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The Imperfect Heroes of J.K. Rowling

Nedokonalí hrdinové v díle J.K. Rowlingové

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Abstract

This diploma thesis deals with the heroes of J.K. Rowling's novels, including her *Harry Potter* fantasy series, her *Cormoran Strike* detective series and her adult novel *The Casual Vacancy*. The aim of the thesis is to describe the archetypes of the heroes appearing in the stories and also to depict the types of the trials these heroes have to pass on their journey. In the following part the thesis observes the predominant type of the archetypes and the trials with respect to changing literary genres. The practical part points out the similarities between all Rowling's novels with the main focus on mother and father figures and their repetitive characteristic features.

Key words: J.K. Rowling, heroes, archetypes, trials, novel of trials, mother figures, father figures

Anotace

Tato diplomová práce se zabývá hrdiny románů J.K. Rowlingové, zahrnující fantasy sérii *Harry Potter*, detektivní romány řady *Cormoran Strike* a román pro dospělé čtenáře *Prázdné místo*. Hlavním cílem této práce je popsat archetypy hrdinů vyskytujících se ve zkoumaných příbězích a také vylíčit typy zkoušek, kterými tito hrdinové na své cestě musí projít.

Následující část práce se pokouší vypořádat převažující typy archetypů hrdiny a rovněž zkoušek s ohledem na měnící se literární žánry. Praktická část poukazuje na podobnosti mezi všemi romány od J.K. Rowlingové s hlavním zaměřením na mateřské a otcovské postavy a jejich opakující se rysy.

Klíčová slova: J.K. Rowlingová, hrdinové, archetypy, zkoušky, román zkoušek, mateřské postavy, otcovské postavy

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Introduction

The main goal of this diploma thesis is a comparative analysis of the heroes of all the novels written by the famous writer J. K. Rowling. With respect to the wide spectrum of research material, the thesis will deal mainly with the archetypes of heroes, the ideas of the trial and the description of mother and father figures, which can be found in all Rowling's novels, and also with the similarities between them.

In the introductory part the personality of J. K. Rowling, as well as the success and acceptance of her novels, will be discussed. The influence of the *Harry Potter* series on modern fiction and namely fantasy will be also briefly described. The theory of the archetypes of heroes will follow, with the aim to apply these archetypes onto the real heroes from the novels in the subsequent chapters and describe their roles as the archetypes.

Accordingly, the thesis will try to describe the main trials that the heroes have to pass during their journeys. Particular examples of the trials will be given, with the aim to observe whether the discussed types of the trials will remain the same despite the changing literal genre or whether we can discover a predominant type of the trial in Rowling's works.

The practical part of the thesis will try to compare the similar features of Rowling's characters, attempting to answer the following questions: Are there any similarities between all Rowling's novels? Can we find some patterns of her characters' features or of the plot that would repeat in all of her works?

By comparing the heroes, their behaviour and characteristic features from all the novels with focus on adult male and female role models in the position of mother or father, the thesis would like to find similarities in the characters discussed. Moreover, it will try to find some patterns in the storytelling or the topic of the novels that would give us a clue about the authorship of one person of all the novels examined.

I. Theoretical part

1. The phenomenon of J. K. Rowling

There are probably very few people in this world that would not know the famous wizard Harry Potter and his maker Joanne Rowling. Since the release of the first book, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* (1997), people all around the world become addicted to Rowling's wizarding world and the adventures of Harry and his loyal friends. During the release of *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* (1999) the release of the book had to be postponed until the afternoon to prevent children from skipping school in order to queue for the new book. The following book, *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire* (2000), broke all the previous records in sales, an unbelievable 3 million copies were sold during the first week of its publishing. In 1999 Rowling earned third place on Great Britain's list of wealthiest women and it is estimated that in the year 2000 only she earned over 36 million dollars. (Whited, 2002)

As Heilman (2008) points out, not only does this scenario remind us of the fairy tale about Cinderella if we consider Rowling's initial unfavourable financial situation, she also managed to do something that only several people have succeeded in - creation of an icon. This worldwide phenomenon reached even as far as such destinations as Siberia, Indian reservations and Harlem. Shops with Harry Potter goods can be found in almost all large cities in Great Britain, you can buy, for example, Bertie Bott's Every Flavour Beans that actually taste like earwax, soap or rotten egg. This phenomenon grew into something bigger that even got its own expression - Pottermania.

Described in the following chapters, Rowling's books that followed after the end of the *Harry Potter* series, *The Casual Vacancy* (2012) and the *Cormoran Strike* detective series (2013-2018), have not gained such favour from her fans compared to the stories about the young wizard. If we want to talk about a phenomenon, we will be talking mostly about Harry Potter. The essential question is then what makes Harry Potter so different from other non-phenomenal book series with for example a similar topic? Why is it that this young orphan with a scar and glasses, living eleven years in a cupboard under the stairs, managed to find his way into almost every book shop on the planet?

If we take a very brief look into Rowling's biography, we can barely find something really special that would differentiate her from any other author. She was born in 1965 near Bristol,

she grew up in different cities in England and Wales, she wanted to be a writer since early childhood and she wrote her first novel called *Rabbit* at the age of six. What is more interesting is the fact that her mother had been suffering from sclerosis since Rowling was a teenager and she died in 1990. (jkrowling.com, 2018)

This may explain some behaviour of the mother-figures in her stories, yet it still does not explain the reason behind the Harry Potter phenomenon. Whited (2002) is convinced that one of the reasons that really helped to bring Harry Potter books even bigger glory was the scandal that arose in 1999 when Nancy Stouffer accused Rowling of stealing her ideas based on Stouffer's book *Rah* from 1987. In this book Stouffer named her main character Larry Potter and his friend Lilly, moreover the expression "muggle" appeared there, used to describe Stouffer's made-up creatures. After Stouffer pressing charges against Rowling, several years of trials followed delaying the new Harry Potter book - *Harry Potter and the Order of Phoenix* - from its release. Finally, in 2002 Stouffer was accused of fraud and the charges against Rowling were dropped. The following year *The Order of Phoenix* finally came out and according to Whited (2002) it was paradoxically this pause and legal battle that put Harry in the spotlight of attention even more.

We of course cannot say that it was just this controversial affair that made a phenomenon out of *Harry Potter* and the cause is also connected with a few other factors. Levy & Mendlesohn (2016) sum the success of Harry Potter up into several factors:

We would argue that the success of the Harry Potter books lies in a number of different factors. The series features a particularly winning hero, a number of well-realized, endearing secondary characters and an unusually well-developed magic system. It also combines a rich textual surface, replete with clever ideas and language play (a rarely noticed equivalent may be Piers Anthony's Xanth novels, beginning with *A Spell for Chameleon*, 1977), with traditional but vaguely liberal values that are not too challenging to the young (or adult) reader's intellect. (p. 166)

If we think about this point of view, it could explain why Harry Potter is so popular not only with children but also with adults. Whereas this extremely well maintained wizards' world evokes the children's sense of fantasy, adventure and the unexpected, adults can actually identify themselves with any adult wizard in the series. According to Whited (2002) one of the main differentiating points of the *Harry Potter* series is Rowling's mastery of combining the real and fantasy world. *Harry Potter* is actually set into contemporary England instead of separated middle-aged land. If we leave the surrounding of Hogwarts, we can get an insight into the

everyday life of wizards, for example, the Ministry of Magic. Just the simple fact that this world coexists directly next to our world, the world of muggles, and is comparative to ours by even having legal authorities and government, makes Rowling's world more realistic. As Whited (2002) very precisely reminds us, the wizards actually have to find a job, have to find a place in this magic world, even though they can use magic. They still have to study, still have to apply for a different careers.

This mirroring of our world gives the reader many possibilities to shift his own life into this fantastical world. It can also be one of the reasons why *Harry Potter* is the book series with the most fanfiction stories that try to either continue with the story, transform or even precede the story. This huge influence of the fans is, according to Whited (2002), also one of the factors that differentiate *Harry Potter* from other fantasy books, as well as the huge success of movie adaptations.

1.1 Children's fantasy since 1990's and the influence of J.K. Rowling

In 1990's the children's fantasy literature divided into the children's fiction and teen fiction, also called as Young Adult. These two groups often blended into each other as the readers of the first age group often read books dedicated to the readers of the second age group and vice versa. It is impossible to say what exactly the main indicator of this division was. It is generally described that the books for children usually avoid depicting topics connected with puberty and adolescence such as sex, violence or lightless endings, whereas so called young adult books frequently pay attention to the aforementioned. Especially in the case of series that tell the story in the extent of several years, these two types of literature usually change from the first type to the second as the protagonists grow up and more serious and complex issues are there for them to be solved. (Levy, Mendlesohn, 2016)

The *Harry Potter* books could be considered the type of series that starts as an innocent children's fiction and then transforms into young adult series. The books are usually unofficially divided into the first and the second half. The breaking point is the ending of *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire (2000)*, which represents the second half. What differentiates it from its predecessors the most is the tone of the whole story, which suddenly goes really dark and serious as the main villain Lord Voldemort returns to the wizarding world with his full power, which is a premonition for another great war. The second indicator is the length of the book,

which is suddenly more than twice as long as the previous *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* (1999). Another often added distinctive factor is the number of various spaces in which the story is set. (Murphy, Matterson, 2018)

If we think about the perspective of the features of young adult fiction, the line between these two halves represents exactly the line between children's fiction and young adult fiction. It is in *The Goblet of Fire* when all three main heroes for example start to be interested in the opposite sex. Harry has his first crush on Cho Chang, Ron falls in love with beautiful half fairy Fleur Delacour and Hermione let herself be charmed by the famous Viktor Krum. It is also the first time we actually witness real violence, let alone death itself. Even the opening scene ends with the death of an innocent old muggle man.

We learn more about the ways of misusing magic including the unforgivable curses like killing curse or torturing curse. The serious social and political questions arise, as we get acquainted for the first time with the terms like Death Eater or Dark Mark and their meaning and consequences. The terms like pure blood, mudblood or superiority that were in the first three books mentioned only during children's fights with Draco Malfoy as an angry offence suddenly become real and very relevant. Hermione reveals the truth about house elves and their "slavery" just to find out that the society does not intend to change anything in the system and neither do the enslaved elves. Harry has to witness his schoolmate's murder and is for the first time absolutely powerless and without any allies and if it wasn't for Voldemort's desire to kill him in a fair fight, he would have died defenceless. More and more examples could be given to prove that *The Goblet of Fire* indeed cannot be called a children's fiction.

According to Levy & Mendlesohn (2016), after 1990's fantasy became the most visible genre on the market in general and the cause can be found in the three main factors:

There were three factors: the first and the most easily recognized was the dual success of Philip Pullman's Carnegie Medal-winning *Northern Lights* (1995) and the mega-bestselling *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* by J. K. Rowling (1997); the second was the internationalization of the book trade through the drop in postal rates and the rise of Amazon; and third, the development of overseas contracts, which changed the nature of the market. (p. 164)

The releasing of *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* and its success inspired many authors to publish their books and contribute to the so called 'fantasy revival'. The first group of the authors were these who wrote some wizard stories before. Witnessing the interest of

children towards the story of the young wizard, they immediately started publishing them. From these we can name for example Diane Duane and her *Young Wizard* series, beginning with *You Want to Be a Wizard* (1983), or Jane Yolen's *Wizard's Hall* (1991). Another group of authors of fantasy stories that became wanted and successful were these who developed the topic of boarding schools. An environment of a school offers the authors relatively wide spectre of relationships to work with. Heroes are also more independent as they are no longer under the care of their parents and teachers represent authoritative and distant unit. The *Harry Potter* series also once more opened a topic of the role of destiny and predestination seen previously for example in Lewis's *The Chronicles of Narnia* (1950-56). From the books that very successfully followed this trend at the beginning of the 21st century we can name *Percy Jackson and the Olympians* books (2005-9) by Rick Riordan. (Levy, Mendelsohn, 2016)

Another feature of so called fantasy revival was a tendency to divide fantasy stories into categories according to different approaches. Mendlesohn (2008) in her work argues that there are four essential categories throughout fantasy determined by the way in which the fantastic enters into the story - the portal quest fantasy, the immersive fantasy, the intrusion fantasy and the liminal fantasy. The *Harry Potter* novels are according to her a crossover between the intrusion fantasy and the portal-quest fantasy. As the representative of the intrusion fantasy the magic world brings the chaos in the form of owls appearing in Privet Drive, Hagrid bursting in on Dursley's or the house elf Dobby who in *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* (1998) represents chaos and disturbing in itself by destroying the important business dinner of Harry's relatives. The crossover into the portal-quest fantasy is then given by Harry being clueless about the wizard's world in the beginning and his consequent exploring of this new world until he can actually manipulate the fantastic. (Mendlesohn, 2008)

In a nutshell, we can clearly see that Rowling's *Harry Potter* series had a huge influence on the development of fantasy at the end of 20th century and at the beginning of 21st century. Even though Rowling was not the only author that influenced the way that children's fantasy fiction went and *Harry Potter* was one of the series that contributed to so call fantasy revival, she was one of the main influencers of this time and she inspired other authors to publish their works. She once more brought to light previous topics and gave them the new idea, in her new own style. In one of the following chapters we will try to think about the reason why the *Harry Potter* series are still favourites after all these years and what is so unusual about the wizards' world she created that it fascinates not only young but also adult readers over and over again.

1.2 Rowling's books for adults

The Casual Vacancy (2012), Rowling's first novel for adults, has now according to *jkrowling.com* been translated into 44 languages and was even adapted for TV by BBC in 2015.

Although this statement may have given one an impression that *The Casual Vacancy* is a very successful novel and a work well accepted by critiques, many of these critics and reviewers do not share this enthusiasm and positivity.

The novel's greatest flaw is in its slapdash style and limited sense of observation. Cliches abound too: abdominal muscles are 'chiselled', breezes are (frequently) 'gentle' and small country towns are 'sleepy'. (Philip Hensher, 2012, Sep 29.)

Philip Hensher in his review (2012) very sharply calls *The Casual Vacancy* not adult novel but "adultish" novel driven only by the need for showing the importance of communities sticking together. The main pillars of the novel are according to him realistic and raw description of the teenagers and relatively good plot. The characters of adults are on the other hand too much stereotypical and almost give the impression of caricatures.

Foreman (2013) in her more moderate review compares Rowling's influence to her readers and the interest in her books, that escalates into almost hysteria, at the times between releasing the first *Harry Potter* book (1997) and the last one (2007) to Dickens' *The old curiosity shop* coming out in magazines between 1840 and 1841. She uses this comparison in many ways and for many reasons, one of them is the similarity between people trying to guess with passion about the characters' next life stories and also queuing several hours in order to get the new piece of story as soon as possible. She claims that Rowling would not in fact need to publish anything else and still would remain the legend in the world of children's literature.

According to Foreman it was exactly this influence that made Rowling turn from fantasy to protestant Victorian novel in a similar style as Dickens used to write. She actually wanted to make her readers think about social problems, she tried to use her influence and encourage them to change the world around them. She in fact totally understand this move and as she reminds, Rowling is not the first neither the last successful author who made such an attempt. She also points out that the inspiration for the novel came from two famous crimes:

The first comes from the 1993 abduction and murder of a toddler by two 10-year-old boys who were known by their courtroom designations as "Child A" and "Child B." The pair encountered several passers-by as they dragged their sobbing hostage on his final journey, none of whom attempted to rescue the victim. The second crime involved the 2007 torture and murder of a little boy by his mother and her lodgers. Known in the courtroom as "Baby P," the child died despite receiving over 60 visits from social workers, police officers and health workers, who were evidently either lazy, incompetent or blind to his plight. A recurring motif in both these events was the cry "Who is to blame?"

