Druidism* and Bonwick, *Irish Druids and Old Irish Religions*).

(cf. *Goblet* 434): "He seemed to have Transfigured himself – but badly" (ibid.). This suggests that, in theory, even a transformation of one's entire body into any given animal by means of a spell is possible in *Harry Potter*'s world. Dumbledore confirms this in his comments on "Babbitty Rabbitty and her Cackling Stump", where he also refers to the differences between being an Animagus and transfiguring oneself into an animal:

> Animagi do not retain the power of human speech while in their animal form, although they keep all their human thinking and reasoning powers. This, as every schoolchild knows, is the fundamental difference between an Animagus, and Transfiguring oneself into an animal. In the case of the latter, one would become the animal entirely, with the consequence that one would know no magic, be unaware that one had ever been a wizard, and would need somebody else to Transfigure one back to one's original form (*Tales* 83).

The loss of identity and magical abilities seems to constitute another difference to the effects of Druidic magic; the children of Lir, for example, remember who they were, though they have been transformed into swans. In addition, shape-shifting Druids who transform themselves can also return to their original shape without the help of others. A case in point is the story of Ceritwen, who pursues the Druid Gwion and changes among other things into a hound and finally into a hen, when she eats Gwion, who has transformed himself into a grain (cf. Birkhan 871).

Spence also mentions Druids changing into the shapes of other people: "The Irish Druid Fer Fidail assumed the appearance of a woman, […] while another Druid deceives Cuchullin […] by taking the form of the Lady Niamh" (Spence, *History* 148). This sounds very much like the effect of Polyjuice Potion in *Harry Potter*. Witches and wizards drinking the potion are transformed into another human being for a short time: "You can change age, sex and race by taking the Polyjuice Potion, but not species" ("Polyjuice Potion" n.p.). Thus, this potion does not work for transforming oneself into inanimate objects or animals, as Hermione's accident with the cat hair in the second volume proves (cf. *Chamber* 168).

The comparative analysis of shape-shifting so far has shown that Druids can transform themselves into another person, animal or inanimate being without the help of potions and spells, i.e., by employing a similar procedure as the Animagi in *Harry Potter*, although without the limitations imposed upon the latter. In Druidism, there are two major types of transformation: one is shape-shifting, the other one is casting a spell on others to make them change their form. The counterpart of the first type in *Harry Potter* are the Animagi and Metamorphmagi and the use of Polyjuice Potion. There are some crucial differences between Druidic transformation and the one practised by wizards and witches in Rowling's series, however, the most important being that Druids can take any form they want without needing a potion or external help, while wizards and witches in *Harry Potter* are subject to rules that restrict the possibilities of transformation. The counterpart of the second type of Druidic transformation mentioned above is to be found in the Transfiguration classes (and thus is a part of the basic school curriculum). Although the overall process of transformation is very much the same, people who are under a spell in *Harry Potter* do not remember who they were before, while the spell cast by Druids may still allow enchanted people to remember their identity and fate. All in all, there are quite a lot of similarities, however, so it seems at least conceivable that Rowling may have picked up some ideas from stories about Druids and developed them further in her novels.

VI. Potions

In addition to spells, potions constitute the second major magical device in the *Harry Potter* series. An entire school subject is devoted to potions, and they can indeed help a wizard in manifold ways – be it to heal wounds, mend broken arms or to make someone else fall in love with oneself.[14] Potions are also employed for dark purposes, for example, to kill someone, and are generally very powerful. As Professor Snape puts it, "'I can teach you how to bottle fame, brew glory, even stopper death'" (*Stone* 102). One of the potions that play a particularly important role throughout the series was already mentioned in the previous section: Polyjuice Potion, which transforms a wizard or witch into another person.

There are also references to potions in connection to Druids in Celtic literature. In one version of a story about the Celtic warrior Cuchullain, for example, he is given "a draught of forgetfulness" (Spence, *Magic Arts* 27) by the Druids to forget the fairy lady with whom he betrayed his wife (cf. Bonwick 52). There is no reference to a potion that could achieve anything like this in *Harry Potter*; yet there is a corresponding spell: 'Obliviate' (cf. *Hallows* 139). In another story, Druids "[consecrate] some water" (Bonwick 52) in order to enable Queen Mughain to bear a child. There is a complex process behind this, but there is no comparable potion in the *Harry Potter* novels. Similarly, Finn MacCoul has the gift to serve healing water from his hands, which makes one forever young and immune to any illness (cf. Spence, *Magic Arts* 26). Although there are many different types of healing draughts in *Harry Potter*, as for example Skele-Gro, which re-grows bones (cf. *Chamber* 131), none of these has the power to make someone immortal. A similar idea is associated with the Philosopher's Stone in *Harry Potter*, which mostly relies on non-Druidic sources, though (cf. "The Philosopher's Stone" n.p.).[15] Finally, a more straightforward connection between *Harry Potter* and alleged Druidic practices can be established with respect to one of the ingredients of Polyjuice Potion: fluxweed can only be picked at full moon (cf. *Chamber* 125), and the Roman historian Pliny states in his accounts of Druidism that the best time to cut mistletoe was determined by the moon (cf. Spence, *History* 164). Although potions are mentioned in connection with Druids as well as in *Harry Potter*, these do not seem to provide many one-to-one correspondences. At least, there are no examples of potions that are completely identical.

VII. Prophecy and divination

A final, very important aspect of Celtic Druidism is divination and the making of prophecies; in fact, "[p]rophecy and divination are the accomplishments most frequently attributed to druids in Irish literature" (Ó Hógáin 75). Divination – similar to Transfiguration and Potions – is one of the subjects taught at Hogwarts (by Firenze and Sybil Trelawney). Moreover, prophecies have a great impact on the storyline throughout the series – most of all the prophecy concerning Harry and Voldemort ("'*and either must die at the hand of the other for neither can live while the other one survives*'", *Phoenix* 741, original emphasis). Yet the forms in which prophecies are made differ in the *Harry Potter* series, on the one hand, and in Druidic lore, on the other hand.

[14] In *Harry Potter*, potions are brewed in cauldrons. As mentioned in the introduction, Rowling definitely knows about the Celtic cauldrons, as her Pottermore article "Cauldrons" shows. Colbert also draws this connection in *Magical Worlds* (52-54).

[15] For a discussion of the background of the Philosopher's Stone, cf. the article by Naemi Winter in this volume.

In Irish literature, there is evidence of Druidic forms of divination by means of casting bones or omen-sticks, reading dreams or crystal-gazing (cf. Spence, *History* 154-55). At least the last two types of divination are also part of the Hogwarts curriculum. Crystal-gazing is particularly prominent in *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*: "Glowing on every table was a crystal ball full of pearly white mist" (*Prisoner* 218). The reading of dreams is addressed in *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix* (cf. *Phoenix* 214, 280). The procedure of reading dreams for Irish Druids is the 'Imbus Forosnai', meaning "Illumination by the Palms of the Hands" (Spence, *History* 151). After having undergone several preparatory rituals, the Druid would lie down with one hand on each cheek and then receive the knowledge he was seeking (cf. Ó Hógáin 79). In Trelawney's classes, by contrast, dreams are interpreted by consulting a book rather than intuitively (cf. *Phoenix* 214). Druids in Irish literature were held to be able to read omens from birds, the raven being connected to foretelling misfortune (cf. Ó Hógáin 75). There is no such procedure in *Harry Potter*.

Professor Trelawney is not the only person to teach Divination at Hogwarts, however, and her preferred methods of divination are not the only ones either. When she loses her position in the course of the fifth book, the centaur Firenze takes over. He is closer to nature than Professor Trelawney and – like centaurs in the Potterverse in general – reads the future mainly from the stars (cf. *Phoenix* 531). When talking about a coming wizarding war he refers to other ways of divination in passing: "'How soon, centaurs may attempt to divine by the burning of certain herbs and leaves, by the observation of fume and flame'" (ibid. 532). This is reminiscent of another aspect of Druidic Divination, namely "[o]mens […] drawn from the direction of the smoke and flames of sacred fires and from the condition or appearance of the clouds" (Spence, *History* 159). Spence adds that these Druidic fires were made of "the magical rowan, or mountain ash" (ibid. 164), which echoes the significance of these trees for wands. In *Harry Potter*, it is also specific plants, for example "sage and mallowsweet" (*Phoenix* 532), which are burnt in order "to look for certain shapes and symbols in the pungent fumes" (ibid.).[16]

Being able to divine the future in order to utter prophecies is associated with the gift of the Second Sight in *Harry Potter* (cf. ibid. 281); something similar can be found in accounts of Druids.[17] Spence observes with respect to Druidic prophecy: "The word employed in such prophecies is *baile*, which in Gaelic implies 'speech of excitement,' or has some such significance suggesting frenzied utterance" (Spence, *History* 161, original emphasis). This characteristic of prophecy-making essentially also holds true in the *Harry Potter* novels. In *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*, Trelawney makes a prophecy in Harry's presence, thus giving insight into the process: "Professor Trelawney had gone rigid in her armchair; her eyes were unfocused and her mouth sagging. […] Her eyes started to roll" (*Prisoner* 238). The last part of her prophecy even suggests the notion of the aforementioned 'frenzied utterance': "'*Tonight ... before midnight ... the servant ... will set out ... to rejoin ... his master ...*'" (ibid. 238, original emphasis).

Apparently, in Irish legends, not all of the prophecies made by Druids come true, and the persons affected by the prophecy are still agents of their own destiny. In one story, a king is informed of a prophecy saying that his daughter's son will take the kingdom from him; yet,

[16] Another aspect of Druidic divination in Irish and Scottish texts is the reading of the future by means of a bull sacrifice (cf. Spence, *History* 160). In historical accounts of Druids, not only animal but also human sacrifices are mentioned. The accuracy of some of these accounts is contested, however, as the Roman writers were probably biased against the Celts (cf. Ó Hógáin 73). None of these practices appear in *Harry Potter*, probably due to the simple fact that *Harry Potter* is after all a series primarily written for young readers.

[17] In Welsh sources, this gift was connected to eating eagle's flesh (cf. Spence, *History* 155).

this son, Finn MacCoul, never becomes king (cf. Spence, *History* 162). The fact that in Rowling's wizarding world prophecies are kept hidden and locked away by the Ministry of Magic (cf. *Phoenix* 685), thus making it impossible for those who are mentioned in them to hear them, suggests that in *Harry Potter* a prophecy maybe does not have to come true, either. Firenze confirms this with respect to divination in general, saying "that it [is] foolish to put too much faith in such things, anyway, because even centaurs sometimes read them [the signs] wrongly" (ibid. 532).

Concerning divination as well as prophecies, there are many similarities between *Harry Potter* and the ancient accounts of Celtic Druidism. Similar practices are employed, including star-gazing, magical fires, crystal-gazing and the reading of dreams. But at the same time, there are many aspects in Druidic divination that have no counterpart in the wizarding world, such as the sacrifice of animals or the reading of omens from the flight of birds. Still, there are so many parallels that it might be possible that Rowling took the processes drawn upon in Druidism as a basis for divination and prophecies in *Harry Potter*.

VIII. Conclusion

Whether or to what extent Rowling actually used the accounts of ancient Celtic Druidism as a source of inspiration for her series remains unclear. However, some parallels between Druidism and the wizarding world are quite striking and suggest that Rowling might have been inspired by ancient accounts on Druids. There are many parallels between Celtic Druidism on the British Isles and in Ireland and the *Harry Potter* novels. Spells and wands, transfiguration, divination and prophecy provide intriguing parallels. Druids, similar to the wizards and witches in *Harry Potter*, make use of a wooden wand, although it is not clear whether they actually need it in order to do magic. They even have a 'peace-bringing wand', which has special powers, similar to the Elder Wand in *Harry Potter*. Druids in ancient Celtic literature also employ similar spells and make use of these in magical battles. The resemblances concerning spells include fire spells, water spells and explosive spells, but the accounts of Druidism speak of spells resulting in clouds raining blood or the creation of storms, which have no counterpart in the Potterverse. Potions exist in *Harry Potter* and in accounts of Celtic Druids, but all in all, they provide a less obvious link between Druidic magic and the Potterverse than spells due to the lack of one-to-one correspondences. Divination and prophecies, by contrast, are very similar in the *Harry Potter* novels and in the accounts of Druidism. Druids and wizards employ similar practices, like star- and crystal-gazing, the reading of dreams and the smoke of flames. Not all of the procedures employed by Druids appear in *Harry Potter*, though; animal sacrifices and the casting of omen sticks for example do not appear. Still, prophecies in the wizarding world and in Druidism seem to follow similar rules; they are made by someone who is gifted with the Second Sight, and they do not always come true, which means that the individuals are still agents of their own future. Lastly, shape-shifting in Irish Druidism provides a close parallel to *Harry Potter*, where it appears in different guises, including the Animagi, Transfiguration and taking Polyjuice Potion. All in all, shape-shifting in *Harry Potter* seems to adhere to somewhat stricter rules than its counterpart in the Celtic tradition, however. After all, Druids can adopt any shape they want to and return to their previous shape at will. Animagi in *Harry Potter* can only transform into one specific animal, and wizards and witches who are not Animagi, yet transfigure themselves into another being, do not retain their magical powers.

This paper could only provide a brief introduction to a comparative analysis of Celtic Druids and Rowling's *Harry Potter* novels. Many other aspects could also be examined in this context, including clothing, further spells and magical battles. Even a comparison of the

modern image of Druidism with the wizarding world presented in the novels would be interesting.

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Svenja Renzel

Double, Double Toil and (Gender) Trouble: The Gaunt Family

I. Introduction

"'He'll be famous – a legend – I wouldn't be surprised if today was known as Harry Potter Day in future – there will be books written about Harry – every child in our world will know his name'" (*Stone* 15). This prediction, uttered by Albus Dumbledore in *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* (1997), has also come true for the world of many Muggle readers around the globe. Despite its undeniable success, the series is far from being flawless. In particular the gender roles that are depicted in Rowling's novels have often been criticised. In this context, Hermione is presumably the character that ought to be mentioned first:

> In the very first book, *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*, Hermione, characterized as the most talented of the bunch in scholastic pursuits, is found helpless and screaming in the bathroom when attacked by a troll. Why didn't she use any of her spells? As the only constant female character in the book, why is she characterized as acerbic and cranky? Why does she have to undergo what amounts to sorcerous cosmetic surgery in a later book in order to be considered attractive? (Thomas 62).

Melissa Thomas clearly has a point. A closer examination of Rowling's female characters reveals that Hermione is definitely not the only female character whose portrayal is highly debatable, though. Molly Weasley is another case in point, as she is arguably more famous for her jumpers than for her jinxes. The portrayal of female characters that are depicted in a questionable way is far from being contemporary; instead, many of these characters seem to have been based on 19th-century templates. When writing about Rowling, Seth Lerer argues that "[t]here is more of Charles Dickens than of Tolkien in her novels" (464). This 'Victorian' side of Rowling's writing becomes particularly visible when studying her female characters.

In the following, a striking example of the 'Victorian' approach to the representation of female characters will be examined in more detail: Merope Gaunt. In this case, even the premise of the character's story could easily call forth associations with Dickens's classic *Oliver Twist* (1837-39). At the beginning of said novel, the reader is told that Oliver's mother was a poor, unmarried woman. She dies in childbirth, and Oliver grows up on a baby farm and in the workhouse. In Rowling's series, Merope is left by her husband and heads for London, being both penniless and pregnant. She gives birth to a son, who is named Tom, and dies, leaving her child in the care of an orphanage. While Oliver and Tom grow up to be vastly different characters, the stories of their mothers bear some striking similarities. As far as the representation of Merope along the lines of 'Victorian' notions of gender roles is concerned, this tale is only the tip of the iceberg, though. In several respects, the witch is depicted in a subordinate position, which echoes Victorian ideas of femininity – and this portrayal is what this paper will focus on.

II. Merope's subordinate position within her family

First and foremost, one needs to contextualise the presentation of Merope Gaunt in terms of both narrative structure and character constellation. She is only introduced to the reader in *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince* (2005), which is simultaneously the last book to really feature her as a character. The series alludes to her much earlier, though, for instance in *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* (1998), when Voldemort mentions his mother. However, only in *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince* is she finally given an identity of her own – apart from that of being the mother of the villain. Harry 'encounters' Merope for the first time when he is visiting a memory in Dumbledore's Pensieve: student and headmaster enter the memory of a wizard named Bob Ogden, who used to work for the Ministry of Magic. As Head of the Magical Law Enforcement Squad, Ogden went to a place near the town of Little Hangleton, where he paid the Gaunt family a visit, believing that Merope's brother Morfin had used magic on a Muggle, who later turned out to be Tom Riddle Sr. However, Ogden's task was not an easy one, as the Gaunt family was hostile to him. Eventually he had to leave, only to come back later, accompanied by reinforcement. The memory of Bob Ogden's visit is the main source of information regarding Merope, which means that – similar to many female characters in Victorian novels – she is only presented to the readers through the filter of a male perspective. Moreover, in order to understand Merope's position, it is necessary to take a closer look at the powerful men around Merope.

Morfin is the first member of the Gaunt family Bob Ogden encounters, even before the Ministry official enters the family's shack. The novel describes Morfin in the following way:

> The man standing before them had thick hair so matted with dirt it could have been any colour. Several of his teeth were missing. His eyes were small and dark and stared in opposite directions. He might have looked comical, but he did not; the effect was frightening, and Harry could not blame Ogden for backing away several more paces before he spoke (*Prince* 191).

Morfin is instantly presented as someone who can inspire fear in others and as being so frightening that Ogden is even physically repelled by him. Furthermore, Morfin also has the personality to match his physique. As it turns out, he has impressive powers and is a potential threat: Morfin is speaking Parseltongue when Ogden encounters him. Said ability is shown to unsettle Ogden. Additionally, Morfin is holding a bloody knife in one hand and his wand in the other, which certainly makes him look intimidating. There is even more to Morfin than that, however. He is willing to take action and jinxes Ogden, who, as a consequence, has a "nasty yellowish goo" (ibid. 192) coming out of his nose. Judging from his behaviour, Morfin completely dominates the situation, despite the fact that Ogden, as the Head of the Magical Law Enforcement Squad, is an authority figure.

Marvolo Gaunt, the second member of the Gaunt family Bob Ogden meets, is even more dominating than his son. Marvolo speaks "aggressively" (ibid.), which indicates that he clearly does not care about starting off the conversation with a high-ranking employee of the Ministry of Magic on good terms. He also acts authoritatively towards his own son, as he orders Morfin around. The fact that Marvolo can control Morfin, who is a threatening character as well, emphasises what a strong patriarch he is. He is described as even looking powerful: "This man was shorter than the first, and oddly proportioned; his shoulders were very broad and his arms overlong, which, with bright brown eyes, short scrubby hair, and wrinkled face, gave him the look of a powerful, aged monkey" (ibid.). While this portrayal – very much like the description of Morfin – is far from flattering, it also underlines the sense of power one can apparently feel in his presence. Moreover, the description of Marvolo's physique conjures up images that are reminiscent of the ape-like appearance of Robert Louis Stevenson's Mr

Hyde, arguably one of the most iconic Victorian literary characters. Additionally, just like his son, Marvolo is able to speak Parseltongue, which is primarily associated with evil characters in *Harry Potter*. During his conversation with Ogden, Marvolo inquires if Ogden has pure blood and once again becomes "suddenly aggressive" (ibid. 193). All of this evokes the impression that Marvolo is a forceful and angry man, who clearly knows how to make himself heard. He does not back down and does not hold back.

All in all, both Morfin and Marvolo are dominating and controlling male characters who have aggressive tendencies and make themselves noticed. Their respective ways of doing so are clearly morally highly questionable – but they are effective. Their power is very different from that some of the other characters of the series possess; they are not presented as intelligent schemers of evil plans, as politically influential or as being able to buy influence. Their power seems to be a lot simpler and more straightforward – but that does not mean that it is less efficient.

When the reader first meets Merope, she is fiddling around with pots and pans. This image of a woman taking care of domestic tasks may remind the reader of the gender relations in the Victorian Age, when "men out in the world operated in the public sphere, while women at home looked after the private one" (Flanders 254). According to Greenblatt and Abrams, the Victorians had "an ideology that claimed that woman had a special nature peculiarly fit for the domestic role" (992). At least from Ogden's perspective, Merope is fulfilling domestic duties, while the men of the family defend the house and talk business. One of the very first things the reader learns about Merope is that she looks downcast; she is described as a "defeated-looking person" (*Prince* 194). This description establishes a striking contrast to her male relatives, who are associated with power and the ability to intimidate others. Merope's physical description could hardly be more different, and therefore the dissimilarity between her and her relatives could hardly be more pronounced. In all likelihood, Merope is – at least in physical terms – the weakest member of her family. It is very interesting that the weakest member of the Gaunt family happens to be the only female family member, which says a lot about this family's gendered power relations. The character constellation which juxtaposes rough men displaying a threatening demeanour on the one hand and a weaker, victimised woman on the other hand bears striking similarities with the character constellation witnessed by Lockwood in Emily Brontë's classic *Wuthering Heights* (1847), which reinforces the impression that Victorian models have informed the depiction of the Gaunt family.

In addition to Merope's defeated looks, she also appears to be 'voiceless', remaining silent, while the men are talking. After a heated discussion with Morfin and Marvolo, Ogden enters the home of the Gaunt family, where he also meets Merope, and continues to discuss the accusations against Morfin with the two men. During this entire conversation, Merope does not say a word – despite the fact that Ogden addresses her directly. He wishes her a good morning, and Merope does not reply. She even remains silent when her father insults her by calling her a 'dirty Squib'. Squibs have to face considerable hardship in the wizarding world. In *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* (2007), Harry meets Ron's aunt Muriel and they talk about how Squibs were treated in the past. According to Muriel, Squibs were "'often hushed up'" (*Hallows* 129). She also tells Harry that "'Squibs were usually shipped off to Muggle schools and encouraged to integrate into the Muggle community'" (ibid. 130).[1] Since Ogden's visit occurred quite a long time ago, being called a Squib was probably even more of an insult in the scene that is evoked in the memory than it is at the time when the rest of the series is set. Given the fact that Marvolo Gaunt is immensely proud of his pure-blood, it is

[1] The witch believes that this way of dealing with Squibs is actually "'much kinder than trying to find them a place in the wizarding world, where they must always be second class'" (*Hallows* 130).

safe to assume that, for him, calling someone a 'Squib' is indeed a horrendous insult. In other words, he behaves in a very disrespectful way towards his own daughter, and she apparently does not even dare to protest; in fact, she does not react at all to what her father says – even though the accusation is not even justified. By and large, her behaviour correlates with the female gender role in the Victorian Age, when "[g]entleness, silence and ignorance were almost synonymous as desirable ladylike traits" (Flanders 276). The wife of the famous Victorian novelist Charles Dickens, for instance, was reportedly never allowed to speak her mind or express her feelings in public (cf. Rose 168-69). Merope's silence is therefore clearly reminiscent of Victorian times, in particular because Marvolo's insult obviously hurts Merope. Her hands are trembling, which shows that she is hurt by her father's verbal abuse, but she is apparently unable or too frightened to express her feelings. As Rowling puts it in the novel, "[s]he then stood quite still, her back against the wall between the filthy window and the stove, as though she wished for nothing more than to sink into the stone and vanish" (*Prince* 195). Merope is the prototype of the passive, victimised woman.

Being passive and displaying a lack of agency is a recurring feature with respect to the depiction of Merope in this memory sequence. In addition to verbally abusing and insulting his daughter, Marvolo also physically attacks her on numerous occasions. She wears a locket, and once Marvolo grabs her by the throat and chokes her with the golden chain. Instead of defending herself or at least voicing her disapproval of this treatment, Merope just massages her neck and gulps for air once the attack is over. It is Ogden who protests on her behalf. The fact that a stranger criticises Marvolo's actions while the person who suffers the most does not protest at all stresses how utterly passive and defeated Merope is.

In addition to all of this, Merope also seems to lack some of the abilities her male relatives and other male wizards around her possess. She seems to have comparatively poor magical abilities, although she is not a Squib. Shortly after Ogden entered the shack, she accidentally breaks a pot while using magic. Her relatives seem to be capable wizards, even though eventually both Marvolo and Morfin are defeated by representatives of the Ministry and put into prison. Still, Morfin displays some amount of magical talent and skill, when he jinxes both Tom Riddle Sr. and Ogden. At least based on what the readers learn about her, Merope does not seem to be a particularly gifted witch.

Her position within the Gaunt family, whose male members are proud of their 'pureblood', is further undermined by her being infatuated with a Muggle. Shortly after having nearly been choked by her own father, Merope sees that Tom Riddle Sr. passes by the Gaunt home. Morfin starts to talk to her in Parseltongue, making fun of her feelings for Riddle. Marvolo joins his son and starts to insult Merope for having feelings for a man he refers to as a "'*filthy, dirt-veined Muggle*'" (ibid. 199, original emphasis). Again, Merope is not treated with respect by her family. Nevertheless, the use of Parseltongue in this situation is noteworthy. As the situation shows, Merope is able to understand Parseltongue; when Morfin claims that she always looks through the hedge in order to see Riddle, Merope shakes her head in denial. Still, the reader never witnesses her *speaking* Parseltongue. It thus remains unclear whether Merope merely understands Parseltongue or can actually speak it, too. Be that as it may, her refusal or inability to speak Parseltongue is yet another instance where she is shown to be silent/silenced in a manner that evokes notions of female inferiority and Victorian womanhood.

The memory ends in a way that confirms Merope's subordinate role once more. Marvolo again physically attacks his daughter and Ogden saves her. Merope is thus once again presented as a silent victim, who needs Ogden to come to her rescue. One could argue that the pattern that is emerging regarding Merope helps to display the full extent of her weakness. She does not only need help in one particular situation, but several times. Being a victim thus

seems to be a part of her existence. Though the presentation of Merope's situation seems to convey a fairly straightforward image of her misery, one should not forget, however, that she is portrayed exclusively from Ogden's perspective.[2] Ogden's memory sequence certainly emphasises Merope's desperate situation and invites a comparison with Victorian families. Judging from the memory sequence, Merope lives in a strictly patriarchal family, which would not have been out of place in Victorian Britain.[3] She is passive, silent and seems to inhabit solely the domestic sphere, leading the life of a Victorian woman in many respects.[4] Women in the Victorian age were widely believed to be inferior to men in terms of their intellect (cf. Trudgill 70); according to the influential Victorian critic John Ruskin, a woman's "intellect is not for invention or creation, but for sweet ordering, arrangement, and decision" (92). Although strictly speaking very little is revealed about Merope's intellectual capacities, she at least does not seem to have the same abilities her male relatives have, being clearly treated as inferior to all of the men around her.

The 'Victorian' depiction of Merope and her fate does not end at this point. Later in *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince*, Dumbledore tells Harry more about the Gaunt family. He informs Harry that the family, despite being related to Salazar Slytherin, became poor long before Marvolo was even born. According to Dumbledore, "'[h]e, as you saw, was left in squalor and poverty, with a very nasty temper, a fantastic amount of arrogance and pride, and a couple of family heirlooms that he treasured just as much as his son, and rather more than his daughter'" (*Prince* 201). This line is striking for various reasons. Firstly, it reveals that Morfin was more important to Marvolo than Merope. It is not revealed whether her gender had any impact on Marvolo's lack of affection or not. Nevertheless, the fact that Marvolo appreciated his male offspring much more than his female one is reminiscent of hierarchies within Victorian families, when children were seen as part of a little hierarchical family pyramid "with boys, of whatever age, above girls" (Flanders 60). Secondly, in this statement, Dumbledore stresses that the Gaunt family lived in squalor and that Marvolo had a bad temper. The reader knows from the memory sequence that the Gaunts' home was not a peaceful one. Truth be told, their home was the opposite of the ideal Victorian home, which was supposed to be an idyllic place, a safe haven. In *The Women of England: Their Social Duties and Domestic Habits* (1839), Sarah Stickney Ellis described the perfect Victorian home as follows: "Not only must the house be neat and clean, but it must be so ordered as to suit the tastes of all, as far as may be, without annoyance or offence to any. Not only must a constant system of activity be established, but peace must be preserved, or happiness will be destroyed" (26). In a similar vein, Judith Flanders explains: "the well-kept house directed men as well as women towards the path of virtue, while the opposite led them irretrievably astray" (xxxiii). One could even claim that the Gaunts, who lived in a shady and dirty place character-

[2] If the aforementioned similarities with *Wuthering Heights* are anything to go by, there is at least the possibility of Ogden being unreliable – like his counterpart in Emily Brontë's novel, Lockwood, who is after all an unreliable narrator, who misunderstands the situation he is confronted with during his first visit to Wuthering Heights, including his assessment of the position of the younger Catherine.

[3] Of course, the Victorian period was not uniform in terms of its values and its gender roles. Andrzej Diniejko, for instance, stresses that the Victorian Age was also a time of change: "The final two decades of the Victorian era witnessed the beginning of a shift in social attitudes regarding gender relations, which is marked by a steady move away from the pattern of patriarchal male supremacy and female dependence towards the modern pattern of gender equality" (n.p.).

[4] Beyond the gender roles, the racist attitudes displayed by Merope's male relatives also hearken back to widespread Victorian ideas; as Michael Paterson points out it "was taken for granted that most other races were lazy and effete, and that they could not compete either in trade or in arms with Anglo-Saxons" (298).

ised by abuse and violence, had rather unhappy endings – a circumstance that confirms once more the Victorian template informing the depiction of the Gaunt family.

III. Merope's failed emancipation

The memory only covers a small segment of Merope's life, but what is described here shows quite clearly that her life was a very unhappy one. Dumbledore tells Harry what happened to her after her father and brother had been imprisoned. Again, the story of Merope's life is filtered through a male perspective; the victimised woman remains voiceless. At first, the further story of Merope's development reads very much like a liberation narrative: "'once she was alone and free for the first time in her life, then, I am sure, she was able to give full rein to her abilities and to plot her escape from the desperate life she had led for eighteen years'" (*Prince* 201). Apparently, Merope also had somewhat stronger magical abilities than the ones the reader could witness during the memory sequence after all. This could generally be seen as a positive sign. Being freed from her relatives she could achieve some power of her own, although the change was only brought about by help from outside. Merope spent 18 years of her life with an unloving, abusive family and did not do anything to change her situation. One could argue that this apparent lack of agency contributes further to her depiction along Victorian gender roles, as women in the Victorian age were denied the right to claim independence; their legal situation made it difficult for them to be autonomous. For most of the Victorian age, "even able and educated women of the privileged class had no legal identity of their own" (Wexler 146), while husbands had a lot of legal power over their wives, being entitled to imprisoning them if they attempted to run away from their marital home (cf. ibid.).

Merope did not only have a difficult relationship to her father and her brother – her relationship to Tom Riddle Sr. was equally conflicted. In this relationship, she displayed power and agency; yet, the use of power by Merope is shown in a very negative light. Dumbledore believes that Merope used a love potion to make Riddle, with whom she had been in love all along, fall for her. Dumbledore's guess is henceforth accepted as factual information in the series, which stresses once more that the depiction of Merope is always filtered through male perspectives. The idea that Merope was able to produce an effective love potion could be seen as evidence of her otherwise rarely displayed magical abilities. Moreover, the notion that she actively pursued her goal of winning Riddle's love is indicative of agency. Yet the use of a love portion in order to make Riddle fall in love with her creates an image of Merope as a scheming and manipulative woman. If she had to trick Riddle into taking a sip from her love potion and thus make him fall in love with her and marry her, this turns Merope into a figure who is doing wrong. This piece of information helps the reader understand her behaviour; nevertheless, it does not justify it in any way. In addition, a female character who uses a potion to manipulate the feelings of her husband, with whom she is "'deeply in love'" (*Prince* 203), as Dumbledore assumes, and is content with a lack of real affection is clearly pitiful. Due to Merope's potion, Riddle was no longer in control of his actions and decisions, having been robbed of his free will. Eventually, Merope had a change of heart; after a while, she stopped giving Riddle the love potion because she did not want to enslave him any longer. Dumbledore, who, quite condescendingly, refers to Merope as "'besotted'" (ibid.), says that she probably believed Riddle would return her love or stay with her for the sake of their baby. Her hopes prove to be unfounded. Without the potion, Riddle does not want to stay with his wife. She shares the fate of many jilted wives and brides in Victorian literature and eventually dies in despair.

Marvolo's reaction to the fact that Merope started to pursue her own goals, which is briefly mentioned by Dumbledore, once more confirms the Victorian framework informing the

presentation of the Gaunt family. According to Dumbledore, Marvolo "'returned from Azkaban, expecting to find his daughter dutifully awaiting his return with a hot meal ready on his table'" (ibid. 202). In Victorian Britain "the custom of expecting one child (often the youngest daughter) to remain at home as a companion to the ageing parents – a relict from earlier days and larger families – still seemed right to many" (Flanders 182). Merope, the only daughter, was expected to wait for her father and be his companion and cook for him, which correlates with women's roles in Victorian Britain. Apparently, it never even occurred to Marvolo that Merope had a life and goals of her own, goals that went beyond cleaning the shack and preparing meals for her relatives. In Marvolo's opinion, it was Merope's task to be nothing but a homemaker and stay in the domestic sphere – just like a Victorian middle-class woman.

Later in *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince*, the story of Merope Gaunt is picked up again. In a chapter called "The Secret Riddle", Dumbledore and Harry talk about Merope one more time, when the headmaster tells his student about Voldemort's childhood. The chapter reveals a lot regarding Merope. As mentioned above, Merope went to London after Riddle had left her, and her situation was more desperate than ever before. As Dumbledore states, she probably would have been able to get "'food and everything for herself by magic'" (*Prince* 245), but she seems to have lost her trust in magic, and perhaps also her will to survive:

> 'I am guessing again, but I am sure I am right – that when her husband abandoned her, Merope stopped using magic. I do not think that she wanted to be a witch any longer. Of course, it is also possible that her unrequited love and the attendant despair sapped her of her powers; that can happen. In any case, as you are about to see, Merope refused to raise her wand even to save her own life' (ibid. 245-46).

The breakup clearly leaves Merope heartbroken and destroys any agency she ever had. The reader cannot be sure if Merope consciously decided not to be a witch anymore or if she was unable to access her powers any longer. If she had made the conscious decision to stop using magic, one could argue that she still had a certain amount of power and control. If Riddle destroyed her abilities by breaking her heart, Merope would have been left completely powerless. Either way, her situation is hopeless, echoing the fate of jilted female characters in Victorian literature, such as Miss Havisham in Dickens's *Great Expectations* (1860-61). At the end of the day, the Muggle Riddle had so much power over Merope that losing him either took away her abilities or caused her to voluntarily give up on her identity as a witch. This development is reminiscent of the oft-repeated Victorian truism that love is a woman's whole existence. Riddle was obviously the more powerful party in this relationship. Merope emotionally depended on him, which is also underlined by the fact that she named her son after him and after her father. Choosing to name her son after two men who seriously hurt her indicates once more that Merope has internalised the role of the victim. She was unable to move on, remaining emotionally dependent on both her father and her husband. In Victorian Britain, women were even expected to strongly depend on the men in their lives. The father's authority was taken for granted in a patriarchal society, and marriage was seen as vital for women's identity: "[w]omen who remained unmarried had failed to fulfil their destiny, both biologically and psychologically" (Flanders 177). Being left by Riddle, Merope failed to fulfil her destiny according to Victorian norms, and this is what killed her eventually.

Merope's choices did not only make herself miserable and brought about her ruin; they ultimately also led to a very dark time for the rest of the wizarding world. On June 30, 2007 fans of the *Harry Potter* series had the opportunity of talking online with J.K. Rowling. One fan asked the author if the fact that Voldemort was conceived while his father was under the influence of a love potion is in any way related to the idea that the dark wizard cannot understand love. Rowling answered that she primarily wanted to show that Voldemort came from a

loveless union. Nevertheless, the author also stated that "everything would have changed if Merope had survived and raised him herself and loved him" (Rowling n.p.). Thus, Rowling stresses the importance of motherly love, which is confirmed time and again throughout the series, most famously with respect to Lily Potter's sacrifice, which saves her son's life. It is striking that Tom Riddle Sr.'s neglect of his son is not mentioned by Rowling. The emphasis on mothering is reminiscent of the glorification of the mother role in the Victorian period (cf. Paxman 107) and concomitant criticism of mothers who failed to fulfil this glorified role. In Victorian Britain, mothers tended to be seen as being mostly responsible for their children. In other words, the children's well-being was primarily associated with the caring qualities of their mothers, even in a time of "poor sanitation, dirty water, overcrowding and the pervasiveness of disease" (Abrams n.p.). The Victorians were plagued with serious epidemics, such as influenza, typhus, smallpox, scarlet fever, typhoid and cholera (cf. Flanders 298). Judith Flanders describes those epidemics as "the result of a lethal combination of bad weather conditions, high food prices leading to poor nutrition among much of the populace, sudden influxes of immigrants, and cities without the sewers and water supplies to cope with the sharp rise in population" (ibid.). Still, the "[r]esponsibility for the appalling death rate amongst infants was roundly placed on the shoulders of mothers" (Abrams n.p.). In addition, it was widely believed that the deaths of infants "could be prevented if poor mothers breast-fed their babies and were taught baby care" (ibid.). According to this Victorian way of thinking, the mother determines her child's future – much more so than the child's father, other people or external circumstances – and this is exactly what seems to happen in the case of young Tom Riddle, who has to grow up without his mother.

IV. Conclusion

"'Merope Riddle chose death in spite of a son who needed her, but do not judge her too harshly, Harry. She was greatly weakened by long suffering and she never had your mother's courage'" (*Prince* 246). This is Dumbledore's assessment of Merope's situation. His words appear to ring true. From all the reader knows, Merope led a life full of psychological and physical violence. Nevertheless, she is a prime example of a weak female character, who shows many traces of Victorian womanhood. She is mostly passive, submissive and victimised. At least in some respects, she is exactly the way women were believed to be (and supposed to be) in Victorian times, as this essay has shown. One could perhaps assume that her ability to make a love potion allows the reader to see her stronger side. However, even this seems questionable. The few empowering moments associated with Merope do not show her in positive light, nor are they indicative of real strength. Ultimately, Merope remains a victimised and weak character. Some of the questionable aspects of Merope's portrayal could be explained and maybe even justified due to her role as a victim – a role that stresses the striking similarities between the character of Merope and her predecessors in Victorian literature.

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Naemi Winter

‘I read about it in *Hogwarts: A History*’: The Reception and Function of History in the World of *Harry Potter*

I. Introduction

It is never going to be possible to properly judge why *Harry Potter* grew to be the worldwide phenomenon that it did and how it captured the imagination of children and adults alike. But that does not mean that one cannot attempt to approach the question from one angle, even if the answer is never quite going to satisfy. Part of what sets the series apart from other fantasy stories like Tolkien’s *The Lord of the Rings* (1954-55) is that it is set in the real world, not in a secondary world the author has created. Many of the locations in the books, such as King’s Cross Station or the Forest of Dean, are recognisable to the reader and many people can relate to some of the experiences the main characters have, like homework, exams, problems in a group of friends – things that are just a normal part of growing up, be it in the wizarding or the Muggle world. Many of the characters the reader encounters are familiar to them, for example, almost everyone has had that one teacher that they despised more than any other or the one subject they dreaded above all else. It is also an important aspect of why the world of *Harry Potter* seems so real to many who grew up reading the books. After all, witches and wizards do their best to escape detection and who can prove that they have not already witnessed magic and been ‘obliviated’? Of course, not all the numbers and facts add up, but it is not as if medieval chronicles never contradict themselves – if they did not, why would medievalists’ papers be mostly made up of footnotes? So why should J.K. Rowling always be absolutely accurate in her information?

One of the reasons why the world of *Harry Potter* appears so real seems to be the way Rowling interweaves Muggle history with that of the wizarding world. The aim of this paper will be to depict three instances in which she draws on Muggle history in order to strengthen the impression that the world she is creating can conceivably exist side by side with the real world. In doing so I will focus first on the way Rowling uses etymology to achieve this, using one example, specifically that of the term ‘Wizengamot’. Secondly, I will take a closer look at how she incorporates the legend of the Philosopher’s Stone into her narrative and make a short comparison of her Nicolas Flamel and the historical figure. Furthermore, I will give a brief introduction to the medieval persecution of witches and the Early Modern phenomenon commonly referred to as ‘witch hunts’ as well as to the characters who were affected by them and the effect they had on the wizarding community as a whole. While doing so, I will also be drawing attention to a common misconception, which is perpetuated by the books. Quite apart from how Rowling uses history to strengthen the perception that the wizarding world could be a real part of the Muggle world, it is also interesting to look at how history and historical research help Harry and his friends defeat Voldemort. The final part of the paper will therefore focus on this aspect, particularly on two types of sources they encounter – books and memories stored in a Pensieve – as well as on how they learn to judge these sources in a manner reminiscent of a historian’s work. This will be demonstrated using the example of how they deal with having to re-evaluate their image of Dumbledore owing to the information that comes to light regarding his youth.

II. Traces of a common past – the Wizengamot

For many years the Muggle and the wizarding world existed side by side, without the separation which plays an important role in the books. One example which clearly demonstrates the common roots of these two societies is the Wizengamot. The exact date when it was established is unknown, but it is likely to stem from pre-Conquest Anglo-Saxon England, since it is clearly based on the Anglo-Saxon Witenagemots. Far from being free to make decisions on his own, a medieval king was required to obtain and heed the advice of councillors – as Frank Stenton wrote, "[t]here are few matters of importance to the state on which an Anglo-Saxon king cannot be shown to have consulted his council" (552). The meetings of these advisors were referred to as the 'witenagemots', although the number and the identity of the councillors varied each time, depending on the location and the importance of the meeting. They could be members of the royal family, bishops, abbots, abbesses and worldly leaders like *earldomen* and *thegns* (cf. Röhrkasten). It should also be mentioned that it is difficult to gauge the exact functions and indeed the amount of influence exerted by the witenagemots (cf. Oleson 8-10). In chronicles, heeding the advice of one's councillors is often either portrayed as a sign of great wisdom or, alternatively, used to exonerate the king for a decision which turned out to be harmful to the kingdom, since he was driven to making that decision by his advisors.

The word 'witenagemot' itself derives from the Old English terms '*witan*', meaning 'to know' (Bosworth 'witan' n.p.), and '*gemōt*', meaning 'moot' or 'council' (Bosworth 'ge-mót' n.p.). The etymological similarities of the two words – witenagemot and Wizengamot – are quite apparent. Both the origin and the function of the Wizengamot within the wizarding world are not entirely clear. Maybe it, too, started out as an advisory council, perhaps even as part of the Muggle witenagemot. One of the few pieces of information that can be gleaned from the books is that there does not seem to be a clear separation of powers in the wizarding government of Britain, since the Minister for Magic, clearly part of the executive branch, also presides over the Wizengamot (cf. *Phoenix* 156), which not only seems to be in charge of the judiciary but also the legislative branch. As is often the case with wizarding institutions, – although the witenagemot cannot be called an institution in the modern sense – the Wizengamot proved to be more durable than its Muggle counterpart and appears to have survived the Norman Conquest, which effectively did away with the witenagemot and replaced it with the *curia regis*. And so, using one word, Rowling manages to seamlessly integrate the history of her wizarding world with an admittedly quite obscure part of Muggle history.

III. Alchemy in history and in fiction

A more obvious example of how Rowling incorporates elements from Muggle history into her story is the Philosopher's Stone, which plays a central role in the first book of the series. While children who read *Harry Potter* for the first time may not know about alchemy or the Stone, most adults will have a good idea of what the little package in Gringotts is and what it might be used for upon reading the title of the book. The belief that a substance may exist that would transform base metals into gold and produce a panacea goes as far back as the beginning of the Common Era (cf. Knapp 575) and remained a part of the scientific discourse in Europe until the Early Modern era, although it never entered the canon of medieval study. Given how deeply rooted it is in Western culture, it is not surprising that it is still a part of the collective memory. What seems to be less well known is the fact that Nicolas Flamel was a historical figure of the 14th and early 15th century, as was his wife Perenelle. He was born around 1330, probably in Pontoise, and died in Paris around 1418. There is little to no evi-

dence that Flamel, a scribe by trade and generous benefactor of several churches in Paris, actually dabbled in alchemy, but the wealth he supposedly acquired during his lifetime led to posthumous rumours about him being one of the few alchemists who actually succeeded in creating the Philosopher's Stone (cf. Jüttner "Nicolas Flamel"). His reputation as an alchemist stems from the 17th century, when several alchemical texts were attributed to him, for example the *Livre des figures hiéroglyphiques* (1612). According to this text, Flamel succeeded in making "pure gold, very certainly better than ordinary gold, milder, more malleable"[1] on 25 April 1382, but as previously stated, it is highly unlikely that this book can be traced back to him, especially because it was published nearly two centuries after his death.[2]

Rowling's Flamel was born in 1326 at the latest, probably quite a bit earlier.[3] He is, of course, a true alchemist within the narrative, in fact he is "the only known maker of the Philosopher's Stone" (*Stone* 163) and far from having died in 1418, his wife and he are still alive and well as late as 1992, at which point they give up the Philosopher's Stone. Flamel was definitely dead by 1996, as evidenced by content on Rowling's old website (Rowling "Rumours" n.p.). Diving into the canon of the *Harry Potter* books, it is entirely possible – as Don Keck DuPree points out in his essay "Nicolas Flamel: The Alchemist Who Lived" (76) – that the reason for the Flamels' disappearance from Muggle historical records is that they retreated to the wizarding world. After all, faking a gravestone should be easy work for someone who has managed to create a Philosopher's Stone. Furthermore, Nicolas Flamel is not the only alchemist Rowling claims for her books. Two other historical figures famous for their work on alchemy and magic make an appearance during Harry's first train ride to Hogwarts; one being Philippus Aureolus Theophrastus (Bombastus) of Hohenheim, better known as Paracelsus (*1493/94, †1541) and the other Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa of Nettesheim (*1486, †1535). Unlike Flamel, both of these are known to have pursued magic and, in the case of Paracelsus, alchemy in particular in their lifetime (cf. Jüttner "Paracelsus"; Valente "Agrippa" 7) and would have had much better cause to withdraw from Muggle society than Flamel a century earlier – which leads to a third aspect of Muggle history Rowling uses to explain 20th-century wizarding society: witch hunts.

IV. Early Modern witch hunts and their medieval roots

Rowling departs from historical evidence by highlighting 'witchcraft' as the main reason for prosecution, while it was actually 'heresy'. That is not to say that there are no recorded cases of prosecution of witchcraft in the Middle Ages, but they are always in connection with heresy. Generally speaking, Early Modern accusations of witchcraft bear little resemblance to their medieval antecedents.

A central aspect of medieval witchcraft was *maleficium*, in the sense of "'harm-doing by occult means'" (Cohn 148). Oftentimes a witch was accused of causing impotence, disease or death, or of conjuring up storms in order to ruin crops, almost always with the intention of causing harm to a particular person or family rather than causing widespread damage. There are only two recorded cases of *maleficium* trials before 1300, one in England around 970 and

[1] "[…] pur or, meilleur très certainement que l'or commun, plus doux & plus ployable" (Flamel *Figures* 54).

[2] According to Claude Gagnon, the true author of the text may have been "Béroalde de Verville, traducteur du *Songe de Poliphile* et auteur cabaliste des *Aventures d'Ali el Moselan*" (570).

[3] This can be calculated from the fact that the book from which Hermione gleans the information about the Stone states that Nicolas celebrated his 665th birthday the year before the book was published and Hermione reads the book in 1992. However, since the book in question is already described as being old (cf. *Stone* 160), it is very likely that Nicolas and his wife (658) are both significantly older.

one in France in 1028, both of which ended in the execution of the accused (cf. ibid. 153-54). The greater danger to suspected witches, however, seems to have been the mob, as there are numerous accounts of incidents where women who had been accused of *maleficium* were drowned, burnt, flogged, disembowelled or otherwise killed without the consent or involvement of the local authorities and much to the chagrin of the Church (cf. ibid. 154-55). Medieval lawmakers and intellectuals tended to have complex views on witchcraft, since it was often seen as a remnant of pagan traditions and superstition, especially during the early and high Middle Ages. The *Capitulatio de partibus Saxoniae*, for example, which is a collection of laws issued by Charlemagne in 782 to enforce the Christianisation of the Saxons, does not condemn witchcraft. On the contrary, one article explicitly states that those who, deceived by the Devil and following pagan tradition, accuse either a man or a woman of being a witch and of eating humans ("*strigam esse et homines commedere*"; "Karoli Magni Capitularia" 68) and burn or eat their flesh or allow others to do so, should themselves be put to death (cf. ibid. 68-69).[4]

The Church, too, spoke out against witch hunts many times over the course of the Middle Ages, denouncing it as un-Christian. Pope Alexander IV in 1260 issued an order to the Dominicans, who had been put in charge of the persecution of heretics, thereby earning the nickname "domini canes" – dogs of the lord – to only engage in the persecution of witchcraft if heresy was involved.[5] On the whole, during most of the early and the high Middle Ages, one was much more likely to be executed for heresy than for witchcraft, unless the latter came up in relation with the former. This was further strengthened by the teachings of Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) and other scholars associated with the Aristotelian tradition, who believed "that most magical operations required the aid of demons. But if one calls upon demons to help perform magic, one must offer the demons something in return. Hence, one must have an implicit pact with them" (Russell 144). The idea that witches got their power from demons evolved with time and paved the way for the concept of the deal with the Devil. This merging of witchcraft and heresy – for Devil worship must, of course, be seen as heresy – led to a resurgence of witch hunts in the late Middle Ages, although they remained sparse in the 14th century. The most influential treatise on witchcraft, the *Malleus Maleficarum* or "Hammer of Witches" was not published until 1486. However, as Norman Cohn points out, "the importance of the most famous of the witch-hunters' manuals, the *Malleus Maleficarum* […] has been exaggerated", at least as far as the formation of the "stereotype of the witch" (225) is concerned. Its main influence lies in the "detailed procedural manual for how a witchcraft trial should be conducted, how evidence should be gathered, and how interrogation and (if necessary) torture should be carried out" (Goodare 49). It is an unusual work in that it barely mentions what was to become one of the most important aspects of Early Modern witch hunts: the witches' sabbath.

It is arguably the idea of the sabbath which paved the way for the witch hunts of the Early Modern period. When charges were brought against a suspected witch in the Middle Ages, the nature of those charges, especially the fact that *maleficia* were generally believed to harm one

[4] The same is not true for Anglo-Saxon civil codes of the same time, which condemn the worship of pagan gods, but make no mention of "the evil practice of magic" (Crawford 107) or the persecution thereof.

[5] "*Ad illud autem quod quaeritur, utrum ad inquisitores haeresis pertineat de divinationibus et sortilegiis, quae contra aliquos sibi denunciantur, cognoscere ac punire talia exercentes. Brevibus respondetur, quod cum negotium fidei, quod summe privilegiatum existit, per occupationes alias non debeat impediri, inquisitores ipsi de iis, nisi manifeste saperent haeresim, ratione huiusmodi officii sibi commissi, se nullatenus intromittant, sed eos relinquant suis iudicibus poena debita castigandos*" (*Bullarum* XLVI 664 §4).

person or family that the witch in question had had a quarrel with, meant that the prosecution of witches was usually confined to either one person or family. This changed when the idea of the witches' sabbath, a meeting of witches presided over by the Devil and involving acts like the killing of babies, cannibalism and sexual orgies, became a central aspect of the charges against suspected witches, as did the nocturnal flight to these meetings. This meant that a suspect was not only expected to confess their own guilt, but also tortured until they revealed the names of others whom they had seen at the sabbath. The 'demographic' of the accused also changed over time. At first, both men and women were said to attend these meetings – in fact, one case saw a convicted man being tortured for the names of his accomplices, most of whom turned out to be men. Not only that, but he was "pressed […] to name priests and clerics and nobles and rich men in particular" (Cohn 230). Suspected witches in the Middle Ages tended to be men in high positions, whereas the Early Modern period saw the creation of the stereotype people are still familiar with today: the old woman as a witch (at least in Continental Europe and on the British Isles).[6] The persistence of the stereotype of women as witches is well demonstrated by J.K. Rowling, in that she uses the terms 'witch' and 'wizard' to distinguish between male and female sorcerers. Of course, she is just following a general linguistic development, since the meaning of the word 'witch' has evolved to almost exclusively refer to women.

V. Victims of witch hunts in *Harry Potter*

Given these facts, one wonders why Professor Binns would assign an essay titled "Witch Burning in the Fourteenth Century Was Completely Pointless – discuss" (*Prisoner* 7) rather than having his students focus on the 16th and 17th centuries. It is highly unlikely that Wendelin the Weird would have had the opportunity of being burnt forty-seven times during this time. Of course, Rowling has not mentioned where Wendelin came from. It can be assumed that she had not intended to be caught the first time she was convicted and only realised that she rather enjoyed being burnt while on the pyre. This would suggest that she was neither from England, where witches were hanged rather than burnt, nor from Scotland. Here the persecution of witchcraft was only legalised with the Witchcraft Act of 1563 and it was not until 1589/90 that witches were actively persecuted. This sudden rise in persecution was partly due to James VI's marriage to Princess Anne of Denmark and the time he spent in her homeland, where "witchcraft trials were quite common and the doctrine of witches' meetings well established" (Larner 24). Additionally, although witches were burnt in Scotland, they were usually strangled before the pyre was lit.[7] It is, of course, possible that Wendelin came from the Continent, but even so, being burnt for witchcraft forty-seven times in the 14th century remains an impressive feat, given both the sparsity of witch trials and the various ways of being executed in those times.

The execution of Sir Nicholas de Mimsy-Porpington, on the other hand, seems more plausible than that of Wendelin. According to Rowling's writings on Pottermore, he was a courtier at the court of Henry VII and in 1492 attempted to straighten the teeth of a lady-in-waiting. However, his attempt backfired and he only succeeded in having her grow a tusk, whereupon

[6] Cf. Goodare et al. (n.p.): "in areas like Estonia, Russia and Finland the percentage of men accused is as high and in some areas higher than of women. In Iceland the percentage of men executed was as high as 90%".

[7] There are 141 extant records of sentences specifying a method of execution. Only 17 of these order burning without mention of strangulation, but given the high number of sentences specifying strangulation and burning (120), it seems reasonable to assume that, at least in a few of the 17 aforementioned cases, the accused was also strangled before their body was burnt (cf. Goodare et al. n.p.).

he was arrested and sentenced to death. He is less of a typical target than Wendelin might have been at the end of the 15th century, being a noble and a man, but 1492 is sufficiently early to silence serious doubts. The way he was executed would suggest that he was not actually convicted of witchcraft, but rather of treason. In this case, the normal punishment for a man would have been to be hung, drawn and quartered, but in Nick's case, it is very possible that the king showed him the mercy of the far less excruciating sentence of beheading. This was not unusual if the convicted traitor happened to be a noble. Incidentally, Nick is not the only Hogwarts House ghost who was executed for witchcraft. The Fat Friar, ghost of Hufflepuff house, was executed "because senior churchmen grew suspicious of his ability to cure the pox merely by poking peasants with a stick, and his ill-advised habit of pulling rabbits out of the communion cup" (Rowling "Ghosts" n.p.), but it is difficult to judge the plausibility of the Friar's case. Apart from the reason for his execution, the only fact that is known with certainty is that he went to Hogwarts and was therefore in all likelihood from somewhere on the British Isles. That alone is not enough to go on, especially since it is neither known when he lived (and died) nor how he was executed.

