De-demonising Universality: Transcultural Dragons and the Universal Agent within J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* and David Eddings' *The Belgariad*

by
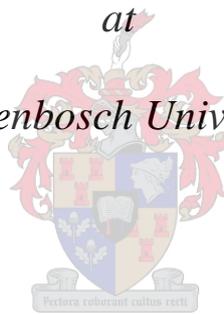
Janka Steenkamp

Dissertation presented for the degree of Master of Arts

at

Stellenbosch University

Department of English

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

Supervisor: Dr Daniel Roux

Date: December 2009

Declaration

By submitting this dissertation electronically, I declare that the entirety of the work contained therein is my own, original work, that I am the owner of the copyright thereof (unless to the extent explicitly otherwise stated) and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it for obtaining any qualification.

Date: 25th August 2009

Abstract

This dissertation provides a reading of the fantasy novel series *Harry Potter* by J.K. Rowling and *The Belgariad* by David Eddings. In particular this dissertation endeavours to recuperate a literary critical methodology rooted in Myth Criticism. Further, it seeks to demonstrate the continued relevance and necessity of this form of criticism in our postmodern era and to refute some of the commonplaces of postmodern critical theory, specifically the poststructuralist scepticism towards the idea of universal truth and individual agency. Using Jungian theory, myth critics ranging from Laurence Coupe to Joseph Campbell and incorporating various postmodern theorists, like the contemporary Marxist theorist Terry Eagleton, and fantasy critics like Brian Attebery and Ursula LeGuin, this dissertation aims to give a well-rounded analysis of the merits of looking at fantasy as a legitimate field of literary study. Moreover, this dissertation seeks to illustrate the fact that fantasy is capable of informing readers' interaction with the 'real' world and that this genre allows for insight into identity formation in present day reality. The chief structure used to explore these claims is an analysis of the Hero's Journey.

Opsomming

Hierdie verhandeling bied 'n vertolking van die fantasie-roman reekse *Harry Potter* deur J.K Rowling en *The Belgariad* deur David Eddings. Die verhandeling poog veral om 'n kritiese literêre metodologie, gegrond op Mite-kritiek, te hervestig. Dit poog verder om die voortdurende toepaslikheid en noodsaaklikheid van hierdie vorm van kritiek in ons post-moderne era te aan te toon, sowel as om sommige van die (té) algemeen aanvaarde standpunte van post-moderne kritiese teorie, en veral die post-strukturalistiese skeptisisme jeens die idee van universele waarheid en individuele agenskap, te weerlê. Deur Jungiaanse teorie te gebruik, tesame met Mite-kritici wat wissel van Laurence Coupe tot Joseph Campbell, en insluitende verskeie post-moderne teoretici, soos die kontemporêre Marxistiese teoritikus Terry Eagleton en fantasie-kritici soos Brian Attebery en Ursula LeGuin, het hierdie verhandeling ten doel om 'n afgeronde (of goed gebalanseerde) analise te verskaf van die meriete daarvan om fantasie as 'n legitieme studierigting te beskou. Voorts poog hierdie verhandeling om die feit te illustreer dat fantasie in staat is daartoe om lesers se interaksie met die "regte" wêreld te beïnvloed en dat hierdie genre insig kan gee rakende identiteitsvorming in die hedendaagse werklikheid. Die vernaamste wyse waarop hierdie aansprake ondersoek word is deur middel van 'n analise van die held se reis.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my friends and family for supporting me through various thesaural upheavals and Daniel for always having an encouraging word to deaden the hysteria during the dissertation process. I would also like to thank the many people who were sounding boards in the last few years – sorry if I bored you, but here it is!

Table of Contents

Chapter 1 – Introduction

Fantasy as a genre is usually approached with caution. Any narrative that deals with uncanny representations of reality is open to great scrutiny – as myth critic Jacques Waardenburg states in his essay *Symbolic Aspects of Myth*:

> …not only are the powers accounted for in the myth no longer really believed in, but also the power for a mythical assimilation of reality is doubtful. Myth then no longer gives access to reality but rather keeps us away from it. It is largely this feeling of oppression and alienation that explains the uncompromising character of the struggle which reason leads against myth as something essentially "other" in which humans have been caught. (57)

The term fantasy, as employed here, refers to texts that construct a world that is at once alien, and yet completely recognisable. This dissertation attempts to draw distinctions between myth, symbol and contemporary reality, ultimately linking the three within the fantasy genre to argue that "myth [and by extension fantasy] implies a prelogical mentality that is not bound by the law of contradiction but operates under the law of participation, according to which 'objects and phenomena can be, though in a manner incomprehensible to us, at once themselves and not themselves'" (Douglas 123). This dissertation will use J.K Rowling's *Harry Potter* series and David and Leigh Eddings' *The Belgariad* series to demonstrate fantasy's ability to engage critically with reality, its ability to explore the integration of the self and its ability to de- and re-mystify the human experience. I will focus on how these texts confront the ideas of identity construction and subjectivity, as well as the space that these texts inhabit and the significance of locating a text within this space.

To this end I will be engaging with myth criticism. I feel that it is a valuable critical tool that in recent times, with the rise of poststructuralism, has been neglected in favour of anti-essentialising critiques associated with postmodern criticism. In particular, my focus is on recuperating a language that might enable one to discuss the idea of "universality" and facilitate a discussion of myth that allows one to interrogate some of the deeply ingrained "postmodern" suspicions concerning the transhistorical and transcultural scope of certain narrative forms. One of the aims of this dissertation is to recover terms such as "universality", "agency" and "essential identity" from structuralist and poststructuralist censure. I will use myth criticism as a foundation to argue that these terms need to be released from the heavy weight of postmodern condemnation and reincorporated into critical analysis.

Myth criticism is the methodology favoured by this dissertation because the notions connected to universality, essential identity and a balanced self have, to my mind, been injudiciously dismissed by postmodern thought, even though they remain essential building blocks for understanding subjectivity. The mere fact that these concepts seem disquieting in a postmodern context is what gives them power; these are concepts that were disavowed at the very inception of postmodernism because they have acquired, in recent decades, a reputation for colluding with the hegemonic and discredited project of modernity. Universality and agency are viewed from a postmodern context as hangovers of a utopic enlightenment ideal, though it is understandable that universality and totality of any kind should be viewed with trepidation. Eagleton formulates this sense of apprehension as:

> universal humanity, in the degenerate sense that one's own cultural prejudices should hold global sway, has been one of the most brutal ways of crushing the otherness of others under one's heel that history has yet come up with. It has played a central role in a poisonous, sometimes exterminationist ideology, and the panic-stricken postmodern reaction to it is thus a generous sort of error. (Illusions 49)

Thus the term "universal" is viewed as either a fairytale that is unattainable or as essentially an ideological tool that can be used for coercive purposes. It is important to destabilise and interrogate these definitions of universality, as ultimately the fact that we are all human on an *a priori*, pre-ideological level – in short, the fact that there *is* such a thing as a "human species"– is the tie that has the potential to bind us together as a global community rather than forcing us apart by insisting on the absolute priority of difference in all matters that touch on human culture and history. Myth criticism offers a powerful theoretical tool that brings to the surface preoccupations and insights regarding these notions that poststructuralist theories tend to bracket off or avoid. By viewing mythic narrative as a mode of "story telling" that has multiple resonances, myth criticism debunks the nihilistic view of the postmodern subject afloat in a sea of disillusion and passivity. This thesis, then, has as one of its aims the recuperation of myth theory in a critical and philosophical context that is in many ways inimical to this kind of criticism.

Myth has always formed part of human interaction and relation to the universe and our place within it. Poems such as *The Odyssey* and *The Iliad*, or the many stories woven around the Arthurian legend, have always evoked the interest of academic minds. Story-making and discovering meaning are inherent processes of the human condition: this is evident from the oral story-telling traditions of various ancient civilizations, to the mythic narratives painted on caves by cultures long extinct. In essence what one is dealing with, whenever one discusses story in any form, is "narrative" and its shifting relationship with the world. Roland Barthes is

very careful to distinguish between myth and narrative, but I feel that his definition of narrative encompasses the importance of myth and the story-making process, in the sense that myth is a form of narrative, perhaps even the foundational form of narrative from which stories spring:

> [N]arrative is present in every age, in every place, in every society, it begins with the very history of mankind and there nowhere is nor has ever been a people without narrative. All classes, all human groups, have their narratives, enjoyment of which is very often shared by men with different, even opposing, cultural backgrounds. Caring nothing for the division between good and bad literature, narrative is international, transhistorical, transcultural: it is simply there, like life itself (Barthes 251-252).

Barthes' assertion is particularly interesting because the language he uses to define narrative is, within itself, universalising, which does suggest that when discussing myths and narrative it is difficult to escape the logic of universality. Myth criticism is first and foremost preoccupied with the nature of myth itself. This has led to many discrepancies between theories that deal with this apparently concrete yet completely ambiguous term. My aim is not to provide an exhaustive overview of myth criticism in this chapter, but simply to point to some of the major schools of thought about myth and definitions of the term and to locate my own methodology within the framework.

The term "myth" is used, nowadays, in several different ways, mostly to connote something that is fanciful or has no root in fact or truth. Myth is generally equated with utopia, fairy tales and paradigms that have no apparent repercussions on our current contexts. Even within the field of myth criticism we have vastly differing definitions of myth: for Northrop Frye, myth is divided into "three organizations of myth [namely] undisplaced myth, myth that tends toward the romantic mode and myth that tends toward realism as a mode" (139-140); for Roland Barthes myth is "a type of speech" (Structuralism 1); in other words, for Barthes it is simply an aspect of language which can be studied in the same way all linguistic utterances can be studied, without invoking some transcendent "mythical realm" outside language. For Jacques Waardenburg myth is "a symbolic construction of reality, or a construction of reality by means of symbols" (54) – these are but a few definitions of myth as a genre. The only thing that these definitions have in common is that from J.C. Frazer's *The Golden Bough* straight through to Eric Csapo's collection on myth criticism, the definition of the term "myth" seems radically subjective. Each critic brings his or her own understanding to the concept, which consequently truly comes "to mean most things to most men" (Gould 5).

I would like to advance a tentative working definition of myth as the underlying components of which literature is made. What this definition puts forward is the notion that the "universality" in myth stems from symbols encoded into the language that act as transcultural, transhistorical signifiers. In metaphorical terms, myth is a single voice, made up of multiple harmonies that resonate differently with different people, but is always imbued with the same message. It is a language that speaks all languages, that crosses all boundaries and appeals first and foremost to our status as *human beings* before ideology and can give us a kind of compass with which we can navigate our current historical, cultural and subjective context – myth governs our entry into and mediates our relationship with ideology.

Within myth studies itself, there are two vastly differing approaches to what has been widely referred to as "myth". Put simply, myths fall into two categories, the first classified as the cloaking of ideological inexplicable absolutes (those which cover truth or lack supposedly for the "greater good" of society) as suggested by Roland Barthes in his work *Myth Today* (Barthes 110). The other approach is that of more essentialist schools of thought, derived from the works of Carl Jung and seen, among others, in the work of Joseph Campbell. These critics argue that myth is an inherited fundamentally spiritual narrative longing that resides in each of us, and that connects us in some way to a bigger picture. An example of this would be Jung's notion of a Collective Unconscious, which refers to a set of universal symbols that we all access involuntarily. This dissertation appraises these two quite divergent approaches to myth in order to see whether they are mutually exclusive, or whether a productive dialogue can be instigated between them. In general, my dissertation is rooted in the more essentialist methodology associated with Jung and Campbell, rather than the poststructuralist "demythification" school of myth studies. One of the important aims of my dissertation is to show that this model has, in many ways, been misunderstood, and is not necessarily "reductive" or simplistic, at least not in the pejorative sense often employed by its critics.

Just as the definition of myth is constantly evolving, the theoretical approaches have evolved in their understanding of the term "mythology". It is therefore imperative to track the development of myth criticism to indicate exactly where fantasy and this dissertation's methodology are located within this field of literary study. For most of the previous century, myth criticism was dominated by the writings of J.C. Frazer, an anthropologist whose most notable work, *The Golden Bough*, sparked off a new kind of engagement with mythology, namely comparative anthropological analysis. Frazer, in effect, abused the comparative mode of analysis to the extent that the mention of his name in any serious context in recent works

published is risible. The entire construction of his theory is founded on assumption that is then substantiated through overlapping evidence of "myth" that he picks and chooses without regard to context.

Instead of sifting out examples in order to apply them to an already devised conclusion, a comparative study of mythology should instead endeavour to uncover "universal patterns" within the narratives (Bidney 22). I use David Bidney as a source here because he sees the "universal patterns" within myth as those of "motivation and conduct" that is not "latent, esoteric wisdom": instead he sees myth as "a universal cultural phenomenon …[originating] wherever thought and imagination are employed uncritically or deliberately used to promote social delusion" (22). In an important sense Bidney, heavily influenced by Ernst Cassirer, boldly showcases the rationalist, historicist approach to myth criticism. In the quotation above he makes it clear that he labels myth as either propaganda or fairy tale – neither inspires any kind of connection to truth. This links directly with the postmodern inflection of universality and agency, because myth is seen as a product of culture that can only be used to further ideology and not critique it. In essence, his analysis of myth is entirely consonant with postmodern appraisals of myth. The ultimate issue, for myth criticism, is that there is a tendency to couple myth with either archaic societies, which is typical of the Myth and Ritual School, associated especially with Jane Harrison and Northrop Frye; or to render it "completely modern" and link it to ideology and the sanctioning of prejudices. The fantasy novels examined in this dissertation demonstrate how the genre in fact stands with a foot in *each* of these spaces into which myth has been pigeon-holed. The fantasy genre connects myth to the here and now by positing the reader within a recognisable paradigm and critiquing it from within what I will call "mythic space". The way that the paradigm is constructed within these texts forces me to acknowledge that paradoxically, myth and fantasy derive their subjectivity from their universality. Further, I must acknowledge that the idea of myth as "transcendent" and trans-historical is actually what gives it its power to criticise the specificities of our own cultural and historical condition.

Most postmodern critics cringe at the mere thought of universality, and myth does seem to be the incubator for such seemingly homogenising concepts that render the subject a passive agent, obsolete and unnecessary. What I intend to argue is that universality, far from being the essentialist, totalising ideological tool that postmodernity claims, is actually *a priori* in terms of ideology – that it exists in a space beyond and before ideology, in the sense that the term should actually mean "accessible to all differences".

At this juncture, it becomes very important to distinguish between archetype and stereotype. Where a stereotype is the product of culture, an archetype is, in theory, pre-cultural: Where an archetype could be seen as universally historical, a stereotype could be seen as culturally historical. A stereotype tends to support a culturally determined role such as "a woman's place is in the home". In contrast, an archetype tends to exemplify a trend that transcends ideology to paint a picture of a mother or martyr regardless of ideological or cultural context. It is human beings who tie subjective experience to a model or symbol, imbuing it with meaning that is always above all things deeply ideological. For example, let us argue that the universal symbol for a mother is a woman with a child nestling in her arms. This symbol would be as easily recognised by watching a woman from any culture with her baby, as by watching a lioness with her cubs. The symbol would, however, at the same time be filtered through that person's subjective filter: in other words, although the image of the Madonna and Child has been co-opted to serve ideological ends, it does not mean that it is itself reducible to an effect of culture. The reader's experience of the image is always mediated by culture and his or her own idiosyncrasies. However, at the root of it the symbol remains the same and recognisable, regardless of personal experience. What, in essence, this dissertation is trying to prove is that myth and fantasy are able to grapple with this paradox in a way that opens the universal and specific up to new readings.

It is first and foremost important to look at myth and its importance in contemporary society. Poststructuralists from Lacan to Althusser to Derrida have pointed out that narcissism seems to be our contemporary globalised capitalist Western culture's distinguishing feature. It depends on Western culture's valorisation of the individual, and it can result in an overwhelming sense of existential meaninglessness and anxiety. DiCenso summarises Lacan's appraisal of the situation succinctly:

> In Lacan's definition, narcissism is ultimately alienating because its closure or self-containment inhibits a reflexive engagement with otherness in the form of external others and undeveloped or repressed dimensions of the self (DiCenso 51).

One could argue that it is this lack of collective, of engaging with the Other both outside and within the self, that fuels the individual's feeling of being cut off from the cosmos, and that it is this same impulse that drives us to make our lives seem more eventful than they are, to try to infuse them with more meaning.

> In other words, the trouble with most lives is that they suffer from want of an imaginatively productive storyline or plot… myth (and here especially myths of

the epic hero like Gilgamesh) has the power to break us free from the mundane and make us free for new and unknown possibilities of meaning and humanity. Perhaps most important of all…myth can provide the occasion for a journey *out* of the self through confrontation with realities *other* than the self. In an age dominated by narcissistic preoccupation with the myth of the self and the plethora of solipsistic intellectual permutations that are its consequence, this is not an insignificant point (Olson 4 -5).

Myths are, in effect, stories that are part of the collective unconscious, the most famous of which have been assimilated into language and have come to acquire certain values as signs. For example, someone who drags his mother into everything is Oedipal; if a task looks daunting it's Herculean; an incredibly attractive man is an Adonis; Narcissus, on a surface level, is so embraced by Western culture that narcissists roam the globe. What these characters, or mythic figures have become, are archetypes of specific predominant personality traits; and yet, within their stories each teaches a specific moral lesson and each of them presents some form of heroic allegory or moral theme, whether it be redemption, a fall from grace, or even the dangers of perceiving yourself as too much of a hero – too beautiful, too important. However, each of them also contains definite significant allegories for life and how we try to derive meaning from the world; and interestingly each of these "heroes", as they are now known to us, had certain hands dealt to them in life that they had to accept. Adonis was born out of incest, one of the foundational and universal cultural taboos, still operative today; Narcissus scorned love and ended up falling so in love with himself that he wasted away in front of his own reflection; Hercules was a plaything for his stepmother Juno, who drove him to a state of madness in which he murdered his wife and children. Oedipus is perhaps the most tragic of all, being literally blind to his fated destiny; he plainly had an existential crisis because he did not choose the path he walked; he just walked it – to a great extent he exemplifies the fact that you cannot cheat fate.

The fact is that these mythical heroes have come to signify but the shell, the surface, of what their entire narrative is actually trying to communicate, which is a concrete understanding of self and the integration of that self into society, to that self's best ability. This process will be explored throughout the dissertation through textual analysis. Each of these stories brings to light explicit universally recognised moral issues and complex resolutions. Perhaps one reason why these moral quandaries are rendered more concrete in narrative form than by simple consideration is that

> people easily enough raise questions for intelligence, for reflection, for deliberation. But we can have hunches that we cannot formulate clearly and exactly, so we tell a story. Stories, as is being currently affirmed, are existential: there are true stories that reveal the life that we are truly leading,

and there are cover stories that make out our lives to be somewhat better than
they are in reality. (Lonergan 33)

Stories also possess the ability to stage the darker side of morality and its consequences, and we thereby, hopefully, learn certain boundaries and moral values. This viewpoint may seem highly Aristotelian, and I am in no way advocating that didacticism is the sole purpose of myth or narrative. What *is* illustrated, however, is that in interpretation and connection with narrative, the reader has to engage with the action taking place, in order to interpret his or her own stance with respect to the way events unfold in the narrative. One will always regard a narrative through one's own subjective lens, thus rendering interpretation an act of moral significance.

Fantasy as a genre has often been dismissed by academics as a dangerous utopian form of narrative that encourages escapism and avoids any real critical engagement with social realities. On the surface this seems a sound argument, but conversely, the hunger for mythic and epic narrative can be construed as an outcry, or a call, back to community in a time where individualism and isolation are championed. This is a possibility because the very nature of mythical and epic narratives is communal: they emphasise not only the qualities of individuals, but also the individual's place within a greater community. In his book *Tracking the Gods: the Place of Myth in Modern Life*, James Hollis explores "the great paradigm shift that lies at the very core of modernism…the loss of mythic connection to the cosmos" (53). His conclusion is the Jungian idea that life is in essence paradoxical; that while human beings must maintain an idea of their role in the greater picture, they must also feed the compulsion to develop as an individual apart from that picture. Hollis argues that all subjects necessitate a link back to mythic narrative, and says:

> Myth takes us deep into ourselves and into the psychic reservoirs of humanity.
> Whatever our cultural and religious background or personal psychology, a greater
> intimacy with myth provides vital linkage with meaning, the absence of which is so
> often behind the private and collective neuroses of our time. (Hollis 7-8)

Based on Hollis' appropriation of this Jungian idea, we can argue that fantasy is not merely a vacuous genre that promotes the rejection of reality, but a tool with which we can interrogate our surroundings. This seems particularly significant given the rise of cultural phenomena such as the *Harry Potter* books and television series like *Buffy The Vampire Slayer* which have not only developed cult followings, but are emerging in academia as case studies of modern popular culture that utilise nuanced mythical metaphors to mirror current questions about human existence. These fantasy narratives also serve as a forum for moral debates that

explore universal trends and psychological coping mechanisms within contemporary society. In essence, fantasy as a literary genre forces an imaginative engagement with real problems. I will argue that there is a strong link between the mythic Hero's Journey and identity formation and consolidation on an *a priori* universal scale. The hero's journey can be read as a map of development towards an integrated self; the trials that the hero undergoes can be equated to the psychological development of any subject within any given context. Moreover, it advocates that positive agency is possible within a recognisable tide of destiny.

Starting from myth criticism and embarking from a Jungian perspective, I aim to argue the importance of what has been called the Hero's Journey (Campbell 36) as a reflection of everyday identity integration that provides an interesting insight in terms of the postmodern notion of the split subject. Joseph Campbell's *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* was initially my primary secondary source. However, I have come to realise that Campbell's reading of the Hero's Journey, while being comprehensive in terms of connecting myth and the initiation stages of development, ultimately conforms to a utopic rendering of both the hero as a reconciled, whole and free subject and society as a brave new world. It was after having read Terry Eagleton's *The Illusions of Post Modernism* that I began to realise that what was needed was a reading of this mythical approach that would allow the reader to connect with the hero on a level where the hero does not embody wish-fulfilment, in the terms of a completely sanctioned ego (here I mean wish-fulfilment in the Lacanian sense of free from the castration complex) but that allows the reader to envisage the triumph that the hero achieves as attainable. Eagleton foregrounds the modern subject's complete and utter isolation from meaningful existence. What I found profoundly disturbing was that there seemed to be no mid-point, in terms of theory, between Kafka's Joseph K and Hercules as heroes. In other words, there is only the rational split subject bullied by destiny who comes to an unfulfilled and ultimately pointless end or a demi-god who manages, through demonstrations of superhuman action, to find himself a whole subject capable of complete agency. Fantasy allows for a hero that oscillates between these two distinct types of hero – the reason that one can find answers to these deeply troubling questions that postmodernism poses within the narratives that I examine in this dissertation is that the hero's status, first and foremost, is that of Everyman.

To this purpose I have chosen two series of books, *Harry Potter* by J.K. Rowling and *The Belgariad* by David and Leigh Eddings. Both these series are situated within differing contextual paradigms, and each text makes reference to the specific current political and

cultural situation at the time of writing; however, they both open up an underpinning mythic space that is essentially the same. My argument will show that this is a space that exceeds both historical and cultural context. Although these texts' contexts are both rooted in the 20th century, their contextual differences will be discussed in detail later in this chapter. Throughout the narratives of both series, the reader is constantly confronted not only by cultural and historical signifiers, but landscapes that are recognisable as well as foreign spaces. The space that the books tap into is a reservoir of knowledge that can only be productively described as Jung's Collective Unconscious. Further, the crux of my dissertation lies in the exploration of language as a dual signifier within fantasy narratives. Essentially, this means that while fantasy presents the reader with a recognisable landscape and seems to be delivering a commentary on a world that can only be accessed by the imagination, it is, in actual fact, simultaneously expressing something else. This "something else", for the purposes of this dissertation, is defined as the unending struggle to assimilate and express meaning (i.e. enact agency) as an individual that is *always already* a member of a pan-cultural, indefinable collective: namely, the community of humanity.

What fantasy and myth offer us is the ability to relate to someone not unlike ourselves who is faced with problems and moral quandaries that are not foreign to us. They bring about the question of agency, in the sense of how much control we have over our own circumstances, our own interpretations. Can we be truly free in our analyses or lives, or are we merely confronting these quandaries through a pseudo-subjective ideologically tainted lens? Perhaps the greatest contribution that fantasy makes to the human condition is that it is a source of hope. This is the true reason that audiences and readers are drawn to this genre; it is the genre's ability to re-instil hope that infuses its popularity, arguably it is the very unity, the sense of solidarity, represented in mythical stories that we cling to: the idea that we are not alone in our existential angst and that we do belong somewhere. This roots the cult re-reading of these texts not in suspension of disbelief in a conventional sense, but in suspending disbelief into a preferred reality: into what our reality would be at its best.

I argue that fantasy allows us to explore a space that I will dub "mythic space" within a text. The function of this space is to allow for an informed confrontation with questions that reappear consistently and constantly throughout the history of literature. It is the space that taps into the symbol archive of the collective unconscious and gives voice to concepts that cannot be represented through the inadequate system of language, hence fantasy's ability to represent something that is contextually specific and yet simultaneously universally relevant.

Each set of books that I have chosen illustrates all these points and highlights the fact that there are several different ways to approach not only a text, but the subject matter that inspires the text. I chose these books because each comes from a specific context that resides within the narrative itself in the form of metaphor and allegory, or, in the case of *Harry Potter*, literal imitation of the "real" world. One finds obvious resonances of the Reagan/Thatcherite era in the work of the Eddings, with allusions to the East/West binary as well as implicit Othering of nations deemed uncivilised by the status quo (Anglo Saxon, Caucasian and Royal). Eddings' novels introduce the reader to a world that is complete down to the last brick, especially in terms of the complex navigation that the subject has to undertake concerning ideology, public and private space, as well as the stormy tide of politics. The novels relate the tale of a boy named Garion who is thrown into an identity crisis when he embarks on a journey with a group of people who slowly reveal to him that he is not who he thinks he is. As is standard in such novels, there is a great evil to vanquish, but the main concern and focus of the narrative is on Garion's battle with himself: will he accept this new information and become who he is destined to be or will free will (in the sense that he can abandon his "true self" in favour of another construction of self) and obtuseness rob him of his destiny? Ultimately, Garion has to connect with himself and the people and environment around him, to find the answers that he seeks.

The hero, therefore, does not enact agency with the sole purpose of having dominion over his environment, but learns to function within that environment while retaining the right to enact his agency. *Harry Potter* presents us with a veil between our world and the magical world, with characters moving between these with ease. The result of this is the re-emphasis of the relevance of mythic space in contemporary life and a scathing critique of what it means to be a subject who acquires agency in a postmodern, capitalist, bureaucratically driven world.

Both Rowling and Eddings have been able to translate a relatively internal journey (integration of the self) into an outward, physical one, managing to capture all the complexities of this journey through use of a well established formulaic narrative genre, and yet at the same time managing to evoke a new way of engaging with the characters and the world in which they find themselves. This represents a genre theory that does not conform to one particular school of thought, but rather to a kaleidoscope of different literary theories. The purpose of the methodology employed in this dissertation is to escape a totalising critical engagement with these texts in favour of a comprehensive analysis of both fantasy and its functions, drawing from a variety of theories, some of which are mutually antagonistic, in an

attempt to explore the inherent duality of fantasy. By extension this undertaking highlights and renders applicable the Jungian notion of "the mythic world as a potential means of compensation for the sense of meaninglessness that plagues modern culture, proud of its rationality but at the same time a prey to doubts and existential anguish" (Walker 23). This, far from rendering other schools of thought about the split, deracinated subject obsolete, creates a new possibility of exploration for the split subject's neuroses and helplessness. The ultimate goal of these novels is to render the split subject whole, thus imbuing that subject with agency that allows him or her to function within the larger world. This analysis will suggest that agency is the free assumption of the always-already chosen – that it is choice and not destiny that renders a subject capable of agency. Both authors use the idea of a child hero, likening the hero's journey to the journey from childhood to adulthood. This is why these narratives are so important, and why the reader can relate to the protagonist. I chose these two bodies of work is because they both deal with the same subject matter and embark from a similar place of origin, and yet at the end of the day the reader is confronted with two texts that approach the subject matter in distinctly different ways. Yet, they both leave us with a message that is substantially the same.