Foreman suggests that Rowling is in her novel set in rather idyllic town Pagford actually trying to answer the main question of the second crime - who is to blame? Moreover, she in her opinion always felt a kind of compassion with the suffering middle-classed people and whereas in *Harry Potter* it is generally represented by most of the muggles, in *The Casual Vacancy* it is teenagers who carry this social burden, again in a very Dickensian style.

Nevertheless, in the similar way as Hensher in his review mentioned above, Foreman reproaches Rowling for the style of writing in this novel. In her point of view Rowling cannot help herself but applies some principles of children's literature into adults' novel. She for example uses too many physical metaphors to describe the emotional state of mind, ignoring the fact that this exaggerated using of adverbs and adjectives are not desired by adults. Many of these cliches as Hensher already mentioned are the result of exactly this effort to direct the way of the adult reader's perception.

The Casual Vacancy has various characters feeling guilt "clawing" at their "insides," a "hollowness in the stomach," fear "fluttering" inside the "belly," a "queasy" stomach, a "lowering in the pit" of the stomach, a "knot" in the stomach.

Foreman unlike Hensher yet emphasises Rowling's creative and observation skills. She even claims that Rowling is at the height of these skills. As she suggests better editing would probably do a lot and if the novel was shorter it would be even greater. With such a length it simply gives Rowling the chance to put every issue and idea she ever had and wanted to say into the story and it simply seems a little bit chaotic. Though she does not give up on Rowling's adult novels and she hopes for a better result next time.

The first book of Rowling's detective stories featuring Cormoran Strike, *The Cuckoo's Calling*, was published in 2013 under the pseudonym Robert Galbraith. (jkrowling.com) The true identity of the author was released in July 2013 and led to an immediate boost in selling and reprinting of *The Cuckoo's Calling*. Many people naturally saw the purpose behind this act as

the revealing of Rowling's authorship was the necessary response for an accidentally posted tweet where her true name instead of the pseudonym appeared. Rowling's agent Neil Blair refused all these accusations with reasoning that there were no new books waiting to be released and it would not be a clever move. (Tackholm, 2013)

The preceding books followed still under the pseudonym, *The Silkworm* in 2014, *Career of Evil* in 2015 and the newest book *Lethal White* was released this year (2018). (jkrowling.com)

Coben (2014) admits that it is simply impossible to separate the real value of the work from its author's personality. As he admits in his review of the second book, *The Silkworm* (2014), the previous success of the author will always have an impact on his following work, even if it absolutely diverges in the genre. It is at the same time very difficult for the readers not to be searching for connections with the Harry Potter world while reading any of Rowling's novels. Coben for example reminds the effort of Harry Potter fans to draw an analogy between Cormoran Strike and Rubeus Hagrid for them both being noticeable bigger than other people around and clumsy in both a physical and a social way. He claims that such connections are more than forced and Rowling herself has many times denied any connection between her two created worlds. His final evaluation of the book is then very positive, he highlights Rowling's story-telling skills and her working with crime genre even though she will probably never overshadow the better crime story writers from her country like for example Peter Robinson, Ian Rankin or Kate Atkinson.

We can see that the mere name Rowling will come with a high expectation. The Harry Potter legend Rowling created will accompany her for the rest of her life. The question is whether such an honour is not also a curse at the same time. *The Casual Vacancy* would probably not have gained so much critique if it had not been for the expectations of Rowling's genius and her previous glory. *The Cuckoo's Calling* and the whole *Cormoran Strike* series would not have been so famous without knowing of Rowling's authorship which is of course good from the economic reasons but if we think about it, Rowling obviously had a good reason to choose to publish it under the pseudonym. As Coben (2014) already mentioned it is extremely difficult to ignore the phenomenon of J.K. Rowling in any evaluation or review and maybe that is exactly what Rowling wanted - to be evaluated and even criticised for her writing and story itself, not for her previous glory.

2. Hero and heroism in literature

At the beginning of this chapter we would like to point out several basic types of heroes that appear in the literature from its origin and try to apply these types onto our examined heroes and compare them later.

As Eagleton (2013) claims, it is important to differentiate a type from stereotype. A literary hero should on one hand be very original and individualised, on the second hand a reader subconsciously expects it to have some same or at least similar qualities as heroes from his previous experience. This expectation of qualities allows a reader to assess the character of a hero from the beginning and create an imaginary bond with it. It allows readers to emotionally cling to a hero and sympathise with it. It nonetheless does not have to mean that qualities of a hero should be stereotypical or a hero itself should be stereotypical. It is not thrown in any general category or group and it can still keep its individuality.

The more precise point of view is presented by Campbell (1968) who says that this expectations of heroic characters are given by so called archetypes. His theory of archetypes was inspired by psychoanalysts like C.G. Jung or Sigmund Freud. In a nutshell it means that we already have an image of how something should look like in our minds, for example of a hero and his actions and qualities. These expectations are created and influenced by the tradition of an ancestral myth. These images in our minds are therefore also called mythological images and these images are the resources for so called archetypes.

According to Campbell (1968), these archetypes are actually pictures of original ancient heroes who usually set off to their passage with a certain task to fulfil, creating a usual scheme of their path: *separation - initiation - return*. In a phase of separation a hero usually leaves his normal human world and enters a supernatural one. The main phase of initiation represents the core of a story. It includes an appearance of evil forces, possibly an arch-enemy, hero's meeting with them, dealing with them and his final successful confrontation achieved by attaining his own forces and allies, and using magical and protective charms, trinkets and weapons. In the final phase - return - a hero comes back from his adventure back to his "normal" world but abounding with his new forces. He actually stops being just a human as he can now overcome all the people including his fellows and he becomes something closer to God.

On the basis of these archetypes and mainly the aim of the adventurous journey Campbell divides heroes into several types:

- ☐ the Hero as Warrior
- x the Hero as Lover
- x the Hero as Emperor and as Tyrant
- x the Hero as World Redeemer
- x the Hero as Saint

According to Campbell's description, the Hero as a Warrior from the mythological point of view sets off to his journey in order to kill his main enemy represented by a tyrant, a dragon, a villain, anyone who abuses the power or the authority. It is usually the pride that causes his fall because he believes that he is the strongest and cleverest above all and he is therefore predestined to be tricked. It is usually the hero's role to possess some secret knowledge that usually brings the doom of the tyrant. It can be a secret weakness, a secret weapon, in other words anything that can destroy him.

The Hero as Lover then sets off to his journey with another aim. His task is usually to set his love free from a tyrant. It can be a bride kidnapped by a dragon or wife taken by an enemy king, a girl kept as a prisoner by her evil stepmother or too strict father. Success or failure of a lover is then measured by her releasing from any form of a prison. By overcoming obstacles on his journey the hero actually proves himself worthy of his maiden, he proves himself to be the only right man for her love.

The Emperor is hero who usually possesses unusual wisdom needed for administering justice in a law and legal way. More than a sword his main weapon is a law book and pair of glasses. He sees beyond the horizon and is ready to change things. Thy Tyrant is then a hero who abuses this power and de facto changes into antihero, into the tyrant that needs to be overthrown. It is usually calling for another hero then, to set off on his journey and defeat this previous overcome hero.

World Redeemer is such a type of hero who becomes closer with God more than other heroes, he basically realises that he and the saint father are one and the same person. His task is than seemingly the same as for example Warrior's - to defeat the evil creature represented for example by a dragon, an ogre, a vicious king and to free the world. Unlike the Warrior he very often has to make a sacrifice to do so, usually he pays with his own life for the freedom of others.

The Saint is then described as a hero that is actually already beyond the myth itself. The myth now cannot describe its form because they are out of the realm. He becomes something more, he becomes the legend, stepping into the ultimate world.

Hunter (2008) as a response for the postmodern development of heroes introduces more modern points of view of so called archetypes based on Jung's original division (1959). He claims that a hero actually goes through all the basic archetypes on his journey. He starts as the innocent and ends as the magician. The passing through all these states is necessary for completing a hero's destiny, his journey, and transformation of his character. His division is represented by:

- x the innocent
- x the orphan
- x the pilgrim
- x the warrior-lover
- x the monarch
- x the magician

If we compare this theory with Campbell's archetypes, we can see that they are in the end very similar, especially the warrior-lover and the monarch. Hunter is using the archetypes for describing a character development more whereas Campbell is more orientated towards the myth and tradition itself. Due to the modern concept of Hunter's division, his archetypes are more reliable to postmodern heroes.

3. A novel of trials

According to Bachtin (1980) the idea of a trial is the key topic that differentiates a novel from an epos. It allows to depict serious philosophical questions and to draw a complex in-depth psychology of characters even in an adventurous novel. The origins of a novel of trials appears back in medieval times and even ancient Greece, the exact content of the trials is modified by the times and current social groups. Bachtin divides these basic contents of the trials into the Christian idea, the Greek idea and the modified ideas of the 19th century.

The Christian idea puts a hero through the trial by torturing and death on one hand and by a temptation to yield to demonic forces on the other. The Greek idea of a trial is based on hero's loyalty, love and valour. The first modified idea of a trial comes at the beginning of the 19th century. The hero is suddenly tested in the question of his competence of a given task, his genius or him being the chosen one. The second modification of the original ideas comes at the turn of the 19th and 20th century. The idea of a trial is represented by a hero's strong personality, his leadership skills and also his opposition towards the majority from various reasons.

3.1. A novel of development vs. a novel of trials

According to Bachtin (1980) in the 18th century a few specialists started to differentiate another type of a novel - a development novel. This novel was then put in the opposition of a novel of trials. According to these specialists like Wieland, Wezel or Blankenburg the original novel of trials may in some forms recognize basic changes in hero's character development like crisis or final transformation but neglect the development of a hero as whole. It does not describe such things as for example maturation or shaping of a character.

A novel of development puts a new type of a hero in opposition to a hero from a novel of trials. Whereas in a novel of trials a hero is already almost perfect, mature individual and completed character, in a novel of development a hero comes to his final character through some way. Another distinctive feature is the fact that it is exactly this way of a hero, his life, his surroundings and his life events that form his character, shape him and influence him.

Bachtin also mentions that these two types of a novel tend to blend and complement each other instead of standing separately, especially since the 20th century. This connection is

characteristic by the main hero being morally split on many occasions, nothing is black and white anymore, good mingles with evil and strength mingles with weakness.

If we think about the *Harry Potter* series, it actually represents exactly this blending of both types. It is true that trials are contained throughout the whole series and every hero actually stands before his own trial in the end. At the same we can nevertheless watch a development of these characters mediated right throughout these trials and their passing or failing. Most importantly we can see how the series of life events, the surroundings and environment form the character of not only heroes but also villains. We will deal with heroes' development more deeply in the practical part of this thesis but for now we will give two basic examples. If we take a look at Voldemort's past, we cannot be surprised he is actually not able to love anyone. He himself was raised in an orphanage, abandoned by both of his parents and no one actually really loved him. Fear was the only way he could he attract attention towards himself and win the respect of others.

Harry, even though he too was growing up without parents, subconsciously knew that his parents loved him and he also knew that they had not chosen to leave him. This love from his parents was his source of mental power for the whole time he lived with his aunt and uncle. Paradoxically, it was their neglecting and in some cases even bullying that let Harry's character crystallize into such a good, modest and humble boy. If we compare his character with his cousin Dudley who is the same age, we can clearly see how spoiled and vicious his parent's exaggerated care made him. This is what Dumbledore realises when he has his last talk with the Dursley's in *Harry Potter and the Half Blood Prince (2005)* as he knows he is already dying and wants to express his attitude towards their behaviour one last time.

“You did not do as I asked. You have never treated Harry as a son. He has known nothing but neglect and often cruelty at your hands. The best that can be said is that he has at least escaped the appalling damage you have inflicted upon the unfortunate boy sitting between you.” (p. 47)

In other words, if the Dursley's actually accepted Harry as their own son and gave him the same care as they gave to Dudley, Harry Potter could have been just a spoiled brat. He could have made a friendship with Draco Malfoy the first time he met him at Madame Malkin's shop in Diagon Alley. He could have ended up in Slytherin and actually yielded to the temptation of the dark magic. Nothing of that happened because it was exactly the cruelty and spoiled characters he used to see around for eleven years that formed his strong personality with a special sense of good.

The same blending of a novel of development and a novel of trials we can see in the other Rowling's novels. In the case of *The Casual Vacancy* the biggest character development undergoes Sukhvinder Jawanda who during her heroic effort to save little Robbie almost dies but goes back as a stronger personality ready to defend not only her interests but also the interests of other people. Another very significant development of character can be also seen in Samantha Mollison, who gives up drinking alcohol and her erotic imaginations with other guys and realises how much she loves her husband and family. Moreover, she decides to dedicate her future effort into helping other people through the chair in the town council.

In the *Cormoran Strike* series we mainly watch Robin's personal development when she changes from the girl who does everything to please her boyfriend including moving to London for him and accepting boring job she is not interested in to the young woman who follows her long forgotten dream of being a detective and she is ready to help other people fight for justice. Her development is unfortunately almost thrown away in the moment she decides to marry her fiancé despite her inner desires and doubts and she leaves that independent strong woman behind. We can only assume how Robin's development will continue, if at all.

II. Practical part

4. Heroism in the novels

4.1 Heroism in the Harry Potter series

As Alice Mills in her essay *Archetypes and the Unconscious in Harry Potter and Diana Wynne Jones's Fire and Hemlock and Dogsboddy* (Anatol, 2003) reminds, the *Harry Potter* series are filled with archetypes and myths from the beginning till the end. Most of the myths comes usually from ancient Greek, such as centaurs, three headed dog guarding the door or the healing power of blood. She also suggest the possibility of interpreting the relationship between Harry and Voldemort as Oedipal power struggle between son and father. In her point of view Voldemort is the opposite of ego-ideal figure of Harry's dead father, James Potter. Voldemort is according to her monstrous father-figure and the prophecy represents exactly this struggle of a father to kill his son before his son kills him.

If we take a closer look at our heroes' destinies, we can also find some inspiration by archetypal features. According to Mills (Anatol, 2003) Harry is interpreted as the most innocent one, which is proven throughout the whole series when he never actually yields to the temptation of dark forces or amoral behaviour. His first victory is achieved even before the first book begins, when he resists the killing curse of lord Voldemort and even defeats him by taking his power away from him. This victory is actually a mystery for the whole wizards' world, only Dumbledore knows the truth for the whole time and he later reveals this secret to Harry. Nevertheless the whole wizards' world actually does not need to know this explanation. In their eyes it was a miracle and Harry is a saviour, the chosen one who saved them. In their eyes, Harry is very similar to Jesus, the God's baby born in order to bring them peace.

The hero's journey described above by Campbell (1968) according to Julia Boll (Berndt, Steveker, 2011) starts with Harry's arrival to Hogwarts. As she reasons, Harry was as a baby put into a normal world where he actually never belonged to. Despite of this fact, he spent eleven years living in this world before he finally learned about the wizards' world and set off to his journey. Harry's return to this normal world he does not belong to every summer and his repetitive returning to the supernatural is yet not typical. Harry according to Boll fulfils the first

two states of Campbell's journey before he is fully trained and ready to enter the last phase, the last trial. Even though she acknowledges the contributions of Campbell's heroic theory, she argues that the 21st century heroes are postmodern heroes who underwent a noticeable transformation and therefore Campbell's theory has been surpassed in some regards.