VI. The impact of witch hunts on the wizarding society

Within the Potterverse, witch hunts had an immense effect on the wizarding society, though not because of great mortality rates. As Bathilda Bagshot points out, Muggles were not particularly good at recognising magic and "on the rare occasion that they did catch a real witch or wizard, burning had no effect whatsoever" (*Prisoner* 7). However, the witch hunts did lead to some witches and wizards becoming resentful of Muggles and separating their society from the non-magical community. As Professor Dumbledore – far more accurately than Bathilda Bagshot – writes in his notes on Beedle's tale "The Wizard and the Hopping Pot":

> The persecution of witches and wizards was gathering pace all over Europe in the early fifteenth century. Many in the magical community felt, and with good reason, that offering to cast a spell on the Muggle-next-door's sickly pig was tantamount to volunteering to fetch the firewood for one's own funeral pyre. 'Let the Muggles manage without us!' was the cry, as the wizards drew further and further apart from their non-magical brethren (*Tales* 13).

The causality between the witch hunts and this form of self-imposed segregation is very clear when looking at the date when the International Statute of Secrecy was officially enacted. According to *Quidditch Through the Ages* (cf. 36), this was the case in 1692, the same year as the Salem witch trials in colonial Massachusetts, among whose victims were several actual witches, according to Rowling's Pottermore writings. Although both *A History of Magic* (cf. *Hallows* 261) and Professor Dumbledore in his notes on "The Wizard and the Hopping Pot" (cf. *Tales* 13-14) state that the Statute was signed in 1689, the Salem trials definitely proved a traumatic experience, whether they were the immediate trigger of the Statute of Secrecy or not.

> Its immediate effect was to cause many witches and wizards to flee America, and many more to decide against locating there. This led to interesting variations in the magical population of North America, compared to the populations of Europe, Asia and Africa. Up until the early decades of the twentieth century, there were fewer witches and wizards in the general American population than on the other four continents (Rowling "History" n.p.).

VII. Historical sources in *Harry Potter*

Another interesting aspect when talking about *Harry Potter* and history is how knowledge of the past helps Harry and his friends defeat Lord Voldemort. As Denis Mootz, drawing upon Ann Curthoys's 2011 article "Harry Potter and the Historical Consciousness: Reflections on History and Fiction", writes, "[i]n their quest to defeat Voldemort Harry et al learn that the past is made up of fragments that must be pieced together. Throughout the novels we are exposed to a wide range of 'sources' for the investigation of the life of Voldemort and of Harry Potter" (62).

The sources in question are interesting in their own right. Especially in the beginning, most of the information Harry, Ron and Hermione need in order to solve the mystery of the Philosopher's Stone and the Chamber of Secrets, respectively, comes from books. Hermione is, of course, the driving force here. In the very first scene where Harry (and the reader) first encounter her, she tells a rather flabbergasted Harry that she has read about him in *Modern Magical History*, *The Rise and Fall of the Dark Arts* and *Great Wizarding Events of the Twentieth Century* (cf. *Stone* 79). The same evening, when the first-years enter the Great Hall for the first time, she is immediately able to tell her classmates that the ceiling is "'bewitched to look like the sky outside […] [because she] read about it in *Hogwarts: A History*'" (ibid. 87). Hermione obviously thought it necessary to know about the history of the world she was entering, which shows remarkable historical awareness for an eleven-year-old, even one as clever as her.

A good part of her preparation before leaving the Burrow to hunt for Horcruxes in *Harry Potter and Deathly Hallows* also consists of sorting books and deciding which ones they might need, among them, of course, *Hogwarts: A History*, because she does not "think [she'd] feel right if [she] didn't have it with" (*Hallows* 84) her. But in spite of her love of books in general and this book in particular, "Hermione is a critical reader of History. She does not accept what she reads in *The History of Magic* or *Hogwarts: A History*, or the *Prophet* at face value. She checks her sources and critiques them with information from other sources" (Mootz 62), especially since she found out that *Hogwarts: A History* is "not *entirely* reliable" (*Goblet* 262, original emphasis), as it does not mention the fact that the kitchens of the school are run by unpaid workers, the house-elves. Quite apart from this, she may also have learnt to be more cautious of believing everything she reads in books after her second year, most of which she spends believing every single word of Lockhart's books, only to find out that he has "'just been taking credit for what a load of other people have done'" (*Chamber* 220).

These are, of course, not the only misleading books in *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*. Tom Riddle's diary is itself a historical source, but is able to think for itself, containing a part of Voldemort's soul. It has all the information on what happened in 1942 when the Chamber was opened the last time, but naturally it only shows Harry enough so he will think Hagrid was responsible for the attacks. In this case, it is not an author who manipulates the source, but the source itself.

Books and diaries are not the only sources that can be manipulated in the *Harry Potter* universe. Memories start playing a major role in the fourth book, when Harry bears witness to Bellatrix Lestrange and Barty Crouch Jr.'s trial in Dumbledore's Pensieve (cf. *Goblet* 634-48) and, as Kern quite correctly states, *The Half-Blood Prince* can be "[thought] of […] as an extended history lesson" (n.p.) with the memories of several people, among them Dumbledore and Horace Slughorn, acting as the main sources. The latter, ashamed of a particular aspect of his past, "'has tried to rework the memory to show himself in a better light, obliterating those parts which he does not wish [Dumbledore] to see'" (*Prince* 348). This is more or less a visual representation of the actions of some witnesses to certain historical events who are

ashamed of their roles in what happened. They may lie in order to preserve their reputations or, in extreme cases, avoid criminal prosecution. Some of them may even start believing their own lie to some extent and start forgetting what really happened in favour of the memory they have constructed for themselves. Arguably, this is also what has happened to Slughorn, although Dumbledore's words and the fact that he is able to supply Harry with the true memory once he has been convinced that it is necessary in order to defeat Voldemort suggest that he made a conscious choice to alter the 'copy' of the memory he gave to the headmaster.

VIII. Re-evaluating Dumbledore's character

It is worth taking a look at Harry's process of forming an opinion on a historical event using different sources, in this case regarding Dumbledore's past. Beginning with the second chapter of the seventh book, Rowling deconstructs Harry's – and the reader's – view of the headmaster. Although Dumbledore himself had admitted to making some mistakes along the way, particularly with regard to not telling Harry about the prophecy before the end of his fifth year at Hogwarts (cf. *Phoenix* 921), no real doubt had ever been cast on his intention. This view is reinforced at the beginning of the second chapter of *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* – aptly named *In Memoriam* – with Elphias Doge's obituary in the *Daily Prophet* (cf. *Hallows* 21-24). He has a rather idealised view of Dumbledore, having gone to school with him and remembering how Albus did not shun him in spite of his dragon pox-marked face. This first impression of his friend and Albus's academic genius, which quickly replaced the notoriety his father had earned the family by attacking three young Muggles, seem to have informed his long-time view of him. The final sentence of his obituary sums this up very well: "*He died as he lived: working always for the greater good and, to his last hour, as willing to stretch out a hand to a small boy with dragon pox as he was on the day that I met him*" (ibid. 24, original emphasis). It is ironic that in praising Albus, he uses the very phrase which haunted the headmaster almost all his life.

Elphias's glowing account of Dumbledore's life corresponds quite closely with the image that has been cultivated over the last six books in the series, but Rowling begins to sow the seeds of doubt in Harry's and the reader's mind in the same chapter, when Harry reads Betty Braithwaite's interview with Rita Skeeter (cf. ibid. 25-29). While promoting her book, which is partly based on an interview she did with Grindelwald's great-aunt Bathilda Bagshot – herself a celebrated historian who lived in Godric's Hollow and knew both the Dumbledores and Grindelwald well; after all, Grindelwald lived with her during his stay in the town (cf. ibid. 290) – Rita talks about discovering a dark side to Dumbledore's life. She claims that he "*dabbled in the Dark Arts himself in his youth*" (ibid. 27, original emphasis) and teases a dark family history involving his mother and sister. These details, which she expands on in her book, prove to be true, but when reading the article in the *Daily Prophet*, Harry does not believe any of it and is angry at Rita's attempt to defame the headmaster (cf. ibid. 29-30). This is partly because it contradicts his own experiences with Dumbledore and partly because he knows Rita as a sensationalist who will take the tiniest sliver of truth and turn it into a scandal for the sake of writing a good story.

However, even given his own experiences with Rita's writings, he starts to doubt his own convictions enough to ask Elphias Doge about what she said in the interview when he meets him at Fleur and Bill's wedding (cf. ibid. 127). When Aunt Muriel gets involved and talks about Ariana and Kendra, theorising about what happened to Dumbledore's sister – whether she was kept a secret because she was a Squib, even going so far as to say that Ariana might have killed her mother in "'a desperate bid for freedom'" (ibid. 130) – Harry starts to believe that there is "undoubtedly something odd about the story" (ibid. 131). His doubts are exacer-

bated when he finds out that Dumbledore never told him that his family had lived in Godric's Hollow, the town where Harry's parents died. Hermione picks up on Harry's hurt at learning that Dumbledore, whom he thought he knew fairly well, withheld such important facts about his own life, telling him "'I think the real reason you're so angry is that Dumbledore never told you any of this himself'" (ibid. 295) after they have read the relevant chapter of Rita's book. Hermione also has trouble dealing with what she has just read. She tries to calm Harry by telling him that "'this is Rita Skeeter writing'" (ibid. 294), but has to admit that there must be some truth to it because of the letter Rita includes in the book. Any doubts she may have had about its authenticity are probably allayed by the author's annotation "a copy of the original letter may be seen on page 463" (ibid. 291). Her knowledge of history enables her to put the pieces together; she realises that this letter might very well have been what inspired Gellert Grindelwald to use the motto 'For the Greater Good' to justify his actions later on. Rather than further doubting what happened, she accepts the fact that Dumbledore's past was deeply flawed and tries to salvage Harry's good opinion of him by pointing out all the things Dumbledore did to help Muggles and Muggle-borns as well as his fight against Grindelwald and later on Voldemort. Thus, she adopts a rather balanced view of Dumbledore, based on the facts presented to her.

Harry, on the other hand, has a harder time accepting his disillusionment, possibly because he is, by his very nature, more emotionally driven than Hermione, but also because he had a far more personal relationship with Dumbledore than she did. His feelings are best summed up in his own words when he talks about what the headmaster asked of him: "'don't expect me to explain everything, just trust me blindly, trust that I know what I'm doing, trust me even though I don't trust you! Never the whole truth! Never!'" (ibid. 295).

His fractured trust in Dumbledore seems to have recovered little by the time he, Hermione and Ron meet Aberforth shortly before entering Hogwarts, yet at least enough to insist on going through with the mission Dumbledore gave him – though this might also be due to a lack of options. This is when he finally finds out what happened to Ariana, i.e., that she was killed while trying to stop a duel between Grindelwald and her two brothers. Aberforth's resentment of Albus comes across in his account of the events. He states Ariana's death meant that Albus Dumbledore was "'[f]ree of the burden of his sister; free to become the greatest wizard of the–'" (ibid.) before being cut off by Harry, who remembers Dumbledore's ordeal in the cave at the end of his sixth year. He realises that Dumbledore "'thought he was watching Grindelwald hurting [Aberforth] and Ariana'", adding, "'it was torture to him, if you'd seen him then, you wouldn't say he was free'" (ibid. 458).

However, it takes listening to Dumbledore's account of the story at 'King's Cross Station' to fully forgive him. During the course of this conversation, Harry learns of the reasons for Dumbledore's actions, his initial thirst for power and invincibility and later on his fear of finding out whose curse killed Ariana, which had him delaying the final confrontation with Grindelwald. He also realises why Dumbledore refused the post of Minister for Magic several times – because he "'had learned that [he] was not to be trusted with power'" (ibid. 575). Although never explicitly stated, it seems as if Harry arrives at a view of Dumbledore not unlike that of Hermione; he realises that Dumbledore was greatly flawed in his youth, but spent the rest of his life trying to make up for it.

Of course, neither Harry nor Hermione, nor indeed a reader who has got to know Dumbledore over the entire series of books can be entirely objective when dealing with the new information with regard to Dumbledore's past. If one tries to only look at the different sources presented – most notably two eyewitness accounts by the people involved (Albus and Aberforth), one by the person with whom Grindelwald was staying at the time (Bathilda Bagshot) and a letter in Dumbledore's own hand – as a historian would, they come together to form a

very coherent picture of what happened in Godric's Hollow all those years ago. This picture combined with all the facts about Dumbledore's later life – his defeat of Grindelwald, his fight against Voldemort's ideology of pure-blood supremacy and his genuine regret at what happened to his family – would most probably prompt a historian to concur with the image Harry and Hermione seem to arrive at themselves.

IX. Conclusion

Harry, Ron and Hermione encounter various kinds of sources over the course of the books, even though this paper could only briefly cover two of them. Rowling uses Lockhart's autobiographies and Riddle's diary to demonstrate why anyone – not just historians – must be careful not to believe everything they read, but judge a text's credibility based on who wrote it, when they wrote it and what their intentions were while writing it – as Lockhart himself says, "'[b]ooks can be misleading'" (*Chamber* 220). The reliability of memories (and their Muggle equivalent, eyewitness accounts) is also called into question by showing how Slughorn manipulated his memory of telling Tom Riddle about Horcruxes so as to avoid shame. A look at how Harry and Hermione learn about Dumbledore's past and need to overturn their opinion of him after being presented with various sources has demonstrated that – emotional involvement notwithstanding – they are capable of evaluating different sources in much the same way as a historian would, arriving at a rather balanced view of Dumbledore.

Furthermore, all three of the aspects of history that have been explored in this paper – the importance of etymology, Nicolas Flamel and the Philosopher's Stone and witch hunts – are skilfully employed by Rowling to achieve a merging of the real world and the world she creates in the books. She uses etymology to suggest a common descent of the two societies, takes a very recognisable magical object such as the Philosopher's Stone and turns it into a major aspect of the plot of the first book and uses witch hunts to find a historical explanation for the separation of the Muggle and the wizarding worlds of the late 20th century. The narrative rings true here, even if there are certain historical inconsistencies in her portrayal of the European persecution of witches. As Edmund Kern puts it, "[a]lthough [Rowling] doesn't treat history, legend and myth as a historian would, she does use them in imaginative ways that are available to the novelist.[…] [She] draws extensively upon history, legend and myth – in both prosaic and preposterous ways – to establish the feature of her imagined world" (n.p.).

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Vera Bub

‘The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death’: Christian Elements in *Harry Potter*?

I. Introduction

References to Christianity are usually not the first thing that comes to one’s mind when one thinks of themes addressed in the fantasy genre. Supernatural elements, magic and witchcraft may even seem to contradict Christian beliefs. For this reason, the *Harry Potter* series has been criticised by representatives of various Christian denominations, which resulted in the ban of the *Harry Potter* books in many school libraries in the United States. The concerns voiced by representatives of Christian Churches, claiming that the book series promotes Satanic themes or lures children away from Christianity, contributed to making *Harry Potter* the “most challenged book in 2000” (Maughan n.p.).

Instead of focusing on this debate, this paper is going to examine the manifold aspects in Rowling’s books that are, after all, very close to Christian ideas and values. An analysis of the story told in the *Harry Potter* series at least reveals many underlying themes that are connected to religion. The quote used in the title of this paper, for instance, is not only from *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* (2007); it can also be found in the *King James Bible* (1 Cor. 15.26). Even though the magical society depicted in the *Harry Potter* series does not appear to practise any religion, the books incorporate themes like death, immortality and, most importantly, love, which is not only a significant aspect in the *Harry Potter* books, but is also a Christian ideal, which is stressed in the New Testament.

First, this paper is going to analyse the depiction of religion in the series by drawing upon the Godric’s Hollow graveyard scene from *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, which seems to show a strong connection to Christianity in some respects, yet ultimately reveals the overall absence of religion in the series. Subsequently, I am going to focus on references to immortal souls with a special emphasis on ‘Priori Incantatem’, as it stresses the idea of an existence beyond death. In addition, I will discuss the Stone of Resurrection, which introduces the idea of resurrection and thus takes the idea of an afterlife a significant step further. In this context, I will also have a closer look at the significance of ghosts, who prove the possibility of an earthly existence after death. Next, I am going to move on to the depiction of sacrifice, using the examples of Lily and Harry Potter, who both give their lives for others, and examine the near-death experience that follows Harry’s sacrifice, which most strongly suggests the existence of an afterlife in the series. Since the idea of immortality is closely linked to Lord Voldemort, who is obsessed by his desire to achieve immortality on earth, this paper will finally discuss the series’ main villain as well as the notion of immortality in the series in general.

II. The absence of religion

As mentioned above, the magical society in the *Harry Potter* series does not show any obvious traces of practising a religion or even acknowledging the existence of God or a similar power explicitly. Yet, unlike in novels such as Philip Pullman’s *His Dark Materials* trilogy,

religion and religious institutions are not criticised, either; religion just appears to be absent – a state of affairs that is reminiscent of contemporary, increasingly secular societies. This overall absence of religion renders a scene in *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* especially interesting: when Harry and Hermione are travelling to Godric's Hollow, where Harry was born, they decide to visit the graves of the Potters in the local graveyard. This scene probably contains the strongest explicit reference to religion in general and Christianity in particular in the entire series, since a church is mentioned for the first time. It is also important to note that this scene is set on Christmas Eve, one of the most important Christian holidays. The fact that the protagonists do not even realise what day it is and do not enter the church may of course be due to the circumstances of their visit, but also points to the fact that they have no personal connection to religion.

The inscriptions on the headstones of Harry's and Dumbledore's families are quotes from the Bible, yet their origin is not mentioned in the book. The one on the grave of Dumbledore's mother and sister reads: "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (*King James Bible*, Matt. 6.21). This verse is taken from the gospel according to Matthew, specifically Jesus' sermon on the Mount, in which he advises his followers to keep their treasure in heaven, i.e., with God, instead of seeking to find it on earth, i.e., in material goods. This message corresponds to an idea promoted throughout the *Harry Potter* series, which consistently ranks immaterial goods above material ones. This stance is perhaps most prominently reflected in the characterisation of the Dursleys, who stand for the "misuse of power and attaining material things" (Apostolides 1), but also in the presentation of the wealthy and snobbish Malfoy family. Thus, a link between characters that are perceived as 'bad' and the idea of focussing on material goods is established.

The second Bible verse, which can be found on the grave of Harry's parents, reads: "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death", which is taken from the first Corinthians and clearly alludes to the existence of an afterlife. Yet when Harry first reads the verse, he immediately associates it with the idea of the Horcruxes, since he does not seem to believe in an afterlife in a religious sense at this point, thinking of his parents as being gone. The phrase can indeed be read differently, especially when applied to Voldemort, who created Horcruxes in order to defeat his ultimate enemy, death. In other words, the scene also alludes to a potentially "perverted reading" (Niemand 119) of this particular Bible quote. The fact that Harry does not grasp the religious dimension of either verse presumably indicates that he has no connection to Christianity. Even though Hermione is able to explain the quotes to him, this does not imply that she is a religious person. Therefore, this scene shows that, even though the protagonists and the entire wizarding society do not appear to be religious as such, religious themes, and in this case specifically passages from the Bible, can still be identified in the story.

Despite apparently not having a religion, the magical world is firmly based on ethical principles (cf. Rahner 195), which is reflected in the way people's actions are explained and evaluated in the series. According to Deavel and Deavel, "[t]he Harry Potter books advance many Christian moral principles, even if these principles are not named as Christian" (62), which again shows that the magical society described in the series may not practise a religion, but it does not contradict religious ideas and, in some respects, even supports these. Religious themes and notions can be pinned down in the subtext; Stojilkov even argues that the *Harry Potter* series has a "plot and message suffused with (Christian) theology, fit for metaphysical, religious, social, or moral analysis" (134).

Yet it is also true that the absence of religion can be observed in virtually every aspect of wizard life. The apparent lack of religion is highlighted, for instance, by the depiction of events that one might expect to be associated with a religious background, such as Christmas,

weddings and funerals. Instead of having any religious connotation, these events can be classified as purely secular rites and rituals in Rowling's novels. Christmas, which is after all an important Christian holiday, is depicted without any references to religion; instead, its celebration rather reflects contemporary British culture, where Christmas tends to be celebrated as an entirely secular feast by many. Moreover, the fact that Halloween is shown as an at least equally significant holiday supports the impression that Christian holidays are not more important than others. A further event in which the absence of religion becomes perhaps even more apparent is Dumbledore's funeral service: instead of involving a service held in a church or chapel, it takes place outside. More importantly, throughout the entire ceremony, there is no mention of prayer of any kind, indicating that it is a ceremony without any religious connotations. The absence of religious references in the wizarding world goes even further, being reflected on a linguistic level, as wizards replace common phrases like 'O god!' by 'Merlin's beard!' (cf. *Phoenix* 141, *Prince* 399, *Hallows* 112).

III. Immortal souls

The idea of the human soul implies a variety of religious questions, yet "*the Bible has no clear teaching*" (Murphy 4, original emphasis) on the subject. While there are conflicting views with respect to the concept of the soul and whether it should be regarded as separate from the body or not, the notion that presumably is most familiar in a Western context is that of a dualism, meaning the dual nature of body and soul (cf. ibid. 2) – an idea which can be found in particular in the New Testament (cf. ibid. 19). When discussing the topic of the dual nature of body and soul in the context of the *Harry Potter* series, it is crucial to acknowledge that, in the magical world, the existence of the human soul as a separate entity appears to be an accepted fact. For instance, it is the soul that is taken by a Dementor's kiss (cf. *Prisoner* 262) or that is ripped apart in the act of murdering someone, which is the prerequisite for creating a Horcrux (cf. *Prince* 414). Horcruxes in particular, which ensure the survival of their creator even after the death of his or her body, highlight the series' unique understanding "of the soul as something immaterial, yet separable from the material container, be it the original body or an object" (Stojilkov 137).

Among the items that Lord Voldemort chose as Horcruxes, his snake Nagini stands out due to the fact that it is an animal. (The others are his diary, Helga Hufflepuff's cup, Marvolo Gaunt's ring, Salazar Slytherin's locket and Rowena Ravenclaw's diadem.) The snake evokes immediate associations with the Bible and specifically with temptation and sin (cf. Niemand 121). The connection between the snake and immortality is particularly striking, since its biblical counterpart, "[t]he primordial snake promises immortality to Adam and Eve" (ibid.). Similarly, Voldemort's snake is supposed to guarantee his immortality, because – as a Horcrux – it contains a part of his soul, ensuring that he will survive even if his body is destroyed. The concept of the soul in the *Harry Potter* series thus clearly shows a strong connection to ideas found in Christianity, and the discussion of the immortality of the soul in the story suggests that it is an accepted entity in the wizard mindset.

Still, when it comes to the immortality of souls and the question of an afterlife, Rowling's novels do not give a definitive answer. On the one hand, the *Harry Potter* series is set in a society that is clearly secular and might consequently not believe in an afterlife. On the other hand, the belief in an afterlife often seems to be implied, most prominently in statements by Albus Dumbledore. These can already be found in *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* (1997), where the headmaster says: "'After all, to the well-organised mind, death is but the next great adventure'" (320). Dumbledore seems to suggest the possibility of an afterlife when referring to an 'adventure'; his wording also implies that there is no need to fear death,

which is an idea that is promoted by Dumbledore throughout the entire series. By contrast, Voldemort obviously does fear death and attempts to ensure his immortality by ripping his soul into seven pieces.

There are further events that appear to allude to the existence of an afterlife, perhaps most prominently the phenomenon called 'Priori Incantatem'. After Voldemort's resurrection in *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire* (2000), this effect, which correlates with a connection between Voldemort's and Harry's wands, produces ghost-like shapes of Voldemort's victims. The entire scene is set in a bright and golden light, which is reminiscent of common images of heaven. In addition, Harry hears the song of the phoenix, which is described as an "unearthly and beautiful sound" (*Goblet* 559). The phoenix is not only a symbol of rebirth, but it is also closely linked to Dumbledore, who is perhaps the character that is most closely connected to the idea of an afterlife throughout the series – in opposition to Voldemort, who due to his merciless killings has come to personify death (cf. Kumlehn 20). Despite the fact that Voldemort's victims appear in a ghost-like state, Harry wonders whether they are in fact ghosts, since they seem to be too solid.[1] They are recognisable and are even capable of movement and speech. Even though their appearance resembles that of ghosts in the *Harry Potter* universe, these shapes can be distinguished from ghosts by a key factor: while ghosts have never truly left the world of the living even after their death, the beings described in connection to 'Priori Incantatem' seem to be returning from a different place. What is most interesting about this encounter and what most strongly suggests the existence of an afterlife is the behaviour of these shapes, which appear to be more than mere shadows. For instance, Lily tells Harry that James is on his way and wants to see Harry, which seems to imply that Lily and James are together in some other place, where they communicate with one another. Cedric also gets the chance to talk to Harry and asks him to return his body to his parents. The fact that the spectres talk to Harry and help him indicates not only the existence of an afterlife, but also that they still act autonomously and have kept their memories. Given all of these factors, Dumbledore's explanation of 'Priori Incantatem' is somewhat surprising; he calls the apparitions mere echoes of their living selves. In other words, Dumbledore's account appears to tone down the emphasis on an afterlife in this case. Nevertheless, this scene remains a key moment in the *Harry Potter* series when examining the theme of a possible afterlife, since it is the first scene in the entire series that provides evidence for the possibility of some form of existence after death – except for the ghosts, who will be discussed below.

An effect that is similar to 'Priori Incantatem' is achieved by the Resurrection Stone, which is one of the Deathly Hallows. According to the "Tale of the Three Brothers", the artefact has the power to return loved ones from the dead. The tale, however, also suggests that they will never again truly belong in the world of the living after their resurrection: the second brother resurrects his beloved, "'*[y]et she was sad and cold, separated from him as by a veil. Though she had returned to the mortal world, she did not truly belong there and suffered. Finally, the second brother, driven mad with hopeless longing, killed himself so as truly to join her*'" (*Hallows* 333). Still, the fact that some form of resurrection *is* possible indicates that souls do not disappear after the death of the body and live on. This leads to the conclusion that "[t]he fact that a person dies does not necessarily imply that the person is gone forever" (Stojilkov 134) in the *Harry Potter* series. In *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, Harry eventually uses the Stone himself before surrendering to Voldemort. Unlike the brother in the tale, Harry does not use the Stone for selfish reasons, but to receive moral support from

[1] Cf. Harry's thoughts on what he sees: "[T]he thick grey ghost of Cedric Diggory (*was* it a ghost? It looked so solid) emerged in its entirety from the end of Voldemort's wand" (*Goblet* 560, original emphasis).

his dead parents, his godfather Sirius and Remus. "It did not matter about bringing them back, for he was about to join them. He was not really fetching them, they were fetching him" (*Hallows* 570). Ultimately, Harry is about to enter a stage between the world of the living and the world of the dead. More important than the fact that Harry uses the Stone, which is an artefact that usually entails bad consequences for its user, is what makes him use it. With the help of the Stone, Harry receives not only assistance and protection; first and foremost, he experiences the company of his loved ones. Thus, this scene illustrates once more that "Rowling's message is one of love transcending death" (Stojilkov 146). Both the idea of being protected by deceased loved ones and the shape in which they appear are reminiscent of the effect produced by 'Priori Incantatem'. Once again, the spectres are apparently more than mere shadows, as "[t]hey were neither ghosts not truly flesh, he could see that. [...] Less substantial than living bodies, but much more than ghosts" (*Hallows* 570). The fact that Harry is the only one who can see his parents, Remus and Sirius and that they disappear as soon as he loses the Stone suggests that the Stone does not have the power to bring about a full resurrection. Needless to say, the resurrection of loved ones as described above seems to hint at the existence of an afterlife. But as the story is set in a world of magic, the doubt whether this effect is merely accomplished by means of a very powerful spell or whether it is indeed indicative of a religious dimension will remain.

The existence of ghosts is another aspect of the wizarding world that is relevant with regard to the question of the immortality of souls and the possibility of an afterlife. In the wizarding world, ghosts are accepted members of the community; even one of the teachers at Hogwarts is a ghost who continues to teach 'History of Magic' after having "fallen asleep in front of the staff room fire and got up the next morning […] to teach, leaving his body behind him" (*Stone* 142). The existence of ghosts is most prominently discussed in *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix* (2003), in a scene in which Harry goes to see Nearly Headless Nick, the resident ghost of Gryffindor House, after Sirius' death. The way in which Harry phrases his question ("'So, you came back, didn't you?' said Harry urgently. 'People can come back, right? As ghosts. They don't have to disappear completely.'", *Phoenix* 791) implies that Harry is wondering about the existence of an afterlife at this point. Nick explains that only wizards are capable of returning as ghosts after their death and that only very few choose to do so. Instead, most wizards prefer to 'go on'. What 'going on' means remains unclear, however; Nick does not know whether there is an afterlife, since the answer to this question is only revealed to those who choose to 'go on'. In sum, readers can conclude that even though the existence of an afterlife is a mystery even to ghosts, their existence provides a strong indication that an afterlife is a likely possibility, yet the question what choosing to 'go on' means is not answered.[2]

In the same scene, it is made clear that the reason for choosing to become a ghost is fear. Being afraid of death is cast in a negative light, as being a ghost is implicitly deemed the worse option. This becomes apparent when Nick says: "'I chose to remain behind. I sometimes wonder whether I oughtn't to have … well, that is neither here nor there … in fact, *I* am neither here nor there … [...] I know nothing of the secrets of death, Harry, for I chose my feeble imitation of life instead'" (ibid. 792, original emphasis). The free will Nick refers to in his statements, i.e., the ability to choose, or at least influence, one's own destiny is a theme that is repeatedly referred to in the entire *Harry Potter* series and it surfaces once again when

[2] In *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* Harry himself is in the position of having to choose; he has to decide whether 'to board a train', whether to return to the world of the living or to 'go on'. This passage does not solve the mystery of the afterlife, but the existence of the latter is definitely presented as a possibility – even more so when Dumbledore says goodbye to Harry only "'for the present'" (*Hallows* 590), after Harry decides to return to life.

Harry accepts the necessity of his own death and willingly surrenders to Voldemort. In highlighting the importance of choice, one could even argue that "Harry Potter is not really about magic, but about character" (Deavel/Deavel 50). This notion is strongly connected to Dumbledore, who tells Harry already early in the series that "'[i]t is our choices, [...] that show what we truly are, far more than our abilities'" (*Chamber* 352).

The Department of Mysteries also plays an important role in the way the series addresses the issue of an afterlife. In the conversation between Harry and Nick, the fact that the Ministry of Magic studies death in the Department of Mysteries is mentioned, which is interesting with respect to the veil that Sirius disappeared into after having been killed. The apparent necessity of studying death in government facilities proves that the question of death and of an afterlife must be significant within the wizarding society; the results seem to be of major interest to the Ministry of Magic. This kind of research also suggests that there is no certainty with respect to the existence of an afterlife or at least with regard to the precise nature of life after death. After his conversation with Nick, Harry talks to Luna Lovegood about the events in the Department of Mysteries. Unlike Harry, Luna believes in an afterlife and hopes to see her dead mother again. She shares this conviction with Harry, saying: "'You heard them just behind the veil […]. They were just lurking out of sight'" (*Phoenix* 794). One can therefore not generalise the assumption that there are no wizards believing in the possibility of an afterlife. Still, the fact that the rather eccentric Luna is one of the few characters to voice this belief is interesting, since she has on the whole been characterised as someone who believes in a number of things that seem implausible to most wizards.

IV. Willing sacrifice

Another aspect in the *Harry Potter* series that is strongly connected to religion is that of sacrificing one's life for a loved one or an entire group of people. This understanding of the term 'sacrifice' does not refer to "the general religious meaning in which sacrifice is understood as the offering of something valuable to God" (Daly 2), but rather to the Christian notion of a willing self-sacrifice that is rooted in the New Testament and specifically Jesus' sacrifice. This idea of 'self-sacrifice' is not only used in the *Harry Potter* series but in other fantasy novels as well. In C.S. Lewis's *The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe* (1950), self-sacrifice is central to the plot and gives the story a religious dimension beyond its moral message, as Aslan is quite obviously associated with Christ: "[M]oral law itself is not religious, or the property of any one religion. Only when Edmund is sentenced to die and Aslan volunteers to take his place does a religious significance emerge. [...] The willing sacrifice, the biblical tone and imagery […] and Aslan's subsequent return to life clearly associate him with Christ" (Schakel 8). Thus, including the notion of a willing sacrifice can potentially add a religious layer of meaning to a story.

A similar imagery can be found in the *Harry Potter* series. According to Nikolaus Wandinger, the series "is suffused with the language of s*acrifice*, beginning with Harry's mother giving her life for her son and ending with Harry 'self-sacrificing' in order to end the reign of evil Lord Voldemort" (27, original emphasis). The readers are first introduced to this topic when they learn that Harry's mother Lily died in his place, protecting him from Voldemort through her sacrifice. As a consequence, Harry is marked twice as a baby: not only visibly by Voldemort (in the shape of his lightning-bolt scar), but also invisibly by his mother's love and sacrifice (cf. Kumlehn 27). As Dumbledore explains to Harry:

> '[T]o have been loved so deeply, even though the person who loved us is gone, will give us some protection for ever. It is in your very skin. Quirrell, full of hatred, greed and ambition, sharing his soul with

> Voldemort, could not touch you for this reason. It was agony to touch a person marked by something so good' (*Stone* 321-22).

Love as a powerful force is a core issue in both the *Harry Potter* series and Christianity, especially in the New Testament (for example, in the well-known verses from the First Epistle to the Corinthians; cf. *New King James Version*, 1 Cor. 13). The power of love is most often explained to Harry by Dumbledore, whose description of love is similar to the way it is presented in the Bible (cf. Kumlehn 26). In addition, the idea that Lily's protection is invisible and does not require any physical proof is also closely connected to Christianity, as especially the New Testament emphasises the concept that one should not need physical proof in order to believe. The notion that the power of love exceeds that of hate is clearly propagated throughout the entire series, but is most visible in Harry's parents giving their lives while trying to protect Harry: "[t]he Potters sacrifice their lives for love of their infant son while Voldemort is reduced to a ghastly living death. An act of hate will always harm the agent while an act of love preserves life" (Deavel/Deavel 58).

In *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, Harry, just like his mother, is willing to sacrifice himself for others, i.e., the entire school. As soon as Harry realises that dying is the only way of turning Voldemort into a mortal being again, he is ready to sacrifice himself for the greater good. Again, the importance of his own choice is highlighted in this scene, because Dumbledore ensured that Harry would only learn the truth in the end, so that his sacrifice would be his own choice and not a destiny he had come to accept (cf. Wandinger 39). In this decision, "Harry never avows the hope for resurrection. Rather, the position he learns from Dumbledore is to *accept creatural mortality* – his own and that of the deceased" (Niemand 128, original emphasis).

Harry does not attempt to fight Voldemort or to save his own life in the forest; instead, he accepts his fate and surrenders to the villain. The way in which Harry surrenders is reminiscent of the passion of Christ in the Bible. As Wandinger puts it, "[h]e is a clear *figura Christi* and highlights the post-Biblical, Christian, sacrifice in an exemplary way" (40). Despite the fact that Rowling admitted that "[t]he values in the books [...] are by no means exclusively Christian" (Gibbs n.p.), this scene in particular echoes Christian motifs, as it displays a sacrifice in the Christian sense: Harry's sacrifice is a necessity, made out of love, accepting death that is inflicted by evil (cf. Wandinger 30). Admittedly, this kind of sacrifice 'for the greater good' is also a typical element of high fantasy and epic adventure stories; the allusion to resurrection following upon the sacrifice, however, is a bit more unusual.

Once Harry sacrificed himself, he finds himself in a hall reminiscent of King's Cross station, which is, however, completely white, i.e., in a colour that (in a Western context at least) is conventionally associated with heaven and resurrection. There is a clear indication that the entire scene is happening in Harry's mind, though; he appears to be in control and to have the ability to manipulate his surroundings. Andrea Stojilkov argues that this setting cannot be understood as heaven from a Christian point of view, as "the white, misty King's Cross seems too desolate for Heaven"; after all, "Heaven is described as a place where nobody will cry or mourn (Revelation 21:4)" (140) and this scene shows a crying Dumbledore. One can therefore assume that this image of King's Cross might not be a depiction of heaven, but rather of a place in between life and death, either actual or imagined.

When Harry meets Dumbledore, the former headmaster of Hogwarts admits that he is dead and explains why his sacrifice was necessary. According to Dumbledore, Harry not defending himself made all the difference and gave him the chance of returning to life, raising the question whether Harry being brought back to life can be seen as a reward for his sacrifice. It is also revealed in the final stage of the battle that Harry's sacrifice has had a similar effect as

his mother's, but affects a larger group of people, since none of Voldemort's spells seem to have a binding effect on Harry's friends. By killing Harry, Voldemort involuntarily erased the part of his own soul that had previously attached itself to Harry, making him the seventh Horcrux. The fact that Harry's scar disappears in this state between life and death confirms that every trace Voldemort left on Harry is gone.

The question whether the near-death experience really takes place or is merely a hallucination cannot be answered with certainty. At any rate, it suggests that the encounter between Harry and Dumbledore has a crucial function, namely that of providing Harry with information he would not have otherwise:

> 'He took your blood believing it would strengthen him. He took into his body a tiny part of the enchantment your mother laid upon you when she died for you. His body keeps her sacrifice alive, and while that enchantment survives, so do you and so does Voldemort's one last hope for himself' (*Hallows* 580).

When Harry asks him whether this experience is real or only happening inside his head, Dumbledore answers: "'Of course it is happening inside your head, Harry, but why on earth should that mean that it is not real?'" (ibid. 591). Thus, the mentor once again stresses an idea that has been present throughout the entire series, especially in connection to Lily's sacrifice for Harry, i.e., the notion that there is no necessity for physical proof in order to believe in something, or, in the case of Lily's sacrifice, to provide powerful protection. This notion closely corresponds to Christianity, in particular to the New Testament, which also conveys the message that physical proof is not needed in order to believe.

Another preeminent idea of the series, which provides perhaps the strongest connection to the New Testament's idea of charity, is the emphasis on love, which Dumbledore refers to in this conversation as well. According to him, the reason why Voldemort has never fully understood what happened in the night he killed Harry's parents is that "'of love, loyalty and innocence, Voldemort knows and understands nothing. *Nothing*. That they all have a power […] beyond the reach of any magic, is a truth he never grasped'" (ibid. 580, original emphasis). Here, Dumbledore, who himself is one of the most powerful wizards in the *Harry Potter* universe, claims that love is the most powerful force, even surpassing the power of magic.

V. Voldemort and immortality

It is impossible to discuss Harry's near-death experience without addressing Voldemort's death. An important aspect to consider in this context is that Harry does not use an Unforgivable Curse against Voldemort, but attempts to disarm him. Consequently, Voldemort is killed by his own rebounding spell, which echoes Voldemort's attempt to kill baby Harry. Harry's alignment with the good side is reinforced by the fact that he appears to have hope that there is still time for the villain to change. He encourages Voldemort to try feeling remorse – a thought that seems to scare the villain, because Harry knows what Voldemort does not know: in his near-death experience, Harry has seen what might become of Voldemort after his death. "When Voldemort will become the helpless baby-shaped thing that Harry has seen, he will be beyond help, as Dumbledore has explained. But as long as he lives, he could repent, he could change, as remote and ridiculous the possibility might seem" (Wandinger 43). Despite everything Voldemort has done, Harry still has hope for him, unlike "Voldemort, who in hoping for himself alone is fundamentally without hope" (Johnston 81). Thus Harry's actions towards his

archenemy do not only echo the Christian notion of forgiving,[3] but are simultaneously in line with the entire book series that emphasises the relevance of forgiveness. Like any other character in *Harry Potter*, Voldemort is given a choice, one that he has had ever since he came to Hogwarts himself, because not even he was destined to become evil (cf. Rahner 199); instead, his choices turned him into the villain, whom Harry still tries to redeem.

In the scene mentioned above, Harry has succeeded in making Voldemort truly mortal: he has destroyed almost all of his Horcruxes and calls him by his original name, Tom Riddle, thereby reducing him to his mortal self. The fact that Voldemort ultimately dies, despite his attempts to become immortal, proves that magic does have its limitations after all, even in defeating death, which indicates that human beings are not meant to be immortal on earth. This idea is affirmed throughout the entire series, as any attempt at cheating death always takes a high toll (cf. Macor 48): in *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, for instance, Voldemort is drinking unicorn blood in order to stay alive and thereby kills a being that is the embodiment of purity and innocence.[4] In the "Tale of the Three Brothers", cheating death results in the death of two brothers; only the third one is able to outsmart death and eventually embraces his fate on his own accord, accepting death as inevitable. Horcruxes, as a means of achieving immortality, require killing another human being, as the soul needs to be ripped apart in the first place. This image in and of itself is likely to be seen in a negative light in the overall context of the concept of (immortal) souls in the series. When examining the villain's pursuit of immortality, "[t]he crucial point is that Voldemort does not strive to achieve eternal life of the soul but […] the eternal life of his powerful mind and body […]. Hence he is willing to mutilate his spiritual self, committing both extreme self-violence and most sinful violence toward others" (Stojilkov 137). Clearly, his death can therefore be regarded as poetic justice (cf. Wandinger 45) for attempting to become immortal.[5]

VI. Conclusion

Despite the fact that religion is never explicitly mentioned in the *Harry Potter* series, a wide spectrum of themes in the novels refer to religious aspects and belief. The presence of these topics indicates that *Harry Potter* is not merely a story of witchcraft practised in an apparently atheist society; it is also a story about life and death, the importance of love, the possibility of an afterlife, the necessity of choice, free will, the relevance of showing mercy and also the hope for redemption. All of these issues can be, but do not have to be, read in a Christian context. Instead of explicitly discussing religion in her stories (cf. Niemand 130), J.K. Rowling chose to incorporate religious aspects rather implicitly, which provides readers with the opportunity of finding and interpreting these aspects for themselves.

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[3] See for example: "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." (*King James Bible*, Eph 4.31-32); or "Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him. And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him" (Lk 17.3-4).

[4] As the centaur Firenze puts it: "'[I]t is a monstrous thing, to slay a unicorn [...]. You have slain something pure and defenceless to save yourself and you will have but a half life, a cursed life, from the moment the blood touches your lips'" (*Stone* 277-78).

[5] Finally, when examining Voldemort's death, it is also important to consider the symbolism inherent in this scene: when he dies, the sun is rising, which heralds a new beginning and the victory of good over evil.

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Part II:
Themes and Structures in the *Harry Potter* Series

Michèle Ciba

Conspiracy, Persecution and Terror: *Harry Potter* in a Post-9/11 World

> "Perhaps *Harry Potter* has the potential to orient us in disorienting times; perhaps, literature has the power to change the world" (Lacassagne 332).

I. Introduction

Terrorism. This is a word we all know well. It is a common topic in today's media, but also a source of a widespread sense of anxiety, bad memories and fear. Hearing this word, we can immediately relate it to numerous incidents, whether it is 9/11, the 7/7 London bombings, the Paris attacks, the Brussels bombings, the recent Manchester attack and many others. To many, terrorism at this point in time seems like a constant threat. We all know that feeling in the pit of our stomach when we hear of another attack and possibly wait for news of what really happened, how many died and what consequences there may be. We know this fear, we have felt it ourselves. What does this have to do with *Harry Potter*?

The fear of terrorism is nothing new. The incidents of the 11th of September 2001 may have triggered a movement known as the 'War on Terror', but the threat of unsuspected attacks on random groups of people is of course a much older phenomenon, which has played a role not only in public discourse but also in media, art and literature for a long time. In the past as well as in the present one way of dealing with fear, especially of a kind that can be both personal and public, is to work through it. Times that are influenced by specific fears tend to show an influx of related topics in literature, in film and photography, and many other cultural artefacts. One main reason for this is that they help us deal with our anxieties. How can this be achieved? Entering into a creatively constructed encounter with difficult topics offers readers or viewers the possibility of a safe space in which fears can be confronted, examined, even played with. Literature often provides far removed worlds, places, and characters which give writers and readers the necessary distance to handle difficult topics whilst still remaining able to relate aspects of stories to their own circumstances. Examples of this can also be found in the *Harry Potter* series.

One intriguing fact when looking at themes related to terrorism in *Harry Potter* is that the first four books were published before the 9/11 attacks, the last three books afterwards. One could most assuredly argue that aspects of terrorism or at least the fear of it can be found in all seven books. However, it is equally safe to say that the last three novels, featuring a 're-born' Voldemort, focus more specifically on terror, fear and conspiracy. This paper will discuss book seven of the novel series, *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* (2007), i.e., the book that deviates most strongly from the traditional 'one year at Hogwarts' setting. It will begin by addressing the three themes of conspiracy, persecution and terror, examine how these themes feature in book seven and explain how they are relevant to the overall plotline. This paper will further argue that the *Harry Potter* series relates to fears of terrorism in the 'real world' and that it may help readers in coping with their apprehensions.

II. Conspiracy

Conspiracy themes and scenarios have long since been popular both in fiction and film. The construction of conspiracy narratives may even be found in works by Ancient Greek authors or even older texts. Although types of plots and intrigues may vary and the intentions behind these may range from resolving love triangles to reaching world domination, the idea of people coming together to collude amoral or criminal actions has been a common theme in all kinds of fiction (cf. Wisnicki 1-2). This makes the definition of conspiracy fiction particularly difficult. For the purposes of this paper, however, it is merely important to outline the general pattern of such narratives and to show that aspects of these can also be found in the *Harry Potter* series and specifically in *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*. Thus this section will first give an overview of important elements of conspiracy narratives and apply them to Voldemort's covert actions in book seven of the series. It will then go on to examine the fears evoked by such plot lines and explore their relation to 'real world' fears as well as their effect on choices the characters make.

Generally speaking, conspiracy fiction focuses on big secret plots which the protagonists uncover, explore and aim to dismantle. Often there is an in-depth investigation, which has to take place secretly, and the complot is revealed to go 'all the way to the top'. Drawing on Wisnicki (cf. 9), common aspects of conspiracy fiction, or, as he calls them, 'conspiracemes' further include a conspiracy theorist (a subject who either tries to know or knows about the secret plot) and an 'Inaccessible Authority' (an oppressive but elusive group). Focusing on accounts which portray an Inaccessible Authority in terms of "conspiratorial-like bureaucracies" (ibid. 113), these kinds of narratives can be seen as anti-establishment and criticising governments working in the dark. In terrorism fiction, in contrast, the focus lies on non-government organisations responsible for violent attacks that draw attention to the perpetrator. Nevertheless, the fear and paranoia evoked by the threat of a conspiracy or by terrorism is similar, which is why the two are often combined. Wisnicki further points out that "the narratives focus on the fear of their protagonist(s) that a conspiracy, often one of immense proportions, *might* exist" (3, original emphasis). Frequently, in both conspiracy and terrorism fiction there is a secret plan of action that the protagonists aim to expose and prevent. The threat of the unknown is omnipresent. Often the claims of the conspiracy theorist are dismissed as being paranoid, which not only hinders further investigations but may also lead to the conspirators' success. These are precisely the plot lines that resonate in books five through seven of the *Harry Potter* series.

When relating Wisnicki's 'conspiracemes' to the *Harry Potter* series, it becomes clear that Harry and his friends can be read as conspiracy theorists, while Voldemort can be seen as an Inaccessible Authority. After the rebirth of Voldemort at the end of *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire* (2000), Harry and his friends as well as Albus Dumbledore try desperately to convince the wizarding community of Voldemort's return. Yet the Ministry of Magic along with the wizarding public do not believe them. The media, represented by the *Daily Prophet*, are portrayed as the main tool of a smear campaign against Harry and Dumbledore. Although Voldemort's return is revealed to numerous Ministry officials at the end of book five and henceforth accepted to be true by the community, the conspiracy theme remains strong up to *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*. Still Voldemort is working in the shadows and has by now infiltrated the Ministry of Magic. The wizarding world's knowledge of his rebirth does not seem to have impaired his quest for power nor his plans for the Ministry, Hogwarts and the world at large. The exposure of his return therefore did not suffice to thwart his plans. The question of where Voldemort is, what he is planning and what possibilities there may be to

defeat him remains open although the wizarding community is now aware of the threat he presents. In this sense, Voldemort continues to represent an Inaccessible Authority.

Having related common conspiracy themes to the *Harry Potter* series, it can also be seen that fears and anxieties connected to Voldemort's actions influence the plot of *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* heavily, even though the covertness of his plans varies throughout the story. While book seven does not feature a classic conspiracy plot, apprehension is a common thread throughout the book, drawing also on fears familiar to the reader. The fears that are evoked include those of an unexposed threat and distrust of the authorities and their methods as well as those of intruders, in this case Death Eaters, being among the Ministry's employees or even of officials being influenced by Voldemort by means of the Unforgivable Curses. These fears are not unfounded. The covert influence of Voldemort on the Ministry of Magic shows clear parallels to 'real world' threats of cyber terrorism. Today computer systems rely heavily on security protocols as protection against hacking. There are countless narratives engaging with the danger of government servers being hacked, not only to gain information but also to gain control of lock down procedures, electrical grids, transport links, etc. In *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* the Unforgivable Curses, especially the Imperius Curse, are used to gain access to and control of the Ministry by using officials as puppets. In a world that does not rely on technology it is not a computer system, but the minds of the Ministry officials that are being 'hacked'. Thus, the anxieties evoked by the conspiracy plot lines relate directly to fears and threats readers know about or may even experience themselves.

A further function of fears connected with conspiracy in *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* is their power to affect characters' choices and therefore also plot developments. Among other things, it is because of the uncertainty about Voldemort's rising influence that the Order of the Phoenix keeps itself apart from the Ministry[1] as do Harry, Ron and Hermione, who choose to fight Voldemort on their own. If they had not been afraid of Voldemort's covert actions and the strong possibility that even under Scrimgeour's leadership the Ministry was compromised, some decisions would have been made differently. Once Voldemort's coup is successful and he gains control of the Ministry, his influence grows stronger and leads to persecution, which will be discussed in the following section.

III. Persecution

There are several occasions in the *Harry Potter* series where persecution takes place in one form or another, whether it is Harry as a baby being pursued by Voldemort or Sirius Black being hunted by the Ministry of Magic. The first instance of large-scale, organised persecution, however, can be observed in *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*. Thus this section will discuss the characteristics and effects of persecution in the seventh novel of the series, its parallels to real occurrences and the resulting criticism of government practice.

In *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* persecution takes on a much larger scale than before. It is no longer an individual that is being targeted, but groups of people with specific markers, for example Muggle-born wizards and witches. Other groups also experience more ill-treatment and discrimination, for example house-elves and goblins. These groups are not persecuted for any individual feature, such as a crime they committed, but for their physical

[1] From the perspective of the Order of the Phoenix people working for the Ministry are mainly suspicious because their allegiance can be unclear: "'Were they Death Eaters or Ministry people?' interjected Hermione. 'A mixture; but to all intents and purposes they're the same thing now,' said Lupin." (*Hallows* 169)

or magical make-up. Even people outside of these groups who take an active stand against the Ministry of Magic, now controlled by Voldemort, will equally be targeted. This is the case with Harry and Ron and a number of members of the Order of the Phoenix, who may technically fall under the label of 'pure-blood' or 'half-blood', but who, due to their rejection of the 'blood purity' doctrine, are instead labelled 'blood traitors'. Bethany Barratt points out that while 'pure-bloods' or 'half-bloods' who sympathise with Muggles or Muggle-borns "face little official sanction, they do suffer some of the same kinds of informal abuse that Muggle-borns do" (76). Accepted 'blood status' alone, therefore, does not protect witches or wizards from abuse, even if they will not be officially discriminated against for rejecting the 'blood status' doctrine. This rejection may however attract the attention of the authorities and therefore risk any other non-conforming actions coming to light, as is the case with Arthur Weasley, who is being tracked by the Ministry due to his "unacceptable pro-Muggle leanings" (*Hallows* 207).

The extent of the now institutionalised persecution continuously adds friction within the layers of secrecy in the world of *Harry Potter*. The former status quo consisted of the wizarding world acting in near-complete secrecy alongside or even within the Muggle world. The Statute of Secrecy was highly important to wizarding legislation and social practice and presumably mostly accepted among the magic community. Below this level of secrecy, however, Voldemort's covert actions to gain control and overturn the system of secrecy constitute another level. This covert affair, or rather conspiracy as outlined previously, is discovered by Harry and his friends as well as by the Order of the Phoenix and other characters who eventually make up the resistance movement. The conflict between Voldemort's followers and the resistance becomes more visible during *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix* (2003), *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince* (2005) and *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*. In *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* the conspiracy is to some degree revealed as more and more members of the wizarding community become aware of this conflict and realise that Voldemort has surreptitiously taken over the Ministry. The readers may assume, however, that a number of wizards and witches remain ignorant of Voldemort's power until he is defeated, continuing to believe Pius Thicknesse to be responsible for the changes in government policy (cf. ibid. 171-72). The layer of secrecy dividing the Muggle world from the wizarding community is equally challenged, although never lifted, as the Statute of Secrecy remains intact and acts of violence against Muggles are masked as accidents or natural catastrophes (cf. *Prince* 16).

Although Voldemort is successful in securing power over the wizarding community, the conflict with the resistance splits the magic society into people following the powers at large and thereby Voldemort's regime (whether they are aware of his role or not) and people openly or covertly supporting the resistance. However, Voldemort seems to gain a firmer footing among the general population than the resistance. Lacassagne attributes this reaction to the spreading of fear:

> When Voldemort takes over the Ministry, he establishes a totalitarian regime and institutes racial laws. […] And like in reality, a resistance movement emerges with the Order of the Phoenix. As in reality, the new regime first advances slyly, practising an incremental policy of repression, as Hitler did. The goal of that manoeuvre is of course to provoke apathy among the people; when they wake up, it will be too late. People, paralysed by fear, are in denial and consider the Order alarmist. People believe in the propaganda diffused by the *Daily Prophet*; they refuse to admit that the newspaper has become a propaganda instrument. […] The few massacres and murders of *muggles* during the slow takeover are considered unfortunate accidents. When people can no longer remain in denial, when totalitarianism is installed, the resistance gets bigger, but it is more difficult to organise. Fear is everywhere (328-29, original emphasis).

Despite the fact that fear is everywhere, or maybe even because it is everywhere, the aforementioned split creates great friction within the wizarding community and causes the society to become unstable.