What I intend to argue is that it is precisely the fact that fantasy masquerades as an "easy read" that imbues it with power and revolutionary capabilities. The reason for this is that in essence these narratives operate in the guise of deceptive childishness. We can all relate to infantile urgency and crises, which links us to the imagination, and the argument that I am putting forward is that the ineffable truth comes disguised as something that we can relate to (Campbell 178). Fantasy uses universal symbols and mythic narrative to appeal to all on a basic interpretive level, and using this deeply symbolic narrative to critique modern civilisation allows the critique to take place on a subconscious level. What fundamentally makes fantasy effective is that the critique does not have to be culturally specific and serves more as a fable would in its universality. Humanity has long been preoccupied with its limits and desires and fantasy, because of the kind of genre that it is, is able to demonstrate both the positive and negative outcomes of pushing these limits. With this kind of freedom within the narrative form, fantasy becomes a malleable genre that allows one to effectively explore the complexities of self-integration and the relationship that the subject has with its environment.

The important thing is that "stories today and the myths of yesterday suffer from a basic ambiguity. They can bring to light what is truly human. But they can also propagate an apparently naïve view of human aspiration and human destiny" (Lonergan 33). That is why it

is important to interpret fantasy and myth critically: the construction of both genres is intrinsically ambiguous yet concrete, in the sense that the archetypes symbolise a specific relationship that is then translated into the context of the text. The archetypes and symbology, as well as the metaphors and allegories used are universal, yet specific; this is what renders these narratives concrete to their readers.

> Myths and symbols may be impertinent in the sense that they force us to confront meanings and possible realities that are quite foreign to us. As such, they disorient us but not unconstructively, because this disorientation may reorient us to what, in fact, is closer to the truth. When this happens, then semantic impertinence is innovative and has issued in the growth of meaning (Olson 4).

Since myth and fantasy are simultaneously ambiguous and particular, we begin to engage in an interesting investigation into the way that allegory is employed. For example, if one were to take a dictator like Kal Zakath in Eddings' *The Mallorean*, we see not only a tyrannical ruler who commands allegiance and sovereignty by fear, bloodshed and imagined esteem (Kal means literally "god and king" within the novels, which further demonstrates his pathological need to be in control), but depending on our subjective interpretation, cultural background and willingness to tie this allegory to reality, we see resonances with Adolf Hitler, Josef Stalin, Augusto Pinochet and even Robert Mugabe. This complexity, this ability that fantasy has to be at once concrete and corporeal, even while it refers to the abstract and the universal, is what makes it an effective tool for deconstructing sociological constructs, political ideologies and different structures in our very real society.

Myth and fantasy give us a space that is both known and unknown, in which we interpret symbols and mediate meaning, "…but what about the reality question? Do myths and symbols…have anything at all to tell us about reality? Or do they have only to do with fantastic unreality? Certainly in ordinary discourse the word "myth" especially tends to be associated and even identified with untruth or falsity" (Olson 1). This is where myth and fantasy overlap: they are both seen as narratives that could not possibly be applicable to reality as we experience it. Of course, this poses a problem, as many people may continue to shun these texts as fantastical narratives designed for escapists – full of dragons, virtuous knights and damsels in distress – and fail to see the importance and artistry of deconstructing our very "real" reality on a canvas of vast possibility.

> While [Bernard] Lonergan assures us that he too appreciates and welcomes the challenge of the mythic-symbolic and its ability to enlarge and enrich our understanding of reality, he also makes it clear that not all myth and symbols can do so equally. In order to receive what it is that myth and symbols give, they have to be

interpreted, and acts of interpretation are informed and performed by the presuppositions, intentions, and values of the interpreter. In other words, the meaning of myth is not immediate but mediated, and it behooves the interpreter to be familiar with the various operations present in the mediational process called interpretation"
(Olson 6)

Myth is essentially polarised, as Wiesel points out: "some myths are good, others evil. Some commit sin, others do not. In history such lines cannot be drawn. The same people are at the same time, and often for the same motivation, both good and evil, capable of sin *and* redemption" (Wiesel 23). This is what renders the analysis of fantasy worthwhile. Whereas myth seems, according to this statement, to fall into neat binary compartments, the kind of fantasy under scrutiny in this paper would rather be seen as echoing the ambiguity of history. This is what contemporary fantasy displays, not the black and white of human nature, but the grey; it does not do away with the good/evil binary but acknowledges that it is an inherent antagonism between two poles. The rise of individualism forgets that in order to be an individual, there still has to be a collective, fantasy, on the contrary, recognises that its reality can only take place in the continuum between black and white. It is the individual's navigation of this greyness, and the confrontation with it in terms of sanctioning the ego or sense of self in this unencumbered ambiguity that concerns this dissertation.

The subsequent chapters of this dissertation will explore and analyse the Hero's Journey and relate it back to the Jungian theory of identity integration, while examining the views that these texts advance concerning ideas of universality and agency. We begin then, by investigating the choice of the Hero's Journey as a plot, and more importantly the kind of hero that is chosen as the reader's window into the text.

Chapter 2 – Gilgamesh to Garion: The Hero's Journey

The hero's journey is perhaps the most significant form of story arc that is ever attempted by a writer, and although the quest does not always involve literal physical battles, dragons and tempting sirens, the journey itself takes on many forms and can be translocated as a psychological journey – the study of a character's evolution. In essence, any *bildungsroman* can be seen as a form of hero's journey, since the main objective of the narrative is to create a kind of catharsis. In a fantasy narrative, however, catharsis is achieved through a move into the space that while acknowledging dialectics neutralises them and forces the character to be ultimately changed upon returning to "reality", and this change is almost always linked to societal catharsis. This shift from the neutralising space of totality back to reality means that the hero awakens to a keener awareness that is supposed to facilitate a shift in society. This is not a journey that is simply a tool for individual, solipsistic catharsis, but a sort of slow societal catharsis that uses the hero as catalyst. The re-emergence of the hero into society in order to instigate change is thus not perceived as some ideal that is realised at the expense of reality, but rather as a way of relating to reality in its totality, including all its flaws and suffering.

Fantasy focuses on the individual and his or her identity construction. This is what makes fantasy so relevant today, where so much emphasis is placed on individuality, specificity and subjectivity that "community" almost seems like a dirty word. The novels analysed in this dissertation demonstrate how the individual's search for self and personal meaning can serve as a catalyst for social change. The novels demonstrate that through integration of the self, a new kind of legitimate agency is born and there can be a move back, yet forward, to a new community: a balanced community that accommodates shared interests and beliefs without erasing the specificity of the individual subject. Thus fantasy is compensation for our angst as over-individuated subjects, compensation for a community. In the oral storytelling tradition, myth wove communities together, the tales were owned by the people, and in many ways fantasy tends to employ the same "archetypal situation" that was traditionally invoked by myth in an effort to induce a conscious assessment of the subconscious construction of our current society. Critics tend to become fixated on this compensatory aspect of fantasy without recognising that it also forces a reappraisal of the world: the utopic "escape" is always already imbedded in and engaged with a particular society and a particular history.

There is a general rejection in the postmodern age of what are termed "utopic ideals" such as hope, unity and brotherly love. We are indoctrinated early on to wake up and face "reality". It seems that what is being advocated is the death of an imaginative engagement with reality, the erasure of our ability to imagine the world *differently*. Many critics argue within myth criticism about the interdependent relationship between both the sacred and the profane, and utopia and ideology. They come to the conclusion that the one cannot exist without the other.

> Myth then for Ricoeur is synonymous with a 'social imagination'which functions by virtue of a dialectic between 'ideology' and 'utopia'. The former, which is a necessary condition of 'integration', need not become oppressive so long as the latter is kept alive. 'On the one hand, imagination may function to preserve and order...On the other hand, though, imagination may have a disruptive function; it may work as a breakthrough.' Ideology represents the first kind of imagination: 'it has the function of preservation, of conservation.' Utopia represents the second kind of imagination: 'it is always the glance from nowhere' (Ricoeur 1986:26). Without the first kind, we would have no sense of society or tradition; without the second kind, we would simply equate the given society and tradition with eternal truth, never challenging or reforming them. Utopia prevents ideology becoming a claustrophobic system; ideology prevents utopia becoming an empty fantasy. Myth, or the social imagination, involves both. As such, it necessitates a temporal engagement, not a gesture of transcendence. (Coupe 96/97)

The general trend today seems to be to prioritise the secular and ideological as ethical exigencies over the sacred and utopic. Coupe suggests that myth explores the tension established between this productive and ongoing dialectic. This dissertation concurs with Coupe's observation: myth has continuously explored the relationship between self and society, the inner world and the outer world. Narratives have always thrived on the tension that the clashing of these opposites creates. Taking Coupe's point into account, I would like to add, however, that from a Jungian perspective, these polar opposites must explore the tension created between them and through that exploration reach equilibrium, in order to achieve any kind of progress – for the nucleus of human life, and indeed world-life (or society), according to Jung, should be balance. Here we see the strongest link between forging a meaningful sense of social collectivity and Jung's theory of individuation (the process through which the individual becomes an integrated self): for Jung they are the same process, and myth allows one to happen in relation to the other. Myth ultimately deconstructs any kind of value-positive distinction between individual and society, self and world. In a hero myth or narrative, it is this hope of equilibrium that connects the psychological and physical development of the hero to the societal shift that the hero's return generally occasions. The hero achieves equilibrium and the integration of the self into a whole, and having achieved this on a personal level, cannot help achieve the selfsame on a larger scale.

The hero's difficulty is showing the world that we have to accept each other as the same on an *a priori*, primordial level, as human beings; but at the same time we need to accept that we are different, as we each intrinsically choose to act on different aspects of human nature as a spectrum of impulses. What seems to cause confusion and further the rhetoric of Othering is the dominance of ideology and other man-made superstructures that induct us through language into various systems of categorisation that have no basis in nature. These structures, like institutionalised religion, for example, reaffirm that it is only through differentiation that the individual can come to terms with and express who or what he/she is – Western society's valorisation of the individual is actually a reaction against totality, universality and homogeneity, all categories that seem to threaten *difference*, and therefore the very existence of the subject. It almost declares that any acceptance of sameness, even a shared vision of utopic existence, renders the subject null and void – another cog in the inexorable machine that we call progress. It is precisely the fact that we have no shared vision of what the future should look like that condemns us to our existence as self-serving subjects, and also compels us to dismiss fantasy as mere fabulation, an escapist fixation with the unreal and the unobtainable. It is as though contemporary obsession with mimesis and realism renders us unable to recognise the fact that reality is always-already mythical; that our experience of reality is mediated by mythical structures. This is what makes the space within which fantasy narratives function interesting: they manage to maintain a level of mimesis that renders the world recognisable to the reader, that resonates with life as the reader knows it, in certain respects. On the other hand, fantasy also occupies a space that is completely foreign to the reader. In this way, these narratives are imbedded in particular social and historical contexts while maintaining a crucial critical distance from the social and the historical: this distance is precisely the mythical. This is what I will call mythic space, since it is in this obscure paradoxical limen that the mythopoeia for the contemporary age can take place, apart from and yet a part of culture.

This brings us to the question of what kind of person is supposed to perform this task. According to Campbell, "[t]he composite hero of the monomyth is a personage of exceptional gifts. Frequently he is honoured by his society, frequently unrecognised or disdained" (Campbell 37). This dichotomy in the treatment of the hero is the most obvious divide in the genre: we have on the one hand the demi-god, who is called to adventure to avenge a wrong or liberate a town, and on the other, we have Everyman, the hero who, although he is destined to do great things, remains in a state of ignorance about his true purpose until the narrative

can unfold. David Eddings, whose works this dissertation will discuss, draws on his strong background in medieval literature (The Rivan Codex 2) to suggest that there are four generic categories of hero that we can apply to fantasy as a genre: "Sir Galahad, Sir Gawaine, Sir Lancelot, or Sir Perceval. Galahad is saintly; Gawaine is loyal; Lancelot is the heavyweight champion of the world; and Perceval is dumb – at least right at first" (The Rivan Codex 7). In his own work, Eddings favours the Perceval-type hero, as does J.K Rowling in her *Harry Potter* books. Consequently, both series of novels present an Everyman hero that the reader can relate to, and also an easy narrative to follow, as the reader walks step by step beside the hero on his cathartic journey. The mystery and essence of the journey unfolds for the reader as it does for the hero. This is an exceptionally effective narrative device for effecting a psychological shift in the consciousness of the reader, as illumination comes in stages and moral awareness is engaged in order to puzzle out the inexorable journey. It is worth noting that the fact that the hero is *human*, although often imbued with mystical powers, or superhuman strength, is what makes him so accessible. If we can relate to the character and put ourselves into their shoes the impact will be more profound. Because the Everyman- or Percival-type hero is so clearly a vehicle for the consciousness of the reader, the reader feels a closer affinity with the text than if the hero were characterised as a demi-god or Übermensch. The fact that the hero is Everyman that ultimately relinquishes the reader into a space in which he or she can be critical of and question the hero's motives and reasoning: one is more likely to question decisions made by a character that one can relate to, than those of an idealised character like Hercules. The Everyman hero is a stylistic choice within the genre.

Tzvetan Todorov, author of *The Fantastic: A Structural Approach to a Literary Genre*, surmises that the element that a fantastic novel should have above all else is that it should compel the reader to hesitate when he or she has to decide whether he or she accepts events that occur within the narrative as supernatural or not. Having looked as his resource material, I discovered that the core texts that Todorov uses for analysis fall more into the category of magical realism (such as Gogol's *The Nose*) than into fantasy as a genre. Magical realism is the marriage of the marvellous with the uncanny; many of the texts that he examines walk the line between the fantastic and the realistic to the extent that seemingly supernatural events are explained away as tricks or as coincidences operating within reason. Todorov argues that:

> the fantastic is essentially based on a hesitation of the reader – a reader who identifies with the chief character – as to the nature of an uncanny event. This hesitation may be resolved so that the event is acknowledged as reality, or so that the event is identified as the fruit of imagination or the result of an illusion…
> (Todorov 157)

Although it is not *exactly* coterminous with Todorov's view of fantasy, his assertion seems quite applicable to the genre that is examined in this dissertation. The reader, as mentioned previously, is given the task of interpretation and is therefore not merely passive in the reading of a fantasy text. Using the Everyman hero implicates and interpellates the reader in the act of hesitation, but not on as one-dimensional a level as Todorov posits here. These texts tend to problematise the reader's entire concept of reality, and in actual fact overturn some fundamental ideas and structures so that the reader is implicated not within reality as he or she knows it, but reality at its most productive level, in terms of questioning reality on an archetypal playing-field. For Todorov this type of fantasy would fall into the category of what he terms "the marvellous", neatly defined by Pierre Mabille in his *Miroir du Merveilleux*: "Beyond entertainment, beyond curiosity, beyond all the emotions such narratives and legends afford, beyond the need to divert, to forget, or to achieve delightful or terrifying sensations, the real goal of the marvelous journey is the total exploration of universal reality" (in Todorov 57). For Todorov, the marvelous is the thing that is left to the reader's discretion to conceive of as real or illusory. It is the event that calls into question the entire integrity of the text itself, the aporetic moment, within which the reader has to decide whether to come down on the side of ideology or utopia: for Todorov there is no middle ground.

Todorov cites Marcel Schneider in *La Littérature Fantastique en France* in order to oppose Schneider's point: "The fantastic explores inner space; it sides with the imagination, the anxiety of existence, and the hope of salvation" (in Todorov 36). This definition seems to suggest that the fantastic draws us into ourselves to expose more of ourselves and can therefore not be reasoned away as an instance of trickery or coincidence. One can understand why Todorov would oppose the logic behind this statement, but a close reading of the fantasy genre actually seems to bear out Schneider's characterisation of the fantastic. At its most basic level, fantasy is located on the ground between reality and "the marvellous". The novels we examine in this thesis delineate neatly the juxtaposition and co-existence of the marvellous and reality, or ideology and utopia. This is not to say that these texts simply destroy Todorov's distinction by taking the middle ground; rather, they problematise the entire notion of distinction by operating as a whole, for the distinction must exist for equilibrium to be achieved – and what is equilibrium but the harmonious co-existence of binaries and dualities as opposed to doing away with them. The way these texts function calls to mind the image of the yin-yang: there are two halves, neatly divided into light and dark, but each with a nucleus of the other present within it. The dividing line, which in essence makes the yin-yang whole, is what we will call mythic space, it is the limen where these two diversely opposite concepts

are reconciled and render the entire structure whole, without disregarding the properties of either half. Both sets of novels that are examined in this thesis address this relationship between the marvellous and reality, both within the text itself and within the reader's interpretation of this relationship. In all cases, what is problematised is this neat binary opposition. These texts explore the fact that something can be fantastical, yet simultaneously be grounded in reality, without forcing the reader to choose one or the other; the transition to this view of a balanced whole is not easily achieved and the binaries stay in check even though they seem to function as two halves of one reality.

In *The Belgariad* the reader is first introduced to the realm of the mythological by means of the prologue, which is an extract from a fictional series of "holy books". The prologue adopts the most pervasive form of myth: the Origin Story. Within these pages the reader is inducted into one of the spaces evoked by this novel, mythic space. The reader learns, in the Classical Greek tradition, of the seven gods that inhabited earth and how each drew a people towards him, how the jealous god Torak coveted his reclusive brother Aldur's orb and proceeded to steal it from him. Torak then raised the orb against the earth, its mother (for the orb was to begin with, a stone), with devastating consequences: he cracked the world, and thus continents were formed. The orb was stolen back by Belgarath the Sorcerer, Aldur's first disciple, and the Rivan line was charged with its safekeeping. The gods then left the world (in the physical sense), fearing that war between them would destroy their creation. However, each of the gods' peoples was scattered across the globe and attended by the god in spirit (not as a physical manifestation) to stop Torak from ever possessing the orb again. In this section the reader also learns that the orb marks Riva's rightful heir (it burns an orb-like shape into the heir's palm) and protector of the orb, and that Belgarath is already several hundred years old.

Following this prologue, there is a distinct break in tone and style as we move on to the first chapter. As stated above, Garion is our typical Everyman hero, an orphan who is raised on a farm by his Aunt Pol. He is initially characterised as an ordinary boy, almost *too* ordinary, as the generic formula pertaining to these stories would have it. It is apparent from the outset that there is more to Garion than meets the eye. Aunt Pol is curiously over-protective of Garion, and Eddings structures the narrative in such a way that the reader has access to more information than Garion, but not to the complete story of his origin, identity and destiny. The reader is always suspicious of Garion's role in the cosmic order of things, but has no concrete evidence to suppose his or her suspicions are correct. The true end of the journey is

illuminated as it is undertaken, yet the reader does have at his or her fingertips small insights given by the narrative. The description of Aunt Pol demonstrates the employment of dramatic irony within the novels: the prologue to the book mentions the first female wizard Polgara the Sorceress. She is defined by her "hair [which is] dark as the raven's wing" (POP 16) [1] but for a lock of white hair in the front that signifies that she is a sorceress. She was "the first female child to be so marked" (POP 16) and the first description of Aunt Pol's features is that "Her hair was long and very dark – almost black – all but one lock just above her left brow which was white as new snow. At night when she tucked [Garion] into the little bed close beside her own in their private room above the kitchen, he would reach out and touch that white lock; she would smile at him and touch his face with a soft hand" (POP 22-23). This simple scene serves two purposes: it gives the reader insight into the link between Polgara, the Sorceress with Aunt Pol, and highlights Garion's link with her power. He touches her lock, which later becomes a motif; he is forbidden to touch it as his powers may manifest too quickly and he may gain too much insight at any given time. Thus the reader is a small step ahead of Garion in some respects.

What the characters of Belgarath and Polgara actually embody is the fine line between the marvellous and the real in terms of narrative construct. In essence they are mythical figures in their own right within the diegetic space of the novel. Their split nature posits a world where the ordinary and the mythical exist side by side in conversation with one another. This baffles many characters along the journey: for them these two figures also belong to the realm of the marvellous and cannot readily exist in reality as they know it. The reader, however, succumbs to a willing suspension of disbelief in two ways in this text. The first is accepting the "reality" of the characters: the setting is essentially pre-technological, indoor plumbing does not yet exist, it is therefore believable as a credible depiction of times past. On the other hand the reader, through Garion, also comes to accept the mythical, magical elements of the world that even the other characters struggle with, as is demonstrated here where a guard does not believe Belgarath is who he says he is. The guard states that he only believes what he can see, so Belgarath places a twig between two flagstones and says "I'm going to do you a favour, Sir Andorig…I am going to restore your faith. Watch closely" (QOS 169):

---

[1] All of the novels used in this dissertation are referred to in reference by their acronyms. For *The Belgariad*, in chronological order, they are: *Pawn of Prophecy* (POP); *Queen of Sorcery* (QOS); *Magician's Gambit* (MG); *Castle of Wizardry* (COW) and *Enchanter's Endgame* (EE). For *Harry Potter*, also in chronological order, they are: *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* (SS); *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* (CS); *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* (POA); *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire* (GOF); *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix* (OOP); *Harry Potter and the Half Blood Prince* (HBP) and *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* (DH).

At first nothing seemed to be happening. Then the two flagstones began to buckle upward with a grinding sound as the twig grew visibly thicker and began to reach up toward Mister Wolf's outstretched hand. There were gasps from the palace walls as branches began to sprout from the twig as it grew. Wolf raised his hand higher, and the twig obediently grew at his gesture, its branches broadening…There was absolute silence as every eye fixed in awed fascination on the tree…Then the tree burst into flower, its blossoms a delicate pink and white. (QOS 169-170)

The guard is understandably shaken, and Belgarath, just to prove a point, puts him in charge of tree. What this extract demonstrates is the reluctant acceptance of the magical within the recognisably "realist" world of the narrative, both by "normal" characters and the readers themselves. As mentioned before, however, the Everyman hero, as a narrative tool, allows the reader to connect with the world through a process of direct identification with the fictional character.

The most interesting example of foreshadowing, if one takes into account the interplay of the marvellous and the real, is near the beginning of the first novel (POP) where we witness an exchange between Garion and Old Wolf that immediately highlights the complexity of undertaking this journey. "The journey" could, in this context, be seen as both the actual physical journey that the hero undertakes and as the journey that the reader embarks upon by picking up the novel. These two "journeys" are concomitant. After supper in the farm's dining hall, the Old Wolf tells an origin story. Afterwards, Garion asks him why he didn't continue with the story and talk about the clash between Torak and the Rivan King, to which Wolf replies:

'Torak and the Rivan King have not as yet met…so I can't very well tell it, can I? – at least not until after their meeting.'
'It's only a story,' Garion objected. 'Isn't it?'
'Is it?' The old man removed a flagon of wine from under his tunic and took a long drink. 'Who is to say what is only a story and what is truth disguised as a story?' (POP 46)

This is a good example of Eddings' self-reflexive style. The novels have a constant metanarrative: besides writing a mythical story, he also explores mythogaphy, particularly through Garion's questions. Garion goes on to re-emphasise the fact that the stories are fictional, and that it is impossible that Belgarath the sorcerer can be alive because that would make him seven thousand years old. Wolf is amused that Garion is nine and has already decided what is impossible or possible. Garion emphasises the fact that it is just a story and Wolf replies:

'Many good and solid men would say so…good men who will live out their lives believing in only what they can see and touch. But there is a world beyond what we can see and touch, and that world lives by its own laws. What may be impossible in this very ordinary world is very possible there, and sometimes the boundaries between the two worlds disappear, and then who can say what is possible and impossible?'
'I think I'd rather live in the ordinary world,' Garion said. 'The other sounds too complicated.' (POP 47)

It is interesting to note that Garion's reasoning is that this "other world" – implicitly, the world that transcends the mundane, that is *extra*ordinary – is too complicated, where we as the readers find his current world bafflingly complex. One understands Garion's trepidation and anxiety about transgressing the boundary between the "real" world and the other world of impossible possibility precisely because of the jarring quality that re-thinking certain apparent absolutes within our frameworks brings to us all. Obviously as a reader one is prepared to accept certain "abnormalities" within the text, because one is aware of the genre within which one is reading: in essence, to pick up a fantasy or science fiction text is to open oneself up to the suspension of disbelief, of reading metaphors, of the desire to explore known territory in the guise of the unknown. This renders reading these texts almost an act of subversion, in the sense that these worlds are ultimately recognisable, and realism is not completely done away with; this allows the reader to shift kaleidoscopically through various ways of apprehending the world.

> [T]he impossible combinations of object and attribute or agent and action that characterize fantasy may refer only to their self-contradiction. They need not convey any meaning beyond our recognition, based on experience or on cultural indoctrination, that those elements indeed do not belong together: that the sea is not boiling hot, that pigs do not have wings. Yet most writers of fantasy have been drawn to combinations that are more than mere paradox or absurdity. Fantastic literature is full of "loaded" images, concrete emblems of problematic or valuable psychological and social phenomena. The combination of such images into a narrative order is an attempt to achieve iconic representation, so that the narrative can, like a city map, give us new insight into the phenomena it makes reference to. (Attebery 7)

Within *The Belgariad* the reader is introduced to many societies, whose ideologies are reflected in everything from attire to housing, and the stereotyped demeanour of the different races. The novels were written in the 80s at the height of the Reagan and Thatcher era and the clear binary between East and West is visible throughout the novels, reflecting the geo-political polarisations of the world in which they were produced. The Eastern characters, called Angaraks, tend to have unpronounceable names (Eddings tries to use Russian and Mongolian sounding phonemes which sound foreign if you are used to Western phonemes)

and are almost all followers of Torak, whose worship incorporates amongst other things, barbaric – even savage – religious rites and rituals. On the Western side we have Alorns, who tend to have problems that parallel and echo recognisable periods in European history: they have serfdom, democracy, capitalism and, of course, monarchies. There are also faint echoes of colonisation and the ramifications of redrawing boundaries without a thought to the people who live there (this particular boundary forces two tribes or societies of people who have hated one another for centuries to live together under one monarchy). Furthermore, most of the eastern countries within the novels procure their wealth through trade by supplying products that the western countries need. In turn, the Alorn states are particularly bellicose, and ready to crush anything that they deem uncivilised or "other". Thus through the reader's interpretation these texts become significant. Thus, it is the reader who consolidates the text's reality and translocates the issues into his or her own contemporary experience. The text reflects our reality, but supplements it in a self-conscious way with an element of the fantastic. Far from signalling an "escape" from our own reality with its specific historically located ideological predicaments, this fantastic supplement serves to defamiliarise our own world, forcing us to reassess it.

The *Harry Potter* series presents the reader with a more tangible reality. He first and foremost exists in a completely recognisable London. Critics such as David K. Steege have argued that the novels take the formula of the traditional boarding school story and infuse these conventions with magical components. Our relation to and identification with Harry is instantaneous. Like Garion, he is orphaned and left on the doorstep of his only known relatives. Here his identity is concealed from him, as it is his aunt and uncle's prerogative to make sure that he grows up rooted in *their* reality, which is suburban humdrum normalcy. Any reference to anything "magical" is treated with cold hard rationality, reminiscent of the conflict between the marvellous world of the imagination, embodied by the circus, and the utilitarian world of the school and the factory in Dickens' *Hard Times*. Ironically, despite this notion of normality that is drummed into Harry, he is still treated as somewhat of an outcast by his family, but he would never have guessed that their ill treatment and dislike of him stem not only from his being a burden on them but also from their fear of his discovering his true identity – the fact that he is a wizard. This fact renders him uncanny or "freakish" in their eyes, and so Harry himself almost becomes a symbol of the space within which the novel functions (between reality and fantasy); he is after all to all intents and purposes just a normal boy who discovers that he has a remarkable talent for magic, much as anyone discovers that they are more proficient at languages or mathematics than other members of their class or

family. The magical and Muggle (non-magic folk) worlds coexist harmoniously within the same space, but like the Greek god Janus are two different sides of the same coin, while the narrative mode used in terms of the space in this novel gives the reader more leave to interrogate the world as we know it. As soon as Harry is inducted into his magical existence we as readers find ourselves more willing to accept certain precedents as "normal" and are therefore more critical about what occurs within this space.