According to Boll, Jung's (1959) division of special child archetypes are more reliable and applicable in the Harry Potter case. She works with his theory of basic figure archetypes that can be furthermore differentiated by certain types or forms of these archetypes. The basic archetypes in Jung's (1959) point of view are the hero, the companion, the shadow, the mentor, the shapeshifter, the goddess, the threshold guardian, the herald and the trickster. The types are then very similar to Hunter's point of view, such as the innocent, the orphan etc. Moreover every character can represent more than one archetype according to his developing role in the story. That is exactly the case of the main protagonist Harry Potter as she proves in her essay *Harry Potter's Archetypal Journey* (Berndt, Steveker, 2011):

“As the eponymous protagonist of the story, Harry Potter embodies several forms of the hero-archetype (discussed by Jung in its particular form of the child archetype: Jung, 1959, pp.151–81): he is the innocent, the orphan, the seeker, the warrior and the magician.” (p. 89)

We have already explained how Harry matches with the innocent type of hero. The orphan type that he also fulfils is, with respect to the death of Harry's parents and his consequent life at cruel relatives, relatively easy to prove. Boll then sees the parallel between Harry's position of a seeker during the Quidditch matches and the archetype of the seeker for the truth.

If we take a look to another characters from the story, the typical companion archetype is according to Boll represented by Harry's best friends Ron Weasley and Hermione Granger. Their main task in the role of this archetype is not to help Harry fight in the battle but to provide him with valuable advice and lessons. Ron and Hermione also cross to the mentor and the trickster archetype.

The shadow archetype is according to Boll represented by lord Voldemort as the reflection of Harry's dark self. It is true that Harry himself is many times actually bothered by the similarities between him and lord Voldemort. They both share the destiny of an orphan, moreover thanks to Voldemort's making a horcrux from Harry they even share their minds and some abilities like Parseltongue, which is said to be the sign of the dark magic. Voldemort himself is also able to see these similarities, this shadowing of his own destiny, and he many times tries to abuse it

against Harry, to convert him to the dark side. The most brightly is this topic discussed in *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets (1998)*:

“Suddenly, something that was nagging at Harry came tumbling out of his mouth. ‘Professor Dumbledore ... Riddle said I’m like him. Strange likenesses, he said ...’

‘Did he, now?’ said Dumbledore, looking thoughtfully under his thick silver eyebrows at Harry. ‘And what do you think, Harry?’

‘I don’t think I’m like him!’ said Harry, more loudly than he’d intended. ‘I mean, I’m – I’m in Gryffindor, I’m ...’ But he fell silent, a lurking doubt resurfacing in his mind.” (p. 255)

Other typical archetypes represented in the *Harry Potter* series are according to Boll Dumbledore as the mentor, Snape as the shapeshifter, also crossing into a mentor, Minerva McGonagall or Molly Weasley as goddesses, the threshold guardian as Fluffy, Draco Malfoy and also Severus Snape, herald as Hagrid and Sibyl Trelawney and tricksters being Weasley twins, Fred and George.

Dumbledore becomes the archetype of the mentor from the first book, *The Philosopher’s Stone*. It is he who decides about Harry’s destiny for the first eleven years of his life in the first place, furthermore when it is time for Harry to find out the truth about his parents and his powers, he wisely sends Hagrid to deliver him this message personally and answer all Harry’s questions. He also gives Harry the Invisible Cloak afterwards as an heirloom from his father James Potter, he watches over Harry when the young boy discovers the tricky Mirror of Erised and at the end of the book it is again Dumbledore who explains to Harry the mystery of Lilly Potter’s sacrifice. As the story continues, Dumbledore continues in his archetype of a mentor culminating in *Harry Potter and the Half Blood Prince (2005)* when he appears in a role of a mentor literally, trying to reveal Harry the truth about lord Voldemort and the horcruxes during their private lessons.

Snape on the other hand appears in the role of the mentor only once, in *The Order of Phoenix*, when he gives Harry the lessons of occlumency. Otherwise he is a typical shapeshifter. Starting as a hated teacher who does not miss a single chance to bully Harry to punish him for his father’s sins, he in the end appears as the broken hearted man who accidentally contributed to his love’s death and as his redemption and honouring Lilly Potter’s memory he promised to keep her son safe. This shapeshifter archetype is moreover supported by Snape’s spying activities on Voldemort and actually being a double agent, shifting from one side to another.

The goddess archetype in the *Harry Potter* series is represented by several female characters with different qualities. On one hand we can see the archetype of a goddess as a symbol of mother's love and fertility, in which case Molly Weasley is a typical representative with her seven children, keeping the household and behaving warmly towards all people in need. Minerva McGonagall on the other hand represents more authoritative archetype of a goddess based on the power and wisdom. She is described as very strict and cold person who is sometimes terrifying, on the other she shows many times during the novels that she actually cares about her students. According to Boll (Berndt, Steveker, 2011) many other female characters could be counted as the goddess archetype such as Lilly Potter, Ginny Weasley or even Hermione.

The archetype of the threshold guardian can be very obviously seen in the three-headed dog Fluffy protecting the door leading to the Philosopher's stone. As Boll suggests, the less obvious representatives are then Draco Malfoy and Severus Snape. The main task of this archetype is to test and question the hero's qualities and resilience. Draco and Snape both push the right button to reveal Harry's wrath and violence repeatedly. These are exactly the qualities that many times get Harry into a dangerous situation and we can say they are his main weakness. Moreover Draco usually attacks Harry's closest friends who are more like a family to Harry, which means he is more sensitive to these offences. Snape on the other hand never forgets to remind Harry how terrible his father was and how Harry inherited all the bad qualities and with such an icon that James Potter represents through the first four books it is extremely painful for Harry to listen to these offences.

Hagrid represents the herald archetype because it is he who delivers Harry the message from Hogwarts and starts his journey as a wizard. Sybil Trelawney is then the source of the legendary prophecy that influences Harry's whole life, sets Voldemort on the path of killing his parents and makes Voldemort and Harry deadly enemies. The Weasley twins are then in Boll's point of view typical tricksters. They do not do any good, throughout the whole series we can watch their pranks and jokes on almost every character, on the other hand they are essentially good heroes and help the main hero by delivering important clues and creating the chaos. Fred and George give Harry the valuable Marauder's map and their chaotic prank culminates in a huge firework explosion in *The Order of Phoenix*, actually helping Harry to get into professor Umbridge's cabinet.

As we can see, the archetypes usually shift from one to another and there is rarely any character that would stay as the one clear archetype. Moreover, as we already know from Hunter's theory

(2008) the heroes actually should walk this path of changing different archetypes and types because it is the part of their natural character development and it is also the scheme of the new heroic journey of new postmodern heroes.

4.2 Heroism in The Casual Vacancy

If we want to take a closer look at the archetypes appearing in *The Casual Vacancy* from Campbell's (1968) point of view, as the first and very visible one seems to be Barry Fairbrother. In the point of view of his fighting for the people from unfavourable life circumstances, he can be seen as an archetype of a hero as the Warrior. Barry represents a warrior in a figurative sense of meaning. The enemy he needs to defeat is the town council with very conservative opinions led by Howard Mollison. The secret knowledge that in this case Barry carries is his own origin as he himself grew up in the unpopular Fields but he managed to get a great education and now he is one of the prominent inhabitants of Pagford. The secret weapon that helps Barry to fulfil his task is then represented by Krystal Weedon and the press. With his article in which he makes an interview with Krystal Weedon, one of the children who live in the Fields but attend the school in Pagford, Barry wants to point out the importance of the possibility of good education for the children from the Fields.

His main enemy on the political and social field is then represented by a shopkeeper named Howard Mollison. When we consider Howard's motives throughout the novel, we can classify him as the Tyrant archetype of a hero. His secondary motive can be the happiness and prosperity of his family, however the main motive still remains the same - the desire for power and influence. Howard slowly shifts into this tyrant role after some time, having the feeling that the Fields have uncontrollable power that he cannot direct. It is this craving for being in control of everything that makes Howard the tyrant. He does not look at the interests of other people, with very rare exceptions in his family circle, and he only follows his own goals. His social influence rising from his position as a successful shopkeeper, city councilman and him being a senior citizen gives him a possibility to manipulate people and persuade them to vote in his favour. This influence gets even much stronger after his son Miles is voted to take the place of Barry Fairbrother in the council.

His wife Shirley seems to be the similar archetype of the Tyrant from the point of view of the desire for power. The problem in her case is that she actually does not carry any important

social post except for being an administrator of the Pagford website and Howard's wife which are two very inconsequential functions. Therefore she uses her husband's influence to advance her own interests and as the victims for her tyrannical whims she usually chooses women. It is interesting to compare these two tyrants as Howard Mollison usually chooses to fight only men like Barry Fairbrother or Colin Walls whereas even to his women enemies like Parminder Jawanda he does not show any hatred or anger, only a sort of indulgence. Shirley, on the other hand, strictly chooses the women from her surroundings to bully or to express her strong antipathy toward. From the women of Pagford we can name for example her daughter-in-law Samantha, her husband's business partner Maureen, doctor Parminder Jawanda or even her own daughter Patricia.

The real Tyrant is then represented by Simon Price. Believing in his own uniqueness and perfection he cannot stand anyone else's opinion and in his distant house on the hill he represents the true tyrant of the Price household. Moreover, he stands to this role even in a physical way, as we can watch his often fits of rage, in which he usually beats his wife and both sons. This tyrannical behaviour of his father puts Andrew into a position of the Warrior even though he does not fight in a literal sense. He uses his secret knowledge of his father's frauds and illegal trades to throw him down and as a weapon he uses an SQL injection and online forum to make the public be aware of it. His effort leads to the short term success when his father loses the job, however in the further future this means moving to another city for the Price family and the tyrant is not dethroned at all, as it is a likelihood that Simon's fits of rage and beating of his family members will continue.

Given the position of Howard Mollison as the tyrant, we can also classify Barry Fairbrother as another of Campbell's archetypes which is the Emperor. By fighting the town council and namely Howard Mollison, Barry represents the warrior archetype of an hero, nevertheless by his detached view on the Fields and people living there, his experience in this lifestyle and his devotion to arrange a better life for its inhabitants shifts him into the archetype of the Emperor. From this point of view Barry meets all the characteristics of the Emperor - he sees further than the others, he really wants to change things and he moreover realises that this change is necessary for the future generation of Pagford.

After the Emperor is dead, the Tyrant represented by Howard Mollison gets directly to the power. We though never actually find out if the change Barry sought for ever happens or not, as the series of events following after the elections and voting are so chaotic that the future of the city is moved to the background and we get only ambiguous clues. On one hand we follow

the planned leaving of the social worker Kay and her daughter Gaia, which means there will be one less person trying to save the Bellchapel clinic. On the other hand, Samantha Mollison finds another life goal in trying to make Pagford and other people's lives better, starting with considering to fight for the Bellchapel. We can only guess if the effort of the Warrior and Emperor Barry Fairbrother was in the end meaningful or not.

We would also like to describe some archetypes based on Hunter's (2008) theory. If we search for an innocent archetype, probably the only characters that fits this archetype are young Robbie, the son of Terri Weedon and brother of Krystal Weedon, Sukhvinder Jawanda and of course, Barry Fairbrother. Barry is basically not guilty of any bad act throughout the whole novel, the only reproaches on his address comes from blinded Howard Mollison and his family and his own wife Mary who selfishly wanted her husband's full attention and she did not like his attachment to the Fields and namely Krystal Weedon.

Robbie as a four year old child can hardly bear any guilt and he can in some cases also shift to an archetype of orphan. Even though he still has his mother, the only person who really cares for him is his sister Krystal who must deal with her own problems and she cannot take care of him fully. Robbie even once was in a foster care as we know and considering his tragic death by drowning in the river Orr he actually leaves this world as an orphan no one cares about. Despite Sukhvinder's enormous effort to save his life and Krystal's and Terri's enormous grief ending by Krystal's suicide Robbie was all alone in the moment of his death and it was the lack of care and attention towards him was what caused his death.

Sukhvinder Jawanda is an archetype of hero that develops to a great extent. Starting as an innocent one who only wants to survive another day at school, shifting into an orphan sometimes, when ignored by her father and siblings and scolded by her mother, Sukhvinder actually changes into a magician archetype after her attempt to save Robbie's life. It is not only Stuart's collapse saving her from his everyday offences and bullying or the gratitude of Krystal's relatives ensuring her the safety at school that forms her new face of heroism.

The incident itself changes Sukhvinder after she emerges from the dark cold water of river Orr with the finding that she actually does not want to die in spite of considering suicide countless times before. With the sudden love and support of her parents she comes back as a new Sukhvinder who is in the same way a magician strong, wise, can heal and lead the other heroes. She tries to heal Terri's wounds by collecting money for her children's funeral, she is strong

enough to arrange all the necessities of it and moreover she gets Krystal's wishes granted at the funeral, including Krystal's favourite song being played.

One more archetype from Hunter's (2008) theory significantly differs from Campbell's (1968) archetypes and is a pilgrim. If we consider who can actually fit this archetype, we can name Kay and Gaia Bawden, Gavin Hughes, Stuart Wall and Samantha Mollison. Kay and Gaia are obvious pilgrims in a literal way of meaning, as they left their home and now they both struggle to feel at home in Pagford, moreover we know that Kay had only one serious relationship and it broke down. Kay and Gaia represent pilgrims looking for a home and supportive environment.

Gavin Hughes is a pilgrim in love and relationships. His inability to choose the right woman he would really want to spend his life with, his cowardice during solving problems or conflicts and denying the real feelings lead to his realisation that the only woman he actually wanted was the wife of his best friend all the time. The circle of refusals when at first Gavin refuses Kay for Mary, Mary in the end refuses Gavin and he is eventually refused by Kay leaves Gavin lonely and without any bright prospects.

Stuart Wall is a pilgrim lost within the question about his identity and origin. As an adopted child he naturally thinks about his real parents and about the influence of inherited genes on his behaviour and character. Combination of his fear that he must have inherited some mental disease from his scum parents, as he sees them, and his own aversion towards his anxious father and his old-fashioned mother graduates into a reckless rebellion ending with Robbie's death and Stuart's absolute mental breakdown.

The last character mentioned, Samantha Mollison, is a pilgrim in more ways than one. She can't find her way in relationships, family life, love or life goals and this wandering makes her sad, bored, moody and gives her an inclination to alcoholism. Not only she does not see Pagford as her home and she does not have a good relationships with her parents in law but also she cannot avoid them because of her husband's love for them. She is not satisfied with her physical appearance, with her husband and with her career and after time she starts transforming this stale disappointing life into erotic fantasies about other men. Samantha is a true pilgrim who in the end finds the right place. After the tragic events in Pagford, she realizes that she took everything for granted, she resurrects her love towards her husband and she finds a new life goal.

4.3 Hero and heroism in the Cormoran Strike series

Given the changing characters throughout the novels we will work mostly with the two main heroes - detective Cormoran Strike and his assistant Robin. Considering his job, Strike can be considered as the Warrior archetype of hero, described by Campbell (1968). He is in a figurative sense the warrior who is supposed to defeat the evil forces represented by criminals or people who committed criminal acts. His job is then to reveal their criminal behaviour and bring them to justice in order to stop them from continuing their criminal acts or from hurting people.

Taking a closer look at his past, Cormoran is also the Warrior in a literal sense of meaning. He served as a soldier in Afghanistan for three years, losing his leg during his service. During his job he sometimes shifts more into the Campbell's Emperor archetype. His very well structured solving of the cases, range of knowledge and wisdom makes him eligible to do his job, moreover his past connections built through the army and police force aid his efforts. Another proof of Strike's Emperor archetype is the fact that he is ready to refuse the case due to morality reasons despite his desperate need of money. These higher moral grounds are exactly what is expected from this archetype.