It is this instability that largely drives the story in *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* by making it necessary for characters to pick sides. Although Harry, Ron and Hermione are affected by the changes in their society and specifically hunted by Voldemort and his followers, their position in the fight against Voldemort has long since been clear. It is the story of other characters which is primarily driven by their unstable society and the ongoing persecution, whether they themselves are persecuted or not. Examples include the stories of Dean Thomas, who is on the run from the Ministry due to the uncertainty regarding his 'blood status',[2] Xenophilius Lovegood, who changes his allegiance due to the threats made towards his daughter,[3] and those of the Hogwarts students in general. They experience a harsh change in school dynamics after the arrival of the Death Eater siblings Amycus and Alecto Carrow. Due to their cruel regime and the counteractions by Dumbledore's Army,[4] led by Neville, Ginny and Luna, the students are forced to pick sides, but they also gain the chance to act as part of the resistance, especially during the last battle of Hogwarts. It is interesting that Rowling chooses a school as the site of this last battle, with numerous students, often still of a young age, as the fighters and also the victims. Drew Chappell argues that in this Rowling takes a more post-modern approach to her representation of child protagonists: "Rowling's novels imagine a culture in which child resistance is possible. Although Harry and his friends are 'heroes' in the sense of taking action and facing adversity, they are also builders of context, awakening their fellow students (and readers) to the network of ideologies in which they navigate" (292). For the child characters in particular it is not only important to take an active stand against the oppressive system they face, as Dumbledore's Army does, but also to question that system and to give other students the opportunity to reach a more informed decision when picking sides. This, more than their initial pranks, is the main reason for the growth of the D.A., which, at the time of Harry's return to Hogwarts, has a large number of members living secretly in the Room of Requirement (cf. *Hallows* 464-66). On a larger scale, the dynamics of active resistance and pointing out the injustices of the system also hold true for the wizarding community in general and specifically for the actions of the Order of the Phoenix, including the *Potterwatch* programme. Thus, the underlying plotline of Voldemort's rise to power is strongly influenced by themes of persecution and resistance.

Contrary to many other novels of the fantasy genre, the two fractions of Voldemort and the resistance are not portrayed as purely 'good' or 'evil'. As Sirius explains to Harry, "'the world isn't split into good people and Death Eaters'" (*Phoenix* 271). Rowling refrains from painting a purely 'black vs. white' picture of the conflict between state authority and resistance. Both the groups of the persecuted and the government officials or Death Eaters feature

[2] The following quotes illustrate Dean's unsettledness and the despair of his family: "'My dad left my mum when I was a kid. I've got no proof he was a wizard, though'" (*Hallows* 234); "'If Dean is listening, or if anyone has any knowledge of his whereabouts, his parents and sisters are desperate for news'" (ibid. 356).

[3] The double bind he finds himself in is described in the following passage: "'They took my Luna', he whispered. 'Because of what I've been writing. They took my Luna and I don't know where she is, what they've done to her. But they might give her back to me if I – if I –' 'Hand over Harry?' Hermione finished for him" (*Hallows* 340).

[4] Dumbledore's Army (D.A. for short) is a secret student organisation which was founded by Harry, Ron and Hermione during their fifth year at Hogwarts. Its original intent was for students to teach themselves Defence Against the Dark Arts (cf. *Phoenix* 303); later it developed into being more openly resistant against Voldemort's regime (cf. *Hallows* 463).

characters which contradict the 'good vs. bad', 'black vs. white' distinction, for example Mundungus Fletcher, Percy Weasley, Draco Malfoy and Severus Snape.[5] Lacassagne describes this as follows:

> But what is remarkable is that she [Rowling] avoids the trap of traditional fairy tales and binary dichotomies. All the characters have complex personality structures (even Voldemort, while in Hogwarts, was a 'good' boy); she shows the ambiguities and nuances of personalities, thus illuminating how difficult it is to maintain the balance between self-control and external constraints (321).

The ambiguity of her characters is one point for which Rowling is often praised and which also complicates conflicts depicted in her series; in consequence the plots appear to be more realistic. It renders it more difficult for the reader to form an opinion on Rowling's characters and also makes the story more relatable to the reader's experiences.

A number of real world parallels to Rowling's themes of persecution can be found. One obvious analogy can be drawn to the Nazi regime and their persecution of Jews. Muggles are portrayed by Voldemort's followers in phrases which are reminiscent of how Jews were described in Nazi ideology: "'Alecto, Amycus' sister, teaches Muggle Studies, which is compulsory for everyone. We've all got to listen to her explain how Muggles are like animals, stupid and dirty, and how they drove wizards into hiding by being vicious towards them, and how the natural order is being re-established'" (*Hallows* 462). As can be seen in Neville Longbottom's comment, Death Eaters begin to teach young witches and wizards as part of obligatory education that Muggles are more like animals than humans, thus undermining their human rights and using imagery that can be found in Nazi propaganda. There are also references to the prejudice that Jews achieved any sort of wealth through devious means. Along those lines, the Ministry of Magic suggests that Muggle-born wizards and witches stole their magic (cf. ibid. 172). The aforementioned doctrine of blood status is reminiscent of the Nazi regime's 'Rassenhygiene'. There are certainly many more examples that reference Third Reich practices.[6] Further parallels may also be drawn to the search for terrorists by governments today. Harry and his friends as well as the Order of the Phoenix and Dumbledore's Army could be seen as enemies of the state. Scrimgeour already begins treating Harry, Ron and Hermione as such in bending the law to hold back artefacts willed to them by Dumbledore. Once the Ministry is taken over, Harry and his friends indeed become enemies of the powers at large and are thus persecuted with the full force of the state. Although the underground resistance is portrayed as being on the 'right' side of the fight of good vs. evil, it nevertheless remains an anti-government organisation. One could, however, question the claim to rule by Voldemort's government, since it gained power through a coup.

This illegitimate gaining of power calls into question the morality or legitimacy of state persecution. Throughout the series, Voldemort is portrayed as strong and dangerous, seeking power and constituting a threat to anyone opposing him. After his return in book four he targets specific people to further his aims. In *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, however, his actions gain legitimacy after having attained control of the Ministry. Now his persecution is an act of government, sanctioned in the public eye. He even arranges for the necessary legislation, such as the Muggle-born Registration Commission. This shows that state persecu-

[5] The ambivalence of these characters is impressive: Mundungus Fletcher shows cowardice in fleeing during an attack and leaving Moody to die (cf. *Hallows* 70); Percy Weasley sees the Ministry as infallible and takes their side against Harry and Dumbledore (cf. *Phoenix* 69) but ultimately joins the battle against Voldemort (cf. *Hallows* 486-87); Draco Malfoy acts in accordance with Voldemort's teachings yet does not have the heart of a killer (cf. *Prince* 546-56); Severus Snape, though often portrayed as cruel, ultimately acts out of love for Lily Potter (cf. *Hallows* 593).

[6] Cf. the article by Carsten Kullmann in this volume.

tion is in many ways more powerful and more threatening than many other forms of oppression and can also be read as a criticism of the power of the establishment. This is further underlined by J.K. Rowling in an interview she gave the team of *The Leaky Cauldron*:

> I always planned that these kinds of things [referring to Stan Shunpike's arrest] would happen, but these have very powerful resonances, given that I believe, and many people believe, that there have been instances of persecution of people who did not deserve to be persecuted, even while we're attempting to find the people who have committed utter atrocities (Anelli/Spartz n.p.).

In questioning Voldemort's right to target anyone opposing him, Rowling also questions today's governments in their choices when carrying out justice.

This criticism of state actions can also be seen in her earlier works. According to Ashley N. Zirkle, it is only after the 9/11 attacks, which is to say as of book five, that Rowling becomes more outspoken about dishonest governments (cf. 55-56). The connection between Rowling's writing and 9/11 may be contested, as many scholars point to *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire* being the novel in which much darker themes, such as torture and first terrorist actions, are introduced. Zirkle does not deny this, but shifts the focus away from themes directly connected to Voldemort as the "primary villain" (56) to those of the Ministry of Magic's dysfunction. Although previous books already show harsh criticism of society (e.g. the question of house-elf rights), it is the last three novels which specifically point out the Ministry's shortcomings and criticise its lust for power, institutionalised discrimination, elitist bias and unnecessary force and violence. Here, the reader also begins to see distinctions between different Ministry officials. It is no longer the wizarding world's society or the system that is criticised, but specific people responsible for specific actions, such as Umbridge and her teaching methods, Fudge's smear campaign against Harry, Scrimgeour's lies to the public and so on.

The theme of persecution enforces the aforementioned fear of government. It also draws a picture of large-scale dissidence and friction, which is often met with violence. The deviation from a 'black and white' struggle of good vs. evil and the often 'grey' portrayal of this struggle add to the realism of the plotline and may also cause the reader to feel an acute sense of anxiety. It is perhaps this theme that most strongly relates to real experiences of trauma, anxiety and fear. Rowling does not shy away from giving the reader a drastic account of violence and terror. Nevertheless, some alleviation may be found in the humour, the narrating style and other, more positive themes.

IV. Terror

The third theme discussed in this paper is that of terror and terrorism. This section will first offer an explanation of the difference between 'terror' and 'terrorism' before giving a working definition of the latter. It will then explore parallels between 'real world' terrorism and the depiction of Voldemort and his Death Eaters. Having done so it will examine the imagery of terrorism in relation to the 9/11 attacks and furthermore outline differences in the comparison between terrorism in *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* and our world today.

As many critics of the *Harry Potter* series have pointed out, terror has a strong presence throughout the series. Rowling makes a point of creating harsh, drastic and dark scenes which inspire anxiety and fear. Some examples include the near-deaths and deaths of numerous characters, including Harry himself, the attack at the Quidditch World Cup, Voldemort's rebirth, the battle in the Department of Mysteries, the cave containing the Inferi, and so on. But what turns instances of terror into terrorist acts? Charles Ruby points to a number of elements that he deems essential for an act to be classified as terrorism. Drawing on Title 22

of the United States Code as well as works by numerous scholars, he argues that terrorism is to be understood as violence that is politically motivated, directed at non-combatants, carried out by subnational/clandestine agents and intended to create a fearful state of mind among an audience beyond the immediate victims (cf. Ruby 10-11). Yet, as Bernd Zywietz points out, the definition of terrorism remains intrinsically problematic because it inevitably references or is even based upon other concepts, such as 'politics', 'opposition' and 'legitimacy', which themselves are vague and ambiguous (cf. 31).[7]

While aware of the difficulties in defining terrorism, it is nevertheless important to examine in what ways the elements of Ruby's definition apply to one character in *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* in particular, namely Lord Voldemort. Apart from his obvious role as the villain of the story, his actions show strong parallels to terrorism. His political motivation is to gain power over the wizarding community and possibly to establish wizard rule over Muggles. Other, non-political motivations include ensuring his immortality. Most of his violence is perpetrated against non-combatants. As the wizarding community does not seem to have any standing military force, Aurors are the only armed force as they have been trained in the Dark Arts and, more specifically, in how to combat them. Although Barratt argues that any wand-carrier may be seen as a combatant because they are armed (cf. Barratt 103), I would claim that any non-Auror wizard or witch and any civilian Muggle should be seen as a non-combatant. After all, Muggles who own and carry weapons are not automatically categorised as combatants, so why should wand-carrying wizards and witches? The *Harry Potter* series also makes clear that nearly all wizards and witches are no match for Voldemort in any duel setting, as his magical power outstrips most others'. In addition to the more obvious violence against non-combatants, such as the Muggle killings, the destruction of the Muggle bridge in *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince* and the torturing and killing of Charity Burbage, next to all of Voldemort's violence is aimed at non-combatants, due to him working outside of any political legitimacy and his concomitant inability to fight a 'state vs. state' war.

This also explains how and why his actions can be classified as subnational or clandestine. As he does not subject himself to any outward authority and even chooses his role in leading the Ministry of Magic to remain largely unknown, all his actions are carried out in a clandestine manner. Due to his infiltration of the Ministry some may argue that in doing so he is establishing legitimacy for his actions. However, since this infiltration or coup occurs in clear violation of wizarding law, any following proclaimed legitimacy would inevitably be tainted, no matter how the legislation was changed to suit Voldemort's needs. As for the creation of a fearful state of mind, it is clear that his actions are designed to spread fear not only among his victims but amidst the wider community in order to discourage any resistance. Furthermore, his violence is not limited to any potential resistance; he also engages regularly in violence against his followers, spreading fear among them as well. Overall, Voldemort's actions therefore show astoundingly clear similarities with terrorism.

Since Voldemort can be read as acting in accordance with terrorist aims, it is of further interest to examine parallels between his Death Eaters and terrorist groups. One important aspect in this comparison is the cellular structure among the Death Eaters, which resembles that of many underground terrorist organisations today. As Barratt points out, this structure allowed many Death Eaters to go undiscovered after Voldemort's first fall and prevented apprehended Death Eaters from giving up the names of others. More importantly, Barratt further argues that "another reason Voldemort might devise a cellular structure for the Death

[7] The original reads as follows: "Zweitens ist das Etikett Terrorismus unvermeidlich unscharf, weil es sich auf selbst wiederum vage, unterschiedlich ausgelegte, konkretisierte und eingesetzte Begriffe wie 'Politik', 'Opposition' und 'Legitimität' stützt, auf sie verweist oder gar zurückführt" (Zywietz 31).

Eaters is that it would prevent members from coordination against *him*" (98, original emphasis). This again underlines not only his lust for control but also his preference for commanding loyalty through fear of punishment rather than through trust.

When arguing that the depiction of Voldemort and his followers features strong similarities to terrorism, it is important to realise that images of terrorism are not universally applicable but formed by context. In today's Western society, terrorism is often connected to images of the 9/11 attacks, which according to Jonathan Matusitz "gave rise to the Fourth Wave of terrorism" (12). The representation of Voldemort and the Death Eaters as terrorists therefore correlates with one specific view of terrorism, one that is predominantly used in today's media. It is these particular images of terrorism, connected to the 9/11 attacks, that the *Harry Potter* series draws upon. Frances Pheasant-Kelly outlines how these images are also used in the *Harry Potter* films:

> Allusions to 9/11 and the war on terror occur frequently in the films, most obviously, when Harry falls under the psychic influence of his enemy Voldemort, but also in connection with memory, death, and danger […] thereby amplifying their potential emotional resonance for post-9/11 audiences. Additionally, such episodes often deploy imagery that directly pertains to 9/11 and terrorism (49).

The use of 9/11 imagery connects deeply with the readers' 'real world' confrontation with images of terrorism and hence relates equally to society's fears concerning terrorism.

In addition to the parallels between the *Harry Potter* series and terrorism, there are also differences, most importantly in the scale of success that Voldemort and his followers attain. When thinking of terrorism today, thoughts of terrorist organisations claiming responsibility for attacks and their political or religious motivations may spring to mind. Although these thoughts may strike fear within us, we generally believe our governments to be working against terrorist groups, preventing many attacks. In *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, the wizarding world, by contrast, experiences a loss of this protective government. If Voldemort is seen as the embodiment of terrorism, then terrorism seems more successful in this novel than it has been in our world so far. Voldemort and his followers are successful in dismantling a government that is trying, however poorly, to protect its people. Rowling paints a scenario where terrorism is so successful that it in a way becomes the norm while the people opposing it become outcasts. Ultimately, however, Voldemort still fails. Harry's defeat of Voldemort becomes an even greater feat, considering that the reign of terror has advanced much further than terrorism in our world. This therefore begs the question of how defeating the greatest terrorist of all times was possible and, furthermore, what implications or even moral lessons a reader may derive from this story.

V. Dealing with trauma

There are many scholars arguing both for and against the *Harry Potter* series being helpful to young readers in dealing with real-life trauma. In this section the main reasons for arguing in favour of reading the *Harry Potter* series in this context will be outlined and it will furthermore be shown that in addition to dark themes, there are also very helpful lessons for dealing with trauma that can be learned by reading the series.[8]

One main target of criticism in *Harry Potter* is that the series is at times very explicit in its depiction of violence and terror. Since dark themes, such as conspiracy, persecution and terrorism, are indeed present and very important to the plot, I can hardly deny this point. Yet

[8] For a discussion of trauma in context of *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*, cf. the article by Anne Mahler in this volume.

scholars such as Taub and Servaty-Seib assert that representations of dark themes, specifically of death, are in fact helpful for child development:

> [T]he fact that she [Rowling] does address issues of death, dying, and bereavement is to be commended. The growing body of literature focused on the childhood experience of death is virtually unanimous in its recommendation for straightforward discussion about death at an early age, prior to the occurrence of a death-loss crisis (23).

Other scholars, such as Courtney Strimel, go even further and maintain that it is the realism of these dark themes that is beneficial to readers dealing with trauma. She argues that the *Harry Potter* series is clearly set in a fantasy world and studies show that children are able to distinguish between reality and fantasy. Because of this, fantasy literature in general offers a suitable distance to the readers' real experience, which enables them to deal with difficult topics such as violence and death. In addition, she points out that instances of terror in the *Harry Potter* novels are clearly coded as 'magic', which separates them from the readers' own experiences. This gap between reality and fantasy enables readers to deal with dark and ambiguous topics and makes them capable of drawing conclusions for their own lives. From this distance, it is acceptable for even the horrors of the story to be described realistically.

Strimel argues further that a realistic and often messy, ambiguous depiction with open questions and loose ends helps to validate the readers' feelings. After all, their experiences are not 'black and white' either. She explains that "[o]nce children feel assured that their feelings and thoughts are reasonable, they may work to understand and cope with terror" (Strimel 44). Chappell agrees with Strimel and points out: "Viewing Hogwarts and the teaching/learning of magic as metaphor, the wizarding world becomes a reflection of our own. The events and structures in the Harry Potter novels prepare children for life as adults by teaching them about the systems inside which both children and adults function" (292). This preparation for life is highly valuable and makes a strong point in favour of recommending the *Harry Potter* novels to children.

In making it possible to learn about the system the readers inhabit, the *Harry Potter* series does not merely offer an accessible depiction of difficult topics but also provides possible solutions to many moral issues. Many helpful ideas are provided by Harry's mentor, Albus Dumbledore, throughout the series. For instance, he gives Harry insight into the power of fear: "'It is the unknown we fear when we look upon death and darkness, nothing more'" (*Prince* 529). He also helps Harry in dealing with fresh traumatic experiences by encouraging him to face his pain: "'Numbing the pain for a while will make it worse when you finally feel it'" (*Goblet* 695). In addition to Dumbledore, Ron and Hermione also support Harry. After realising he will have to face Voldemort again, it is their support that keeps him from despairing: "the mere fact that they were still there on either side of him, speaking bracing words of comfort, not shrinking from him as though he were contaminated or dangerous, was worth more than he could ever tell them" (*Prince* 97). In showing how Harry is able to deal with trauma, even when it is arduous, Rowling gives her readers hope that they may attain such support as well and learn how to manage their own difficult experiences. As Harry and his friends overcome numerous obstacles and ultimately succeed in defeating Voldemort, a number of qualities are shown to be helpful in alleviating fear: small acts of bravery, teamwork, kindness, the willingness to admit one's own faults, loyalty, hope for a better future and friendship.

VI. Conclusion

Overall this paper has shown many instances where the themes of conspiracy, persecution and terror are drawn upon in *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* in particular and the *Harry Potter* series in general. These themes are not circumstantial, but of high importance to the plot development. Without them, Voldemort would not be who he is and his reign of terror would not become as successful as it does. In embedding these aspects into her story J.K. Rowling comments on current developments. The influx of the theme of terror in her series after 9/11, though long previously planned, correlates with a general influx of this topic in media and culture. In referring to current issues, presenting them in an accessible way and showing possible defences against a controlling sense of fear, Rowling arguably helps her readers to come to terms with the world they inhabit. Bridger emphasises this by citing an essay competition held by Rowling's US publisher which showed that readers were inspired by Rowling's characters, who helped them cope with varying difficult situations such as illness or bullying (cf. 10). When asked about the influence of terrorism on her writing Rowling herself answered: "I've never thought, 'It's time for a post-9/11 Harry Potter book,' no. But what Voldemort does, in many senses, is terrorism" (Anelli/Spartz n.p.). In *Harry Potter* J.K. Rowling engages with the highly debated and difficult topic of the impact of terrorism. She succeeds in not only creating a thrilling story but also inspiring many readers to keep hope amidst the ongoing 'War on Terror'.

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Carsten Kullmann

Of Muggles and Men: Identifying Racism in the *Harry Potter* Series

I. Introduction: When Harry met Draco…

When Harry visits Diagon Alley with Hagrid for the first time, he buys his first set of Hogwarts school robes, amongst other things. In *Madam Malkin's Robes for All Occasions* he meets a snobbish young aristocrat who rambles on about his views on who should and should not be admitted into Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry: "'I really don't think they should let *the other sort* in [...] I think they should keep it in the old wizarding families'" (*Stone* 84, emphasis added). In this scene, Draco Malfoy introduces Harry to issues of race and racism in the wizarding world, and little does Harry know that this encounter, emblematic for his and Draco's differing world views, marks them as adversaries for their entire school career. In the Potterverse, it is blood lineage which stirs discrimination against "the other sort", even constituting for some fanatics the basis of their racist ideology. Generally, prejudice based on 'bloodedness' runs deep in the entire society and surfaces every so often when wizards and witches are confronted with issues evolving around the questions of descent and the origin of magical abilities. Broadly speaking, racial prejudice can be sorted into two categories: firstly, prejudice against non-human beings of magical origin, such as house-elves, goblins, centaurs, or giants. Secondly, within the category of humans, a distinction is made between pure magical and Muggle descent. Since the former issue has already been examined thoroughly in academia,[1] this paper will focus on the latter.

As the origin of magic is unclear and the hereditary laws in the Potterverse are never specified, racial prejudice against people from a Muggle background has a longstanding tradition in the wizarding society. Historical accounts lead to the idea that these prejudices originated in the Middle Ages, around the time of the witch hunts. In *The Tales of Beedle the Bard*, Dumbledore's notes on "The Wizard and the Hopping Pot" inform readers about the history of Muggle-wizard relationships: as a result of Muggles' persecution of witches and wizards, anti-Muggle sentiments enjoyed heightened popularity in the Middle Ages, and "[by] the seventeenth century, any witch or wizard who chose to fraternise with Muggles became suspect, even an outcast in his or her own community" (15). Extreme pro-wizard propaganda, such as that found in the magazine *Warlock of War*, edited by Brutus Malfoy, perpetuated the stereotype that "any wizard who shows fondness for the society of Muggles is of low intelligence" (*Tales* 16). However, while general blood prejudice is continually, though latently, present throughout the *Harry Potter* novels, its extent varies. The extreme stance represented by Brutus Malfoy's association of Muggle origin with lower intelligence developed into a full-fledged ideological system that sought to discriminate systematically against Muggle-born witches and wizards. In Harry's time, the most prominent advocate of this racist supremacist ideology is, of course, Lord Voldemort. His ideology propagates the division of the wizarding society into several hierarchical classes according to purity of blood. The troublesome issue of racist thinking and practices produced by this hierarchy runs as a central motif

[1] For detailed analyses of this issue, see Ostry (2003) and Horne (2010).

through the series and the corresponding ideology in its extremes remains associated with the series' villain(s).

In presenting Harry and his friends in clear opposition to the forces of evil, Rowling does not only depict the typical fairy-tale good vs. evil struggle in her *Harry Potter* series. Throughout the novels, the boundaries between good and evil are blurred; characters that started out as presumably evil turn out to be on the good side. Vice versa, being good is not mistaken for being flawless and infallible. Even Harry and Dumbledore, who may perhaps be considered two of the most benevolent characters in the saga, are shown to have their dark sides. Still, in associating Voldemort and his followers with supremacist racial ideology, their viciousness is constantly underscored. Besides displaying despicable character traits, they pose a threat to society at large. What ultimately enables Harry to remain victorious is not some sort of divine goodness inherent to his character, but rather his strict adherence to a core set of moral values and his ability to remain free to choose his actions. Therefore, this paper argues for the *Harry Potter* heptalogy to be read as an allegory that promotes these morals and the importance of free choice as universal weapons for the fight against evil on a greater scale. The representation of racism in the series caters to the depiction of Voldemort and his supporters as agents of quintessential evil, which is stressed by deliberate allusions to a historical period that has come to signify evil: Nazism in Third Reich Germany from 1933-1945.

II. Preparing the ground: theories of racism

Turning to the theoretical preliminaries necessary for identifying racist supremacist ideology in the *Harry Potter* series, it soon becomes clear that every attempt at defining the terms will inevitably be confined to just that – a mere attempt without any claim to be exhaustive. The term 'racism' is too fuzzy, too complex, and too historically loaded at this stage. Already the etymological origin of the word 'race' is anything but clear; various theories trace it back to Arabic, Latin or Old French. The earliest uses of 'race' can be identified in Spanish ('raza') and Italian ('razza') between 1300 and 1450 to denote the notion of 'species' as well as 'lineage' or 'origin' (cf. "Race" n.p.). While the idea of different human races is already present in Antiquity, the concept of racism develops in the context of the Enlightenment in Europe. The social and political upheavals of the French Revolution as well as the beginning of colonialist and imperialist expansions of Central European nations confronted the mostly aristocratic ruling elites with two issues both at home and abroad: firstly, their formerly inherited privileges were endangered by the awakening of the ideals of equality and (political) freedom, and secondly the increasing economically motivated exploitation of Indigenous peoples in the newly discovered colonies needed ideological justification in the face of these emerging ideals of human equality. As Patrick von zur Mühlen remarks, Europe was relatively homogeneous in terms of ethnic diversity at the time of the emergence of racial theories (cf. 11). Thus, the increasing appeal of racial theories needs to be seen as the attempt to counter social conflicts as well as the endangering of established privileges of the ruling classes. The idealisation of nobility and aristocracy as 'master race' secured the rights of their members against the aspiring bourgeoisie.

Consequently, racial theories in this sense first emerged in post-revolutionary France among the old elites: Count Joseph Arthur de Gobineau is generally credited with the dubious honour of being the 'father of racism'. His *Essai sur l'Inégalité des Races Humaines* (1853-55) marks the first of two broader branches of racial theories. Gobineau understood 'race' as an essentialist, innate characteristic of human beings and divided humanity hierarchically into three categories according to skin colour: white, yellow, and black. Amongst the white race,

he saw what he called the 'Aryan race' endowed with a natural predisposition to rulership. Departing from the a priori concept of human inequality, Gobineau identified the contemporary social upheavals as results of racial miscegenation, which had supposedly compromised the 'Aryan' elements of French society. Concluding with a pessimistic view of the future, Gobineau proclaimed the end of humankind as a result of continuing miscegenation and, concomitantly, racial degeneration (cf. zur Mühlen 62).

The second branch of racial theories developed soon after the publication of Charles Darwin's *The Origin of the Species* (1859) and *The Descent of Man* (1871). Transferring Darwin's principles of natural selection and the survival of the fittest to society, Social Darwinists, as they were soon called, alienated the biological findings of Darwin and used them for their own political ends. Contrary to Gobineau's idea of a priori inequality of human races, the strictly selectionist Social Darwinist approach assumed a theoretical equality of races which shifts as a result of the unrestrained competition among races. In consequence, a Social Darwinist understanding of race did not submit to Gobineau's pessimism, but translated the alleged dangers of progressing miscegenation into active politics. The result was the eugenic movement, which took the theoretical idea to a practical level, suggesting social action for eliminating the 'unfit' and preventing society from increasing degeneration by racial mixture. These developments were brought to an unspeakably savage conclusion by the Nazi Regime in Germany in the 1930s and 1940s. The National Socialists took a supposedly natural racial superiority of the so-called Aryan race as a justification for cold-blooded industrial murder.

Lord Voldemort's understanding of race, and consequently his racist practices, show characteristics of both Gobinean and Social Darwinist ideologies. His syncretic approach unites Gobineau's idea of race as an essentialist and unchangeable characteristic with the Social Darwinist consequences of eugenic practices. Similar to the Nazis, who followed the same syncretism in their ideology, which ultimately led to the Holocaust, Voldemort overlooks the theoretical inconsistencies that result from such a unity of two contradictory concepts. In summary, more than two hundred years of racial theory have failed to produce a single, comprehensible definition of their subject. The contradictory syncretic ideologies used by Voldemort in the *Harry Potter* novels and the National Socialists in Third Reich Germany gloss over their theoretical imperfections with large-scale propaganda. However, they do not bear up against thorough and critical scrutiny.

Therefore, as any attempt at properly defining race and racism has failed so far, there is no illusion that the issue can be solved within the limited frame of this paper. Instead of trying to reach a concise working definition, several characteristics of racism and racist practices can be identified which will constitute the toolbox for analysing Voldemort's racist ideology in the *Harry Potter* saga. His ideology shares characteristics with two historical instances of state-induced racism: Third Reich Germany's antisemitism and the Apartheid regime in South Africa. A closer analysis of both regimes' legislative means of ousting the respective 'other' from society reveals four categories on which these practices are based: xenophobia, ethnocentricity, endogamy, and pure-blood mysticism (cf. Geiss 27-28). All four criteria can be found in Voldemort's racist supremacist ideology.

Ethnocentricity and xenophobia constitute two sides of the same coin: the fear of everything 'foreign', which when talking about racism applies to the enmity felt towards entire 'races', emphasises particular in-group features in order to bolster one's own identity and vice versa. A functional in-group identity can only be defined by setting it off from the out-group, the 'other' (cf. ibid. 28-29). Similarly, endogamy and pure-blood mysticism are closely connected. The perception of race as a fixed criterion links the transfer of both despised characteristics of the 'other' and the glorified 'goodness' of one's own race to mechanisms of heredity and, consequently, to blood. Blood allegedly 'transports', so to speak, characteristics

that are allocated to the particular races and, thus, plays a central role in racism. In consequence, the purity of blood that needs to be preserved constitutes a full-fledged mysticism, which forms the centre of racist ideology. Endogamy is the means by which this purity is preserved; members of the in-group are forbidden to 'sully' their blood by mating with members of the out-group.

The essentialist understanding of race, marked by the purity of blood, provides Voldemort and his followers with a universal and unchanging trait on the basis of which they can divide fellow wizards and witches into those who belong and those who do not belong to society. Voldemort makes use of this basic distinction and links the innate characteristic of non-magical blood with other character traits such as lower intelligence and less skill. These stereotypes are attributed to the entire out-group regardless of intra-group variation. Wizards and witches with Muggle ancestry are perceived as one homogeneous group, compromised by their non-magical descent. This process of stereotyping was first described by Stuart Hall: while we constantly categorise the world around us, stereotyping is the negatively connoted practice of reducing persons or groups to a few simplified and exaggerated characteristics that are presented as unchangeable and natural (cf. 15-24). Stereotypes imply that they convey all necessary information about that person or group. The essentialist, generalising notion accounts for "the belief that certain groups are distillable to a core set of common fixed traits, cultural values, or identities whilst any variation across the group is considered secondary" (Quraishi/Philburn 22). In the same sense, Steve Garner proposes the 'triad' of racism (cf. 11): a hierarchical power relationship allows those with more power to naturalise and, therefore, racialise certain characteristics; these criteria are then transformed into a set of ideas, an ideology, that grants legitimation for the third step, forms of discrimination and discriminatory practices that are based on the constructed ideology. Racism, therefore, is always connected to power (cf. Memmi 96). Accordingly, Voldemort's racist ideology becomes infinitely more threatening after his ascent to rulership, when he has acquired the means to implement his practices into active politics on a large scale.

Eventually, the process of defining basic, innate characteristics as criteria of difference and allocating to them certain negative, stereotyped attributes leads to the construction of the undesired group as fundamentally different. Members of that group are presented as being opposed to the 'self' and therefore perceived as 'other'. Hence, the identity of the 'self' is constructed in binary opposition to the 'other'; 'self' and 'other' are mutually exclusive. However, the 'self' needs the 'other' in order to define itself; the image of the 'other' serves as the antithesis to the image of the 'self' (cf. Holz 45). In this sense, the construction of Muggle-born witches and wizards as 'others' serves two concrete purposes: firstly, their social and political de-legitimation strengthens the in-group identity of Voldemort's pure-blood fanatics and, thus, their claim to power. Secondly, it legitimises any action undertaken against the 'other'. Denying Muggle-borns the right to use magic, regardless of their ability, constitutes an act of dehumanisation and, therefore, justifies actions that aim at their extermination.

III. 'You'll be next, Mudbloods!': the racist ideology of Lord Voldemort

In the *Harry Potter* series, one can easily see how these theoretical preliminaries apply to Lord Voldemort's racist practices. He only regards wizards and witches of pure magical descent as worthy members of society. The perception of his 'self' is strictly demarcated from anyone who does not fulfil this basic criterion. Allocating a supreme significance to blood means that witches and wizards with Muggle ancestry as well as Muggles themselves are regarded as inferior to pure-bloods, which allows for discrimination against the 'other'. The

discriminatory practices of Voldemort's followers range from pejoratives, such as 'Mudblood' (taking the idea of soiled blood very literally), to outright physical violence. In the following, two examples will be examined in order to demonstrate the development of discriminatory action based on racial supremacy: firstly, in *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* (1998), the Basilisk is set free by the Horcrux diary to continue Salazar Slytherin's work of purging Hogwarts of Muggle-borns. Therefore, already the second instalment of the series addresses the deadly consequences that can result from thinking along the lines of racist ideology. Although the fatal danger of the Basilisk is toned down and students are merely petrified, the looming imminence of death hangs over the entire term like the sword of Damocles. Secondly, after Voldemort's return in *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire* (2000), the threat he poses to non-pure-bloods becomes increasingly pressing with his ascent to power, culminating in the takeover of the Ministry of Magic in *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* (2007). The new regime immediately sets up a Muggle-born Registration Commission, aiming at surveying how Muggle-born wizards and witches obtained their magical power. The concomitant obligation for everyone under survey to prove wizarding ancestry is gruesomely reminiscent of the Nazis' introduction of the Aryan certificate. The connection of both examples illustrates the step-by-step progression of racist supremacist ideologies in the Potterverse: while initially the actions of the Horcrux diary are confined to the grounds of Hogwarts, Voldemort relentlessly implements his pure-blood fanaticism into active policy after his return. In their increasing ruthlessness, the examples will illustrate the dangers that emanate from pursuing racist ideologies.

Apart from Draco Malfoy's constant association with pure-blood ideology, the issue of race does not feature prominently in the series until *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*. Throughout the second term, students are attacked by the Basilisk on grounds of their Muggle parentage. Once the Chamber has been opened, the first message on the wall reads "'Enemies of the heir, beware'" (*Chamber* 146). Right from the beginning, those targeted by the Basilisk are constructed as 'enemies' – a notion that mirrors typical stereotyping practices by demonising the 'other'. By invoking alleged danger stemming from these enemies, one's own actions are legitimised as preventive or even counter-active. Further clarification on who is meant by "'[e]nemies of the heir'" (ibid.) is provided by Draco Malfoy, who upon reading the first message immediately bursts out: "'You'll be next, Mudbloods!'" (ibid. 147) Known for his affiliation with pure-blood supremacy, he immediately springs to Harry, Ron, and Hermione's mind as the possible culprit. His commitment to racial purity is emphasised time and again by means of his frequent use of the pejorative 'Mudblood' throughout *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*: "When Malfoy calls Hermione 'You filthy little Mudblood', he is then tapping into a deep vein of cultural division and emotion. His taunt has the cultural shock of the word 'nigger' in contemporary America, as seen by the response his 'Mudblood' comment elicits" (Westman 314). The attacks on Muggle-borns at Hogwarts mirror the heightened attention that is given to the issue of blood purity and the fear of miscegenation. The continuing assaults and the threatening atmosphere already foreshadow what is to become Voldemort's political agenda once he has seized power: "The petrification of the Mudbloods", Julia Eccleshare claims, "has sinister overtones. The idea that some individuals are being picked off in what initially seem like unrelated attacks is very scary to an enclosed community. When they discover the link between the victims, it is even more horrific [...] [making] it a convincing parallel to the persecution of any minority within a society" (79).

Shortly after the first attack, in one of Professor Binns's more interesting classes, it is revealed that the Chamber of Secrets was built by Salazar Slytherin. Disagreeing with the other three Hogwarts founders on the question of who was and who was not worthy of being taught magic, Slytherin left the school in a bad temper after constructing a secret chamber for his

heir to open and to continue the work of purging Hogwarts of the 'unworthy'. Ergo, Salazar Slytherin must be regarded as one of the forerunners of racial supremacy in the *Harry Potter* universe. Not shying away from drastic methods, he was willing to go to the ends of ethnic cleansing to implement his ideas. As the plot continues, it becomes evident that Slytherin's heir is none other than Lord Voldemort. Voldemort, therefore, is linked with Slytherin's racist ideology already in the second instalment of the series, even before his direct descent from Slytherin is further elaborated on. Once more, however, Harry thwarts his plans, slays the Basilisk and destroys the Horcrux diary. As the series' hero, he not only battles Lord Voldemort himself but, by extension, also his fundamentally racist ideology targeted against Muggles as well as wizards and witches with Muggle ancestry. With the horrors of the second year defeated, the issues of race and racism fade from the plot in Harry's third year at Hogwarts. They return, however, with one of the perhaps most gruesome scenes in the entire series.

At the beginning of *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*, celebrations of the Quidditch World Cup are grimly cut short when a masked wizard lynch mob turns the festivities into what Mary Pharr calls "holocaustic gateways for the return of the Dark Lord" (16). Abusing their magical powers, Death Eaters terrorise the Muggle owners of the campsite, floating them in mid-air like marionettes. Sickly, the trio watches "the smallest Muggle child, who had begun to spin like a top, sixty feet above the ground, his head flopping limply from side to side" (*Goblet* 102). As Suman Gupta notes, "[t]he manner in which the crowd grows and cheers marks this demonstration as a popular one" (102). This scene signifies the transition of racially motivated assaults from the confined area of the Hogwarts grounds to the public sphere. The foreshadowed return of Lord Voldemort prompts his followers to leave their hiding places and to openly display their ideologically motivated hatred for all non-pure-bloods. Voldemort's actual return fully completes this transitory stage.

After the Dark Lord's return at the end of *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*, the situation for Muggle-borns deteriorates increasingly. Although the protagonists are still protected at Hogwarts from the worsening political environment until the end of their sixth term, Voldemort's mounting power in the wizarding world eventually leads to the invasion of Hogwarts and the murder of Albus Dumbledore. Deprived of a sphere of safety and conscious of their moral obligation, Harry, Ron, and Hermione decide not to return for their final year in *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* and face the world outside school. Here, they experience an increasingly hostile environment for those who do not comply with Voldemort's ideology. This alarming political development reaches its climax with the fall of the Ministry of Magic.

As Voldemort rules wizarding Britain, racist thinking also enters official legislature. The Ministry subsequently passes a bill that calls into existence a Registration Commission for Muggle-borns. Additionally, minors are now obliged to attend Hogwarts if they are given 'Blood Status' – that is, if they can prove their wizarding ancestry. At Hogwarts, Muggle Studies are made mandatory for every student, transforming the subject into learning "'how Muggles are like animals, stupid and dirty, and how they drove wizards into hiding by being vicious towards them, and how the natural order is being re-established'" (*Hallows* 467). Moreover, so-called Snatchers form quasi-militias aiming at hunting down Muggle-borns on the run who were unable to prove their wizard descent. Clearly, the wizarding world transforms into a totalitarian society that rests firmly on the ideological foundation of pure-blood supremacy. Muggle-borns are increasingly ostracised as they represent the 'other' within society. Their 'mongrel' status contradicts the pure-blood mysticism at the heart of Voldemort's supremacist ideology that is just about to become official state racism. Their otherness is met with xenophobia, an anxiety resulting from the fear of the natural order's collapse, and transforms into unmitigated hatred (cf. Geiss 45). The excessive ethnocentricity of Volde-

mort's fellowship, based on the identity-constituting notion of pure-bloodedness, at the same time fuels and is driven by the xenophobic ousting of the 'other' within their own society: witches and wizards of Muggle descent whose mixed blood contradicts the doctrine of racial purity and testifies to sin against this doctrine.

IV. Depicting evil: allusions to Third Reich Germany

Within most of Voldemort's political actions the collective memories of fascist Europe in the middle of the 20th century resonate. Overall, there are remarkable similarities between the construction of Voldemort's pure-blood supremacy and his policy in the *Harry Potter* series and historic accounts of the practices that were order of the day in Nazi Germany. Purity of blood becomes the essential, defining characteristic that qualifies a person as a worthy member of society. All those who do not fulfil this criterion are, step by step, ostracised, rounded up, and ultimately eliminated. Memories come back of the Third Reich, where the defining characteristic for belonging was not magic but 'Aryan' blood. Just as the Jews in Germany, "'Muggle-borns are being rounded up'" (*Hallows* 169), which is legitimised by the Ministry's new motto: 'Magic is Might'.[2] The Muggle-born Registration Commission requests Muggle-born wizards and witches to prove their wizard descent as to avoid prosecution for allegedly obtaining magical power by force or theft. Similar genealogy measures were undertaken by the Nazis; in order to become a full-fledged member of society, one had to prove 'Aryan' ancestry by certificate. The sub-divisions of Blood Status categories – pure-blood, half-blood, Muggle-born – also closely resemble the categorisation of blood lineage that was introduced by the Nuremberg Laws.

The obsession with preserving blood purity is at the centre of the fanatics' concern and adds to the blood-mysticism which marks their racist practices. Endogamy among pure-bloods is the logical consequence and mixed marriages are openly despised: Sirius' mother, Walburga Black, a devout pure-blood fanatic who held dear the family's motto 'Toujours pur', mutilates the living-room tapestry depicting the family tree after her niece Andromeda married a Muggle, removing her for not making a "'lovely, respectable pure-blood marriage'" (*Phoenix* 104). The actual removal of Andromeda from the family tree tapestry symbolises the elimination of objectionable elements from the Black family, a family Sirius describes as thinking "'Voldemort had the right idea, they were all for the purification of the wizarding race, getting rid of Muggle-borns and having pure-bloods in charge'" (ibid. 103) and which is thus emblematic for the wider appeal Voldemort's ideology held in the wizarding society.

In the Potterverse, the new supremacist ideology is both taught at school and conveyed to the public. At Hogwarts, Muggle Studies are made compulsory for all students, as was mentioned above. The subject now intends to brain-wash them by proclaiming natural inferiority of Muggle blood to magical blood. A claim to power is deduced from this alleged natural superiority, which is represented as the 'natural order'. As Aida Patient and Kori Street have observed, "there is a clear connection between the learning outcomes of Muggle Studies and the racial paradigm expressed in the pamphlet used to teach German children about Jews" (226). At the Ministry, in turn, pamphlets are produced intended to inform the public about

[2] The new motto is visualised by a new statue in the Ministry's Atrium: the Fountain of Magical Brethren is replaced with a witch and a wizard sitting on "hundreds and hundreds of naked bodies, men, women and children, all with rather stupid, ugly faces, twisted and pressed together to support the weight of the handsomely robed wizards" (*Hallows* 196). Engraved in the statue, the new motto 'Magic is Might' seems like a distorted perversion of the Nazis' 'Jedem das Seine', which was displayed over the entrance of Buchenwald concentration camp.

'Mudbloods and the Dangers They Pose to a Peaceful Pure-Blood Society'. These pamphlets again stress the allusion to Nazi propaganda, which depicted Jews as harmful elements to German society and claimed that they needed to be 'exterminated' in order to maintain 'the natural order'.

The more powerful Voldemort becomes, the more his racist, supremacist ideology transforms into state policy. The atmosphere in the wizarding world after the fall of the Ministry is shaped by anxiety, fear of terror, and mutual distrust, guaranteeing that no one dares to challenge the system of rule (cf. Staab/Malcher 227). Voldemort's war against political enemies like Harry and ideologically stigmatised outsiders, i.e., the Muggle-borns, recreates images of Third Reich state terror. Snatchers and dementors, hunting those on the run, serve as the Dark Lord's executive militias and bear in their political function similarities to Hitler's *Schutzstaffel*. The symbol used by the powerful to identify like-minded individuals emphasises this historical connection: Voldemort's Dark Mark is strikingly reminiscent of the SS Death's Head Units skull insignia (cf. ibid. 231). The Death's Head Units were responsible for administering the concentration camps and overseeing the 'extermination' of Jews and others whom the Nazis considered 'Untermenschen' in the death camps during the Second World War.

In associating Voldemort and the Death Eaters with Third Reich Germany, they are constructed as the series' unadulterated evil. Besides the personal feud between Harry and Voldemort that is tied to the prophecy that neither can live while the other survives, Voldemort also poses a threat to the entire wizarding society. Patient and Street note in this regard that "Hitler, the Nazis, and the Holocaust have come [...] to epitomise evil. They have become the quintessential or archetypal metaphor for evil" (202). Similarly, Stefan Hirt considers Hitler a 'pop-icon' which is used for "his ideological otherness and role as absolute evil in moral discourses and popular culture" (501). By alluding to Nazism and the Holocaust, most prominently in *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, Rowling depicts Harry's arch-nemesis as evil on a greater scale, conveying "an immediate understanding of evil to modern audiences by referencing what we think we know about that past" (Patient/Street 204). However, it is important to note that there are no exact parallels between the world of the *Harry Potter* series and the events during the period of Nazi rule; rather, the novels "are transcoded with historical references, albeit reductive ones, to a particular historical period that has come to represent evil" (ibid. 205). These encoded images stir in the reader the access to cultural memory images of the historical period of 1933-1945 and serve as a kind of surrogate *lieu de mémoire* (Pierre Nora). The allusion to the unparalleled cruelty and abomination of the Holocaust resonates with the references to this particular past in *Harry Potter* and lends to Voldemort a notion of evil that sets him apart from all the other villains in the series, marking him as the ultimate embodiment of evil.

V. Conclusion: 'It's our choices […] that show what we truly are'

Harry, on the contrary, will have nothing of Voldemort's ideological fanaticism. Himself a half-blood, he befriends a 'blood traitor' and a Muggle-born witch, and together the trio ultimately succeeds in overthrowing the Dark Lord. Accordingly, what prevails over evil is a specific set of moral codes and values: loyalty, solidarity, compassion, friendship, and love. In the face of bigotry and racism, Harry, Ron, and Hermione remain virtuous and claim the moral high ground, which enables them to be victorious. As Eliana Ionoaia correctly observes, Harry makes this conscious choice very early in his wizarding career, urging the Sorting Hat to put him into Gryffindor instead of Slytherin. From the beginning, "he chooses to distance himself from a group of people unhindered by morals, choosing a life of morality and virtue" (Ionoaia 61). After all, believing in morality and virtues and being willing to act

on them is essential for making the world a better place. This contradiction in terms of Voldemort's supremacist ideology and Harry's empathy and belief in free choice finds its literal expression at the end of *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*: realising that he cannot defeat Dumbledore in this moment, Voldemort attempts to possess Harry, aiming at tempting Dumbledore to kill the 'Boy Who Lived' and to drive out evil. However, the Dark Lord does not succeed; he is ultimately driven out of Harry's body as he cannot bear the boy's range of positive feelings: "And as Harry's heart filled with emotion, the creature's coils loosened, the pain was gone" (*Phoenix* 751).

The *Harry Potter* series portrays a world that is modelled on our own and troubled by similar problems. In the end, it "provides not only the promise of triumph over evil, but also guidance on how to meet it through thoughtful attention to right and wrong" (Kern 26). The typical fairy-tale ending of the triumph of good over evil is hard fought for and the way to victory leaves the reader with a moral lesson that can be transferred to their own lives: "despite its dark recesses, the world is good, and people can overcome their difficulties and find joy" (Black 238). The novels suggest that adhering to the values Harry, Ron, Hermione, Dumbledore, and all the others who fight on Harry's side cherish and promote will help readers "to critically engage with power structures in their lives and become architects of their own agency" (Chappell 282).

Assuming then, as many scholars do, that "the preoccupation with blood as signification of magical races, and the identifiably fascist politics of the Magic world associated with that, cannot but resonate with the politics of race in our world" (Gupta 103), the allegory that love beats racism can be transferred to our own practices. In cherishing the values and morals that ultimately prevail in the *Harry Potter* saga, everyone, like Harry, can make our own muddled Muggle world a better place. The novels' targeting of "the formation and replication of ideology rather than prejudice per se [...] show[s] how contemporary cultural opinion becomes naturalized as truth, as well as how that 'truth' can change" (Westman 315) and they leave their readers with the unspoken assignment to follow Harry's example in challenging the naturalised 'truths' of their own world. The subliminal call to political action can be understood as the series' most lasting impact. Depicting the modern world as deeply fractured by political beliefs and competing ideologies, the *Harry Potter* saga "offers [its] readers the opportunity to ponder on their own ideas for healing those fractures. Some ignore the opportunity – but others have leapt upon it" (Pharr 15).

In the light of the recent political shift to the right as well as the unwelcome revival of racism, nationalism, misogyny, hatred, and bigotry, not only in Europe but around the globe, it is timelier than ever to be aware of these fractures and competing ideologies, and to reflect on the values promoted by the *Harry Potter* series. Firmly believing in solidarity and loyalty, friendship and trust, empathy and love, as well as the willingness to act on those beliefs will help us preserve freedom and democracy in times of crisis. They will help us stay open-minded and open-hearted, and to leap upon the opportunity to heal the fractures of our world. Naturally, in all his wisdom, Albus Dumbledore was aware of the importance of such moral integrity and love. In the series' greatest moment of crisis, immediately after Voldemort's return and the murder of Cedric Diggory, he calls upon the students at the leaving feast: "'We are only as strong as we are united, as weak as we are divided. [...] We can fight [discord and enmity] only by showing an equally strong bond of friendship and trust. Differences of habit and language are nothing at all if our aims are identical and our hearts are open'" (*Goblet* 608).

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Sarah Hofmann

‘Can someone just explain what that skull thing was?’: The Workings of Capital in the Wizarding World

I. Introduction

J.K. Rowling’s fantasy series about a young wizard who courageously fights evil had fans all over the world on the edges of their seats. Harry Potter, who had previously lived with his non-magical aunt and uncle, Mr. and Mrs. Dursley, as well as their son Dudley, is suddenly plunged into a world in which most things, if not all, are magical and sometimes very different from what he knew before. In a world which is neither completely removed from our world nor entirely the same he learns that he is famous for something he does not even remember. He makes friends at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry, learns spells, incantations and brewing potions and navigates his way to defeating evil. In short: Harry finds his place in the wizarding world, which – despite features such as wands, flying broomsticks and talking hats – shows a remarkable number of similarities to the world that Rowling’s readers know. These similarities are particularly apparent if one focuses on the underlying social structure of the wizarding world.

In “Forms of Capital” (1986), the French sociologist and intellectual Pierre Bourdieu elaborates on the idea that capital manifests itself not only in the restricted economic sense of material wealth, but also in social interactions and cultural production. Especially in its immaterial forms of cultural and social capital, capital plays an essential part in furthering the plot of Rowling’s *Harry Potter* series. As Rowling’s readers accompany Harry, his friends, and his enemies through the years, they get a unique insight into the characters’ accumulation of the various forms of capital within the magical world. This paper aims at examining capital, as defined by Bourdieu, in terms of its structure and distribution in the wizarding world in order to gain a deeper understanding of the inner workings of the wizarding society and culture. By having a closer look at features such as Death Eaters, wands and other magical objects, I will attempt to apply Bourdieu’s concepts in order to examine how the different kinds of capital are constructed and how they may be converted into one another, while taking the specific conditions of the wizarding world into account.

II. The social field and economic capital

In explanations of the functioning of society (both in reality and in fiction), the fact that capital is not confined to the economic sphere but extends to the social field as well needs to be taken into account. During their lives, individuals navigate through different social fields, with specific goals in mind, almost like playing a game.[1] Our actions as well as the material

[1] In her essay on Bourdieu’s notion of the ‘social field’, Patricia Thomson explains the concept like this: “According to Bourdieu, the game that occurs in social spaces or fields is competitive, with various agents using different strategies to maintain or improve their position. At stake in the field is the accumulation of capitals: they are both the process in, and product of a field” (Thomson 67). To put it in simple terms, the game itself is not the goal. Instead, the players aim at reaching higher scores than other players and, ultimately, playing on the winning team.

things we use in our daily lives do not derive meaning from any inherent properties that these actions and things possess, but only through their relation to one another in a social field, which we share with others. One can think of the social field in terms of rules of the game, which are constantly revised and developed as the game is being played and are adhered to by the players according to their abilities and strengths. Patricia Thomson remarks that "there is no level playing ground in a social field; players who begin with particular forms of capital are advantaged at the outset because the field depends on, as well as produces more of, that capital" (67). This means that not all individuals in the game play according to the same rules, and it also means that not all rules apply to all players. There are different starting positions, which may change during the game, but which do not necessarily have to change.[2] Individuals are likely to get along well with others who play similar positions in the game. Will Atkinson explains that this is the case because "[t]hose in similar positions within the social space, with similar levels and types of capital, share similar conditions of existence" (65). When the composition of individuals' capital is similar enough, these individuals will identify with each other; thus, capital, in all its forms, constitutes the social field (the game) and helps navigate through it.

Bourdieu identifies three major kinds of capital: economic capital, cultural capital, and social capital. Economic capital, which includes one's total wealth, income and property ownership, is more apparent than the other two forms of capital distinguished by Bourdieu, because capital that takes this form can be more easily assessed than the other two types, which do not necessarily appear in material forms (cf. Atkinson 62). Still, according to Bourdieu, "[t]he different types of capital can be derived from *economic capital*, but only at the cost of a more or less great effort of transformation, which is needed to produce the type of power effective in the field in question" (Bourdieu 252, original emphasis). In other words: while economic capital is at the root of all other kinds of capital, and cultural and/or social capital may under differing conditions be converted into economic capital, economic capital itself is not enough to get ahead in the game, so to speak. One also needs to use it in order to improve one's social and cultural capital and in order to gain social power. An example from our world illustrating this mechanism is an economically wealthy person who buys a football club in order to be able to exert control over the players in the team as well as over the sports market. An equivalent of this conversion of economic capital into immaterial capital in the *Harry Potter* series is the strategy pursued by Lucius Malfoy. He is a very wealthy man, who strategically uses his wealth to put pressure on and influence others, especially the employees of the Ministry of Magic and the Hogwarts Board of Governors. Thereby he increases his social capital and that of his family as well as their cultural capital because a larger social network will possibly provide the Malfoy family with insider information regarding the Ministry. When he buys new brooms for the Slytherin Quidditch team, he ensures Draco's position on the team and makes sure that the players are able to fly faster than those of the Gryffindor team, which illustrates how money can be used and converted into power and social capital in the wizarding world.

[2] Nick Crossley describes these 'positions', as I just called them, in this way: "Every individual, on Bourdieu's account, has a portfolio of capital. They have a particular amount or volume of capital, and their capital has a particular composition" (87). To illustrate this, one might think of the different positions of Harry and Draco, who are both in possession of large sums of money, i.e., economic capital, but make use of their economic capital in very different ways. In *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* (1997), for example, readers get to know that Draco wants to buy a racing broom for himself, whereas Harry finds delight in buying sweets from the trolley lady and sharing them with Ron (cf. 88, 113).

III. Social capital, the wizarding society, and Death Eaters

Social Capital, as defined by Bourdieu, is "the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition" (Bourdieu 248). Thus, social capital consists of all the social networks an individual is part of and entails potential access to the various kinds of capital that the other members of these networks bring with them. The social networks are not divided by pre-determined boundaries, but instead

> in perception – not necessarily coherently by any means – through associating certain symbols with certain names through experience. This can take the form of the explicit discourse of 'classes', but it can also work through similar terms which do exactly the same job of representing a section of social space and symbolic space, including that which one sees oneself as in (Atkinson 72).