> In [Harry's] world, magic is a part of everyday life, unseen by the Muggles, but practiced with casual cheerfulness by all those who understand it. There are no quests for magic rings and dragon feathers. This is contemporary England, and instead we find bankers and government bureaucracy. People, even magical ones, have to get jobs. But across everything is the veil of magic, the overlay that skews the world we know and brings us up, surprised, on startling perspectives. (Cockrell 15-16)

In this case the magical world is tied directly to the idea of imagination within our contemporary context; we as readers depart from the known into the unknown, which in these novels functions as a direct mirror of our society, and this produces a reading of our reality that is both more objective and shrewd. This shift from "reality" as we know it in into a more critical imaginative space can be very difficult to assimilate, but this difficulty is reiterated in the text as well, to facilitate the reader's shift from a stark fact driven reality into an imaginary reality that functions more as allegory than a pure coincidental space.

> [S]ituating the train that takes people to Hogwarts [School of Witchcraft and Wizardry] at platform 9¾, between tracks 9 and 10, reinforces the central location of these stories between the earthbound and magical worlds. As Harry transports himself beyond the boundaries of the real world, between tracks 9 and 10, one can viscerally feel his body brace against the shock, his mind unbelieving, as he breaks through what appears to be a solid barrier, as the imaginary may seem in real life". (Natov 133)

This is what makes the books so effective and the impact of them so plausible. Apart from the fact that this world is in terms of narrative perfectly constructed down to the very last brick, the parallels that J.K Rowling draws are uncanny and unmistakable. The obvious markers would be the Ministry of Magic, which functions exactly as a ministry would in the real world: there is office politics, departments that do not do their work and departments that correspond with the reader's "reality", such as the department of Foreign Affairs that contacts wizards in other countries – and perhaps more interestingly, the department of Muggle Affairs that deals with our reality directly and is therefore situated as an intermediary on the borderland between the fictional reality and our own. There is wildlife conservation, except that dragons rather than tigers are being conserved; patriotism is rife in the international sports arena, with the Quidditch World Cup (a game that is a mixture of rugby, basketball and

baseball, played on broomsticks several feet in the air) taking place in book four, *The Goblet of Fire*. In terms of rites of passage for teenagers the parallels are abundant: you have to be 17 to take the "apparition test" to get a licence to be able to "apparate" (this is appearing somewhere, the fastest mode of transportation), which can be equated to a driver's licence; the school system is the same as the English school system, except that at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry instead of G.C.S.Es and A-Levels one takes O.W.Ls (Ordinary Wizarding Levels) and N.E.W.Ts (Nastily Exhausting Wizarding Tests).

Consumerism as a driving force is also markedly present in the novels, which is not surprising considering the ubiquity of capitalist modes of production in the world today. The books themselves are subject to questioning in terms of their mass appeal (in that they are themselves commodified) and the revenue that the scores of products linked to the novels accumulate. Within the novels, however, consumerism is dealt with in a very realistic sense: boys collect wizard cards in the chocolate frog sweets, much as boys in South Africa will spend a lot of money at Sasol garages trying to collect all the Springbok Rugby player cards or an avid *Harry Potter* fan would try to collect all the memorabilia. There is also a preoccupation with new and improved things: "Curious to know what the crowd in the shop was staring at, Harry edged his way inside and squeezed in amongst the excited witches and wizards until he glimpsed a newly erected podium on which was mounted the most magnificent broom he had ever seen in his life" (POA 43). This encounter with the Firebolt serves a dual purpose in that *anyone*, specifically in contemporary society, can relate to wanting a better model of something that they already have, but it also demonstrates that just because the world is magical does not mean that there is no need for improvement: in effect, the picture that is being painted for us within these novels is not entirely utopic; we are not transported into a world devoid of problems, and what solidifies this for us is that Harry, who reads the sign "price on request", is as incapable as we are of making money appear out of nowhere to satisfy his consumerist whims. It seems as if magic can alter reality up to a point, but it cannot interfere with the capitalist logic governing many contemporary societies.

Our "reality" in all its complex glory is subjected to a magnifying glass: by imbuing everyday objects with magical qualities we are re-confronted with the mystery of existence and what it means to be a subject within a given community, and we are then capable of tackling relevant contemporary issues from a different perspective. For the reader these events become plausible for two reasons. Firstly, in both sets of novels, but more overtly in *Harry Potter,* we are re-introduced to the magic of everyday reality, and secondly, through being introduced to

these "alternate" realities by an Everyman hero, we come to accept that these realities have ruling principles that allow for uncanny events. In both of these sets of novels the base reality is still recognisable and so we realise that there is still structure to these alternative conventions, and that the ultimate taboos or facts of life are not relinquished: death cannot be reversed, love cannot be induced, and there is no foolproof antidote to fear. It is perhaps precisely because these heroes, although functioning in a reality that is constructed as more epic, more magical than ours, have to process the same difficulties that we do – grief, heartache, the sense of not belonging – that these narratives evoke the reactions that they do in the reader: those of identification and legitimisation of the text. For "if Harry, the orphan with the bad hair and glasses, can make friends, win at Quidditch, be a favourite of the headmaster, overcome the school bully, and be the hero not just of his own life but of wildly successful books, then there is hope for every young reader" (Grimes 105). Although this sentiment seems chiefly aimed at Harry's contemporaries – children or teenagers – one needs to assert the fact that adult readers can also experience isolation and lack of self-confidence. What is actually being brought to the fore here is the question of agency. A subject cannot experience any form of true agency when his or her potential remains unrecognised by themselves. This failure of recognition can manifest itself in a two-fold way: either the subject deems him- or herself as cut off or excluded from the collective, in which case the subject's actions will have no impact; or the subject views him- or herself as so autonomous that his or her actions have no resonance in the bigger picture because the actions are subjectively motivated. Both of these states are insufficient for the true exploration of agency.

These texts force us to grapple with the question of agency, and what is discovered is that the subject gains agency through choice. The nihilistic postmodern view that all subjects are specks adrift in a sea of greyness, forced into certain reactions by dominant ideology, is completely overturned when one introduces the much overlooked notion of *choice*. What fantasy seems to say is that despite the subject being caught up in an unstoppable grand narrative – in this case destiny – the subject still acquires absolute agency in the form of choosing whether to be an active part of the narrative within which he or she finds him- or herself. Arthur may have been destined to pull the sword out of the stone, but had he been particularly averse to the notion, Camelot and all its tales never would have existed. Here it is necessary to pinpoint the difference between Fate and Destiny as concepts within this grand narrative. Each sign has associated with it particular conventional aspects: Fate seems, at a semiotic level, to already have a negative connotation, which implies being forced or bullied into completing a task that perhaps goes entirely against our subjective grain by some

transcendental or metaphysical force. Its emphasis seems to be that the subject has no control over its circumstances, and regardless of action, that which is fated will come to pass. Destiny, on the other hand, seems at its core to possess less pejorative associations, in terms of engendering a drive towards something life-changing in a positive way. It encompasses a sense of purpose and control, but on the subject's part and not on that of the unknown's. Fate seems to say "because of what you are, the following will happen to you", whereas Destiny proclaims "because of who you will become and your choices, you will do great things". Oedipus was fated, whereas in the novels we examine, Garion and Harry are destined for greatness. Having said that, the line between the two is not always easily distinguished and in both narratives, at one time or another, the characters are not prepared to deal with their prophesied fate.

The next chapter explores the effect of the hero's change from known to unknown space, and the impact that this has on his moral compass. It further investigates how this change in environment begins the journey towards the acquisition of true agency within this genre.

Chapter 3 – Of Humble Beginnings

The notion or acquisition of agency is directly linked to the hero's journey, as above all else the journey presents itself as a quest for one's true self – an integrated vision of self that has discarded the show of previous ideological sanctions, faced its darker reflection in the mirror and incorporated those traits into a self that is first and foremost understanding of the duality of what it means to be human. This newly integrated *self* directly dictates what type of agency the protagonist will practise within the narrative. In other words, the success of the integration of these two halves of the self will directly influence whether the protagonist becomes a benevolent or malevolent agent. The question of agency is further defined by the fact that agency is directly linked to one's sense of self and the relationship of that self with the community. One's impact on one's community depends largely on one's ability to exercise and perform one's subjectivity in an acceptable yet meaningful way which, however, creates a paradox that complicates the notion of agency: it is exceedingly difficult to practise any form of agency within an ideology that is stifling or overbearingly rigid and the converse is also true, in a very flexible and accommodating ideological system, individuality is ironically devalued precisely *because* it is such common currency.

In both *Harry Potter* and *The Belgariad* the heroes start off from a place where their identity is informed by information that is left out. Thus their starting point for personal development is missing key factors that would facilitate their transition into adulthood and society – that is, the perceived missing ingredient in their original identity formation at the start of the novels is the seed of their mythical roles. In both cases the rationale behind incorporating these would-be heroes into a seemingly normal childhood clear: the hero's initial lack of knowledge about his or her mythical role allows the hero a normal childhood, and provides insight into the prosaic day-to-day workings of ordinary life. Garion's personal viewpoint is developed in relation to the strong sense of community in his childhood world and Harry's through his rejection of his original sense of family. This kind of identity development within these novels is an example of what Vladimir Propp calls "absentation" – a device used in folk tales that is supposed to introduce tension into a text, as when a family unit is no longer unified, either by the absence of a parent that has gone to work, or a child going out for a walk (Propp 13). Both our heroes experience the worst kind of absentation: their parents are dead, therefore the view that they develop of the world is built from their experience of, and in Harry's case reaction against, the world within which they find themselves. The fact that, at the beginning of both sets of novels, the heroes are just trying to survive within the world is

what makes the reader identify with them. More importantly, it demonstrates the fact that the hero is *excluded* from the social order; he has no symbolic place that he can speak from, *and this is how he gains ethical agency and authority*. He uses this agency to *create* a new collective, a new family (his "group of outsiders") that better reflects his personal view of right and wrong.

Each narrative intricately describes the hero's initial environment, as this is the point of departure for the journey. In each case the reader shares the consciousness of the character and comes to feel as the character does about his initial circumstances. In both *The Belgariad* and *Harry Potter,* leaving the known environment has a jarring effect on both the reader and the protagonist, an effect at once pleasurable and painful, as is particularly evident in Garion's case. Faldor's farm is his home: he has never been beyond the boundaries of Sendaria and his departure is both exciting (as an adventure should be) and painful (as leaving the known is to anyone dealing with change). Where Harry is concerned, however, the painful aspect is completely done away with. He has nothing to tie him to his original context and the reader feels the same relief and cautious excitement that Harry does at rejecting the familiar and going on his adventure. Harry reasons that anywhere would be better than being caught in the Dursleys' reality; he hopes to find happiness and a sense of belonging and knows that he has to remove himself from the Dursleys to find anything remotely resembling acceptance. When he arrives in the wizarding world he is confronted with another reality on a level that he did not imagine. The text invites the reader, through being privy to the crossing of the threshold, to experience an almost child-like sense of wonder at the characters' potential fate, particularly when the characters are children themselves. The reader becomes a witness to the character's development and growth from the initial perceived self – the environmentally sanctioned ego – towards a fully realised, integrated self.

The real journey that occurs in both texts is that of the protagonist in the diegesis as a subject. The outward physical journey serves as a mirror of the internal, often unconscious journey of a split subject. This is a subject that is not only confronting the duality of the perceived self and the shadow self (or darkness within) but also a subject that is straddling two frames of reference: the mythic and the mundane. The protagonist has to reconcile his ideologically written self with the darkness that he finds within himself. Instead of rejecting and repressing this darkness or shadow self, it has to be incorporated into the subject's identity in order for it to become the True Self. Accepting all aspects of the psyche causes the protagonist to, in a fashion to "die" to the world. Fantasy as a genre allows this dying of the old self and re-

emergence of the new to be expressed literally (through action) as well as figuratively (through shifts in character personality and thought). This change is a slow process that is mapped out throughout the narrative and allows the reader an objective look at the small shifts that occur within the character as slow steps towards an eventual revelation.

As we have explored in detail, the first step in these narratives is to make the reader critically aware of the space within which the character functions. Acquaintance with the paradigm from which the character originates is imperative to understand the forces that drive him, shift in purpose and acceptance of his eventual lot. Neither of these characters makes the conscious choice to become a hero, they simply are. What the journey does is confront them with their potential, but it is still their choice whether they use it or not. The narratives represent the hero's agency as a *potential* for agency rather than as something that is immediately and self-apparently realised. There is a kind of implicit double-choice: one has to *choose* to be someone who exercises choice. The notion defies common sense, but the argument is not that we can escape destiny. The argument is that in order for the hero to be able to navigate the path that he finds himself on, he has to be willing to engage with repressed parts of his personality – his dark side, as well as, the obstacles that are set on his path – as predestined as they may be. It is like the current of life. We slowly progress from birth to inevitable death, but we tend to focus on what we achieve in the interval between these two inevitable states of being.

Through the removal from known space the character is forced to confront his ideals and former environment from an altered perspective. The transition from known to unknown space creates a faultline in which the character may question and re-examine the dictates previously adhered to. By thrusting the character into an unknown environment, he finds himself by extension thrust into an unknown space that he has to navigate from an inherently subjective and personal point of view. The result is that the character questions not only his reasons for adhering to certain dictates, but all that he is. This continual questioning is what makes the journey interesting. The focus of these narratives is not on the moment of epiphany but on the means by which this "transcendental" moment is achieved. Thus the beginning of the path to true agency, the beginning of the mythical journey and the inward journey of self-discovery all interconnect with the subject as nexus.

One can map the increase in the subject's ability to act with true agency along the lines of the duration of the journey that is undertaken. At once physical and intangible, this journey's

purpose is two-fold: the first is that the subject needs to acquaint him- or herself with a true reflection of all that he or she is and accept that reflection regardless of imperfection, thus imbuing him- or herself with true agency – as the limits of the initial perceived self are explored and often exceeded. The second purpose is to place the subject in a mythical space from which he or she can view the environment's dictates and socially sanctioned frameworks from several perspectives. In other words, the mythical space allows for a critical distance from the world: the protagonist is in a sense both an imbedded subject and an object that can be scrutinised, judged and acted upon. From this liminal space the subject comes to understand not only his or her mythical role in terms of his or her environment, but the mundane reality to which he or she initially so desperately clings. In essence, the acquisition of agency, the discovery of the mythical role and the undertaking of the journey of self-discovery are three dimensions of the same process.

The Beautiful and Terrible Truth – Realisation of the Self: Acquisition of Agency

On the surface both Harry and Garion possess all the mandatory elements that a hero should in terms of these narratives: they are orphaned and oblivious to the fact that destiny has mapped a path out for them, thereby placing them within an intrinsically complex and dangerous web of prophecy. Each is also marked by their destiny and this mark links them not only to a sense of family but a sense of purpose: the hero's scar or physical defect, a mark of his special destiny, is of course a motif in many mythical stories and further indicates fantasy's roots in myth. Garion has a "perfectly round, white patch on the palm of his right hand" (POP 67). With the emergence of this mark the importance of Aunt Pol's white lock of hair (briefly alluded to earlier) comes to the fore. Garion is coming of age and gaining a new awareness of certain things about himself. It is mentioned that the mark on his palm was always there but he had never thought about it before. When he discusses the mark with Aunt Pol, we again get a sense of his pre-destined journey and the fact that he is part of some important larger scheme.

> 'Did either of my parents have the same kind of mark?'
> 'Your father did. It's been in the family for a long time.'
> A sudden strange thought occurred to Garion. Without knowing why, he reached
> out with the hand and touched the white lock on his Aunt's brow. 'Is it like that
> white place in your hair?' He asked.
> He felt a sudden tingle in his hand, and it seemed somehow that a window
> opened in his mind. At first there was only a sense of uncountable years moving
> by like a vast sea of ponderously rolling clouds, and then, sharper than any knife,
> a feeling of endlessly repeated loss, of sorrow. Then more recent, there was his
> own face, and behind it more faces, old, young, regal, or quite ordinary, and
> behind them all, no longer foolish as it sometimes seemed, the face of Mister

> Wolf. But more than anything was a knowledge of an unearthly inhuman power, the certainty of an unconquerable will.
> Aunt Pol moved her head away almost absently. 'Don't do that, Garion,' she said, and the window in his mind shut. (POP 69)

Throughout the narrative Garion, as well as the reader, is given these small clues regarding the ultimate destination of his journey. We as readers are a little more aware of what the symbolism actually means, but are also none the wiser in terms of the grander scheme of things. The only characters that can claim this awareness are Polgara and Belgarath, and they only give Garion information when they deem it necessary for him to know something – which in this case makes them akin to the Dursleys in the *Harry Potter* novels in terms of withholding information about origins. They are aware that Garion needs to have his true identity revealed slowly to him so that he has time to process and integrate the information. This slow release of information should enable Garion to accept who he actually is more easily, as he is not simply thrust into the unknown with no identity whatsoever – instead he is nudged by his subconscious (his true self, his destiny) into development. This is, in essence, what the novels in the fantasy genre examined in this dissertation try to do: they try to cause an unconscious shift in the way that the reader thinks, through subtle metaphor the narratives hope to aid the readers in gleaning more insight into their own reality, without being out rightly told what the problems are.

Harry has a lightning shaped scar on his forehead, a souvenir from the evening his parents died. His aunt and uncle maintain that the Potters lost their lives in a car crash, as opposed to the truth – that he got the scar the night Voldemort murdered his parents and tried to murder him. Harry envisages it as a link to his parents: it is the only thing he likes about his appearance (SS 20). Later in the novels, however, it comes to symbolise more than just a boy's wish to be linked to some kind of family. It becomes the symbol of his destiny and of Voldemort's fate – throughout the series of novels, the reader, through Dumbledore, becomes increasingly aware of the importance of Harry's scar within the grand narrative that is about to unfold.

Furthermore, much of the inner monologue that both characters engage in as the narratives progress hinges around the words: "Why me?". The theme that is highlighted is that of choice: this is why the reader connects with the hero; he chooses to walk the difficult road and use the tools before him. It also confirms that one cannot simply conform to the stereotypical heroic traits and expect adulation, for

mythology does not hold as its greatest hero the merely virtuous man. Virtue is but the pedagogical prelude to the culminating insight, which goes beyond all pairs of opposites. Virtue quells the self-centred ego and makes trans-personal centeredness possible. (Campbell 44)

This suggests the theme of *self*-sacrifice (previous ego for true self) and the readiness to do what is right as opposed to doing what is easy. Coming to terms with the "Why me?" question brings insight to the hero that allows him to not only blindly strive for what he believes in, but to assimilate and ponder the other point of view, understand it and follow through. As "Old Wolf" says to Garion, "Nobility is a trait that's not always trustworthy, since it sometimes causes men to do things for obscure reasons" (POP 51). This is in fact where all these narratives lead: a deeper understanding of inherent opposites, to the point where they melt away, in an endeavour to understand the multifaceted nature of the world.

Initially the hero has to be removed from familiar surroundings in order for him to experience identity construction that has only to do with *his- self*, his beliefs, his ideals and moral code, instead of those that are sanctioned by his previous environment. This does seem like an individual quest, but as previously established, in order to effect a change in the environment or the world, the hero first has to effect a change within himself. In order for this to happen, an event must occur which forces the hero to abdicate from his current existence and depart on the journey. In Harry's case, the event that causes his life to alter considerably is the arrival of a letter from Hogwarts, though to the Dursleys these letters signify an acceptance of their nephew's abnormality and the rush to destroy them ignites Harry's curiosity. He cannot understand who could possibly be writing to him and who would have such an effect on his incredibly uptight relatives. It is only when the Hogwarts gamekeeper, Hagrid, arrives that Harry receives any form of explanation as to the bizarre events of the previous three days:

> "Harry – yer a wizard."
> There was silence inside the hut. Only the sea and the whistling wind could be heard.
> "I'm a *what*?" gasped Harry. (SS 50-51)

Hagrid hands Harry his Hogwarts letter in which he learns that he belongs to the wizarding world and is expected to turn up for school on the first of September. This is the first time in Harry's life that he is allowed to make a choice, and without regard for the Dursleys he decides to go off on this new adventure and discover where his parents came from. He leaves the Dursleys with full knowledge of his parents' demise and the threat of Voldemort's return hanging in the air. This abrupt change of fortune is, for Harry, the equivalent of winning the lottery. The Dursleys have mistreated him since he can remember, and the chance that he can

find an accepting environment outweighs his attachment to them because so little exists between them – in fact his existence has been miserable up until this point. He is an outcast, and what this opportunity presents for him is also a chance to belong. This shift from muggledom to the wizarding world also allows Harry to put some much-needed distance between himself and the Dursleys; they represent the unmoving side of humanity that abides the status quo. This fact is showcased multiple times throughout the narrative. They are neglectful, ignorant and bigoted and represent in a caricatured way precisely that which Harry fights against. This is also a clear act of agency that catapults the plot into motion: Harry makes the choice to leave, it is not forced upon him. It is also interesting to note that within the space of one chapter fundamental truths about Harry's life come out that entice him into going with Hagrid. As for the question of his motivation in the matter, that is less clear. Harry is only eleven years old and has just found out that his parents belonged to a world that he did not even know existed. As mentioned above, Harry has a deep longing for a sense of family and one cannot discount the fact that his move into the wizarding world was initially chiefly based upon a need to feel closer to his deceased parents. It is interesting also that this motivation can be linked to the overall journey, as what is sought after primarily within these narratives is not just a particular "truth", but a particular "truth" that realigns the broad abstract concept of The Truth in general.

On the other hand, in *The Belgariad*, we have Garion, an orphan who has adopted the ways of the people of Sendaria where he is being raised. He does not feel a lack of belonging, the farm life that he has lead for so long is all he has ever really known. He is completely integrated into this societal framework. Although not strictly Sendarian, he shares their disposition, which is both practical and inclusive. Durnik, the blacksmith, is particularly responsible for this, as he comes across as almost an elder brother/ father figure to Garion. It is while Garion is in his smithy that "Without even intending to, Durnik instruct[s] the small boy in those solid Sendarian virtues of work, thrift, sobriety, good manners, and practicality which form the backbone of the society" (POP 25). In the first few chapters of the first book, the reader is given the background into Garion's childhood, which is again deceptively normal, with the exception of the appearance of a hooded figure that only he can see, and whom he has never discussed with Aunt Pol. This figure presents itself as an antithesis to Aunt Pol's guardianship of Garion. The figure merely watches him and has been watching him for some time now; from the onset, the figure is suspect, but it is only when Garion is drowning in the lake after having hit his head on a log and the figure makes no move to help him, that the figure's allegiance to the "other" side is made known.

After several strange encounters Garion does leave the farm of his own volition, but completely in the dark as to the kind of adventure that he is embarking upon. There is a infiltration of the farm by Murgos, they are Angaraks that worship the god Torak and whose mission it is to find and kill the next Rivan King in order to restore Torak to his glory: it soon becomes apparent that the hooded figure who has been watching Garion all this time is indeed a Murgo too. Consequently, Old Wolf and Aunt Pol think it best to leave; Garion's hiding place has become compromised and it is better to keep him on the move. There is also the question of an orb that has been stolen that they need to find and return to its rightful place. So here we have two typical motifs that recur in fantasy as well as mythic narrative: we have an orb, an object of some power, and we have the protection of a young boy who exclaims upon readying himself to leave: "It's just that I don't understand. I don't understand any of this at all" (POP 97). One could go further and argue that Garion leaves the farm because of a benign agent (Campbell 58), as Polgara refuses to leave him behind: he is thrust into this new stage of his life without knowing why, and slowly pieces the puzzle together as the journey continues. Leaving Faldor's farm is not so much characterised as an act of volition, but as a nudge by the universe and a co-dependency on the only family he has ever known. He does not realise that he has always been part of the Great Narrative that is about to unfold, and as readers we have that slight advantage; as mentioned before we have access to enough narrative hints to be able to link Aunt Pol with Polgara, just as within the first two chapters we are equipped with enough narrative evidence to link "Old Wolf", the storyteller, to Belgarath The Sorcerer. These characters are the "big guns" so to speak, which emphasises the sense that Garion might have been placed in Sendaria for a reason, and that in order for him to justify this reasoning he will have to leave Faldor's Farm, where he had taken residence, and wander into the various kingdoms that make up the world.

Thus we can conclude that both narratives start off in a place where the hero is completely unaware of his status within the grand narrative, but a distinction must be drawn. Although both protagonists inhabit fictional worlds with similar genre conventions, the psychology of the two characters is widely divergent in the texts. The unifying aspect in both texts is a longing for or holding on to family, but where Garion leaves with the only family he has left, Harry rejects the family whose care he has been posited in and seeks to discover his true root of belonging. The different frameworks within which these two boys are raised have a great impact on each of their stories and have supplied them with the tools to create positive change within the world.

> All human societies implicitly refer to two contrasting social models. One…is of a society as a structure of jural, political and economic positions, offices, statuses and roles, within which the individual is only ambiguously grasped behind the social persona. The other is of a society as a communitas of concrete idiosyncratic individuals who, though differing in physical and mental endowment, are nevertheless regarded as equal in terms of shared humanity. (V. Turner 1974:166 in Walker 151-152)

Harry finds himself within a society of the first kind. This is established from the beginning of the narrative. There is heavy emphasis placed on homogeneity and conformity to socially accepted roles as we encounter the first line of Harry's adventure: "Mr and Mrs Dursley, of number four, Privet Drive, were proud to say that they were perfectly normal, thank you very much" (SS 1). The entire chapter foreshadows the hegemonic rule under which Harry Potter will be brought up, and the slow stealth of the wizarding world's infiltration of the Dursleys' neat, compliant and utterly conformist existence. The Dursleys are products of their social milieu through and through and enforce their ideological views on both their own son Dudley as well as on Harry. In Dudley, this encourages a predisposition to material goods. He is characterised as never satisfied with anything and he is also rather fat, which renders corporeal his greed, as well as acknowledging the "fat boy" trope in public school fiction. This greed is in turn nurtured by his parents and is seen as a testimony of excellence within the framework within which they function. A good example of this is in *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* where Dudley is complaining that he has received fewer presents for birthday:

> "All right, thirty-seven then," said Dudley, going red in the face. Harry, who could see a huge Dudley tantrum coming on, began wolfing down his bacon as fast as possible in case Dudley turned the table over.
> Aunt Petunia obviously scented danger, too, because she said quickly, "And we'll buy you another *two* presents while we're out today. How's that, popkin? *Two* more presents. Is that all right?"
> Dudley thought for a moment. It looked like hard work. Finally he said slowly, "So I'll have thirty…thirty…"
> "Thirty-nine, sweetums," said Aunt Petunia.
> "Oh." Dudley sat down heavily and grabbed the nearest parcel. "All right then."
> Uncle Vernon chuckled.
> "Little tyke wants his money's worth, just like his father. 'Atta boy, Dudley!" He ruffled Dudley's hair. (21-22)

The focus of this extract is on quantity as opposed to quality. Dudley does not care that his presents may be more expensive or bigger than last year; instead he focuses on the amount of "loot" that he will receive. Here is a poignant comment on the type of mindset that the Dursleys encourage and engage in. Everything must be tangible and in its place, anything abstract or that remotely deviates from what they perceive to be the norm is looked at,

remarked upon and justly repressed. Harry functions as an anomaly in their lives. They seem to be of the opinion that they can force the "abnormality" out of him by constantly reinforcing the boundaries within which they function and paradoxically treating him as an outsider by treating him as less than human. He is not ultimately able to be part of the society that the Dursleys so revere, and being treated as a diminished person for his entire life opens him up to the alternative. He has in so many words and through so many actions repetitively been told that he does not belong in the Dursleys' perfectly manicured world, but they have also made it abundantly clear that there is no other world. Therefore, when Hagrid arrives with an alternative to this liminal space within which Harry finds himself, it is no wonder that he jumps at the chance to extricate himself from an ideology that would reject him: a paradigm in which his integrated self only achieves the status of "nobody".