Robin from the start shifts between the Warrior and Lover. As Strike's assistant, she basically does the same job as he does, more precisely assisting Strike towards the end result, stopping criminals in their acts, is in the end the same. We also know that Robin came to London to live with her boyfriend Matthew. By giving up on her previous job and ending up working at a place she does not actually like Robin sacrifices some parts of her life to keep Matthew's love and stay by his side. This pays back as he proposes to her, though his demands start to be higher as we know he does not approve of Robin's temporary job. The breaking point then comes in the end when Robin, despite getting a new perspective place, decides to stay in Strike's office, moreover offering him to lower her salary so he could actually afford it. This can be actually interpreted as a strong shifting from the Lover archetype to the Warrior archetype as Robin finally finds her life goal and is ready to face new enemies.

According to Hunter's (2008) division, we could consider our both main heroes as pilgrim archetypes. Strike, since he came back from Afghanistan, suffers from terrible memories, he cannot find happiness and he is slowly losing everything he has, including his girlfriend.

Because of his mother he also moved around a lot as a child, he attended several different schools and never lived in a stable environment. Sleeping on a sofa in his office, Strike still does not have a stable home, relationship or life in general and he is kind of lost.

Considering his mother's lack of interest and the absence of a father in his life, Strike in some features also appears as an orphan archetype, going through his life as a loner. Witnessing all the relationships he has ever had break apart, he is very sceptical towards relationships and sometimes it even seems that he enjoys being alone, as no one can disappoint him.

Robin starts as a pilgrim in the first book, *The Cuckoo's Calling* (2013), from the point of view of her goals. Coming to London to be with her love, moving there from the small village in Yorkshire, she does not feel comfortable in the capital, she feels mostly lost. She is forced to take jobs she does not care about and knows nothing about, as she did not even know that Strike was a private detective when she was sent to work for him. She did not intend to stay there.

Ironically, this coincidence evokes her long forgotten ambitions and she slowly starts her change from the pilgrim to the warrior-lover, as she actually finds a new goal in her life.

The name on the paper beside the outside buzzer was engraved on the glass panel: C. B. Strike, and, underneath it, the words Private Detective. Robin stood quite still, with her mouth slightly open, experiencing a moment of wonder that nobody who knew her could have understood. She had never confided in a solitary human being (even Matthew) her lifelong, secret, childish ambition. For this to happen today, of all days! (Galbraith, 2013, p. 12)

In *Career of Evil* (2015) this new found warrior archetype is even more enforced by breaking up with her fiancé after finding out he was cheating on her and by her painful past in which she was raped. This new strength she finds in herself enables to her to fight for other women and makes her a real warrior. The new found power is unfortunately ended by the big misunderstanding and Strike's sacking of Robin. From the Hunter's (2008) point of view she basically stays the warrior-lover archetype, nevertheless compared with Campbell's (1968) theory Robin shifted back from the Warrior to the Lover and she completed her journey by return phase in which she came back from her adventure of being a detective and ended up marrying her cheating fiancé, determined to live an ordinary life by his side. We though do not know if this is really Robin's final phase of the journey as the series is not completed.

5. Trials in the novels

5.1 Trials in the Harry Potter series

If we take a look at the trials contained in the *Harry Potter* series, we can see that Rowling skilfully combines all the types of the trials. The main protagonist, Harry Potter, is put through the Greek idea of loyalty, love and valour promptly in the first book, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone (1991)*, when he decides to save the world from Voldemort's return and prevent him from stealing the powerful stone even if he is risking his own life. His love and loyalty is questioned when lord Voldemort offers him bringing his dead parents back to life in exchange for the stone. Harry's short hesitation with the answer can also be interpreted as one of the Christian ideas of a temptation. This temptation is mainly represented by powerful magical objects throughout the whole series such as the Mirror of Erised, the Marauders map or the Deathly Hallows. In the manner of these objects, it is always their owner and the way he uses them, that decides whether the trial has been passed or failed. We will take a look at these objects in the special subchapter.

Another type of trial that Harry is put through is the Christian idea of the trial by torturing and death. As mentioned above, the trial by death is one of the main trials of the last book *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows (2007)*. Harry has to sacrifice himself to let Voldemort destroy his own horcrux that he created unintentionally - Harry himself. This nonetheless means passing his trial by death and he moreover survives in the end which can be seen as a reward for passing the trial. The trial by torturing can be seen throughout the whole series, beginning with pain in Harry's scar, which he feels anytime lord Voldemort is close to him or he feels an extreme emotion.

This pain grows into torturing in *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire (2000)* when Harry is held in the old cemetery as a hostage of Voldemort and is used as an actual tool for his resurrection. Not only he is cut because of the need for his blood for Voldemort's ritual, he also feels the pain that is almost unbearable in the moment Voldemort comes back with all his power. It is also a few moments later when Harry for the first time in his life feels the cruel pain caused by torturing curse *Cruciatius*. If we want to see also the mental side of a torturing and not only purely physical one, it can be seen in the death of Cedric Diggory in the preceding scene. Harry can only watch him dying, not able to do anything except for carrying his dead body back to

his parents. He never stops blaming himself for Cedric's death as he actually persuaded Cedric to grab the goblet at the same time as him which transported him to the cemetery where he died.

The first modification of an idea of a trial comes to light in *Harry Potter and the Order of Phoenix* (2003). At the end of the book Harry comes to understand the full extent of the prophecy that sent lord Voldemort to kill his parents and attempt to kill Harry as well. As Dumbledore reveals the prophecy could actually have been about two boys and it was only Voldemort himself who decided which boy was a bigger threat to him. We know that the second boy the prophecy could have been about is Harry's schoolmate Neville Longbottom. It is quite a big shock for Harry as he has always seen himself as the chosen one, the only one who was predestined to kill the dark lord. Since that moment Harry very often thinks about the possible consequences if it had not been for Voldemort's preference of Harry. He thinks about Voldemort's possible success in killing Neville as a baby and on Neville's questionable chance to kill Voldemort and fulfil his task.

The idea is even more developed in the following book, *Harry Potter and the Half Blood Prince* (2005), when Harry cannot help himself from defeatist thoughts and doubts about his own genius to fulfil his task at one moment.

'Without his Horcruxes, Voldemort will be a mortal man with a maimed and diminished soul. Never forget, though, that while his soul may be damaged beyond repair, his brain and his magical power remain intact. It will take uncommon skill and power to kill a wizard like Voldemort, even without his Horcruxes.'

'But I haven't got uncommon skill and power,' said Harry, before he could stop himself. (p. 399)

He sees the meaning of the prophecy as his crucial role, that he simply must kill Voldemort or Voldemort will kill him but there is no chance that both of them can live. As Dumbledore tries to explain to him, it is not all about the prophecy and Harry simply being "the chosen one". It is more about the choice, as he is trying to highlight throughout the whole series. Harry is not just the chosen boy that decided by the prophecy must kill Voldemort. He himself actually wants to kill Voldemort as a revenge for his parents and he is able to do it because Voldemort accidentally gave him some of his powers while trying to murder him.

'So, when the prophecy says that I'll have "power the Dark Lord knows not", it just means - love?' asked Harry, feeling a little let down.

‘Yes - just love,’ said Dumbledore. ‘But Harry, never forget that what the prophecy says is only significant because Voldemort made it so. I told you this at the end of last year. Voldemort singled you out as the person who would be most dangerous to him - and in doing so, he made you the person who would be most dangerous to him!’ (p. 400)

What Dumbledore actually tries to explain to Harry all the time is that this genius to fulfil his task, to defeat the dark lord, is not only the raw magical power that Voldemort has. It is a far more complex set of skills that are required to defeat Voldemort. Dumbledore ensures that Harry knows about him possessing of these abilities not simply because of the prophecy or because he was born with them but because of his own life story, because of everything that happened to him and that formed him into the person that he is now.

“If Voldemort had never murdered your father, would he have imparted in you a furious desire for revenge? Of course not! If he had not forced your mother to die for you, would he have given you a magical protection he could not penetrate? Of course not, Harry! Don’t you see? Voldemort himself created his worst enemy, just as tyrants everywhere do!” (p. 400)

At this point it is Dumbledore who helps Harry to pass his trial of doubts and to prepare mentally for the upcoming fight with his enemy.

“It was, he thought, the difference between being dragged into the arena to face a battle to the death and walking into the arena with your head held high. Some people, perhaps, would say that there was little to choose between the two ways, but Dumbledore knew - and so do I, thought Harry, with a rush of fierce pride, and so did my parents - that there was all the difference in the world.” (p. 401)

The second modification is again mostly seen in *Harry Potter and the Order of Phoenix* (2003) when Harry is put into the position of an outsider. As only his closest friends believe him that the dark lord came back, Harry’s name is being ridiculed in newspapers, his schoolmates consider him to be mad and a liar, he is even brought before the court for using his magic outside the school and in front of a muggle. As we know, thanks to the quick intervention of Albus Dumbledore Harry is not penalised in the end, nevertheless this new position of the main hero as an outsider who has to defend himself and stand against the pressure of the negative public opinion against him is clearly the representation of this modification of a trial.

5.1.1 Magical objects representing the trial by temptation

As Dumbledore tells Harry in the first book, the Mirror of Erised was the cause of the doom of many people who yielded to its tempting images. Professor Quirell directed by Voldemort is not able to trick it and by force take what he wants. Yet for Harry it represents his advantage over Voldemort and Quirell, the tool for gaining the philosopher's stone, something that only a human of a good intention is capable of.

The Marauders map is another good example of how the owner and the usage of a tool can change its purpose. When possessed by George and Fred Weasley's it serves towards finding a way how to escape from their main pursuer, Argus Filch, and it helps them to do their little pranks at school. This purpose is not fully good but not purely evil either. When they donate this map to Harry, it suddenly becomes a helpful tool in committing good. The Marauders map helps Harry to uncover the traitor Peter Pettigrew. It also warns him about the Death Eater Barty Crouch Jr. but unluckily Harry is not aware about the shared name with Barty Jr.'s father. Last but not least it helps him on his many missions for a greater good such as breaking into the professor Umbridge's cabinet in *Harry Potter and the Order of Phoenix* (2003) or spying on his enemy Draco Malfoy in *Harry Potter and the Half Blood Prince* (2005). When taken by Death Eater Barty Crouch Jr. mentioned above whom in *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire* (2000) passes himself off as professor Moody it becomes the weapon helping Barty to stay uncovered till the end and moreover to track and kill his father.

In the case of the Deathly Hallows the influence of the purpose and the owner of an object can be seen the most clearly. The Elder Wand is the most travelled hallow and has an extremely bloody and violent past. For centuries it was believed that for gaining a loyalty of this wand it is necessary not only to defeat the previous owner of the wand, but also to kill him. There is no need to describe in detail how the purpose of the wand changes when owned by Grindelwald, Dumbledore, Voldemort (even though he actually never was its true master) or Harry as the second and the last mentioned characters were actually the only ones who did not misuse its power for their selfish reasons.

The more interesting hallow is then the Resurrection Stone. As a gift from the Death it caused the suicide of its original owner, owned by the Gaunt family it represented their connection with Salazar Slytherin and dark forces then when possessed by Voldemort it was even modified

into a horcrux, a living piece of Voldemort's evil soul. It is the Resurrection Stone that would have in the end caused the death of Albus Dumbledore by a fatal curse if he had not chosen another way of dying. Dumbledore, who was able to resist the temptation of the Elder Wand, now fails his trial by trying to use the stone for his selfish purpose - to resurrect his dead sister Arianna. The only good the stone had ever made was in Harry's hands when represented the tool that encouraged him to face certain death by letting him reunite with his beloved ones for a moment and use their love as a support.

The Invisibility Cloak represents the only "good" hallow. It is mostly because of its first owner who was the only one who did not ask the Death for a gift from selfish reasons. He only wanted to live his life as he used to before meeting it. The cloak is also probably one of the very few magical objects that had not been misused during the series. What we know for sure from the books is that James Potter was using the cloak during the war against Voldemort to sneak outside the streets and try to gather information about Voldemort and the Death Eaters. Given the fact that it was already in the time that Voldemort wanted nothing more than to find him and his family, it was very heroic act and hardly a misuse. What we also know is that Dumbledore borrowed the cloak from James for a while to study it when he became suspicious about the possibility that the cloak could be one of the hallows. For example, he never really tried to misuse it in the way he did with the Resurrection Stone. In Harry's possession the cloak becomes the similar tool as for example the Marauders map, helping him to do a greater good.

5.2 Trials in The Casual Vacancy

The Christian idea of a trial by temptation can be seen most in *The Casual Vacancy*. With several main characters instead of one protagonist we can watch a more varied spectrum of these temptations. In contrast to the *Harry Potter* series we can watch mostly failing of these trials as the characters yield to their temptation throughout the novel. This failing then leads to the series of consequences and usually escalates into some dramatic breaking point. As the first temptation arises the desire for money and power. Money itself is the highest desire of Simon Price who is not scared to do illegal jobs for it and buy stolen stuff for a cheaper price. Failing in resistance of this desire leads eventually to the loss of his job, the ruining of his reputation and his moving out of the town.

Power in the political or social meaning is for example what Howard Mollison, Miles Mollison or Shirley Mollison desire for. Howard wants to keep the whole city under his control and moreover keep it in a nice conservative way which he remembers from his young age. This desire is the main cause of his hatred towards the Fields and its inhabitants who represent chaos, disorder and uncontrollable force and also the main cause of his constant fights with Barry Fairbrother. His inability to accept new things and other people who differ in any way makes him an enemy in the eyes of people like Parminder, Barry or Colin. His other temptation is represented by over eating, escalating into two heart attacks and breathing difficulties.

Howard's wife Shirley desires more respect than power for herself. Her desire for admiration leads to a narcissistic view of the world, her family and herself. She suffers from ridiculous visions in which everyone including Queen Elizabeth II, express their respect, moreover, if this immaculate image of herself in the eyes of public is threatened, she behaves in an almost maniacal way. When she finds out her daughter Patricia is lesbian, she basically terminates her relationship with her, she is actually relieved that Patricia moves away and she refuses to talk about her with anyone. She never accepts Patricia's partner Mel and she does not even invite her to Howard's birthday party properly. When Patricia arrives alone, she is just relieved that she did not bring her partner and she feels only the need to make Patricia appear ordinary in the eyes of the guests. The fact that she does not even care that Patricia leaves in the middle of the night without a word of goodbye and she feels only a relief that she does not have to deal with her later in the morning is terrifying enough and fits the description properly.

The true breaking point is set when Shirley finds out about her husband's affair with his business partner Maureen. Scared to death by the image of her reputation being so ruined in front of everyone she decides to purify this image by killing her husband with an injection of adrenalin. In her mind she would be a respected, pitiful widow just like Mary Fairbrother, who deserves to be taken care of. She is stopped though in the realisation of her plan by Howard's second heart attack. She later tries to convince herself that she acted in anger and she would have never actually done followed through with her murderous plan.

But even with her husband lying in hospital in a critical state of health Shirley cannot resist her temptation of the desire for a respect and being the centre of attention:

Beside her, Samantha was hugging Miles. Shirley did not like it; *she* ought to be the centre of attention; it was *her* husband who was lying upstairs, fighting for his life. She had wanted to be

like Mary Fairbrother, cosseted and admired, a tragic heroine. This was not how she had imagined it. (Rowling, 2012, p. 537)

This never-ending desire for the perfect pure image of herself in the eyes of other people leads to the feeling of loneliness, lack of understanding of other people's feelings and absence of life happiness. She is in the end glad that Howard is so ill because in the end for her it means that he will be less likely to cheat on her again and destroy her valuable reputation.