This perception of different networks and of the individuals who are part of these bears the potential for conflicts. For example, the origins of conflicts between pure-blood wizards and witches and those who are Muggle-born lie mainly within the ways social capital is negotiated within the wizarding community. Susan Hall notes that "[t]he wizard world is intensely hierarchical. Magical beings other than 'pure' wizards are treated to greater or lesser degrees of discrimination, amounting to open persecution at times" (153). Already in his first encounters with the wizarding world, Harry learns from Draco Malfoy that some believe there are different kinds of wizards: those to whom Draco refers as "'*our* kind'" (*Stone* 89, original emphasis), by which he means 'pure-blooded' wizards and witches, and "'the other sort'" (ibid.), e.g., Muggle-born witches and wizards.

In some respects, the social system of the wizarding world echoes the class system of Muggle Britain. They are similar in that they are based on a hierarchical structure. The wealthy, old pure-blood families of the wizarding community are the counterpart of the aristocrats of Muggle Britain. The Malfoys clearly fit into this category and are very proud of that. They were born to wizard parents and possess wealth (considerably as liquidated money). In Harry's case the situation is a bit more complicated; he has inherited "a small fortune […] buried deep under London" (ibid. 85), but at least his mother was Muggle-born, which undermines his credentials from the point of view of people like the Malfoys. The Muggle middle class corresponds to characters such as the Weasley family. They are also of pure-blood descent, but because the wizarding community – much like Muggle Britain – is biased to favor wealthy people over poor ones, the Weasley family has little chance of upward movement, unless they should happen to somehow increase their economic capital on a long-term basis. Additionally, at least the Malfoys see the Weasleys as "'a disgrace to the name of wizard'" because the latter are known to side with Muggle-born witches and wizards (ibid. 89, cf. *Chamber* 71). Characters such as Hagrid and Professor Lupin represent the lower social classes within the wizarding society. They are both members of the wizarding community, yet ostracized and shunned by the rest, because of their status as half-giant or werewolf respectively. Though both are friends of Albus Dumbledore, which provides them with a certain amount of social capital, they seem to possess neither much social capital beyond that nor much economic capital. Moreover, Hagrid, due to having been expelled from Hogwarts and thus having been unable to finish his education, lacks cultural capital (cf. *Chamber* 270).

A special caste within the magical community is that of the house-elves, who have magical abilities that go beyond the abilities of some witches and wizards, but who are kept in a state of slavery. Lower in status than centaurs but living in wizard families to serve in their households, they raise interesting questions about the wizarding community's definition of what exactly constitutes "a 'being' – that is to say, a creature worthy of legal rights and a voice in

the governance of the magical world" (*Fantastic Beasts* 2001, xix), as 'Newt Scamander' puts it in his introduction to *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them*. There are other magical creatures within the wizarding world that also inhabit ambiguous positions in between the human and the inhuman 'Other'. The aforementioned centaurs, for example, feature in several of the books and are apparently highly intelligent creatures who speak the human language (English) and are excellent seers, who can read the future. Nonetheless, they are not considered as human beings. The Ministry seeks to limit their territory to the deeper parts of the Forbidden Forest, and Dolores Umbridge, who is after all a Ministry official, refers to them as "'half-breeds'" and quotes Law Fifteen 'B', according to which they are "'creatures who [are] deemed to have near-human intelligence'" (*Phoenix* 828). At one point, even Hermione calls the newly appointed centaur-Divinations teacher Firenze a 'horse' (cf. ibid. 659), clearly dismissing him as somehow less than human.

Muggles constitute another interesting case because they are recognized as humans by the wizarding community but are largely ignored by wizarding law.[3] They seem to be regarded as equals in that they are also human, but are kept at a distance from the wizarding world. Until the moment a child with magical abilities is born to Muggle-parents, Muggles are kept in ignorance of the existence of magic and are only introduced to some aspects of the wizarding society when their children receive their Hogwarts letters. These children, while accepted into the wizarding community, have to work hard to integrate into wizarding society and thus acquire social capital. Hermione Granger, for example, has to prove her status as a witch multiple times throughout the series. Despite their magical abilities, Muggle-born witches and wizards are seen by pure-blood witches and wizards as lacking some inherent magical traits.

The social system described so far creates the basis for a discourse of Otherness which underlies all social relations and interactions between witches and wizards. There are more privileged groups, which, by means of excluding those they perceive to be 'below' or, for some reason or other, to be too different from themselves, exert a kind of symbolic violence through this discourse of Otherness.[4] In this way, the *Harry Potter* books "portray privilege and exceptionalism, not in the sense of 'elitism' but in a specifically hereditarian context which protects some while exposing others" (Mendlesohn 384). Yet social relations are also always a question of agency and choice, which can be seen in Harry's overt rejection of Draco's offer of friendship, or at least companionship, in *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*; instead, Harry befriends Ronald Weasley and later on Hermione Granger (cf. *Stone* 120). This example shows that social relations within the wizarding world are not entirely pre-determined and are thus subject to continuous negotiations.

Membership in a group or social network guarantees the company of like-minded wizards and witches, while also keeping outsiders at bay. In other words, social capital describes the "actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network" (Bourdieu 248), providing each of its members with certain credentials. Membership in a group endows both the individual member of the group as well as the group as a whole with credentials. This concept is exemplified and enforced in the Sorting Ceremony, during which new Hogwarts students are divided up into family-like structures according to their personality traits. Like-

[3] There are, however, a few exceptions, for example the International Statute of Wizarding Secrecy and the Muggle Protection Act.

[4] Symbolic violence here describes a sort of discrimination. It occurs when people find themselves in situations in which they do not have the various forms of capital needed to function effectively (cf. Schubert 191). Symbolic violence is not expressed through overt physical aggression; instead, many different insults tend to be at someone's disposal to pick on people who belong to a supposedly different social category. Sexist insults or racist denominators are still commonly used to dismiss other people. In the wizarding world, the insult 'Mudblood' assigns people to a supposedly lower social category.

wise, Death Eaters form an elite social network united by their allegiance to the Dark Lord and his policies. The Death Eaters are a select club, deliberately organized by the Dark Lord in order to concentrate social capital and increase his own power in doing so. Here, too, hierarchical structures abound: on top of the hierarchy stands the Dark Lord himself, followed by those members of the group he believes to be most valuable to him and his cause. Prime examples for this top of the pyramid include the Malfoy family and Bellatrix Lestrange. They are followed by general supporters of pure-blood supremacy who have not necessarily been initiated as Death Eaters. The Dark Lord chooses wizards and witches eligible for this high status as his close confidants, depending on whether the witch or wizard displays characteristics and traits the Dark Lord desires. These are, among others, a pure-blood heritage, economic wealth, connections to high-ranking officials in wizarding institutions such as Hogwarts or the Ministry of Magic, loyalty and dedication, as well as great magical skills. However, a group member does not have to fulfill all of these characteristics, if they can somehow compensate for deficits, for example by demonstrating exceptional loyalty. This shows that in the wizarding world, even seemingly clear-cut groups are constructed in ways that are somewhat arbitrary or inconsistent. Bourdieu states that "[t]he reproduction of social capital presupposes an unceasing effort of sociability, a continuous series of exchanges in which recognition is endlessly affirmed and reaffirmed" (Bourdieu 250). For example, Peter Pettigrew, also known as Wormtail, whose blood status is unclear and who does not have much influence, wealth or magical skill, returned to the Dark Lord and nursed him, before performing the ritual that gave him back his physical form and even sacrificing his hand in this ritual, thus proving recognition and loyalty to Voldemort. Wormtail is later rewarded by the Dark Lord, who gives him a new hand made of silver, thus recognizing Wormtail's efforts (cf. *Goblet* 703).

IV. Cultural capital and the acquisition of knowledge

Material objects and the cultural capital that is needed in order to be able to interpret them aid in the construction of social networks. This touches upon what Bourdieu calls 'cultural capital'. A shared set of signs can unite a group; a diverging interpretation of signs possibly separates groups from one another.[5] For the Dark Lord and his Death Eaters, wands symbolize the supremacy of wizards and witches over Muggles, while they are a threat from the point of view of the New Salem Philanthropic Society, which is introduced in the movie *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* (2016). Culture-specific knowledge, respectively a lack thereof, in this case has a huge impact on social relations and politics. In much the same way, the Dark Mark that hovers over the Quidditch World Cup camping site after the terror attack incites very different reactions within Harry's travel group alone. Those who know the meaning the Dark Mark acquired during the First Wizarding War are deeply concerned, while others, like Harry and Ron, do not immediately draw the connection, which prompts them to ask the question which eventually has become the title of this article (cf. *Goblet* 158). This incident is not only a significant turning point in the series; it also gives readers a glimpse at the acquisition of cultural capital.

Having grown up with the Dursleys, Harry was at first deprived of what Bourdieu calls the "domestic transmission of cultural capital" (Bourdieu 244) concerning the wizarding world.

[5] Will Atkinson explains this connection as follows: "Bourdieu argued this is the nature of human perception: we carve up the world into categories and groups, name them and associate them with things, oppose them to other categories, define their features, gather with people we consider to be in the same category as us and sometimes even represent them and fight for them against others" (72).

Usually the transmission of cultural capital begins at home, even before socialization in school sets in. In Harry's case, there was no transmission of cultural capital, at least with respect to the wizarding society, before he started to attend Hogwarts. Up until the beginning of *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire* (2000), all that Harry knows about the history of the wizarding world, and even about his own family history, he has learned during his first three years at Hogwarts. Aside from people at school, Harry at first does not have a contact person to tutor him on these matters, thus, "ignorance becomes Harry's defining condition" (Hopkins 25). Unlike Harry, his friend Ron Weasley has grown up in a fairly privileged position concerning matters of wizarding history, given that he is part of a pure-blood wizarding family and both of his parents have lived through the First Wizarding War. Yet, he, too, is clueless concerning the meaning of the "'shape in the sky'" (*Goblet* 158) even though his father works for the Ministry of Magic and many of his relatives have experienced the First Wizarding War first hand. It is Muggle-born Hermione Granger who – though equally deprived of access to knowledge about the wizarding world as Harry during the first years of her life – is able to grasp the significance of the sign in the sky. She has actively pursued the acquisition of knowledge beyond the bare minimum required by her teachers and thus has accumulated cultural capital. To Harry and Ron, the Dark Mark is a shape in the sky, nothing more. Hermione has understood the political implications lingering behind its appearance because she knows that the sign was used by the Death Eaters to mark the murder of an opponent. This knowledge is what Bourdieu calls the 'embodied state of cultural capital'.[6] For a short time during this incident, Harry and Ron, even though both of them have two wizard parents and thus supposedly have a higher status in the wizarding hierarchy, are the outsiders. Only through Hermione's explanation are they reaffirmed as members of the group.

Similar to a sign like the Dark Mark, names in the wizarding world hide a great deal of embodied capital. Harry's name is known throughout the entire wizarding world for something that Harry can barely even remember, namely the downfall of the Dark Lord. A lot of capital is also associated with the name of the Dark Lord, or, more specifically, its omission. Lord Voldemort, the name the Dark Lord fashioned himself, elicits such fear in members of the wizarding community that many choose to replace it by 'He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named' or 'You-Know-Who', instead of pronouncing the name. Only very few members of the wizarding community dare to speak the Dark Lord's name and call him Voldemort. Not even the Death Eaters dare to speak their leader's name. This omission of the name 'Voldemort' was taken to extremes when a taboo spell was put on it during the time the Dark Lord was in power. This spell reveals the location of the person speaking the taboo word, making it more easy to find and arrest witches and wizards who oppose the Dark Lord, since these are most likely to pronounce Voldemort's name (cf. *Hallows* 430). Those who speak his name dare to question structures of authority; Professor Dumbledore, one of the few who dare speak the Dark Lord's chosen name, even dares to call Voldemort by his birth name: Tom Riddle. In doing so, he actively defies the narrative Riddle invented for himself when he changed his name before his ascent to power.

[6] Cf. Bourdieu: "in its fundamental state, it [cultural capital] is linked to the body and presupposes embodiment. The accumulation of cultural capital in the embodied state, i.e., in the form of what is called culture, cultivation, *Bildung*, presupposes a process of em-bodiment, incorporation, which, insofar as it implies a labor of inculcation and assimilation, costs time, time which must be invested personally by the investor" (244).

V. Wands and cultural capital

Bourdieu further subdivides cultural capital into 'objectified cultural capital' and 'institutionalized cultural capital'.[7] This distinction proves to be very fruitful for a discussion of the ways in which wizards engage with wands. The possession of certain objects, which qualify as 'objectified cultural capital' adds to a person's overall capital. Yet, objects turn into culturally significant artifacts in the first place because they are interpreted according to an individual's embodied capital, i.e., the knowledge of a person. Thus, embodied cultural capital is always needed to make use of material objects in a culturally relevant manner. This means that objects, much like texts, have to be 'read' in order to be understood properly and to manifest their full potential in terms of capital. Cultural capital is often sanctioned academically by means of legally guaranteed qualifications, which are formally independent of a person or a bearer. A degree from a renowned (Muggle) university attests the bearer competence in the specific area which they have studied; in the same way, an 'Outstanding' in Potions attests that Hogwarts students have acquired the knowledge and skill to move on to more difficult potions.

Wands inhabit a peculiar place in wizarding society. A wand is one of the most powerful objects a wizard or witch can own, and it is used to channel magic. A wand is made of wood, with a magical substance at its core, such as unicorn hair, for example. Some wizards can do magic without wands, and some magical creatures like house-elves and goblins do not need a wand to do magic at all. It must be noted, though, that house-elves and goblins are not allowed to carry a wand, at least not in Great Britain. Wands are neither a necessity (as wizards have been known to perform magic without wands), nor a luxury, as most wizards and witches own and use wands. Arjun Appadurai proposes a definition of luxury goods that is useful to describe the position of wands in the wizarding society and that should therefore be quoted in its entirety:

> I propose that we regard luxury goods not so much in contrast to necessities (a contrast filled with problems), but as goods whose principal use is *rhetorical* and *social*, goods that are simply *incarnated signs*. The necessity to which *they* respond is fundamentally political. […] The signs of this register, in relation to commodities, are some or all of the following attributes: (1) restriction, either by price or by law, to elites; (2) complexity of acquisition, which may or may not be a function of real 'scarcity'; (3) semiotic virtuosity, that is the capacity to signal fairly complex social messages […]; (4) specialized knowledge as a prerequisite for their 'appropriate' consumption […]; and (5) a high degree of linkage of their consumption to body, person, and personality (38, original emphasis).

The right to carry a wand, which is restricted to wizards and witches, is institutionalized capital and amounts to establishing an elite by wizarding law, namely by being registered as human and educated wizards and witches. The only British wandmaker mentioned in the *Harry Potter* series is Mr. Ollivander, whose shop is in Diagon Alley in London, which makes the acquisition of a wand somewhat difficult, since it requires travelling. Harry Potter paid seven Galleons for his first wand, which, theoretically, could further restrict wand-ownership to those witches and wizards who have enough economic capital to be able to

[7] For a definition of the different types of cultural capital, cf. Bourdieu: "Cultural capital can exist in three forms: in the *embodied* state, i.e., in the form of long-lasting dispositions of the mind and body; in the *objectified* state, in the form of cultural goods (pictures, books, dictionaries, instruments, machines, etc.), which are the trace or realization of theories or critiques of these theories, problematics, etc.; and in the *institutionalized* state, a form of objectification which must be set apart because, as will be seen in the case of educational qualifications, it confers entirely original properties on the cultural capital which it is presumed to guarantee" (243, original emphasis).

afford buying a wand (cf. *Stone* 96). Since all Hogwarts students need a wand, this hypothetical restriction seems to be fairly negligible though. Wands are capital in its objectified state, but embodied capital is needed to use them properly. While magical abilities *per se* are something witches or wizards may have inherited from their parents, the ability to do magic is not enough to master this gift. Magic has to be learned and practiced for a long period of time. Learning how to use magic involves studying proper wand movements and incantations as well as being aware of their possible consequences. Most witches and wizards visit schools where they are trained in the various magical arts and acquire the specialized knowledge necessary to use a wand properly. After having passed their O.W.L. exams, they are allowed to carry their wands at all times and perform magic outside of school, though not in front of Muggles, as that would be a violation of the International Statute of Wizarding Secrecy, which is another facet of institutionalized capital. The MACUSA even hands out wand permits, without which the possession of a wand in the United States is illegal for foreigners (cf. *Beasts* 44). During the Second Wizarding War, when the Ministry of Magic has been taken over by Death Eaters, witches and wizards with half-blood wizarding ancestry or whose parents did not have any magical blood at all, are questioned about their possession of a wand. It was assumed that they must have stolen their wand and were not its legitimate owners, and by extension not even a legitimate wizard or witch (cf. *Hallows* 290). This shows that there are many different ways to institutionalize objectified capital, but embodied capital is always required in order to properly obey the laws of capital or, as in the example of the Second Wizarding War, interpret existing laws accordingly.

In the wizarding world, another remarkable mechanism is at work with respect to wands, as Mr. Ollivander explains to Harry:

> 'The wand chooses the wizard. That much has always been clear to those of us who have studied wand-lore [...] if you are any wizard at all you will be able to channel your magic through almost any instrument. The best results, however, must always come where there is the strongest affinity between wizard and wand. These connections are complex. An initial attraction, and then a mutual quest for experience, the wand learning from the wizard, the wizard from the wand' (ibid. 543).

If the wand chooses the wizard, and thus acts like a sentient entity, it follows that wands build social networks. Muggles might find the idea of an object choosing them rather than them choosing the object a little odd, but there are in fact several other objects in the Potterverse that can act on their own accord. Cases in point include the Sword of Gryffindor, which will appear to 'true Gryffindors' (cf. *Stone* 130, *Chamber* 343) in need of help, and the Sorting Hat, which famously assigns students to their Hogwarts houses and which once even has a chat with Harry in Dumbledore's office. Wands which share a core, like the wands of the Dark Lord and Harry Potter, both of which have phoenix-feather cores that came from the same bird, recognize each other and have been known to refuse to fight against each other. Such wands are called 'brothers' by Mr. Ollivander, evoking the idea that objects in the wizarding world can have a 'family' with which they have a connection that might resemble human emotions (cf. *Stone* 96).

This raises the question of how objects in the wizarding world achieve sentiency and whether sentiency is a trait that is perhaps inherent in *all* objects used by witches and wizards. Apparently, "in the magical world, functioning life is *almost always* present in the objects of magic" (Oakes 125, emphasis added). Some objects, such as wands, clearly possess sentiency as an inherent trait. Other objects, like the relics that have been turned into Horcruxes, seem to have had sentiency thrust upon them through magical bewitchment. This also seems to be true for Mr. Weasley's Ford Anglia, which was a Muggle-object in the first place. "Thus, while Muggles may impose an imagined consciousness on some of the more advanced items

in our world, the wizarding inhabitants must face real consciousness and volition in almost every ordinary object" (ibid.).

One specific wand plays an important part in furthering the story: the Elder Wand, which is made of elder wood, with a core of Thestral's hair. It is mentioned for the first time in "The Tale of the Three Brothers", a fairy tale which is part of *The Tales of Beedle the Bard*. While it is initially thought to be just a story for children, Harry and his friends gradually discover that the tale is at least partially true. An old legend says that he who possesses all three Hallows, i.e., the Elder Wand, the Resurrection Stone and the Cloak of Invisibility, shall be the true master of Death (cf. *Hallows* 453). Of course, no one can master Death, not even in the Potterverse, but Harry and his friends discover that the objects mentioned in the tale really exist and can use them to gain a small advantage over the Dark Lord. Interestingly, the Elder Wand seems to be the one Hallow that Voldemort is most interested in. This is not so much due to what it does (after all, any wand can potentially channel magic), but rather a consequence of its social history. It even seems appropriate to speak of the Elder Wand as having a 'cultural biography' along the lines outlined by Appadurai: "The social history of things and their cultural biography are not entirely separate matters, for it is the social history of things, over large periods of time and at large social levels, that constrains the form, meaning, and structure of more short term, specific, and intimate trajectories" (36). The wand's previous owners, as well as all the magic performed with it, have left a mark on the Elder Wand. Supposing the Elder Wand has been in use for most of its 'life', it must have had an excellent and unusual magical 'education', starting with the moment it came into existence, having been fashioned by Death himself, and potentially culminating in the uses the Dark Lord may find for it. The bloody trail that the Elder Wand has supposedly left throughout history adds symbolic intensity to this education. Yet, the Dark Lord reads the Elder Wand in the wrong way: the previous owner does *not* have to be killed; instead, a common disarmament charm or simply stealing the wand suffice to make the wand switch allegiance. The Dark Lord's insistence on killing Severus Snape not only shows how little regard Voldemort has for members of his network, but also eradicates any chance he might have had to find out the truth. This lack of embodied cultural capital on the part of the Dark Lord has a significant impact on the ending of the series. Had he understood this detail concerning the Elder Wand, he might have had a chance to win the fight. In contrast to Voldemort, Harry and his friends understood that the Elder Wand does not belong to the Dark Lord, even if he kills Snape. The Elder Wand will always respect its true master, but it seems as though it also expects to be respected in return.

In the movie, Harry destroys the Elder Wand so that no one may ever feel tempted by its power again. In the novel, by contrast, Harry uses the Elder Wand to mend his own wand, which was made of holly and phoenix feather, before burying the Elder Wand with Professor Dumbledore so that the powers of the wand may die with him, when he (Harry) dies of a natural death. This shows that the way one uses the Elder Wand has an impact on whether it has the power to determine its owner's destiny. The level of insight he displays in this context shows that Harry would be a worthy owner of the Elder Wand. It also shows that the accumulation of embodied and social capital makes it possible to use cultural capital in constructive instead of destructive ways.

VI. Conclusion

This paper has shown that Bourdieu's concept of different kinds of capital can be applied to the wizarding world. The application reveals many parallels between the wizarding society and the Muggle world as far as the accumulation of social capital or the organization of

institutionalized capital are concerned, for example. Despite many similarities between the magical and the non-magical society, at least one remarkable difference emerges as well, which contributes very much to the unique nature of the wizarding world. In the Potterverse, objects can be sentient, and even establish their own social capital, both with wizards and witches and with other objects, as the example of 'brother' wands, which have a similar magical core, illustrates. In such cases, it seems wise to heed the advice offered by Mr. Weasley, who once told his daughter Ginny to "'never trust anything that can think for itself'" (*Chamber* 354) if one cannot see where it keeps its brain.

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Anne Schneider

Is Harry Potter a Criminal?
Some Thoughts on Magical Criminal Law

I. Introduction

Since the publication of the first *Harry Potter* book, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, in 1997, the stories about Harry Potter and his friends Ron Weasley and Hermione Granger have been among the most popular works of fiction in the world (cf. Thomas 429). One of the attractions of the *Harry Potter* books is that Rowling has created an entire magical world (cf. Joseph/Wolf 194). This world resembles the Muggle world, but has its own distinct features, which are at least in part a consequence of the presence of magic. The richness of Rowling's magical world also includes legal topics (cf. ibid.). The books contain detailed information about the law and legal institutions in the magical world, in particular about criminal law. While the first books do not explicitly address the subject of the law, *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire* (cf. 634-48) and *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix* (cf. 126-38) both describe criminal trials. It has even been suggested that Rowling implicitly addresses lawyers in *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire* (cf. MacNeil 545) and that the whole *Harry Potter* narrative is "a story about law" (Schwabach, "Norm-formation, Inconsistency and the Rule of Law" 310). Whether this is the case or not, it is certainly true that the *Harry Potter* books have caught the attention of legal scholars (see, e.g., the collection of essays by Thomas et al. and Thomas/Snyder). This paper follows in this tradition by raising the question of whether Harry Potter – the hero of the narrative – is, in fact, a criminal (for a similar approach, see Watson 103 ff.). In order to answer this question, it is first necessary to define what Magical Criminal Law is. Then, the paper will focus on the Unforgivable Curses and analyse Harry's use of them. At last, possible justifications for Harry's behaviour will be examined.

II. Magical Criminal Law

When trying to determine whether Harry Potter is a criminal, it is necessary to be clear about which law this assessment refers to. As Harry is part of the wizarding world and falls under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Magic, the applicable criminal law is the Magical Criminal Law of the wizarding community. However, the scope of Magical Criminal Law is not perfectly clear.

1. Personal Scope

It is apparent from the text that the rules of the wizarding world apply to all witches and wizards who are aware of their magical abilities. The Ministry of Magic is mentioned for the first time by Hagrid after he has given Harry the letter offering him a place at Hogwarts (cf. *Stone* 74-75). Everybody accepts the separation of the wizarding world from the Muggle world and the need for a separate magical government. When Harry is wrongly accused of having used a Hover Charm outside school, he does not even think about questioning the

authority of the Ministry of Magic (cf. *Chamber* 21). This shows that the Ministry's authority is in principle accepted.

Magical Law also seems to apply to other creatures with human-like intelligence such as giants, werewolves, house-elves, and goblins. The werewolves in the story either support Dumbledore (Remus Lupin) or Voldemort (Fenrir Greyback), but again fully accept Magical Law. House-elves are forbidden to carry wands under Magical Law and seem to follow this rule in general (cf. *Goblet* 148-49), as do goblins, albeit reluctantly (cf. *Hallows* 395). The giants have been driven away from Britain but are regarded as valuable allies by both Voldemort and his opponents (cf. *Phoenix* 374 ff.).

However, it is not clear at what age people become subject to Magical Law. We know from the texts that Harry and Tom Riddle performed magic as children without being aware of their magical abilities (cf. *Stone* 31 ff., *Prince* 254), but the Ministry does not seem to react to this use of magic at all. Neither are Muggles protected from Riddle's abusive use of magic, nor are Muggle memories altered or is magic reversed in these cases. This indicates that witches and wizards who are raised in the Muggle world do not have to follow Magical Law until they are notified of its existence. From a legal point of view, this makes sense because one can hardly expect people who do not even know that magic exists to control their magical abilities.

It is not clear whether the same is true for wizard-born children. Apparently, young children cannot control their magic sufficiently (cf. *Hallows* 455); so it is up to their parents to prevent them from doing magic. It might even be the case that children under the age of 11 are not governed by Magical Law at all. Yet the Dumbledore family was afraid that Ariana, who refused to learn how to use magic, would be sent to St Mungo's Hospital as a "serious threat to the International Statute of Secrecy" (ibid.). We do not know if the Ministry would have considered this right after the attack on Ariana by three Muggle boys, when she was six years old (cf. ibid. 454), or only later when she would normally have attended Hogwarts and would have been expected to control her magic. Considering that many wizarding families live in places that are removed from the Muggle world and therefore are not subject to Muggle laws, it is more likely that Magical Law applies to all such places.

2. Territorial Scope

Similarly to the Muggle World, the wizarding world has states that are sovereign entities. We know from the movie *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* (2016) that these wizarding states each have their own laws. Again, this is similar to the Muggle world. However, there seem to be some differences regarding the state territories. In the Muggle world, the United Kingdom consists of different nations, each of which has its own legal system. Accordingly, it is common practice to distinguish between the laws of England and Wales, Northern Ireland, and Scotland. In the wizarding world there seems to be no distinction between the applicable law in Surrey or London, i.e., England, and Hogwarts and Hogsmeade, which are situated in Scotland (cf. Schwabach, "Norm-formation, Inconsistency and the Rule of Law" 341). Thus, the Magical Law referred to here can be classified as British Magical Law.

In addition, there is some evidence that Ireland is not independent from the rest of Britain in the wizarding world. In *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*, Ireland plays Bulgaria in the finals of the Quidditch World Cup. The Bulgarian Minister for Magic is present for the match, but there is no Irish counterpart. Instead, the British Minister for Magic, Cornelius Fudge, seems to represent Ireland. This indicates that Ireland is part of Britain (cf. ibid. 339-40). A reason for this difference could be that the magical community is much smaller than the Muggle community and therefore might be too small to form a government of its own (cf.

Anon. n.p.). Moreover, the religious quarrels that have led to Irish independence are of no importance in the wizarding world, where the Christian religion as such is not followed.[1]

3. Criminal Law

Finally, the rules of law that will be looked at in this paper are only those that belong to criminal law. Criminal law is "enacted to preserve the public order by defining an offense against the public and imposing a penalty for its violation" (Gifis 365). A typical penalty of criminal law is imprisonment, but other penalties are possible. Criminal punishment shows strong disapproval of the forbidden conduct and criminal punishments are usually the harshest sanctions available in a society. This is why criminal law tends to be used as *ultima ratio*, i.e., as the last resort to influence a person's behaviour if nothing else works. This is what makes criminal law a good subject of law and literature studies: because criminal law is reserved for the most severe violations of law, it can easily raise moral questions.

In the *Harry Potter* series, there are different forms of punishment (see, in more detail, Fishman (a) 452 ff.). Nonetheless, this paper will concentrate on rules that apply throughout the whole magical society. This excludes violations of school rules and punishments in the school settings, which are common in boarding school stories (cf. ibid. (a) 453). Even considering this restriction, there are still numerous examples of Magical Criminal Law in the books. The earliest ones the readers encounter are the Decree for the Reasonable Restriction of Underage Sorcery, 1875, Paragraph C and section 13 of the International Confederation of Warlock's Statute of Secrecy (cf. *Chamber* 21).

One of the best examples of Magical Criminal Law are the Unforgivable Curses. These are the Cruciatus Curse (incantation: "Crucio"), which causes unbearable pain, the Imperius Curse (incantation: "Imperio"), which puts the victim under the caster's control, and the Killing Curse (incantation: "Avada Kedavra"), which kills the victim instantly (cf. *Goblet* 234-37; see also Schwabach, "Norm-formation, Inconsistency and the Rule of Law" 313 ff.). The curses are described for the first time in *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire* when Barty Crouch Jr., posing as Alastair Moody, talks about them in the Defence against the Dark Arts class (cf. 234-37). From what he explains, the British Magical Law on the Unforgivable Curses could state something like that:

> **Unforgivable Curses**
> (1) The use of an Unforgivable Curse on another human being is punished by lifetime imprisonment (in Azkaban).[2]
> (2) Unforgivable Curses are the Cruciatus Curse, the Imperius Curse and the Killing Curse.

As Crouch explains, these curses are the ones that are most severely punished in British Magical Law (cf. *Goblet* 233). This means that the use of an Unforgivable Curse is one of the severest crimes in British Magical Law. Therefore, the curses are a good starting point for exploring the character's view on Magical Criminal Law.

[1] Cf. the contribution by Vera Bub in this volume.

[2] Muggle criminal codes do not name specific prisons. However, considering that there is only one prison for wizards and witches in contemporary magical Britain, it is possible that the prison would be explicitly named in the Statute.

III. Harry Potter and the Unforgivable Curses

In the following part, Harry's relationship to the Unforgivable Curses will be examined. Having been raised by Muggles, Harry is first told about the Unforgivable Curses by Crouch Jr. in the lesson on Defence against the Dark Arts (cf. *Goblet* 233 ff.). However, it soon becomes clear that Harry is not as strongly affected by the Imperius Curse as others and can resist it at least twice, i.e., when Crouch Jr. and later Voldemort put him under it (cf. ibid. 255, 716-17). What is more problematic from the point of view of criminal law is that Harry himself uses the Unforgivable Curses several times in the novels.

1. Harry's use of Unforgivable Curses

The first time when Harry uses an Unforgivable Curse is during the battle at the Department of Mysteries, right after Sirius was killed and has vanished behind the veil. Harry pursues Bellatrix Lestrange, his godfather's killer:

> Hatred rose in Harry such as he had never known before; he flung himself out from behind the fountain and bellowed, 'Crucio!' Bellatrix screamed: the spell had knocked her off her feet, but she did not writhe and shriek with pain as Neville had – she was already back on her feet, breathless, no longer laughing (*Phoenix* 715).

She then goes on to mock Harry for his inability to use an Unforgivable Curse and lectures him that he really has to want to cause pain. The second time Harry tries to use the Cruciatus Curse is when he pursues Snape after the latter has killed Dumbledore. Each time Harry tries to utter the incantation he is interrupted at 'Cruc' by Snape (cf. *Prince* 562). Although Snape also mocks Harry for being unable to perform Unforgivable Curses, in hindsight the readers realise that Snape is no Death Eater anymore at this point and thus assume that he probably tries to prevent Harry from committing a crime.

The next Unforgivable Curse used by Harry is the Imperius Curse. When Harry, Ron and Hermione enter Gringotts in disguise in order to break into the Lestranges' vault, Harry puts the goblin Bogrod under the Imperius Curse twice (cf. *Hallows* 428-29). Later, he also uses the Imperius Curse on the Death Eater Travers (cf. ibid. 430). From a legal point of view, it is doubtful whether both uses carry the same weight because goblins and humans might have a different status as victims (see *infra* 2.a).

The last instance of Harry using an Unforgivable Curse is at Ravenclaw Tower before the Battle of Hogwarts. Amycus Carrow, who has replaced Snape as teacher of Defence against the Dark Arts, argues with McGonagall and spits in her face. Harry gets out from under his Invisibility Cloak and addresses Carrow:

> 'You shouldn't have done that.' As Amycus spun round, Harry shouted, 'Crucio!' The Death Eater was lifted off his feet. He writhed through the air like a drowning man, thrashing and howling in pain, and then, with a crunch and a shattering of glass, he smashed into the front of a bookcase and crumpled, insensitive, to the floor. 'I see what Bellatrix meant,' said Harry, the blood thundering through his brain, 'you need to really mean it' (*Hallows* 477).

The reference to Bellatrix' words in *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix* shows that Harry has learned a lesson: he is now able to use the Cruciatus Curse effectively. Nevertheless, despite the reader's wish to see Harry triumphant, his reckless use of Unforgivable Curses creates a dilemma. On the one hand, the Curses are most severely punished in the magical world; on the other hand, they are used by Harry and other positive characters, such

as McGonagall, without any reprehensions (cf. Schwabach, "Unforgivable Curses" 73). Considering that the readers know the use of these curses to be criminal offences, how can they justify Harry's actions (cf. Schwabach, "Norm-formation, Inconsistency and the Rule of Law" 315)?

2. Justifications within British Magical Criminal Law

First, I will examine whether the British magical legal system contains rules or legal concepts that can justify Harry's actions. According to general criminal law doctrine, a criminal offence consists of two parts: the *actus reus* and the *mens rea*. Moreover, the defendant can rely on defences in order to justify his or her wrongdoing.

a) *Actus reus*

It is clear from the text that Harry has committed the *actus reus* of the crime of using an Unforgivable Curse; i.e., he has committed the "physical acts that may amount to a crime" (Hall 155). However, not every instance when Harry uses an Unforgivable Curse is necessarily wrongful conduct. According to what the readers hear from Crouch Jr., it is only the use on a "fellow human being" (*Goblet* 239) that is considered to be unforgivable. Apparently, the use of the curses on spiders for educational purposes is not unforgivable (cf. Schwabach, "Norm-formation, Inconsistency and the Rule of Law" 312). The readers do not know whether the cursing of goblins is prohibited by Magical Criminal Law or carries a lesser penalty. Considering the severe discrimination that goes on in the wizarding world, cursing goblins might even be legal (on the discrimination issues, see Hall 155-56; Loffredo 167 ff.). In any case, it is not the same *actus reus* as in the other cases.

The readers do not know either whether and, if so, to what extent the attempted use of the curses is punishable under Magical Criminal Law. When Harry runs after Snape and tries to curse him, he is interrupted before finishing the incantation. Cases where the conduct that constitutes the *actus reus* has remained unfinished can be punishable, e.g., in German Muggle Criminal Law, but the same might not be true for British Magical Criminal Law (see, on British Muggle Criminal Law, s. 1 Criminal Attempts Act 1981, ch. 47; Williams 225 ff.). This means that the readers can only be certain that the curses affecting Bellatrix Lestrange, Travers and Amycus Carrow fulfil the *actus reus* requirement.

b) *Mens Rea*

It is not clear whether Magical Criminal Law requires *mens rea*, i.e., a certain mental attitude such as the intent to commit a crime (for a more detailed definition, see Gifis 312). On the one hand, the readers know that, after Voldemort's fall from power, wizards and witches have claimed that they were forced to commit crimes while under the Imperius Curse (cf. *Goblet* 234-35). Apparently, this is a valid argument in Magical Criminal Law, as, indeed, it would be in Muggle Criminal Law. On the other hand, the treatment of house-elves shows that their lack of free will does not necessarily exclude criminal responsibility (cf. Hall 155-56). As Hall has noted, in a world where "magic itself can work on the mind, will, and memory, [there are] serious difficulties in assessing *mens rea*" (155). In any case, Harry fully intended to use the curses without being under anyone's control and thus would fulfil the *mens rea* requirement if it was necessary.

c) Defences

In Muggle Criminal Law, there are several general defences that can justify crimes. Unfortunately, the readers do not know whether Magical Criminal Law recognises any defences for the use of Unforgivable Curses. Aurors are licensed to use the curses on suspects (cf. *Goblet* 573) – but Harry is only a schoolboy, not an Auror. The readers also know that the Decree for the Reasonable Restriction of Underaged Sorcery allows the use of magic in the presence of Muggles in circumstances of self-defence (cf. *Phoenix* 135). Hence, it can be assumed that self-defence is a valid defence in Magical Criminal Law. However, there are several problems with this defence: when Harry uses the Imperius Curse on Travers, there is clearly no imminent attack on Harry, which excludes self-defence (cf. Gifis 463). In the cases of Bellatrix Lestrange and Amycus Carrow, Harry might have been in danger of being attacked. However, this was due to the fact that he willingly made himself visible to his attacker by leaving his hiding place (cf. *Phoenix* 714-15) or by taking off his Invisibility Cloak (cf. *Hallows* 477). This might count as provocation and thus limit his right to self-defence (cf. Gifis 463-64). In any case, although the Cruciatus Curse probably prevents an attack, Harry knows curses that can achieve the same end without causing pain, such as the Stunning Spell or the Body-Bind Curse (cf. Schwabach, "Norm-formation, Inconsistency and the Rule of Law" 314), which are also easier to use. Therefore, Harry could have defended himself more effectively by using another curse that would have caused less harm. The use of the Cruciatus Curse is excessive and thus not self-defence.

Another defence that might be worth considering is insanity. Insanity is known in the wizarding world, as we can see from the cases of Lockhart and the Longbottoms (cf. *Phoenix* 450 ff.). Whether it is a valid defence in Magical Criminal Law is unclear. Even so, although Harry was harbouring a tiny piece of Voldemort's soul and thus could be considered as 'possessed', there is no evidence that he was insane when using the curses. In all instances, he is either trying to take revenge or following a logical plan. These are not actions of an insane person. Accordingly, Harry could not defend himself with insanity.

d) Mitigating Circumstances

Although Harry's crimes cannot be justified within the story, there are some mitigating circumstances that the reader could take into account on Harry's behalf. First, in the three instances where Harry's conduct definitely constitutes the *actus reus*, all the victims (Bellatrix Lestrange, Travers, Amycus Carrow) were Death Eaters and therefore criminals themselves. Secondly, nobody was actually seriously hurt by Harry. Travers was told to hide and keep out of harm's way while under the Imperius Curse. The Cruciatus Curse on Bellatrix Lestrange did not much more than wipe away her smile (cf. *Phoenix* 715). Only in *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* does Harry manage to use the Cruciatus Curse effectively: he lifts Amycus Carrow in the air and makes him howl in pain (cf. 477). However, this pain is cut short when Carrow smashes against a bookcase and becomes unconscious. The lengthy torture for which the Cruciatus Curse is apparently used by the Death Eaters is thus not undertaken by Harry. Thirdly, Harry is somehow provoked to use the Cruciatus Curse, since Bellatrix Lestrange has just killed Harry's godfather. This puts Harry under a lot of emotional distress and can to some extent explain his wish for revenge. In *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, Amycus Carrow has insulted McGonagall, which makes Harry use the Cruciatus Curse in revenge. This reaction, which McGonagall calls "'foolish'" and "'*gallant*'" (ibid., original emphasis), seems disproportionate considering that McGonagall has not been hurt and is fully capable of defending herself. While emotional distress due to the death of a father figure such as Sirius

Black is understandable, the painless insult of a teacher is something that Harry, who has suffered a lot of insults in his life, should be able to witness without great emotional turmoil.

3. Justifications by the Right to Resistance

As Magical Criminal Law apparently does not justify Harry's crimes, it should be considered whether there are justifications outside British Magical Criminal Law that apply in this context. The most relevant one is the right to resistance or right to revolution. The right to resistance is internationally recognised as a general principle of law (cf. Marsavelski 266). It can justify "actions against a legal order that is perceived as being unjust and therefore both – illegitimate and illegal" (Gesk 1075). This means that the right to resistance can justify crimes even if the applicable legal order does not. Although the reader does not know whether the concept of a right to resistance is known in the wizarding world, Harry was apparently never prosecuted for what he did while trying to overthrow Voldemort. This suggests that the idea of a right to resistance is not foreign to the wizarding world.

In order to justify the use of force, i.e., criminal conduct, by this right, four requirements have to be met (cf. Marsavelski 278-79): the majority of people must support the use of force (or would support it if they knew the circumstances), the use of force must be the last resort and not excessive, the cause of the use of force is the government's oppression, and the use of force has to be directed against the oppressive government.

a) The Just Cause for Resistance – Flaws in the Magical Legal System

The most important requirement for giving rise to the right to resistance is the just cause. The existing government must be oppressive; i.e., it must substantially violate the constitution or fundamental human rights. In the case of *Harry Potter*, there are two different governments, the Ministry of Magic under Fudge and Scrimgeour and the Ministry of Magic under Thicknesse, which is controlled by Voldemort. Both of these governments are oppressive and give rise to a right to resistance.

The many flaws of the magical legal system before Voldemort's interference have been listed elsewhere (cf. Barton 33 ff., Joseph/Wolf 193 ff., Hall 147 ff., Ligugnana 419 ff.). Only a few examples will be given here. Overall, one has to say that the political system lacks all principles of a modern democracy. There is no separation of powers (cf. Ligugnana 420 ff.). Legislation is drafted within the Ministry of Magic, which is the only executive power (cf. Hall 149, Ligugnana 420). The Wizengamot, the court for criminal procedures, is situated within the Ministry of Magic (cf. *Phoenix* 124-25). High Ministry officials act as chief prosecutors and judges (cf. Ligugnana 422). There is no evidence of elections (cf. Barton 42). Fudge is "'sacked'" (*Prince* 20) and replaced by Scrimgeour, but the readers do not know how this was done.

What the readers get to know about criminal proceedings is even worse. Sirius Black was sent to Azkaban for murder without a trial (cf. *Goblet* 572). It later turns out that he was innocent, but there seem to be no procedures for contesting a wrongful conviction (cf. Rapp 97). In *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*, Hagrid is sent to Azkaban on suspicion of having petrified several students without any judicial procedure. This seems to be due to political reasons rather than a conviction of Hagrid's guilt (cf. Schwabach, "Norm-formation, Inconsistency and the Rule of Law" 343-44). Generally, the Minister for Magic seems to have total discretion in deciding whether to prosecute an offender. When Harry accidentally blows up Aunt Marge in *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*, Fudge genially drops all charges (cf. 38-39). In contrast, he later decides to hold a full criminal trial for "'a simple matter of

underage magic'" (*Phoenix* 137). Moreover, judicial review does not seem to play an important role in the Magical legal system. When Harry receives an official warning for having performed a Hover Charm, he is not informed about any way to challenge this decision (cf. Hall 155).

There are also severe human rights problems in the magical world. The prison conditions at Azkaban are atrocious (see Fishman (b) 124, Joseph/Wolf 197). Having to stay in close proximity to dementors makes the prisoners go mad – a treatment that qualifies as torture under International Law (cf. Hall 158). Moreover, the wizards and witches seem to be under constant surveillance while they are underage; after all, the Ministry knows when they perform magic due to 'the trace'. What is also obvious is that the magical society is based on discrimination and even allows the enslavement of house-elves (cf. Joseph/Wolf 198 ff.). This aspect of the magical society becomes even more obvious in the new government controlled by Voldemort, which distinguishes between pure-blood and Muggle-born wizards. These examples show that the Ministry of Magic was – even before Voldemort – a government that could be rightly resisted.

b) The Use of Force by Harry

Even so, the actual use of force must be proportionate and help the goals of resistance, which means that it should be directed against the government. This is only true for the use of the Imperius Curse on Travers, because this is part of a plot to gain a Horcrux and thus to become able to kill the unofficial head of the new government, i.e., Voldemort (cf. Schwabach, "Unforgivable Curses" 73). Of course, this conclusion is based on the assumption that Travers is part of the new government or at least associated with it, which seems rather likely.

However, the use of the Cruciatus Curse is a different matter. The cursing of Bellatrix Lestrange is certainly not directed against the government, which is at that time led by Cornelius Fudge. More to the point, the curse is completely useless as a measure of resistance. Whereas the Imperius Curse helps Harry to gain a weapon against Voldemort, the Cruciatus Curse has only the function to cause pain. It does not help to overthrow the government or to improve the existing legal system. Therefore, the use of the Cruciatus Curse must be called excessive and thus cannot be justified.

IV. Conclusion

Is Harry Potter a criminal? In the light of the analysis above, the answer is 'yes'. Neither British Magical Criminal Law nor the general principle of the right to resistance justify the use of the Cruciatus Curse. In contrast, the use of the Imperius Curse can be justified as resistance against an oppressive government that disregards human rights. In this context, it is important to utter a *caveat*: what works for Harry can as easily work for Voldemort. It is difficult to distinguish rightful resistance from terrorism (cf. Gesk 1075). If Harry can claim to have used the Imperius Curse on Travers 'for the Greater Good', who can prevent Voldemort from claiming the same right for his use of the Imperius Curse for gaining control over the Ministry? The Ministry's failure to build efficient legal structures makes it an easy target for anyone who wants to overthrow the existing legal order (cf. Schwabach, "Norm-formation, Inconsistency and the Rule of Law" 350). This is the lesson that can be learned from the *Harry Potter* series.

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Denise Burkhard

Secrets and Forbidden Places in *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*

I. Introduction

Secrets and mysteries are central motifs in children's literature that are often intimately connected with themes such as individual identity or family history and inheritance. They also feature prominently in Joanne K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* series and already play a central role in *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* (1997). The mystery revolving around Harry's identity as a wizard, which makes him a part of a hitherto unknown wizarding world, and the secret surrounding the titular Philosopher's Stone lie at the core of the first novel. Throughout the story, Rowling uses secrets as a crucial plot device and, as I will argue in the following, often links secrets and mysteries with the representation of the spatial in Gothic(ised) or otherwise dangerous and unfamiliar places. The connection between secrets and forbidden places in and near Hogwarts is already alluded to in Dumbledore's somewhat cryptic announcement at the end of the start-of-term banquet, in which he utters warnings without providing further information:

> 'First-years should note that the forest in the grounds is forbidden to all pupils. And a few of our older students would do well to remember that as well. [...] And finally, I must tell you that this year, the third-floor corridor on the right-hand side is out of bounds to everyone who does not wish to die a very painful death' (*Stone* 94-95).[1]

As the announcement illustrates, places in Rowling's *Harry Potter* universe typically function as more than the setting for the characters' actions; they are an integral part of the story and are explored and revisited by the characters, can be interconnected and contribute substantially to the distinctive atmosphere created in Rowling's novels. Clare Bradford and Raffaella Baccolini also stress the significance of places and spaces and observe that "narratives of maturation in children's texts are commonly plotted in relation to spatiality" (40).[2] Rowling's boarding school environment – a towering castle with secret rooms, moving staircases, hidden passageways and forbidden places – permits negotiating spatiality and identity in different ways and offers a substantial number of places and spaces suitable for (re-)negotiation.

As the first novel of the series, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* is largely concerned with world building and introduces readers to a wide range of (magical) settings, some of them more perilous and mysterious than others. Referring to Hogwarts, Sarah K. Cantrell argues that "[t]he complexity of Hogwarts's architecture causes no small measure of frustration and anxiety for Harry and his classmates" (200). Despite being first-year students, Harry,

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1 Chris Columbus's audio-visual adaptation of *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* (2001) excludes those parts of the announcement which refer to the use of magic between classes and Quidditch practice and introduces the students to the out-of-bounds places even before the Sorting takes place, arguably making them even more mysterious and intriguing in this way (cf. 00:39:16-00:39:48).

2 When referring to the concepts of 'place' and 'space', I use Bradford's and Baccolini's differentiation: "Space is generally associated with large and abstract conceptions of spatiality, place, with the local and the bounded" (37).

Ron and Hermione also encounter places in and around the castle that are more overtly linked to secrets, restrictions and dangers than Hogwarts as a whole.[3] In order to highlight the correlation between secrets and places that is established in the first novel of the series, I will analyse the "dark, scary Forbidden Forest [which is] full of magical, dangerous creatures" (Bayne 264) and the out-of-bounds third-floor corridor as 'forbidden places' that are intimately connected with the secret concerning the Stone and are crucial in Harry's rite of passage. Moreover, I will have a closer look at the Mirror of Erised as a spatial device and powerful (spatial) illusion that allows Harry to see his dead parents for the first time, and as the object where the Philosopher's Stone is ultimately hidden.

II. The Forbidden Forest

The Forbidden Forest is one of the significant places in the story and it is the location where Harry is confronted with his nemesis Lord Voldemort in disguise for the first time at Hogwarts. Despite the fact that the forest's "most complex aspects are revealed only in the later novels, it assumes a mysterious and menacing significance from the start" (Petrina 105). It derives an aura of mystery from Dumbledore's brief start-of-term announcement as well as from Percy's explanation that "'the forest's full of dangerous beasts, everyone knows that'" (*Stone* 95). From its introduction, the forest is perceived as an unambiguously threatening place that houses various fantastic creatures and has a sinister presence, which is repeatedly emphasised, for example when the Gryffindors are on their way to their first flying lesson and see the forest, "whose trees were swaying *darkly* in the distance" (ibid. 109, emphasis added).

When Harry enters the Forbidden Forest for the first time, he follows his mysteriously hooded potions teacher, Severus Snape, who is "sneaking into the Forest while everyone else was at dinner" (ibid. 165), which strikes Harry as odd. Despite the fact that the forest is introduced as a natural and wild environment,[4] whose trees are thick and dense, the focus is mainly on the conversation between Snape and Quirrell in this scene, which alludes to the advantage of choosing the forest as a meeting place: "'... d-don't know why you wanted t-t-to meet here of all p-places, Severus ...' 'Oh, I thought we'd keep this private,' said Snape, his voice icy. 'Students aren't supposed to know about the Philosopher's Stone, after all'" (ibid.). The function of the forest as a forbidden location is that of a place connected with secrecy, where things can be discussed even during the day that should not be overheard by students. Moreover, it is also the place where Harry hears his theory about the Philosopher's Stone confirmed. In this context, Snape's and Quirrell's conversation serves as a catalyst that prompts Harry, Ron and Hermione to further actions to prevent Voldemort from obtaining the Stone. In order to receive crucial information, Harry has to violate school rules by entering the forest; he physically and symbolically transgresses the boundary of Hogwarts into an unfamiliar and perilous place.

Only during Harry's second visit the forest is genuinely introduced as a Gothic setting, where the connection of the forest with mystery and especially danger is not only drawn upon once more but even further emphasised. On the way to detention, Mr Filch reminds the four students that "'it's into the Forest you're going and I'm much mistaken if you'll all come out

[3] Karen M. Bayne also sees Hogwarts as an ambivalent location: the "[c]astle itself is simultaneously a mysterious Gothic space and an everyday boarding-school, a genuine haunted castle rendered mostly unthreatening by familiarity" (264).

[4] In *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* (1998), the forest is even more strongly presented as a wild setting: it hosts a substantial number of Acromantulas and becomes the home of Mr Weasley's flying Ford Anglia. Upon seeing the car in the forest again, Ron remarks "'Look at it. The Forest's turned it wild'" (*Chamber* 203) and thus hints at the Forbidden Forest's transformative impact on the car.

in one piece'" (ibid. 181-82), indicating imminent danger and even a threat to the students' lives. Likewise, Draco Malfoy's objection that they "'can't go in there at night – there's all sorts of things in there – werewolves, I heard'" (ibid. 182) reasserts that the forest is full of dangerous magical creatures and reiterates the connections between the forest, restriction and danger. Thus, when considering the circumstances of their didactically somewhat questionable detention, the reaction of Neville, who "clutched the sleeve of Harry's robe and made a choking noise" (ibid.), is emblematic of the sense of fear and dread the forest evokes, which is already generated by the discussion about entering the forest. Once the group actually steps into the forest, the feelings of unease and fright are enhanced by sensory impressions, including the mysterious slithering sound Hagrid, Harry and Hermione hear, Harry's "nasty feeling [that] they were being watched" (ibid. 186) as well as the darkness and density of the trees, which also contributes to creating a sense of disorientation. This form of psychological terror, which accompanies the group on their way through the forest, is, at least in Harry's case, supplemented by physical pain and threat when he sees the hooded figure drinking unicorn blood. Though the encounter is brief, the searing pain of the protagonist's scar dominates the scene, signifying that an imminent threat is at hand and reinforcing the connection between Harry and Voldemort, which is elaborated on in the later novels of the series. Even the resolution of the scene in the forest – Harry's encounter with Voldemort and his rescue by the centaur Firenze – maintains the forest's image as a place of danger and threat, which is emphasised by Firenze's warning that "'[t]he Forest is not safe at this time – especially for you'" (ibid. 187).

In *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, the forest thus functions as "both a real and a symbolic landscape, a frightful but indispensable element in the hero's development" (Petrina 106). It is real by being a physical though forbidden location in the novel and constitutes, as it does in classical fairy tales, a central place of threat. It is symbolic insofar as it is linked with Harry's maturation process; the encounter with Voldemort prepares Harry for fighting and, at least temporarily, defeating him and encourages him to protect the Stone. Even after Hermione and Harry returned to the castle, Harry is unsettled and "still shaking" (*Stone* 189), he realises the significance of Voldemort's potential return and becomes aware that fighting Voldemort will be about life and death. The episode in the Forbidden Forest thus emphasises that "the spaces that child characters inhabit in literature, and the ways in which they come to know and inhabit them, affect them profoundly and in many different ways" (Doughty/Thompson 4). In the forest, Harry does not only receive crucial information regarding the Philosopher's Stone but also concerning Lord Voldemort, so that detention eventually helps him to put together the pieces of information and induces him to prevent Voldemort from getting hold of the Stone.[5]

Chris Columbus's audio-visual adaptation of *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* also renders the Forbidden Forest significant for the hero's development by visually elaborating on the Gothic setting. Lisa Hopkins observes that "the film is clearly Gothic. Obviously, this element is already strongly present in the book, but it is considerably more developed in the film" (132). Indeed, in the adaptation, the Forbidden Forest is replete with stock Gothic elements and features; the five-minute sequence shows a forest that is enshrouded in mist, huge bare trees (whose crowns often cannot be seen and which make even half-giant Hagrid appear relatively small) and is set during the night, which enhances the group's feeling of dread. Other than in the novel, the forest is also endowed with an alternative name, namely

[5] Even from a structural point of view, the location of the chapter "The Forbidden Forest" suggests a climactic structure of the final chapters and reinforces the forest's function as a crucial stage in Harry's development, because it already anticipates a second encounter between Harry and Lord Voldemort and arguably also an increasing amount of danger, preparing the reader for the final chapter of the novel.