Starting from this state of being "nothing" allows Harry to develop a keen sense of what he experiences as right and wrong. It also, in the style of the original boarding school novel, allows Harry to draw toward him a group of what are largely seen as outsiders who end up helping him in his cause. As a direct result of his upbringing, he rejects the Dursley-approved criteria for judgement, which would be material wealth and social standing, and opts instead to judge people on wealth of character and their treatment of others. Far from being a product of his circumstances, Harry evolves into a revolutionary who rejects his previous environment. This allows Harry to create for himself a family that conforms more to the idea of communitas than to any form of ideological dictate.

Garion, on the other hand, is raised on Faldor's farm, a community that is essentially a communitas. Any hand that can be used is hired, and all farmhands including the owner and foreman dine together at every meal. Each subject within this community is viewed as integral to its running and of equal importance and standing. It is only once Garion has left the farm that he starts to see the injustices of communities that conform to other codes of conduct, those societies that are dictated by wealth, greed, bureaucracy and religion. Being a child as well as the product of a community that is all-inclusive, Garion's interaction with people is based on seeing them firstly as ordinary human beings and secondarily as whatever their titles may signal them to be. This is made very apparent in the second book *Queen of Sorcery* where the company visits the kingdom of Arendia, a land that was torn apart by civil war and was then unified and is comprises two races, the Mimbrates and the Austurians. It is here that Garion comes face to face with serfdom for the first time:

They passed a heavily burdened serf clothed in scraps and pieces of sackcloth tied on with bits of string. The serf's face was gaunt, and he was very thin under his dirty rags. He stepped off the road and stared at them with apprehension until they had passed. Garion felt a sudden stab of compassion…he wondered what would finally happen to them. It seemed important for some reason. 'Is it really necessary to keep them so poor?' he demanded of Lelldorin, unable to hold it in any longer.

'Who?' Lelldorin asked, looking around.

'That serf.'

Lelldorin glanced back over his shoulder at the ragged man.

'You didn't even see him,' Garion accused.

Lelldorin shrugged. 'There are so many.'

'And they all dress in rags and live on the edge of starvation.'

'Mimbrate taxes,' Lelldorin replied as if it explained everything.

'You seem to have always had enough to eat.'

'I'm not a serf, Garion,' Lelldorin answered patiently. 'The poorest people always suffer the most. It's the way the world is.'

'It doesn't have to be,' Garion retorted.

'You just don't understand.'

'No, And I never will.'

'Naturally not,' Lelldorin said with infuriating complacency. 'You're not Arendish'. (QOS 53-54)

This extract embodies a framework that defies reason from our hero's perspective. He does not see a serf, he sees a human being. Although some critics may argue that all Eddings is doing here is introducing a typical anachronistic liberal humanist perspective to the spectacle of feudalism, it does not change the fact that Garion sees *all* people first and foremost as people. It has less to do with the political system and more to do with the reality that this destitute existence of people can be greeted with such complacency, in short, as a socially sanctioned societal norm, by other people. It is especially difficult for Garion to reconcile with his attitude toward the world and humanity in general. His company, unlike Harry's, all form part of a prophecy. He does not draw the people toward him but is instead the moral centre of the group up until the point that he discovers that there is perhaps even more to his *self* than he thought there was. In a sense, his companions are like a portable *communitas*: they serve as a reminder of where he comes from and the ideals that he upholds. They are all of different creeds, races and ideological backgrounds, but each serves their purpose in turn, and without one of them the quest could not be completed. Thus Garion steps into the unknown and all of its alienating dictates with a clear reminder of how he views the world and what the world should be, with his group functioning as a reflection of the world as it should be. The group in essence symbolises balance and unity. They function almost as one entity, each bringing their unique skills to the journey. This serves as a marker for the integrated self, as well as a microcosm of the kind of space that the world should eventually become. Myth and fantasy are always concerned with community, and for Garion the perfect

concentrated version of the end product of both his psychological and physical journeys is symbolised in the "family" that undertakes this integration process with him. They intend to balance the world with Garion at the helm; but he first needs to find balance in himself.

For Harry, the shift from known to unknown space signifies a reassessment of his identity from the moment that Hagrid says "Harry – yer a wizard" (SS 50). Harry instantaneously has to assimilate that he is not what he thought he was for so long: a no-one, the runt of the litter, the outcast of his family. He is immediately made aware that he is something else by being labelled a wizard. Thus he crosses both the spatial and the identity-searching thresholds in one fell swoop. For Garion this metaphysical threshold is only crossed long after his physical journey has begun. Aunt Pol has come to signify Garion's place in the world, and that is why he left Faldor's Farm with her. She is the only family he has ever known he has never thought really about where he comes from, and to him it has always been a given that she is a cornerstone of his identity. As the journey goes on, Garion starts to realise that he is in fact not a Sendar. It is an exchange between himself and Silk (the Drasnian spy of their party) that throws the question of his actual identity into the spotlight of Garion's mind:

> 'I *am* a Sendar,' Garion objected. The hint implicit in Silk's observation struck at the very centre of his sense of his own identity.
> Silk turned and looked at him closely. 'No,' he said, 'you aren't. I know a Sendar when I see one – just as I can recognise the difference between an Arend and a Tolnedran or a Cherek and an Algar. There's a certain set of the head, a certain look about the eyes of Sendars that you don't have. You're not a Sendar.'
> 'What am I then?' Garion challenged.
> 'I don't know,' Silk said with a puzzled frown, 'and that's very unusual, since I've been trained to know what people are. It may come to me in time though.'
> 'Is Aunt Pol a Sendar?' Garion asked.
> 'Of course not.' Silk laughed.
> 'That explains it then,' Garion said. 'I'm probably the same thing she is.'
> Silk looked sharply at him.
> 'She's my father's sister, after all,' Garion said. 'At first I thought it was my mother she was related to, but that was wrong. It was my father; I know that now.'
> 'That's impossible,' Silk said flatly.
> 'Impossible?'
> 'Absolutely out of the question. The whole notion is unthinkable.'
> 'Why?' (POP 142-143)

This exchange has a dual significance it highlights that the reasoning that so impeded Garion's ability to accept this "other" world – that allowed him to distinguish between the possible and the impossible – which is precisely the thought process that Silk slingshots into impossibility. For Silk, like the reader, knows what Polgara and Belgarath are, their origins, their mission, and also that Beldaran, Polgara's sister, was the first Rivan King's wife. He

also knows that the Nyssian Queen had the last Rivan King and all his children murdered, so it is according to Silk's knowledge impossible that Garion is a sorcerer or a direct descendant of the Rivan King. For Garion, this exchange is quite traumatic, as it throws into question not only his relation to Aunt Pol, but his entire sense of self. It also alienates him in a specific sense, as he has now left a known environment for the "unknown". The only vestige of normalcy – of his life on Faldor's farm – is being challenged. Furthermore, it highlights the beginning of Garion's actual metaphysical journey in terms of the discovery of self. Aunt Pol is in place to help him, but only through alienation, and the subsequent rejection of that which was, will he be able to become that which he is. In other words, like Harry, Garion needs to completely experience the feeling of being cut off from that which he knows and Aunt Pol embodies that. This is his first metaphorical "crossing of the threshold": where in mythology, the gates would usually be manned by some ogre or guard, the foe that he now has to overcome is the previous ideological construction of the self. He has to do away with what he perceives as "reason" and "normality" and open the gates to begin accepting the impossible, or at least the fact that perhaps nothing is as it seems.

Through examining the origins of the two protagonists in these narratives, we can draw the conclusion that the ideological stances that are present in the inception of the text serve as markers that allow the reader to identify with the heroes and through them with the space within which these novels function.

Chapter 4 – The Two Faces of Janus: Incorporating the Shadow Self

Once the hero is removed from his known surroundings he is also confronted with unknown realms within himself. The most daunting shard to incorporate into the final mirror of identity is that of the shadow self and this shard represents an aspect of our personality that we attempt to repress or deny. In her essay "The Child and the Shadow" in *The Language of the Night*, Ursula Le Guin characterises why one's shadow is perceived as a monstrosity:

> The shadow is the other side of our psyche, the dark brother of the conscious mind. It is Cain, Caliban, Frankenstein's monster, Mr. Hyde. It is Vergil, who guided Dante through hell, Gilgamesh's friend Enkidu, Frodo's enemy Gollum…The shadow stands on the threshold between the conscious and the unconscious mind, and we meet it in our dreams, as sister, brother, friend, beast, monster, enemy, guide. It is all we don't want to, can't admit into our conscious self, all the qualities and tendencies within us which have been repressed, denied, or not used…Jung himself said, "Everyone carries a shadow, and the less it is embodied in the individual's conscious life, the blacker and denser it is," The less you look at it, in other words, the stronger it grows, until it can become a menace, an intolerable load, a threat within the soul (59).

Fantasy as a genre is particularly preoccupied with the battle between good and evil. Often, we are made aware of this through a prophecy of some sort that brings with it an apocalyptic vision showcasing the manifestation of the disastrous consequences of our inaction. In the same way, our shadow self encompasses all that we would prefer to repress, everything in our personalities that seems revolting to us, and becomes a site onto which we project all that we revile and attempt to ignore about ourselves.

To a degree modern popular culture grapples with this aspect on a regular basis, but in a very superficial way. An obvious illustration of this concept is a character in a soap opera that suddenly acquires an evil twin. In this case, the character splits neatly in two, the normal self and the shadow self, representing good versus evil. This direct splitting into binaries in the Jekyll/Hyde school of narrative is not, however, what occurs in reality or, in fact, in most fantasy narratives. The reason that the fantasy narratives problematise this neat binary is that there is an acknowledgement that the relationship between good and evil is not clear-cut; it is murky at best. Therefore, what is interrogated within these narratives is the complex relationship between these not always easily-separable concepts. Each text tackles this particular notion in different ways. Both have the great battle between good and evil as a backdrop and both have cast their heroes into an unknown space where they are forced to grapple with their identity, but this process is also exacerbated in these specific texts by the

heroes' coming into adolescence. It is the fact that these texts track not only the integration of self but liken it to the transition from child to adult that renders them accessible to the reader. One can relate to this transition and because of the nature of these texts, the metaphors employed for the assimilation of one's total personality or identity can be rendered accessible and direct through ensconcing them within a fantastical casing.

These texts demonstrate the confrontation with and eventual acceptance of the shadow self in vastly different ways. Both, however, draw on the idea of the collective shadow.

> The collective shadow [is] viewed as a component of the collective unconscious, [it] is the archetype of collective evil and can be presented by such archetypal images as the Devil, the Enemy, the Bad Guys, and the Evil Empire. In wartime or in any other situation of political confrontation the shadow is likely to be projected onto the enemy side, which is consequently viewed as hopelessly depraved, vicious, cruel and inhumane…At the same time our side, having projected its shadow contents onto the enemy, appears to be all good and thoroughly justified in bombing the enemy back into the Stone Age, if necessary. The myth of combat between Good and Evil often covers up a situation of moral consciousness, with inflation of Good and projection of Evil the usual result (Walker 33-34).

These texts, by interrogating the binary between good and evil, reveal the protagonist falling into the 'trap' of projecting images of depravity and cruelty onto the darker counterparts of the heroes. They investigate these shadows and do not leave the reader or the hero thinking that the journey is as simple as identifying the threat to the self and world and ridding the world of him. These texts utilise this 'trap' as a metaphor to explore the truth about the side of human nature that we tend to conceal. The exploration of the antagonist's motives and background is integral to the hero's progress. Each 'dark lord' is first and foremost characterised as power-hungry, narcissistic and evil, thus the initial view of these characters is that of a simple one-dimensional villain. One assumes that the antagonist only exists as the binary opposite to the hero in order to underscore his or her journey towards the light, but upon closer examination the reader finds that these villains are not merely evil for the sake of evil: each has a unique set of circumstances, has made a conscious choice to follow the specific path that he or she is on and, most importantly, each of them is playing the role that they themselves, and not destiny, has cast them in. Therefore, it is crucial that the hero is educated about the impulses, choices and previous deeds of the villain. This is so that the hero can demonstrate a clear understanding of the villain's point of departure in an effort not only to overcome him, but to understand him. Much as the hero finds himself on a path that first and foremost requires him to reach complete understanding of himself; the villain is more than likely part of the cause of his being on the specific road that he is walking. Therefore, he

needs to acquire a thorough understanding of the villain's modus operandi in order to understand his purpose as well – in fact; to defeat the villain the hero has, paradoxically, to identify with him.

Furthermore, the villain is usually conceived as the hero's antithesis in these texts. Sometimes the hero is, as in Garion's case, literally branded as the opposite: Garion is The Child of Light and Torak is The Child of Dark. At other times, such as in Harry's case, the villain is simply the opposite product of the same circumstances. The mythic space provided in these texts allows a nuanced reading of the seemingly simple equation that the world is split up into people who do good and Death Eaters (these are Voldemort's followers) by forcing the hero to engage with and get to know this shadow that looms over himself and the world. What this highlights for the reader, again, is that the liminal space within which the hero finds himself, trapped between what he was (his previously ideologically sanctioned being) and his true self (the result of incorporation of the shadow), is the same as the liminal space within which the world finds itself. The hero's struggle becomes a mirror for the world that is trapped between the dark words of a prophecy (or in *The Belgariad*'s case trapped between two prophecies, one of light, the other of dark). In this sense both the world and the hero find themselves within the same space – powerless to enact any form of agency because of a dark threat that jeopardises the very core of what is believed to be 'normal' and right. It is almost as if the villain represents the hero in a different modality: what distinguishes villain and hero are not their respective upbringings or ineffable destinies, but the domain of subjectivity itself – the place where identity is chosen rather than conferred.

Both our heroes have to glean intimate knowledge of their shadow selves in order to overcome their own limitations and overthrow the shadow in order to incorporate it into an integrated, whole self. On the surface this seems a contradictory notion: how can one overthrow yet incorporate the shadow into an integrated whole? The answer to this is anticipated in the previous paragraph. The hero must confront his inner demons, the reflection of himself that repulses him. These are the impulses that are present in any human being, but are repressed. What Torak and Voldemort symbolise are incarnate shadow figures. Whereas our heroes still have the capacity for either dark or light, are still grappling with their moral codes, the villains are not. They have become hollow and doomed themselves to a half-life in that all of their actions are selfishly motivated. They stared into the darkness within and they liked what they saw. In essence they became it.

The idea of evil as embracing the shadow at the expense of integrating the personality is a prevalent notion in many studies of the nature of evil. Our heroes thus stare not only at a villain when they see their binary opposite, they stare into their own darkness, and confrontation with these villains throws their moral codes into question for themselves. Thus they need to articulate a balance within themselves, they need to accept that they may have baser, megalomaniacal impulses, and that these impulses are a part of them, but they also have to recognise that it is possible to choose not to act on them. This journey, whether the characters know it or not, starts the moment that they forsake the initial known space. They are slowly moving towards their final assimilated selves by completing various trials in their journeys. What this means for the readers is that through experiencing these trials in the company of a character with whom they identify, they are able to enact a certain amount of agency and place themselves within this hyperbolic representation of identity integration; which translates directly into their experience of the "real" world.

> For Jung and the Jungians, the outer world of social myths and rituals and the inner world of the strange mythology of the psyche are connected. Public and intrapsychic worlds meet at the point where human imagination creates myths and symbols that correspond both to social needs for harmony and to individual needs for growth and individuation (Walker 92).

Thus one can conclude that the reader can translate the agency experienced within the text into their immediate context, regardless of its particularities, precisely because it is presented within a mythical form that accesses symbols from the collective unconscious.

First Sightings

The shadow in these texts presents itself in two distinctly separate fashions. In *Harry Potter*, Voldemort is a literal corporeal representation of Harry's shadow, and as the narrative progresses becomes more and more a representation of what Harry chooses not to become. Harry does of course have to recognise that he has the potential to become Voldemort, and for him the parallels that can be drawn between himself and the Dark Lord are uncanny and terrifying: they are both orphans, both raised in an environment in which they feel that they are the outsider and Harry also notes that he shares many of Voldemort's magical gifts. Harry's link to Voldemort demonstrates, in part, Freud's theory of The Uncanny. What is demonstrated in the relationship between the self and shadow is a classic exploration of one's double. When one looks from the perspective of identity integration, the shadow comes to signify the recognisable repressed that has surfaced. As Freud notes, quoting Schelling, "'*Unheimlich'(Uncanny) is the name for everything that ought to have remained…secret and hidden but has come to light*" (345). Based upon this definition it is easy to identify

Voldemort as the recognizable repressed; as Freud ultimately defines The Uncanny as "that class of the frightening which leads back to what is known of old and long familiar" (Freud 340) – the mirror that Harry looks into in order to encounter his darker half. If one looks at the self as the inverse of the 'uncanny' we can start to unpack Freud's complex definition:

> In general we are reminded that the word '*heimlich*' is not un-ambiguous, but belongs to two sets of ideas, which, without being contradictory, are yet very different: on the one hand it means what is familiar and agreeable, and on the other, what is concealed and kept out of sight (Freud 345).

This definition implies that if we are to see the shadow as "unheimlich" then we see the self as "heimlich"; but both, even semantically, exist within the same whole: the "unheimlich" cannot be viewed as apart from the self, but must be viewed as something that must be accepted and overcome in order to cultivate a whole self. This idea reinforces an inherent split subjectivity that through exploration and confrontation can be, to some degree, reconciled. Just as with the shadow, the uncanny is frightening precisely because it is familiar and identifiable.

The first inkling that the reader gets of the uncanny nature of the opposition between Harry and Voldemort is in the first novel when Harry goes to buy his wand. After several failed attempts at brandishing different wands Harry has an Excalibur moment: his wand has found him. What is disturbing about this scene however, is Ollivander the wand maker's reaction:

> 'Curious...curious...'
> 'Sorry,' said Harry, 'but *what's* curious?'
> Mr. Ollivander fixed Harry with his pale stare.
> 'I remember every wand I've ever sold Mr. Potter. Every single wand. It so happens that the phoenix whose tail feather is in your wand, gave another feather– just one other. It is very curious indeed that you should be destined for this wand when its brother–why it's brother gave you that scar.'
> Harry swallowed.
> 'Yes, thirteen-and-a-half inches. Yew. Curious indeed how these things happen. The wand chooses the wizard, remember...I think we must expect great things from you, Mr. Potter...After all, He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named did great things – terrible, yes, but great.'
> Harry shivered (SS 85).

For the reader, this is a particularly illuminating moment, and it functions on several different levels. We are informed that the wand chooses the wizard; there is a sense that destiny is present at this moment of initiation. What then of agency? Although the wand chooses the wizard, it is only a tool, an inanimate symbol of power: how that tool is wielded is left completely up to the wizard. This is illustrated in the extract above as we are made aware that Ollivander sold Voldemort his wand, and his weapon goes down in history as a bringer of

death. There is also an allusion to the fact that Harry and Voldemort have intertwined paths and that at some point the two brother wands must face each other in combat. This reiterates the villain's part in the 'destiny' of the hero. For if Voldemort had never raised his wand to Harry, would *that* wand have sought Harry out? Voldemort's actions have a direct impact on Harry's life and although he is unaware of the struggle that ensues for his soul, from the outset he identifies the right choice by going with his instincts. The more he seems to identify with and resemble Voldemort, the more he throws his own character into question. This is perhaps best showcased in the second novel *Chamber of Secrets.* In this novel, Voldemort's old diary is smuggled into the school. The diary contains a living memory that is Voldemort at age 17. His muggle name was Tom Riddle. The diary possesses Ginny Weasley and when the power of it begins to frighten her, she attempts to get rid of it but is unsuccessful; the diary falls into Harry's hands.

> Harry couldn't explain, even to himself, why he didn't just throw Riddle's diary away. The fact was that even though he *knew* the diary was blank, he kept absentmindedly picking it up and turning the pages, as though it were a story he wanted to finish. And while Harry was sure he had never heard the name T.M. Riddle before, it still seemed to mean something to him, almost as though Riddle was a friend he'd had when he was very small, and had half-forgotten (CS 233-234).

Here we again see echoes of Freud's uncanny. The choice of the word 'curious' as the first comment about the connection between Voldemort and Harry seems particularly apt, as they are curious about each other. Of course at this point Harry is not aware that Tom Riddle is indeed Voldemort, but it is significant that he seems to feel as though Riddle is a childhood friend that he had "half-forgotten". It is intriguing because Riddle did inform Harry's childhood; as a direct result of his actions, Harry grew up at the Durselys away from the world to which his parents belonged. Here we see an interplay of the shadow with the self; the two halves of the yin-yang looking at each other in a discerning fashion; once again reiterating that the self needs to get to know the shadow properly to assimilate it and achieve wholeness. Curiosity is a distinctive human trait, it is what propels us when we are children to ask questions about the world and it is what drives us as adults to make sense of the world, whether it be as philosophers struggling to define the human condition or as scientists investigating the substance that holds matter together. Curiosity is what leads us to question ourselves and our environment, thereby creating meaning for our lives. Harry's face-to-face encounter with Tom Marvolo Riddle, however, does not satisfy his curiosity but throws his own interpretation of his identity even further into an obscure space. This meeting with Voldemort is the beginning of Harry's war within himself. More importantly, this is the

moment when Harry begins to realise that the darkness is not only without, but within. Tom Riddle's comment about the "strange likenesses" between himself and Harry causes Harry to question his very being.

Before we go on, it is important to give a little background on the house system at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry, because the houses that are set up within the space of the school correlate directly to one of Harry's chief preoccupations during his confrontation with Voldemort. There are four houses named after the four founders of the school. These are: Gryffindor, Hufflepuff, Ravenclaw and Slytherin. In Gryffindor "dwell the brave of heart", Hufflepuff is home to the "just and loyal", Ravenclaw is the house of "wit and learning" and lastly there is Slytherin that houses "those cunning folk [who] use any means to achieve their ends" (SS 118). The Hogwarts students are sorted into their respective houses by a magical Sorting Hat upon arrival at the school in first year. From the start of Harry's encounter with the magical world, he has built up a prejudice against Slytherin House. The teacher that seems to hate him the most is head of Slytherin and his nemesis in the schoolyard is Draco Malfoy, who in also in Slytherin and is the embodiment of pride and prejudice. Therefore it became exceedingly important to Harry not to be put into Slytherin. This is also felt later, in the textual instance we shall now examine, when he realises that Voldemort also used to be in Slytherin. The symbol of Slytherin is a snake, and fittingly so, as Salazar Slytherin was a Parselmouth– this is someone who speaks Parseltongue which is snake language. Harry, too, has this gift, which produces more questions than he would like answered.

Harry is profoundly disturbed after coming face to face with the teenage Voldemort; his comment that they share a common background is probably the thing that strikes to the heart of Harry's sense of self:

> "I can see now...there is nothing special about you, after all. I wondered, you see. There are strange likenesses between us, after all. Even you must've noticed. Both half-bloods, orphans raised by Muggles. Probably the only two Parselmouths to come to Hogwarts since the great Slytherin himself. We even *look* something alike..." (CS 317).

This recognition by Voldemort of their similarities frightens Harry into questioning his role in the order of things. Harry's subsequent exchange with Dumbledore does little to ease his mind and also becomes the moment in which he learns something that completely repulses him:

> '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.

'Professor,' he started again after a moment. "The Sorting Hat told me I'd –I'd have done well in Slytherin. Everyone thought *I* was Slytherin's heir for a while because I can speak Parseltongue...'

'You can speak Parseltongue, Harry,' said Dumbledore calmly, 'because Lord Voldemort – who *is* the last remaining ancestor of Salazar Slytherin– can speak Parseltongue. Unless I'm much mistaken, he transferred some of his own powers to you the night he gave you that scar. Not something he intended to do, I'm sure...'

'Voldemort put a bit of himself in *me*?' Harry said, thunderstruck.

'It certainly seems so.'

'So I *should* be in Slytherin,' Harry said, looking desperately into Dumbledore's face. 'The Sorting Hat could see Slytherin's power in me, and it–'

'Put you in Gryffindor,' said Dumbledore calmly. 'Listen to me, Harry. You happen to have many qualities Salazar Slytherin prized in his hand picked students...Yet the Sorting Hat placed you in Gryffindor. You know why that was. Think.'

'It only put me in Gryffindor,' said Harry in a defeated voice, 'because I asked not to go in Slytherin...' (CS 332-333).

At this point in the narrative Harry cannot see his way out of the identity conundrum that he finds himself in. At this moment he first becomes aware of the fact that it is possible that a shadow self can exist within him. This extract brings several themes to light that have been discussed within the course of this dissertation. The first is Harry's willingness to believe that somehow he has thwarted destiny, that he should be in Slytherin and that he made an error in choosing Gryffindor. He thinks that by having told the Sorting Hat where to place him, he has forsaken his identity. What this underscores is the fact that it can be in one's *nature* to make a *free choice*; this places the true seed of agency within the subject and not within the subject's circumstances. It underlines the fact that the Nature/Nurture dichotomy does not have to be mutually exclusive. Fantasy, as the offspring of myth, opens up the door to a space that links these inherent binary opposites: the universal and particular, culture and the self, and above all, predetermination and free will. It is interesting to note that Harry starts this exchange vehemently denying any kind of connection with Voldemort and yet as soon as he learns that there may be some of Voldemort within himself; he starts to question the decisions he has made. What this highlights is that the notion of choice up until this point has not been emphasised. For Harry, the idea of choice itself seems foreign, since he grew up with the Dursleys where he could only ever do what he was told. The shift from their home to Hogwarts itself was his first choice, and if one examines the narrative keenly up until this point, one realises that Harry is behaving autonomously for the first time in his life. He is now in a space where he *can* say to Draco Malfoy "I think I can tell who the wrong sort are for myself, thanks" (SS 109) and he takes the initiative to decide where the Sorting Hat will place

him. What it is also imperative to recognise is that Harry now has to come to terms with the fact that there is a little bit of Voldemort in him. Harry's new-found agency, independent of Dursley rule, hinges on the fact that he must incorporate the shadow to completely sanction his ego. The shadow is very overtly referred to; we all have a little Voldemort in us; but it is whether Harry chooses to act upon this fact or not that will make him who he is. It is Dumbledore's reply to Harry's defeatist statement that he chose Gryffindor that raises the veil, at least partially, from Harry's eyes.

> '*Exactly*' said Dumbledore, beaming once more. 'Which makes you *very different* from Tom Riddle. It is our choices, Harry, that show what we truly are, far more than our abilities' (CS 333).

This speech of Dumbledore's puts Harry's mind at ease; but it is several books later when he finally realises exactly what Dumbledore means, and even then, fittingly, it is only at the climax of the narrative that he puts what he has learnt into practice. An intricate balance must first and foremost be achieved within the self; this balance will culminate in true agency. The hero must effect a change in themselves to be able to enact any kind of agency and change the world: this seems to be a recurring mythical theme. As Joseph Campbell states: "The returning hero, to complete his adventure, must survive the impact of the world" (227), he must "re-enter with his boon the long-forgotten atmosphere where men who are fractions imagine themselves to be complete" (216) and "effect a reconciliation of the individual consciousness with the universal will" (238). According to Campbell "the hero's ultimate difficult task [is] to render back into light-world language the speech-defying pronouncements of the dark" (218). Voldemort cannot achieve any kind of balance within himself because the light half of his self simply is no more – therefore the kind of agency that he enacts upon others does not stem from anything other than deceptive coercive tools that are only wielded in a bid to seize control and power. Here we see that Harry and his corporeal shadow are inextricably linked, and that the final battle between the two will involve the types of agency that they choose to enact.

In *The Belgariad* the reader is presented with a two-fold shadow self. One is Torak, The Child of Dark, who is in direct binary opposition to Garion as The Child of Light, but there is another manifestation of the shadow on an unconscious level: the idea of "Belgarion" which is Garion's "true name". His true name heralds him as a disciple of the God Aldur and the prefix "Bel" is associated with men who possess the gift of The Will and The Word. Garion equates his true identity with a monster. This is mainly because his first encounter with his "true name", Belgarion, occurs after a particularly harrowing act that he himself has

performed. Thus he comes face to face with 'the monster' literally inside himself and rejects Belgarion and all he stands for. This rejection of "Belgarion" and the placement of Torak as his corporeal shadow self brings to the fore a detailed intertwining of inner and outer space.