If we focus on the character of Samantha Mollis, we can find out that she combines several types of temptations. Her most visible temptation is an alcohol. Even though we know she has recourse to drink it because she is actually not satisfied with her own life, it is alcohol that allows her to put her barriers down and say things she would never say when sober and so do things she would not normally do. Later we discover that her dissatisfaction with own marriage leads to erotic visions and dirty thoughts. At first we can watch her enchantment with Parminder's husband Vikram which stays more or less innocent because he is obviously not interested. With the time continuing, she at first aims her attention to a young singer of a band boy - Jake. From the first coincidental watching when she sees her daughter's favourite CD she moves to buying another CDs, buying magazines with Jake's pictures and having erotic visions about this young attractive man.

The breaking point is then when she fully yields her temptation and buys the tickets for Jake's band concert, using her daughter as an excuse to go. When this dream of hers vanishes and she is forced to leave her ticket to Libby's friend, she at Howard's birthday party she combines both temptations and reinforced with alcohol she makes an attempt towards young Andrew Price, being eventually caught by her own husband. However by consequential turn of events this storm unexpectedly cleans the air between the husband and wife and makes their relationship stronger and Samantha in the end finds her happiness and a greater goal.

The last Christian trial by temptation we would like to mention is of course the heroin addiction that is connected throughout the whole story and with all the characters as it is the Bellchapel methadone rehabilitation clinic and its future fate that is discussed between all the inhabitants of Pagford. Terri Weedon, mother of Krystal, is a heroin addict for many years, still she has four children. The two older of them were taken from her shortly after being born but it is her youngest son, Robbie, who is the subject of interest to social workers. Unfortunately Terri is not capable to resist her temptation even under the threat of her son being put into foster care. We know from the story that Robbie even once was a foster child before Terri promised that

she would start her treatment all over again and get better so she could take care of him. Nevertheless we follow her failing many times throughout the novel. With the help of her social worker Kay she tries to start again and takes her last chance to go through a successful treatment and have Robbie in her care. We can even see that once she passes her trial and resists heroin offered by her old friend Obbo.

Terri met her daughter's gaze for a bare two seconds; her eyes fell, reluctantly, to Robbie in his pyjamas, still clinging tightly to Krystal's leg.

"Yeah, I wuz gonna go ter bed, Obbo," she mumbled, without looking at him. I'll mebbe see yer another time."

"I 'eard your Nan died," he said. "Cheryl wuz tellin' me."

Pain contorted Terri's face; she looked as old as Nana Cath herself.

"Yeah, I'm goin' ter bed. C'mon, Robbie. Come wi' me, Robbie." (Rowling, 2012, p. 366)

In this case, even though teasing by Obbo's reminding her of the death of her grandmother, Terri resist after Krystal's tireless persuading her not to take heroin again and after seeing her son Robbie scared and helpless. The irony is that it is this only passing of her trial that leads Obbo to rape her daughter Krystal instead of what he came for originally. Moreover, we later watch how under the growing threat of the Bellchapel methadon rehabilitation's closure Terri cannot stand the pressure and becomes addicted again, which with such circumstances means failing her trial for good.

Death and torturing representing the other Christian ideas of trials are undergone by Mary and Barry Fairbrother. The latter of the two mentioned goes very obviously through his trial by death when he eventually dies in an ambulance. But Barry is also going through a short physical torturing when he passes out on the lawn of the golf club from terrible pain.

The pain such as he had never experienced sliced through his brain like a demolition ball. He barely noticed the smarting of his knees as they smacked onto the cold tarmac; his skull was awash with fire and blood; the agony was excruciating beyond endurance, except that endure it he must, for oblivion was still a minute away. (Rowling, 2012, p. 5)

If we want to speak about mental torturing, Mary Fairbrother seems to be the main character going through this trial as she at first has to watch her husband dying in agony and then her grief for him increases with the so called "Ghost of Barry Fairbrother" published on an online

forum, the upcoming elections for her dead husband's chair in the town council and with many other events like Barry's unclear life assurance policy or one of his best friends hitting on her.

In the case that we would like to find a Greek idea of trial, which means trial of love, loyalty and valour, we could use the life destiny of Krystal Weedon as an example. Krystal is very contradictory character. She on one hand also yields a temptation many times, starting with alcohol, cigarettes and having sex since childhood, continuing with stealing items that are somehow important to her as she admits to herself, for example the watches of Tessa Wall. But on the other hand Krystal shows a strong love and loyalty towards her brother Robbie. She is determined to save him from a terrible life destiny, so she takes care of him instead of addicted Terri, she washes him, teaches him how to use the toilet and she walks him to nursery school. After being raped and seeing the threat of Robbie being put into foster care as Terri starts to take heroin again, Krystal decides to take Robbie with her when she runs away from home and find them both a better livelihood.

The character of Krystal can also represent the trial's modification from the beginning of 20th century. She is an outsider but she still manages to go against the stream and not care what most of the people think about her. She was the only one of her group of friends who entered the rowing team of Barry Fairbrother, even though she had to bear a mockery from them afterwards. She is a strong personality in her own way and that is probably exactly that special characteristic feature that only Barry Fairbrother could see in her and why he liked her so much.

Considering the characters in the point of view of this second modification of the idea of a trial, the other people who go against the stream and are more or less found in the position of an outsider are Barry Fairbrother, Parminder Jaswant and in the end Sukhvinder Jaswand. Barry is an outsider in the eyes of the town council because of his attachment towards the hated Fields and in the eyes of his own wife because of his favour of ill-mannered Krystal Weedon. Parminder has to face racist attitudes towards herself because of her origin and her religion. The fact that not only is she a doctor, very prestigious and important function, she also gets involved into the local political situation and with her friend Barry she represents the minority that vote against Howard and his image of perfect pure Pagford.

Sukhvinder is an outsider for almost the whole story. Bullied by her classmates led by Stuart "Fat" Wall, Sukhvinder cannot find the strength to face them, moreover she is often admonished by her mother for not doing as well in school as her siblings. This escalates into self-harming and quiet suffering, we definitely cannot say that Sukhvinder goes against the stream throughout

the novel. She is though definitely a strong personality because she does not end her life even though she thinks about it countless times, besides it is only her in the end who is brave enough to jump into the dirty cold river Orr and try to save Robbie despite risking her own life. After this event Sukhvinder suddenly changes, supported by the sudden favour of her parents, and it is her in the end who actually goes against the stream and arranges the funeral of Krystal and Robbie. It is she who organizes the fund-raising for the funeral and implements the requirements that she thinks Krystal would definitely want, such as being buried with her valuable medal and having her favourite Rihanna song played.

5.3 Trials in the Cormoran Strike series

In the case of the *Cormoran Strike* series, the very obvious trial is the Christian idea, concretely the trial by torturing. Strike is tortured not only physically, missing his leg that was blown off while he was serving in Afghanistan and suffering from a phantom limb. His memories from this time are haunting him within the story and really test his resilience. The other Christian idea of a trial, by temptation, can be seen in the character of his ex-girlfriend Charlotte. While being with her, Strike lived in a really nice modern flat instead of sleeping on a sofa in his office. Charlotte not only sponsored the establishment of his office, but due to her he also lived the comfortable life without worrying about his future or material background.

This comfort though was paid by her unbalanced personality and countless hysterical fits. For some time Strike yielded to this temptation of an easy life and quietly suffered Charlotte's behaviour. After finally passing his trial and ending this destructive relationship he though sometimes reminisces back to this time when he lived in comfort and doubts his decision.

The Greek idea of a trial by love, loyalty and devotion is then for Robin to pass. At first she moves to London just to be with her boyfriend Matthew, leaving her job and her friends behind and directly changing the surroundings of the small village she lived in to move to London. She later in *Carrier of Evil* (2015) stays faithful to her fiancé after countless of nights spent sleeping on the sofa after a terrible fight as Matthew becomes more jealous of Strike and angrier that he cannot control Robin as easily as before. Even after she finds out he cheated on her and she in the end finds enough strength in herself to forgive him and marry him. We can also witness how devoted she is to her job when she not only stands up against her fiancé Matthew when he

does not approve of her staying in the job, but she also voluntarily gives up a part of her salary in order to allow Strike to keep her as his assistant.

The second modification of the idea of a trial can be seen in most of the Strike's cases. In order to find the truth and reveal the true offender he often has to go against the stream and try to prove the opposite of the things people believe in. This strong personality of a hero who can be seen as an outsider for the company but he remains loyal to his task can be seen even in the first novel, *The Cuckoo's Calling*. Hired by her brother, Strike tries to solve out the case of the death of famous supermodel Lula Landry. The problem and the main reason why Lula's brother hired Strike is that the case of his sister was according to the police solved and defined as a clear suicide. Strike has to face the doubts from the police and also himself, as he at first agrees with the statement about the suicide. Following the police's investigation, he also must face the witnesses' persuasion of Lula committing suicide.

“John Brown's not happy with the results of the inquest on his sister. He's hired me to take another look at the evidence.”

“Yeah,” said Wilson, “I know.”

“How much did he give you to talk to me?” Strike asked casually.

Wilson blinked, then gave a slightly guilty, deep-throated chuckle.

“Pony,” he said. “But if it makes the man feel better, yuh know? It won't change nuthin'. She killed huhself. But ask your questions. I don't mind.” (Galbraith, 2013, p. 102)

He nevertheless passes this trial when he continues in his job despite the doubts and eventually finds the evidence that Lula had been murdered. In the same way he always follows his task in all the cases he is hired for and he does the job he is paid for despite his doubts. If it is necessary, he goes against the stream and he does not care for other people's opinions. He remains one of the very few people who do not believe that Leda Strike, his mother, overdosed.

Strike is also the only person who does not believe in the innocence of a soldier Donald Laing accused of raping of young girl after he personally witnesses his unstable and brutal nature during their boxing match. As described in *Career of Evil* (2015) after Laing being acquitted on all charges, Strikes personally goes to check on his wife after a report from a local citizen that Laing obviously abuses her. Strike finds Laing's wife and child living in terrible conditions, obviously mistreated, and Laing is then sentenced to 16 years in prison.

Finally, the biggest trial by temptation for Cormoran Strike in the end represents his assistant Robin. Whilst knowing that Robin is engaged, Strike holds every dangerous sign of attraction towards her deeply within himself but respects her relationship. He is also a very practical man and realizes what a negative influence this affair could have on their future job together and therefore he stays as only a friend and colleague to Robin, even though he likes her more deeply than as a friend or colleague. In *Career of Evil* this temptation is extremely strong when Robin runs away from Matthew and Strike considers an option of moving their relationship to the different sphere very often.

When Robin and Matthew get back together, Strike still resists the temptation as he does nothing to stop the wedding happening even though he hated the idea of Robin getting married to Matthew. After firing Robin in a fit of rage when he finds out she risked not only her life but also the success of the whole case, Strike realizes he misses her and finally yields to his temptation in the first and the last attempt to talk to her and tries to tell her his opinion about the wedding. Due to Matthew's intervention this attempt comes too late and Strike watches Robin getting married with Matthew and it is hard to predict whether this means that his temptation will go away forever or on the contrary even gets stronger.

6. Dethroning of father figures

During reading Murphy & Matterson (2018) we met with an interesting thought that inspired us to a further studying of its content:

Additionally, the orphaned Harry is presented with several surrogate adult role models, both positive and negative, including Dumbledore, Voldemort, Sirius Black and Professors Lupin and Snape. Over the last three novels Harry is presented with evidence that each potential male role model may not be as unequivocally good or bad as he had been led to believe, and must come to recognise them as flawed, complicated human beings in order to develop into his own person (this never happens with his mother or any of the adult women in his life).

(Murphy & Mutterson, 2018, p. 141)

We decided to extend this interesting thought and examine it more deeply not only throughout the *Harry Potter* series as the authors originally pointed it out, but also throughout all Rowling's novels. This dethroning of father figures from their pedestal or simply failing of the father figures in their roles is something visibly similar in all her stories, as we will see further.

In the case of the *Harry Potter* series, the simple failing of father figures can be seen throughout the whole spectrum of male characters. The most serious example of where the failing of father's task can lead is represented by no one else than lord Voldemort. After finding out that his muggle father Tom Riddle abandoned his pregnant mother and let her take care of herself, not showing the smallest interest in the baby, the anger towards his father, slowly changing into a much wider anger towards all the muggles, makes young Voldemort, Tom Riddle, to build his own army of Death Eaters and set off the greatest war in the wizards' world.

Another failure can be seen in the fate of the Malfoy family. Lucius, trying to give his son the best in the world, forms his character into a spoiled and inconsiderate brat. Draco may own the most expensive broomstick, clothes and other equipment, nevertheless in the moments when he really needs his father's support and attention he finds just a reserved man who gives priority to the family's reputation rather than his own son's feelings. This failure can be mostly seen after the dark lord's return when Lucius, too fearful to stand up against Voldemort, would rather let his family suffer under Voldemort's tyrannical rule. Even though he might consider an escape from the dark powers and deserting to the other side too risky for his family, this silent

bearing of the destiny in the end shows as almost destructive for his family and namely for his son Draco.

From the point of view of spoiling his son with an exaggerated love and fulfilling his every wish, Vernon Dudley is a similar type of father as Lucius Malfoy. With his wife Petunia they also spoil Dudley to an extreme extent and moreover, by overfeeding him they also cause a lot of his later health problems because of the obesity he suffers. The only ideal father figure appearing in the story are probably Arthur Weasley, Hermione's father or Amos Diggory, Cedric's father. The last two mentioned though, we meet just for a very short time.

We will go back to the original thought that Harry discovers that every male role model has a light but also a dark side of their personality. The first process, when Harry discovers the dark side of a father figure which he in his mind had set on an imaginary pedestal all the time, is the most obvious one. Into these dethroned male models we can count his father James Potter, his godfather Sirius Black, his parent's friend Remus Lupin and Albus Dumbledore. The most shocking revelation for Harry about his father's character comes in *Harry Potter and the Order of Phoenix* (2003).

Harry finds himself alone in Snape's office after one of their lessons in Occlumency and decides to take a look into Snape's memories through the pensieve. He then in an absolute shock watches his young father bullying young Snape, humiliating him in front of the whole school, with his friends Sirius and Peter cheering him on and Remus pretending he does not see anything despite being head boy. Moreover, he is a witness of his parents' fight and cannot believe that these two ever fell in love. He is disappointed not only for his father's behaviour and for the absolute ignorance of Remus and Sirius' enthusiastic encouraging. He also realizes that Snape had a reason to really hate his father and maybe some of the hateful insult he spoke on James' address can be based on truth. He later meets both of his father's friends and demands their explanation, desperately trying to find some way how to forgive his own father and justify his behaviour.

'Look, Harry' said Sirius placatingly, 'James and Snape hated each other from the moment they set eyes on each other, it was just one of those things, you can understand that, can't you? I think James was everything Snape wanted to be - he was popular, he was good at Quidditch - good at pretty much everything. And Snape was just this little oddball who was up to his eyes in the Dark Arts, and James - whatever else he may have appeared to you, Harry - always hated the Dark Arts.' (Rowling, 2003, p. 600)

After recognizing that his father in the end grew up into that wonderful person he knows from everyone's stories, Harry calms down and finds an inner strength to forgive his father this miserable slip and continue to keep his memory clean. This discovery of the truth nevertheless makes him realise that neither his father, nor Sirius or Remus are as perfect as he saw them all the time and that even they are only humans and they make mistakes. The memory has also another consequence, which is the opposite process to the one just described.

'Look,' he said, 'your father was the best friend I ever had and he was a good person. A lot of people are idiots at the age of fifteen. He grew out of it.'