'Dark Forest', which echoes J.R.R. Tolkien's Mirkwood in *The Hobbit* (1937) and raises certain expectations.[6] Throughout the movie, the forest remains an enigmatic setting, as the adaptation lacks the scene where Harry eavesdrops on Snape and Quirrell, so that Harry enters the forest only once and can explore merely a small part of it during his detention with Hagrid. In particular the visual and sound tracks contribute significantly to the creation of a sinister and threatening atmosphere. For instance, the howling of a wolf seems to confirm Draco's suspicion that werewolves might be roaming the forest. Furthermore, the soundtrack accompanying the group in the forest is used to establish a sense of foreboding and to elaborate on the setting. The slow-paced music, which at first features predominantly string instruments, later joined by wind instruments in a (slightly cacophonic) crescendo, accentuates that the Forbidden Forest is a place connected with danger and the unknown. The pervasive threat already associated with the forest is further enhanced by the rustling of dead leaves while a hooded and hardly discernible figure is moving through the mist (cf. Columbus 01:41:36-01:41:39) and evokes a sense of unease in Harry and the others. Thus the novel's focus on Harry's sensory impressions is transferred to the viewers of the movie and conveys the sinister atmosphere to a considerably greater extent.

The 2015 illustrated edition of *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* also visualises the Forbidden Forest in form of a two-page illustration, albeit from a different angle, which challenges the forest's status as a forbidden location. With respect to picture books, Maria Nikolajeva argues that words and images are typically used to provide different types of information: "Images are far superior to words when it comes to descriptions of characters and settings, while words are superior in conveying relationships and emotions, as well as direct speech. Images are unsurpassed in conveying space, while words are indispensable for temporal aspects" (108). Her observation, however, does not only apply to picture books, but to text-image relationships more generally. Jim Kay's illustrations of the first *Harry Potter* novel confirm this claim, because they are predominantly used to illustrate and visually introduce characters as well as to elaborate on the spatial environment in which the story is set. Since picture books require an oscillation "from the sign system of the verbal text to the sign system of the illustrations" (Sipe 102) and vice versa, both images and text are significant for the story by providing information individually as well as by means of their interaction. This dynamic relationship between word and image is also relevant when analysing a story that was originally published (in the U.K. edition) without illustrations and which now has become subject to extensive visual expansion. Given that illustrations often lend spatial depth and detail to a story, Kay's interpretation of the Forbidden Forest is striking in various respects. The illustration features a unicorn in what looks rather like a storybook-forest at night-time in contrast to the threatening and foggy forest of Columbus's adaptation. Despite the fact that the trees are kept in dark colours and have what seem like menacing birds sitting on their otherwise bare and almost skeletal boughs, the beams of moonlight and the bright, nearly radiant unicorn partially undermine the sinister effect. The latter aspect of the illustra-

[6] J.R.R. Tolkien's Mirkwood is, similar to the Forbidden Forest, introduced as a border and appears as "a black and frowning wall" (Tolkien 158) from the distance. The idea of blackness/darkness, inherent in 'mirky' already, is further elaborated on when the company consisting of thirteen dwarves and a hobbit enters the forest and realises that "[t]here was no movement of air down under the forest-roof, and it was everlastingly still and dark and stuffy" (ibid. 164). The pitch-black nights, during which the company can hardly see anything except for seemingly bodiless eyes (cf. ibid.), contributes to the Gothic atmosphere of fright and evokes the uneasy feeling of being watched and followed. Given that both Mirkwood and the Dark Forest have a connection with darkness by their names, the viewer might perhaps expect a much gloomier and denser forest than the blue-tinted forest displayed in the audio-visual adaptation.

tion is reinforced by the fact that the unicorn is still alive and apparently completely unharmed, so that the illustration enhances the text by showing an event that chronologically precedes the events on the textual layer.[7] In this context, the positioning of the illustration in the context of the chapter is crucial as it interrupts Hagrid's graphic description – "'[t]here's blood all over the place, it [the unicorn] must've bin staggerin' around since last night at least'" (*Illustrated* 203-06) – while the group is still standing at the edge of the forest; the image refrains from displaying either blood or a wounded unicorn and instead assumes an almost flashback-like quality that reinforces the aesthetic appeal as well as the innocence and purity of the creature.

Focusing on the visual qualities of pictures in picture books and the relationship between word and image, Perry Nodelman and Mavis Reimer claim: "As illustrations, in fact, *everything* in such pictures is less important as a source of aesthetic delight than as a source of information about a story" (278, original emphasis). Pictures frequently elaborate on information regarding, for instance, objects, characters and settings as well as more abstract components, such as mood and atmosphere. Especially the latter is striking in the illustration of the Forbidden Forest, as it evokes a peaceful and melancholic atmosphere and fails to convey the threatening and gloomy mood that is created on the textual level, which is also due to the fact that the forest displays hardly any Gothic elements. These are more visible in the illustrations of Hogwarts, most notably in the castle's Gothic architecture, which suggests that evil is lurking within the castle rather than in the Forbidden Forest.[8] The depiction of the forest requires the textual layer to convey the impression that students are not allowed to enter the forest due to the dangers hiding in its depths. Thus, Jim Kay's illustration arguably renders the forest 'un-Gothic' and elaborates on a revised version of the Forbidden Forest that is far from being frightening and which clearly undermines the idea of the forest as a forbidden place. By contrast, both the novel and its audio-visual adaptation elaborate on the forest as a Gothic, clearly forbidden and eerie place that is connected with secrets.

III. The Third-Floor Corridor and the Philosopher's Stone

The Philosopher's Stone, the titular secret of the first novel, is introduced and elaborated on in connection with certain places. This link can be seen already during Hagrid's and Harry's visit at Gringotts, where Hagrid withdraws a mysterious parcel that is referred to as "'You-Know-What in vault seven hundred and thirteen'" (*Stone* 57). Gringotts, described as "'the safest place in the world fer anything yeh want ter keep safe – 'cept maybe Hogwarts'" (ibid. 50), is introduced in relation to secrecy, safekeeping and heavy security protections.[9] Simul-

[7] On a basic level, Nikolajeva assumes that the interplay of words and images can be symmetrical, i.e., conveying (more or less) the same information, or complementary, i.e., enhancing each other and filling in gaps (cf. 108).

[8] The chapter "The Forbidden Forest" features an illustration of the doorway to the entrance hall, which is framed by a high archway. The door is ajar and a beam of light emanates from the inside of the hall. In combination with two round windows, slightly above the door, the front of the castle is reminiscent of a face with a gaping 'mouth' and even slit-like 'pupils' in its 'eyes' (cf. *Illustrated* 202). Despite being part of the castle, the illustration of the castle's front entrance evokes even more strongly the eerie and gloomy atmosphere the reader expects with the Forbidden Forest.

[9] The references to Gringotts and Hogwarts as safe places are particularly relevant when considering that the break-in at Gringotts coincides with the day Harry and Hagrid withdraw the parcel. The break-in into the high security vault may also have fostered the trio's decision to disregard McGonagall's assurance that "'no one can possibly steal it [the Stone], it's too well protected'" (*Stone* 195), since the same has been claimed about Gringotts before.

taneously, the place is invested with Gothic elements ranging from twisting maze-like passages, underground lakes and darkness to the wizarding bank's location deep below London, which makes it particularly suitable as a place to keep things secret and safe. Quite early in the novel, both Gringotts as a place and the parcel hidden in one of its vaults contribute to conveying a sense of mystery and spark Harry's interest immediately. Upon being asked by Harry what is inside the vault, Hagrid answers: "'Can't tell yeh that,' said Hagrid *mysteriously*. '*Very secret*. Hogwarts business. Dumbledore's trusted me. More'n my job's worth ter tell yeh that'" (ibid. 57, emphasis added). The unknown content of the parcel inevitably becomes a mystery, and Hagrid's answer helps maintaining a sense of concealment, while Harry's witnessing the retrieval of the parcel eventually contributes to making him aware of the implications of the newspaper report about the break-in at Gringotts, which might otherwise have gone unnoticed. By and large, Gringotts as a place is a significant plot element that introduces both Harry and the reader to the secret of the Philosopher's Stone and keeps being mentioned repeatedly in the further course of the story.

In the context of Dumbledore's start-of-term announcement, not only the Forbidden Forest but also the right-hand corridor on the third floor gains significance as a perilous and life-threatening place in the boarding-school setting of Hogwarts – one that is connected with the Philosopher's Stone, as it is revealed at the end of the novel. Establishing a pattern that is later also used in Harry's discovery of the Mirror of Erised, Harry, Ron, Hermione and Neville hide from the caretaker Mr Filch and accidentally stumble into the out-of-bounds third-floor corridor, which contains "a monstrous dog, a dog which filled the whole space between ceiling and floor" (ibid. 119). The presence of the dog in the corridor makes unmistakably clear that the Forbidden Forest is not the only place to host vicious beasts and creatures. The secret hidden in the third-floor corridor topples possible assumptions concerning the spatial opposition inside vs. outside, which is in line with Mieke Bal's more general observations on the meaning of spatial oppositions:

> A contrast between inside and outside is often relevant, where inside may carry the suggestion of protection, and outside that of danger. These meanings are not indissolubly tied to these oppositions; it is equally possible that inside suggests close confinement, and outside freedom, or that we see a combination of these meanings, or a development from one to the other (220).

The forbidden third-floor corridor is a prime example that highlights that Hogwarts castle and the forest are essentially equally perilous settings and implies that the castle, which is introduced as a home and a place of safety and comfort, combines disparate meanings. The threat that emanates from its corridor on the third floor is aptly captured in Harry impression that "he was sure he'd walked into a nightmare" and Neville's frightened reaction of "tugging on the sleeve of Harry's dressing-gown for the last minute" (*Stone* 119). Had it not been for Hermione's keen eye and her observation skills, the trapdoor would have remained unnoticed, and her clever deduction that the dog is "'obviously guarding something'" (ibid. 120) brings them closer to suspecting that the parcel from Gringotts is underneath the trapdoor. Even though the encounter with the massive three-headed dog caused some fright, it also sparked a sense of adventure: "Indeed, by next morning Harry and Ron thought that meeting the three-headed dog had been an excellent adventure and they were quite keen to have another one" (ibid. 121), which initially downplays the threat connected with the corridor to some extent. Thus, the first encounter with "Rowling's version of Cerberus, Fluffy" (Cantrell 199) on the third-floor corridor has a two-fold function: firstly, it serves as a means to introduce the students to a forbidden place that is intimately connected with utmost danger. Secondly, it functions as a means to trigger further investigation regarding the secret of the small parcel and furthers the students' quest to uncover its content.

The trapdoor in the forbidden corridor leads to a whole range of different, eerie places and rooms that the trio uncovers in the final chapter of the novel, which clearly are a tribute to Lewis Carroll's *Alice* stories.[10] While the story features a quest plot that is tied to the Stone and climaxes in the final chapter, this last chapter of the novel also includes a number of smaller quests or obstacles that have to be overcome. The protagonists' way through the "obstacle course" (Wolosky 29) is reminiscent of the spatial arrangement of the Chocolate Factory in Roald Dahl's *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* (1964), in which the eccentric Willy Wonka tests the children's temptations and their virtues in different rooms of the factory, leading them from one room to another. Likewise, in *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, the way through the individual tasks takes them to different, interconnected rooms, but requires knowledge, logical thinking and bravery to successfully overcome the riddles and obstacles contained in each room. This "obstacle course [...] tests the knowledge they have mastered in their first year at Hogwarts" (Wolosky 29), which is reflected in the fact that each teacher has provided a protection from his or her field of expertise, and also suits the individual talents of the protagonists. Simultaneously, the third-floor corridor and the subsequent rooms also feature Gothic elements, which are used to create the distinctive atmosphere of threat and danger for the final showdown and the urgency with which Harry, Ron and Hermione encounter the obstacles.[11] These elements feature most strikingly in the chapter title "The Man with Two Faces", which hints at the *Doppelgänger* motif from Gothic fiction, the idea of forbidden rooms, a classic Gothic motif, or in the darkness, which by and large informs the trio's way through the subterranean rooms. Darkness is already introduced when Harry looks down the trapdoor and all he can see is a bottomless pit (cf. *Stone* 201) before "they land on the writhing tendrils of an anthropomorphized plant called Devil's Snare" (Pheasant-Kelly 57), which attempts to choke them and poses a fatal danger (as do most of the obstacles). In a similar vein, Hermione's observation that they "'must be miles under the school'" (*Stone* 201) evokes the impression of claustrophobia and entrapment that is reinforced by the lack of knowledge where the rooms lead to in the end.[12] The fact that the forbidden corridor and the adjoining rooms are Gothic places, linked with the secret of the Stone and part of smaller quests sets the tone of the episode and the battle between Harry and Voldemort, which is, after all, decisive for the entire wizarding world. Only the final room at the end is directly connected with the secret and also with its resolution. The other rooms are crucial in the development of the protagonists' friendship, their courage and mutual trust, as the obstacles in the rooms demonstrate that one of them alone would not have been capable of successfully overcoming them. These rooms need to be passed and negotiated by the trio and

[10] Readers of the *Alice* novels will easily recognise the mirror, chess pieces, anthropomorphicised plants and winged flying objects as elements taken from *Through the Looking Glass* (1871) that have been adopted and transformed significantly by Rowling. Moreover, Alice's famous fall through the rabbit-hole in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1865) is alluded to when Harry, Ron and Hermione jump through the trapdoor, while the highly elaborate potions riddle echoes the riddles with which Alice is confronted in Wonderland time and again.

[11] In her analysis of the films, Fran Pheasant-Kelly also examines some of these obstacles in the context of 'abject spaces'. For her analysis see Pheasant-Kelly (56-57).

[12] This assumption is retrospectively debunked by Albus Dumbledore, who informs Harry that they have been in the dungeons (cf. *Stone* 214). Similarly, in *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*, Salazar Slytherin's hidden chamber is also assumed to "'be miles under the school'" (*Chamber* 223) and Ron speculates that they are "'[u]nder the lake, probably'" (ibid.). Given that they slide down the pipe for some time, the Chamber of Secrets can be assumed to be underneath the dungeons, which then draws on and conveys the sense of entrapment even more distinctly. For a discussion of Gothic places in *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*, cf. the contribution by Denise Burkhard and Julia Stibane in this volume.

function as places where they can display courage, friendship and mastery over what they have learnt at Hogwarts so far.

IV. The Mirror of Erised

The final task Harry faces during his quest is associated with a magical object that was already introduced earlier in the novel: the Mirror of Erised. Mirrors feature prominently in traditional fairy tales as well as in children's literature and range from huge standing to small hand-held mirrors and even encompass shards of mirrors, all of which can have different functions in stories. David Langford asserts that, as magical objects, mirrors can be used as 'scrying devices' and uses Galadriel's mirror in *The Lord of the Rings* (1954-55) as one of his examples, or as portals to other worlds, as can be seen most prominently in Lewis Carroll's *Through the Looking Glass* (cf. 651). Moreover, Susan Reynolds observes that "mirrors and reflection are used in literature as emblematic of trickery and illusion" (285), which are functions that are, for example, drawn upon in Neil Gaiman's *Coraline* (2002), in which mirrors and mirroring are used extensively. The creation of a (spatial) illusion is not only frequently used in architecture, as in the Hall of Mirrors in Versailles, but is also at the core of the Mirror of Erised in *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*.

The Mirror of Erised is striking in its appearance and its function as a device to externalise desire by creating a spatial illusion. Using the Invisibility Cloak, an item inherited from his father, for research in the Restricted Section at night, Harry needs to evade the caretaker, Mr Filch, and Professor Snape and hides inside a seemingly disused classroom, where he finds the Mirror. The "magnificent" Mirror's "ornate gold frame" contrasts with "[t]he dark shapes of desks and chairs" (*Stone* 152); it looks extremely valuable and, at the same time, genuinely out of place. Its inscription "*Erised stra ehru oyt ube cafru oyt on wohsi*" (ibid., original emphasis) is not only an instance of retrography but also requires a rearrangement of letter combinations in order to reveal its true meaning: 'I show not your face but your heart's desire'. The mirror shows the person looking at it *in combination* with that person's deepest desire, which makes the experience very personal: it does not only show Harry's family but Harry reunited with his family. Ignoring the riddle posed by the Mirror's inscription, Harry at first does not realise why he is able to see his deceased family members in the Mirror and speculates whether he is "in fact in a room full of invisible people and this mirror's *trick* was that it reflected them, invisible or not?" (ibid. 153, emphasis added). This speculation is not unreasonable when considering that Harry just used the Invisibility Cloak and has been invisible himself. Instead of reflecting invisible people, however, the Mirror of Erised creates a powerful illusion based on Harry's desire (Harry reunited with his parents and members of his family), which originates from the absence of Harry's biological parents and the abusive environment he has been exposed to by the neglectful and unloving Dursleys.[13]

An explanation for the functions of the Mirror can be found in the spatial illusion the magical object creates. According to David Langford, "[a] room's mirror reflection seems subtly awry owing to reversal, suggesting a different room in an otherworld behind the glass, with the mirror now [serving as] a potential portal" (651). Despite the fact that Harry nearly touches his own reflection when looking at the image of himself with his family, he is not able to use it as a portal. Lucie Armitt also elaborates on the idea and speculates that "[t]he

[13] Similarly, Ron also sees what he desires most in the mirror, namely (personal) success. The Mirror shows him as Head Boy and Quidditch captain, holding the Quidditch and the House Cup. When he asks Harry "'Do you think this mirror shows the future?'" (*Stone* 155), he hopes that the mirror might function as a scrying device, which Harry immediately rules out as a potential function.

new reader eagerly desires this [the Mirror of Erised] to be the doorway into an after-life that will reconcile Harry with the dead" (521), which, however, remains wishful thinking. In this respect, the impression of dimensionality the Mirror evokes is crucial, as the mirrored classroom features a reversed image of Harry and, additionally, is filled with deceased people, lending the impression that they might really exist behind the surface of the Mirror – in the mirror image of the room.[14] Since Harry sees his dead relatives, the Mirror evokes the illusion of a *Verzeitlichung des Raumes* ('temporalisation of space'), which Ansgar Nünning describes as the supposed presence of the past in the spatial environment, i.e., different layers of time surface in the same place evoking temporal simultaneity (cf. 410). In providing Harry with the illusion that his family is standing behind him, the Mirror shows an intersection between the past (Harry's parents are dead after all) and the present (Harry as an eleven-year-old in front of and reflected in the Mirror), generating temporal simultaneity, which may also be one of the main reasons for Harry's fascination with the object. In contrast to the moving paintings that feature so prominently at Hogwarts and which often contain talking and otherwise responsive images of people, the image in the Mirror is limited to the moment when Harry is looking into the Mirror, in which his family remains voiceless and restricted to waving, crying and smiling.

The Mirror of Erised is paradigmatic for the intersection between space and identity, as it is in the reflection of the Mirror where Harry sees "his family, for the first time in his life" (*Stone* 153). The absence of photographs of both Harry and his parents (or other objects associated with them) in the Dursleys' house renders Harry's encounter with the Mirror even more significant. Up until this point in his life, Harry's wizarding relatives and in particular his parents had remained a secret to him, which already highlights the Mirror's pivotal function in secrets and mysteries. Eventually, the ephemeral image in the Mirror, which can only be seen when standing right in front of it, is fixed in the photo album containing wizard photographs of James and Lily Potter that Harry receives from Hagrid while he is still in the hospital wing recovering from his encounter with Lord Voldemort. Accordingly, "one of the great gifts he [Harry] gains when he enters the wizarding world is access to memories and traces of his parents" (Zimmerman 198) as well as to knowledge about himself and his past. Harry even follows in his father's footsteps by becoming a player in the Gryffindor's Quidditch team, a legacy that is pointed out by Professor McGonagall in remarking that "'[y]our father would have been proud [...] [h]e was an excellent Quidditch player himself'" (*Stone* 113).

Since the image in the Mirror has a significant impact on Harry's identity formation in terms of his self-perception, Harry's encounter with the Mirror of Erised bears a certain resemblance to the mirror stage in child development as described by Jacques Lacan. In his speech "The Mirror Stage as Formative of the *I* Function as Revealed in Psychoanalytic Experience" (delivered in 1949), Lacan proposes that "[i]t suffices to understand the mirror stage [...] *as an identification*, in the full sense analysis gives to the term: namely, the transformation that takes place in the subject when he assumes an image" (76, original emphasis). Despite the fact that Harry is not an infant when he absorbs the utopian image presented in the

[14] Columbus's adaptation *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* highlights this impression by solely showing Harry's parents in the Mirror, which makes the experience even more personal for Harry. The reflection in the Mirror shows his parents standing right behind him and displays the three of them in a family-picture fashion, which is enhanced by the fact that Lily Potter is putting her hand on Harry's shoulder, signaling affection (cf. Columbus 01:31:08). In addition, the fact that the Mirror is "standing on two clawed feet" and is "as high as the ceiling" (*Stone* 152) suggests that, from a spatial point of view, the reflection shows Harry from head to toe in the Mirror, which facilitates recentring into the image and the dream solution presented by the magical object.

Mirror, the reflection has, nevertheless, a considerable impact on his self-perception, albeit in a variation on Lacan's mirror stage. While Lacan's idea proposes the infant's recognition of his/her individuality, Harry sees himself as part of a group, his deceased relatives and parents. Arguably, a transformation in Harry's self-perception takes place in the process of identification with the people displayed in the Mirror and in the recognition that they are his family: "Harry looked into the faces of the other people in the mirror and saw other pairs of green eyes like his, other noses like his, even a little old man who looked as though he had Harry's knobbly knees" (*Stone* 153). Especially, the strong focus on Harry's parents suggests that the Mirror presents him with an idealised image of what his life could be like if his parents were still alive and, simultaneously, emphasises Harry's loss. For quite some time, Harry "remains in front of the mirror, consumed by the prospect of ridding himself of his orphan identity" (LeFebvre n.p.), which is reinforced by the fact that Harry interacts with and absorbs the image he sees by speaking to the people as well as by "[staring] *hungrily* back at them" (*Stone* 153, emphasis added). The Mirror, thus, evokes a powerful sense of longing and burgeoning belonging in Harry and furthers his quest for his identity and the recovery of his past.

Upon seeing their images in the Mirror and being completely preoccupied with this vision, both Harry and Ron start getting under its magical spell. Harry in particular seems susceptible to the Mirror's illusion, which provokes "a powerful kind of ache inside him, half joy, half terrible sadness" (ibid.). Even though his ambiguous reaction is based on feelings of longing and loss, which are a consequence of his special situation, it arguably is also the seeming corporeality of the reflection that intrigues and fascinates Harry along with "the [Mirror's] special power of capturing people with the fantastic pictures that they produce out of their deepest desires" (Piippo 74). His indifference towards the passing of time and towards preventing 'Snape' from getting past Fluffy while being enchanted with the prospects apparently promised by the Mirror is also an instance that highlights that "[a]t its most basic level Harry's quest is deeply personal: he is an orphan whose parents die when he is too young to know them" (Campbell 177). To break free from the Mirror's spell, Harry requires Dumbledore's explanation that this magical object "'shows us nothing more or less than the deepest, most desperate desire of our hearts. [...] However, this mirror will give us neither knowledge or truth. Men have wasted away before it, entranced by what they have seen, or been driven mad, not knowing if what it shows is real or even possible'" (*Stone* 157). It is only after their conversation that Harry is able to understand the workings of the Mirror so that he is prepared for another encounter with it. The Mirror's impact on Harry, however, continues and transcends the room in which the Mirror stands by slipping into Harry's dreams: "Harry wished he could forget what he'd seen in the Mirror as easily, but he couldn't. He started having nightmares. Over and over again he dreamed about his parents disappearing in a flash of green light while a high voice crackled with laughter" (ibid. 158). Similar to his encounter with Voldemort in the Forbidden Forest, which also brings back his old nightmare, the processing of the experience implies an intersection between his (repressed) memory and his dreams that have been triggered by the mirror image. His nightmare indicates that Harry (even though he was very young) experienced a traumatic event, namely the death of his parents, which starts to resurface subconsciously in his dreams. It also highlights that the Mirror has an ambiguous impact on Harry, who longs to see his family but is simultaneously reminded that they are dead, which is a topic that Rowling made even more explicit in *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* (1999).[15]

[15] With the introduction of the Dementors in the third *Harry Potter* novel, Rowling further elaborates on the significance of Harry's parents, albeit from a different angle. While the Mirror of Erised externalises Harry's deepest desire, the Dementors of Azkaban feed on happy memories, leaving their victims "'with nothing but the worst experiences of your life'" (*Prisoner* 140). As soon as a Dementor gets

In its new place, in a room down the trapdoor in the out-of-bounds corridor, the Mirror is used as a hiding place for the Philosopher's Stone and features as the final obstacle as well as the Stone's ultimate protection. In the last chapter of the novel, Harry encounters the Mirror again and ponders how to find the Stone: "What I want more than anything else in the world *at the moment*, he thought, is to find the Stone before Quirrell does. So if I look in the Mirror, I should see myself finding it – which means I'll see where it's hidden!" (*Stone* 211, emphasis added). Even though his strategy is only part of the explanation for finding the Stone, it suggests that "[l]ack can change over time, so that desires change" (Piippo 68). It is, however, rather the mixture of his intention to prevent Voldemort from rising again and the fact that the Stone's "properties cannot fulfill Harry's hopes and dreams" (Bayne 271), i.e., reunite him with and resurrect his family, which enables him to retrieve the Stone eventually.[16] At the same time, the Mirror as hiding place for the Stone partakes in the riddles surrounding this magical object and its protection and raises profound questions regarding spatial depths and materiality that are due to the Mirror's magical properties and the enchantment(s) bestowed upon it.

In the context of forbidden places in and around Hogwarts, the Mirror occupies an ambivalent position, which is due to the object's complex relation with spatiality. It can be analysed as an object in a 'forbidden' place and as an artefact that is capable of creating a spatial illusion, thus drawing on more abstract notions of space. As an object in the unused classroom and in one of the rooms down the trapdoor, the Mirror is connected with restriction on different levels. Despite the fact that the seemingly *unused* room is only described briefly, the location as well as the objects and their arrangements in the room are of relevance: "[t]he dark shapes of desks and chairs were piled against the walls and there was an upturned waste-paper basket" (*Stone* 152). The description suggests that the classroom may be used as a storeroom and is not in use anymore, which supports the idea that the room may symbolise the forgotten or repressed. Correlating the room and the Mirror, Susan Reynolds suggests: "The fact that the mirror exists in an unused classroom indicates that it is locked away because the knowledge is either outdated or forbidden, just like the knowledge contained in the Restricted Section of the library. The room is also untidy and in disorder, something one rarely encounters in the series" (285). Despite the fact that the room is not directly referred to as one of the forbidden places at Hogwarts, it is no longer in use as a classroom, appears to be out of the way and is linked with transgression and rule-breaking on a different level, since Harry violates school rules when he roams the castle at night. Even though Harry could have slipped into the room during one of his breaks between classes, his night-time visits indicate that he either may not be allowed to enter the room during daylight or has other reasons for returning at night (when he is not supposed to be away from his dormitory). Likewise, the Mirror's new location in a room down the trapdoor on the third-floor corridor is also a place where students are not supposed to be and is out of bounds from the start. In both rooms, the Mirror receives

near Harry, he "'can hear Voldemort murdering my mum'" (ibid.), which is also part of the repressed memory of the traumatic events in which his parents died. Interestingly, Harry apparently hears Voldemort's high voice crackling with laughter in his dreams and the death scream of his mother when he encounters a Dementor, both of which indicate the intensity of the experience.

16 The movie adaptation creates an even stronger link between Harry's identity, his family and the Stone in the hidden chamber where the Mirror can now be found. During the conversation with Lord Voldemort, who "speaks as if out of the mirror" (Hopkins 133), Harry can see an image of his parents in the Mirror, slightly more transparent than during his first encounter with it, next to Voldemort's face (cf. Columbus 02:05:26). In refusing Voldemort's offer to exchange the Stone for his parents, Harry proves moral uprightness and indicates that he has recognised the threat to the entire wizarding society emanating from Voldemort's return.

significance in relation to the places: it appears to be conveniently put out of the way in first of all a hidden place (so that Harry can nevertheless find the Mirror) and finally in a forbidden place, suggesting that the Mirror needs to be locked away. As an object capable of creating a spatial illusion, the Mirror (or rather the image created by the Mirror) is also linked with danger and the forbidden. This link is made explicit in Dumbledore's explanation and his remark that "'[t]he Mirror will be moved to a new home tomorrow, Harry, and I ask you not to go looking for it again'" (*Stone* 157), which implies that the illusion can be harmful and needs to be handled with caution. His polite warning also evokes the idea that Harry must not seek for the magical artefact again, because he should not "'dwell on dreams'" (ibid.) that cannot come true. Both approaches highlight that it is possible to read the Mirror as both a spatial device and as an object in a place connected with the forbidden. Especially the danger connected to its spatial illusion, the fact that Harry is to keep away from the Mirror as well as the Mirror's new location in one of the rooms down the trapdoor in the out-of-bounds third-floor corridor support this assumption and reinforce the Mirror's relevance in the overall context of secrets and (forbidden) places.

V. Conclusion

When Albus Dumbledore explains to Igor Karkaroff "'I would never dream of assuming I know all Hogwarts' secrets'" (*Goblet* 363), he points to the omnipresence of secrets in the castle and more specifically to the room he just discovered by accident. Throughout my article, I have argued that secrets and forbidden places are a vital ingredient of Rowling's *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*. The places examined in this article are associated with transgression as well as rule-breaking, feature (more often than not) the characteristic night-time setting and are visited repeatedly in the course of the novel. These elements contribute to endowing these places with significance when it comes to restrictions and secrecy. The Forbidden Forest and the forbidden third-floor corridor provide crucial moments in Harry's rite of passage by confronting him with utterly threatening and dangerous environments, but which ultimately prepare him and support him in uncovering the Stone and eventually in defeating Lord Voldemort, even if only temporarily. Both locations display the connection between forbidden place and secret most clearly and have been endowed with significance from the start. As a magical item and a powerful means of (spatial) illusion, the Mirror of Erised is clearly linked with secrets and displays a connection to 'forbidden' places on a more abstract level. It is crucial in establishing Harry's sense of identity as a wizard and as a part of the wizarding world as well as in providing him with a sense of belonging to a family that Harry lacked at the Dursleys. Thus, the Mirror clearly addresses and visualises the secret revolving around his wizarding heritage while it is simultaneously intertwined with the secret of the Philosopher's Stone.

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Part III:
Beyond the *Harry Potter* Series

Anne Mahler

Haunted by Voldemort or Suffering from PTSD: Analysing Harry Potter's Psychological Struggles in Adulthood in *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*

> 'I thought I'd lost him – Voldemort – I thought I'd lost him – and then my scar started hurting again and I had dreams of him and I could even speak Parseltongue again and I started to feel like I'd not changed at all – that he'd never let me go – […] [t]he part of me that was Voldemort died a long time ago, but it wasn't enough to be physically rid of him – I had to be mentally rid of him' (*Child* 305).

In the final scene of *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* (2016), a grown-up Harry Potter reflects on his struggle to overcome his past and the clutches of his antagonist Lord Voldemort. Especially interesting is that he does not only comment on the consequences of carrying a piece of Voldemort's soul within him for most of his life, but also on working through the psychological implications that followed an adolescence characterised by numerous horrifying battles against the Dark Lord.

Looking back, the original series found its unnerving climax in *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* (2007), when Harry realises that the uncanny connection between him and Voldemort stems from a piece of Voldemort's soul living within him. In a heroic act during the Battle of Hogwarts, he sacrifices himself, just to be reborn without the intrusive hauntings of his opponent. After one last duel, Harry, with the help of his companions, finally triumphs over the Dark Lord. The novel ends with J.K. Rowling reassuring the reader that Harry's scar had not hurt since the final defeat of Voldemort and that "all was well" (*Hallows* 607). After years of fighting against Voldemort and his followers, the very last chapter of *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* provides a peaceful and happy ending, closing the series as well as this terrifying and defining part of Harry's life.

In 2016, however, the *Harry Potter* series made a highly successful comeback in the form of the play *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*. To satisfy the demands of thousands of *Harry Potter* fans worldwide, the stage play in London's West End was soon followed by the publication of the rehearsal script which saw a revival of 'Pottermania' in the form of midnight openings of book shops around the world, and the well-known long queues in front of them. Even though scholars and fans alike are still in dispute as to whether the play has a place in the canon (cf. Coats 146), *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* nevertheless gives an insight into what life for the, now middle-aged, protagonists and their children is like. The play is set nineteen years after the Battle of Hogwarts, and focuses on Harry's son Albus' identity crisis as the misfit offspring of the Potter family who is lured in by Voldemort's daughter Delphi. Picking up with the same, almost serene, scene at platform 9¾ that closes the original series, the reader, as the plot unfolds, is confronted with Harry's mental troubles. Harry is, for instance, highly irritable and suffers from a number of nightmares in whose aftermaths his scar starts to hurt again. The protagonists blame these symptoms on Voldemort's supposed return, contradicting the conclusive ending of the series which the play aims to continue. According to the timeline of the play, however, Voldemort neither returns to the present, nor does Harry carry another horcrux. And even when the protagonists meet Voldemort again in the final scenes of the play, it is *them* who have travelled in time to prevent Delphi from changing the past, not Voldemort who returns to regain power.

Therefore, the question arises whether Harry's struggles actually stem from the supposed reappearance of dark forces of some sort, or whether they have a different origin. In support of the original ending, this paper provides a reading of *The Cursed Child* as a trauma narrative with a special focus on post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). It is argued that Harry is not possessed by Lord Voldemort once again, but rather suffers from PTSD caused by abuse during childhood and near-death experiences in his teenage years. To support this claim, the clinical definition of PTSD in combination with close readings of the series and the play is used. A closer look is taken at both causes and symptoms of the condition and how they surface in Harry's character. Looking beyond the mere textual evidence for trauma on the content level, stylistic devices usually employed to represent trauma will also be critically discussed and applied to the text.

Literary criticism on the *Harry Potter* series is numerous and manifold; in this context, psychological readings are no exception. Anthologies such as Neil Mulholland's *The Psychology of Harry Potter: An Unauthorized Examination of the Boy who Lived* (2006) aim at both showing how J.K. Rowling's series is used by psychotherapists as a means of treating patients as well as assessing several characters in the *Harry Potter* universe. In her essay "Harry on the Couch: A Psychologist's Reading of Harry Potter" (2007), Joanne Macgregor briefly mentions that Harry might suffer from PTSD. However, her analysis lacks both the scientific foundation of PTSD research and thorough examination of the primary texts to be able to come to a conclusive conclusion with regards to Harry's mental state. Peter Subkowski draws a parallel between the Freudian theory of development and trauma as a means for the reader to feel empathy with the characters in the *Harry Potter* universe. Yet, most of these studies were published before *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* and even before *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*. They are therefore not able to assess the state of Harry's psyche in adulthood in relation to his adolescence, and its impact on the protagonist.

It is the aim of this paper to advance psychological readings of Harry Potter by including *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* in those readings, looking beyond the protagonist's childhood and adolescent experiences and at his mental struggles in adulthood. Since the clinical DSM-definition of PTSD is usually used to analyse real-life patients, this paper adopts Bernard Paris's understanding of analysing fictional characters with the means of clinical psychology. Paris sees fictional characters not just as "functions in a text or encoded messages from the author but […] imagined human beings whose thoughts, feelings, and actions ma[k]e sense in motivational terms" (5). According to Paris, it is possible to apply diagnosing strategies to literary characters, both to explain their motivations and mental conditions. Critics counter-arguing this theory often state that to analyse a fictional character, a comprehensive view into their childhood is necessary – and usually not provided (cf. ibid. 7). With the character of Harry Potter, however, the main, if not the whole, corpus of primary texts is concerned with experiences from his childhood and adolescence – another argument for an analysis based on the PTSD definition from diagnostic manuals. In the following, an overview of post-traumatic stress disorder, its causes and symptoms will be given and then applied to Harry's character. It is the aim of this article to illustrate that the true nature of Harry's distress can be found in an untreated psychological condition and not in the return of Him-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named.

Even though post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is a relatively new syndrome, it has had a great impact on cultural and literary trauma theory. Its inclusion in the DSM-III as a medical condition in 1980 is largely the result of lobbying campaigns led by Vietnam War veterans in the United States who struggled with physical and psychological symptoms following their deployment in the war zones (cf. Gibbs 3). As will be discussed later, the definition of causes and symptoms of PTSD has since then undergone (and is still undergoing) significant en-

hancements to broaden the group of potential victims. The evolution of the concept of PTSD in the last decades and over the last two editions of the DSM saw, for example, the inclusion of not just 'first degree' immediate victims of traumatic events, but also 'second degree' indirect victims (cf. Luckhurst 1). However, the current definition and understanding of PTSD still reflects a relatively simple approach to trauma, its causes and effects. Its conceptualisation as a fixed concept, as seen in the work done by some trauma scholars, is highly problematic. Nevertheless, since its acknowledgement PTSD has significantly shaped what is now understood as "subjectivity and experience in the advanced industrial world" (ibid.). It is therefore a powerful tool to analyse contemporary literary representations that are consciously or unconsciously dealing with trauma.

Cultural and literary trauma theorists were quick to discover the relevance of the new condition for literary representations of trauma, making PTSD the "principal trauma paradigm" (Gibbs 166). Apart from approaches introduced in the highly influential, yet now heavily criticised works of the 'founder' of cultural and literary trauma theory, Cathy Caruth, PTSD is the main means for conventional trauma readings. Literary trauma theory, however, is inextricably linked to the latest findings in psychology and needs to be reviewed and questioned accordingly. With this development in mind, scholars such as Richard McNally have observed an uncritical use of PTSD in cultural and literary trauma theory which leads to an uncontested acceptance of its questionable origins in the politically motivated campaigns of post-Vietnam United States (cf. 1). This uncritical use by some scholars who view PTSD as an analytic imperative should be kept in mind when thinking about the condition. This paper therefore places itself in line with arguments of second-generation literary trauma theorists, acknowledging recent findings in PTSD research, as well as criticism of the Caruthian trauma paradigm. Furthermore, the most recent definition of PTSD is not exclusively used to illustrate a certain trauma aesthetic, but, first and foremost, chosen as a method to illustrate the causes and symptoms of Harry's mental state. The conventional stylistic devices derived from PTSD by literary trauma scholars will also come into effect, but the main focus remains on textual evidence to be able to analyse the character of Harry as a victim of trauma.

In the current diagnostic manual editions ICD-10 and its US-American equivalent DSM-V, PTSD is defined by its cause as well as a specific set of symptoms. The cause of the syndrome is the exposure of the victim to

> actual or threatened death, serious injury [...] in one (or more) of the following ways:
> 1. Directly experiencing the traumatic event(s).
> 2. Witnessing in person, the event(s) as it occurred to others.
> 3. Learning that the traumatic event(s) occurred to a close family member or close friend [...] (American Psychiatric Association 271).

According to this definition, PTSD cannot just be caused by being a direct victim of a traumatic event, but also on a more indirect level. As the second and third part of the definition emphasise, even if the physical integrity of the PTSD victim is not threatened, patients can still suffer from the syndrome. In this case, what is regarded as traumatic is the endangerment of an individual with high emotional significance to the patient and not the threat to the patients themselves. According to the DSM-V, this means that both experiences cause the same reactions within the sufferer, granting interpersonal relationships a remarkably high significance for the individual. The non-American diagnostic manual ICD-10 also points out the very specific nature of the trauma trigger, placing it "outside the range of human experience" (World Health Organization n.p.). Therefore, whereas the question of how PTSD is triggered offers multidimensional possibilities, the list of events that have the potential to cause PTSD still is very restricted.

Since the 1990s, this shortcoming has been especially noted by feminist psychiatrists. They expanded the clinical definition by adding the notion of insidious trauma. Insidious trauma does not come in form of a sudden event, but evolves slowly, over time. The best practical examples of this kind of trauma are abusive relationships, parental abuse during childhood and bullying, for instance in school. It is "usually associated with the social status of an individual being devalued because a characteristic intrinsic to their identity is different from what is valued by those in power" (Root 240). Insidious trauma infiltrates its victim slowly but surely. "'Everyday' chronic conditions" are accepted as "potential causes of trauma", instead of surprising events that are outside the usual range of experience (Gibbs 16). In that respect, it differs from the clinical definition, since the trigger for PTSD is not exclusively found in one-time traumatic events. Nevertheless, the consequences of insidious trauma are just as devastating for the victim as those of the "extreme traumatic stressors" of the classic definition (World Health Organization n.p.).

Taking a closer look at Harry Potter's childhood and teenage years, both forms of trauma triggers can be found in the original series. Harry being in fatal danger is a concept which constantly lurks in the plot of every new instalment, whether it is during Harry's many encounters with Voldemort's horcruxes in the first four novels, or when he learns about the prophecy at the end of *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix* (2003). The prophecy states that "'*either must die at the end of the other for neither can live while the other survives*'" (*Phoenix* 924), making Harry either a murderer or predicting his imminent death. In the middle of the Battle of Hogwarts, Harry then finally learns about his fate as involuntary horcrux and this time the lurking threat materialises in form of a memory seen in Dumbledore's pensieve (cf. *Hallows* 752):

> Finally the truth. [...] Harry understood at last that he was not supposed to survive. His job was to walk calmly into Death's welcoming arms. [...] Terror washed over him as he lay on the floor with that funeral drum [his heart] pounding inside him. Would it hurt to die? All those times he had thought it was about to happen and escaped, he had never really thought of the thing itself: his will to live had always been so much stronger than his fear of death. Yet it did not occur to him now to try to escape, to outrun Voldemort. It was over, he knew it, and all that was left was the thing itself: dying (ibid. 757-58).

Despite the fact that Harry survives when the horcrux is extracted from his body, being so close to dying is undoubtedly traumatising and emotionally scaring.

But it is not only Harry's own life that is in constant danger. In the course of the series, Harry is faced with the traumatic deaths of acquaintances, very close friends and companions. Although Harry was too young to consciously remember his parents' death, he revisits this scene, stored in his unconscious repeatedly. Usually, the appearance of dementors triggers those memories to surface. Every time Harry encounters dementors, he hears his mother's voice begging Voldemort to kill her instead of her son (cf. *Prisoner* 259). The first death he consciously witnesses is the murder of Cedric Diggory at the end of *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire* (2000) when "[f]or a second that contained eternity, [he] stared into Cedric's face, at his open grey eyes, blank and expressionless as the windows of a deserted house" (691). Returning from the graveyard he is "clutching – the smooth, cold handle of the Triwizard Cup, and Cedric's body [...] as though he would slide away into the blackness gathering at the edges of his brain if he let go of either of them" (ibid. 726). Arguably the two most traumatising deaths are those of his father figures, Sirius Black and Albus Dumbledore. As Dumbledore says about Sirius' death: "'[y]ou have now lost your mother, your father, and the closest thing to a parent you have ever known'" (*Phoenix* 905-06). Although Harry admits to himself at Dumbledore's funeral that "he had not, as he had with Sirius, looked desperately for some kind of loophole, some way that Dumbledore would come back" (*Prince* 752), he is

fully aware that "the last and greatest of his protectors had died and he was more alone than he had ever been before" (ibid. 759-60).

Apart from these life-changing deaths of Harry's close associates, the passing of characters such as Fred Weasley, Lupin and Tonks, who die during the Battle of Hogwarts, as well as the death of the house-elf Dobby also haunt Harry's character. The traumatising effect of witnessing the death or learning about the death of someone emotionally close manifests itself in the form of 'survivor's guilt' which Harry feels even decades after the battle. When his son Albus goes missing in the course of *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*, the pattern of blaming himself for the deaths of others becomes apparent again: "'I shouldn't have survived – it was my destiny to die – [...] and yet I lived. [...] All these people – all these people – my parents, Fred, the Fallen Fifty – and it's me that gets to live? How is that? All this damage – and it's my fault'" (*Child* 269). Harry compensates the senselessness of the deaths of his friends and family by accusing himself of not dying in their place. As Erica Goode argues in an article on survivor's guilt in the *New York Times*, the idea of being able to prevent traumatic events "may help ward off the even more frightening notion that [they] were completely random" (n.p.). Guilt, as a response to the traumatic deaths, therefore serves as a substitute emotion which keeps Harry "from facing other key issues or intense emotions, and, in that sense, may serve as an unrecognized method of avoidance" (Nader n.p.). Therefore, Harry's unresolved survivor's guilt is another sign of post-traumatic stress, as well as of his missing confrontation with these punctual traumas.

In addition to extreme trauma triggers, abuse and bullying likewise play an important role in Harry's early childhood. When the reader encounters Harry in the first novel, he is an outsider in his own family. Having lost his parents, he "lived with the Dursleys almost ten years, ten miserable years [...] ever since he'd been a baby and his parents had died in that car crash" (*Stone* 37). In the Dursley family, there is no tradition of remembering Petunia's sister and brother-in-law, and it is only at the end of Harry's first year in Hogwarts that he receives a photo album with pictures of his parents (cf. ibid. 326). Instead, adding to Harry's isolation, it is emphasised over and over again that they were strange outsiders. In *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* (1999), Vernon's sister Marge goes to extremes by stating that Lily "'was a bad egg. [...] Then she ran off with a wastrel [...,] [a] no-account, good-for-nothing, lazy scrounger'" (36). Moreover, Vernon and Petunia "often spoke about Harry [...] as though he wasn't there – or rather, as though he was something very nasty that couldn't understand them, like a slug" (*Stone* 30). He is treated like a servant, forced to take care of the house and the garden, "[w]hile Dudley lolled around watching and eating ice-creams" (*Chamber* 16), not to mention him living in a cupboard until the first Hogwarts letters arrive (cf. *Stone* 45). His cousin Dudley continuously either threatens to use physical violence against him or actually does so. Harry's glasses are "held together with a lot of Sellotape because of all the times Dudley had punched him in the nose" (ibid. 27). The abuse Harry suffers at home continues in his school environment until he is accepted into Hogwarts: "[a]t school, Harry had no one. Everybody knew that Dudley's gang hated that odd Harry Potter in his baggy old clothes and broken glasses, and nobody liked to disagree with Dudley's gang" (ibid. 38). It is this kind of continuous trauma which surfaces again in *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*.

Having established the potential causes for post-traumatic stress disorder in Harry's character, *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* will in the following be analysed to see if the syndrome actually manifests itself. Hereby, two perspectives are applied: first, the textual analysis of PTSD symptoms Harry shows, and, second, how these symptoms are formally represented in the play.

Returning to the ICD-10 and DSM-V definition of PTSD, a victim's reaction to the exposure to an extreme traumatic stressor is usually delayed (cf. World Health Organization n.p.). It includes

> [r]ecurrent, involuntary, and intrusive distressing memories of the traumatic event(s) [...], [r]ecurrent distressing dreams in which the content and/or affect of the dream are related to the traumatic event(s) [...], [i]ntense or prolonged psychological distress at exposure to internal or external cues that symbolize or resemble an aspect of the traumatic event(s) [...], [p]ersistent negative emotional state [...], [i]rritable behavior and angry outbursts (with little or no provocation) (American Psychiatric Association 271-72).

According to these definitions, three main categories of symptoms can be identified: first, a period of latency between the traumatic event(s) and the surfacing of PTSD symptoms; second, a change in behaviour either towards high emotional irritability, and thirdly the continuous involuntary revisiting of the traumatic event itself.

The latency period describes the time between the traumatic event and the first symptoms of post-traumatic stress. Whereas classic readings of trauma narratives, especially those by Cathy Caruth, stress the importance of this period of belatedness where the traumatic memory is not accessible to the victim, more recent research suggests that a period of amnesia is a conscious decision of the trauma sufferer (cf. Gibbs 11). Drawing on neuroscientific research, second-generation cultural trauma scholars in particular underline that a sufferer's reaction to a traumatic event can be considerably more complex than suggested by the restricted model Caruth insists on (e.g. Kaplan 38). Instead, traumatic memory is "remembered but consciously repressed" (Gibbs 12). This notion also frees trauma narratives from the imperative of a period of belatedness – dictating a clear time frame after which the traumatic memory is bound to surface again – and incorporates primary texts in the trauma canon which either include no or significantly longer latency periods.

Harry Potter and the Cursed Child is in line with this more open and complex approach to traumatic memories that includes the assumption of an accessible traumatic memory. Between the statement that "all was well" (*Hallows* 607) after the defeat of Voldemort and the appearance of Harry's first symptoms, an exceptionally long period of nineteen years passes, suggesting that Harry chose not to think about the traumatic scenes of his childhood and adolescence rather than not being able to remember them (cf. *Child* 48). What triggers the reappearance of symptoms are arguably the recurring fights with his son, as well as a conversation with the aged Amos Diggory confronting Harry about Cedric's death once again. Both factors can be regarded as extraordinary stressors and threats to Harry's fragile mental health which is also under strain because of a very stressful working life as auror for the Ministry of Magic (cf. ibid. 29). From early on in the play, Harry already shows signs of "[i]rritable behaviour and angry outbursts" (American Psychiatric Association 272), especially when it comes to his son Albus. In a key conversation in Act 1, Scene 7, Harry is very quick to lose his temper and tell Albus "'there are times I wish you weren't my son'" (*Child* 41), also trying to control him until Professor McGonagall is "'bewildered by [...] his vitriol'" and Ginny is "'unsure of what he's become'" (ibid. 123). Here, Harry's clear over-reaction following a conversation with his teenage son is not only recognisable for the reader, but also for characters who have known and been close to Harry for decades, suggesting that his behaviour is far from regular.

Another symptom of PTSD is the intrusive re-experiencing of traumatic events in the form of Harry's nightmares. There are three nightmares in the course of the play, all of which have Harry waking up with an anxiety attack. Three common threads can be identified: his age, his aunt Petunia, and Voldemort's voice at the end of each dream. In none of the dreams Harry is older than eleven years. In addition, he is always accompanied by Petunia, who is not short in insulting him and his parents with statements like: "'we hoped we could improve you – build

you – make you a decent human being. So I suppose it's only ourselves we've got to blame that you've turned out... such a limp disappointment'" (ibid. 89). The fact that Petunia plays such a prominent role in all of the dreams reinforces the idea of how much insidious trauma in the form of long-term emotional abuse during childhood contributes to PTSD in later stages of Harry's life. Of course, Voldemort, the cause of all punctual traumas that Harry experiences also appears, even if it is 'only' his voice threatening Harry at the end of each nightmare (cf. ibid. 45, 91, 207). Arguably, this intrusive re-experiencing climaxes when Harry impersonates Voldemort and then forces himself to witness his parents' death, eventually sending him "*to the floor, a pure mess of grief*" (ibid. 297, original emphasis).

Trauma narratives in general follow a certain aesthetic that defines them; however, this aesthetic has been undergoing major changes since the earlier mentioned paradigmatic shift in analysing trauma fiction. On the one hand, first-generation trauma scholars identify a very close, and arguably highly restrictive, set of features that identify a trauma narrative. Cathy Caruth argues that because of the unrepresentability of trauma, narratives should display experimental forms of story-telling that formally reflect clinical trauma symptoms. These forms include heavily disrupted, non-linear forms of texts (cf. Caruth 5). Anne Whitehead supports these claims and stresses the importance of abandoning a "conventional linear sequence" (6) in order to represent trauma. Furthermore, Laurie Vickroy emphasises the clear distinction between the 'high culture' works that comprise the characteristics outlined by Caruth, and works of popular culture which she discounts as works of mere "terror, suspense, or prurience" (7). Partly owing to this heavy scholarly support, Caruth's readings became highly influential for literary criticism, even though Caruth herself based her theories on a very narrow reading of Freud, leading her to assumptions that are highly problematic when looking at more recent trauma research.[1] Second-generation trauma scholars, on the other hand, criticise this narrow approach to trauma aesthetics which leads to a vicious cycle of authors following the academically approved trauma narrative and vice versa (cf. Luckhurst 89). This critical assessment of both conventional ways of trauma reading, as well as the implication of more recent research opens up a number of narrative possibilities. These include for example the inclusion of a "wide diversity of high, middle and low cultural forms" (ibid. 83) in the trauma canon, or the potential of linear realist narratives to be recognised as trauma texts (cf. Gibbs 36). Imperative trauma concepts such as belatedness or literal nightmares and flashbacks become mitigated and are not compulsory to constitute a trauma narrative anymore. These additions to the otherwise more conventional features were explored by Robert Eaglestone in his study *The Holocaust and the Postmodern* (2004) and summarised by Roger Luckhurst (2008). They include "interruptions, temporal disorder, refusal of easy readerly identification, disarming play with narrative framing, disjunct movements in style, tense, focalization or discourse, and a resistance to closure that is demonstrated in compulsive telling and retelling" (Luckhurst 88), adding further dimensions and acknowledging that trauma and PTSD show uniquely in each victim.

Harry Potter and the Cursed Child utilises the characteristics of the conventional trauma aesthetic Eaglestone and Luckhurst identify, while also displaying features second-generation literary trauma scholars recognise.[2] Whereas the original *Harry Potter* series has a fairly linear timeline and narrative style with only few interruptions, *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* is characterised by the interruptions and temporal disorder Roger Luckhurst identifies. Here, magical means, such as the Time-Turner, serve as tools to jump between narrative

[1] For a thorough critical discussion, see Gibbs (2014).

[2] Even though plays do not yet play a significant part in the trauma fiction canon, scholars have commented on their potential to serve as trauma narratives. Matthew R. Martin, for instance, identifies an equivalent of the trauma aesthetic employed for prose in the tragedies of Christopher Marlowe (cf. 4).

perspectives and various moments in time. Frequent changes of narrative agency and scenes in general make it especially difficult to analyse Harry's behaviour, even though they do not have a direct connection to his symptoms. Nevertheless, it is easy to dismiss these symptoms in favour of the bigger picture of the storyline. Overlooking exactly this kind of behaviour, however, means running the risk of ignoring that Harry's struggles serve as strong plot triggers, for example by causing Albus to rebel against his father multiple times in the course of the play. As a consequence, the viewer or reader is not able to identify with Harry's character as easily as in the original series. The comprehensive insight into Harry's feelings and thoughts is replaced by mere glimpses into the inner workings of his mind, for example during conversations with his wife Ginny or with Dumbledore's portrait in the Ministry of Magic (cf. *Child* 46-48; 256-58). The element of compulsively revisiting Harry's trauma appears in the form of the already mentioned nightmares, but is also pushed to extremes – again with magical means – when Harry literally revisits the killing of his parents, turning a subconscious traumatic memory into a conscious trauma (cf. ibid. 296-97). The relatively peaceful ending of the play cannot hide the "resistance to closure" (Luckhurst 88) which has only been achieved for Harry's parental issues, but not for his post-traumatic stress. Arguably, laying out the eighth story as a play gives all of these techniques space to develop fully.