Torak is a God, driven mad by his obsession with the Orb of Aldur and stands in direct opposition to Garion's purpose as Belgarion. Here again we see the shadow's impact on the hero's path, as without Torak's threat Garion would never have realised that he is the Rivan King – ironically it is only because of his destined encounter with evil that he emerges as a mythical king. So in a sense, just as Harry would not have been The Chosen One if Voldemort had not acted on the prophecy, Garion would not have existed without Torak's hunger for possession of the orb and worldwide adulation. The link between Garion's rejection of "Belgarion" and Torak as his shadow self is that Garion must become Belgarion in order to defeat Torak. Becoming Belgarion entails a mastery of sorcery and Garion initially only experiences sorcery as a destructive force, much as Torak is viewed. Garion up until this point in the narrative has seen himself only as a scullery boy, therefore, when he is confronted with what he is capable of, he shies away from it. He, like Harry, cannot understand how *his* choices will impact on the world. For each of these heroes the entire journey can be seen as a prolonged initiation, the goal of which is to enable the hero truly to embrace his purpose and his *self* in order for him to be able to perform the function that destiny has set on his path. The hero can only achieve the fulfilment of his destiny once he has effectively obliterated his ego, in other words, it is only once he has shrugged off the mantle of the previous construction of the self, that he can successfully achieve his purpose.

If one views the journey to complete integration of self as one that consists of three major hurdles, the first would be crossing the threshold from a known to an unknown environment, the second would be squaring off with the shadow self and the third is the rebirth into the world as an integrated self. This model of hurdles is a modification of Joseph Campbell's detailed Hero's Journey outline and the Jungian pattern of identity integration. When one considers that the purpose of this journey is for the hero, in a sense, to die to the world, then it is fitting that the combat with the shadow manifests as the five stages of grief: Denial, Anger, Bargaining, Depression and Acceptance (Kübler-Ross). Obviously the distinctions are not as clear-cut as these stages are presented and often the hero feels more than one of these emotions at once. What the engagement with the shadow self signifies, especially when considered within an adolescent paradigm, which frames these texts, is that the hero starts to

take responsibility for his or her acts and feelings. And with that responsibility may come a terrible load of guilt. The adolescent shadow often appears as much blacker, more wholly evil, than it is. The only way for the youngster to get past the paralysing self-blame and self-disgust of this stage is to really look at that shadow, to face it, warts and fangs and pimples and claws and all – to accept it as the self – as *part* of the self. The ugliest part, but not the weakest. For the shadow is the guide. The guide inward and out again; downward and up again; there, as Bilbo the Hobbit said, and back again. The guide of the journey of self-knowledge, to adulthood, to the light (Le Guin 61).

For each of our heroes this process is significantly different. If one considers the fact that although all human beings go through the same developmental stages, the outcomes are significantly different because they are informed by ideological context, then willingness to let go of the old and the willingness to embrace the future is directly rooted in subjectivity. What this brings us back to is the question of the relationship between choice and agency. Through analysing each hero's struggle with his darker half we are given more insight into his potential as a warrior of light. It is our choices that set the path we are going to walk, and not the path that dictates how we walk it. This section will explore each hero's identification of and subsequent encounters with his shadow self. This will highlight not only the trauma in identifying yourself with something that is perceived as evil but recognising it as part of your *self*.

Both heroes' journeys are very much inward, and exploratory of the recesses of the self – both conscious and unconscious. It takes them a little longer to get to the point where they completely let go and start accepting certain things about this "unknown" with which they are faced. This is precisely because the boundaries that are being traversed are actually frontiers of the self. Each unknown geographical space that the hero finds himself in informs his identity in some way, as he is always testing himself. This re-solidifies the relationship of the outer, physical journey into the unknown to the inner journey toward healing the self. Both heroes literally have to accept the Other as part of themselves to reach completion.

We have already examined Harry's first realisation that Voldemort is within him, now we turn to Garion's analogous first encounter with "Belgarion". This is the part of him that is a sorcerer and has access to "The Will and The Word". This concept is the basis of sorcery within *The Belgariad*; it is the ability to connect these two things, namely the unseen and the tangible that forces a supernatural reaction. This is a perfect metaphor for the construction of the self within these novels. Initially Garion is oblivious to the power that he possesses and he has no control over it. He exercises his power only in times of emergency and always

unconsciously; it is as though in those instances he accesses his true self, but only momentarily. Harry also experiences his powers in this way up until the point where Hagrid comes to tell him that he is a wizard; he only uses his magic in self-defence and once accidently sets a python on his cousin Dudley at the zoo. In both cases, when the hero experiences these moments, it is as if in that instant he is whole, without complicating his existence in terms of rationale, logic or boundary. The problem, however, arises afterward as he cannot reasonably explain the occurrence. Harry only thinks the incidents are "like magic", whereas Garion starts to view himself as a kind of monster who only has the power of destruction within him. This viewpoint is only presided over by logic and a fear of the unknown, as when examined closely, each action that Garion performs is either completely justifiable or kind. The four occasions when he unconsciously uses his power are very specific but it is the second one that haunts him and he only understands the implications of the first much later. Each time he uses his power he is being nudged further along to the point where he will actually confront his shadow self.

The first time that Garion utilises The Will and The Word is in the second novel *Queen of Sorcery*. The Will and The Word is the brand of sorcery that is utilised within these texts; it functions as a nexus of reason within a world of possibility. The Will and The Word joins two concepts: the power of mind and the utterance that is linked to it. The power itself serves as a reiteration of the balancing of two distinct opposites – the physical and the metaphysical. What this creates is a fine balance that is always cautiously maintained within the narrative, between supernaturally "fixing" things and doing them practically, i.e. without the use of magic. This balance is what Garion comes to learn as he commences his trials with "Belgarion". Garion's primary encounter with The Will and The Word occurs as the party is driving through a town when a monk who has gone mad runs up to Garion. Garion instinctively touches the monk's head with the mark on his palm. The man falls at the blow and Polgara assists Garion in helping the man stand up. The monk is then cured of his madness. Belgarath tells the party that Polgara used Garion as a conduit, as the hand that dealt the blow had to finish whatever was happening; but Garion knows or suspects that the power comes from him. This is echoed in Harry's dismissal of occurrences as "like magic", not much attention is paid to these bizarre occurrences, but there is an underlying acknowledgement that perhaps it stems from himself. The second time Garion uses sorcery it is a little more conscious but still the product of impulse. This confrontation highlights two very important moments in Garion's journey, the first being his redirection of impulse and the second his act of vengeance. In the light of this second moment it is important to consider the information

that Garion has received earlier within the books. At the end of the first novel Garion speaks to Belgarath and begins to deal with the fact that if Aunt Pol is really Lady Polgara, then they could not possibly be related because she is thousands of years old. Belgarath asks him why it is so important to him and Garion explains:

> 'You see, I don't really know who I am or what I am. Silk says I'm not a Sendar, and Barak says I look sort of like a Rivan –but not exactly. I always thought I was a Sendar –like Durnik –but I guess I'm not. I don't know anything about my parents or where they came from or anything like that. If Aunt Pol isn't related to me, then I don't have anybody in the world at all. I'm all alone, and that's a very bad thing' (POP 340).

Belgarath then soothes Garion's worst fear by explaining that it is complicated, but that Aunt Pol and he are actually from the same bloodline. Therefore she is actually his Aunt, in a manner of speaking (she is the sister of his ultimate grandmother). He realises that he has gained not only an actual aunt – that the bond between Aunt Pol and himself is in point of fact real – but as Belgarath is Polgara's father, he has also gained a grandfather. Belgarath tells Garion about his parents, who have hitherto been shadows and ideas to him. He explains that they were murdered, and Garion swears that one day he will avenge their deaths and implores Belgarath to tell him who did it; he does not reveal this information to Garion. Garion is adamant and Belgarath says:

> 'I don't suppose I'll be able to talk you out of this…but I really think you're going to feel differently about it after it's over.'
> 'Not very likely,' Garion said, still pacing (POP 345).

The thirst to avenge his parents is always at the back of Garion's mind, but is constantly perceived as an event that will happen far in the future. The second incident where he uses sorcery involves the murgo who had been watching him on Faldor's farm. He has by now been identified as Chamdar or Ashrak. Near the close of the second novel Chamdar, flanked by legionnaires, appears to take Garion away from his companions. All of Garion's friends are held at sword-point and the situation seems helpless, but Chamdar makes a grave mistake; "with a bland smile he slap[s] [Aunt Pol] sharply across the face" (QOS 343). Garion cannot abide this, and he storms forward ready to pull out his dagger (as he is a child, the legionnaires did not mark him); but he stops, is reminded of The Will and The Word by the other consciousness within him and instead burns Chamdar using sorcery. This shift showcases the fact that Garion is an instrument of a higher purpose and Garion's need to inevitably come to terms with his gift. It shows him as an instrument because Garion has another consciousness that comes to him at times with which he speaks. It is later revealed that this consciousness is in actual fact the prophecy that Garion is supposed to fulfil.

Occasionally it speaks through him but on this occasion it speaks only to him and reminds him of his gift. Garion says he cannot use it but the consciousness shows him "the image of the God Torak writhing in the fire of Aldur's Orb" (QOS 343) and he is able to burn Chamdar. This is also significant because by now we as readers know that Garion's great deed, his ultimate battle, is with Torak; so the supernatural aid is slowly preparing him for it without his knowledge. He wills himself to kill Chamdar, but as he burns he begs forgiveness and Garion softens in pity toward him. It is Polgara that urges him to continue as an act of vengeance, not for the insults that the murgo paid her, but because Chamdar was the murgo that murdered Garion's parents, and fittingly, he set them on fire. This pushes Garion over the edge and he completes the task.

This act completed, Aunt Pol's voice sounds in Garion's head "'*It is done…They are avenged!*' And then her voice rang in the vaults of his mind with a soaring exultation. '*Belgarion!*' she sang. '*My Belgarion!*'" (QOS 346). Garion has finally earned his true name. For weeks afterward he shuns the name and goes back on his idea that once he had performed the avenging act he would not feel differently, he relives Chamdar's screams with shame and disgust. It is this specific occurrence that forces him to believe that he is some kind of monster and pledge to himself that he will never use sorcery again – in essence denying his true identity. What he learns at this juncture is that revenge is rarely, if ever, useful on any scale; it cannot undo what has been done; there are no scales of justice to tip without creating a new imbalance. He is also made aware of the fact that this "impossible" side of existence is concrete or "real" and is not to be trifled with. Sadly, he cannot come to terms with the fact that he has accessed that side of himself and therefore it can never lie dormant again. He has to incorporate it into his identity because without constructing it into his sense of self, he can never be whole, can never accomplish his purpose.

The Chosen One– Alienation

Thus we see from both Garion and Harry's first realisation of the existence of their shadows that the initial reaction is denial and anger with a healthy dose of fear in the mix. What the journey foregrounds ultimately is the question: Can the ego put itself to death? This question is intimately linked with the agency that the character is willing to practise. In this case, what that means is how much responsibility the subject is willing to take for its actions, furthermore, it throws into question the subject's motivation for following the chosen path.

> Cassirer locates the specificity of mythological thought in the blending of the
> real and ideal, of thing and image, of substance and characteristic, and of first
> causes and general principles. This transforms resemblance or contiguity into

causal succession. The process of cause and effect becomes concrete metamorphosis. Relationships do not fuse into a synthesis but come to resemble each other. Instead of 'laws' there are unified concrete images. Parts become functionally identified with the whole. The entire cosmos is created following a single unified plan that is actualised using the sacred/profane opposition and a sensibility to the presence and position of light…Cassirer's analysis of mythological causality suggests that myth is characterised not by change – which presupposes the existence of some universal law – but by metamorphosis, in the Ovidian sense of the word. Hence myths describe singular and causal events that derive from an act of will. In some ways causalness generates causality because mythological thought poses the questions 'how' and 'why' not on a general level but on the particular (Meletinsky 32-33).

Cassirer's point has merit: the crux of mythology and by extension fantasy is the exploration of the relationship between cause and effect. Where this dissertation disagrees with him, however, is in the dismissal of change as the characterisation of mythical thought. In essence, mythology and these narratives try to link proximate and ultimate causation in one coherent narrative. Myth tries to bring everyday motivations in line with a bigger process that extends beyond the self. We see evidence of this in the hero's need to acquire agency to cause change on a larger scale. Obviously at this stage of initiation the threat to the self is perceived only on a subjective level. There is no thought of the impact that this change will have in the grander scheme of things. The only thing that is considered is the impact that this change will have on the subject itself. Therefore, one can understand why Garion point blank refuses to access sorcery again:

> 'Did it have to be fire?'
> 'The choice was yours,' she answered. 'If fire bothers you so much, don't do it that way next time.'
> 'There isn't going to be a next time,' he stated flatly. 'Not ever.'
> '*Belgarion,*' her voice snapped within his mind, '*stop this foolishness at once. Stop feeling sorry for yourself.*'
> 'Quit that,' he said aloud. 'Stay out of my mind – and don't call me Belgarion.'
> 'You *are* Belgarion,' she insisted. 'Like it or not, you will use the power again. Once it's been released you can never cage it up. You'll get angry or frightened or excited, and you'll use it without even thinking. You can no more choose not to use it than you can choose not to use one of your hands. The important thing now is to teach you how to control it. We can't have you blundering through the world uprooting trees and flattening hills with random thoughts. You must learn to control it and yourself…' (QOS, 357).

At this juncture Garion perceives the entire idea of "Belgarion" and all that the name entails as a threat to his soul, a destabilising initiative that can render his entire psyche, as he knows it, obsolete and sinister. He has come face to face with what he perceives to be the evil inside of him. The third time Garion uses sorcery emphasises the natural progression of his

development. This is the first time that he calls on his Will of his own volition. The scene is in Nyssia, land of the snake people, where they still trade in slavery. Garion is on the deck of a ship and watches as a slave bravely dares to try and escape his fate by plunging into the reeking, poisonous, leech-infested swamp that is the River of the Serpent. Garion watches the man being attacked by leeches and cannot stomach it; he translocates the man onto the wharf close to their ship, but he is already dead. Polgara is livid because Garion does not want to be trained and yet cannot help himself from using his power. The problem is that any kind of supernatural disturbance causes a sound that can only be heard by other supernaturally inclined beings. Torak's followers also have sorcerers on their side, called grolims, who can hear this noise, so in essence Garion betrayed their position with his untrained thundering translocation spell. To make matters worse, she then bluntly over-emphasises the fact that the man was dead already. This exchange is vital because it stresses and underlines the tumult that is taking place within Garion at this point in the narrative:

> 'He wasn't dead when I did it!' Garion shouted at her. 'He was screaming for help.' He was angrier than he had ever been in his life.
> 'He was beyond help.' Her voice was cold, even brutal.
> 'What kind of monster are you?' he asked from between clenched teeth. 'Don't you have any feelings? You'd have just let him die, wouldn't you?'
> 'I don't think this is the time or place to discuss it.'
> 'No! This *is* the time – right now, Aunt Pol. You're not even human, did you know that? You left being human behind so long ago that you can't even remember where you lost it. You're four thousand years old. Our whole lives go by while you blink your eyes. We're just entertainment for you –an hour's diversion. You manipulate us like puppets for your own amusement. Well, I'm tired of being manipulated. You and I are finished!' (QOS 384).

The reason that this third instance is a seminal one is because in some way saving the slave was to Garion an attempt at atonement, at rebalancing the scales without causing further disequilibrium. He feels that he has to do penance for burning Chamdar and even at that he fails. This is still, however, the first time that Garion consciously tries to utilise his power. It is a blow because at this point in the narrative he is carrying with him the conviction that this power that he has can only cause destruction. This instance leaves the impression that even employing it for what he deems to be a "good" purpose is futile. It further exacerbates his distortion of self, as he is now more than ever, inclined utterly to ignore this particular side of his identity. The reader also gleans that all of the insults that he spits at Aunt Pol are actually directed at himself. He tries to cope with the fact that he is "less than human" by projecting his anger and denial onto Aunt Pol. This further highlights the fact that he wants to completely disassociate himself with anything to do with sorcery or "Belgarion". This

complete distortion and cutting off of oneself from everything and everyone is a necessary part of this identity formation process, particularly in the case of this hero's journey inward.

Harry goes through the same set of trials involving denial and alienation. Despite Dumbledore's earlier reassurance that "only a true Gryffindor could have pulled [Godric Gryffindor's sword] out of the [Sorting Hat]" (CS 335), Harry starts to question whether he is intrinsically a bad person because there is this strong connection between himself and Voldemort. In both cases we see the classic reaction of "Why Me?". This seems to be a mythic motif as well: the hero never truly sees himself as a hero; he or she is only directed by their moral compass and has to wonder why he or she has been chosen for this particular lot. This is the burden of being the chosen one. Each hero is labelled: Garion is The Child of Light and Harry is The Boy Who Lived. This idea of being a chosen one and trying to live a normal life is constantly reiterated in these kinds of mythical narratives. Garion has grown up as a normal child and still perceives himself as normal, with the intention to ignore Belgarion as part of his *self*. Harry also grew up within a relatively normal milieu, but as soon as he entered the wizarding world realised that he was famous, and all he wants to be is normal by the standards of the wizarding world. The quote that exemplifies this problem is perhaps best stated in *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, where the context is the same: she is the chosen one, her destiny is to combat demons and protect the world. As she is waiting for a review from the Watcher's Council (a body in England which combats evil using the Slayer as its tool) she remarks worriedly to her mentor, Rupert Giles: "They're going to expect me to be like a Slayer and know stuff, but I'm just me and I don't know anything..."(Checkpoint). This same sentiment runs through the two narratives that are examined in this dissertation. The first thing that Garion says to the awareness in his mind when it informs him of his destiny is: "Why me?...Can't somebody else do it?" (MG 56). Harry's "Why me?" has another dimension to it that throws his convictions about himself into even further doubt. Although he is constantly surrounded by a support system in Ron and Hermione, he is the one who has to perform the final deed. It is the moment of clashing with "destiny" or prophecy, where Harry's status as the Chosen One is confirmed that alters his perception of self to the point of distortion and causes his immediate alienation from his friends.

The unveiling of the prophecy occurs in the fifth book in the series *The Order of the Phoenix*. Harry and Dumbledore discuss the prophecy that Voldemort was trying to obtain in an effort to understand Harry's part in the grand narrative that he sketched for himself. What is revealed

is that Voldemort put a narrative in motion the second that he acted upon the prophecy, of which he heard only half, and so sealed his fate. The prophecy was as follows:

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

Having only heard the first half of the prophecy that the one who will vanquish him will be born as the seventh month dies, Voldemort speeds hastily to action, and so renders Harry's destiny concrete. The true blow to Harry's questioning his role within this grand narrative is when he finds out that he was literally chosen/marked and that there was another boy who could have fitted the profile. The other boy is Neville Longbottom, a fellow Gryffindor, whose parents fought alongside Harry's against Voldemort. When Harry hears this, his first reaction is to go into denial and bargaining:

> 'Then– it might not be me?' said Harry.
> 'I am afraid,' said Dumbledore slowly, looking as though every word cost him a great effort, 'that there is no doubt that it *is* you.'
> 'But you said– Neville was born at the end of July, too– and his mum and dad–'
> 'You're forgetting the next part of the prophecy, the final identifying feature of the boy who could vanquish Voldemort...Voldemort himself would *mark him as his equal*. And so he did, Harry. He chose you, not Neville. He gave you that scar that has proved both a blessing and a curse.'
> 'But he might have chosen wrong!' said Harry. 'He might have marked the wrong person!' (OOTP 742).

Harry's reaction here is textbook, in the sense that he has also for an instant understood that "his life must include, or end in, murder... [and he felt there was] an invisible barrier separating him from the rest of the world. He was –he had always been– a marked man. It was just that he had never really understood what it meant..." (OOTP 754). It is logical to wish this lot to fall on someone else. This reaction is also rooted in Harry's ambivalence about his connection to Voldemort – the prophecy has made it clear: it's kill or be killed, and in the end, what does that make him? It is interesting that the dialogue between himself and Dumbledore that precedes the unveiling of the prophecy is the moment where Harry most and least reflects Voldemort.

Throughout the narrative we are given indications of Voldemort's inhumanity. He even looks less than human: his face is described as "Whiter than a skull, with wide, livid scarlet eyes and a nose that [is] flat as a snake's with slits for nostrils..." (GOF 643). Voldemort is essentially trying to escape his humanity. He is afraid of death and cannot feel anything

resembling a normal human span of emotions; he is, as the collective shadow would have it, depraved, inhuman, volatile and literally a mutilated soul. It is Harry's thorough human-ness, his ability to love and feel, that is the "*power that the Dark Lord knows not*"(OOTP 741). From the beginning, Dumbledore explains to Harry that the reason that Voldemort could not defeat him as a baby was that his mother died to save his life. Harry does not understand the full implications of being able to love; but as Dumbledore points out, the fact that Harry can still love after all that he has been subjected to, is precisely the reason that Voldemort cannot fathom his character. Voldemort sees love only as a weakness and nothing more. In *The Order of the Phoenix* Harry's godfather Sirius Black is murdered by one of the Death Eaters; Sirius symbolised not only Harry's last real family but the escape from the Dursleys, a link to his parents and a true sense of belonging in the wizarding world. The magnitude of his grief is devastating and it is the enactment of this grief that brings him to a strange instance in which he momentarily comes to Voldemort's understanding of shuffling off this human coil. This understanding is still, however, rooted in a very human place and comes from grief and love, rather than the wish to be hollow.

> 'There is no shame in what you are feeling, Harry,' said Dumbledore's voice. 'On the contrary...the fact that you can feel pain like this is your greatest strength.'
> Harry felt the white-hot anger lick his insides, blazing in the terrible emptiness, filling him with the desire to hurt Dumbledore for his calmness and empty words.
> 'My greatest strength, is it?' said Harry, his voice shaking as he stared out at the Quidditch stadium, no longer seeing it. 'You haven't got a clue...you don't know...'
> 'What don't I know?' asked Dumbledore calmly.
> It was too much. Harry turned around, shaking with rage.
> 'I don't want to talk about how I feel, all right?'
> 'Harry, suffering like this proves that you are still a man! This pain is part of being human–'
> 'THEN-I-DON'T-WANT-TO-BE-HUMAN!' Harry roared, and he seized the delicate silver instrument from the spindle-legged table beside him and flung it across the room...
> (OOTP 726)

Harry's violent reaction stems from love and pain. According to Voldemort these are petty human weaknesses that hinder any kind of real life or acquisition of power. Both heroes see humanity as the most important aspect of their psyche. Being human denotes the ability to be connected to both physicality and spirit and, by being aware of your soul, you have the ability to love. This underpins both texts' humanist ideology and reinforces the move back to universality as the glue that binds us together, rather than a tool of hegemonic oppression. We see resonances here with the components of The Will and The World and the overall hero's journey. Garion hurls insults at Aunt Pol precisely because he feels inhuman; *he* feels like a

monster who is only capable of bringing pain to people, and that is something that he cannot live with. Harry, on the other hand, is constantly reminded that it is his humanity that sets him apart from Voldemort. This is essentially because Voldemort has no concept of any of these great virtues: love, loyalty or honour; he rules his Death Eaters by fear, which is in itself an interesting notion considering that Voldemort's initial action regarding the prophecy was wholly motivated by fear.

It makes sense that the heroes would pick humanity as the thing that they do not want to or cannot lose, as when your entire identity is thrown into question the fact that you are human is probably the only thing you are certain of. This translates into a very traumatic encounter because there is a three-fold clash occurring: there is the perceived self that is the product of childhood and one set of conventions; then there is the shadow self that appears and illuminates the darker half of the psyche (which naturally leads to the question "Who am I?") and, lastly, there is being human: having the ability to love, forgive and having the ability to choose between light and dark. In other words, the answer to this clash is to try and achieve equilibrium and to try to navigate the sea of the self to the best of your ability. When the heroes encounter these shadows, their own *human-ness* is brought to the fore: they are not hollow, not capable of killing a man with no remorse or emotional impact, and the result is doubt: it pivots around the idea that they have been chosen to perform these tasks and yet they have no clue as to whether they are the right people for this journey.

Mentorship, Space and Control
There is always room to doubt oneself and the hero is not immune to this worry. Both heroes view being labelled "The Chosen One" with much trepidation, but they are not flung into the unknown without any form of aid. Where in reality our parents serve as facilitators to all the woes of shifting identity, these heroes have mentors who facilitate the difficult changes in their lives. Their role in each text is to present the hero with a sanctuary in which he can learn to control the more difficult elements of his journey. The significance of the sanctuary within these narratives and myth in general, takes us back to the discussion of a "communitas" as a space that contrasts a deeply ideological environment and engagement with the world.

> 'Communitas'…being transitional, marginal, 'liminal', corresponds to that moment …a 'rite of passage' when the initiate is placed outside society, on the threshold…The separation of the initiate is thought to coincide with the suspension of normal social rules, so that the 'post-liminal' phase of reintegration involves rebirth not only for the individual but also for the community. Thus where 'structure' insists on identity and certainty, 'communitas' allows scope for difference and ambiguity, and so for potential (V. Turner 1974:81-82 in Walker 152).

Both heroes end up in a sanctuary space that fits most of what Turner has described above. Harry's learning takes place at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry – which is above all else a boarding school and far removed from "normal social rules". Garion's space is almost sacred; the Vale of Aldur can best be described as what Joseph Campbell calls The World Navel. The role of the mentor is to lead the hero toward and instruct him how to use the tools that he will need in order to fulfil his duty; this does not mean that the hero is locked away at a monastery learning secrets and Olympic ninja moves. The hero is, to the contrary, exposed to the world. It is imperative that he understands what he will be fighting for, and the landscape that the mentor aids the hero in traversing is more the landscape of identity than literal space. The literal space is, however, also important, but first the hero has to demonstrate a willingness to learn.

In Garion's case, what informs this change toward learning about his abilities is the presence of the dry voice inside his head, which he initially only hears on occasion and which seems to be a bystander or supervisor to what is about to unfold. It is however in this monumental third book that the true power of this voice is revealed to Garion. The voice is in fact "the awareness of the original purpose of the universe" (MG 56). What this voice represents, in mythical terms, is the consolidating factor between the hero's identity integration and the world. It is the prophecy of light, the good one of the two prophecies that are destined to collide, and early on in the novel Garion learns that he is the stone that The Purpose has thrown to right the course of the universe. Of course, he has some objections along the lines of 'why me' but the awareness very bluntly points out to him that there is no-one else, that he is destined to do this, and no objections will allow him to wangle his way out of it.

The entire notion of destiny in these texts provides an interesting resonance with Franz Kafka's *The Trial*. *The Trial* provides the reader with an essentially nihilistic and definitively modernist, in some cases almost postmodern, view of agency, universality and ethics. Within this framework we are led to believe that there is no "greater purpose" behind Joseph K's tribulations, or, if there is, that the purpose is radically and completely inaccessible from the perspective of the protagonist. In Kafka's *The Trial* we are presented with a fairly similar call to journey but are confronted with a subject who constantly speaks of taking action but inevitably does not bring himself to enact any kind of positive agency. Joseph K, from the outset, views himself as the hero of his own life. He prizes his rationality and morals above all else and, once the trial commences, assures himself that these two unwavering compasses in

his personality will direct him out of this foreign wilderness within which he finds himself. As the narrative progresses. K's deep-seated existential angst is drawn more and more to the foreground. In essence Kafka is almost demonising destiny and reinforcing the idea of a rational subject thrown into turmoil by an inexorably irrational tide of circumstance: the status of "free subject" is ultimately denied. In many ways *The Trial* is a testament to Sartre's idea of existentialism: Joseph K is condemned to "freedom" and an existence in which his actions seem meaningless. Notably, once he is arrested he becomes doubly conscious of society's gaze, reinforcing the idea: "l'enfer c'est les autres" – that one is constantly and repetitively condemned by the judgement of others. The text ignores the fact that ultimately it is our choices that will lead us to 'salvation' – in this case free subjectivity – we are the only ones who can make the choice to live a meaningful existence.