'Yeah, OK,' said Harry heavily. 'I just never thought I'd feel sorry for Snape.' (Rowling, 2003, p. 602)

This feeling of being sorry for a person whom he had hated and despised until that point is similar as in *Harry Potter and the Half Blood Prince* (2005) when Harry led by Dumbledore slowly uncovers the truth about Voldemort's unhappy past and mainly his childhood. After realisation that Voldemort's own mother chose to die instead of staying alive and taking care of her son, Harry cannot help but feel the short wave of sympathy towards a small abandoned orphan Tom Riddle. Even with such feelings of sympathy it nonetheless does not change anything about Harry's attitude toward both Snape and Voldemort, it helps Harry realise the fact that our character is formed by our past and that no one is really born evil.

The last father figure that is dethroned in Harry's eyes is of course Albus Dumbledore, who for Harry represented much more than an excellent mentor. Albus is dethroned more times in Harry eyes. The first time is when he actually dies. Harry for a long time cannot understand how undefeatable and immortal Dumbledore could have died. The second dethroning comes after Harry's conviction of Snape's betrayal of Dumbledore, therefore Dumbledore, the most powerful and the smartest wizard in the world was in his eyes tricked by the loathsome Snape. The penultimate dethroning comes in the last book after revealing of Dumbledore's dark past, his friendship with a black wizard Gellert Grindelwald and his desire for power. Harry cannot believe, as in the case of his father and his friends, that perfect Dumbledore would yield to a temptation and behave in such horrific way.

The final wound for Harry then comes after watching Snape's memories containing an important dialogue with Dumbledore. After hearing Dumbledore saying that he has known for a long time that Harry is the last horcrux and in order to kill Voldemort Harry must die, Harry loses even the last part of a bond he felt to Dumbledore. This bond is again resurrected in the

afterlife dialogue with Dumbledore himself, but this moment, together with Snape's memories revealing the deep love for Lilly Potter and willingness to sacrifice himself for her son, means for Harry the breaking point of final dethroning of the last perfect father figure he believed in.

In *The Casual Vacancy* (2012) the dethroning of father's figures is not so significant, yet we will still struggle if we want to find father figures that are not failing in their role. Simon Price as a tyrant who during his often fits of rage beats his own wife and sons can hardly ever be seen as a good father. Moreover he bullies his sons, he mocks them every day and younger son Paul even stutters because of this pressure. Andrew has never held him in high regard because since his early age Simon was ensuring him about his brutal nature and fierce temper. The only sign of hoping for a better relationship comes after Simon loses his job, therefore he calms down for a moment and the whole family will moreover be moving to another city. Andrew naively persuades himself that this can mean a new beginning for the whole family and that maybe he can actually find his way to Simon and make an alliance with him. Unfortunately though, we never find out if his plan supported by revealing to Simon the secret of SQL injection and hacking the town's website worked or not.

Colin Wall, Cubby, as his son calls him behind his back, does also not represent a father of the year. In his case this is given mainly by his illness, obsessive-compulsive disorder, due to which he suffers from panic and anxiety attacks, horrible visions and imaginations and in addition he cannot actually tell what is real and what not. This never-ending circle of anxiety, panic and fear is tiring even for his wife Tessa, not speaking of pubescent Stuart who after the revealing of being adopted tries many devastating ways of experimental behaviour in order to find his own identity and is simply not able to understand his father's struggle.

Stuart mocks his father at first behind his back, later, when confronted, he dares to provoke him face to face and this fight ends with Colin punching Stuart. The maximally offended son then makes his father's deepest fears public on an online forum and this acts as a trigger for the already partially broken Colin to break down completely. Stuart, in a similar way as Andrew, never saw his father in a good light and never admired him, probably because of his father's weird behaviour and his weak personality, as he perceived it. The significant role played also the vicious sentence pronounced by Colin after this huge fight saying that he never actually wanted to adopt Stuart in the first place. Stuart actually takes it as a confirmation of what he thought the whole time and as a permission to behave in an even more devastating way. It is his mother Tessa who after the tragic death of Robbie, the consequence of Stuart's headless acting, reveals to Stuart the truth about his Colin's feelings and the family history.

“I was desperate to adopt you,” she said. “Desperate. But Dad was very ill. He said to me, “I can’t do it. I’m scared I’ll hurt a baby. I need to get better before we do this, and I can’t do that and cope with a new baby as well.”

“But I was so determined to have you,” said Tessa, “that I pressured him into lying, and telling the social workers that he was fine, and pretending to be happy and normal. We brought you home, and you were tiny and premature, and on the fifth night we had you, Dad slipped out of bed and went to the garage, put a hosepipe on the exhaust of the car and tried to kill himself, because he was convinced he’d smothered you. And he almost died.” (Rowling, 2012, p. 540)

After this revealing of the terrible truth and her part of the guilt of the tense family relationships, Tessa slowly manages to start improving the broken relationship between her son and husband. Stuart, still shocked and scared from previous events, is looking for the comfort and compassion and Colin more than anyone understands this need. He therefore for example makes a stand against Tessa’s decision that Stuart should go to Krystal and Robbie’s funeral and he allows him to stay at home with him, moreover he tries to protect Stuart’s feelings by unsuccessfully covering his son’s view of the passing procession with the coffins.

If we think about Howard Mollison, he probably never was a failing figure in his son’s eyes, nevertheless it is his daughter, Patricia, who holds the secret that could ruin his reputation in front of the whole city. It is in her eyes that she cannot put her father on pedestal since the age of twelve.

“Turned my stomach too,” said Patricia. “Old Maureen and my father singing along together. Arm in arm.” Patricia took a final fierce drag on her cigarette and threw the end down, grinding it beneath her heel.

“I walked in on her blowing him when I was twelve,” she said. “And he gave me a fiver not to tell my mother.” (Rowling, 2012, p. 487)

Howard is definitely dethroned in her eyes since that moment and this ruining of her father’s picture continues when he does not stand for her against his wife Shirley when Patricia finally reveals that she is a lesbian. We can only assume what exactly happened in the family history but given that Howard, even very drunk, at least showed some concern for his daughter and noticed her absence we can guess that the main mischief-maker was his wife back then.

An interesting father figure then is Vikram Jawanda. As a heart surgeon he is usually very busy and he does not have a time to deal with his children’s problems completely. We cannot say he would be dethroned in any way in his children’s eyes or that he would be failing his role for all

of them. For his problem-free twins he represents a really easy-going father who supports them and spends what little free time he has with them. In the case of his youngest daughter Sukhvinder he fails in the ways of recognizing that something is not alright with her and in not standing up for her more during her mother's blaming monologues towards her personality. For Vikram Sukhvinder is just another relaxed child of his, probably not as clever as the twins, and she does not need any special care or attention. The sad truth is that it is exactly his attention and special care Sukhvinder would need the most and it is very ironic that the daughter of two doctors does her self-harming rituals under their roof every night and none of them notices anything.

If we take a look at other father figures throughout the series, there are some that without closer description also failed in their father's role, such as Gaia's father who abandoned her and her mother shortly after she was born. We can nevertheless find some characters that appears to be good fathers, represented for example by Barry Fairbrother or Miles Mollison. Neither Barry nor Miles do one single thing to disappoint their children, throughout the whole novel they do nothing else other than being the best fathers they can be and as a result their children never show any signs of unhappiness or dissatisfaction.

In the case of the *Cormoran Strike* series (2013-2015) the father figures are either rather mysterious or completely failing. We cannot talk about putting any of the father figures on the pedestal, as Strike does not know his real father very well and he never idealised him. As a famous singer, his real father, Jonny Rokeby had many more of these "unwanted" children such as Cormoran is. We know that Cormoran met him only twice in his life and Strike remembers a strange man in a pub confessing to Cormoran in *The Cuckoo's Calling*, that he probably knew his father better than Cormoran himself. As far as we know from the story Jonny did dutifully pay alimony and not a small amount. He was forced to reduce the amount of money he had been sending to Strike's mother Leda after she usually spent it irresponsibly and too quickly. We do not know many details about his relationship with Strike's mother or Strike's more personal attitude towards his father, we also do not know much about their two meetings as Strike hates to talk about his past.

The relationship we know more about then is between Strike and his stepfather Jeff Whittaker. In *Carrier of Evil* (2015) we meet Strike's stepfather personally as he is one of the people Strike suspects of sending him a leg of a dead woman in a box. We therefore learn more about this figure and Strike's childhood, including the fact already briefly mentioned in the previous novels - that Whittaker was accused of murdering Strike's mother Leda. Despite all the

witnesses claiming that Leda had never taken a heroin, which in the end killed her through overdose, including young Cormoran Strike persuaded about Whittaker's guilt, Jeff is acquitted by the court on all charges and released.

We know from Strike's memories that he hates Jeff Whittaker more than anyone else and that we cannot even fully talk about him as a father figure as 16 years old Strike never accepted 21 year old Jeff as his stepfather. From the official point of view Jeff being Strike's stepfather, from all evidence given of him and his father's role we cannot talk about anything else other than failing.

Being a drug addict, involved in the illegal cocaine trade, and an extremely violent person already, represents enough reasons for a father to fail. We also know that Whittaker desperately needs attention, he loves to tease Strike and he hopes to provoke him to a fight in the end. Leda though serves as a mediator between the two men and she never let the real fight happen. In *Career of Evil* Strike eventually gets into a short fight with his former stepfather and he realises even more how much he hates him and that he actually wants to hurt him and punish him for his mother's death and his avoidance of justice. Whittaker's personality also did not change as he desires vengeance upon Strike for his testimony during the trial.

Strike basically never knew any positive father figures and that is probably one of the main reasons why he joins the army. If we want to look for a good example of a male role model, we could probably name Robin's father as we know that he loves his daughter very much and together with his wife they support her. The problem is that we never know anything closer about Robin's father so we cannot consider him a perfect father character.

From this point of view the the *Cormoran Strike* series represents the most common failing of a father figure and also because of the specifics of their genre, they remain the most brutal and realistic novels from Rowling's repertoire. Unlike the *Harry Potter* series or *The Casual Vacancy* we cannot witness any dethroning of the seemingly perfect father figures but the obvious failing of the father figures and absence of the perfect male model role connects it with the mentioned works and creates a similar pattern of the imperfect father roles.

7. Mother figures - a godlike mother vs. a terrible mother

The thought quoted in the chapter above (Murphy & Matterson (2018)) made us consider also the position and role of the female characters in all of Rowling's novels, more precisely of the mothers. The thought discussed basically claims that Harry never meets with an adult woman figure who would not be more or less perfect. It is nevertheless not true, as the basic problem of the thought is in our opinion that it concludes only the positive female characters from Harry's closest surrounding like Molly Weasley, who is actually a second mother to Harry, or other heroes of the wizards' world like Tonks, Fleur, Minerva McGonagall and others.

We will examine the other characters, namely the mother characters from the novels, and point out, that even though some of them, like Lilly Potter or Molly Weasley, are almost untouchable in the point of view of character, the goddesses. Some on the other hand are far away from being called perfect and some of them, especially in Rowling's novel for adults, are even failing in their mother's task.

Women in Harry's closest surroundings are usually abundant in good qualities and personalities. We will therefore focus only on mothers and we will moreover extend this focus beyond Harry's inner circle. The typical example of a perfect mother is of course Lilly Potter. We cannot witness many scenes describing Lilly's motherly role and how she was actually fulfilling her everyday duties, however, the fact that she sacrificed her own life to save her son, moreover giving him powerful protection created by her love, corresponds very clearly with her goddess type of mother.

Molly Weasley, who becomes Harry's substitute mother, can be also considered goddess type of mother. We can personally witness her care of not only her own children, but also Harry and Hermione or other members of The Order of the Phoenix. She makes sure everyone in her vicinity is fed, clothed and satisfied, and if needed she also fights for her family with the strength of a lioness. Even though she is sometimes strict towards her sons or daughter, she always wants the best for them and does everything she can to achieve it. Her one and only failure could be considered Percy Weasley's deserting of the the ministry and rebelling against his own family, but this can hardly be seen as a result of Molly's care as she did nothing to support this idea of his

As the goddess mothers cannot be considered for example Hermione's mother, Cedric Diggory's mother or the mother of any of Harry's classmates, since we unfortunately do not know more information about their household, family running or closer behaviour. Between these we can also count parents of Neville Longbottom as we know nothing about their relationship with their son from the past, we can only guess from the signs that his mother loved him very much before she went mad. Neville's grandmother, who is then in the motherly role as well, does not represent a goddess, as we know that even though she may love her grandson, she is very strict to him and she does not help to improve Neville's self-confidence. Moreover, she always compares him with his father.

In the *Harry Potter* series we can then see another group of mothers who are not goddesses, perfect mothers, but they are still not completely failing in their motherly role. This feature can be easily seen in Petunia Dursley. As mentioned in the chapter before, with her husband Vernon they spoiled their son Dudley terribly, they supported him in his aggressive behaviour not only towards Harry and his peers but sometimes also even towards themselves. Dudley never dares to attack his mother or father physically as he usually does with children but his insistent fits of rage are often directed against his parents. Petunia represents the loving mother whose love is far too exaggerated and it shows to be a double-edged sword that hurts Dudley in the end. Starting with his lack of real friends, escalating into his obesity and health problems, Petunia through her own love cannot see her son's real needs.

Another interesting example is then Narcissa Malfoy, Draco's mother. In the similar way to Petunia, Narcissa ignores Draco's real needs, she encourages his unfriendly attitude towards other people and she supports his feeling of superiority over wizards with impure blood. She still loves her son more than anything and she is willing to risk her own life to assure him safety. After Voldemort's task for Draco that will probably end with her son's death, she asks for help from her old friend Severus despite multiple warnings received from Severus or her sister Bellatrix. Finally, when Voldemort sends Narcissa to verify whether Harry is really dead, after finding out the truth Narcissa's first thought belongs to Draco. After being ensured by Harry that her son is still alive, despite an enormous risk Narcissa lies to the dark lord and decides to try to save her son. In spite of some issues in Draco's upbringing Narcissa is definitely the loving mother who can hardly be labelled as a simply failing one.

Considering all the mothers throughout the *Harry Potter* series, we will find out that unlike in *The Casual Vacancy* or *Cormoran Strike* series, none of the mothers fail downright in their task, as they all love their children with all their hearts. The closest to the failing mother figures are

Voldemort's mother, Merope Gaunt, and Sirius' mother, Walburga Black. Merope, despite her having powers that might have saved her she decides to die during childbirth. Her son Tom then ends up in an orphanage, without any relatives or knowledge of his own origin. We of course cannot blame only Merope for the villain Tom becomes in the end, but she definitely bears a part of a guilt as she may have loved her son but lacked the power to stay alive for him.

Walburga Black, as we know, was a real supporter of Voldemort's opinions even though she never really belonged to Death Eaters. Her son's protest against the superiority of pure blooded wizards, his being sorted into Gryffindor and his friendship with impure blooded wizards led to her decision to throw him out of the house and disinherit him, including the burning of his name from the family tree. Sirius then found the second home at the Potter family and, as far as we know from the story, he never spoke to his mother again.

We also don't know many details about Sirius' childhood and upbringing with his parents, so we cannot really judge whether Walburga loved her son or not, however, from Sirius' uncomplimentary remarks on her address it seems that she did not. This impression of her as a mean hag is even more supported by the behaviour of her portrait in her house that is not really enthusiastic about the presence of strangers. Walburga's mother's task is in every way shown as a failing one throughout the novel but lacking more information, we cannot label her as a terrible mother.