Therefore, it can indeed be concluded that *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* is a trauma narrative, in terms of both content and formal characteristics. Whereas first-generation trauma scholars are likely to contest this assumption, the development of literary trauma theory in past years allows a trauma reading of the play not only with regard to the story itself, but also to how it is presented. Using the clinical definition of post-traumatic stress disorder demands an analysis of the novels preceding the play and vice versa. Harry Potter's behaviour in the play clearly shows signs of post-traumatic stress, and as the analysis of the original series shows, the origins of his symptoms are complex. In the original series, several punctual trauma triggers, such as the many deaths of Harry's close associates or the constant endangerment of his own life, can be found. These events alone would suffice to cause severe post-traumatic stress beyond the feeling of survivor's guilt. Harry, however, also undergoes a period of severe bullying in his domestic environment, i.e., with the Dursleys. The almost chronic behaviour of his relatives slowly infiltrated Harry's psyche and is another aspect which continues to haunt him even decades later. The original novels therefore serve as a necessary starting point to explain Harry's behaviour displayed in the play.

Throughout *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*, symptoms of post-traumatic stress appear in Harry's character; yet they stay unrecognised and untreated. Instead, the other protagonists assume that the return of dark forces causes Harry's distress. LaCapra notes that trauma has the potential to "confuse self and other, and collapse all distinctions" (21), an observation especially relevant when looking at the conclusion that Harry's symptoms are caused by Voldemort still being an integral part of Harry's psyche. Just like nineteen years earlier, the lines between Harry (representing the self) and his antagonist (representing the other) start to blur. The suspicious behaviour of Harry's friends and family, and the suspected hauntings in the form of horcruxes do not only multiply Harry's doubts and insecurities, but also function as metaphorical representations of Harry's as well as the others' suffering caused by the threatening and war-like environment they were faced with when growing up. When they are finally able to prevent Voldemort's daughter Delphi from meddling with the past and stop her exploiting both Albus and Draco Malfoy's son Scorpius, Harry appears to be much calmer and more reflective than he has been up to this point. In the opening quote of this paper, he even claims to have already freed himself from the trauma Voldemort imposed on him. For most trauma survivors, however, working through trauma is an on-going process and even if

Harry eventually finds peace, he will still have his scar on the forehead – a physical proof of his psychological trauma.

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Marthe-Siobhán Hecke

Queerbaiting in the *Harry Potter* Series and in *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*?

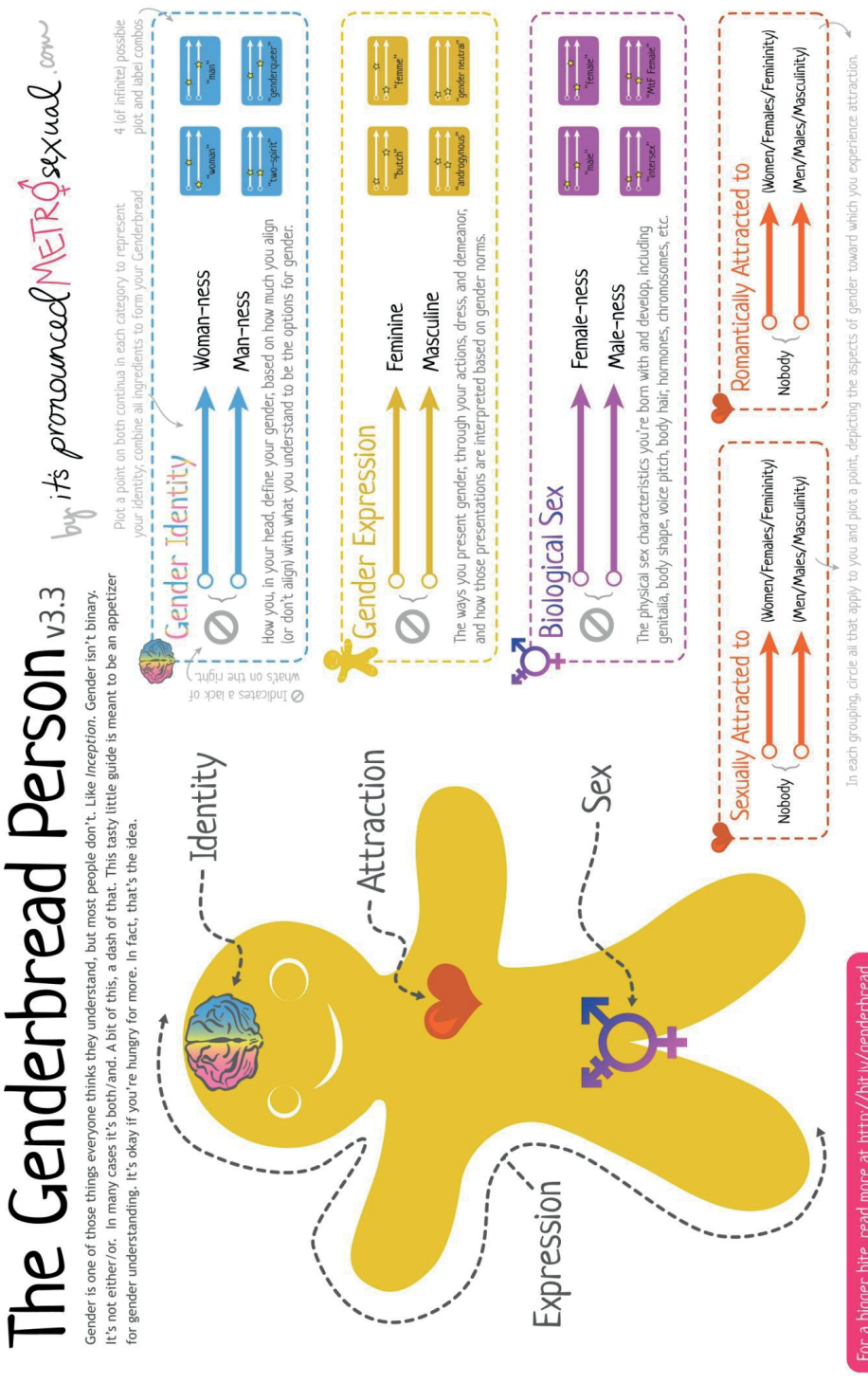
I. Introduction

When the play *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*, which is the product of a collaboration between J.K. Rowling, Jack Thorne and John Tiffany, was published in 2016, expectations were high as it was said to be the eighth book in the *Harry Potter* series. The play, which is divided into two parts, continues the story of *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*: nineteen years after Voldemort's defeat, the next generation has entered the stage; the story focuses on Albus Potter and Scorpius Malfoy. Soon after its publication, however, the play was accused of including a hidden love story between these two heroes, who needed to remain closeted to avoid displeasing most of the audience. This paper seeks to find clues for this assessment and the heteronormative Cloak of Invisibility. In order to do this, queerness and queerbaiting are discussed in the context of the *Harry Potter* series and in *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*.

II. A short introduction to queerness

'Queerness' is a term used in many different contexts, which turns any attempt to define the term into a quite difficult endeavour. The meaning of the term has in fact changed significantly in the course of the last few centuries: initially, 'queer' "referred to something strange or illegitimate" (Barker/Scheele 9), but in the 19th century the meaning changed from "odd" to being used as hate speech, because it increasingly came to be used as a "derogatory term for same-sex sex, or for people with same-sex attractions" (ibid.). Today, in an act of appropriation, it is often used as "an umbrella term for anyone who is not heterosexual […] or cisgender (remaining in the gender that they were assigned at birth)" (ibid. 11), which is also the definition of queerness that will be applied in this paper. The following diagram gives a good overview of the different dimensions associated with gender, showing that one's identity involves variables on the level of sexual and romantic attraction, the expression of oneself and one's sex. In other words, a person can be born with a certain biological sex, can be sexually and/or romantically attracted (or not) to persons of different genders, may express their gender (or not) and has (or has no) gender identity. Ultimately, all of these categories constitute a scale, since there is not one fixed male or female gender, but there are many different expressions of gender in-between.

Judith Butler's writings have had a profound impact on both feminism and queer theory. In her book *Gender Trouble* (1990), she continued work done by earlier feminists, such as Simone de Beauvoir, arguing that sex and gender are not connected, although the norms of society tend to assume a necessary link between them. According to Butler, culture constructs and maintains a heterosexual matrix, suggesting that a supposedly fixed sex determines the individual's gender, which then defines the desire of a person. Gender is, thus, not something humans are born with, but is rather the result of an individual's performative acts, which, however, tend to be informed by patterns that have evolved and been consolidated in society:



Credit: Sam Killerman, http://itspronouncedmetrosexual.com

> The act that gender is, the act that embodied agents are inasmuch as they dramatically and actively embody and, indeed, wear certain cultural significations, is clearly not one's act alone. Surely, there are nuanced and individual ways of doing one's gender, but that one does it, and that one does it in accord with certain sanctions and proscriptions, is clearly not a fully individual matter (Butler, "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution" 525).

Performativity, thus, is anchored in a culture which has reiterated certain ideas of gender (e.g., the opposition of 'strong males' vs. 'weak females') for centuries (cf. Butler, *Gender Trouble*). Consequently, Butler conceptualises the 'heterosexual matrix' or 'heteronormativity' as follows: everything that does not adhere to cultural expectations regarding a predetermined performance in accordance with a binary opposition between 'male' and 'female' is likely to be seen as inferior and to be eliminated or at least punished. In a similar vein, Barker and Scheele point out that heteronormativity amounts to "homophobia, heterosexism, and straight privilege" (85). Deviations from behavioural norms often lead to sanctions, because the concept of heterosexuality seems to require the construction of a 'distinct' alternative: "In other words, for heterosexuality to remain intact as a distinct social form, it requires an intelligible conception of homosexuality and also requires the prohibition of that conception in rendering it culturally unintelligible" (Butler, *Gender Trouble* 98). Certain types of desires and of 'doing gender', e.g., homosexuality, are thus likely to be marginalised and/or forbidden, as they stand in opposition to gender norms; after all, "desire and its repression are an occasion for the consolidation of juridical structures; desire is manufactured and forbidden as a ritual symbolic gesture whereby the juridical model exercises and consolidates its own power" (ibid. 96). Repetition leads to a perpetual reproduction of these culturally constructed genders.

Hence, gender performativity is not random but tends to follow rules. Queerness in gender performances draws upon the cultural conventions which were previously used to categorise a certain behaviour as 'male' or 'female'. Butler emphasises that these culturally generated norms can be challenged and changed through repeated, altered usage:

> The public assertion of 'queerness' enacts performativity as citationality for the purposes of resignifying the abjection of homosexuality into defiance and legitimacy. I argue that this does not have to be a 'reverse-discourse' in which the defiant affirmation of queer dialectically reinstalls the version it seeks to overcome. Rather, this is the politicization of abjection in an effort to rewrite the history of the term, and to force it into a demanding resignification (Butler, *Bodies that Matter* 21).

Butler's concept of 'citationality', as picked up by Fathallah, establishes gender performativity as "constrained by signs and gestures repeated from the cultural archives of femininity/masculinity or straightness/queerness, any of which may inflect, parody, critique, or consolidate those constructions" (491). Subversive performativity might be able to change previously fixed gender stereotypes, just as a changed usage of language might be able to tackle hate speech (cf. Butler/Menke).

III. What is queerbaiting, and why is it a problem?

Altering norms via performativity is a challenge, given that, for instance, movies and other products of popular culture routinely function as a "ritualistic release for a heterosexual economy that must constantly police its own boundaries against the invasion of queerness" (Butler, *Bodies that Matter* 126). As homosexuality arguably undermines gender stereotypes, the (gendered) rules regulating the interaction between individuals are questioned by homosexuality, potentially giving rise to what Sedgwick and Butler refer to as 'homosexual panic'.

The "displaced production and resolution of homosexual panic actually fortifies the heterosexual regime in its self-perpetuating task" (Butler, *Bodies that Matter* 126). Sedgwick follows Butler's line of argumentation, claiming that the elimination of gender binaries is prone to cause a 'homosexual panic', especially for males. Looking at the *genderbread person* one can see that a division between identity (e.g. woman/male-ness), attraction (sexually or romantically), sex (female/male-ness) and expression (feminine, masculine) leads to diverse ways of expressing oneself. This might lead to insecurity and panic in others because the 'boundaries' defining who is attracted to whom no longer exist.

> I argue that the historically shifting, and precisely the arbitrary and self-contradictory, nature of the way homosexuality (along with its predecessor terms) has been defined in relation to the rest of the male homosocial spectrum has been an exceedingly potent and embattled locus of power over the entire range of male bonds, and perhaps especially over those that define themselves, not as homosexual, but as against the homosexual. Because the paths of male entitlement, especially in the nineteenth century, required certain intense male bonds that were not readily distinguishable from the most reprobated bonds, an endemic and ineradicable state of what I am calling male homosexual panic became the normal condition of male heterosexual entitlement (Sedgwick 190).

To avoid 'homosexual panic' and refrain from displeasing a conservative audience, queerbaiting has recently become an increasingly widespread phenomenon in popular culture. Masad defines queerbaiting as follows:

> Queerbaiting is a term that exists mostly in fan communities, and refers to the writers or creators of a world (whether of a movie franchise, a book series, or a TV show) using injections of homoeroticism and romance to draw an audience seeking LGBTQ representation, while not alienating a wider audience who may not want to see a gay relationship depicted. Think of the term 'bromance' – a dynamic that employs romantic tropes, all the while not actually fulfilling them (Masad n.p.).

Queerbaiting can be understood as referring to instances of queer performativity, while not keeping the promises made in this way, in order to create a cultural product (such as a novel, movie, TV series, etc.) which is compatible with the preferences of the (heteronormatively inclined) masses. Members of the queer community are thus able to decipher and identify with certain (more or less obvious) signs of a queer performance, but are in the end time and again disappointed as the performance of queerness is only used as 'bait' for them, while genuinely queer characters are not included. A famous example of this strategy, which is discussed by Fathallah, is the BBC series *Sherlock*, where obvious queer disruptions of the story can be found. A possible interpretation of Sherlock and Watson as a homosexual couple is rejected in season three by showing Watson marry a woman. Barker and Scheele define 'queer moments' (which may lead to queerbaiting) as follows: "Queer moments are those that disrupt the narrative and destabilize heteronormativity by highlighting what is integral to it: moments which demonstrate that gender is performative, that identities are not fixed, or that queer attractions are possible" (Barker/Scheele 103). Including the possibility of interpreting certain scenes in a series/movie or passages in a novel in both a heterosexual and a queer manner may be considered queerbaiting if the queerness is withdrawn in the end.[1] Yet queering (for example in Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest*, where cucumber sandwiches might signify more than just sandwiches) may be used to reinterpret novels or series, as meaning is by definition culturally constructed and thus variable:

[1] A further problem of debates on queerbaiting so far seems to be that the term is almost exclusively used to refer to male homosexuality – bisexuality, asexuality and female homosexuality are excluded. Continuously disregarding certain members of the queer community is, of course, highly problematic. Lesbians, asexuals, bisexuals and other non-heteronormative persons need representation, too.

> Queer reading, or analysis, is often called 'queering' as it frequently involves rendering a text queerer by reading it in a certain way. Queer theorists and post-structuralists would argue that there's never one 'true' reading of any text – not even the one the author intended. Rather, there are always many possible readings, and the reader is implicated in the meanings that are (re)produced. As Foucault said, we are agents of the systems of power and knowledge that are in place, as well as being effects of them (Barker/Scheele 102).

A text may include more or less obvious clues, inviting a reader to decipher it in a queer and/or heteronormative way. Yet, more often than not, queer disruptions (i.e., moments of destabilised heteronormativity) and the "possibility of queer identities and desires are dismissed as a joke, or a fantasy in the minds of a less valued minority" (Fathallah 491), which leads to a silencing of queer voices and a refusal of providing room for queerness on screen and/or on the page (especially in popular culture):

> Queerbaiting may be defined as a strategy by which writers and networks attempt to gain the attention of queer viewers via hints, jokes, gestures, and symbolism suggesting a queer relationship between two characters, and then emphatically denying and laughing off the possibility. Denial and mockery reinstate a heteronormative narrative that poses no danger of offending mainstream viewers at the expense of queer eyes (ibid.).

Yet a representation of members of the queer community, especially in so-called 'mass' culture, is vital to communicate alternative life and love choices to the public rather than showing them remain either in their closets or being queer in the old sense (meaning 'weird' or 'odd'), at least from the heteronormative point of view.[2] Queerbaiting is not enough. Instead, representations of *actual* queerness are needed in order to initiate a change and to avoid reproducing (binary) gender stereotypes. A 'room of one's own' in the media might also help to tackle stereotypes, prejudices and fear or hate that can be traced back to many people's lack of knowledge regarding LGBTQ identities.

The negative effects of perpetuating stereotypes are not restricted to queerness, of course. A less prejudiced understanding of masculinity and femininity in general is needed as well. It is high time to overcome gender stereotypes which cause men to act in a supposedly 'manly' manner, showing strength while avoiding a display of emotions and which encourage women to favour weak and helpless demeanour. A representation of less stereotypical and more realistic characters on the page as well as on screen might help to promote the idea that not all females or males are alike, adhering to a comparatively fixed gender role, but are (or at least should be) free to choose how to live their life. Yet, as Masad emphasises, a perpetuation of gender stereotypes is one of the problems that causes queerbaiting:

> [I]t is extremely important to see portrayals of deep, emotional, non-sexual romantic male friendships in popular culture. Currently, there are very few on offer. Toxic masculinity, a social condition that dictates men must act a certain way in order to be acceptably manly, has damaged portrayals of male friendships on TV, in our films, on the page. Pop culture too often settles for stereotypes: men talk about sports, boast about sex, and don't touch one another. Any emotional or physical closeness is brushed away as 'gay' in a pejorative sense. Because of what we see, it's no wonder there is a sense of insecurity and shame about physical intimacy of any sort between men – sexual or not. The lack of representation of even casual intimacy between men may be one of the reasons fans so desperately wish these male characters into romantic relationships – leading to accusations of queerbaiting when they don't see their fantasy officially told. This isn't to say that queerbaiting isn't real – but there's a reason

[2] This does not mean, however, that queer characters should be included just to appeal to a queer audience; instead, if the author has a queer character in mind, this character should be depicted thus and not hidden away to avoid discomfort or even outrage amongst the readership.

> why we see closeness between men as almost intrinsically gay. And that is a problem in itself (Masad n.p.).

Hence, representations of queerness as well as non-stereotypical depictions of males (and females), which allow for the display of intimacy, are needed in popular culture, for example in highly successful YA literature. The seven *Harry Potter* novels did not answer to this call; instead, the series is characterised by an absence of both queerness and intimacy – a problem which will be addressed in the following.

IV. Harry Potter and the Curse of Heteronormativity, or: the absence of sexuality

Although the *Harry Potter* series has a young audience in mind, in particular from book four onward both the tone and the topics get increasingly sinister and are, perhaps, no longer very child-friendly in the narrow sense; death, war, torture, and racism[3] are among the issues the young heroes and heroines have to come to terms with. Various forms of discrimination are depicted in the novels, but discrimination due to skin colour, religion or sexual identity does not seem to be part of the underlying conflicts in the wizarding world. Nevertheless, the expressions of sex and gender by and large seem to adhere to the heterosexual matrix. There is not even one openly queer character in the entire series. Rowling has stated that she imagined certain characters to be gay, including Dumbledore,[4] Seamus Finnigan and Dean Thomas (cf. Smith n.p.), but decided against them being openly gay. She even emphasised on Twitter that Hogwarts was a safe place for LGBT students (cf. Rowling 2014 n.p.), but chose not to comment on why she did not include diversity more overtly. Rowling may have wanted to avoid agitating more conservative readers (or parents), or maybe her publishers did not want a more diverse studentship. Whatever the reason may have been, the series lacks major identification figures for minorities, especially for members of the queer community. Dean and Seamus, Hogwarts' potentially gay couple, seem to be heterosexuals after all (with Dean dating Ginny at one point). If Rowling considered them to be gay originally, she apparently decided against this option. Wise, tolerant and thoughtful Dumbledore, who stayed a bachelor his entire life after having fallen in love with Grindelwald in his youth, might have been a queer character to identify with. Instances of queerbaiting can be found in the series, but only by those who know what they are looking for, as can be seen in the description of Dumbledore's relationship with Grindelwald.[5] Rowling's decision to let some characters out of the

[3] Racism, understood as discrimination against non-magical persons, so-called Muggles, and all magical persons who are not so-called 'pure-bloods' is addressed extensively in the series. Cf. the contribution by Carsten Kullmann in this volume.

[4] According to *The Guardian* (Smith n.p.), Rowling was surprised when the information that Dumbledore was gay was greeted with ovations and excitement by the queer community. One might perhaps speculate that Rowling did not see the necessity to include queer characters and thus underestimated the queer audience's need for representation. But not all hope is lost: Rowling hinted at Dumbledore being openly gay in the *Fantastic Beasts* movie sequel ("As far as his sexuality is concerned," she said, pausing for a moment. "Watch this space."; McCluskey n.p.), which would be the first time that an openly queer character is depicted in any of the series' instalments. One could argue that the scenes between Credence and Grindelwald in the 2016 movie *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* constitute queerbaiting as well because the two men seem to be unusually intimate with each other. Nevertheless, nothing was shown that could have supported this assumption.

[5] That Dumbledore was in love with Grindelwald as a young man could have only been guessed by those open to queerness, since there is no explicit textual basis for this assumption.

closet in retrospect cannot change the fact that the series seems to adhere to the heterosexual matrix in terms of the characters' life choices and sexual identity.[6]

The main characters in the series are all apparently heterosexual and lead a rather conservative life in terms of gender identity: Harry, Ron, Hermione, Ginny and Draco (to name just a few) all marry, have children and thus live a conventional life gender-wise. Almost all of their parents appear to have been happily married as well;[7] divorces are not common practice in the wizarding world and alternative family constructions (e.g., homosexual wizard couples) are not presented at all. Although women are working in the wizarding world, the headmaster, the Minister for Magic, the main villain and even the hero, Harry, are male. Hermione truly is a heroine, but she arguably is not as important to Harry as Ron is.[8] Most other female characters are only relevant as tough side-kicks, such as Professor McGonagall or Tonks, or as 'evil' witches like Dolores Umbridge and Bellatrix Lestrange. None of the female teachers at Hogwarts seems to have a family or a partner (of either sex), but neither do the male teachers. Although even Mrs Weasley turns out to be a 'badass' eventually, she is, first and foremost, the perfect housewife and it is never mentioned whether she has ever had a job. Of course, the representation of a freely chosen life as a housewife must be respected as well (no matter how traditional or old-fashioned it might seem). In *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* Hermione has become Minister for Magic, and Ginny is a formerly famous Quidditch player who now works as a journalist, which indicates that the role allocation seems to have changed significantly.

As an intermediary result, one may argue that there is no overt representation of queer (and other) diversity in the novels, even though students at Hogwarts do have many different cultural backgrounds (e.g., Cho Chang, Parvati Patil), which are never considered a problem. As a matter of fact, reading *Harry Potter* was found to increase the readers' empathy and tolerance towards minorities (cf. Vezzali et al.), as the exclusion of certain groups (especially of Muggle-borns and werewolves) and the cruel and depreciative slave-like treatment of magical creatures such as house-elves or goblins show racism in a different form. This positive influence should certainly not be underestimated. Yet, the positive effects of a representation of diversity and a critique of racism just mentioned render the lack of a depiction of openly queer characters even more deplorable, since a realistic representation of queer characters might have had very beneficial effects, too.

One may of course also argue for a queer reading of the series which assumes parallels between the discrimination against non-pure-bloods and the current marginalisation of LGBTQ communities. Pure-blooded wizards and those descending from Muggles fight over where and how the wizarding world is in relation to the Muggle world. The conflicts between two of the school houses, Gryffindor and Slytherin, are based on the underlying ideologies of dreaming of a pure-blooded community, which rather oppresses Muggles than hiding from them to

[6] It needs to be mentioned in this context that there are hardly any references to sexuality in the series: kissing is the only sexualised act that can be found in the novels. Even hugging is hardly referred to.

[7] The relationship between Remus Lupin and (Nymphadora) Tonks could be described as troubled, but they eventually marry and have a child. Remus could be regarded as a queer character as well, because he is a werewolf and, therefore, more or less unable to lead a normal life, since society does not accept him to be a human with human rights. His struggles for acceptance in society because of his 'sickness' could be compared to the struggles of HIV-positive persons: both groups (HIV-positive persons and werewolves) are thought to be dangerous, hence are avoided, have difficulties finding/having a job, leading a normal life and having children. Lupin tries to leave Tonks because he is afraid his child might be sick and, therefore, an outcast as well.

[8] Hermione, nevertheless, is very important to both Harry and the plot, especially in her (stereotypically feminine) role as a peace-keeper between Ron and Harry. She is also depicted as a strong female, however, which has to be acknowledged.

avoid exposure, versus a more liberal and tolerant idea of a community embracing everyone who is able to do magic.[9] Rowling might have substituted racist- or queer-motivated hate, exclusion and discrimination in this world for problems of the non-pure bloods in the wizarding world, creating a different form of racism. But even if the problems that members of the queer community face today (in the real world) are replaced by a pseudo-biological racism based on an idea of 'pure blood', a more explicit representation of queerness (as a utopia or ideal society, where sex, gender and desires are a matter of free choice and not discriminated against) would have been possible. In many respects, it would not have made a difference for the story if Dumbledore was openly gay (and heartbroken because he once was blinded by his love) or if some students were bi-, trans-, homo- or asexual or something entirely different and fabulous, but it would have made a huge difference in terms of the representation of a diverse society.

V. Queerbaiting in *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*?

Considering the ongoing discussions about the lack of queerness in the *Harry Potter* series, the publication of *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* led to even more disappointment among members of the LGBTQ community, because it – once more – did not include openly queer characters. Masad quotes an enraged fan accusing the writers of the play of intentional queerbaiting, seeking to reach a wider audience without alienating more conservative readers/viewers:

> 'The writers of the Cursed Child intentionally included this fan theory to draw us in, but decided to change it just enough so that they wouldn't have to admit that they made two 11-year-olds gay,' Jameson Ortiz, an LGBTQ campaigner and Harry Potter fan, told me. 'It's queerbaiting because they knew exactly who they were reeling in and why, but still decided to leave out the main attraction for all the fans they hooked, choosing instead, like so many others, to set up the gay romance, hint at it constantly, make it believable and deep and perfect, and then force it out of the story' (Masad n.p.).

There are ambiguous scenes in the play which make it possible to argue that the heteronormative interpretation at least is not the only viable one, but can be challenged via queering. In the following, I will argue that queer elements can be found in the play, but that these are often reduced to mere queerbaiting, because passages including compulsive heteronormativity eliminate the possibility of true queerness in many cases.

When he first meets Scorpius Malfoy in Act One, Albus Potter decides to share a compartment on the Hogwarts Express with him, even though Rose Granger-Weasley (whom he has known since childhood) refuses to join them. The ambitious girl fears to befriend the wrong kind of student; after all, Scorpius's father, Draco Malfoy, was their parents' antagonist and a Death Eater, though a reluctant one. Seeing the lonely blonde boy, whom he does not know yet, all alone in a compartment, Albus decides to stay – not because of Scorpius's company, but for his sweets, or that is what he says at least (cf. *Child* 17). One might suspect another reason, however; after all, the boys who seem to like each other are both outsiders. Albus and Scorpius are not only descendants of two very famous families in the wizarding world, but they have also inherited their fathers' looks. Despite having discussed the possibility of being sorted into the 'wrong' house with his father, Albus is still confused by the deci-

[9] One could argue that Voldemort dreams of a totalitarian state with torture, persecution of lateral thinkers/so-called 'Mudbloods' and Dumbledore of a more democratic community based on human rights, tolerance and peace. The vital question seems to be what kind of society the wizarding world wants to become in the future.

sion of the Sorting Hat, which confirms his role as an outsider. After the sorting, he has to struggle not only with his famous father, whose looks and name he shares and whose legacy he is expected to live up to, but also with being in the 'wrong' house and in the 'wrong' company: a Potter in Slytherin.[10] In a queer reading, this struggle with the expectations of family and society might be interpreted as the struggle of persons trying to come to terms with their identity and specifically their sexuality.

In the following years (which are summarised on a few pages), Harry proves to be incapable of understanding his son, who is unpopular in school, is teased by fellow students and largely isolates himself (cf. ibid. 28). The only one Albus can talk to in this situation is his friend Scorpius, who has to cope with the rumour that he is Voldemort's son. The only solace the two lonely boys have is each other's company and friendship ("'[B]e my good friend'", ibid. 29). Before his son's fourth year at Hogwarts starts, Harry tries to find a way to communicate with him, but they end up fighting and Harry states that "'there are times I wish you weren't my son'" (ibid. 44). This scene proves to be a crucial turning point.

Up to this scene, the relationship between the two young men seems to conform to heteronormativity. Albus and Scorpius are best friends, both are outsiders, but they seem to be happy that they have each other.[11] Scorpius in fact appears to be romantically interested in Rose. But then 15-year-old Albus does something out of the ordinary (even for him), because he "*hugs his friend. With fierceness. They hold for a beat.* SCORPIUS *is surprised by this*" (ibid. 55, original emphasis). Scorpius says: "'Okay. Hello. Um. Have we hugged before? Do we hug?'", while the stage direction states: "*[t]he two boys awkwardly dislocate*" (ibid. 55, original emphasis). The two boys' demeanour suggests that physical contact does not seem to have been normal for them so far.[12] That Albus now all of a sudden initiates physical contact might be interpreted as an expression of his need for being comforted by the only person who understands him. Alternatively, the hug might also be more than a gesture of understanding between friends, especially as the experience is awkward for both of them. Masad reads the repeated references to Albus and Scorpius hugging "in a manner resembling the common trope 'Hot Gay Hugging': a hilarious title for the less-than-funny absence of casual intimacy allowed between homosexual characters" (Masad n.p.): while "[h]etero couples get to kiss, the gays are limited to a (hot gay) hug. And Albus and Scorpius do go for it, with all the awkwardness you'd expect from two English lads" (ibid.).

Moreover, the two teenage boys defy the cliché that men cannot or do not want to talk about their feelings. After having broken into the Ministry of Magic and stolen the Time-Turner, Scorpius talks about Albus being a disappointment to his father – a situation which he, Scorpius, knows from his own relationship to Draco. Scorpius wants to discuss "'difficult emotional issues'" (as Albus puts it) and tries to console his friend saying "'My point is – there's a reason – we're friends, Albus – a reason we found each other, you know'" (*Child*

[10] When Albus shows that he does not share his father's talent for Quidditch, the other students call him "'Albus Potter, the Slytherin Squib'" because "'[h]e really isn't like his father at all'" (*Child* 22). Moreover, Harry does not like Scorpius because he is Draco's son (cf. ibid. 24).

[11] One could certainly say that Albus and Scorpius resemble Harry and Ron, who were a team when they were students. But Ron and Harry were simply best friends and never showed any interest in each other outside this box. Both were interested in girls (something that was for example indicated by the awkwardness displayed by Ron when it came to hugging Hermione, although it took him some years to realise that she was, indeed, a girl with whom one could go to an event like the Yule Ball); there are no clues that Harry and Ron are not heterosexual. (Fan fiction obviously needs to be excluded in this context.)

[12] It should be stressed that neither of the two is very much used to physical contact in general; in contrast to Albus, Scorpius is not even hugged by his father in the beginning.

88), before he is distracted. This might of course be a declaration of their friendship – or it might be a glimpse of them being more than just friends.

The interaction with Delphi makes the boys' friendship appear in a somewhat ambivalent light. Before using the Time-Turner, Albus practices spells with Delphi; he wins and they high-five, while Scorpius is watching from "*the back of the stage. He looks at his friend talking to a girl – a part of him likes it and part of him doesn't*" (ibid. 105, original emphasis). Apparently, Scorpius, on the one hand, enjoys witnessing Albus having fun with someone else; on the other hand, he does not like it because he wants to stay his only friend. Alternatively, one could argue that Scorpius partially likes to see Albus interested in a girl and simultaneously dislikes Albus behaving in accordance with the heteronormative matrix. If Scorpius was merely jealous of Albus having a close connection to somebody else, the stage direction might have looked different (e.g., referring to Albus talking to somebody else, i.e., not to a girl). Later, Albus and Delphi work together on a plan and Scorpius "*isn't enjoying the* DELPHI-ALBUS *double act*" (ibid. 106, original emphasis), which is why he suggests leaving Delphi instead of taking her along on their time travels.

Before they use the Time-Turner, Scorpius declares that all he "'ever wanted to do was go to Hogwarts and have a mate to get up to mayhem with. […] You're my best friend, Albus'" (ibid. 113). The choice of the term 'mate' (and the reference to mayhem) reiterates a rhetoric of masculinity that apparently seeks to avoid queerness. When their first time-travelling goes wrong and Albus is injured, Harry wants his son to stay away from Scorpius in the future. Yet Albus refuses to do so, stressing their friendship ("'[m]y best friend? My only friend?'", ibid. 124). Albus' refusal to forsake his friend makes Harry insist on having his son monitored by means of the Marauder's Map, which enables him to trace his whereabouts in Hogwarts all the time. Albus is forced to obey his father, thus being unable to talk to a confused Scorpius ("ALBUS *looks up at* SCORPIUS *and his heart breaks. He walks on.*"; "SCORPIUS *is left looking up after him. Heartbroken*", ibid. 130, original emphasis). If the two protagonists were a man and a woman, the stage directions just quoted would presumably be interpreted quite readily as being indicative of a romance. The two young men, though, might still only be read as friends, as the text is ambiguous. In a later scene, Albus and Scorpius meet again, but after the "*two boys look at each other. Lost and hopeful – all at once* [...] ALBUS *looks away and the moment is broken – and with it, possibly, the friendship*" (ibid. 137, original emphasis). Again, the wording is ambivalent; the stage direction can be read as an indication of romance or friendship. Against Harry's wishes, Scorpius and Albus eventually meet in the library, quarrel over using the Time-Turner once more or not and finally reconcile. Albus comforts Scorpius, saying, "'[Y]ou're kind, Scorpius. To the depths of your belly, to the tips of your fingers'" and "SCORPIUS *is moved by this*" (ibid. 156, original emphasis). They dare to declare their affection to each other; Albus states that Scorpius is "'the best person I know. And […] you make me stronger'" (ibid.), to which Scorpius responds by admitting: "'I don't much like my life without you in it either'" (ibid.). The two end up hugging (it is again Albus who initiates the physical contact), but their reaction is different from that in the earlier scene as they now smile at each other after the hug (cf. ibid. 157). They appear to be more at ease with their emotions.

During the time travel, there is a scene that may be read as containing comparatively obvious sexual innuendo. The two boys plan to use the engorgement charm to humiliate Cedric during the Triwizard Tournament (and thus save him in the long run); they decide to practice the charm beforehand in the girl's bathroom. This scene, where the two teenage boys are in the bathroom enlarging soap together, could easily be seen as having a double meaning:

SCORPIUS: So let me get this right – the plan is Engorgement…
ALBUS: Yes. Scorpius, the soap if you may…
SCORPIUS *fishes a soap out of the sink.*
Engorgio!
He fires a bolt from his wand across the room. The soap blows up to four times its size.
SCORPIUS: Nice. Consider me engorgimpressed (ibid. 168, original emphasis).

Although their next time travel fails again, Scorpius manages to change the timeline once more, and Albus and Scorpius end up back in the lake again: Scorpius is overwhelmed with joy because his friend is alive, unlike in the parallel universe ("'You have no idea how good it is to see you again'", ibid. 210). This is why Scorpius – (for the first time!) – "*hugs* ALBUS *in the water, a difficult task*" (ibid., original emphasis). Albus is confused, asking Scorpius if he has "'been eating too many sweets again'" (ibid. 211); Scorpius replies that he has missed his friend being "'all dry humour and Albus-y. I love it'" (ibid.). Scorpius says explicitly that he does not only adore Albus's humour, but also his entire personality, which is a statement one perhaps would not expect from a fifteen-year-old teenager.

Despite striking queer elements, which appear to become more prominent in the course of the play, *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* ultimately undermines the tentatively established queerness and resumes a heteronormative stance. In the last but one scene of the play, Albus and Scorpius are once more in Hogwarts. They are very excited because Scorpius has asked Rose out; even if she said no, the boy still maintains that this is the "'acorn that will grow into our eventual marriage'" (ibid. 321). Albus claims he thought he would be the "'first of us to get a girlfriend'" (ibid. 322), and Scorpius mocks him for having a "'thing about older women'" (ibid.). The two young men's banter suggests that they adhere to compulsive heteronormativity; queer disruptions or queer interpretations of these passages are made virtually impossible. Then they meet Rose, and "ALBUS *grins and punches* SCORPIUS *on the arm*" (ibid. 323, original emphasis), a gesture that is perhaps meant as an encouragement. Albus is about to leave in order to meet his father when Scorpius hugs his friend (another queer disruption initiated by Scorpius), which confuses Albus ("'What's this? I thought we decided we don't hug'", ibid. 324). Whilst hugging his friend, Scorpius says that he "'wasn't sure. Whether we should. In this new version of us I had in my head'" (ibid.); they then "*dislocate and grin at each other*" (ibid., original emphasis). A queer reading of this passage is definitely possible: either the two have decided that physical contact between two men is nothing to be ashamed of (in defiance of homosexual panic), or they have even come to terms with their romantic feelings for each other. In other words, the scene described above could be understood as them having accepted either a friendship that allows a certain amount of intimacy, or even a non-platonic sexual interest.

All in all, the relationship between Scorpius and Albus seems to be more complex and to go significantly further than the undeniably strong and lasting friendship between Ron and Harry in the novels, which is devoid of the ambiguity that is introduced in *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*. The lack of ambiguity meant that Ron and Harry appeared to be at ease in their behaviour towards each other and in their interest in girls. Problems with hugging or other kinds of physical contact are not referred to in the series. *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*, by contrast, depicts the relationship between the two new best friends in a very different manner, which has even led to the play being re-named "Harry Potter and the Curse of Heteronormativity" on Twitter (Baker-Whitelaw n.p.). But is it really queerbaiting? Masad concludes that even if the play just shows a deep friendship between the two male heroes (including a display of emotions and physical contact in defiance of clichés and homosexual panic), it should be celebrated as a representation of "a loving relationship between two boys,

who may or may not be in love. Because that achievement, while maybe not as progressive as some may want, is still progress" (n.p.).

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Aleksandra Szczodrowski

Native Americans in J.K. Rowling's "History of Magic in North America" on Pottermore

I. Introduction

In 2014, J.K. Rowling published the "History of Magic in North America" series on the Pottermore online platform as part of the continuous expansion of her magical universe. The "History of Magic in North America" consists of four chapters, structured along a timeline: 'Fourteenth Century – Seventeenth Century', 'Seventeenth Century and Beyond', 'Rappaport's Law', and '1920s Wizarding America'. It mostly focuses on (partly fictional) events after the colonisation of North America which began in 1492 and thus concentrates on the settler history of that continent.

To be more precise, the "History of Magic in North America" briefly outlines the time period from the 14th century to the beginning of the 20th century in an area which is now known as the United States of America. In this pseudo-historical narrative, Rowling also attempts to represent Native Americans[1] in order to describe their position in the magical world and their relations to the European colonisers, who began to settle in the Americas in the 15th century. As this contribution will seek to show, the result is problematic in several respects. The first chapter ('Fourteenth Century – Seventeenth Century') begins with a juxtaposition of European and Native American magic and concludes that European magic is more sophisticated due to the use of wands. In its second section ('Seventeenth Century'), the struggles of the newly arrived European wizards are described. The Salem Witch Trials are presented as a traumatic example of the wrong-doings of Puritan religious persecution – yet without addressing the damage inflicted by the missionaries on Indigenous communities. Rowling then continues to build the wizarding world in the US by inventing institutions such as the MACUSA (Magical Congress of the United States of America), which is highly relevant in the narrated world and features prominently in the recent movie *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* (2016), which is set in America in the 1920s and uses these institutions as elements of the setting. Native Americans apparently do not play a role on such a high political level; in these passages of Rowling's "History of Magic in North America" they are not mentioned at all. This may serve as a first indication of the marginalisation of Native Americans in Rowling's historiographic narrative set in the US.

The inclusion of Native Americans in the magical history can of course be seen as an attempt to bring more diversity into the *Harry Potter* universe, which has often been criticised for its failure to represent the plurality and heterogeneity of contemporary societies. But this attempt at diversifying the franchise backfired, which is emphasised by the criticism provided by Indigenous scholars, such as Adrienne Keene, who is a member of the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma and currently assistant professor at Brown University, and Allison Mills, who is of

[1] This essay will mostly use the terms 'Native Americans' and 'Indigenous peoples' as J.K. Rowling does not differentiate between individual nations. While the term 'Native Americans' is generally accepted as being politically correct, it is not unproblematic because it homogenises the experiences and cultures of different Indigenous peoples. However, to a certain extent, Indigenous peoples from different nations do share similar experiences in the U.S. despite their different customs, traditions and cultures.

Mushkegowuk Cree and French-Canadian descent and currently an IRSC research assistant at the University of British Columbia. One of the major starting points of criticism, as will be shown in the following, is the allegation that Rowling employs damaging stereotypes that construct Native Americans as vanishing and 'unreal' peoples. In fact, the 'Vanishing Indian' is a colonial stereotype that has been used as a means to legitimise the colonisation of North America and its Indigenous peoples. Thus, it can be argued that Rowling employs elements of colonial master narratives, represents dominantly a settler perspective and has consequently constructed a settler narrative in the "History of Magic in North America".

In order to analyse in how far Rowling's North American history is indeed a settler narrative, this paper will focus particularly on the stereotype of the 'Vanishing Indian' in order to examine whether it has been perpetuated in the primary text. Additionally, Indigenous perspectives on historical events as well as on Rowling's historiographic narrative will be taken into account to discuss some major issues of the "History of Magic in North America". Core concepts of postcolonial studies, such as the 'Other' and modes of (self-)representation will also be addressed as they reveal the colonial stance of the text.[2] Finally, this article will also draw on postcolonial criticism of other texts of the *Harry Potter* series in order to analyse whether there are parallels between the representation of Native Americans in the "History" and that of ethnic minorities in other stories by Rowling.

II. Dominant historiography and its impact on Indigenous peoples

When Social Darwinist concepts, such as that of the 'Vanishing Indian', can be identified in historiographic discourses, it is possible to say that history is a narrative constructed by those who are in power. Historical narratives are highly selective and must be regarded as such. In a country like the US, there are many marginalised social groups whose perspectives are still being neglected and are usually not admitted in dominant historiographic discourses. However, a paradigmatic shift occurred in the 1960s/1970s (cf. Miller 26) and since then, marginalised groups, such as Indigenous peoples, have increasingly attempted to deconstruct, complement and correct the dominant discourses.

Still, up to this day, North American history has been mainly understood and taught from a Eurocentric perspective which favours the idea of settlers as "brave people who bring enlightenment and civilization to a benighted continent" (ibid. 25). However, US history does not begin in the year 1492, i.e., with the arrival of Columbus, as the American continent had been inhabited by culturally diverse peoples long before. In fact, "systems of knowledge" have been developed in North America for thousands of years before colonialisation (ibid.). Despite these known facts, pejorative representations of Indigenous cultures and knowledge systems continue and may contribute to psychological conditions of "cognitive dissonance and self-hatred" (ibid. 26), i.e., issues that are addressed in many Indigenous novels which employ Indigenous self-representation, such as *The Night Wanderer* (2007) by Drew Hayden Taylor or *Monkey Beach* (2000) by Eden Robinson. Both novels express the need for historiographic revision. In both texts, adolescent protagonists experience the continuous misrepresentation of their peoples' histories but they react differently to it. In Taylor's novel, the protagonist feels disconnected from the history of his people and expresses the general lack of interest in this history (cf. Taylor 29). In Robinson's novel, the protagonist resists misrepre-

[2] Even though this paper employs postcolonial concepts, it is necessary to point out that a postcolonial approach needs to be aware of the fact that from the perspective of Indigenous peoples colonisation is not over, i.e., the 'post-' cannot be understood in the sense of 'after'. They have been and continue to be colonised and their struggle for sovereignty is going on.

sentation by singing the song "Fuck the Oppressors" in class (cf. Robinson 68-69). Those examples emphasise that a false representation of Indigenous peoples and their histories does have an ongoing negative impact on those who are represented.

III. On postcolonial concepts of the 'Other' and modes of representation

Postcolonial studies constitute a fruitful approach for understanding the (mis-)representation of Indigenous peoples as they critically engage with the relationship between the coloniser and the colonised and are highly critical of the narratives colonisers have employed in order to justify the colonisation and subsequent exploitation of the countries' resources and the dispossession of Indigenous peoples. Even though the 20th century has seen many countries being decolonised, Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin note that all formerly as well as continuously colonised nations are subjected to "subtle forms of neo-colonial domination" (1). Hence, the term 'postcolonialism' does not imply a completed historical stage, but a "continuing process of resistance and reconstruction" (ibid. 2) and is therefore also applicable to Indigenous cultures.

The 'Other' is a key concept in postcolonial studies. It describes the colonisers and their concepts of "law, political economy, and ideology" (Spivak 24) as 'Subject', or, more precisely, as the norm. Everything outside that norm is deemed the 'Other'. The 'Other' is characterised by "ideas of barbarity, exoticism, mysticism, magic, sensuality, and so on" (Grigoryan 7). This stance suggests a backwardness of the 'Other'. Therefore, the Subject is able to make claims of superiority which are needed in order to colonise other nations. Thus, the 'Other' is entangled in a struggle for power. Those binary constructions have had and continue to have very real implications for how 'Others' are seen and treated by society, economy, politics and law.

The concept of the 'Other' leads to the question of representation as the coloniser hinders the 'Others' in their self-representation (cf. Spivak 25). Only by being able to represent themselves are colonial subjects able to rewrite the harmful constructions which have been imposed on them by the coloniser. Spivak emphasises that it is vital that the Subalterns can represent themselves in a heterogeneous, polyphonous way in order to avoid a favouring of elitist, intellectual voices (cf. 26). For this paper, this means that it is vital to draw on Indigenous perspectives in order to deconstruct dominant historiographic narratives. Only heterogeneous Indigenous perspectives will be able to break the cycle of continuous misrepresentation through Othering and other means.

IV. The representation of Native Americans in the "History of Magic in North America"

Rowling's "History of Magic in North America" illustrates that dominant colonial narratives still influence discourses in Great Britain (and beyond). It emphasises the need for Indigenous peoples to represent themselves so that their customs, traditions and cultures are not at risk of being misrepresented or silenced. Particularly Rowling's association of Indigenous beliefs with magic has been criticised because "Native spirituality and religions are not fantasy on the same level as wizards. These beliefs are alive, practised, and protected" (Keene "Franchise", n.p.). Throughout colonial history, Native spirituality has not been respected because it was seen as regressive and 'prehistoric' (cf. Goldie 130). However, configuring Native spirituality as 'fantasy' is simply wrong and follows the pattern of imposing colonial perspectives and norms on the cultures of the colonised. Additionally, this interpretation of Indigenous spirituality ignores the systematic oppression of Native American beliefs which have only become protected under the Indigenous Religious Freedom Act of 1978 in the US (cf. d'Errico 19).

Indigenous peoples struggle to this day to have their beliefs and traditions acknowledged and respected, as the ongoing Standing Rock protests prove. This is why Rowling's narrative has the potential to do harm, as it is insensitive towards contemporary issues of Indigenous communities.

In the first section of her historiographic narrative Rowling constructs the real practices of shamans and hunters as customs exhibited by witches and wizards and represents them consequently as 'magic': "In the Native American community, some witches and wizards were accepted and even lauded within their tribes, gaining reputations for healing as medicine men, or outstanding hunters" ('Fourteenth Century – Seventeenth Century' n.p.). This account ignores the fact that shamans are vital for Indigenous communities (cf. Mills n.p.) and that they "serve as healers, educators, and cultural consultants, and are often well versed in traditional spiritual practices, cultural knowledge, and language", as Hartman and Gone note (quoted in Mills n.p.). By ignoring these facts, Rowling falls in line with many other authors who have put Native Americans into the same category as mythical beings (cf. Keene, "Franchise" n.p.). Equating Indigenous peoples and their cultures with mythical beings suggests that they are 'unreal', which correlates with a colonial master narrative legitimising colonial appropriation: if Indigenous peoples are not seen as fellow humans, North America was not colonised or invaded but just discovered and settled. This also implies that the cultural genocide of its Indigenous inhabitants could not have taken place, as their cultures were not 'real' to begin with.

In addition to constructing Indigenous spiritual beliefs and peoples as magical and thus 'unreal', Rowling casts Native American magic as inferior to European magic because of the absence of wands in Indigenous communities. This claim of inferiority can be supported by Rowling's definition of wands: "Wands channel magic so as to make its effects both more precise and more powerful" ('Fourteenth Century – Seventeenth Century' n.p.). Taking an Indigenous perspective into account the wands may almost be read as guns, which have been a primary symbol for European means of violence (cf. Mills n.p.). At the same time, Rowling suggests an Indigenous sophistication in animal and plant magic, which seems to be a positive feature at first glance. But a closer look reveals that this construction of Native American 'magical expertise' actually perpetuates the stereotype of the 'Noble Savage'. This stereotype conceptualises Native Americans as "at one with nature, [living] 'free' and unburdened with worry" (Fort 309). Not only does this stereotype construct Native American cultures as static, as being stuck in pre-European contact times, but it also implies that, due to this fact, it seems only natural that advancing (European) civilisations would make "tribes and tribal citizens" (ibid.) disappear. As Rowling implicitly "denies scientific advancements made by indigenous peoples" (Mills n.p.) she reiterates the harmful dichotomy of savagery vs. civilisation when writing about the magical abilities of Native Americans. This ultimately contributes to the ongoing cycle of misrepresentation of Indigenous peoples.

V. The stereotype of the 'Vanishing Indian'

Rowling's construction of Native Americans as pre-historic, less developed and even 'unreal' leads to the discussion of the 'Vanishing Indian' stereotype which Indigenous critics largely associate with Rowling's narrative (cf. Little n.p.). As was already pointed out above, this stereotype locates Indigenous peoples in a pre-historic and pre-scientific context and correlates with the assumption that Rowling's portrayal of Native Americans perpetuates historical discourses which other and misrepresent Indigenous peoples and cultures.

The concept of the 'Vanishing Indian' was established between 1787 and the early 1800s and it continues to influence legislature and discourses to this day (cf. Fort 309). The notion

of the 'Vanishing Indian' describes the construction of Native Americans as peoples of the past who were responsible for their cultural demise due to their supposedly uncivilised ways (cf. ibid. 310). Inherent in this stereotype is the idea that it was only logical that Native Americans would give up their traditional ways in order to choose the allegedly more advanced European ways of living. Consequently, assimilation was favoured and enforced, suggesting that only through their integration into settler society, Native Americans could escape the threat of "death and extermination" (ibid. 313). However, assimilation also meant the "eradication of Native American spirituality" (d'Errico 19) in favour of so-called civilisation (cf. Fear-Segal 327). Therefore, it is fair to say that assimilation contributes to the eradication of cultural identity on an individual level as well. This also means that Rowling has made use of a stereotype which has played a major role in the oppression and erasure of Indigenous spiritual beliefs. It may appear rather cynical to use those stereotypes in order to represent Indigenous 'magic' while contributing to a repression of those spiritual beliefs in discursive reality.

The stereotype of the 'Vanishing Indian' has most famously been institutionalised in the *Johnson v McIntosh* landmark from 1823, which ruled that private persons could not buy land from Native Americans: "[a]s the white population advanced, that of the Indians necessarily receded....The soil... being no longer occupied by its ancient inhabitants, was parceled out according to the will of the sovereign power" (quoted in Fort 318). This landmark in jurisdiction claims a 'natural' decline and disappearance of Native Americans from their lands and erases the oftentimes violent encounters between settlers and Native Americans regarding especially the use of land. Consequently, it justifies colonial expansion by suggesting that the advancement of the White European settlers in North America was only natural and not forced or violent by any means.

This notion of a 'natural' disappearance of Native American cultures has always been a gross misrepresentation of reality (cf. Fort 311). Indigenous peoples continue to inhabit North America and they continue to struggle for "land and water rights, hunting and fishing, religious freedom, criminal and civil jurisdiction" (d'Errico 7). Adrienne Keene also emphasises that "we're [Indigenous peoples] not magical creatures, we're contemporary peoples who are still here, and still practice our spiritual traditions, traditions that are not akin to a completely imaginary wizarding world" ("Franchise" n.p.). By contrast, the stereotype of the 'Vanishing Indian' has contributed to making Indigenous peoples appear less 'real' and thus perfectly suitable for Othering constructions (cf. Goldie 158). The construction of Indigenous peoples as vanishing cultures also obstructs discussions of the brutal aspects of colonialisation like the establishment of reservations (which contributed to the dispossession of Indigenous peoples), boarding schools and other dimensions of cultural genocide such as the massacres of the Pequot in 1637 and of the Narrangansett in 1675 (cf. d'Errico 19). In fact, Goldie emphasises that the concept of a 'Vanished Race' is used precisely in order to avoid facing the contemporary issues Indigenous peoples are subjected to (cf. 155). Rowling largely fails to mention the aspects of colonialism mentioned above and thus erases a significant part of North American history in favour of a Eurocentric perspective. She only briefly mentions a 'conflict' (cf. 'Seventeenth Century and Beyond' n.p.) between settlers and Native Americans in the 17th century, but does not go into detail, thus confirming the dominant discourse.

VI. Cultural appropriation

Another aspect of Rowling's pseudo-historiographic account which needs to be addressed is her representation of the skinwalker, which in her story is mainly used as proof for Indigenous magic. The skinwalker is described as a Native American legend (cf. 'Fourteenth Century –

Seventeenth Century' n.p.); in other words, a creature which only plays a part in spiritual beliefs of the Navajo is homogenised. The skinwalker is an evil-spirited person who can change into animal form in order to bestow evil on others (cf. Anon. n.p.). Therefore, they are said to be feared creatures, and members of the Navajo community refuse to talk about them (cf. Keene, "Part 1" n.p.). Rowling's narrative, however, separates the skinwalker from its cultural context by claiming that the skinwalkers are merely a legend that was spread by No-Majs[3] in order to demonise wizards (cf. Mills n.p.). Thus, she fails to acknowledge that skinwalkers have their roots in the reality of Navajo spirituality and instead asserts her own interpretation of a foreign cultural concept. The process of 'borrowing' content from different, often marginalised cultures and imposing one's own interpretations onto a specific feature of a culture is known as 'cultural appropriation'. The lack of respect for intellectual and cultural property rights is an issue which is largely discussed in the context of marginalised communities such as First Nations and Native Americans.

Cultural appropriation is a main instrument of "cultural destruction" (Mathiesen 462) which has been caused by colonialisation. The appropriation of certain aspects of Indigenous cultures serves as a means to portray those cultures as "'exotic', 'authentic', 'spiritual', or 'savage'" (ibid.). Hence, cultural appropriation is yet another tool which manifests the idea of Native Americans as 'prehistoric' and inferior peoples and cultures. It is supported by "unethical research practices, collecting and selling stories, art and craft styles, and music" (ibid.). One can argue that unethical research practices as well as the appropriated retelling of stories by means of misrepresentation do in fact surface in Rowling's "History of Magic in North America" as well.