Importantly, *The Trial,* generally seen as a *modernist* text highlights the rejection of mythology as a tool with which to apprehend the world. Further, the subject's being swept up in destiny is viewed as a one-way posit into dystopic existence – where action and inaction are one. The view of the world that is presented by K, as the subject being caught between several layers of what is clearly a corrupt system of justice, locates him within a liminal space of inaction (i.e. regardless of the action the subject chooses to take there are no ramifications in terms of the societal gaze). This space represents the subject being trapped within the dictates of a society that he feels has no purpose or base in rationality. This confining fence of entrapment (society) is repetitively emphasised throughout the narrative in a sophisticated way, as space is often characterised as vast and impressive and yet the air within these places is described as particularly oppressive. This dual image of space that is at the same time both open and oppressive reinforces the illusion of freedom that the text seeks to deconstruct. *The Trial* reiterates this paradoxical stagnation many times throughout the narrative – through the description of space, through the lack of finding anything useful from the past and facing an uncertain condemned future, as well as its views on community, which are particularly bleak, as showcased in the following exchange between Joseph K and a traveller, when they are discussing the people lined up in the court houses to make sure that their cases are progressing:

> 'As a rule they don't meet much,' said the traveller, 'it would be hardly possible, there are too many of them. Besides, they have few interests in common. Occasionally a group believes it has found a common interest, but soon finds out its mistake. Combined action against the Court is impossible. Each case is judged on its own merits, the Court is very conscientious about that, and so common action is out of the question…So there's no real community, people drift in and out of the lobbies together, but there's not much conversation. The

superstitious beliefs are an old tradition and simply hand themselves down.' 'I saw all the people in the lobby,' remarked K., 'and thought how pointless it was for them to be hanging about.' 'It's not pointless at all,' said the traveller, 'the only pointless thing is to try taking independent action. As I told you, I have five Advocates besides this one…' (Kafka 193-194).

The principles of this text are particularly fluid; in the above exchange alone the contradictions are evident. The traveller starts off by encapsulating the maxim: "every man dies alone", when referencing community and shared interest as things that are plausible and acted out but cannot truly exist. Myths and superstitions are on an equal par and are merely remnants of an older tradition that perpetuate themselves to no-one's advantage. In the traveller's first speaking turn, individualism is ratified as the sole base from which the court's judgement is issued. When K expresses his belief that their waiting is pointless, however, the traveller counters with "the only pointless thing is to try taking independent action" (194). This statement wholly contradicts the previous notion of complete individualism as the sole means of existence within society. Kafka uses the metaphor of the Court to represent the world and the Advocates as mentors within that world: they understand the process and try to aid 'the accused' as best they can within the given situation. This mirrors both Dumbledore and Belgarath's actions within the texts that we explore. The ultimate ideological shift between the texts we examine and *The Trial* is that instead of being "The Chosen One", Joseph K is "The Accused". K tries throughout the narrative to gain knowledge about the Court and its proceedings in order to help his case, but each time his unwaveringly stubborn reasoning does not allow him to contemplate the situation from any viewpoint but his own. It is rather his immovable agency that causes him to stagnate.

Kafka's commentary on agency and mythology is, however, double edged – particularly when one takes into account K's conversation with the priest in the penultimate chapter. Hitherto, mythology has been characterised as a useless resource in an effort to claim purpose or agency:

> 'The final decisions of the Court are never recorded, even the Judges can't get hold of them, consequently we have only legendary accounts of ancient cases. These legends certainly provide instances of acquittal; actually the majority of them are about acquittals, they can be believed, but they cannot be proved. All the same, they shouldn't be entirely left out of account, they must have an element of truth in them, and besides they are very beautiful. I myself have painted several pictures founded on such legends.' 'Mere legends cannot alter my opinion,' said K. 'and I fancy that one cannot appeal to such legends before the Court?' The painter laughed. 'No, one can't do that,' he said. 'Then there's no use talking about them,' said K (Kafka 171).

Here we have the overt dismissal of mythology as a reference point for any kind of navigation of the present. The irony lies in the fact that the answers to K's dilemma are presented to him in a parable from the 'scriptures' in his encounter with the priest – and the two things explicitly addressed are agency and destiny. The priest tells him of a man that one day wishes to know the Law, so he goes to the Court and finds a doorman guarding a door that is standing open. The man tries to enter, but the doorman refuses him access and tells him that he will not be permitted to go through the door at this time. He also says that there will come a point in the future when he will allow him to traverse the threshold and enter. So the man gets a stool and wastes his life away in front of the open door waiting to be allowed through. He asks the doorman many questions, but eventually on his deathbed asks the doorman "Everyone strives to attain the Law…how does it come about, then, that in all these years no one has come seeking admittance but me?"(Kafka 236-237). The doorman's reply is: "No one but you could gain admittance through this door, since this door was intended only for you. I am now going to shut it" (Kafka 237).

The subsequent conversation that takes place between the priest and K highlights the fact that his judgement stems only from reason. The significance of this piece of information is twofold in terms of the purpose of this thesis: the first is that this information is communicated in an essentially mythological medium and perhaps for that reason is ignored by K as having any kind of real resonance with his situation. The second is that it reinforces the element of choice in order to enact true agency. The man and the doorman are dependent on one another, neither can serve his purpose without the other present. The fable highlights the man's choice and willingness to remain in front of the open door without setting foot through it. The doorman comes to represent an almost intangible force that subjugates the subject into complacency. In *Harry Potter* and *The Belgariad*, however, it is the intangible force that infuses the subject with purpose in order to utilise and perform agency. The distinction is important because, on the one hand, we have a demonstration of the intangible force acting like a puppeteer who utilises the subject as a pawn, thus demonstrating the power he/she has over the subject; and on the other hand we have the intangible force imbuing the subject with power but allowing the subject to decide how that power will be utilised. This demonstrates the difference between Fate and Destiny and how our perception of the world, and ourselves, informs how we use or don't use the agency that we are granted.

The Purpose in *The Belgariad* explains, very clearly, to Garion what hangs in the balance; that should he fail, the world itself will no longer be the same. This entire exchange takes

place in Maragor, a haunted place, where the God Mara weeps and howls incessantly for the loss of his people. The Purpose is also able to reason with the Gods, as it came before, and contains the destiny of the world. The voice speaks to the shattered God Mara through Garion. The God is angered and he directs the full force of his mind at Garion:

> Then the mind within his mind responded. The power was so vast that the world itself was not large enough to contain it. It did not strike back at Mara, for that dreadful collision would have shattered the world, but it stood rather, calmly unmoved and immovable against the raging torrent of Mara's fury. For a fleeting moment, Garion shared the awareness of the mind within his mind, and shuddered back from its immensity. In that instant, he saw the birth of uncounted suns swirling in vast spirals against the velvet blackness of the void, their birth and gathering into galaxies and ponderously turning nebulae encompassing but a moment. And beyond that, he looked full into the face of time itself – seeing its beginning and its ending in one awful glimpse (MG 66).

This connection to The Purpose predictably fills Garion with purpose. It is not long after this encounter that Garion resurrects the colt in the cave of the Gods under the instruction of the cave itself. One of the mares is pregnant, and Garion and the others seek shelter in a cave that Garion knows is there, but cannot explain his knowledge of. The heavy door opens only at the touch of his palm and the mare goes into labour as soon as they get inside. Polgara and Durnik try and help the mare, the foal has to be turned, Garion is standing a way off when he hears that the mare will be alright, but the foal died under the strenuous circumstances.

> Garion began to gather his will.
> 'Don't do that, Garion,' Aunt Pol told him firmly. 'It isn't possible, and you'll hurt yourself if you try.'
> Garion was not listening to her. The cave itself was speaking to him too loudly for him to hear anything else. He focused his every thought on the wet, lifeless body of the foal. Then he stretched out his right hand and laid his palm on the unblemished, walnut-coloured shoulder of the dead animal. Before him there seemed to be a blank wall – black and higher than anything else in the world, impenetrable and silent beyond his comprehension. Tentatively he pushed at it, but it would not move. He drew in a deep breath and hurled himself entirely into the struggle.
> 'Live,' he said.
> 'Garion, stop.'
> 'Live,' he said again, throwing himself deeper into his effort against that blackness.
> 'It's too late now, Pol,' he heard Mister Wolf say from somewhere. 'He's already committed himself.'
> 'Live,' Garion repeated, and the surge he felt welling up out of him was so vast that it drained him utterly. The glowing walls flickered and then suddenly rang as if a bell had been struck somewhere deep inside the mountain. The sound shimmered, filling the air inside the domed chamber with a vibrant ringing. The light in the walls suddenly flared with a searing brightness, the chamber was as bright as noon.

> The little body under Garion's hand quivered, the colt drew in a deep,
> shuddering breath. Garion heard the others gasp as the sticklike little legs began
> to twitch. The colt inhaled again, and his eyes opened (MG 141-142).

This incident, is directly connected to Garion's first encounter with the monk. There he reacts purely on instinct, and it is only when he decides to finally undergo instruction to learn to control his ability that he is told by Belgarath that in order to cure the monk's madness, he had to fully understand that madness. Garion does this, seemingly without thinking about it. This fourth incident, where the cave of the Gods spurs him on, is obviously a confrontation with death. He is unafraid to try and traverse the "blank wall – black and higher than anything else in the world, impenetrable and silent beyond his comprehension" (MG 141). Garion seems to do that which Polgara herself deems impossible, thereby throwing the entire binary (of possible and impossible) into question again. It becomes even more apparent here that Garion is The Chosen One. What this highlights is that Garion is able to understand exceedingly complex issues without employing rational or logical thought consciously, and yet is flummoxed by unbelievably simple concepts that he tries to tackle through the goggles of his previously instilled ideological framework. He cannot, for a very long time, believe that Polgara and Belgarath are who they are, and yet with a subconsciously all-encompassing touch he can cure madness. This antagonism between his conscious and his subconscious is thrown into further turmoil by his strict moral code and Sendarian upbringing. What this extract, in conjunction with Garion's encounter with the dry voice in his head demonstrates is Garion's unknowing willingness to be used as a tool for the greater good.

What the voice in his head demonstrates or embodies is the inherent conscience within each human being, the readiness to do good which resides within each of us. It represents a complex web of cultural significance in terms of a modern context, as it can be read as either an ideological predisposition or pre-intended position determined by the dictates of the state or religion, in essence any ideological structure, or it can be seen as a metaphysical construct that ratifies the human striving or thirst for progress, and peace and other such generally hyperbolised notions. In terms of the texts as resonating with mythological narratives, however, the voice comes to represent a universal ethics that transcends worldly morality and ideology. Departing from this statement, we can conclude that the universal ethic (disguised in this text as the voice of the original awareness of the universe) cannot erase agency; it functions within the text as a guiding force that cannot predict the outcome of events, but merely guides the listener along a better path, and in that way it seems more like a conscience than a coercive agent of ideology. Therefore, one can conclude that it is more a benign

signpost toward a more meaningful existence than an actual moral compass that dictates the "right" versus the "wrong" path. This, moreover, renders the narrative more accessible in terms of varying cultural contexts as there is no prescribed, particular, religious undertone. At the core of this narrative is the basic struggle between an age-old binary of archetypes: Good and Evil. The universal morality that escapes ideology represents the willingness to understand and accept both Good and Evil as forces and enact agency for the greater good.

In *Harry Potter* we are also faced with this kind of battle. Harry, however, enters a space where he must learn to control his gift from the moment that he crosses the initial threshold from the known into the unknown. The space within which most of the narrative takes place is Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry, which places Harry's story within a revised British School Story trope. "As critic John Reed points out, in boys' school novels the school itself is as much a protagonist as the individual student, and the structure of these novels follows the progress of a boy from his anxious but excited arrival at the school to eventual triumphant but regretful leave-taking years later, after he has risen through the ranks to become a leader, a hero, and a protector of first years" (Steege 142). Hogwarts is first and foremost characterised as a haven:

> Harry had never imagined such a strange and splendid place. It was lit by thousands of candles that were floating in midair over four long tables, where the rest of the students were sitting. These tables were laid with glittering golden plates and goblets (SS 116).

The vision we have of Hogwarts is a place that emanates warmth and safety. It also shares several features with the genre of the British school story. What is most important however, is the actual education of the students. Harry learns spells in class that prove to save his life during later confrontations with Voldemort. Similarly, the fact that Hermione is in essence a bookworm and usually ready to give an answer in class proves to be their salvation on more than one occasion. What is valued here is not the ability to do magic but the aptitude the students present in using what they have learnt. What this highlights, as in the case of Garion, is that magic is something that must be controlled. David Steege argues that another feature of "many public school novels [is that] we are presented with a school that is largely a world all to itself, isolated from outside influences...[and that] the public school experience is often described...as one where the outside world is far less important that the microcosm of the institution. While at school, the outside world largely drops away and the hero can concentrate on his own exploits and development" (145). He goes on to state that "in Harry's case, the isolation of Hogwarts is especially important, for every moment he spends there is one less under the thumb of the Dursleys" (145). This proves that although the *Harry Potter*

series finds its roots within a well established set of conventions, it lends a rather special reading of these circumstances and advocates not division, but co-operation. Furthermore it re-emphasises the journey of identity consolidation within the framework of the outside world. Far from being, as David Steege has suggested, completely cut off from the outside world, Hogwarts whilst being identified as a microcosm of society is always preoccupied with the translation of knowledge into the real world. This is proven countless times throughout the narrative, culminating in the fifth book with direct infiltration by the Ministry of Magic itself, who instate a state-approved curriculum for Defence Against the Dark Arts that is wholly theoretical and will not help the students in the on-coming battle. Harry learns what he needs to know not only from his teachers, taking classes such as Transfiguration, Charms, History of Magic, Defence Against the Dark Arts and Potions, but also from different sources within the school itself. Harry benefits from Professor Lupin's teaching him to conjure a Patronus to scare away Dementors (horrible grim reaper look-a-likes that suck the happiness out of the air) and in return forms a group called 'Dumbledore's Army', in reaction to the Ministry's meddling, that allows the students to put into practice things that will save their lives. He manages to teach the other students magic that Lupin labelled as very difficult for a wizard his age. By naming the group "Dumbledore's Army", the students have also indicated that they have chosen a side in the larger scale battle. Dumbledore is the wizard that Voldemort always feared most and is, fittingly, Harry's mentor.

Hogwarts is not only a place where Harry can be out from under "the thumb of the Dursleys" (Steege 145); it is the place where Harry learns to be whole and feels as though he belongs. It is also the place that instils Harry, for better or worse, with purpose. Dumbledore contributes the hardest life lessons to Harry's education in magic and terms of self-discovery, the conversations that take place between these two characters, more often than not, have at their centre a valuable moral lesson. It is important to note that Dumbledore never directly preaches at Harry, but often provides illumination into events that Harry largely only sees the significance of much later in the narrative. Dumbledore's most important function in the narrative is to provide Harry with a guided tour of Voldemort's past – which takes place largely in the penultimate book of the series, *The Half Blood Prince*. Dumbledore reiterates the importance of getting to know Voldemort, not to discover how he is now, but to uncover the reason he became what he is. This course of action re-emphasises the importance of the complete identification of the shadow self. Harry has to glean intimate knowledge concerning Voldemort in order to understand himself and the choices that he makes from a neutral perspective. It is here in one of their sessions that Harry finally comes to understand

Dumbledore's previous statement that "It is our choices... that show what we truly are, far more than our abilities" (CS 333). The narrative here once again foregrounds choice, reiterating that the subject is not merely a pawn on a giant chess board but controls each manoeuvre that he performs.

> 'But, sir,' said Harry, making valiant efforts not to sound argumentative, 'it all comes down to the same thing, doesn't it? I've got to try and kill him, or–'
> 'Got to?' said Dumbledore. 'Of course you've got to! But not because of the prophecy! Because you, yourself, will never rest until you've tried! We both know it! Imagine, please, for a moment that you never heard that prophecy! How would you feel about Voldemort now? Think!'
> Harry watched Dumbledore striding up and down in front of him, and thought. He thought of his mother, his father and Sirius. He thought of Cedric Diggory. He thought of all the terrible deeds he knew Lord Voldemort had done. A flame seemed to leap inside his chest, searing his throat.
> 'I'd want him finished,' said Harry quietly. 'And I'd want to do it.'
> 'Of course you would!' cried Dumbledore. 'You see, the prophecy does not mean that you *have* to do anything! But the prophecy caused Lord Voldemort to *mark you as his equal*...in other words, you are free to choose your way, quite free to turn your back on the prophecy! But Voldemort continues to set store by the prophecy. He will continue to hunt you...which makes it certain, really, that –'
> 'That one of us is going to end up killing the other,' said Harry. 'Yes.'
> (HBP 478-479)

This instance is the first clear moment of illumination for Harry; it is the instant when he for the first time understands what Dumbledore has been teaching him from the beginning:

> 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... that there was all the difference in the world (HBP 479).

This means that the emphasis now falls, not on what Voldemort wants, but what Harry chooses to do in reaction to Voldemort. Making the decision to live out the destiny that he has now sanctioned as his own is Harry's way of walking into the arena with his head held high. The journey that lies ahead has interesting metaphorical implications as well. Harry and Dumbledore have now come to the conclusion that Voldemort has been making Horcruxes. A horcrux is "an object in which a person has concealed part of their soul" (HBP 464); one can only make a horcrux by committing an act of evil, through killing someone, when one's soul is split and the person who commits the crime can do an enchantment to encase the torn portion of their soul in any object that they desire. It transpires that Voldemort has made seven horcruxes, which accounts for his inhuman appearance as well as his 'soulless' perception of the world. What also transpires is that the driving force for all of the mayhem and ruin that Voldemort has left in his wake has little to do with power and everything to do

with fear of death. Harry already at this stage demonstrates a strength that Voldemort doesn't have by deciding to walk into the arena of his own accord, where Voldemort ensured that he would be dragged into the arena by acting on the fear he felt upon first hearing the prophecy.

Both heroes' transitory space is within themselves. They are caught between what they think they are and what they actually are, and should become. The belly of the whale in this case is signified by their being swallowed by their untapped, uncontrolled potential and destiny. Garion properly crosses the first threshold and enters the belly of the whale the moment that he allows Belgarath to start instructing him in the ways of the Will and the Word, as Harry does the moment that he starts to unravel the truth about Voldemort with Dumbledore as guide. Having passed the emotional gargoyles that impeded his path toward his true self, the hero's acceptance of his mentor's assistance with this 'other' that is encased within himself; with this other "facet" of his identity, is but the first step along this road of self-discovery. What he does not yet realise is that by taking this step, by agreeing to undergo these trials, he is in effect rendering himself whole, step by step. Thus, the hero's undertaking of instruction is a constructive step towards self-realisation. He is looking something that terrifies him in the eye and is willing to take steps to master and control it. This does not however mean that he is completely willing to annihilate his ego in order to undergo reconstruction from a completely objective blank perspective; what it does mean is that he is willing to face certain facts about himself that do not lock into his personality as he perceives it at this point, and that he is going to endeavour to reconcile this "new" reality with the previously given notion of his identity. This in terms of Jungian myth criticism denotes the path of the construction of the self, which is viewed as "the central archetype, that of the fulfilment and potential and the integration of personality. Frequently symbolised by a mandala or magic circle, it is the psychic totality towards which all human life moves. Indeed, we may infer that the very journey from ego to self is circular, involving descent into the darkness of shadow and ascent towards the light of the self" (Coupe 141).

Garion, much like Harry, gains knowledge not only from his mentor Belgarath, but also from the rest of his company. At the point of accepting Belgarath's tutelage he has not quite reconciled himself to the fact that he is "Belgarion", but he has realised that he cannot ignore this part of himself any longer, for fear that he will become the monster that he initially thought he was. It is the fourth incident of unrestrained use of the Will and the Word, discussed above, namely the bringing of the colt back to life, that instigates this willingness to learn. That deed served as Garion's atonement for what he did to Chamdar and opened the

gateway to understanding the magnitude of what he is in fact ignoring. It is as though the blinkers fall away and, as opposed to seeing that which is new and strange as evil, he is able to compute it in terms of its complexity. This is a standard motif in these kinds of narratives: the crossing of the first threshold deposits the hero into

> a dream landscape of curiously fluid, ambiguous forms, where he must survive a succession of trials…The hero is covertly aided by the advice, amulets, and secret agents of the supernatural helper whom he met before his entrance into this region. Or it may be that he here discovers for the first time that there is a benign power everywhere supporting his superhuman passage (Campbell, 97).

In Garion's case, the benign power is always present, and he is aware of its existence but rejects it. The cause of this rejection is the fact that above all else his entire set of trials is occurring within his subconscious, in the fluid landscape of his mind. He struggles as a young boy of fifteen to understand what is happening to him, where these dark shadows fit in to the light spectrum that makes up his identity. Significantly, his elementary acquisition of control transpires in the Vale of Aldur, named after the god whom Belgarath serves. The Vale of Aldur is where Garion's ancestors originated: in a sense it is his homeland, the centre of his real identity (coupled with Riva), in a mystical, spiritual sense, this place is the World Navel. It is here that Garion and Belgarath converse so that Garion can gain a better understanding of the talent he possesses: he learns that each person depending on complexity of mind, has access to different facets of what is more commonly known as sorcery. That while all people have the potential, only few tap into it, and those who do, depending on the workings of their mind, excel in different fields. He is here again set apart; his power exceeds that of many people who have been practising the talent for years – but so it was destined. It is here revealed that Garion has a simple understanding of exceedingly complex things, such as madness and death; and yet, once again, as he employs reason, he learns that trying to control something is infinitely more difficult that just allowing it to instinctually happen, as he has been doing up until this point. Garion decides one morning to go and try to move the rock that Aldur forced Belgarath to move in order for him to realise his potential; naturally, being Sendarian, Garion first tries to move the large rock with brute strength alone:

> Each time he'd done something with his mind before, it had been on impulse, a response to some crisis. He had never sat down and deliberately worked himself up to it. He discovered almost at once that the entire set of circumstances was completely different. The whole world seemed suddenly filled with distractions. Birds sang. A breeze brushed his face. An ant crawled across his hand. Each time he began to bring his will to bear, something pulled his attention away. There was a certain feeling to it, he knew that, a tightness in the back of his head and a sort of pushing out with his forehead. He closed his eyes, that seemed to help. It was coming. It was slow, but he felt the will begin to build in him.

Remembering something, he reached inside his tunic and put the mark on his palm against the amulet. The force within him, amplified by that touch, built to a great roaring crescendo. He kept his eyes closed and stood up. Then he opened his eyes and looked hard at the stubborn white rock. 'You *will* move,' he muttered. He kept his right hand on the amulet and held out his left, palm up (MG 187-189).

What this extract expresses is the struggle between reacting in a certain way in the heat of the moment, and actually consciously deciding to take a specific course of action. It showcases the difficulty of accepting responsibility for a decision that is thought through, as opposed to a momentary reaction. The reality of the exhaustion that is experienced to use intellect as opposed to brute force is also unravelled in this particular extract, as Garion's mental exertion is more taxing than his physical exertion. The entire metaphor of the Will and the Word comes to signify not only the cohesive nature of a self, but also the multifaceted nature of human interaction with the world. What is reflected is that sorcery is not the easy option; it is just as draining as manually completing a task, and is merely an alternative means to an end. The general consensus throughout the narrative is for trial and error: the first attempt during any situation, for most of the characters, is "normal" means, ie non-supernatural rectification; only when that reserve crumbles do they then call on a less conventional approach. For Garion, who grew up on a farm, exerting himself physically, and not knowing what he is capable of, or who he is, the entire idea of doing something that does not, initially, seem to have any kind of rules in terms of the "real" physical world, the nasty surprise of finding himself body-deep in the meadow, is completely unexpected. Of course, logically, in terms of physics, it would follow that he would sink, as he pushed against something without pushing back against himself. He soon begins to learn that this alternative method of doing things is more closely tied to the things that he does know than it is foreign.

The second significant occurrence in the Vale is that Garion meets Aldur; what is vital about this incident is that it takes place *after* Garion has grudgingly, or at least partially, accepted the fact that he is indeed Belgarion. What brings about this change is that Garion starts to use his reasoning in a logical way for the first time, pertaining to the conundrum that he thinks he's in:

The strange thrill he always felt at the sound of his other, secret name ran through Garion. 'Why do you all insist on calling me that?' he asked.
'Belgarion?' Wolf said mildly. 'Think, boy. Think what it means. I haven't been talking to you and telling stories all these years just because I like the sound of my own voice.'
Garion turned it over carefully in his mind. 'You were Garath,' he mused thoughtfully, 'but the God Aldur changed your name to Belgarath. Zedar was Zedar first and then Belzedar–and then he went back to being Zedar again.'

> 'And in my old tribe, Polgara would just have been Gara. Pol is like Bel. The
> only difference is that she's a woman. Her name comes from mine– because
> she's my daughter. Your name comes from mine, too.'
> 'Garion–Garath,' the boy said. 'Belgarath– Belgarion. It all fits together, doesn't
> it?'
> 'Naturally,' the old man replied. 'I'm glad you noticed it.'
> Garion grinned at him. Then a thought occurred. 'But I'm not really Belgarion
> yet, am I?'
> 'Not entirely. You still have a way to go.'
> 'I suppose I'd better get started then.' Garion said with a certain ruefulness.
> 'Since I don't really have any choice.'
> 'Somehow I knew that eventually you'd come around,' Mister Wolf said (MG
> 174-175).

We see here that Garion does not undertake his inclusion or evolution into Belgarion in his stride, but rather submits with muted, half-hearted defiance into accepting his responsibility in terms of his destiny; this is the commencement of the making of a hero. Garion is in the process of learning to put his own wants, needs, and insecurities aside in order to do what is necessary. He realises that he doesn't have to like it, but that it is a fact of life. The meeting with Aldur, however, pushes his conviction into an entirely different direction.

> 'Hail, Belgarion,' Aldur said gravely.
> 'Master,' Garion replied. He dropped to one knee, not really knowing why.
> 'We have awaited thy coming since time's beginning. Thou art the vessel of all
> our hopes.' Aldur raised his hand. 'My blessing, Belgarion. I am well pleased
> with thee.'
> Garion's entire being was suffused with love and gratitude as the warmth of
> Aldur's benediction filled him (MG 180-181).

It is as though for the first time Garion realises that there is a point to what he has been asked to do; that he truly belongs somewhere and that ultimately it is up to him to salvage the "normalcy" that he holds so dear, but cannot really take part in. It is important to note that he has experienced the world as a "nobody", and thus fully understands that his undertaking is important in terms of rectifying certain wrongs and generally putting a stop to certain malevolent and corrupting forces. His slow acceptance of himself as Belgarion punctuates the narrative that follows, as he begins to realise that his existence and his quest are exceedingly important to the welfare of life as he knows it. He still, however, has not come to complete terms with what he is involved in, and this is reflected in small narrative choices, such as his never referring to Aunt Pol as Polgara, or to Belgarath by his real name, instead he is Mister Wolf or grandfather. What this showcases is the complexity of the psyche; somewhere in the deep recesses of Garion's mind he has come to the conclusion that he is Belgarion, and made peace with the fact, though within that same subconscious there is the nagging thought "Why

me? I'm nobody" – and the answer that it is his destiny seems almost too simple. On a conscious level he has tentatively conceded that he is on the way to becoming Belgarion, but that it will be mean work, and since he has no choice he will *have* to undertake the venture: But by consciously denying the identities of the two most important people in his life, he does himself a disservice. It connotes that perhaps if he does not concede to their roles in this entire set of incidents, perhaps it is not true.

Interestingly, however, Relg, an Ulgo zealot, calls him Belgarion and he does not object, as that is how UL introduced him. This is the first time within the narrative that a character has not known Garion as anyone other than Belgarion. UL is the father of the Gods, and Garion's meeting with him only reaffirms his urgent need to come to terms with who he is to right the world, as UL echoes Aldur's blessing and calls him "Aldur's gift to the world" (MG 281). Garion's not objecting to being known as Belgarion underscores the subconscious shift that is taking place.