In *The Casual Vacancy* (2012) unlike the *Harry Potter* series the mother figures appears to be even more failing figures than the father's characters. If we take a closer look and think, who could we actually label as a goddess mother, as an almost perfect mother. The first goddess that crosses our minds will be Mary Fairbrother. Even though she expressed many reproaches towards her husband's behaviour, even after his death, we do not witness any misbehaviour or neglect toward her children, on the contrary she supports her children as much as she can including letting them arrange Barry's funeral in the way that they want it. The problem is we cannot actually take a deeper insight into the Fairbrother family during the whole story and therefore we cannot consider Mary as the goddess mother type like, for example, Molly Weasley, even if she really was in Rowling's mind.

The closer look at other mothers in the novel gives us a clear picture of mothers who failed in their role. We will start with the most obvious terrible mother from, Terri Weedon. Terri had been a heroin addict when her first child was born, she continued then with shorter or longer breaks from using heroin, subsequently lost her first two children who were put into a foster

care and eventually adopted by her relatives. She also lost Robbie, who was for a few months also put into a foster care, and almost lost Krystal who's only luck was that her grandmother Cath was willing to take care of her.

Terri represents the most serious failure of a mother throughout the whole series and probably throughout all of Rowling's novels in general. She is not able to give up her addiction even facing the threat of losing her son forever. It is mostly her daughter Krystal who not only takes care of Robbie, but also keeps an eye on Terri, trying to persuade her not to take heroin and to go through the rehabilitation clinic programme. If it had not been for Krystal, Terri would probably lose Robbie within a few weeks after getting him back. Also the compassion and the effort of the social worker Kay Bawden kept Terri's hopes up for keeping her son alive. Despite the help of these two, despite a willingness of the Bellchapel clinic to give Terri one last chance, she is in the end not able to stay clean and take care of her children. One of the most serious failures then comes in the moment when her friend Obbo rapes Krystal and instead of taking care of her daughter and dealing with the situation, Terri decides to deny it and accuse Krystal of lying.

On the other hand, if we consider Krystal in her motherly role when she was taking care of her brother Robbie, we can partially see this goddess character is a perfect mother. We say partially, because not only was it Krystal's irresponsibility that caused Robbie's death in the end but also she, as a 16 years old girl, was not able to cope with all the matters that come hand in hand with a motherhood. Facing her own problems she very often neglected Robbie's needs and feelings, she often refused to take care of him just in order to rebel against her mother. Still, in the end, even after being raped and deciding to escape from her mother, her first thought is to take Robbie with her and create a nice environment for him. We can also see the small signs of how much she loved him, such as the photograph of him she used to carry in the heart frame in her wallet, the medal she promised to bring him from the rowing race and above all, her suicide after finding out that her beloved brother is dead through her fault.

Looking at the other mothers in the novel, failing in their role is obvious at least in one way. Ruth Price quietly suffers her husband's fits of anger, his violence and his beatings. That would be understandable if she did it for her children, trying to direct her husband's fury just towards her to protect her sons. She thoroughly ignores him bullying of both boys, moreover she defends him after seeing him with her own eyes beat both boys until they were bloody. She simply lets her husband beat them, doing nothing to stand up for her two boys and ignoring her husband's obvious mental problem.

Samantha does not fail in such a large range as some other mothers, nevertheless she ignores her daughter's feelings and needs. Selfishly motivated by her own desire, she uses her daughter Libby to get to the concert of a teenage boy band. After this causes a fight between Libby and her best friend, it is still the intervention of another adult person that gives her no other chance than give up her chance to go to the concert, not for a single moment considering her daughter's feelings. In the same way she does not care about her second daughter, Lexie's feelings when from boredom and hopelessness she ends up kissing Lexie's former classmate Andrew Price at Howard's birthday party. Not even mentioning that Lexie was standing in the next room at the given moment and what impact that scene would have had on her psyche if she had seen it.

Shirley may be a good mother for Miles, but we can compare her care to Petunia Dursley's love for her son Dudley in the *Harry Potter* series. This love, in the same way as Petunia's, is extreme, blind and destructive. Miles is visibly not so spoiled and influenced by it as Dudley, but it is his relationship with his wife Samantha that suffers because of it. Samantha mocks Miles about his mom's boundless love and with revulsion she does everything she can to rebel against her mother-in-law. Shirley on the other hand sees Samantha as the woman not worthy of her perfect son and with jealousy she does her best to ruin Samantha's life. Speaking of Shirley's second child, her daughter Patricia, we already mentioned Shirley's failure in not being able to accept her daughters' sexual orientation and practically disinherits her.

The last two mother figures we would like to mention are Tessa Wall and Parminder Jawanda. Tessa could be, similarly as Krystal, considered a partial goddess. We know that for her son Stuart she does everything she can, offering him the best supportive environment she can. The problem is then in her intentional ignorance of Stuart's destructive behaviour, starting with his smoking and then escalating his affair with Krystal Weedon. In the same way as an extreme love, this cautious, timid attitude towards her own son eventually leads to the tragic death of Robbie Weedon when Stuart, even in spite of being in doubt, listens to Krystal and leaves small Robbie alone near the river. It is not until this tragic event when Tessa finally musters the courage to speak her mind to Stuart and starts acting like a parent worthy of respect and obedience.

Parminder is failing within the major part of the story, her attitude towards her daughter Sukhvinder cannot be called anything else than appalling. Sukhvinder suffering enough at school from everyday bullying does not feel safe even at home facing the threat of her mother yelling at her about her grades at school. Parminder does not even ask at all about the cause of Sukhvinder's bad grades, but it is also shocking that as a doctor she cannot recognise her

daughter's awful state of mind. Moreover her comparing Sukhvinder with more successful siblings causes serious damage to Sukhvinder's self-confidence, which is already so worn down by her classmates.

After Sukhvinder's heroic effort to save Robbie despite risking her own life, the change finally comes. Parminder realises how close she was to losing her daughter forever and in a real turnaround she changes from scolding and reproaching to something that we can call almost adoration of her daughter. She supports her in everything Sukhvinder decides to do, including sponsoring the main part of the funeral. On the last few pages of the novel, we can finally see Parminder as the goddess over all of her children.

Finally, an interesting mother figure can be seen in the character of Leda Strike, mother of Cormoran Strike from the *Cormoran Strike* series (2013 - 2015). With Strike described many times especially by the press as an unwanted child it could seem that Leda did not love her child. From the pieces of information Robin searches for on the internet in the first book *The Cuckoo's Calling* (2013) or in *Carrier of Evil* (2015) we could also assume that she failed in her motherly task as her whole sexual life is in described in detail on the internet, including her naked photographs.

There are also Strike's personal memories that could suggest her failing in the role of mother. We learn she could not manage the money Strike's father was sending her. Leda usually spent it too quickly and irresponsibly which led to poverty for her and her children. She sometimes took lighter drugs and, the most important failure, she did not give priority to her children before her lover and later husband Jeff Whittaker. From Cormoran's memories in *Carrier of Evil* we know that Whittaker drove Strike's step sister Lucy away by sexually harassing her and Leda still did not take action against it.

From this point of view it really seems like she failed in her motherly role. Nevertheless Strike also knows she had a big heart and she could love deeply. She, for example, saved a bleeding boy on the street that later became one of his best friends, who had the nickname Shanker. She used to take little Strike to concerts with her and she also opens her heart to Strike countless times. She might not have been a perfect mother but from what we know Strike really loved her.

Despite all the aversion he has to his mother's lifestyle and especially her well known sexual life, Strike still voluntarily decided to stay with her after Lucy decided to leave home, even though his relatives begged him to come and live with them. He could not leave his mother

alone with the brutal Whittaker even if it meant staying in a terrible environment. We can of course consider Strike's sense of justice and his need to help the weak as the reason why he stayed with his mother. He still would not decide to sacrifice a vision of a comfortable life if he had not loved her.

Leda's sudden death also wounded him very deeply and we know that it still haunts him to the present time as he knows the murderer of his mother stays unpunished. In a nutshell, Leda definitely does not represent the goddess type of mother and we can watch many failings and mistakes during her journey through motherhood, however, we cannot label her only as a failing mother, considering that her son and the boy she saved really loved her. Unlike many mother's characters in *The Casual Vacancy*, she never treated her children with a cruelty or did anything in order to intentionally hurt her children. She was, in the same ways as many mothers from the *Harry Potter series*, just the mother who loved her children and tried her best given her limited possibilities.

8. Spirits and ghosts in the novels

If we think about the story itself, the *Harry Potter* series and *The Casual Vacancy* have one important topic in common and that is death. Both stories start with the dead, in the case of the *Harry Potter* series the death of Harry's parents comes even before the main story starts. In *The Casual Vacancy* it is the opening scene of the whole book. Now with all respect to Harry's father, James Potter, and his heroic fight against the dark arts and Voldemort, more important death in this case is the death of Harry's mother Lilly Potter. It is actually her sacrifice and her unbelievable effort to save her son's life that decides the way the whole story goes. This sacrifice and her spirit accompanies us throughout the whole series. Not only she gives Harry the chance to survive the murderous curse of lord Voldemort, she also gives him very powerful protection that saves Harry's life a few times. We can see this power in the first book, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, when professor Quirell hosting Voldemort in his own body is not able to touch Harry without suffering and in the end dies under Harry's touch.

Moreover Lilly's memory is also the reason why Severus Snape despite an extreme danger he is facing spies on the dark lord, dares to lie to him and comes back to his former vicious Death Eater accomplices. He does it to keep Harry alive, to save him and honour the memory of Lilly whom he loved. Lilly's spirit and her bravery reminded by Harry is also that impulse that finally makes Horace Slughorn reveal his shameful memory of telling Voldemort the secret of horcruxes and therefore giving him the possibility to become immortal. Many other characters face the surviving memory of Lilly Potter, most of them in a positive way but we can also see characters for whom this spirit is more of a haunted past. Between these characters we could count for example Harry's aunt, Lilly's sister Petunia. We know she did not have a good relationship with her sister, mostly because she was simply envious about Lilly's special powers and her possibility to go to Hogwarts and become a real witch. We also witness a scene mediated by Snape's memory in which Lilly and Petunia become really alienated and this is probably the breaking point they never got over. After being called a "freak" by her own sister, Lilly was never able to build a sisterly relationship with Petunia again. We know they kept a sporadic contact that can hardly be called a warm one.

As Dumbledore reminds us in Harry in *The Order of the Phoenix*, despite all the disagreements between her and her sister, despite all this bitterness she held inside her, Petunia still took Harry under her roof and let him stay there for all these years. Even though she never dropped a nice word to him, even though Harry was very often bullied by her own son Dudley and was treated more like an unwelcomed guest, she still could not get rid of her own nephew, of Lilly's son, and send him to for example an orphanage. It is a shame that we cannot see anytime throughout the series if Lilly's death actually affected Petunia. We can just assume on the basis of her decision to let Harry stay at her house and feed him, dress him and raise him that it was maybe the guilt, the sadness and the ghost of her sister that haunted her conscience.

In the same way we can talk about the spirit of Barry Fairbrother in *The Casual Vacancy*. His death is the force that puts everything in motion, in a similar way as in the *Harry Potter* series. Barry's spirit then accompanies the whole story and some of the characters are haunted by this spirit in a very negative way, even though most of them simply miss his wonderful personality just like people miss Lilly Potter. This haunting is even more escalated by the messages appearing on the town's online forum and revealing dirty secrets of several inhabitants of Pagford because the author of the message always carry the nickname "Ghost of Barry Fairbrother". This misusing of Barry's name is something completely different to the *Harry Potter* series where, except for Petunia, Voldemort or some Death Eaters, no one ever says a bad word about Lilly Potter.

Barry on the other hand during his life had to confront a few people because of his chair in the town council. His enthusiasm for the Fields, for people living in unfavourable circumstances like he originally did, made him an enemy in the eyes of for example the whole of the Mollison's family. His concern for Krystal Weedon was the cause of most of the fights with his own wife. For the Mollison family Barry's death represents simply just that sudden vacancy in the town council and the vision of future victory in the town counsel without a strong opponent like Barry was. His ghost haunts them only by the meaning of Barry's effort to keep the Fields under Pagford and using the press to keep it as such.

The group of people for whom Barry Fairbrother was indispensable to and who miss his presence the most visibly are not just his family but also his closest friends. These represent Colin Wall, Tessa Wall, Parminder Jawanda and Gavin Hughes. Gavin Hughes is a strange example because he, as we know, he slowly sees that Barry's sudden death is an opportunity to be with his wife, beautiful widow Mary Fairbrother whom he always liked. Though his expression of love towards her comes too early, pushed by his angry rejection by lover Kay, he

admits to himself that he always felt a deep admiration towards her and it was only Barry who stood in his way to make an attempt towards her. The ghost of Barry then haunts Gavin who feels guilty, but at the same time he cannot help himself and feels excitement every time Mary mentions that her marriage was not perfect. After being rejected not only by Mary, but also by Kay, Gavin in the end feels just a deep loss over losing his best friend and he suddenly simply misses his best friend.

Gavin had had an odd couple of weeks. He was missing Barry badly. He did not understand himself: when he should have been mired in misery that Mary had turned him down, all he wanted was a beer with the man whose wife he had hoped to take as his own... (Rowling, 2012, p. 558)

Another example of how Barry Fairbrother used to affect the people around him, serving most importantly as a bridge between them, we can see from Tessa Wall. As a head of the guidance department at Winterdown Comprehensive she is more used to thinking about people's behaviour and character than anyone else. Through her eyes we can actually see the consequences of Barry's death on his closest friends. As Tessa knows, for her husband Colin was Barry always the comforting element that kept his fears and panic caused by his illness within the confines of normal behaviour. He also helped Colin with his self-confidence and attitude towards his pubescent son Stuart.

It is exactly his "bridge" function, this mediator position, that Tessa misses the most and in her opinion the other people from his surroundings miss as well. She sees him as a bridge between her son and her husband or between Parminder and her daughter Sukhvinder. In her opinion had it not been for Barry's death, Parminder would be more opened towards troubles of her daughter and more willing to listen and Colin would get Barry to calm him down and would not immediately verbally attack Stuart. It is not only Tessa who shares the same opinion. Even Parminder during one of the misunderstandings with her husband thinks to herself that Barry would have made Vikram change his mind and additionally would have made him laugh.

Tessa sees Barry's absence as crucial for the upcoming voting, whether the Fields will stay under Pagford or not. For her, Barry was again the bridge between Pagford and the Fields, not only because he was born in the Fields but studied and lived in Pagford, but because of his belief in everyone and his optimistic nature. Tessa is rather pessimistic and knows that Barry's spirit alone will not be enough to persuade the council and win the voting.

They're completely deluded, Tessa thought, looking at the other three, who were poring over some graph that Parminder had extracted from Kay's notes. They think they'll reverse sixty years of anger and resentment with a few sheets of statistics. None of them was Barry. He had been a living example of what they proposed in theory: the advancement, through education from poverty to affluence, from powerlessness and dependency to valuable contributor to society. Did they not see what hopeless advocates they were, compared to the man who had died? (Rowling, 2012, p. 422)

This realisation is one of the reasons Tessa never actually supports her husband in elections besides the very obvious reason that in his illness and the consequences the new stressful position could bring to his mental health. We in the end cannot precisely tell the result of the voting because even though the situation seemed very hopeless for the Bellchapel clinic at first, Parminder's burst of anger during the discussion caused such a chaos that the council actually forgot to vote about it. Also the fate of the Fields is rather dim because of the series of tragic events, so we do not know for sure whether they will stay under Pagford and if Barry's spirit will then continue further.