As cultural appropriation remains one of the most debated issues of contemporary Indigenous struggles, Indigenous and non-Indigenous scholars have created a set of best practices in the form of the Protocols for Native American Archival Materials (PNAAM) in 2006 (cf. Mathiesen 456). These protocols serve as recommendations on how to deal with "Native American traditional cultural expressions and traditional knowledge" (ibid.). Even though these protocols focus on archival work, they surely help to foster a profound knowledge of Indigenous peoples and cultures for authors of fictional works, too. This example shows that there are already means of assistance available for non-Indigenous peoples which Rowling (and others, who do exactly the same thing in novels, movies and TV series)[4] could have used.

VII. Indigenous struggles and endurance

In the last part of Rowling's "History", Indigenous struggles and endurance are at least mentioned. Indeed, the chapter '1920s Wizarding America' mentions an example of Indigenous resistance to colonisation. The act of resistance that is described is a fictitious event called the Great Sasquatch Rebellion of 1892, which is initiated by the mythical Sasquatch creatures. The fact that this rebellion bears quite obvious similarities with the actual Battle of Little Bighorn, as Mills notes is disturbing (cf. ibid.); Rowling's narrative, once again, appears to suggest that Indigenous peoples are mythical beings. Since the Sasquatch resembles a "prototypical pre-human, a liminal man-beast, not quite wild and not quite tame" (Simon n.p.), Indigenous peoples are being associated with a pre-historical context once more. Moreover, they are arguably even depicted as animal-like. This is in fact a mode of representation which

[3] No-Majs are the American equivalent to Muggles.

[4] Adrienne Keene's blog "Native Appropriations" can be highly recommended for the purpose of engaging with the ongoing misrepresentation of Indigenous peoples in popular culture.

has been widely circulated throughout colonial history (cf. Goldie 25). In the 19th and early 20th centuries, when scientific racism was at its peak, depictions of African Americans and Indigenous peoples as, often ape-like, animals were circulated in order to institutionalise white supremacy. Given this history of racist thinking, the parallel between Sasquatches and Indigenous peoples can unfortunately only be considered as bearing traces of racist imagery and being deeply harmful.

In addition, the parallel between Indigenous peoples and the non-human participants of the Sasquatch Rebellion may also be read as suggesting a disappearance of Indigenous peoples by the end of the 19th century, which is yet another confirmation of the stereotype of the 'Vanishing Indian'. This observation is confirmed by the book title "Big Foot's Last Stand" ('1920s Wizarding America' n.p.), which suggests that the Great Sasquatch Rebellion was indeed the final major act of resistance. In this case, Rowling's pseudo-historiographic version of the US-American past misrepresents historical reality in at least two ways: firstly, the Battle of Little Bighorn (1876) was won by Indigenous peoples (cf. Mills n.p.) and, secondly, Indigenous peoples continue to resist their colonisers to this day. It remains unclear why Rowling decided to refer to a real historical event in such an erroneous way, but it is clear that all of this amounts to a harmful and distorted representation of Indigenous peoples and their ongoing struggles.

Despite the dominant presence of the stereotype of the 'Vanishing Indian', there is an indication in the text that Indigenous peoples have endured after all. In the last chapter ('1920s Wizarding America') there is a hint that Indigenous peoples have assimilated successfully into settler society. This is exemplified by introducing the character of Shikoba Wolfe, who is of Choctaw descent and a wandmaker. Here, Rowling does not use a term that homogenises Native Americans, but refers specifically to the Choctaw. Still, as discussed above, the wand is the ultimate symbol of the allegedly superior European 'technology'. Thus, while the hint at assimilation is certainly not wrong, historically speaking, the reference to a Native American character fails to acknowledge the endurance and resistance Indigenous peoples have shown in order to maintain their own cultures, customs and traditions.

VIII. Race and ethnicity in the *Harry Potter* series

The frequent misrepresentation and stereotypical depiction of Native Americans in the "History" raises the question of how Rowling dealt with ethnic and racial minorities in the *Harry Potter* series. At first sight, questions of race and ethnicity are primarily discussed in the context of the 'blood status' of witches and wizards in *Harry Potter*. Throughout the series, Harry and his friends fight against the supremacist ideology of Lord Voldemort and his followers, who see witches and wizards who are either Muggle-born or 'half-bloods' as unworthy of being part of the wizarding community.[5] Consequently, the fight for equality and against discrimination plays a prominent role among the main themes of *Harry Potter*.

Nevertheless, upon closer examination there are still issues of racism in which the protagonists in the *Harry Potter* series are complicit. This racism is not directed against human beings, but against the non-human and semi-human beings that appear in the novels (cf. Green n.p.). Hermione Granger and her activism for the house-elves is an exception rather than the norm. Interestingly enough, Green actually refers to Native Americans and the stereotype of the 'Vanishing Indian' when discussing the situations of giants and centaurs in the wizarding world (cf. ibid.). Both giants and centaurs live on allocated land, just as many

[5] Cf. the article by Carsten Kullmann in this volume for a more extensive discussion of this aspect of the series.

Native Americans have done in reality (cf. ibid.). Furthermore, they are dependent on the Ministry of Magic and have no sovereign status (cf. ibid.), just like many Indigenous communities today. Especially due to Rowling's construction of various non-human creatures as being endowed with a human intelligence, this mistreatment is bound to cause concern. Nobody except for Hermione actively advocates the "full civil rights and equal protection under Wizarding law" (ibid. n.p.) of those beings; thus, the majority at least tacitly acquiesces with institutionalised marginalisation and mistreatment. On this basis, one could argue that Rowling refers to racism in the *Harry Potter* series, as the similarities between Native American realities and the fictional experiences of giants, centaurs and house-elves in the series strongly suggest.

The discussion of ethnicity in the *Harry Potter* series raises the question why Rowling continues to reproduce colonial thought patterns while clearly attempting to write a story advocating equality in other respects. Anatol's reading of Rowling's relation to the ideological legacy of the British Empire certainly offers a viable perspective: "the stories actually reveal how difficult it is for contemporary British subjects such as Rowling to extricate themselves from the ideological legacies of their ancestors" (165). Despite her efforts of being inclusive and respectful in her writing, Rowling has grown up in a culture which still tends to romanticise its imperialist past. The colonial legacy and a lack of subversive discourse contribute to the ongoing reproduction of harmful stereotypes, especially in popular culture. Furthermore, even though *Harry Potter* transcends a lot of boundaries between "domestic and foreign, civilised and savage" (Anatol 168), for example by humanising non-human and semi-human beings, Hogwarts, i.e., the school educating human witches and wizards, always remains the "true center of intellectual, spiritual, and cultural enlightenment" (ibid.). As a consequence, the 'Other' is still assigned to her/his marginalised position despite her/his human capabilities. Therefore, the novels never subvert the dominant discourse, which affirms that "outlying regions of the world have no life, history, or culture to speak of, no independence or integrity worth representing without the West" (Said quoted in Anatol 172). Thus, respect and the universal good remain concepts that are essentially reserved for the dominantly white, British characters of *Harry Potter*: in *Harry Potter*, the 'Other' by and large remains at the margins and is thus subjected to misrepresentation and stereotypes.

IX. Conclusion

The example of the "History of Magic in North America" exemplifies how dominantly colonial discourses may still control the mechanisms of selection and representation operating in historiographies written in the 21st century. As a consequence, it misrepresents Indigenous peoples in a harmful way. Instead of truly engaging with the colonisation of North America from an Indigenous perspective, Rowling draws upon master narratives and stereotypes that have been established and perpetuated by the coloniser. Her historiographic narrative reiterates the widely disseminated stereotype that Indigenous peoples are 'prehistoric', 'unreal' and inferior. Therefore, similar to many other products of contemporary popular culture, the "History of Magic in North America" unfortunately perpetuates the misrepresentation of Native Americans. Rowling's pseudo-historiography matters because she is one of the most influential authors of the 21st century and has fans from all over the world. Many of her fans will now have gained a false understanding of Indigenous peoples and their cultures. Rowling's silence regarding this issue certainly does not help either.[6]

[6] Rowling, who is usually very responsive on Twitter, has not positioned herself in any replies to the Indigenous criticism of her narrative (cf. Keene, "Part 1" n.p.).

Indigenous studies contribute to challenging the aforementioned stereotypes by emphasising that Indigenous peoples and cultures have endured to this day and continue to struggle for land rights and sovereignty. They revise dominant historiographic discourses by highlighting the oppression, assimilation and attempted annihilation Indigenous peoples have been subjected to. They offer perspectives that challenge and subvert dominant discourses. Despite the fact that research in Indigenous studies is readily available, Rowling perpetuates the master narrative which has justified colonial exploitation and oppression for centuries. Her attempt at making her magical world more diverse does not work out. She has failed her Indigenous readers and fans, who have had to come to terms with yet another misrepresentation of their peoples and cultures. Mills warns that the stereotyping that is used in "History of Magic in North America" is in fact highly "damaging" and "has a negative impact on their [young people's] self-esteem" (n.p.), especially due to the international visibility of the franchise. The shortcomings of the "History of Magic in North America" emphasise the relevance of including Indigenous voices in literature and other forms of cultural representation in order to be able to narrate Indigenous stories accurately.

The issues which have been discussed in this paper are supposed to encourage non-Indigenous authors who are interested in writing about Indigenous peoples to work thoroughly with Indigenous perspectives. There are ways of finding assistance in this endeavour, as the Protocols for Native American Archival Materials (PNAAM) show. The continuous misrepresentation and marginalisation of Indigenous peoples in literature and popular culture can only be stopped by engaging in a culturally sensitive research on Indigenous cultures and traditions and by providing the discursive space for self-representation. Indigenous peoples have endured to this day despite ongoing attempts at assimilation and annihilation. Their spiritual beliefs are real and valid and should not be appropriated. The example of the "History of Magic in North America" demonstrates that there is still a lot that needs to be done in order to ensure a sovereign space for Indigenous peoples in various fields of cultural production.

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Franziska Göbel

The Dark Arts: Violence, Incest and Rape in *Harry Potter* Fan Fictions

Content Warning: This text contains examples of sexual violence in fan fiction as well as images that depart from the original characters of the Harry Potter *series.*

I. Entering the Dark Arts

In fan fiction, there is an unwritten rule that says 'if you can imagine it, it exists', and of course everything is possible in the deep realms of the World Wide Web. As a person who started reading fan fiction at quite a young age, I have seen many fictions that most people would consider very weird or plainly wrong. Mostly written for amusement, there are stories that, for example, tell their readers about the Teletubbies' adventures in Tolkien's Lothlórien, including elaborate translations of Teletubbese to make sure the reader understands the dialogues between elves and the brightly coloured creatures that carry TV screens in their bellies.[1] The fans of the *Harry Potter* series are no less creative when it comes to fan fiction. Plots range from the development of friendships and first romances of various Hogwarts students to explicit depictions of sexual acts in any imaginable way. A case in point is "The Sorting Hat's Love", which describes the Sorting Hat's sexual desires, how he enchants Hermione to make her have sex with him and how Severus Snape's physical features and sexual skills are the only possibility of breaking the spell and freeing Hermione from the Sorting Hat's control – through penetration.[2] The story is disturbing, even more so because it has been categorised as 'Romance/Humor fiction' and has apparently been written to create a humorous effect, though the story describes how Hermione is penetrated by both the Sorting Hat and Severus Snape while being under a spell and not able to give consent, i.e., while being raped.

I thought I had seen it all when I found a piece of writing that exceeded my imagination about what people write and publish online in their leisure time. Some years ago, I stumbled across a live journal when I was searching for a romance fiction that involved either Lucius or Draco Malfoy. Because there was not much of a description given by the author (who calls himself 'Nostrademons'), other than "[n]ever, ever let me have a keyboard at 4:00 AM" (Nostrademons n.p.), I read on and soon regretted this decision. The untitled story describes how Lucius Malfoy takes pleasure in drilling a hole in his son's forehead with a hand drill and how Draco slowly dies in the process. The plot advances by depicting how the pleasure of the "soft velvety wetness, clinging all around his penis" nearly drives Lucius to the edge of madness when penetrating the brain of the dead body of his son, and how he climaxes, "shooting his load all over what had once been Draco's thinking machine" (Nostrademons n.p.).

Fantasy fiction and fan communities have become an important part of contemporary popular culture, though fan fictions of course constitute only one component of the creativity

[1] This example refers to a fan fiction called "The Teletubbies' Adventure in Lothlorien", which was published by user LalaithElerrina on fanfiction.net.

[2] "The Sorting Hat's Love" was published by user hahaharrypulp on fanfiction.net.

displayed by fans and their interaction in a fandom. The relevance and the varying literary complexity of fan fictions have been discussed extensively in cultural studies in recent years; although works written by fans may lack in artistic style, they are still read by many. They thus may influence the readership's values and views of certain topics to a certain extent. In contrast to mere casual readers of fiction, fans re-read and (re-)interpret texts and are thereby able to shape the understanding of fictional characters within the fan community as well as of the beliefs and morals that certain texts convey (cf. Borah 355). With fan activity becoming more and more centred on the web, which provides access to connections outside the usual group of friends as well as anonymity, fans can choose to interact with other fans based on common interests. The fan is not a passive consumer anymore but increasingly becomes an active creator of fiction, whose works can be discussed with other fans immediately. Conversations among these chosen companions can quickly become quite personal (cf. ibid. 359-60) and, as is often the case in the realm of fan fiction, rather controversial.

Nostrademons' fiction is not an isolated case, as even on platforms designed to host fan fictions the number of stories that employ graphic depictions of violence, non-consensual sex, incest, pedophilia and murder is striking. About one third of all erotica fictions featuring Draco Malfoy on the online fan fiction platform Archive of Our Own are about rape.[3] Searching for stories featuring other main characters, such as Hermione Granger or Harry Potter, leads to similar results. Many of these fictions have been written in an erotic manner that clearly aims at offering the reader sexual satisfaction.

In the following, I will look more closely into some of the reasons that account for the popularity of (very graphic) erotic fan fiction and, more generally, the existence of quite a lot of disturbing content in fan fiction. I will suggest two different approaches by, firstly, discussing general characteristics of fan fiction which are conducive to the production of erotic fan fiction involving sexually violent scenes and, secondly, asking whether the *Harry Potter* series in particular contains themes and structures which invite the type of fan fiction that focuses on sexuality and (sexual) exploitation.

II. Fan Fiction Erotica: The Light and the Dark Side

Kroner distinguishes between a 'Light Side' and a 'Dark Side' in fan fictions (cf. 265). The label 'Light Side' describes romantic love stories, often containing references to sexual elements, ranging from innocent kisses to the explicit depiction of consensual sexual intercourse (cf. ibid. 271). Fictions dealing with non-consensual sexual actions, power play, perversion and violence are subsumed under the label 'Dark Side' (cf. ibid. 265). Romance and consensual sex as well as rape and torture are sometimes part of longer stories, where they are embedded in a more complex plot, but they may also be found in shorter works, which may focus on only one period of the characters' relationship or a certain event. These stories may exist to prove a certain point (e.g. 'a certain character is bad and does bad things', or 'a character is so attractive that anyone would want to engage in sexual activity with them') or function purely as pornographic material (so-called 'one-shots', or PWPs, short for 'plot what plot?', or 'porn without plot').

[3] This observation is based on search results on the platform Archive of Our Own (last access: 02 Apr. 2017), on which I searched for the total number of stories featuring a certain character of the *Harry Potter* series and compared this number with the results showing up for fictions about the same character that were categorised as 'Romance' and as 'Rape/Non-Con'. For example, the total number of stories featuring Draco Malfoy at the time was 29.844, of which 4.072 contain elements of romance/erotica, while 1.385 works were tagged as 'non-consensual'.

Some stories that seemingly belong to the 'Light Side' also contain elements of angst, mental abuse or underage sex, which means that the distinctions can blur. Even stories about incest may be widely accepted among the fan fiction community, if incestuous sexual acts are not depicted as perversion and are based on a consensual, romantic relationship. In other words, "[i]ncest is 'good' if it is committed by good or likable people, like the Weasleys […]. The ethic dimension is never questioned, neither by the author, nor by the characters themselves" (Kroner 266). A romance story about Harry Potter and Severus Snape that results in consensual sex may describe pedophilia as well as the exploitation and abuse of a student-teacher relationship. Depending on when the story is set, it may also include illicit sexual relations with a minor, as the protagonist is underage in most of the novels. Yet this kind of story is not necessarily seen as controversial or morally reprehensive among the fans and tagged accordingly by the author.

In 'smut' fictions, the pornographic aspect of the sexual encounter is at the centre of the story and the body matters more than moral values, which means that dark topics such as incest or rape may occur as well (cf. Tresca 39). Most fictions provide an unrealistic image of rape with regard to both the process of being abused and its aftermath. The victim's physical and psychological damage is not always taken into consideration in these fictions, which often end with a depiction of the sexual climax of the dominant part. Especially shorter works of rape fan fiction fail to represent factors like social environment, economic and political conditions, education and race as conditions that may be linked to the motivation for rape and that influence who might be particularly likely to become a rape victim. Instead, the sexual assault is often generalised and disconnected from social reality in fan fictions.

A substantial number of erotica fictions can be categorised as 'slash fictions', which describe the sexual relationship of characters of the same sex. One of the most popular pairings in *Harry Potter* fan fiction is that of Harry Potter and Draco Malfoy. This pairing may be accounted for by the fact that character pairings in erotica fan fictions are frequently "based on perceived hotness of the characters or on interactions between characters in the books" (Kroner 263). In the films, both Harry and Draco are portrayed by attractive actors, who have contributed to shaping the fans' images of the fictional characters. Moreover, their rivalry adds an interesting friction to stories in which the two boys eventually fall in love with each other. Most slash fictions focus on male homosexual relationships, though heterosexual women appear to be the main readership of these works.

Slash erotica fan fictions give women the opportunity of expressing their sexual desires without any sanctions, as fan fictions can be read online without another person (e.g. a partner) judging the reader's sexual fantasies. This particular type of fan fiction provides women with the opportunity of writing/reading sex scenes without playing the submissive part of being penetrated. As Susanne Kroner explains:

> In popular romance, even in the modern ones where women occupy the same position as men, with regards to social standing, employment etc. – when it comes down to the sexual act, women's role is still the submissive one, hers is the body that has to submit to penetration, which is the ultimate goal of sex scenes and love stories. When writing about two men, on the other hand, you can write them as versatile or one as a so-called pushy bottom. Submission here often is a conscious decision rather than a biological necessity (269).

The genre of abuse and rape fiction takes this idea significantly further. It grants one character complete power over another character and thus invites the reader to engage in imaginary empowerment – or submission.

The striking interest of female fans in (reading and writing) fan fictions depicting sexual violence in a manner that aims at giving pleasure to the reader suggests that rape fantasies,

which are not accompanied by any desire to act out rape in real life, may be more common amongst women than one might perhaps assume. Fan fictions may provide an outlet for fantasies that are still associated with shame and considered to be a violation of moral principles. A study by Jenny Bivona and Joseph Critelli examined women's rape fantasies in terms of frequency. This study

> indicated that 62% of women have had a rape fantasy, which is somewhat higher than previous estimates. For women who have had rape fantasies, the median frequency of these fantasies was about 4 times per year, with 14% of participants reporting that they had rape fantasies at least once a week (Bivona/Critelli 33).

There are debates about the reasons for such sexual fantasies and their functions. On the one hand, rape fantasies may be seen as being indicative of women's emancipation from social and sexual norms. On the other hand, rape fantasies may allow women to distance themselves from any responsibility for the action that gives them pleasure within the fantasy. Women who are insecure regarding their own sexuality "may then utilize a fantasy of being raped in order to trick the 'little girl' by saying, in effect, 'I am being forced to submit; I can't help it if I'm enjoying it'" (Kardener 55).

III. Sexual violence in fantasy fiction

A depiction of (sexual) violence is anything but unusual in fantasy fiction. It almost appears to have become a trope in (high) fantasy literature, which is generally drawn upon to emphasise male dominance. The depiction of sexual violence in the genre is usually accounted for by the genre's tendency to draw upon medieval gender roles. In high fantasy, the setting as well as prevailing notions of sexuality, romance, the body and consent (or a lack thereof) appear to have been inspired by the European Middle Ages, which, apparently, makes representations of sexual violence more acceptable from the point of view of many readers/viewers. Still, the scene of Jaime Lannister raping his sister Cersei next to the corpse of their son in the TV series *Game of Thrones* (2011-), which is based on George R.R. Martin's book series *A Song of Ice and Fire* (1996-), sparked a lively discussion amongst fans and especially feminists about 'rape culture' in fantasy. The rape scene in *Game of Thrones* seems to depart from those depictions of rape victims that have been widely accepted in fantasy fiction, i.e., scenes where the victims are saved by the hero and are eventually avenged. The scene from *Game of Thrones* portrays something that arguably goes beyond what tends to be accepted as Cersei is raped by her own brother, in familiar surroundings (cf. Ferreday 31).

Due to widespread references to (pseudo-)medieval settings, rape in fantasy is sometimes seen as something that is 'unreal', i.e., as something that does not have to be translated into our society. Debra Ferreday explains in her article:

> The 'obvious unrealness' of the fantastic – that is, of fantasy as *genre* – is made to shut down discussion of the scene's relation to off-screen rape culture: feminist readings are by implication conflated with the stereotypical image of both fan and feminist as having excessive negative attachments to texts, of 'reading too much into' what is obviously intended as entertainment. As in 'real life', rape becomes 'that scene': something which is at once dismissed as un-traumatic ('there are worse problems') and yet which cannot be named (32, original emphasis).

High fantasy, which frequently creates quite vivid images of the fantastic world, of places, characters and their interactions in the reader's mind, tends to focus on the emotions of the (male) protagonists, whereas female characters more often than not are silenced. The same is

true for many rape victims in reality: rape tends to be downplayed by means of a rhetoric that describes the assault in euphemistic terms. The marginalisation of rape as a topic in public discourse and the widespread tolerance with respect to depictions of sexual violence in popular culture are indicative of a 'rape culture'. Drawing on an article by Burnett et al. Ferreday argues:

> The silencing of women is intimately bound up in the lived, embodied and affective experience of women as mediated subjects in late capitalist culture. Women 'have been muted in a multitude of ways, including the methods in which women tell stories, through male-controlled media, in ways women's bodies are portrayed and analysed, and through censorship of women's voices' (26; cf. Burnett et al. 469).

Fantasy fiction has the tools to break with stereotypes and criticise cultural constructs, and recent fantasy novels seem to use this potential more frequently. Fantasy fiction – and fantasy fan fiction – may have a liberating potential as far as gender roles are concerned. Most authors of fan fiction are women; fan fiction is not edited by others, and it can be published on websites that are primarily used and controlled by a female readership. Moreover, platforms make a dialogue among fan fiction writers possible and encourage readers to discuss and criticise certain works. Though *Harry Potter* is a kind of portal fantasy set in contemporary society, which means that many of the stereotypes concerning the depiction of sexual violence in traditional fantasy fiction do not apply, some elements of high fantasy have been incorporated in the story (most prominently the plot pattern of the heroic quest). Moreover, the complete lack of modern technology in the wizarding world evokes a pseudo-medieval setting. The parallels with high fantasy and its traditional focus on heroic deeds, combat and violence may thus be a first starting point for explaining in how far the characteristics of the series may encourage fan fiction focusing on sexual abuse. Although Rowling's novels avoid explicit references to sexuality, sexual intercourse and rape play a quite prominent role in *Harry Potter* fan fiction.

IV. Abusive elements and power structures in *Harry Potter*

Beyond the general tendency of fan fiction to tell stories about sexuality and sexual violence, there are a number of more specific reasons why authors of *Harry Potter* fan fiction indulge in graphic descriptions of (at times violent) sexual activities. To a certain extent, the desire of fans of the *Harry Potter* series to write stories about romance and sex might be accounted for by the fact that the novels do not really address sexuality as a topic and are moreover dominated by a very traditional concept of love, in which love and sexuality are automatically connected to (heterosexual) marriages. While it was enough to dive into Rowling's sexually innocent stories as a child reader, many – by now adult – readers might want to imagine the well-known protagonists in adult situations that the readership knows from their own lives or desires.

Even though moral decisions and values constitute the core of Rowling's novels, the stories also display some characteristics that arguably may provide further reasons why the *Harry Potter* series is so prone to giving rise to abuse fiction. A number of abusive elements and power structures can be identified in the original stories, and these may in turn facilitate imagining the characters as vulnerable and liable to exploitation and assault in fan fictions. The story famously begins with Harry being maltreated by the Dursleys, which seems to be tolerated by his environment. Later, in Hogwarts, the students' lives are very much shaped by rivalry, formal and informal hierarchies as well as total submission to adult authorities. Despite the fact that Hogwarts is supposed to be a relatively safe environment (far away from

abusive homes), the students (and in particular Harry) are repeatedly exposed to highly dangerous situations (cf. Collinsworth 8). Especially in the first volumes of the series, Harry and his friends repeatedly worry about the possibility of being expelled for breaking school rules. The fear of expulsion is a recurring theme, which is introduced already in the depiction of Harry's second week at Hogwarts (cf. *Stone* 160). Harry's fear of being expelled seems justified as various members of the teaching staff repeatedly threaten students with expulsion (cf. ibid. 157, *Chamber* 83). Witches and wizards who cannot complete their education can easily become outcasts in the wizarding society, which puts extreme pressure on the students to obey authorities. In other words, Hogwarts favours a very authoritarian education.

From the point of view of modern principles of education, punishment in Hogwarts seems extremely controversial; it ranges from losing house points (which entails peer group pressure) to detention, during which students may be exposed to danger, which is apparently tolerated. A case in point is the detention during Harry's first year, when the protagonist, Hermione, Neville and Draco have to accompany Hagrid into the Forbidden Forest. As Collinsworth explains in his paper "I Will Have Order": "In fact, throughout the Harry Potter series, the inconsistency with which punishments are applied and with which awards are bestowed becomes a prominent theme. Harry and his friends may be rewarded for breaking rules at one point and then punished harshly for breaking them at another time" (8-9). This inconsistency of school authoritarianism is likely to increase students' insecurities regarding their rights and safety at school and promotes submissive behaviour towards the teaching staff, which can easily be exploited.[4]

In addition, the use of Gothic elements in *Harry Potter* promotes a general atmosphere of fear and terror, which accompanies the entire story. The characters' safety is increasingly endangered by the rise of Voldemort and his followers, whose actions are "dictated by cruelty, sadism, and the will to dominate" (Sanna n.p.). Interestingly, Voldemort, though portrayed as the seemingly untouchable antagonist and Gothic villain, potentially introduces a type of persecution and abuse that may be read as having sexual overtones. Right from the start, Harry becomes Voldemort's ultimate object of desire, though the villain at first cannot bear to touch the boy. When he finally has become able to lay his hands on Harry in *Harry Potter and Goblet of Fire* (2000), Voldemort increasingly starts to penetrate into Harry's mind, thus taking possession of the boy on a very intimate level. Harry's reaction to the intrusion is reminiscent of that of a rape victim: he experiences extreme physical pain during the process, feels dirty afterwards and isolates himself from his friends (cf. Sanna n.p.).

During the war in *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* (2007), patterns of abuse and oppression become even more prominent. Both parties experience constant danger, which, for some characters at least, also entails the suppression of emotions. In fan fictions, a number of these characters find relief in the act of psychologically, physically or sexually abusing their opponents and seeking to compensate for psychological pressure by means of achieving sexual satisfaction, regardless of the other character's consent. Moreover, fan fictions show rape that is strategically used as an instrument of punishment and humiliation during the Wizarding War, thus addressing a link between war and sexual violence that is also relevant to war experience in reality.

The later novels of the series increasingly elaborate on the interaction of and collaboration between the generations, i.e., Harry's generation and the one of his parents, thus creating some emotionally charged character constellations that fan fictions often pick up. If characters

[4] Professor Umbridge, for example, abuses her power over her students and uses physical pain and injuries as punishments. Although her abuse of power is criticised by Harry's friends, neither he nor any other student reports this abuse because they are afraid, feel obliged to refuse giving in to her, or, even worse, come to believe they deserve pain as a punishment.

are primarily paired according to their attractiveness in fan fictions, moral values are easily disregarded, which establishes the basis for abusive sexual relationships. No matter whether the sexual act is consensual or not, power structures will never be balanced in a relationship involving a middle-aged adult and a child or teenager. The younger character is bound to be inferior to the adult and is thus vulnerable to manipulation and sexual exploitation.

What defines the *Harry Potter* series more than anything else is the use of magic. According to fan fictions, magic also influences witches' and wizards' sex life. Given the fact that there is no depiction of sexual acts in Rowling's novels, fans feel entitled to be extremely creative as far as the impact of magic on sexual practices is concerned. Magic may make sex more romantic and interesting for witches and wizards, because it enables them to overcome obstacles that may render sex in the Muggle world complicated. Contraception and cleaning routines, which tend to preoccupy many Muggles, are taken care of by means of a quick wave of the wand or a sip from a potion (cf. Kroner 271). Magic makes the 'logistics of sex' much easier for witches and wizards, but it can also be used by the 'Dark Side' of fan fiction to make abuse and rape easier. Victims of sexual violence can be shut up, tied up or paralysed effortlessly with a spell, or even be forced to act against their will by means of the Imperius Curse. Magic even enables the agent of abuse to make the victim forget about the assault. Thus, the victim may feel pain or shame without remembering the reason for these emotions. Moreover, rape may occur repeatedly, because the victim is not able to accuse the culprit of the deed or even avoid him/her. Furthermore, magic allows injuries to heal more quickly. While this is shown to be an advantage in the novels, fan fictions may use this feature of the wizarding world in depictions of abuse: "You can hurt someone more, you can heal them more quickly so you can inflict more pain in a shorter time period" (ibid. 267).

The examples discussed so far presumably do not really explain why *Harry Potter* abuse and rape fiction exists, but at least they demonstrate why writing about the 'Dark Side' while maintaining the features of the original story and the wizarding world to a large extent is comparatively easy for authors of fan fiction.

V. The relevance of ethically responsible tagging

Tags used on online platforms hosting fan fictions to label stories are crucial for guiding readers to the material they are interested in, but the markers are often hardly adequate. While 'erotica' or 'romance' generally denote love stories, which often result in sex though their focus is on the development of the romance, 'smut' refers to fiction that privileges sex scenes, which are often not embedded in a complex plot and which tend to be graphic. In this type of fan fiction, the pornographic dimension is prevalent (cf. Tresca 37). 'Hurt/Comfort' narratives tell a story in which one of the main characters goes through some kind of traumatic experience (i.e., hurt), which often includes emotional abuse, torture or rape, while the other character offers comfort and helps the victim to recover. The 'comfort' usually comes along with romance and/or sex. Hurt/comfort stories thus constitute a category in which some kind of abuse is referred to, though it is usually not the main point of the story. Instead, the history of abuse serves as a device that helps the two protagonists to fall in love.

Though the terms that are used to designate the different types of stories may vary, erotica or smut fictions in which sexual violence is a major component of the plot are commonly referred to as 'dub-con' (short for dubious consent) or, even more frequently, as 'non-con' (short for non-consensual). The use of such euphemisms conceals the nature of what is described in this type of fan fiction. In reality, calling rape 'non-consensual sex' is regarded as harmful since this label ignores both the violence that is involved and the damage done to the victim. In her *New York Times* article "There Is No Such Thing as 'Nonconsensual Sex.' It's

Violence", which focuses primarily on sexual violence on American university campuses and describes how language is regularly used to downplay or even justify felonies, Kelly Oliver explains the pitfalls of the term 'non-consensual sex' as follows: "While sex is considered an activity, until recently, it commonly referred to an activity shared between people, as in the familiar phrase, 'having sex'. Implicit in the concept of sex is consent. Without consent, sexual activity becomes rape" (n.p.). Still, in fan fiction euphemisms that identify stories about rape are widespread. 'Non-con' becomes an umbrella term for any form of sexual assault referred to in fan fictions that does not necessarily describe rape, but often does. Moreover, the actions that are described in so-called 'non-con' stories often have little in common with a realistic portrayal of the experience of violence and rape. Sexual violence is frequently presented as an aestheticised and eroticised event, which is supposed to provide the reader with sexual stimulation and pleasure. Yet, readers may of course feel disturbed by the graphic portrayal of sexual violence. This kind of story may prove particularly harmful for a younger readership, whose concept of (healthy) sexual activities may be affected by eroticised depictions of rape. Thus, it is necessary to use appropriate terms for labelling the content presented in fan fiction.

Generic labels prove to be extremely vague on the majority of fan fiction platforms, such as fanfiction.net. Even though most platforms allow users to choose age ratings, hardly any platform hosts a category that indicates rape or abuse, and trigger warnings usually only show up in the author's description – if there are any at all. This can be extremely confusing and provide a false impression of the fictions. The platform Archive of Our Own, by contrast, provides the category 'non-con/rape'. What caused them to include the term 'rape' in a tag when nobody else does? In a personal correspondence, they explained that

> the concern was that 'Non-Con' could suggest that it only applied to kink, but the label was meant for non-kink uses. The Content Policy team in general prefers that the mandatory warnings be as clear as possible to make enforcement of the Terms of Service easier (AO3 support, personal communication, Feb 17, 2017).

Moreover, the team sent me a paper of a case study about Archive of Our Own by Fiesler, Morrison and Bruckman that describes why the platform was founded as well as how it is still run today. Due to the impression that earlier, often commercially run archives, such as FanLib, were unable to satisfy the user's needs and disregarded their values, "some members of the community voiced a desire to avoid both dependence on the online communities they had been using and potential exploitation by new ones. The result was an initiative to create a space to share work that they would have control over: an archive of their own" (Fiesler et al. n.p.). What sets this archive of fan fictions apart from others is the fact that it has been "designed, coded and maintained nearly entirely by the community it serves – a community made up mostly of women" (ibid.). Archive of Our Own sets an example as a platform that responds to the writers' desires and tries to present a clear image of the stories' contents by providing more precise categories as well as trigger warnings, which enables authors to publish their works in a more responsible manner.

VI. Conclusion

Abuse fan fictions clearly cross boundaries by addressing topics that are morally reprehensive, including child abuse, incest and general exploitation of power structures – issues that are usually not talked about openly in a fandom or beyond. Writers and readers of fan fictions may of course have very different motivations for writing or reading fan fictions that deal with topics such as incest, illicit sexual relations with minors (whether consensual or not),

perversions (like necrophilia), incest or depictions of extreme sexual violence and rape. People may try to deal with a trauma through fan fictions, play out a kink or they may want to imagine experiencing the power they lack in their real (sex) lives. At any rate, readers of fan fictions, especially young ones, should be made aware of controversial content and of the gap between fictional scenarios and real-life abuse. Given the fact that abuse fictions are easily accessible on the internet and specific platforms, which mostly do not provide sufficient categories or trigger warnings, there is often no protection for a younger readership, who is looking for stories about beloved literary characters, or for people who might be triggered by the abuse described in these stories.

Although I am aware of the fact that fan fictions with controversial content may help to address issues such as child abuse, incest or the general abuse of power structures, they may also contribute to establishing a culture in which depictions of rape and sexual violence are increasingly seen as being part of the entertainment offered by popular culture. Thus, the aestheticisation and eroticisation of rape in fan fictions is highly problematic, because it may serve to glorify sexual violence, especially when the latter is presented without any context or explanation. Still, if trigger warnings and adequate descriptions are provided for works featuring controversial content, readers can more easily decide whether they want to read or avoid a certain text. This process is supported by fan fiction platforms and archives which provide precise generic categories and trigger warnings.

The way we perceive, depict and talk about rape is indeed a collective problem of our society. In this context, fan fiction, being an unfiltered online medium, gives non-professional writers the opportunity to create, share and discuss works that address a wide range of implications of sexual violence. Appropriate terms, however, are necessary for labelling those works in order to protect readers and allow the individual reader to choose what he/she wants to be confronted with.

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The Ever-Expanding Potterverse: *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child – Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them – Pottermore*

I. Introduction

Ten years after the publication of *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* and six years after the release of the last instalment of the *Harry Potter* film series, the Potterverse is (still) extremely dynamic. It keeps being revisited, expanded, and at least partially reinterpreted by different agents, who are endowed with varying degrees of authority, including fans, scholars, people who work for the franchise in different capacities, and, of course, J.K. Rowling herself. The year 2016 was a significant one for the Potterverse: the stage play *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* premiered and the movie *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* was released. While the play is clearly a sequel of the *Harry Potter* saga, the movie, though situated in the same universe, takes the viewers to a different continent and time and introduces new protagonists; moreover, it is the starting point of a film series in its own right. Given these developments, the Potterverse so far has not turned into what Rebecca Williams in her study *Post-Object Fandom* refers to as a 'dormant text'.

Instead, it is 'wide awake' and diversifying, which also means that characters that may have rather occupied the periphery of the Potterverse are now allowed to enter centre stage. As Cassie Brummitt observes, both the stage play and the movie "demonstrate a willingness on the part of *Potter* creatives to depart from dominant narratives and iconographies" (113). Can one conclude that the Potterverse is currently at a crossroads? Perhaps also with respect to the target audience? In the following, we will have a closer look at the play and the movie in order to examine in what ways they are a recognisable part of the Potterverse as developed in Rowling's seven novels and in how far they depart from some of the well-known templates. We will also discuss the functions of Pottermore in the ongoing development of the Potterverse. Since its launch in 2011, the online platform has gone through major changes and has contributed to the expansion of the wizarding world.

II. The sequel: *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*

The stage play *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*, which is the outcome of a collaboration between J.K. Rowling, John Tiffany and Jack Thorne and which premiered in London on 30 July 2016, has been widely marketed as 'the eighth volume' of the series. In 2017, the play became the first production to win nine Olivier Awards in the history of the most prestigious British theatre award.[1] At first sight, the play indeed appears to be a quite straightforward sequel of the *Harry Potter* series, since it starts exactly where the seventh novel ended, i.e.,

[1] *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* won the Olivier Awards for Best New Play, Best Director (John Tiffany), Best Actor (Jamie Parker), Best Actress in a Supporting Role (Noma Dumezweni), Best Actor in a Supporting Role (Anthony Boyle), Best Set Design, Best Costume Design, Best Sound Design and Best Lighting Design.

with Harry, Ginny, Hermione and Ron accompanying their children to King's Cross Station, 19 years after Voldemort was defeated in the Battle of Hogwarts. Even elements of the dialogue in the first scene have been taken over directly from the last pages of the novel. The Potters' younger son Albus Severus is about to embark on his very first journey to Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. By offering this starting point, which incorporates some of the most iconic settings of the series (King's Cross, its somewhat elusive Platform 9¾, the Hogwarts Express) and some well-known characters, the play may trigger a certain amount of nostalgia among readers/spectators.[2] The beginning of the play is likely to make readers/spectators expect more Hogwarts-based adventures, which perhaps even draw again upon the pattern of the boarding-school novel, which has very much shaped volumes 1-6 of the original series. The first scenes of the play might also suggest that the readers/spectators will have to say farewell to the trio Harry, Ron and Hermione immediately after having finally 'met' them once more after a hiatus of several years (though not quite 19). Yet, expectations like these are only partially fulfilled in the course of the play, which departs from the patterns established in the series in some respects, as the readers/spectators are soon to find out. The sequel undermines the narrator's optimistic final remarks in the novel: "The scar had not pained Harry for nineteen years. All was well" (*Hallows* 607). 19 years after Voldemort's defeat the situation in the wizarding world is *not* good. There is again evil that needs to be fought, and Harry's scar is about to start causing him pain once more. Even Hogwarts is not quite the same in this new instalment of the *Harry Potter* saga. While Ron's characterisation of Hogwarts – "'Big. Wonderful. Full of food. I'd give anything to be going back'" (*Child* 11) – presumably captures what many fans may be feeling; Albus Potter's attitude towards Hogwarts turns out to be much less positive than his father's, which means that the famous School of Witchcraft and Wizardry soon appears in a different light.

In the scene set on the Hogwarts Express (Act One, Scene Three, *Child* 13-18) there are a number of features that are reminiscent of Harry's journeys to school, including the trolley witch, who is still selling Chocolate Frogs and other sweets. Yet something is amiss from the start; Rose Granger-Weasley, the daughter of Hermione and Ron, who is Albus's age, is a bit too selective with respect to her company, reminding her cousin Albus to choose his friends very carefully; after all, as she puts it, "'[m]y mum and dad met your dad on their first Hogwarts Express you know…'" (ibid. 13). While Hermione was certainly ambitious when she was Rose's age, the elitist attitude displayed by her daughter is not reminiscent of her mother's notion of friendship. Instead, readers/spectators might be reminded of Harry's first meeting with Draco Malfoy at Madam Malkin's, when Draco makes it quite clear that he aims at steering clear of the 'wrong sort' of wizards and witches (cf. *Stone* 89). In the further course of the play, the readers/spectators do not really find out what friends Rose makes. For most of the play, she very much fades into the background (for various reasons, which will be discussed below). Albus, by contrast, just like his father, finds a true friend on his first journey to Hogwarts, with whom he, just like Harry, initially bonds by sharing sweets. The boy whom Albus befriends is none other than Draco Malfoy's son Scorpius, who, to make things worse, is rumoured to be Voldemort's son. Rose is not the only one to frown upon this friendship; when Harry eventually finds out about it, he is anything but happy and even tries to prevent the boys from being friends in a very authoritarian fashion.

Many familiar names, the destination Hogwarts and a quite controversial new friendship – this might still be the beginning of a story that is very similar to the original series. Soon,

[2] If nostalgia, as Michael Pickering and Emily Keightley assume, can be associated with "[t]he experience of loss [that] is endemic to living in modernity" (920) one could argue that sequels of book, TV or film series cater to a nostalgia that is driven by a feeling of loss on a somewhat smaller scale, which is inherent in 'post-object fandom' (cf. Williams).

however, it becomes apparent that the play is not *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* all over again. The stage play continues to revisit familiar features of the novels – such as the Sorting Ceremony, various subjects taught at Hogwarts (e.g., a flying lesson and a Potions class) – but there is a crucial difference in terms of the narrative pace. Three years at Hogwarts are compressed into a few minutes/pages in the very short transition scene (Act One, Scene Four, *Child* 19-29), which just briefly touches upon some of the familiar routines of life at Hogwarts. Twice "*[w]e're back on platform nine and three-quarters and time has ticked on mercilessly*" (ibid. 22, original emphasis), as the stage directions indicate. The rapid pace allows references to the traditional boarding-school narrative, but simultaneously signals that the 'eighth volume' has moved beyond this pattern, has 'grown up', despite focusing on two young protagonists once more. The fact that school routines play a very minor role in *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* also means that the 'eighth volume' of the saga departs to a certain extent from the mixture of "the heroic and the everyday", which Maria Nikolajeva (225) deems characteristic of the original series. What transpires very soon in this fast-forward version of life at Hogwarts is that Albus Potter is very different from his father in some respects. Albus appears to be bad at *all* of the subjects taught at Hogwarts and has inherited neither Harry's talent for flying nor his enthusiasm for Quidditch. The most striking contrast between father and son, however, is certainly established by the fact that he is sorted into Slytherin, which provokes scathing comments by fellow students, who compare "'Albus Potter, the Slytherin Squib'" (*Child* 22), as one of them puts it, to his famous father, the celebrity.[3] Admittedly, Harry also experienced periods when he was ostracised by other students during his years at the boarding school; still, first and foremost, Hogwarts meant 'home' for the orphaned boy.[4] This is completely different for his son, who hates being in a place where he feels like an incompetent outsider.

On the whole, the famous school is thus shown in a much bleaker light than in the original series, projecting images which are likely to differ quite radically from those that fans presumably have formed of this place over the years. Only rarely is a more positive impression of Hogwarts expressed. In Act Two, Scene Six, Albus and Scorpius see the castle from the edge of the Forbidden Forest. The stage directions ("*And revealed through the trees is HOGWARTS – a splendid mass of bulbous buildings and towers.*", *Child* 112, original emphasis) as well as the comments by Albus ("'Hogwarts. Never seen this view of it before.'", ibid.) and in particular Scorpius ("'Still get a tingle, don't you? When you see it?'", ibid.) evoke something of the old fascination with the School of Witchcraft and Wizardry – and may perhaps remind readers of the feeling of eager anticipation that used to be associated with the first sighting of the castle in the early novels and movies. The return to a more positive view of Hogwarts is reinforced when Scorpius elaborates on his attitude towards the school, which differs significantly from that put forward by Albus:

> SCORPIUS: From the moment I first heard of it, I was desperate to go. I mean, Dad didn't much like it there but even the way he described it… From the age of ten I'd check the *Daily Prophet* first thing every morning – certain some sort of tragedy would have befallen it – certain I wouldn't get to go.
> ALBUS: And then you got there and it turned out to be terrible after all.
> SCORPIUS: Not for me.
> ALBUS *looks at his friend, shocked.*

[3] According to the Sorting Hat, Slytherin might have suited Harry as well, but the 11-year-old boy was adamant in his dislike of the house associated with evil wizards, which led to him being sorted into Gryffindor.

[4] The notion that Hogwarts is much more than a school is stressed time and again throughout the series, as the following passage exemplifies: "Hogwarts was the first and best home he [Harry] had known. He and Voldemort and Snape, the abandoned boys, had all found home here…" (*Hallows* 558).

> All I ever wanted to do was go to Hogwarts and have a mate to get up to mayhem with. Just like Harry Potter. And I got his son. How crazily fortunate is that (ibid. 112-13, original emphasis).

Scorpius's comments may perhaps reconcile fans who may have been disappointed with the bleaker image of Hogwarts. In one of the last scenes (Act Four, Scene Fourteen), when Albus and Scorpius have helped to defeat evil, both appear to feel much more at home in their school. In other words, the myth of Hogwarts being a wonderful and exciting place that provides a real home, which works particularly well for maltreated orphans like Harry Potter, is challenged but not undermined completely.

After the very brief summary of the first three years in the transition scene, the play approaches its core, i.e., Albus's and Scorpius's attempts to change the past in order to prevent the death of Cedric Diggory in the Triwizard Tournament. By means of a Time-Turner they have stolen from the Ministry of Magic the two boys travel back to Harry's fourth year at Hogwarts three separate times and interfere with each of the tasks of the Tournament in order to make Cedric lose, which could save his life. This plot element invites the readers/spectators to remember key moments from *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire* (2000).[5] The time travel trope allows the play to revisit well-known scenes and to show characters who died in the original series, including Cedric. Here, it already becomes evident that what promised to be a sequel does not really break free from the original series in some respects. The tendency to return to material already presented in the novels, albeit from a different angle, is even more pronounced at the end of the play, when Albus and Scorpius travel back even further in time and witness Voldemort's attack on James and Lily Potter and baby Harry in Godric's Hollow in 1981. In terms of its time structure, the play thus keeps revisiting defining moments in the chronology of the original series; a narrative strategy that may have the side effect of endowing the fictional world with additional depth due to the interweaving of plot lines. As the play is approaching its end, it returns to the founding moment of the series, when the myth of 'the boy who lived' came into existence. The scenes set in Godric's Hollow in 1981 arguably constitute the climax of the play and are emotionally intense. These are followed by two short scenes set in the present, which show a happier Albus as well as a decidedly improved father-son relationship, thus reiterating the happy ending of *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*.

Harry Potter and the Cursed Child is clearly situated in the tradition of time travel stories in terms of some of the questions the play raises. As in many other time travel narratives, the attempts to change one particular feature of the past are shown to have far-reaching, disastrous consequences. The actions of the two boys bring about alternative timelines, which get progressively worse.[6] Although devices that allow characters to travel through time are presumably more common in science fiction than in fantasy, time travel as such is not new to the

[5] According to Michael K. Johnson, "much of the pleasure of such narratives [i.e., time travel narratives] comes from recognizing the interplay between the original and the adaptation, the story of the past as it is originally told and the retelling of that story from a different perspective during the time-travel sequence" (210). What is special about *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* is that the comparison between the original and the retelling exceeds the text at hand, falling back on knowledge of the original series, in particular *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*.

[6] While one of the founding texts of modern time travel literature, H.G. Wells's *The Time Machine* (1895), does not introduce the notion of a 'butterfly' or 'ripple' effect caused by time travel, the most recent audio-visual adaptation of Wells's novel from 2002 adds this idea to the story. This serves to show that the possibility of changing the present for the worse by travelling back in time has become one of the stock features of time travel narratives. Examples include the movie *Back to the Future* (1985) and various *Star Trek* episodes, some of which suggest that "it might be necessary to 'clean up the timeline' from previous 'incursions'" (Barrett/Barrett 129). 'Cleaning up the timeline' is exactly what Scorpius ultimately has to do, with some help by others.

Potterverse. In *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* (1999), a Time-Turner plays a crucial role in helping Harry and Hermione save the day, making it possible for Sirius Black and the Hippogriff Buckbeak to escape from utmost danger. In a similar manner, the Time-Turner confiscated by the Ministry of Magic and stolen by Albus and Scorpius allows them to save Cedric Diggory's life. To anyone familiar with time travel narratives it comes as no particular surprise that the actions of the two time travellers cause several alternative timelines or 'what if'-scenarios to unfold in the course of the play.

Alternative timelines may be associated with time travelling, but they do not have to be. Authors may also choose historical events as starting points for 'what if'-scenarios. Cases in point include Philip K. Dick's *The Man in the High Castle* (1962) and Robert Harris's *Fatherland* (1992), which start from the assumption that the Nazis won World War II. *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* does something quite similar by introducing an alternative timeline in which Harry has not survived, whereas Voldemort has won and has established a fascist regime. As Scorpius finds out when he ends up in this timeline, 'Mudbloods' are tortured in the Hogwarts dungeons (cf. *Child* 182) or sent to "'[t]he "Mudblood" death camps'" (ibid. 184). The allusions to fascist Third Reich politics and practices, which can already be found in the original series,[7] could hardly be more obvious (complete with a fascist greeting consisting of putting one's hand to one's heart before bringing one's wrists together, cf. ibid. 180). A sinister atmosphere pervades the scenes set in this timeline, which is on a par with the tone of the later volumes of Rowling's series, most of all *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*. In this dark alternative timeline, neither Albus nor Rose have been born, while Ron and Hermione, who are not a couple in this version of reality, are virtually the last remaining members of an underground resistance movement. In *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* the 'what if'-scenarios also make it possible to bring back characters who are already dead in a way that goes beyond the series' convention of the talking portrait of a deceased person.[8] When Scorpius attempts to restore the original timeline (without the help of Albus, who has not been born in the timeline in which Voldemort has won), he has to fall back on the help of Snape, Hermione and Ron. Once Delphi, who pretends to be Amos Diggory's niece but turns out to be Voldemort's daughter, finds out that the 'dark alternative' could be brought about, she does everything to make this version of events come true. At this point, it is also revealed that her plan was triggered by a prophecy predicting Voldemort's return (cf. ibid. 247). The fact that it is once more a prophecy that propels the plot onward of course also creates an important link with the original series.

Although the play foregrounds the friendship between Albus and Scorpius, time and again the protagonists from the original series take centre stage, most often Harry. There are for instance three dream sequences (Act One, Scene Eight; Act Two, Scene One; Act Three, Scene Twelve) which explore his traumatic memories and simultaneously serve to revisit further scenes from the original series.[9] Moreover, these scenes provide a link to the novels due to the fact that Harry used to be the main internal focalizer throughout the book series, which means that fans have become used to perceiving the wizarding world from his point of view. The first dream/memory sequence takes the readers/spectators back to the moment when Hagrid appeared in the hut where the Dursleys hoped to escape from the Hogwarts letters (cf. ibid. 45-48). The second sequence returns to Privet Drive and the iconic Cupboard under the Stairs in order to elaborate on the cruel maltreatment Harry suffered in the first

[7] Cf. the article by Carsten Kullmann in this volume.

[8] The device of the talking portrait is picked up in order to bring back the character of Albus Dumbledore (cf. *Child* 273-76).

[9] For a discussion of the ways in which *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* explores Harry's trauma, cf. the contribution by Anne Mahler in this volume.

years of his life (cf. ibid. 97-99). The final dream sequence, however, introduces a scenario that is not based on a memory of an actual event. Harry dreams about visiting his parents' grave in Godric's Hollow with Aunt Petunia, although he did not get to see this place until he was 17, as the readers are told in *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*. Still, the dream condenses various aspects of Harry's life that have shaped his personality: the loss of his parents, the Dursleys' lies about Lily and James Potter's identity and the danger embodied by Voldemort.

The exploration of dreams and memories is nothing new in the Potterverse; in the novels, dreams and, more specifically, Harry's dreams play a very prominent role almost from the start. They highlight Harry's special link with Voldemort and serve to explore Harry's identity. Memories are presented most vividly in the Pensieve, which makes it possible to see someone else's memories by 'diving into' the past. All of the dream sequences in *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* end with Voldemort's voice being heard calling Harry's name, which suggests that the connection between Harry and his archenemy has not been destroyed completely after all. In the third dream sequence, Voldemort cannot only be heard but he actually appears physically, as the stage directions indicate: "VOLDEMORT*'s hand rises into the air above the Potters' gravestone, the rest of him rises after. We don't see his face but his body provides a jagged, horrific shape*" (ibid. 221, original emphasis). Thus, the dreams get more intense and threatening in the course of the play, recalling the many harrowing moments in the original series when Harry had a vision of Voldemort due to the special link between the hero and his nemesis.

In addition to the representation of dreams, *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* also continues a further strategy that was already established in the novels: features that were introduced into the Potterverse at some point are revisited at a later moment (often only in a later volume of the series), when they are made more complex by disclosing additional information. A case in point is Harry's Invisibility Cloak, which is introduced in *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* simply as a very convenient magical device for moving through Hogwarts without being seen that Harry inherits from his father, yet (much) later turns out to be one of the Deathly Hallows, i.e., a legendary magical artefact with a long history. This strategy of revisiting features of the wizarding world gradually adds more and more layers of meaning and depth to the Potterverse and renders the process of rereading earlier volumes more rewarding. In the light of new information the earlier text is enriched; additional semantic layers become apparent to the fan reader and lend the series a high degree of coherence.[10] A feature from the original series that is revisited in *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* in the manner described above is the trolley witch, who already appears in *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, selling a range of magical sweets to Harry, who at this point has just been initiated into the wizarding world. The focus is clearly on the sweets and not on the witch selling these in the first volume. In *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*, however, readers/spectators find out that the trolley witch might actually be even more interesting than her Cauldron Cakes and Chocolate Frogs. In Act One, Scene Eleven, Albus and Scorpius escape from the Hogwarts Express and find out that the trolley witch is a major, entirely unexpected obstacle for them. She follows the two boys onto the roof (even bringing her trolley along) and tries to prevent them from jumping off the train. In the process, her "*hands transfigure into very sharp spikes*" (ibid. 60, original emphasis) and she demonstrates that her pumpkin pasties can be used as hand grenades. The scene serves to show that the woman who

[10] In a somewhat similar vein, Nikolajeva claims with regard to the last volume of the original series: "In the final volume, all loose ends are tied together. In fact, it is astounding how many tiny details from the previous volumes turn up and prove highly significant." (237)

appeared to be quite ordinary beforehand actually possesses considerable magical abilities. When she tells Albus and Scorpius that everyone who tried to escape from the train in the past was stopped by her, this also serves as an occasion to remind the readers/spectators in passing of further well-known characters from the original series:

> 'Never. Never. Have I let anyone off this train before they reached their destination. Some have tried – Sirius Black and his cronies, Fred and George Weasley. ALL HAVE FAILED. BECAUSE THIS TRAIN – IT DOESN'T LIKE PEOPLE GETTING OFF IT …' (ibid., original emphasis).[11]

After having had a glimpse of this uncanny side of the trolley witch, one is likely to see this apparently unassuming minor character in a different light when rereading one of the earlier volumes.