One could argue that it is the constant reference to himself as Belgarion, his true name, that mediates his slow easing into the truth of who and what he is. The next narrative instance of note is in the fourth novel, *Castle of Wizardry*, where Garion is put in charge of the group, as Aunt Pol is busy protecting Eriond (a little boy, who incidentally at this point, is the only one who can touch the orb), and Belgarath is quite weary from his fight with Ctuchik, a dark wizard who sought the orb for himself. Parenthetically, Ctuchik destroyed himself when he saw that Belgarion was going to accept the orb as Eriond offered it to him. A thousand year old sorcerer, in one terrifying moment, forgot the cardinal rule of sorcery: that you cannot unmake things, i.e. you cannot will something out of existence. He panicked, knowing that once Belgarion touched the orb it would wake Torak, so he tried to will the orb out of existence, and instead he lost his own. Belgarath was standing next to him at the time, and the sheer force of Ctuchik's being blasted out of existence rendered him incapacitated. Garion is then the obvious choice for leader of the group, as he is the only one who can protect them from Grolim attack. These dark wizards also use their wills to attack, but being cowardly, perform their magic from quite a distance: as anyone ordinary has no chance of defending themselves, what must ensue is a battle of wills. Why this particular incident is noteworthy is because Garion is at this point still only learning to control his ability, but it is also demonstrated that he readily accepts, without question, at this point in the narrative, the instruction of the awareness within his mind. This is another indication of Garion's slow acceptance "Belgarion" from his subconscious to his conscious mind.

The dialogue that precedes Garion's first encounter with the grolims is ironic:

> Durnik nodded, 'It's always best in the long run to be what you are. It isn't proper to behave as if you were more, but it isn't good to behave as if you were less, either. Do you understand what I'm trying to say?'
> 'The whole problem seems to be finding out just exactly *what* you really are,' Garion observed (COW 60).

This exchange is ironic because, barely a page later, Garion, with the help of the awareness, is facing the grolims as a shadow, and when asked *who* he is, thunders: "I am Belgarion. Leave my friends alone" (COW 62). What this utterance expresses is that there is no shade of doubt or inner turmoil; it expresses a truth and a commanding air, as Garion steps into the reality of 'Belgarion', who is not, as Garion thought before, a destructive force, but a just force. It is in this encounter that Belgarion learns that, through control, he can employ his will without doing permanent damage to anyone or anything, least of all his own conscience. This idea resonates with the image of "going into the breach", where Aunt Pol and Belgarath are powerless to help him, and he must stand alone; this is also an echo of what is to come. It is also here that Garion starts to process the idea of doing that which is necessary in terms of the common and greater good. He needed to threaten the grolims, or they would have killed his friends. The fact that they now fear him and think he is powerful, bloodthirsty and deadly serious does not disturb him, as it would have a few chapters earlier on in the narrative. This is due to the fact that Garion is also gaining the scope to understand the importance of the journey that he has unwittingly undertaken.

A great milestone in the narrative is when Garion meets his cousin, Adara in Algaria. He has never had any real family, and the two become inseparable, as Adara shows Garion the kingdom. It is a turning point for Garion, because one day during one of their many, lengthy discussions, Adara is very sad, and Garion makes her a flower.

> It wasn't really much of a flower. It was a kind of pale lavender colour, and it was distinctly lopsided. It was quite small, and its petals were not very firmly attached. Its fragrance, however, was sweet with all the promise of summer. Garion felt very strange as he wordlessly handed the flower to his cousin. The sound of it had not been that rushing noise he'd always associated with sorcery, but rather was very much like the bell he's heard in the glowing cave when he's given life to the colt. And when he had begun to focus his will, he has not drawn anything from his surroundings. It had all come from within him, and there had been a deep and peculiar joy in it (COW 123-124).

This is a formative moment, because this is the first time that Garion encounters the beauty of the will and the word; it adds another facet to this "Belgarion" creature that he has hitherto

perceived as his shadow, a threat. It is light, and beautiful and also exceedingly necessary, in order for Garion to perceive the full spectrum of his identity.

Harry does not receive this kind of textual moment, a quiet antithesis to all of the gloom and shadow that dominates the text; instead there is constant reassurance that he is a good man and surrounded by things and people worth fighting for. To Harry, The Weasleys represent what he never had – a family – and they treat him like their own son. The more that he thinks about Voldemort's intentions for the world, the more he cannot allow Voldemort to succeed. This stems not from a sense of vengeance, but from a need to sanctify the past and save the future. Harry, like Garion, has lived in the world as a nonentity, he understands what the world is and has now only found his place in it; to have this place, and by extension the rest of the world, threatened by someone like Voldemort who actually only cares for himself is more than Harry can bear. After hearing about the horcuxes, Harry realises that the only way to defeat Voldemort is to destroy all seven of the horcruxes and then, lastly the bit of soul left in Voldemort's body. Dumbledore, having guided him through Voldemort's past, and Harry, are then able to identify which objects Voldemort would most likely encase parts of his precious soul in. They come up with five: The Diary, Helga Hufflepuff's Cup, Nagini (Voldemort's pet snake), Salazar Slytherin's locket and ring. As for the diary, Harry destroyed it in the second book without the knowledge of what it really was, and Dumbledore destroyed the ring. There are three left that they know of, so they proceed from there. Dumbledore, knowing that Harry will have to complete this mission on his own, takes Harry along with him to find the next horcrux, which he has a strong suspicion is hidden in a cave where Voldemort harassed other children in his youth. It is this instance in the narrative that brings Harry and Dumbledore's relationship full circle. Hermione is terrified that Harry will get hurt and he replies "I'll be fine, I'll be with Dumbledore" (HBP 516). Dumbledore has always been Harry's safeguard up until this point; it is repeated again and again throughout the text that no harm will come to Harry while Dumbledore is around – it has sort of become a universal truth within the narrative – therefore, Harry surmising that being with Dumbledore translates into safety makes all the sense in the world. However, they find the cave and the horcrux is hidden under a green potion that must be drunk in order to get rid of it. Dumbledore reasons that Harry is more important than he is to the world and drinks it; eventually they make it out of the cave and Harry, supporting Dumbledore who is severely weakened by the potion, reassures him that he will get them back to Hogwarts. Dumbledore replies: "I am not worried, Harry...I am with you" (HBP 540). Shortly after this, Dumbledore dies, the reader is left with the sense that Dumbledore believes Harry is now ready to take responsibility for his path and that Harry

was always going to rely on Dumbledore to dictate his decisions; therefore his death is a necessary part of Harry's journey. Dumbledore leads Harry in the right direction and now it is up to him to complete the mission. This is a burden that he willingly takes up, for he is "Dumbledore's man through and through" (HBP 605).

Both our heroes at this point are left with a sense of purpose as well as a semblance of unity within themselves. Garion has seen the light side of Belgarion and Harry, although mentor-less, has even more reason to go on and live out his destiny. Harry and Garion have both realised, through the course of encountering their shadow selves, that it is not that you have power, but how you use it. In the end it all comes down to choice and what is important. As Dumbledore says to the whole school at the end of *Goblet of Fire* after Cedric Diggory is murdered, "Remember, if the time should come when you have to make a choice between what is right and what is easy, remember what happened to a boy who was good, and kind, and brave, because he strayed across the path of Lord Voldemort. Remember Cedric Diggory" (724). Cedric Diggory, in this case, signifies everything that both Garion and Harry will eventually come to fight for. These events bring our heroes to the brink of acceptance of their true selves and their fates; what remains to be seen is how these heroes reconcile their shadows with themselves and how they manage to translate what they have learnt about themselves into the tools that will aid them in the final battle for the good of the world.

Chapter 5 – Acceptance: The First Step to World Recovery: Culmination

Mythology and by extension these fantasy narratives present us with a hyperbolised utopic view of complete identity integration and the enactment of agency that would take place once this complete identity is realised.

> [It] is clear that Jungians value the study of mythology primarily as a means of furthering individuation. In individuation the individual integrates, at least to some degree, the inner world of split-off personalities based on unconscious identifications, withdraws projections, and realises to some extent the archetypes of the Self, the foundation for the secure sense of self-identity. Individuation is the ultimate goal of human life, although Jungians are quick to admit that it is rare for anyone to realize it completely (Walker 33).

What in fact happens within these narratives is that the protagonist reconciles all aspects of his personality to his best ability, much as the reader does in everyday life. What sets these narratives apart from the readership is the eventual surpassing of binaries that allows the subject to fully act as an agent of change. Jung himself stated: "No one stands beyond good and evil, otherwise he would be out of this world. Life is a continual balancing of opposites, like any other energetic process. The abolition of opposites would be equivalent to death" (Quoted in Walker 40). Achieving complete agency within this framework then becomes a rejection of both the known: sanctioned dictates of society and what is perceived as "reality"; and rejection of the unknown: anything perceived as Other or impossible. Both these should melt into one, carry the same value and therefore achieve equilibrium. It is here that we see myth and fantasy overlap as genres, but it highlights why fantasy as a repository of myth is relevant to the subject of today. The protagonist, in myth, represents a utopic and impossible reconciliation of a dialectical process; this ontological state renders myth almost obsolete in its ability to deliver commentary on current contexts. For if it is impossible to transcend the conflicts of everyday existence, what is the point of having a hero who can? The key to the relevance and popularity of these texts is the same as the hero's key to defeating the shadow self– it is the protagonist's humanity, believability and status as Every Man. The texts do not present us with an over-eager demi-god that blunders through a utopian wilderness hell-bent on vanquishing a great distillation of pure evil: instead, these texts represent us with a completely recognisable space and hero, thus rendering the "utopia" achieved at the end of the text attainable. The hero integrates himself and the space to the best of his ability, which is

something that we all try to achieve in our lives. Thus these texts present us with the interdependent relationship of agency, ethics and teleological drive.

Achieving a "whole" self is the result of treacherous trials with the shadow; it encompasses acknowledgement of dark as well as light within oneself, and the recognition that ultimately it is the choices that we make that dictate which parts of our personality we access. The previous section tracked the hero's initial encounter with the shadow self and the subsequent slow process of integration and understanding. Now we turn to the final moment of reconciliation of the self and the impact of choices on the type of agency that the hero can then enact. This is embodied in the hero's "dying" to the world.

The final moment, in terms of Garion's subconscious trials, as he becomes Belgarion, occurs, quite fittingly, in Riva. This momentous shift occurs in two phases. The first is at the baths:

> Dreamily [Garion] lay back, and then, not knowing why, he allowed himself to sink beneath the dark, steaming surface. How long he floated, eyes closed and all sense suspended, he could not have said, but finally his face rose to the surface and he stood up, the water streaming out of his hair and across his shoulders. He felt strangely purified by his immersion. And then the sun broke through the tattered cloud outside for a moment, and a single shaft of sunlight streamed down through the small grilled window to fall fully upon Garion. The sudden light was diffused by the steam and seemed to flicker with an opalescent fire. *'Hail Belgarion,'* the voice in his mind said to him. *'I greet thee on this Erastide.'* There was no hint of the usual amusement in the voice, and the formality seemed strange, significant.
> *'Thank you,'* Garion replied gravely, and they did not speak again
> (COW 187).

This moment serves as an unconscious and literal self-baptism. This is also the day that the orb will be returned to the pommel of Riva's sword. The significance is twofold: Garion makes peace with "Belgarion", and the reader by this time is certain that Belgarion is the new and rightful Rivan king. The symbolism as well as the language in this extract all point to a kind of holy transcendental moment: Garion is naked, he is at the beginning of a definitive journey. He is reborn, with the use of words such as "immersion", "purified" and the image of the sun breaking through the clouds as a form of literal and figurative illumination. This moment is preparation for the utterance: "All hail Belgarion, King of Riva and Overlord of the West!" (COW 194). I say that it is aporic because Garion has entered a space that is unknown to himself, it is as if he has pierced the unfathomable real and within that womb-like space been given knowledge, knowledge that even he does not understand. This acceptance of identity is shrouded in a curtain that obscures the truth; again, we can call this curtain "*logos*" in this context. Garion's divide between *logos* and experience, consciousness and world is the

gap that he needs to be overcome in order to fulfil his destiny. This is the true purpose of myth and fantasy: to reconcile reason with more abstract concepts such as love and universality. As mentioned when discussing The Will and The Word, the ultimate balance lies between the two: reason and experience or what we believe to be impossible. Garion is aware that he has a great role in the events that are to unfold, but is still uncertain as to what exactly that role entails. This is demonstrated in phase two of this great shift in Garion's reality; as Garion enters the hall for the ceremony to return the orb to its original dwelling place, a change takes place:

> The little boy crowed with delight, turned, and presented the glowing Orb to Garion. Uncomprehending, Garion stared at the fiery stone. He could not take it. It was death to touch the orb.
> *'Reach forth thy hand, Belgarion, and receive thy birthright from the child who hath borne it unto thee.'* It was the familiar voice, and yet at the same time it was not. When *this* voice spoke, there was no possibility of refusal. Garion's hand stretched out without his even being aware that it was moving.
> 'Errand!' the child declared, firmly depositing the Orb in Garion's outstretched hand. Garion felt the peculiar, seething touch of it against the mark on his palm. It was alive! He could feel the life in it, even as he stared in blank incomprehension at the living fire he held in his naked hand
> (COW 192-193).

Here in this moment, all that was revealed in the baths is reiterated: there is an overarching theme of uncertainty evident in the repetition of "uncomprehending", "incomprehensive" and "without his even being aware". He is clearly prepared to fulfil his role, even though he is unable to recognize exactly what it is. The image "the living fire he held in his naked hand" is another variation of purification and new beginnings; again he is naked, stripped of his previous identity with only the mark on his hand as a signifier, something that has always been a part of him but has only recently been brought to his attention. The most interesting dimension of this extract is the way in which the dry voice is described as a "familiar voice, and yet at the same time it was not". In many ways this is a great metaphor for Garion's transition into Belgarion; in essence he is the same person, and yet not, also as Belgarion he is King of Riva and Overlord of the West, so his voice is the same, but has far-reaching power and authority, which is something he never had as Garion the scullery boy. This voice is what gives Garion the power to be able to vanquish Torak in the final battle.

Harry, on the other hand, still has a long road ahead of him. He has decided to undergo the trials of finding and destroying the remaining Horcruxes, but he is still not completely comfortable with the connection between Voldemort and himself. The seventh book that

chronicles the last stages of Harry's journey is full of textual instances where Harry comes to realise that the connection between them is something that he can use:

> 'Harry, you aren't supposed to let this happen any more!' Hermione cried, her voice echoing through the bathroom. 'Dumbledore wanted you to use Occlumency! He thought the connection was dangerous– Voldemort can *use* it, Harry! What good is it to watch him kill and torture, how can it help?'
> 'Because it means I know what he's doing,' said Harry.
> 'So you're not even going to *try* to shut him out?'
> 'Hermione, I can't. You know I'm lousy at Occlumency, I never got the hang of it.'
> 'You never really tried!' she said hotly. 'I don't get it, Harry–do you *like* having this special connection or relationship or whatever–'
> She faltered under the look her gave her as he stood up.
> 'Like it?' he said quietly. 'Would *you* like it?'
> 'I–no–I'm sorry, Harry, I didn't mean–'
> 'I hate it, I hate the fact that he can get inside me, that I have to watch him when he's most dangerous. But I'm going to use it.'
> 'Dumbledore–'
> 'Forget Dumbledore. This is my choice, nobody else's…' (DH 192-193).

As stated previously, Dumbledore's death is a necessary event within the text because it forces Harry to rely on himself for answers and not merely seek them out from his mentor. In this extract we are made to realise that Harry is finally stepping up and taking responsibility for his mission on his own terms. The road that Dumbledore put him on is not as clear-cut as it seems and Harry wonders for much of the text why Dumbledore left him so ill-equipped to deal with what lies ahead. The reason for Dumbledore's evasiveness becomes apparent later on in the text. In *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* Harry and his friends are made aware of a folk tale called "The Tale of the Three Brothers": it tells of three brothers who meet Death one morning and he cunningly bestows on them three gifts of their own choosing. The first brother asks for a powerful wand, the second for a stone that can call people back from the dead; and the last brother being wary of Death asks for something that will enable him to travel from place to place without being followed by death. The first brother with the unbeatable wand walks around and boasts about it, resulting in his own death by the hand of another who sought the wand for himself. The second brother uses the stone to call back his true love who died at a young age, but he gains no comfort from her presence as she is forced to live a half life. The last brother wore the cloak his whole life and "when he had attained a great age [he] finally took off the Cloak of Invisibility and gave it to his son. And then he greeted Death as an old friend, and went with him gladly, and, equals, they departed this life" (DH 332). These three objects are known as the Deathly Hallows. It transpires that Harry's cloak of invisibility that Dumbledore returned to him in the first book is the cloak from this fairytale. He starts to realise that he has to make another choice: Hallows or Horcruxes. He

knows that the final encounter between himself and Voldemort must end in death; so he has to decide whether he will hunt the two remaining Hallows (for it is said that he who possesses all three will become the master of death) or whether he should stick to his mission and deliver the world from Voldemort. Harry figures out that Dumbledore had the Elder Wand from the fairytale. He therefore knows where two of the Hallows are; but he cannot bring himself to desecrate Dumbledore's tomb, nor can he see that finding them makes any difference at this stage. Voldemort is getting stronger; he has taken over the Ministry of Magic and before long the whole world will be overrun by his rule. Choice is highlighted here again; Harry has to choose between what is right and what is easy. In essence he has to decide whether he, himself, or ridding the world of Voldemort, is more important. He chooses the Horcruxes.

> Harry understood, and yet did not understand. His instinct was telling him one thing, his brain quite another. The Dumbledore in Harry's head smiled, surveying Harry over the tips of his fingers, pressed together as if in prayer.
> *You gave Ron the Deluminator. You understood him...you gave him a way back...*
> *And you understood Wormtail too...you knew there was a bit of regret there, somewhere...*
> *And if you knew them...what did you know about me, Dumbledore?*
> *Am I meant to know, but not to seek? Did you know how hard I'd find that? Is that why you made it this difficult? So I'd have time to work that out?*
> (DH 391).

This extract showcases the tumult within Harry. On the one hand self-preservation is screaming that the Hallows are the way to go; but he knows that the Horcruxes should be his first priority. This moment is in essence what makes Harry "worthy" of his destiny, it signifies a coming of age and acceptance of responsibility. He has chosen to run the course of the path that he set out on and fully assume his symbolic role as his own even though it was imposed from the outside, as Voldemort cast him in it. Although he is afraid of death and there are measures he can take to make him feel more secure about it, he chooses to complete the mission that he and Dumbledore would have set out on. Rightfully, he is angry that Dumbledore never explained these things to him properly, but again, the hero must navigate the last part of the journey alone; and it is only when Harry gleans information from Snape's memory that he truly understands his part in this grand narrative:

> Finally, the truth. Lying with his face pressed into the dusty carpet of the office where he had once thought he was learning the secrets of victory, Harry understood at last that he was not supposed to survive. His job was to walk calmly into Death's welcoming arms. Along the way, he was to dispose of Voldemort's remaining links to life, so that when at last he flung himself across Voldemort's path, and did not raise a wand to defend himself, the end would be

clean, and the job that ought to have been done in Godric's Hollow would be finished: neither would live, neither could survive (DH 554).

Armed with this information, Harry walks to the edge of the Forbidden Forest, ready to face his death. Upon Dumbledore's death, he bequeathed Harry with a snitch (a golden ball that when caught ends a Quidditch match). The symbolism of this inheritance has several resonances: In one way, Harry is the snitch that has to be caught for the game to end, just as Garion is the stone thrown in the path of one set of prophecy. In another, the snitch literally symbolises death; snitches have what is called flesh memory, the touch of the first person to catch it from then on is always recognised by the snitch. Harry, receiving this obscure gift from Dumbledore, reasons that he must have placed something inside it. Throughout the narrative Harry tries to coax the snitch into yielding its contents, but it never obliges; there is only a strange inscription on it that reads: "*I open at the close*" (DH 113). After the above quoted moment, Harry realises what the snitch's inscription means. He holds it up to his mouth and utters the words "I am about to die". The snitch then opens revealing the Resurrection Stone: the second Hallow. Harry realises that the purpose of the stone is not to use it to force others to return from the peace that they have known in death; that "it did not matter about bringing them back, for he was about to join them. He was not really fetching them: they were fetching him" (DH 560). His mother and father, Lupin and Sirius appear at his side to give him the strength to go on and do what must be done. This reiterates the importance of family within these texts and also Harry's graduation from the naïve young boy who asked Sir Nicholas (one of the school ghosts) about Sirius and why he didn't come back as a ghost; to a young man that realises that nothing can defy the laws of nature and that there are worse things than death. This is the key to Voldemort's demise death to him is a symptom of the disease of humanity. Harry conquers death, which is a feat that Voldemort could never dream of achieving. Harry walks into the clearing where Voldemort is waiting and does not raise his wand to defend himself. Voldemort kills him.

The scene in which Harry finally puts the part of Voldemort that resides in him to rest occurs immediately after his "death"; a forceful metaphor for the feat that the hero must accomplish. He finds himself lying on a cold white surface, like Garion he is naked; stripped of his former identity:

> He sat up. His body appeared unscathed. He touched his face. He was not wearing glasses any more.
> Then a noise reached him through the unformed nothingness that surrounded him: the small, soft thumpings of something that flapped, flailed and struggled. It was a pitiful noise, yet also slightly indecent. He had the uncomfortable feeling that he was eavesdropping on something furtive, shameful.

For the first time, he wished he were clothed (DH 565).

It is interesting that Harry is comfortable with his nakedness up until he hears the sound penetrating the fog that forces him to cover up. His reaction to the noise mirrors the ambivalent feelings that he has toward Voldemort: he pities the thing, but he also finds it "slightly indecent". The image that he is 'eavesdropping on something furtive, shameful' conveys one's general feeling towards the shadow self. One would find these impulses that one represses shameful and something that does not fit in to the rest of one's character as it has been constructed. The impulse to clothe himself even though he is aware that he is perfectly alone, reiterates the shame that he feels within this "unknown" fog. He becomes curious about the origin of the noise and soon finds himself face to face with it:

> It had the form of a small, naked child, curled on the ground, its skin raw and rough, flayed-looking, and it lay shuddering under a seat where it had been left, unwanted, stuffed out of sight, struggling for breath.
> He was afraid of it. Small and fragile and wounded though it was, he did not want to approach it (DH 566).

His curiosity once again mirrors the hero's encounter with the shadow self. This "small, naked child" is the part of Voldemort that was in Harry. Harry was the seventh Horcrux that he never intended to make. One sees the resonances with Voldemort's personality in the description of the bit of soul that resides in Harry; it solidifies Voldemort's neglect of his humanity as well as his incomprehension of what it means to be a whole self. This fragment of his soul is "unwanted, stuffed out of sight, struggling for breath"; Voldemort had no intention of making Harry into a Horcrux and still has no knowledge of it. His soul was in so many bits and pieces by the time that he tried to kill Harry that he did not even notice that another part of it was gone. The neglect with which he treats his soul is encompassed in its skin that is "raw and rough [and] flayed-looking"; this heightens the image of Voldemort's physical and spiritual self-mutilation. It is remarkable that this 'child' is something that Harry is afraid of; "he ought to comfort it, but it repulsed him" (DH 566). This again highlights the ambiguous nature of Harry's relationship to Voldemort. Having reached an understanding of Voldemort's modus operandi Harry feels pity more than any other emotion with regard to his nemesis; but as Dumbledore rightly states whilst Harry is looking at the tiny writhing figure on the floor: "You cannot help" (DH 566). Only Voldemort can attempt to undo the evils that he has perpetrated on his own soul and Harry can only offer him a chance to see his mistakes and try to feel some remorse for them. Throughout this interlude in "limbo" Harry is aware of the noisy writhing bundle, but slowly it starts to bother him less and less until eventually it's moaning does not register with him as resolutely as it did earlier. He has come to accept it as

something that is just there, and by accepting it realises that it has no hold over him; his fear of the thing is transformed into pity:

> Harry glanced again at the raw-looking thing that trembled and choked in the shadow beneath a distant chair.
> 'Do not pity the dead, Harry. Pity the living, and, above all those who live without love. By returning, you may ensure that fewer souls are maimed, fewer families are torn apart. If that seems to you a worthy goal, then we say goodbye for the present' (DH 578).

This is Harry's last choice and Dumbledore knows that he will make the right one. The moment that he first sees Harry in this threshold space of clarity, he greets him with the words: "You wonderful boy. You brave, brave man. Let us walk" (DH 566). This is the moment when Harry has completed initiation and has crossed from boyhood to manhood. What this signifies is both a coming of age, but an acceptance of responsibility for all aspects of the psyche, conscious and unconscious. Despite his fear, his child-like terror at facing Voldemort he walked into the arena – he died, like Dumbledore, on his own terms. In actual fact Voldemort had very little to do with it. This transformation complete, Harry must decide whether he will return to finish Voldemort once and for all, or move on to the next life. Harry's status as hero obviously ensures that he will return and save the world; but he knows something that Voldemort does not: Although Voldemort possesses the Elder Wand and desecrated Dumbledore's tomb for it; the real master if the wand is Harry himself. This completes the Deathly Hallows trio and makes Harry master of death, for the point of uniting the Hallows is not to avoid death but to allow them to aid you when you understand that death is not something that can be run away from. The brother who chose the cloak in the fairytale exemplified the true purpose of the Hallows; thus Harry becomes worthy of wielding them simply because he is willing to die. Thus the Deathly Hallows set is complete and Harry is complete as he allows the squirming, defiled child that is the fragment of Voldemort's soul, to fade into the fog.

Garion's clash with Torak, unlike Harry's with Voldemort, is not revealed to him until after he has accepted "Belgarion" as his true name. The acceptance of the name and the taking up of the mantle as Rivan King and Overlord of the West is but Garion's first step toward the culmination of his journey. It is after he has taken on his kingly duties that one night the awareness in his head leads him to the prophecy in the Mrin Codex that renders Garion's part in all the happenings concrete. Garion is suddenly made aware of what exactly his part in unfolding events is:

> 'Behold, it shall come to pass that in a certain moment, that which must be and that which must not be shall meet, and in that meeting shall be decided what has

gone before and all that will come after. Then will the Child of Light and the
Child of Dark face each other in the broken tomb, and the stars will shudder and
grow dim.' Garion's voice trailed off. 'It still doesn't make any sense,' he
objected… 'Who is the Child of Light?' Garion asked.
'*You are–for the moment at least. It changes.*'
'Me?'
'*Of course.*'
'Then who's this Child of Dark I'm supposed to meet?'
'*Torak.*'
'Torak!' (COW 279).

Garion's reaction here is one of shock and disbelief: Torak is after all a God and he still
perceives himself as merely "Garion". Garion, unlike Harry, has not had time to study Torak
or understand him. He has only been focussing on honing Belgarion's presence within his
personality. The thought that he would actually have to put this integrated "Belgarion – Rivan
King and Overlord of the West" identity into practise never actually crosses his mind up until
this moment. It is as if initially he has a willingness to misunderstand the prophecy, because
by now he must have assumed, as the reader has, that he is the last hope for the reconciliation
of the prophecy of light with the world. The biggest blow to Garion is the fact that this is
something that he has to complete on his own. When the time comes, like Harry walking head
held high into the clearing in the woods, he has to walk into the City of Night and face Torak:

Garion went very cold. 'Are you trying to say that I'm supposed to fight Torak?
Alone?'
'*It's going to happen, Belgarion. The universe itself rushes toward it. You can
gather an army if you want, but your army– or Torak's won't mean anything. As
the codex says, everything will be decided when you finally meet him. In the end,
you'll face each other alone…*' …
'What you're trying to say is that I'm just supposed to go off alone and find him
and fight him?' Garion demanded incredulously.
'*Approximately, yes.*'
'I won't do it.'
'*That's up to you.*'
Garion struggled with it. 'If I take an army, I'll just get a lot of people killed, and
it won't make any difference in the end anyway?'
' *Not in the least bit. In the end it will just be you, Torak, Cthrek-Goru, and the
sword of the Rivan King.*'
'Don't I have any choice at all?'
'*None whatsoever.*'(COW 279-280).