Lilly Potter also represented a so called bridge, in her case she tried to be a mediator between her best friend from Slytherin Severus Snape and her future husband James Potter from Gryffindor and his friend Sirius Black. We know that this mediator function ended in the fifth year when Severus Snape, ashamed by James Potter in front of too many people, called Lilly "mudblood". Even though Severus tried to explain to Lilly his reasons and express how sorry he was, she never got over this strong offence, spoken by her best friend. The tension between the students of Slytherin and the young generation of Death Eaters following Voldemort that arose there, including Severus, separated these two friends for good. Even though Lilly stopped being the bridge between Slytherin and Gryffindor and ended her friendship with Severus, James, as Lupin told Harry, still never dared to curse Snape directly in front of Lilly and he was doing it only behind her back.

In the same way Lilly's spirit continues to represent this bridge namely between Snape and for example the members of The Order of Phoenix. Lilly's spirit is the reason of Snape's actions against dark magic in order to protect her son. Led by the desire to honour his love's memory, Snape simultaneously stands as the bridge between The Order of Phoenix and Voldemort with his Death Eaters. Similar bridges are later represented by Remus Lupin who is stands for the werewolves or Rubeus Hagrid who is supposed to convert the giants to Dumbledore's side.

It is also the time of their death that makes the biggest difference between the spirit of Lilly and the spirit of Barry. Both of the stories begin with death but when the main storyline of *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* starts, Lilly is dead over ten years already. Even though she is brought up often throughout the series and she still plays a significant role in the story, Barry being dead only a few hours when the events in Pagford are put in motion is simply remembered significantly more often than Lilly. The freshness of his death makes each character in the novel think about him and what he meant to them. The insight into the mind of all the characters is also given by the style of the storytelling and we can see multiple types of reactions and thoughts. Both Barry and Lilly nevertheless influence the future sequences of events even after their death and it is exactly their extremely strong personality they had whilst alive that simply does not allow them to just vanish from people's destinies. Instead of that they remained in the background of the story, not as shadows but as spirits mentioned above that accompany some people in a positive way and on the other hand haunt some other people as ghosts from the past.

A different situation can be seen in the *Cormoran Strike* series (2013 - 2015). In this case we can talk only about the ghosts from the past that haunt the characters and moreover these ghosts are not always represented by a person. The most visible ghost for Cormoran Strike represents his service at Afghanistan and his days at military in general. We know that he came back from Afghanistan without his leg which was blown off during one of his missions. He suffers from the phantom limb and also from violent visions from his time as a soldier.

This ghost of his soldier's past comes to a real form in *Carrier of Evil* (2015) when his assistant Robin receives a warning dedicated clearly to Strike and Strike is then forced to search back through his memories and try to figure out which one of the men he met and ruined as a soldier somehow could be a potential offender. This also brings back another ghosts from his past which are the ghost of his dead mother and the ghost of his still living stepfather, who Strike also considers one of the suspects.

The ghost of his dead mother haunts Strike in a very negative way, unlike in, for example, the *Harry Potter* series, in which Lilly Potter represents a memory of a love and functional family. Strike not only blames himself that he could not prevent his mother's death, he also believes that she did not overdose but she was murdered by his stepfather, Jeff Whittaker. This ghost, who nevertheless still lives, also haunts Strike from the first book. Not only does Jeff Whittaker represent an unpunished criminal, something unforgivable in Strike's eyes, Cormoran also remembers Whittaker's demeanour during trial when he tried to prove his innocence in murdering his mother. Strike now expects the moment when his stepfather comes back to take

his revenge and in the same time he is looking forward to this moment as he himself desires vengeance.

The last imaginary ghost appearing is the shadow of Robin's past. In *Carrier of Evil* (2015) we can witness her honest confession to Strike admitting that the reason why she dropped out of university was that an unknown man in a gorilla mask raped her one night. This ghost comes back in the novel mentioned above, as Robin has to face abused women and even worse, children in the end. Although she copes with this ghost in an incredibly brave way, her actions result in her being sacked by Strike and ending her dream of being a full detective.

None of the ghosts of the past are positive as in the case of the *Harry Potter* series or *The Casual Vacancy*, though the topic of a dead mother seems to be similar in the means of motivation. In the similar way as Harry is determined to kill Voldemort for murdering not only his mother, but also his father, Cormoran is determined to reveal the real face of Jeff Whittaker to the public and in the meantime he prevents other similar offenders as Whittaker from harming innocent people. We can only assume what role the ghost of his mother played in his decision to open his own detective office, however it seems that his long-term life goal is to clean his mother's memory and honour it by convicting her murderer.

Conclusion

The main aim of the thesis is to remember the personality of J.K. Rowling and the huge success of her *Harry Potter* series, and subsequently to compare it with the acceptance of her novels for adults, namely *The Casual Vacancy* and *Cormoran Strike* series, and also to examine how the success of *Harry Potter* series influenced children's fantasy of the 21st century.

As the second aim the thesis presents different theories of the archetypes of heroes and applies these particular archetypes throughout all Rowling's novels in order to find out which archetypes will predominate. Not surprisingly, one of the most frequent archetypes appearing in the novels is the classical Warrior archetype, the hero that must defeat his enemy, frequently represented by the Tyrant archetype. In both literal and figurative sense these Warrior archetypes are represented mostly by the main characters such as Harry Potter, Cormoran Strike, his assistant Robin or Barry Fairbrother from *The Casual Vacancy*.

A more interesting archetype appearing in all the novels is the pilgrim hero. This pilgrim archetype can be found in all Rowling's characters, and it connects all of them with some basic features, such as dysfunctional family background, a lack of long-term life goals and wandering in multiple ways. A special context belongs to the theme of wandering in terms of looking for love, which can be found in the stories of Cormoran Strike and Robin from *Cormoran Strike* series, Samantha Mollison, Gavin Hughes and Kay Bawden from *The Casual Vacancy* and Severus Snape from *Harry Potter* series.

The third archetype connecting all the novels appears to be the orphan archetype. Represented by Harry Potter, young Robbie from *The Casual Vacancy* and Cormoran Strike, this archetype seems to be the most subjective one as two of the heroes mentioned still have at least one of their biological parents, nevertheless they fulfil the description of the orphan archetype in a wider way of understanding.

The following part of the thesis describes the basic ideas of the trials the heroes must pass with a depiction of particular examples of these trials in the novels. The thesis then observes if these trials radically differ on the basis of various literary genres. For *Harry Potter* and *The Casual Vacancy* the predominant type of the trials are the trials by temptation. In both *Harry Potter*

series and *The Casual Vacancy*, the temptation is represented by inanimate objects, such as heroin, money or power in *The Casual Vacancy*, or even magical objects abounding with supernatural power appearing in *Harry Potter*. The type of the trials in the *Cormoran Strike* series, on the contrary, appears to be balanced. None of the types of the trials are in excess of the others.

Finally, the last chapters in the practical part of the thesis analyse the similar features of Rowling's heroes, as well as of her storytelling and topics. With the main focus on the adult role models, namely the mother and father figures, the chapters in the practical part try to answer the following questions: Are there any similarities between all Rowling's novels? Can some patterns of either characters' features or of the plots that appear in all of her works be found?

Particular similar features in mother and father figures were found in the end and several chapters compare the motives of their behaviour, their role in the story and also the consequences of their behaviour. Whereas the father figures appear to be either dethroned in the eyes of the heroes or largely failing in their role from the beginning, the mother figures show much better success of their task in the stories. The father figures dethroned from their imaginary pedestal prove to be James Potter, Sirius Black, Remus Lupin and Albus Dumbledore from *Harry Potter* series and Howard Mollison from *The Casual Vacancy*. The rest of the father figures contained in the novels appear to be rather failing in their role with the exception of Arthur Weasley, Barry Fairbrother and Miles Mollison or the characters described extremely briefly in the stories, such as Robin's father, Hermione's father or Amos Diggory, Cedric's father.

The features of the mother figures are more complicated to summarize them as a whole, as they appear on the scale created by two different poles - a goddess mother and a terrible mother. Despite this wide range the similar characteristic features managed to be found. The predominant mother figure appears to be the mix of both poles, more exactly the mother figure that absolutely adores her child and will do anything for it, however, it is this exaggerated love of hers that blinds her and makes her partially fail in her task. These figures are represented by Petunia Dursley and Narcissa Malfoy from *Harry Potter* series, Krystal Weedon and Tessa Wall from *The Casual Vacancy* and Leda Strike from *Cormoran Strike* series.

Moreover, one topic connecting the fate of all the heroes in all Rowling's novels has been successfully found and therefore the question given at the beginning could be answered. The motif used in all Rowling's novels appears to be the past of the heroes that accompanies them all the way throughout the stories. It is represented usually by either a loving soul, an already dead good character, such as Lilly Potter or Barry Fairbrother in *Harry Potter* series and *The Casual Vacancy*, or, on the contrary, by so called ghosts of the past, negative characters that still live, such as Jeff Whittaker in *Cormoran Strike* series. Whereas the good souls give the characters the strength to continue their tasks and motivate them to a further effort, the ghosts of the past, on the contrary, limit the hero on his journey and they haunt him, not allowing him to live a happy, harmonic life.

The connecting topic for all the Rowling's novels, regardless a literary genre, is the experience of death at the very beginning of the story, mostly before the main story even starts. In the case of *Harry Potter* series and *The Casual Vacancy*, the death of both Lilly Potter and Barry Fairbrother makes some heroes to step out of their comfort zone and try to be better, such as Colin Wall, who tries to win Barry's chair in the town counsel despite his mental illness, or professor Slughorn, who in spite of his own shame and his fear of lord Voldemort reveals Harry the forbidden memory in order to honour Lilly's memory. In the case of *Cormoran Strike* series the death of his mother Leda Strike haunts Cormoran till the present day as he knows that his stepfather Jeff Whittaker, the ghost from his past, who, as he believes, murdered Leda still avoids justice.

The thesis proved the main point claiming that Rowling builds her characters up in a similar way and she uses her own unique patterns for all of her works. The examples provided in the practical part of the thesis support this theory. The main difficulty of the thesis proved to be the wide spectre of examined characters. In a few cases only the main heroes of the story could have been analysed, with respect to the extent of the thesis, and the secondary characters had to be omitted. Another problem turned out to be the choice of appropriate theory of the archetypal heroes, as there are several of them and, considering the planned extent of the thesis, not all of them could have been used.

There are several possibilities how to develop the ideas of this thesis. The first option would be to narrow the number of characters examined by focusing on only one type of Rowling's work. Another option would be to choose one of the genres examined, for example, a detective story,

and compare the information contained in this thesis with the analysis of other heroes of detective stories and their assistants.

Summary

Resumé

Vzhledem k poměrně bohaté odborné literatuře, která se věnuje detailním rozborům nejslavnější série autorky J.K. Rowlingové *Harry Potter*, bylo hlavním motivem této práce zahrnout do zkoumání i ostatní autorčina, odbornou literaturou poněkud opomíjená, díla (*Prázdné místo* a série *Cormoran Strike*) a navzájem je porovnat. Stěžejní myšlenkou výzkumu bylo přesvědčení, že určité charakterové rysy postav ze všech autorčiných románů se v dílech opakují a můžeme tak mezi nimi nalézt podobnosti, určité vzory ve vytváření postav, které jsou pro autorku typické.

Prvním klíčovým bodem před zahájením samotného výzkumu bylo rozhodnutí, z jakého pohledu romány přesně porovnávat, neboť vzhledem k rozsahu zkoumaných materiálů bylo nutno toto hledisko co nejvíce zúžit. Práce se nakonec věnuje teorii archetypů hrdinů a také románům zkoušek a druhům těchto zkoušek, které hrdinové musí na své cestě vykonat. Další kapitoly se pak zabývají rozbohem otcovských a mateřských postav, jejich funkcemi a naplnění rolí. V neposlední řadě se pak práce pokoušela najít alespoň jeden tematický prvek spojující všechna díla.

V teoretické části byla nejdříve připomenuta osobnost autorky, její přínos do světa literatury a také krátká úvaha o tom, čím se právě její série knih o Harrym Potterovi stala tak neuvěřitelně úspěšným dílem, celosvětovým fenoménem. V následující podkapitole je rovněž krátce popsán její vliv na rozvoj fantasy literatury počátkem 21. století, neboť i když se práce pokouší zahrnout a porovnat všechna autorčina díla, *Harry Potter* série zůstává základním pilířem tohoto výzkumu.

Následující kapitola se věnovala teorii archetypů hrdinů, podala jak tradičnější, starší pojetí této teorie, tak i pojetí modernější. Práce s oběma teoriemi umožnila archetypy uchopit z více hledisek a později s nimi pracovat důkladněji a určovat je přesněji. V další kapitole práce představila teorii románů zkoušek, který teorii archetypů hrdinů doprovází, a seznámila tak čtenáře se základními ideami těchto zkoušek, kterými musí hrdinové na své cestě projít.

V praktické části následovala vlastní interpretace zmiňované teorie archetypů hrdinů a její uplatnění na konkrétní postavy z románů. Cílem této analýzy bylo zjistit převažující archetypy

objevující se v dílech J.K. Rowlingové a porovnat tak díla z hlediska typů hrdinů. Výzkum ukázal, že nejčastější archetypy objevující se v románech jsou klasický archetyp hrdiny válečníka, archetyp sirotka a archetyp poutníka. Zmíněné archetypy spojují všechna díla, neboť se v různých pojetích vyskytují ve všech dílech J.K. Rowlingové. Tyto postavy nesou velmi podobné charakteristické rysy a sdílí i obdobné životní osudy.

Další kapitola praktické části uplatnila teorii románu zkoušek nastíněnou v teoretické části. V kapitole věnované interpretaci zkoušek v kontextu autorčiných románů se práce snažila vyzorovat, zda se bude nějaký typ zkoušky objevovat častěji s ohledem na měnící se literární žánry. Kapitola zanalyzovala konkrétní zkoušky hrdinů a poukázala na to, že nejčastěji se objevující typ zkoušky byla křesťanská idea zkoušky pokušením. Tato pokušení byla nejčastěji zobrazena v románech z *Harry Potter* série a v románu *Prázdné místo*, ve kterých byla reprezentována převážně neživými objekty. V případě série *Harry Potter* se navíc jednalo o předměty magické, s nadpřirozenou silou, jejich hlubšímu významu se tedy důkladněji věnovala samostatná podkapitola. Naopak v případě detektivní série *Cormoran Strike* výzkum neprokázal převahu žádného typu zkoušek.

V následujících kapitolách praktické části se práce věnovala analýze otcovských a mateřských postav z románů. Cílem bylo tyto postavy nejen popsat a porovnat, ale hlavně vyzdvihnout podobné rysy, které se napříč romány u těchto postav objevují. Práce poukázala na převážně selhávající otcovské postavy, které jsou navíc v očích svých dětí většinou takzvaně “shozeny z piedestalu”. Tato situace nastává, když je dítě svědkem, ať už očitým nebo nepřímým, nevhodného chování této postavy, kterou předtím považovalo za dokonalou, svůj vzor. Mateřské postavy naopak sjednocuje postava matky, která nade vše miluje své dítě, nicméně její vlastní zaslepenost či jiné nedostatky jí brání vykonávat svou roli bez chyb. Právě tyto nedostatky ve výchově velmi často dítěti naopak ubližují.

Poslední kapitola práce se pak pokoušela nalézt spojující tematický prvek pro všechna zmíněná díla autorky. Podařilo se nalézt a podrobně popsat motiv smrti na počátku příběhu. Ta se stává buď inspirací, pozitivním impulsem pro zasažené postavy, nebo naopak stínem minulosti, negativním duchem, který postavy pronásleduje po celou dobu příběhu a nedopřává jim klidu. Společný motiv tak rovněž potvrdil teorii existence stejných, opakujících se prvků napříč všemi autorčinými romány.

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