Some of the more unusual features of the play could arguably be read as a reaction to criticism and/or fan interests. The depiction of the opposition between Gryffindor and Slytherin has been completely overhauled in *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*. The representation of the two houses as being essentially the embodiment of good and evil, which pervades the series, may strike readers as being too simplistic and fostering stereotypes. Even the fact that Severus Snape (Head of Slytherin House) ultimately turns out to be a good, heroic character has not done much to change the overall bad reputation of Slytherins within the novels. There seem to be many fans, however, who wish to see a more balanced approach to the representation of the houses, as for instance fan fiction and the popularity of Slytherin-themed merchandise indicate. In *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*, both Albus and Scorpius, i.e., the two – very likeable – protagonists are sorted into Slytherin. Thus, the readers/spectators are confronted with a different perspective, and from this point of view Gryffindor students do not fare all that well. They are reduced to being minor characters (including Rose Granger-Weasley, whom one might expect to be one of the protagonists at first) and they do not come across as being very friendly, either; instead, they tend to be quite arrogant. In one of the alternative timelines brought about by time travelling, Albus has been sorted into Gryffindor, but this does not really make things any better for him. This glimpse of an alternative reality stresses that Albus is not simply unhappy because he has been sorted into the 'wrong' house. In other words, it is *not* Slytherin that is the problem.

The reinterpretation of Slytherin is also apparent in the depiction of Draco Malfoy, who has undergone a major process of reinterpretation, which is reminiscent of some of the approaches often adopted in fan fiction, in particular those Henry Jenkins subsumes under the labels 'emotional intensification' and 'moral realignment'.[12] In *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*, Draco is reimagined as a character with previously unexplored emotional depth, who envied the friendship Harry, Ron and Hermione shared and felt lonely, which he admits in a conversation with Harry and Ginny:

[11] A number of characters from the original series who do not appear on the stage are referred to in dialogues in the course of the play (e.g. when Hermione says: "'I will not be Cornelius Fudge on this one'"; *Child* 73). This strategy emphasises the function of the play as a tribute to the original series.

[12] Jenkins defines the strategy of moral realignment as follows: "Perhaps the most extreme form of refocalization, some fan stories invert or question the moral universe of the primary text, taking the villains and transforming them into the protagonists of their own narratives. Characters like Servalan, Paracelsus, the Master, Darth Vader, and the Sheriff of Nottingham are such compelling figures that fans want to explore what the fictional world might look like from their vantage point; such tales blur the original narrative's more rigid boundaries between good and evil." (168)

> 'You – the three of you – you shone you know? You liked each other. You had fun. I envied you those friendships more than anything else. […] And being alone – that's so hard. I was alone. And it sent me to a truly dark place' (ibid. 147).

The depiction of Draco Malfoy in the play draws upon redemption narratives, which are not only popular plotlines for villains in fan fiction, but also well beyond that.[13] In addition to stressing the loneliness Draco felt as a child and adolescent, the play suggests that Draco has been turned into a kinder, better person by love. He tells his son: "'You know what I loved most about your mother? She could always help me find light in the darkness. She made the world – my world anyway – less – what was the word you used – "murky".'" (ibid. 186). The notion of the villain reformed by love is another idea that is frequently drawn upon in fan fiction and, more generally, in romance plots in popular culture. While Draco's change of heart may come as a surprise, hints at Draco being less callous and thus less firmly aligned with evil than one may have thought initially can already be found in the last volume of the original series. When Harry, Hermione and Ron are captives inside Malfoy Manor, for instance, Draco is extremely reluctant to identify his schoolmates and thus condemn at least Harry to being killed by Voldemort (cf. *Hallows* 372).

Unlike Rowling's novels, the play does not introduce many new and spectacular settings and primarily revisits familiar ones instead. The home of the Potter family is a new setting, but it is hardly fleshed out. There is, however, at least one new place that is worth mentioning, namely St Oswald's Home for Old Witches and Wizards. Introducing an institution that takes care of elderly members of the wizarding community continues a tradition of the *Harry Potter* series, i.e., the translation of facets of the Muggle world into wizarding counterparts. There are professional sports teams and world cups, a Ministry of Magic with many different departments, and there is St Mungo's Hospital for Magical Maladies and Injuries. Similar to these institutions, St Oswald's Home for Old Witches and Wizards supports the underlying realism inherent in the series' world building, which suggests that the wizarding community is indeed a complete, fully functioning society. The addition is also a significant one in the light of current debates about the consequences of an 'ageing society'. The stage directions suggest that the institution is a quite agreeable place:

> *This is chaos. This is magic. This is St Oswald's Home for Old Witches and Wizards and it is as wonderful as you might hope. Zimmer frames are conjured into life, knitting wool is enchanted into chaos, and male nurses are made to dance the tango. These are people relieved of the burden of having to do magic for a reason – instead, these witches and wizards do magic for fun. And what fun they have* (*Child* 66, original emphasis).

Although the stage directions emphasise the 'fun', one cannot help but wonder whether the chaos might also be an indication of elderly wizards and witches suffering from disorders like dementia. Moreover, the fact that the motivation for introducing St Oswald's in the first place is the focus on Amos Diggory, who is still grieving for his son Cedric, further undermines the depiction of the institution as a cheerful place and, instead, reinforces the theme of loss, which is running through the entire play.

All in all the play creates a sense of completion and closure rather than functioning as the beginning of a new set of stories focusing on the 'next generation'. It could almost be called an 'extended epilogue'. *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* does not introduce a new archenemy but revives the old one once more. There are quite a number of scenes featuring Harry, Ginny, Ron, Hermione and Draco, and in the final showdown, the two generations have to

[13] A case in point is the vampire Spike in the TV series *Buffy, the Vampire Slayer* (1997-2003), who turns from the title character's archenemy into one of her closest allies.

work together. Thus, the play does not focus exclusively on the next generation and simultaneously departs from one of the conventions of children's literature, where young protagonists are typically

> allowed […] to become strong, brave, rich, powerful, independent – on certain conditions and for a limited time. Even though the fictional child is usually brought back to the security of home and parental supervision, the narratives have subversive effect, showing that the rules imposed on the child by the adults are in fact arbitrary (Nikolajeva 227).

When left to their own devices, Albus and Scorpius create chaos; in order to correct their mistakes, they need support by adults (their parents in the final scenes respectively Snape, Hermione and Ron in Act Three, Scenes Five – Nine). While 11-year-old Harry faced the first of several reincarnations of Voldemort on his own at the end of *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* and managed to defeat the villain (for the time being), Albus and Scorpius appear to need adult backup in order to get things right. Ultimately, this presumably means quite simply that *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* has largely shed the vestiges of the origins of the Potterverse in children's literature. In a more grown-up vision of the wizarding world, the notion that children can essentially get by without adult support – an idea that informs for instance children's adventure stories written by Enid Blyton as well as Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876) – no longer holds. In other words, the young protagonists are ultimately overshadowed by adult characters – even though they prove to be quite ingenious, as the strategy of using Harry's baby blanket to send a message 'through time' proves. While the play does not give the young protagonists as much room and agency as the novels did, Albus and Scorpius seem to have found quite a lot of fans already. After all, on the online platform Archive of Our Own, there are already 5,346 fan writings involving Scorpius and an amazing number of 16,059 search results for Albus Potter.[14] This striking popularity of the two characters is presumably to a certain extent due to the fact that the presentation of these adolescent boys renders a queer reading possible, which ties in with the overall popularity of 'slash' fan fiction, i.e., texts focusing on "same-sex trust, intimacy and eroticism" (Duffett 170).[15]

Yet Albus and Scorpius are not the only interesting new characters in *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*. In the character of Delphi[16] the play addresses the trope of the orphan once

[14] The numbers were elicited on 26 September 2017.

[15] For a discussion of possible queer readings of the play, cf. the contribution by Marthe-Siobhán Hecke in this volume. Various reasons for the popularity of slash fan fiction are examined by Mark Duffett (173-78).

[16] As is the case with many of Rowling's characters, Delphi's name is semanticised, due to the fact that it invites several associations. The most obvious ones rely on the link between her first name and the ancient Greek oracle of Delphi, which was devoted to the God Apollo and said to be the *omphalos* ('navel'), the centre, of the world situated on Mount Parnassus not too far from the Gulf of Corinth (cf. Cartwright n.p.). A parallel between the play and the oracle is established by the relevance of serpents: the young woman Delphi is the daughter of Voldemort, who is the heir of Slytherin and fittingly accompanied by the snake Nagini, while the oracle of Delphi is the site where Apollo is believed to have killed the Python, a dragon-like serpent, who guarded the sacred area. The actual oracles were performed by Pythia, the priestess, whose name provides an immediate reference to Apollo's deed. But it is not only the allusion to monstrous snakes and their being overcome by heroes that is evoked by the protagonist's name; due to the eponymous oracle it also affirms the relevance of the prophecy for the plot development (cf. *Child* 247), a link that is further highlighted by young Delphi being associated with an Augurey, an "*Irish phoenix*", which "has a distinctive low and throbbing cry, which was once believed to foretell death" (*Fantastic Beasts* 2017, 5, original emphasis); this may have been a rather apt skill considering the fact that the Latin verb 'augurare' means 'to foretell' or 'to forebode'. Cf. the following

more, which is a recurring motif in Rowling's novels and contributes to the coherence of the *Potter* narrative on a thematic level. While Harry comes to terms with having lost his parents, Delphi is adamant in her attempts to bring her father back. Some people have found fault with the fact that Bellatrix Lestrange has given birth to Voldemort's child.[17] Yet the notion that a villain is eager to produce offspring, i.e., an heir, is actually not that far-fetched in the light of genre conventions. In many respects, Voldemort is a stereotypical Gothic villain, and the idea of producing an heir at all costs is something that Harry's archenemy might share for instance with the very first Gothic villain (Manfred) in Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* (1764). The loss of his only son and heir causes Manfred to turn into a Gothic villain in the first place. For someone who is as obsessed with ancestry as Voldemort is, the wish to produce an heir who will carry on his legacy certainly seems plausible. It is thus only the idea of Voldemort potentially following patterns of romance that seems utterly out of character. Romance, of course, does not have to precede the conception of a child. So there is no need to ascribe romantic feelings to Voldemort. With respect to Bellatrix Lestrange there are actually hints in *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* which suggest that she might not have been averse to bearing her 'master's' child.[18]

Reading the play, of course, inevitably falls short of the experience of actually watching a performance, which strives to involve the audience in the magic. While an illusion of magic nowadays may be created quite easily in movies by means of CGI, the task of presenting credible *Harry Potter*-style magic on the theatre stage is challenging. The advantage of the theatre in comparison to movies, however, becomes apparent in a scene like Act Two, Scene Twenty, where Dementors are flying through the auditorium (cf. *Child* 173); here, the theatre manages to provide a remarkable degree of immersion. Even if less immersive, the magic displayed on stage can hold its own when compared with what has been animated in the movies: actors hovering in the air and Albus's, Scorpius's and Delphi's sudden disappearance when they are being sucked into a telephone box are only two of many examples that support this impression. The play has been hugely successful, with performances sold out months in advance. Due to the fact that *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* could be called 'all-ages theatre' one might even hope that it will make younger people more interested in the theatre in general. In spring 2018, *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* will open on Broadway, which is indicative of a transatlantic expansion of the Potterverse, which is also apparent in the movie *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them*, though in different ways.

passage when Delphi addresses (Harry in the shape of) Voldemort: "'I am the Augurey to your Dark Lord, and I am ready to give all that I have to serve you'" (*Child* 307).

17 Cf. the following comments from reviews: "Another major plot point was Voldemort and Bellatrix Lestrange having a daughter; first of all, it's questionable Voldemort had any sexual desires whatsoever, it seems particularly out of character. Second, it's something that really does read like fan-fiction." (Shepherd n.p.); "We're meant to find it credible that the cold, asexual, incapable-of-loving Voldemort had sex with Bellatrix Lestrange right before the Battle of Hogwarts and produced a daughter?" (Tausz n.p.).

18 The following passages from *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* support the idea that Bellatrix might have harboured feelings of a diffusely romantic nature with respect to Voldemort: "Bellatrix had spoken: she sat closest to Voldemort […]. Voldemort raised his hand to silence her, and she did not speak another word, but eyed him in worshipful fascination" (*Hallows* 563); "'My Lord…*my Lord*…' It was Bellatrix's voice, and she spoke as if to a lover" (ibid. 580, original emphasis).

III. The prequel: *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them*

Harry Potter and the Cursed Child takes readers/spectators into the future of the Potterverse while simultaneously revisiting a number of characters and moments from the original series, whereas the movie *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* ventures more clearly onto new territory in terms of its spatial and temporal dimension. The setting of the movie is not contemporary Britain, but New York City in 1926. At the beginning of the movie, this new departure within the franchise is marked by means of a transition from the familiar 'Hedwig's Theme' by John Williams, which opens all of the *Harry Potter* movies, to a different musical theme. Still, there are many links with Rowling's novels, which make sure that *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* remains firmly situated within the Potterverse. The depiction of magic and magical artefacts, for instance, picks up the tradition of the *Harry Potter* movies. The attention to detail, which has become one of the hallmark features of the *Harry Potter* book and film series is again apparent in *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* and has been acknowledged by an Academy Award for Best Achievement in Costume Design and a BAFTA Award for Best Production Design (2017).

Though none of the main characters in the movie is a protagonist from the original series, there are still connections on the character level. The main character Newt Scamander is a former Hogwarts student, whose name has been familiar to fans since *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, where Scamander's book on fantastic beasts appears on the list of textbooks that Harry is supposed to buy at Diagon Alley (cf. *Stone* 77). True to the ruse that it is one of the textbooks used at Hogwarts, the book *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* does not contain a plot, but essentially lists various 'beasts' and provides information on these. The 2016 movie "convert[s] this static encyclopaedia into a spectacular action-adventure about the origins of his [Newt Scamander's] book" (Bradshaw n.p.). As was pointed out above, *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* strives to revise the overwhelmingly negative depiction of Slytherin. One could argue that *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* does something quite similar for another Hogwarts house, which has not been vilified in the series but certainly neglected. With Newt Scamander, a former Hufflepuff becomes the film's protagonist and shows that Hufflepuffs are not only loyal, but may also possess plenty of courage as well as knowledge and expertise that would not be out of place in Ravenclaw.[19]

In addition to Scamander, there are further characters that are linked to the original series. Dumbledore is mentioned in *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them*, though only in passing. The name Gellert Grindelwald is also familiar from the novels; in the first volume he is categorised as a "*dark wizard*" (*Stone* 114, original emphasis) who was defeated by Dumbledore in 1945, and in the further course of the series the close friendship between Grindelwald and Dumbledore during their youth throws a dubious light on Harry's mentor. The movie also suggests that Newt Scamander at one point had a crush on a fellow student called Leta Lestrange, whose last name must ring a bell with fans, since it implies that Newt is somehow connected with the family of Sirius Black, Narcissa Malfoy and, of course, the

[19] There are attempts in the original series to show the qualities of Hufflepuffs. Cedric Diggory is a Hufflepuff, and in *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* the Hufflepuffs are also presented in a quite positive light. When the evacuation of students before the Battle of Hogwarts is about to begin, it is a Hufflepuff student, Ernie Macmillan, who stands up and shouts: "'And what if we want to stay and fight?'" (*Hallows* 489). When the students who prefer to go home have left, "[t]he Slytherin table was completely deserted, but a number of older Ravenclaws remained seated while their fellows filed out: even more Hufflepuffs stayed behind, and half of Gryffindor remained in their seats, necessitating Professor McGonagall's descent from the teachers' platform to chivvy the under-age on their way" (ibid. 491). The main focus is on Gryffindor throughout the series, due to the focus on Harry's point of view.

notorious Bellatrix Lestrange. Given Rowling's knack for picking up apparently circumstantial details at a later stage in order to weave them into the texture of her increasingly complex world, one may venture the guess that we will hear more about Leta Lestrange in the next movies. The information that is currently available on Pottermore about the second movie, which will be released in November 2018, confirms that Grindelwald, Dumbledore and Leta Lestrange will appear in the next instalment of the new film series.

As the title already suggests, *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* shifts the focus partially to the magical creatures inhabiting the wizarding world. The link with the original series is enhanced by the fact that four of the 'beasts' that play a prominent role in the movie – the Demiguise, the Erumpent, the Bowtruckle and the Niffler – are already mentioned in the original series. When Harry, Ron and Hermione visit the eccentric Xenophilius Lovegood they see an Erumpent horn on the wall (cf. *Hallows* 325), and Lovegood tells them that Invisibility Cloaks may be "'woven from Demiguise hair'" (ibid. 333). Later on, Bowtruckles are mentioned at least in passing by Aberforth (cf. ibid. 452), but these are also mentioned in *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix* (2003), in which they are described as twigs which "revealed themselves to be what looked like tiny pixieish creatures made of wood, each with knobbly brown arms and legs, two twiglike fingers at the end of each hand and a funny flat, barklike face in which a pair of beetle-brown eyes glittered" (*Phoenix* 233). Nifflers are introduced to the students in one of Hagrid's Care of Magical Creatures lessons in Harry's fourth year. Here the narrator describes the Nifflers as "fluffy black creatures with long snouts. Their front paws were curiously flat, like spades, and they were blinking up at the class, looking politely puzzled at all the attention" (*Goblet* 590). Hagrid informs his students that the Nifflers' defining characteristic is that "'[t]hey like sparkly stuff'" and, thus, are "'[u]seful little treasure detectors'" (ibid.). The Demiguise also provides a link with *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*, where Albus and Scorpius use a Tincture of Demiguise as 'invisible ink' on Harry's baby blanket (cf. *Child* 284). In the stage play, the Demiguise is only associated with invisibility, but the additional information on Demiguises provided in *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* – i.e., that Demiguises are able to foresee the most probable future – of course also fits extremely well into the context of a play that focuses on the creation of alternative timelines.

Already in the *Harry Potter* series, magical creatures are a recurring feature. A mandatory subject at Hogwarts is devoted to them – Care of Magical Creatures, which is for some time taught by Hagrid, who clearly loves all fantastic beasts, even those that others find hard to appreciate. To a certain extent, Newt Scamander resembles Hagrid in the way he cares about the creatures he brings to New York City.[20] Yet, while Hagrid's love for dragons, spiders, three-headed dogs and other 'monsters' tends to be depicted as bordering on the ludicrous, Newt Scamander's efforts echo the insight that wildlife deserves protection and are indicative of a scientific stance.[21] Inside his suitcase there is a pair of Graphorns, which is "'the last breeding pair in existence'" (*Beasts* 103-04), as Newt tells Jacob. Newt tries to rescue this

[20] In addition to sharing a love for fantastic creatures, Newt and Hagrid consider themselves both as 'mothers' to some of the creatures (cf. *Stone* 254, *Beasts* 107) and have been expelled from Hogwarts for similar reasons: Hagrid was expelled because he was wrongly accused of setting the Basilisk free, which attacked and murdered one of the students, and Graves explains during the interrogation that Newt was "'thrown out of Hogwarts for endangering human life [...] with a beast'" (*Beasts* 158).

[21] As a matter of fact, Newt's ecological approach reminded critics of two outstanding British (non-magi-) zoologists: "Newt is a connoisseur, scientist and scatterbrained magic-beast taxonomist who is not far from the [...] beardless Darwin. Redmayne's distinctively breathy voice even has something of the young Attenborough" (Bradshaw n.p.).

species from extinction and to get more members of the wizarding community interested in the conservation of endangered species, as the following dialogue shows:

> NEWT: If I hadn't managed to rescue them, that could have been the end of Graphorns – for ever.
> […]
> JACOB: So what – you, you rescue these creatures?
> NEWT: Yes, that's right. Rescue, nurture and protect them, and I'm gently trying to educate my fellow wizards about them (ibid. 104).

In addition to propagating breeding programs similar to the ones run by zoos in the Muggle world, Newt criticises animal trafficking, a practice that endangers species in our reality as well.[22] In other words, the Potterverse appears to have begun to embrace serious ecological thinking.

Newt's ecological awareness and passion for creatures is also reflected in his magical suitcase, which opens into a "vast polychrome world of wonder" (Zachanek n.p.), where the Magizoologist nurses, nurtures and preserves fantastic beasts. Inside his suitcase, Newt created a fully functioning ecosystem, complete with replications of different geographical habitats: "*It contains what appears to be a safari park in miniature. Each of* NEWT'S *creatures has its own perfect, magically realised habitat*" (*Beasts* 100, original emphasis). Existing in the macrocosm of the suitcase, these habitats are arranged as a series of interconnected, adjoining rooms and display different seasons and times of day and night to suit the individual needs of the creatures inhabiting the spaces. Newt's magical suitcase significantly departs from the ideas informing spaces and containers viewers are already familiar with from Rowling's *Harry Potter* universe, such as Hermione's beaded bag or the Room of Requirement. The 'world' contained inside the suitcase is subdivided into smaller compartments, which play with the idea of multi-dimensionality. The impression of the spaciousness of the individual habitats is created by the apparently enchanted 'walls': when Newt calls the Graphorns, which require some time to come on screen, they have apparently covered some distance, which the size of the compartment – when it is shown from above – does, in fact, not permit (cf. Yates 00:37:31-00:38:04). Instead of caging the creatures, Newt's preservation strategies are thus based on recreating what are presumably the creatures' native habitats, which are magically expanded and connected to one another.[23] All habitats (re-)created inside the suitcase are natural environments, ranging from wintry, mountainous landscapes to small green woods, and even Newt's shed is made of wood. This shed, which is reminiscent of the Weasleys' Burrow and functions as a refuge for Newt, establishes a strong contrast to the urban environment in New York and in particular with the impressive, concrete building in which the Magical Congress of the United States of America is located.

The extension charm applied to the suitcase does not suggest that Newt has exhausted the available space, but that he might add further compartments, which renders an expansion of the living ecosystem in the suitcase possible. The multitude of beasts already inside the case, on the one hand, highlights Newt's environmental awareness and critical ecological attitude and, on the other hand, reinforces that the creatures are in need of protection. Before they embark on the rescue mission to recover the creatures that have escaped from the suitcase,

[22] This is what Newt tells Jacob about the Thunderbird inside his suitcase: "'He was trafficked, you see. I found him in Egypt, he was all chained up. Couldn't leave him there, had to bring him back. I'm going to put you back where you belong, aren't I, Frank. To the wilds of Arizona'" (*Beasts* 102).

[23] The idea that the compartments are subject to an extension is also reinforced when Newt and Jacob enter the area enclosing the forest in which, among other creatures, the Bowtruckles live. The moment Jacob steps inside the compartment, the audience perceives the space to be elongated and to become three-dimensional (Yates 00:38:56-00:39:00).

Newt explains to Jacob that the fantastic beasts are "'currently in alien terrain, surrounded by millions of the most vicious creatures on the planet. [...] Humans'" (*Beasts* 113-14). This statement emphasises the ontological status of the suitcase as an alternative, magical and safe habitat for the creatures, which would otherwise be endangered or even become extinct. In this respect, Newt provides what he considers "[p]erhaps the most important step in the concealment of magical creatures" (*Fantastic Beasts* 2001, xxx), namely a safe habitat, which he created inside his suitcase, which is equipped with a 'Muggle worthy' setting to conceal and protect his fantastic beasts.

In line with the original series, the movie also displays a tendency to introduce a wide range of different magical creatures and to be very specific about these species and their properties. Already in *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, the readers learn that dragons can be subdivided into different species, one of which is the Norwegian Ridgeback. In the first task of the Triwizard Tournament, the dragons the four competitors have to face again belong to different species; there is "a Welsh Green", a "Chinese Fireball", a "Swedish Short-Snout" and a "Hungarian Horntail" (*Goblet* 384). Introducing several dragon species, which differ in terms of their looks and characteristics, instead of opting for the generic label 'dragon' is proof of the attention to detail which is typical of Rowling's brand of world-making in general.[24] Beyond that, this strategy may foster a recognition of the diversity and the uniqueness of living beings that correlates with ecocritical thinking (cf. Zapf 277).

While there are many links between the movie *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* and the original series, the most complex one is the relationship to Rowling's book *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them*, which was first published in 2001. Although the movie is certainly only an adaptation in the widest sense[25] – given the fact that Rowling's book, which is indebted to the genre of the bestiary (cf. Vom Lehn), does not tell any kind of story, let alone one that is set in the United States – an intriguing dialogue between the text and the movie can be traced, which attests to the dynamic nature of the Potterverse. The book was supposedly 'written' by Newt Scamander and constitutes an "authoritative compendium" (*Fantastic Beasts* 2001, xviii) as well as "a renowned textbook for Magizoology and [has] thus [been] used for teaching a specialized branch of science" (Vom Lehn 68). Due to the fact that Newt Scamander's book is one of the school books Harry needs for his first year at Hogwarts, readers are familiar with the author's name and the title from the beginning of the *Harry Potter* series, as was mentioned above. The 2001 edition is allegedly a reprint of Harry's textbook, "complete with his and his friends' informative notes in the margins" (*Fantastic Beasts* 2001, xiv). Including explicit references to the protagonists of the novels links the book even more firmly with the original series. Their annotations are often used as either jokes or hints at adventures the trio had in the series; for instance, they expand the headline of the entry 'werewolf' to "werewolfs aren't all bad" (ibid. 83), clearly alluding to their teacher and friend Remus Lupin.

[24] In her 2001 edition of *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them*, Rowling even goes a step further and lists a total number of ten different species of dragons in the entry 'Dragons'. These ten species of dragons are the Antipodean Opaleye, the Chinese Fireball, the Common Welsh Green, the Hebridean Black, the Hungarian Horntail, the Norwegian Ridgeback, the Peruvian Vipertooth, the Romanian Longhorn, the Swedish Short-Snout and the Ukrainian Ironbelly (cf. *Fantastic Beasts* 2001, 20-25). Thus, Rowling expands the geographical range (as some of the names already suggest) as well as the variety of dragons that populate the Potterverse.

[25] Drawing upon Geoffrey Wagner's typology of adaptations, Brian McFarlane distinguishes between transpositions, commentaries and analogies, which differ in how close they are to the original text. While transpositions stick more or less to the original, the analogy is the type of adaptation that constitutes the most independent work of art (cf. 10-11).

Apart from displaying links with the original series, the book also expands the fictional universe by including biographical information on Newt Scamander and by providing additional 'facts' on beasts that are only mentioned in passing in the *Harry Potter* series (up until *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*). As Antje vom Lehn argues, the footnotes in the text are also crucial for expanding the Potterverse: "The footnotes [...] [refer] to other (fictitious) books from the magical world [and] are another way of giving the fictional universe greater coherence, depth and credibility" (68). In quoting, for instance, Bathilda Bagshot's *A History of Magic*, Scamander's book refers to one of the standard works Hermione consults time and again and thus draws upon something readers are already familiar with, rooting the book firmly within the *Harry Potter* universe. Providing full references to other (academic) works from the wizarding world, such as *The Philosophy of the Mundane: Why the Muggles Prefer Not to Know* by Prof. Mordicus Egg, Dust & Mildewe, 1963 (cf. *Fantastic Beasts* 2001, n.8 xxix), Rowling diversifies and enlarges the repertoire of (fictional) 'textual resources' (Wertsch) within the magical world.

The book's foreword, supposedly written by none other than Albus Dumbledore, offers some information on the publishing history of *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* and informs readers that it is available to Muggles as of now. With her usual attention to detail, Rowling maintains this impression, for instance by referring to the cooperation of two publishing houses: "Bloomsbury *in association with* Obscurus Books, 18a Diagon Alley, London" (*Fantastic Beasts* 2001, n.p., original emphasis).[26] Not privileging one publishing house over the other, the back cover lists them in reversed order and includes the price in GBP (£) as well as in Galleons and Sickles, which again suggests a dual readership. Since the book has been 'made available' for Muggles, its publication also had an impact on (material) fan culture, because fans could now access material that Harry and his friends used at Hogwarts, furthering their own studies in Magizoology and Care of Magical Creatures – and may presumably decide whether they feel addressed as wizards or Muggles.

In 2017, a revised edition of *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* has been published, which features six new 'beasts', only one of which has been included in the first instalment of the new movie series. In his introduction to the 2001 edition, Newt Scamander states that he "[does] not doubt that some time this year yet another [species] will be discovered, necessitating a fifty-third revised edition" (ibid. xxxiv), so that the new edition of the book with additional beasts does not come as a surprise. In the revised edition, Rowling once more elaborates on the co-publication of the book by Obscurus Books and Bloomsbury, yet makes a significant change in the foreword, which is "[t]o appear only in 'For wizards version'" (*Fantastic Beasts* 2017, ix). Since the preface closes with an editor's note regarding the 'Muggle edition' ("for Muggle edition, usual guff: 'obvious fiction – all good fun – nothing to worry about – hope you enjoy it'"; ibid. xiii), fans may feel reassured that they are part of Rowling's wizarding world.[27]

The revised edition of the book also has an impact on the new movie series, since additional information is either hinted at or given explicitly. The six new beasts – the Hidebehind, the Hodag, the Horned Serpent, the Snallygaster, the Thunderbird and the Wampus Cat –

[26] In *Quidditch Through the Ages* (2001), which was published alongside *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them*, Rowling also elaborates on wizarding publishing houses and includes the fictional publishing house 'Whizz Hard Books', which is located in 129B Diagon Alley, London. By contrast, Hermione's 'rune translation' of *The Tales of Beedle the Bard* (2008) seems to have been published only by Bloomsbury (and Rowling's charity Lumos).

[27] The recently published house editions of *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* aim at a similar effect with respect to the Hogwarts houses. Cf. the contribution by Marion Gymnich and Klaus Scheunemann in this volume.

have been illustrated (except for the Hodag), and the readers are told that these can be found in America, which suggests that they might play a role in the upcoming movies.[28] With information such as "[t]he Horned Serpent gives its name to one of the houses of Ilvermorny" (*Fantastic Beasts* 2017, 43), Rowling also draws attention to the American wizarding school, which she has introduced on Pottermore, reinforcing the coherence of the expanding Potterverse.[29] The new edition also gives additional information on Newt Scamander, which in all likelihood will be incorporated in the next movies of the series. The comment "that Albus Dumbledore was something more than a schoolteacher to me" (ibid. xii) might be read in the context of queerbaiting, whereas "the declassification of certain secret documents kept at the Ministry of Magic" (ibid. x) may hint at an increasing politicisation of events in the following movies. Given that *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* has become the starting point for an entirely new movie series and has been adjusted accordingly in the new edition, the Potterverse is currently in the process of a substantial expansion both on the textual level and the big screen.

This expansion makes itself felt very clearly in the introduction of New York as a new setting. In the Potterverse, settings have always had a major impact on the atmosphere. Even if there are a number of scenes in the *Harry Potter* series that are set in London (in particular in the Ministry), the stories are mostly set in Hogwarts and various villages (Hogsmeade, Godric's Hollow) or sparsely populated areas in Britain (especially in *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*). *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them*, by contrast, is set entirely in New York City. The American metropolis is depicted as a rather grim place where wizards and witches are confronted with hatred that is fuelled by the Second Salemers' campaigns against magic:

> Fantastic Beasts may take place in the build-up to the Great Depression, but its vision of an America caught in the jaws of fear and paranoia has the stony-grim ring of the here and now. Hogsmeade, USA this ain't: the city is cold, dark and seething with suspicion, with pamphleteers pressing for a 'Second Salem' – as in witch trials – to keep the country's clandestine magic-using element in check. Mixing cultures is frowned upon, intermarriage the strictest of no-nos (Collin n.p.).[30]

Beyond such political overtones, the images of New York City may also remind viewers of disaster and superhero movies, which are often set in the American metropolis. Thus, scenes in which buildings are destroyed or whole streets are ripped open may look quite similar to scenes of devastation in other genres and filmic contexts. After all, this is the city that has been terrorised on the big screen by King Kong, Godzilla and various supervillains countless times.

Apart from the setting, one of the major innovations of *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* is the fact that the movie includes a Muggle (or No-Maj, as the American wizarding society puts it) among the main characters and presents this character, Jacob Kowalski, in a very positive way. In the Potterverse, Muggles have traditionally been marginalised, as Niko-

[28] The illustrations in *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* (2017) are heavily influenced by the 2016 movie adaptation, as can be seen with the depiction of the Thunderbird or the Niffler. Due to its important role in the movie, the Niffler features also prominently in the book and has even been used as decorative element on the title page of the volume as well as on its final page, which allows arguing that – similar to a Niffler accumulating anything that glitters – the reader accumulates knowledge and a deeper understanding regarding the fantastic beasts included in the compendium.

[29] The four houses of Ilvermorny are Thunderbird, Wampus, Horned Serpent and Pukwudgie.

[30] Parallels between intolerance and persecution in contemporary society and the Salem witchcraft trials have been drawn upon in American literature before, perhaps most famously in Arthur Miller's play *The Crucible* (1953).

lajeva observes: "Power hierarchies in the series are unequivocal. Wizards are superior to non-wizards" (228). Moreover, the Dursleys certainly make Muggles look bad, and apart from Harry's horrible relatives Muggles are only mentioned more or less in passing (such as Hermione's dentist parents for instance). On the whole, wizards, with the notable exception of Arthur Weasley, do not seem to be all that fond of Muggles although the series mentions that some wizards and witches have Muggle friends or are married to a Muggle. At first sight, the portly Jacob Kowalski bears a vague resemblance to Harry's Uncle Vernon, but Jacob turns out to be the exact opposite of the unpleasant bully living in number four, Privet Drive, who does not "hold with such nonsense" (*Stone* 7), i.e., magic. Unlike Vernon Dursley, Jacob is almost immediately enraptured by what he experiences in the wizarding world. In fact, he sees the world he accidentally stumbles into with just as much wide-eyed wonder as Harry during his first visit to Diagon Alley. He likes Scamander, Porpentina Goldstein and especially the latter's sister, the legilimens Queenie, who, in turn, is quite taken with Kowalski. The No-Maj is also fascinated with Newt's fantastic beasts and clearly enjoys watching, feeding and stroking them, which shows that he is a character who is not that easily frightened, who is open-minded and curious. At the end of the movie, Jacob is very unhappy to be forced to leave the wizarding world behind, and Newt and Queenie are equally sad to let him go. During their adventures, Jacob has become a true friend for Newt, who tells him: "'you're my friend and I'll never forget how you helped me, Jacob'" (*Beasts* 267). Paradoxically, in a society where the Statute of Secrecy is adhered to rigorously and enforced by wizarding law, the boundary between wizards and No-Majs seems more permeable than in the original series. With the introduction of Jacob there appears to be a real chance of 'centring the periphery' or of diversifying the magical master narrative by including Muggles/No-Majs in the adventures of wizards and witches; as Queenie says to Jacob at one point, "'you're one of us now!'" (ibid. 167). In this respect the happy ending of the movie is crucial; it is set three months later and opens with a shot of Jacob's bakery. Not only has Jacob been able to fulfil his dream of opening his own shop due to Newt's generous present of Occamy eggshells, but his pastries also seem to have been inspired by the fantastic beasts he came across during his adventures. The baked goods are "*all moulded into fanciful little shapes – we recognise the Demiguise, Niffler and Erumpent among them*" (ibid. 281, original emphasis), which suggests that Jacob, despite having been obliviated, subconsciously seems to remember some of the fantastic beasts he encountered. The impression that he still 'remembers' what occured is enforced even more strongly when Queenie enters the bakery: "JACOB *looks up and is thunderstruck all over again: it's* QUEENIE. *They stare at each other* – QUEENIE *beams, radiant.* JACOB*, quizzical and totally enchanted, touches his neck – a flicker of memory. He smiles back*" (ibid. 282, original emphasis). The 'flicker of memory' and his reaction indicate that Jacob can at least partially remember what happened, which implies that the Obliviation charm was not as successful as MACUSA anticipated.

At first sight, the stout, middle-aged Jacob Kowalski seems to be an unusual choice as a protagonist in a fantasy movie that also seeks to address a younger audience. Yet, the example of middle-aged Bilbo Baggins in J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Hobbit* (1937) has demonstrated that novels (and movies) without a child or adolescent protagonist can in fact work very well for a young target readership/audience. Jacob Kowalski and Bilbo Baggins even share a number of characteristics, which are likely to endear them to audiences: in particular their loyalty, humble demeanour and open-mindedness. Moreover, the Niffler is an element that is bound to appeal to a younger audience since many of the scenes featuring the mischievous creature are rather comical. A case in point is the scene when Newt shakes and tickles the Niffler in the bank vault to relieve the kleptomaniac and agile creature of a significant amount of coins, gold bars and jewels he has put into his pouch. This scene aims at indicating the somewhat

strenuous relationship between Newt and the Niffler as well as creating comic relief. Thus, *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* is not necessarily a movie that only addresses an adult audience, despite claims in some reviews that seek to establish a one-to-one relationship between the lack of young protagonists and an older target audience.[31]

The age of the implied audience has also been an issue of discussion with respect to the *Harry Potter* series. In the course of the seven novels, Rowling's series gets increasingly darker, arguably ceasing to be children's literature at one point. Simultaneously, political themes became more and more prominent. While fantasy novels by Tolkien and C.S. Lewis as well as George R.R. Martin's *A Song of Ice and Fire* saga (1996-) essentially conjure up pseudo-medieval, feudal societies, Rowling takes a radically different approach. In the wizarding world there is an equivalent of aristocrats, but the society is governed by the Ministry of Magic, whose many departments for the most part suggest a considerable amount of bureaucracy rather than democratic structures. By increasingly providing insights into the Ministry and its workings, the readers are also granted glimpses of political corruption and misuse of power. This aspect of the Ministry, which becomes particularly obvious in *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* when the Ministry is under the control of Voldemort's supporters, establishes a link with the popular genre of the (young adult) dystopia, which adds yet another facet to the genre hybridisation Rowling's series has made use of from the start. This interest in politics, which increases in the course of the series, is also picked up in *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* and might very well become more central in the next instalments of the new movie series.

In terms of its plot structure, *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* differs from the *Harry Potter* series in so far as it focuses less on a central quest plot. Newt Scamander's efforts to catch the various beasts that have escaped from his magical suitcase makes up much of the plot, but in particular the beginning and the end of the movie quite clearly suggest that there is significantly more at stake in the movie series. At the beginning of the film the viewers see articles from magical newspapers from various countries and in different languages reporting on Gellert Grindelwald, whose name is familiar from the original series, as was pointed out above. The name appears for the first time in *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, where Grindelwald is mentioned on one of the Chocolate Frog collectible cards, due to his link with Albus Dumbledore. In *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, the portrait of Grindelwald is fleshed out considerably, since he played an important and dubious role in Dumbledore's past. If Voldemort was the darkest wizard of all time, Grindelwald is probably a close second. According to Rita Skeeter's biography of Albus Dumbledore,

> *in a list of Most Dangerous Dark Wizards of All Time, he* [Grindelwald] *would miss out on the top spot only because You-Know-Who arrived, a generation later, to steal his crown. As Grindelwald never extended his campaign of terror to Britain, however, the details of his rise to power are not widely known here* (*Hallows* 290, original emphasis).

While journalist Rita Skeeter is not the most reliable source of information, at least her observations on Grindelwald by and large seem to hold true. The scenes focusing on him in *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* constitute a kind of frame within the filmic narrative which suggests where the film series might be going in the future. It appears to embark on an

[31] Cf. the following comment: "The new movie *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* is the first full-length Harry Potter franchise story that leaves behind childhood adventure and teen angst, and expressly deals with adult characters living in an adult world. And there has to be some appeal in that for longtime series fans: in theory, it's a sign that the series has continued to mature with them" (Robinson n.p.).

exploration of events in the past that are only alluded to in the *Harry Potter* series and that are bound to take viewers to locations other than Britain.

IV. Background information and material for further stories: Pottermore

Taking recipients somewhere where they have not been yet is also a key strategy of Pottermore.com, which provides fans with "a completely new form of storytelling, blending encyclopedia, computer game, and novel into an interactive form" (Sharp 115). In 2011, fans were delighted when the new (and free) Pottermore website was launched on Harry's birthday, inviting initially only the first million of users to a new *Harry Potter* experience (cf. Flood n.p.). Rowling commented on her motivation behind this "collaborative project" (ibid.) as follows:

> I wanted to give something back to the fans that have followed Harry so devotedly over the years, and to bring the stories to a new generation […] I hope fans and those new to Harry will have as much fun helping to shape Pottermore as I have. Just as I have contributed to the website, everyone else will be able to join in by submitting their own comments, drawings and other content in a safe and friendly environment (Rowling quoted in ibid.).

In addition to its originally highly interactive set-up, Pottermore.com was designed as the exclusive website for the sale of ebook editions of the *Harry Potter* series and it also promised "to feature a wealth of new and previously unpublished material about the world of Harry Potter" (Flood n.p.). What is especially remarkable in this context is the fact that Rowling devised the website as a true publishing venue in the sense of it providing new texts that were written to stay: "Most interesting is the explicit claim that Rowling's writing on Pottermore is official enough to be permanent ('yes, it's canon!')" (Brummitt 125).

Exploring Pottermore is a bit like walking through Hogwarts: every moment one may encounter something unexpected, and, as Bryan Young puts it, "[t]o say that Pottermore is an immersive experience might be an understatement" (n.p.). The original version (2011-2015) invited the user to explore chapters of the *Harry Potter* novels in depth, providing readers with a wealth of additional information. There were objects to collect virtually, a shopping experience in Diagon Alley and a quiz which allowed the aspiring witch/wizard to be chosen by her/his wand before being sorted into one of the four Hogwarts school houses. But, as Young states, "there's even more to do. You can cast spells and duel with fellow (live) students, you can make potions, and keep track of house points in the Great Hall" (n.p.).

Due to the fact that Pottermore referred, at least initially, mainly to the original series and has provided in-depth additional information on characters, places, objects and cultural practices in the wizarding world Hutcheon claims that "[c]onsidered in the context of adaptation studies, *Pottermore* is an adaptation as remediation and extension, a transmedia world-building experience" (197). Yet the strategies of world-building have developed over the years, the "digital heart of J.K. Rowling's Wizarding World" (Pottermore Team n.p.) has changed its beat. As Brummitt summarises, "Pottermore from 2011-15 was largely preoccupied with strengthening the textual dominance of the *Harry Potter* novels and reinforcing Rowling's authorial position, while offering fans new world-building material" (120). By contrast, the current website offers several tabs on more recent elements of the Potterverse, such as the play *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* or the film *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them*, and provides, often exquisitely illustrated, extensive background knowledge.[32]

[32] The biographical information given on Minerva McGonagall may serve as an example. The texts cover her 'Childhood', 'School Career', the events surrounding her 'Early Heartbreak', her 'Ministry Career',

Still, despite the rather recent addition of 'Pottermore's Digital Hogwarts Experience' (launched on 01 September 2017), it remains fair to say about Pottermore that, in comparison to previous versions, "[o]pportunities for participation […] are further reduced in its present incarnation" (Brummitt 123).

One of the prime functions of Pottermore with regard to the Potterverse is the expansion of the wizarding world in terms of its geography. In many respects, Rowling's novels are quintessentially British. They are embedded in the tradition of the British boarding-school system, most of the characters are British or Irish and the setting is restricted to the U.K. In *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*, the Quidditch World Cup as well as the students from Beauxbatons and Durmstrang competing with Hogwarts in the Triwizard Tournament introduce an international dimension into the series, but there is no sustained internationalisation from that point onwards. Even though trips abroad and work abroad are mentioned from the first volume onwards (e.g. Ron's brother Charlie working with dragons in Romania, the Weasleys travelling to Egypt in *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*, etc.), the focus is clearly on Britain throughout the series. On Pottermore, the wizarding world expands significantly in terms of its geography. There are short articles about wizarding schools in different countries, including Beauxbatons in France and Durmstrang in Eastern Europe, but also Mahoutokoro in Japan, Uagadou in Uganda and Castelobruxo in Brasil. Currently, the most extensive texts on Pottermore focus on the United States, accompanying the movie *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them*. Pottermore currently features a "History of Magic in North America" (a pseudo-historiographic account of the development of the magical community in the United States and its troubled relationship with No-Majs) as well as a comparatively long text exploring the origins and history of Ilvermorny School of Witchcraft and Wizardry.

Ilvermorny is first mentioned during an exchange between Jacob, Queenie and Newt in *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* which suggests a transatlantic rivalry between schools:

> JACOB: (*putting on his jacket*)
> Did you say school? Is there a school? A wizardry school here? In America?
> QUEENIE: Of course – Ilvermorny! It's only the best wizard school in the whole world!
> NEWT: I think you'll find the best wizarding school in the world is Hogwarts!
> QUEENIE: HOGWASH (*Beasts* 222, original emphasis).

Instead of discussing an international ranking of educational institutions several entries on Ilvermorny on Pottermore inform readers of when the school was founded and where it is located. Historiographical accounts correlate the origin of the school with the arrival of Irish immigrants in the United States and explain how the four houses – Horned Serpent, Wampus, Thunderbird and Pukwudgie – came into being. Even information on Ilvermorny's sorting ceremony as well as on the school song is provided. In sum, these descriptions seem to validate the impression that wizardry is a transnational phenomenon which is always closely intertwined with Muggle history.

In addition to highlighting the international dimension of the Potterverse, Pottermore also expands the historical depth of the wizarding world, taking both individuals and institutions as starting points, as the abovementioned texts on the different magical schools and the magical

her 'Friendship with Albus Dumbledore', and the story of her 'Marriage'. These accounts are complemented, for example, by 'Rowling's thoughts' on her name as well as by a Minerva McGonagall fact file, some impressive quotes and a 'Minerva McGonagall infographic' also available in a mobile version (cf. Rowling, "Professor McGonagall" n.p.; Rowling, "All about... Minerva Mcgonagall [sic!]" n.p.).

history of North America already illustrate.[33] There is, for instance, a chronology of British Ministers for Magic from 1707 to the present. Moreover, readers may explore the histories of the Potter family and of the Malfoy family, whose ancestor "Armand Malfoy arrived in Britain with William the Conqueror as part of the invading Norman army" (Rowling, "Malfoy Family" n.p.). As this example illustrates, Rowling's historical accounts are typically tightly interwoven with Muggle history. This can be seen even more clearly with the following piece of information from Rowling's account of the history of the Malfoy family:

> Though hotly denied by subsequent generations, there is ample evidence to suggest that the first Lucius Malfoy was an unsuccessful aspirant to the hand of Elizabeth I, and some wizarding historians allege that the Queen's subsequent opposition to marriage was due to a jinx placed upon her by the thwarted Malfoy (ibid.).

Rowling blends wizarding and Muggle history and creates alternative historiographic accounts by adding complementary material and information taken from her own universe. In her mock-revisionist historiography, which relies very much on 'facts' and historical dates (both from Muggle history and from wizarding history), Rowling endows her wizarding world with additional credibility and follows in the footsteps of Tolkien's famous and extensive Appendix in *The Lord of the Rings* (1954-55). Yet, the very fact that Rowling links her wizarding history with Muggle history (and often inserts obviously ironic comments) shows that Rowling's way of writing about 'history' is informed by a typically postmodern eclecticism and irreverence with respect to the boundary between fact and fiction.

V. 'Capacious extremis!': Conclusion

> "The Extension Charm ('Capacious extremis!') is advanced, but subject to strict control, because of its potential misuse" (Rowling, "Extension Charm" n.p.).

In the seven volumes of her *Harry Potter* series, J.K Rowling has managed to create a world that is amazingly detailed and coherent. After having established the contours of a remarkably plausible magical world in the first volume of her series, she has never ceased adding new information, new perspectives and twists, which convey the impression that there is still so much more to explore in the wizarding world. The stage play and the movie *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* are embedded in this particular tradition of storytelling. It is telling that the stage play, which provides Harry's story with some kind of closure, had its premiere in the same year in which *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* embarks on a very different journey within the same universe. Thus, the year 2016 certainly marks a decisive step in the expansion of the Potterverse on stage and on screen.

In several respects, *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* seems to negotiate with the original series and partly even appears to deviate from frameworks readers of the novels may have expected: first of all, the sequel does not only rewrite the optimistic ending of the final novel (as it turns out that a representative of evil is still around), but it also subverts any precast ideas of 'good' and 'evil'; this time it is not a (more or less purely) evil male adult that has to be vanquished. Albus and Scorpius and their families have to defeat a female adolescent whom recipients may read as a daughter who merely tries to cope with her loss and who would simply do anything to be able to meet her father. Even characters who have been perceived as either dark or morally ambiguous and with whom readers are familiar, such as

[33] For an analysis of Rowling's "A History of Magic in North America", cf. the contribution by Aleksandra Szczodrowski in this volume.

Draco Malfoy, are morally realigned. Secondly, the positive image of Hogwarts as a home for a wizarding orphan, an extraordinary child, a perfect Gryffindor, is rewritten, because the focalization strategies highlight the perspective and perceptions of a rather common young wizard of Slytherin House (with his parents very much alive) for whom Hogwarts is mainly a place he does not cherish. Consequently, the play pursues an unusual narrative pace, the years at school are condensed, which leaves enough room for the introduction of alternative timelines. The phenomenon of time travel introduces the necessity of 'cleaning up the timeline' due to the temporal ripple effect and re-introduces the audience to already well-known characters or allows them to re-visit places that they recognise from the novels. As a matter of fact, this is only one of several narrative strategies that establish close links between the play and the original series. The fact that former protagonists still play important roles, the relevance of representing (Harry's) dreams or the reoccurrence of specific features or characters, such as the Invisibility Cloak or the trolley witch, is a narrative phenomenon which (in allusion to Mieke Bal's idea of travelling concepts) may be called 'travelling narrative entities', because they transcend several media with ease and can be rediscovered in various corners of the Potterverse. Hence, they mutually affirm the fictional world(s) and thus contribute to an *effet de réel* (Barthes) by adding semantic layers without questioning the validity of the narrated events. This strategy of assertion is echoed in the ending of *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*, a play which did not endow the young protagonists with as much agency as the original series: the final scenes do not promise the beginning of a new storytelling cycle, they rather convey a sense of closure.

'Closure' is certainly not what comes to mind with respect to the film *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them*. Maybe paradoxically it is precisely this prequel which promises the beginning of several new, alternative narratives that will go far beyond the fictional ground covered so far. Nevertheless, the film exhibits a range of strategies that link it to the other works in the Potterverse: the attention to detail continues the tradition of the *Harry Potter* movies; there are also links on the character level (e.g. Newt Scamander and Gellert Grindelwald) and other 'travelling entities', such as the Demiguise, the Erumpent, the Bowtruckle and the Niffler, whom the audience recognises from the original series. And, of course, on a more abstract level, the interrelation between the film and the various editions of the eponymous text needs to be mentioned. In a first step, these editions provide additional information especially on magical creatures as well as on Newt Scamander and, in a second step, the most recent edition welcomes readers as members of the wizarding community by offering them a foreword that supposedly appears exclusively in the edition for witches and wizards. This concept of transcultural transgression, i.e., the idea that the borders between the world of wizards and Muggles need not be that fixed, is picked up again in the movie as it includes, for the very first time, a Muggle/No-Maj playing a vital part and due to implicit and explicit characterisation strategies, Jacob Kowalski can certainly be seen as a likeable protagonist and as a true friend to Newt Scamander. The shift of focus to the magical creatures and their well-being and survival is equally innovative. In combination with Newt's educational approach, his dream to "[r]escue, nurture and protect them" (*Beasts* 104), *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* introduces a strong ecological stance into the Potterverse, which finds its best expression in Scamander's suitcase, which can be understood as a magical device that may be used to visualise a potential 'spatial ripple effect' on screen. It is not only the case that the suitcase houses various perfectly balanced ecosystems which provide the creatures with precisely the habitats they require, but the multiple (and potentially countless) compartments adapt and expand continuously to the needs of the moment. In other words, Scamander's suitcase endows the macrocosm of the metropolis New York City with a natural, heteroge-

nous microcosm that is very precious. If the suitcase were to fail, the worst 'spatial ripple effect' would follow, namely the extinction of several magical species.

The spatial (as well as temporal) expansion of the Potterverse constitutes also one of the main aspects of Pottermore. Yet Pottermore, too, transfers this "world-building experience" (Hutcheon 197) into your own home. It may be argued that more recent versions of Pottermore are less interactive and immersive than the original (maybe due to the ever-increasing competition of the videogame industry), but it is still a vital element of the Potterverse that contributes to its coherence (for example by supplying background knowledge on characters' biographies), to its internationalisation (for instance by providing further information on various wizarding schools) as well as to its being embedded in a socio-historical context (for example by exploring the histories of various wizarding families). Thus, Pottermore invites readers to acquire in-depth knowledge and/or to indulge in personal wizarding experiences, which allow them to be the agents or directors of their very own individual Potterverse expansion.

Given the multiple fictional worlds, numerous timelines and various spatial dimensions the Potterverse works with, it does not come as a surprise that the extension charm ('Capacious extremis!') is referred to time and again. It is this very spell that allows Hermione to carry around all of the things the trio needs in a small, "fragile-looking bag" (*Hallows* 135) and that makes it possible for Newt Scamander to house an entire magical microcosm inside his suitcase. Once one starts exploring the Potterverse, one gets the impression that an Extension Charm has been cast on it as well. Just as Newt Scamander has created a heterogenous microcosm in his suitcase, which adapts to the needs of its inhabitants, Rowling's Potterverse can be called a 'heterocosm' (Hutcheon), a "[w]orld […] adaptation" (Hutcheon 196) constituted (so far) mainly by the *Harry Potter* series and films, additional texts, various versions of *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* and Pottermore. This does not only mean that Rowling employs "arguably one of the most powerful immersive adaptation strategies in use today" (ibid.), but that she is (luckily) also capable of expanding her Potterverse even further. So it seems pretty clear that the Extension Charm, 'Capacious extremis!', works brilliantly on the Potterverse and that it continues to provide a perfect habitat for witches and wizards, Muggles and No-Majs – as well as for its readers.

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List of Abbreviations

The following abbreviations are used throughout the volume:

Stone	J.K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*
Chamber	J.K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*
Prisoner	J.K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*
Goblet	J.K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*
Phoenix	J.K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*
Prince	J.K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince*
Hallows	J.K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*
Fantastic Beasts	J.K. Rowling, *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them*
Tales	J.K. Rowling, *The Tales of Beedle the Bard*
Child	J.K. Rowling, John Tiffany and Jack Thorne, *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*
Illustrated	J.K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, illustrated by Jim Kay
Beasts	J.K. Rowling, *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them (The Original Screenplay)*

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