It is interesting to note that in both heroes' cases the motivation for going in to danger's path
alone is solely based on love and the idea of protecting human life. This we see in the extract
above is Garion's moot-point in considering whether to take an army with him or not. We
have a glimpse once more of the hero's willingness to forego creating circumstances that will
put him more at ease in the face of his destined lot, for the sake of preserving those who
would be saved by his actions. This fact reiterates the connection between individual and

community; and showcases the individual's willing self-sacrifice in service of the community. The subject achieves a kind of wholeness through the acquisition of agency, which enables him to rationally consider what must be done for the greater good. The hero sees himself as not having a choice. His willingness to face his own destiny alone re-emphasises his humanity once more – neither hero can reconcile himself to the fact that in order to still his own fear he will cause needless bloodshed.

What is perhaps not explained properly to Garion, as it was to Harry, is that whether he chooses action or inaction – Torak will come for him. Again we have a case where regardless of the hero's action, the opposition is setting store in something that must occur. What is interesting in this case, however, is the fact that Torak is as afraid of the meeting as Garion is. Once again, the villain's fear, coupled with a thirst for power, is the primary motivation for the events that are to come to pass. Where Voldemort's fear was the origin of Harry's destiny and has since dissipated through his underestimation of Harry's character, Torak's fear is directed only toward the final clash between himself and Belgarion. Both villains' fears are however compounded in prophecy, as they willingly accept that what is fated shall come to pass. Perhaps that is the difference between the heroes and the villains: the villains set their fates into motion through setting store by the prophecy and trying to get one up on fate, whereas the heroes recognise what will come to pass and despite their very real fears about the events soldier on. After having decided to go alone, Garion summons Belgarath and Silk and the three of them set off so that he can meet with Torak before a full-fledged war erupts between the East and the West. Garion, once again, leaves known space (Riva) for unknown space (Mallorea) to undergo his final trial in identity integration and showcase the agency that he will enact in role that he is to play in the fate of the world. Leaving Riva to go on this mission does not signify Garion's acceptance of what he is about to do; it does however once again signify his willingness to be used as a tool of change – he does not understand *his* role in all this but he does understand his responsibility for endless bloodshed should he try to hide from this. Several days into their journey the full weight of what he is about to do comes to rest on his shoulders:

> He was afraid. The fear grew worse with each passing day until the sour taste of it was always in his mouth. More than anything, he wanted to run, but he knew that he could not. Indeed, he did not even know any place where he *could* run. There was no place in all the world for him to hide. The Gods themselves would seek him out if he tried and sternly drive him to that awful meeting which had been fated to take place since the beginning of time. And so it was that, sick with fear, Garion rode to meet his fate (COW 337).

It is at this moment in the narrative that the inevitability of the meeting is seared into Garion's mind. He cannot run; the irony is that by leaving Riva he already made the decision not to run. He, like Harry, underestimates himself and the strength that he will find inside himself that will allow him to complete his task. Neither hero understands why he has been chosen for this mission, or even questions the fact that if he has been chosen, there must've been a reason for it. In Harry's case Voldemort's choice of him does leave room for doubt – but in the end, he was chosen and he is the one who must fulfil the mission. In Garion's case, he has been chosen by the universe, a prophecy of light – it is strange that it never crosses his mind that his being the Child of Light is not an accident, that it was pre-destined and that therefore he must possess the follow-through to be able to do what is required of him. It is after this moment, sick with fear, that Garion first starts asking questions about Torak, taking us back to the importance of gaining knowledge about the shadow that we must face in order to beat it. Belgarath gives him an eyewitness account of the God's disposition, which once again is a reflection of all of the properties of the collective shadow; he is arrogant, vain and sanctimonious. Something that Belgarath does say to Garion that is of dire importance is:

> 'Torak is probably as much afraid of you as you are of him. When you meet him, he isn't going to see a Sendarian scullery boy named Garion; he's going to see Belgarion, the Rivan King, and he's going to see Riva's sword thirsting for his blood. He's also going to see the Orb of Aldur. And *that* will probably frighten him more than anything' (COW 338).

Here Garion is reported to have asked questions about Torak out of "morbid curiosity" (COW338). Curiosity is again fore-grounded and this moment is ultimately the shift between identifying Belgarion as the shadow self and shifting that shadow onto the corporeal foe that is Torak. Harry and Garion are both fundamentally heroes because of their overwhelming acceptance and high regard of their humanity. In both cases their nemeses are either literally more than human like Torak, or like Voldemort, trying desperately not to be human. The result is the same for either case: a complete misunderstanding of the complexity of man. Each approaching their opponent from their inherently subjective viewpoint that power is the ultimate goal coupled with an inherent fear of death cannot in *any* way perceive the kind of acceptance that it takes to be willing to sacrifice yourself for a greater cause. This is not about martyrdom; this is about the recognition that you have the power to do something that will benefit more than yourself and your desires. This is about the moral high ground as opposed to the desire of having your likeness emblazoned in the minds of the populace forever as the great martyr who died for a cause. This is what sets the heroes apart – they are not walking into the jaws of death because that is what they are required to do – they are walking into the jaws of death because that is who they are and they would not have it any other way.

The villain's inability to fathom the true drives of human nature is ultimately his downfall. In both cases the villain assumes that he has over-arching powers that can force his opponent to succumb to his will. Voldemort sees Harry as boy that was merely lucky in escaping his wrath until now and Torak taps into Garion's emotions to create a mirage of the perfect circumstances that he can entice Garion away from his resolve to meet him with:

> 'You will be our son,' the whispering voice told him. 'Our beloved son. I will be you father and Polgara your mother. This will be no imaginary thing, Child of light, for I can make all things happen. Polgara will really be your mother, and all of her love will be yours alone; and I, your father, will love and cherish you both. Will you turn away from us and face again the bitter loneliness of the orphan child? Does that chill of emptiness compare with the warmth of loving parents? Come to us, Belgarion, and accept our love' (EEG 352).

Torak goes straight to what he thinks is Garion's Achilles heel: family. Voldemort does the same when goading Harry – both try to use the orphaning of the hero as either a bargaining chip or a tool to break down the hero's resolve. Their line of attack is: "You are all alone, why bother existing and fighting, nothing can come of it". This line of offence in both cases has the completely opposite effect on its target. In Harry's case, the resurfacing of his parents' death serves as a talisman against Voldemort – their bravery and strength are what he uses as a model – goading him only strengthens his resolve. Garion, after asserting that Torak isn't playing fair, is capable of discerning that all he says is a lie and that it all stems from fear. Eventually he gets so irritated with Torak's disregard for his intelligence that he strikes back and throws down the proverbial gauntlet:

> '*I know you now,*' he declared silently, hurling the thought at the murky sky. '*You might as well give up trying to win me over to your side, because I'm not going to change my mind. Aunt Pol is not your wife, and I'm not your son. You'd better stop trying to play games with my thoughts and get ready, because I'm coming to kill you.*'
> The Orb beneath his hand flared with a sudden exultation as Garion threw his challenge into the Dark God's teeth, and the sword at Garion's back suddenly burst into a blue flame that flickered through the sheath enclosing it (EEG 355).

The first utterance to the Dark God is "I know you now"; marking the beginning of Garion's triumph over Torak. He understands Torak's fear and this only spurs him along the path to the meeting, for if Torak is afraid there is actually a chance that he may win. Garion also at this stage realises that the past cannot be undone, and like Harry, that he has built himself a wonderful family despite the fact that he is not related to any of them. The mission then becomes focused on behalf of the people that will be saved, instead of being selfishly motivated. The significance of the orb flaring at Garion's words underscores his complete acceptance of the inevitable face-to-face encounter with Torak: He is ready, whether he feels a hundred percent sure of it or not, this is something that he has to do.

Both heroes are now poised for the final confrontation with their nemesis; each armed with information that will prove useful. Their acceptance of what they deemed to be destructive forces within themselves only consolidates their ability to withstand and overcome Torak and Voldemort, who are the vessels in which all they stand in opposition to are signified. What each of these heroes' triumphs signify is not the blatant repelling and rejection of evil and darkness, but the understanding that one must come to in order to beat the dark. Each of them have in a sense "died" to the world; the touch of that aporetic moment, that void, is what informs their interactions with their opposite. Having moved, as Jung would have it, beyond good and evil to a place of understanding they are now equipped with the tools with which they can overcome the threat to the world. As we have seen, each hero is faced with a choice and that choice is directly linked to the notion of agency – the kind of agency they enact is in return directly informed by their ethical outlook and moral compass. Therefore, these heroes are not the products of their environment in the sense that they are enacting a certain kind of agency because there is not an alternative; instead their environment benefits from their willingness to enact an agency that stems from within. Harry chooses to go back after his sojourn in "limbo" to finish Voldemort off once and for all; and Garion chooses to ride into the City of Night with his head held high to go and face a God.

The key to both heroes' victory is their unwavering belief in the good of humanity and the demonstration of a true understanding of the concept that we call Love. These are two things that both villains have no experience of or little interest in. Where they are divided, however, is in their ability to identify true power. Voldemort, as previously mentioned, shrugs love off as a human weakness, something that impedes the path to power. He is of the opinion that there is no good and evil, only power and those too weak to seek it. He sees attachment to anyone or anything as weakness – which is intensely ironic when one observes how attached he is to power as a concept. We have also looked at how Voldemort tries prodigiously hard to relinquish his humanity, to escape the limitation of what it means to be human; the body, emotions and dependence. Harry knows all this and understands Voldemort's thought process; this is how he finally beats him. His assault comes in three waves:

> 'You won't be killing anyone else tonight,' said Harry as they circled, and stared into each other's eyes, green into red. 'You won't be able to kill any of them, ever again. Don't you get it? I was ready to die to stop you hurting these people–
> '
> 'But you did not!'
> '–I meant to, and that's what did it. I've done what my mother did. They're protected from you. Haven't you noticed how none of the spells you put on them

are binding? You can't torture them. You can't touch them. You don't learn from your mistakes, Riddle, do you?'

'*You dare–*'

'Yes, I dare,' said Harry, 'I know things you don't know, Tom Riddle. I know lots of important things that you don't. Want to hear some, before you make another big mistake?' (DH 591).

The above extract reads like a tactical onslaught that is cleverly designed to push every one of Voldemort's buttons. The first line: "You won't be killing anyone else tonight", demonstrates two very important shifts in the dynamic of these two opposing forces. The first is that Harry is taking a stand; he has for the first time, ever, issued Voldemort with an order. The second is that it highlights the tone that he employs – usually he is shouting at Voldemort in defiance or cowering in fear of what Voldemort is capable of. Here Harry utilises a tone that is defiant, controlled and assured; this throws Voldemort completely off-balance. He is not used to being spoken to as though he is a simpleton that does not understand the rules – he is Voldemort – he makes the rules. The way that Harry addresses him with rhetorical questions that put his intelligence under scrutiny not only irritates the Dark Lord, but causes him a moment's hesitation. These factors are coupled with the added blow of Harry calling him by his Muggle name: Tom Riddle. This choice on Harry's part strips Voldemort down to the human being that he used to be – he effectively unravels the construction that is "Voldemort". After all, Voldemort is not a real person but the construct behind which the de-humanised Tom Riddle hides. Harry strips Voldemort back down to his rotten human core and reminds him that originally and in essence he is still only a human being. The moment's hesitation that Harry's entire demeanour and attitude induces lasts only as long as it takes for Voldemort to come to the conclusion that the "secret" that Harry knows, is once again linked to some or other human weakness that he does not care to understand or explore:

> 'Is it love again?' said Voldemort, his snake's face jeering, 'Dumbledore's favourite solution, *love*, which he claimed conquered death, though love did not stop him falling from the Tower and breaking like an old waxwork? *Love*, which did not prevent me stamping out your Mudblood mother like a cockroach, Potter– and nobody seems to love you enough to run forwards this time, and take my curse. So what will stop you dying now when I strike?' (DH 592).

What this speech of Voldemort's demonstrates is first and foremost his complete inability to understand the purpose of love. It reiterates not only the fact that he thinks there is no merit in it, but also that he sees it as a weakness that leads you to an altar of useless sacrifice. What is also demonstrated is his fear of death; in his eyes love cannot possibly be powerful because it cannot remedy death or physical pain. This is Voldemort's worst fear – the ultimate human weakness that he tries to escape – death. In the end it is Harry's ability to love that destroys

Voldemort, it is his willingness to accept that even someone who has mutilated his soul to the extent that Voldemort has, must be given a chance to feel something about the actions that he has performed – and hopefully feel some shred of human emotion within what is essentially a flesh shell. Therefore, in his final confrontation with Harry, the question that blindsides him most has nothing to do with Harry knowing more than he does, it instead hinges on Harry's request:

> 'You're right. But before you try to kill me, I'd advise you to think about what you've done…think, and try for some remorse, Riddle…'
> 'What is this?'
> Of all the things that Harry had said to him, beyond any revelation or taunt, nothing had shocked Voldemort like this. Harry saw his pupils contract into thin slits, saw the skin around his eyes whiten.
> 'It's your one last chance,' said Harry, 'it's all you've got left…I've seen what you'll be otherwise…be a man…try…try for some remorse…'
> 'You dare–?' said Voldemort again.
> 'Yes, I dare,' said Harry, 'because Dumbledore's last plan hasn't backfired on me at all. It's backfired on you, Riddle' (DH 594).

Harry has moved beyond feeling hatred towards Voldemort, but feels only pity. He recognises Voldemort as a construction to hide an emptiness that is devoid of sense of loss, love and a sense of belonging. It is Voldemort's vehement insistence on being independent and cut off from anything and anyone – in essence his wilfully elected isolation, that causes him to abandon any form of human expression of emotion. That Harry would dare to advise him to try to feel remorse for his actions, together with the request to "be a man", is for Voldemort the ultimate in insolence and ultimately incomprehensible. He sees mercy and remorse as feeble human expressions that deserve punishment – as showcased by his servant Wormtail's death at his own hand, which Voldemort regenerated. Wormtail gave up his hand in order to resurrect Voldemort; he was then rewarded with a new one that seemed as though it was made of steel. Harry saved his life once and whilst Wormtail was struggling with Harry and trying to strangle him, he took a pause; at which point his hand, that was a gift from his master, turned on him and strangled him to death. That moment encapsulates what Voldemort thinks of mercy. The idea that his returning to his original human status would save him from a fate worse than death cannot be comprehended by this snakelike shell that houses the remains of Tom Riddle. Harry, through the acceptance of his darker impulses, understands that Tom Riddle was incapable of resisting the darkness within, but that there is still the potential for him to cross over to the light and somehow manage to try to reassemble his mutilated soul, thereby in some small way rectifying the evil deeds that he has put into motion. Riddle, however, has mutilated his soul so far past anything resembling a human understanding of wholeness and retribution that he cannot sense the light within him. He rejects Harry's

proposal as an act of foolish bravado that stems from ignorance of what is important. Harry's assertion that Dumbledore's plan has backfired on Voldemort is of course the fact that *he* is the true master of the Elder Wand that Voldemort clutches to as the weapon that will bring about his final riddance of Harry; who has come to symbolise little more to Voldemort than a thorn in his side. Voldemort, once again, ignores Harry's warnings and logic and decides to squash this cockroach, as he did his mother:

> The bang was like a canon-blast and the golden flames that erupted between them, at the dead centre of the circle they had been treading, marked the point where the spells collided. Harry saw Voldemort's green jet meet his own spell, saw the Elder Wand fly high, dark against the sunrise, spinning across the enchanted ceiling like the head of Nagini, spinning through the air towards the master it would not kill, who had come to take full possession of it at last. And Harry, with the unerring skill of the Seeker, caught the wand in his free hand as Voldemort fell backwards, arms splayed, the slit pupils of the scarlet eyes rolling upwards. Tom Riddle hit the floor with a mundane finality, his face vacant and unknowing. Voldemort was dead, killed by his own rebounding curse, and Harry stood with two wands in his hand, staring down at his enemy's shell (DH 595-596).

This last piece of action is testament to Voldemort living out the end of his own narrative. Harry's triumph over Voldemort did not include physical force – in fact the spell he hurtled at Voldemort was a disarming spell. Voldemort was literally killed by his own power and unwillingness to understand that anything else could be more important. This is perhaps poetic justice, as the curse that killed him, was the same curse that he had used to kill so many others, among them, Harry's parents. From a narrative point of view, the line: "Tom Riddle hit the floor with a mundane finality", signifies a great crash back to reality. Voldemort was always Tom Riddle, a man who went to great lengths to seem devoid of human weakness. It is fitting that in his death he should be referred to as what he truly was. Something else that is of extreme importance is that Harry is not the one who deals the fatal blow – morally at this point in the narrative it would undo all of the character growth that preceded this moment. Harry's whole, untouched soul was the essence of his strength against Voldemort, and to have that compromised in defeating Voldemort would have brought a more serious and tragic aspect to the text. As much as we, the readers, would have loved for him to actually kill Voldemort, we are shown that it wasn't necessary – Voldemort reached the inevitable end of the path that he chose to walk and literally brought about his own destruction. Harry's role in Voldemort's story arc was to allow him a moment of reflection that should have directed him to a path of atonement – Harry utilises his agency in a way that empowers others, should they wish to be empowered, as opposed to utilising it for coercive efforts that can strip another of

their agency. Here in the final moments, we see Harry give Voldemort a choice, and his demise is a direct result of his actions.

The Belgariad tackles this final confrontation in a very different way. The references to love and agency are almost identical, but the emphasis is placed elsewhere. On the surface Torak stands in direct opposition to Voldemort. As we have seen earlier, he tries to entice Garion to abandon his pursuit of him, in favour of accepting himself and Polgara as his parents. Torak has an exceptionally obscure notion of what love truly is; but where Voldemort merely writes it off, Torak seeks it – confusing love with power. Torak's core driving force seems to be obsession– an obsession with something that he cannot have. We see this from the inception of the text: Torak's initial maiming and exclusion from the company of his brothers was the result of covetousness. He wanted Aldur's Orb and he took it – even after the Orb maimed him and unleashed its blue fire he was still obsessed with it and saved it in an iron cask that he would look upon once a day. The Dark Prophecy states that Torak will have dominion and Polgara will be his bride. As previously mentioned, both villains set store by these words of prophecy, therefore, Torak has developed what he *thinks* is love for Polgara, but the way that he goes about winning her as a prize illuminates more than just his pathological need to acquire, what he in his thwarted logic, deems his:

> 'I have come to watch you die.'
> 'Die, Polgara? Me? No, my bride, that is not why thou hast come. My will has drawn thee to me as was foretold. And now thou art mine. Come to me, my beloved.'
> 'Never!'
> 'Never, Polgara?' There was a dreadful insinuation in the God's rasping voice. 'Thou wilt submit to me, my bride. I will bend thee to my will. Thy struggles shall but make my victory over thee the sweeter. In the end, I will have thee. Come here.'
> So overwhelming was the force of his mind that she swayed almost as a tree sways in the grip of a great wind. 'No,' she gasped, closing her eyes and turning her face away sharply.
> 'Look at me, Polgara,' he commanded, his voice almost purring. 'I am thy fate. All that thou didst think to love before me shall fall away, and thou shalt love only me. Look at me.'
> Helplessly she turned her head and opened her eyes to stare at him. The hatred and defiance seemed to melt out of her, and a terrible fear came into her face. 'Thy will crumbles, my beloved,' he told her. 'Now come to me.'
> She *must* resist! All the confusion was gone now, and Garion understood at last. *This* was the real battle. If Aunt Pol succumbed, they were all lost (EEG 382-383).

Demonstrated in the extract above is Torak's unwitting emphasis of love as power. He has a distorted vision of what love is, and being a God, assumes that he has only to bring his will to

bear and what he wishes for, he will receive. The reliance on the prophecy is also fore-grounded; Torak believes she is his bride because it has been foretold. He, like Voldemort, only perceives the prophecy from one perspective – the fact that Belgarion is there to represent the other course of events that may be, completely escapes his notice. Garion's realisation that Polgara's strength of will is the key to victory is also significant; he does not think twice about helping her and projects images of Durnik into her mind. Garion shows her images of true love; Durnik was a good man, who loved Polgara, but never spoke to her of it. Garion uses Durnik's wholesome, *real* love as a counterbalance to Torak's offer of submission cloaked as love. It is only when Torak realises that Polgara will never yield to his will that he strikes out in force and Garion steps in. The conditions of the meeting of the two prophecies are met and Garion realises that they are evenly matched. "Torak's advantage of size had been erased when they had both swelled into immensity, and Garion's inexperience was offset by Torak's maiming" (EEG 387). Here we see, as with Voldemort and Harry, they meet as equals, but it is once again the understanding of what the shadow lacks and its soft spots that causes the hero to triumph:

> Again Torak raised Cthrek Goru, but a strange hunger flickered across his steel-encased face. 'Yield!' he roared.
> Garion stared up at the huge form towering over him, his mind racing.
> 'I have no wish to kill thee, boy,' Torak said, almost pleading. 'Yield and I will spare thy life.'
> And then Garion understood. His enemy was not trying to kill him, but was striving instead to force him to submit. Torak's driving need was for domination!
> …
> 'No!' Garion shouted, and, taking advantage of Torak's chagrin at that violent rejection, he rolled out from under the shadow of Cthrek Goru and sprang to his feet. Everything was clear now, and he knew at last how he could win (EEG 388).

Garion recognises that Torak has no wish for blood, only to be master of all men. The prophecy would therefore be enticing to him, as it reads that he will be the true God and king of all the world – it plays directly into what Torak envisions as his true purpose. After having witnessed Torak's anger at Polgara's defiant resistance of succumbing to his will, Garion realises that Torak does not need to be killed; he needs to be dethroned from his own delusional pedestal. The previous encounter has also unveiled to Garion that what Torak ultimately seeks is the adoration that comes with being loved:

> 'Hear me, maimed and despised God,' he grated from between clenched teeth. 'You are nothing. Your people fear you, but they do not love you. You tried to deceive me into loving you; you tried to force Aunt Pol to love you; but I refuse you even as she did. You're a God, but you are nothing. In all the universe there is not one person–not one thing–that loves you. You are alone and empty, and

even if you kill me, I will still win. Unloved and despised, you will howl your
miserable life to the end of days.'

Garion's words struck the maimed God like blows, and the Orb, as if echoing
those words, blazed anew, lashing at the Dragon-God with its consuming hatred.
This was the EVENT for which the universe had waited since the beginning of
time. *This* was why Garion had come to this decaying ruin–not to fight Torak,
but to reject him (EEG 388-389).

Garion's defeat of Torak echoes the hero's confrontation with the shadow self. One cannot kill the darker half that resides in one's psyche, but has to acknowledge it, understand it, and then choose not to act on it. In essence, "Belgarion" is the light half of the universe's psyche and Torak embodies the dark; the two were engaged in a dance that would affect the outcome of the entire universe and had to meet in order for a course of action to be consolidated. The hero's agency therefore translates into agency for the world; through his actions he can set the course of the universe onto the right path. Garion needed to go through the painful process of identity integration to be able to be strong enough to recognise that he stands in direct opposition to Torak. After Garion's blatant rejection of him, Torak falls on Garion's sword and is killed. His last words are a cry to the universe: "Mother" (EEG 390). Torak turns to the only thing that he feels still loves him in some small way. The reading that enables us to see the final clash between these opposites as a greater metaphor that enhances the idea of integration and agency occurs the moment that Torak dies:

Again there was silence. The racing clouds overhead stopped in their mad
plunge, and the stars that had appeared among the tatters of that cloud went out.
The entire universe shuddered–and stopped. There was a moment of absolute
darkness as all light everywhere went out and all motion ceased. In that dreadful
instant all that existed– all that had been, all that was, all that was yet to be– was
wrenched suddenly into the course of one prophecy. Where there had always
been two, there was now but one (EEG 390).

This instance signifies the interstitial space that exists when one makes a choice. This is reiterated in the moment when the whole world stands still and darkness reigns for a split second. This image is an echo of the unknown, the space that exists between dark and light, and then as the world is "wrenched suddenly into the course of one prophecy" we see its agency enabled by the hero's fulfilment of his destiny. The integration of the shadow self is paralleled on this large scale by the use of the line "all that had been, all that was, all that was yet to be"; the line signifies complete integration taking place that rushes toward one specific purpose. This entire encounter and the hero's confrontation with the shadow self, is in essence a larger metaphor for the notion of agency. We see the journey come full circle: Garion had to become Belgarion in order to be the light in the world and enact agency when facing Torak –

it was also not, strictly speaking a physical battle, but a battle of wills – by defeating Torak, Garion empowers the universe into one course of agency – a choice had to be made.

 Both heroes enact their agency in a way that liberates the world; in essence their actions give the world its agency back. Harry lifts the threat that Voldemort poses to life as we know it and in the process corrects many misconceptions about people who died for the cause. He also relinquishes the Elder Wand – hides it so that its power dies with him, and a threat like this can never reappear. The hero reinstates equilibrium and under this free society, its inhabitants are motivated to maintain the balance. Torak's demise has a greater mythical aspect and is more literally linked to the fate of the universe; it resonates well with both the hero's initial journey and the hero's empowerment of the universe in terms of agency. Thus we can trace a direct line between the process of integration of identity and acquisition of agency for the hero and the ramifications of the hero's enactment of agency on the space which he inhabits. These texts supply the reader with the notion of hope. The idea is that although the subject is split and we cannot achieve a kind of utopic balance within ourselves or the world, we must consider what kind of agency we enact and can thus render ourselves whole. Overall, what is demonstrated is the fact that the subject, far from being an insignificant speck within the vast sea of the world, is in fact a paradoxical construct that is both autonomous and dependent. The reading of these texts reinforces the idea of a split subject, but showcases a mythical space in which the subject has the agency to re-root itself within its own context.

Chapter 6 – Conclusion: Handing the Boon to the World

Handing the boon to the world is the last step of the hero's journey. It is at this stage that the hero gives the knowledge he has gleaned throughout the journey to the world. In *Harry Potter* and *The Belgariad* this process proves to be the most difficult step of all – the hero has to find a way to use his new found agency as a catalyst to ensure the agency of society. These texts deal with this stage in two different ways: in *Harry Potter*, Voldemort, in a twist of karmic fate, is finally defeated by his own hand. The agency that Voldemort chooses to enact inevitably leads to his complete destruction. In many ways Harry Potter has a fairytale ending; the villain is impaled on his own wand and the world is safe once more. The boon is neatly packaged into a homogenous love for fellow man and wonderful family portrait for our once orphan Harry. This is a very contrived way of looking at the knowledge that the *Harry Potter* series conveys to its readers, to merely perceive his story as culminating in finding a family reduces the essence of the boon that is being conveyed. One could argue that to all intents and purposes the story is well rounded in a fairytale style complete with smiles and a future, but ultimately, what made this ending possible is so far from a fairytale that, I think to simply state that *Harry Potter* conforms to a nouvelle fairytale formula is a misconception founded on erroneous reading. When one strips down this journey, particularly the latter half of it, what we have in fact witnessed as readers is the story of a boy who had no sense of belonging in any world, who was humiliated by an adult so far from human that his face looked snake-like and who was chosen for a battle that ultimately cost the lives of half of his friends. This is not light reading – the fact that within this context actions actually have consequences is what catapults Harry's story out of the fairytale realm and into reality. This is the summation of this dissertation, that even though these narratives are set in magical realms, the fact that they adhere to (for the most part) all laws that govern our reality and that they demonstrate the consequences of moral and intellectual action is what makes them worthy of study as a legitimate literary genre.

The Belgariad, on the other hand seems to leave some questions unanswered. Belgarion has defeated Torak and has been crowned king of Riva and has married Ce'Nedra, but Belgarion, in terms of his *self* construction, is still not quite complete. In many ways at this stage of the narrative Garion is only acting the role of the agent with true agency that is Belgarion, and as

we see at the start of the series that follows, Garion is still no quite sure *how* to be a king, *how* to hand the boon of his knowledge to the world. What makes this more interesting is how the next and final series *The Mallorean*, ends: Belgarion calls a council to discuss international relations between countries in conflict and he realises that all he can do is facilitate the peace process: the rest is up to the other players in the game. This is the moment when Garion truly becomes Belgarion – he leads by example and takes into account the flaws of those around him. As stated previously in this dissertation, ultimate identity integration and societal integration is an unattainable dream. What these novels have done is to show the readership that integration to the best of one's ability is achievable and necessary in order to enact legitimate agency in the world.

Within these novels, the dark elements of fairytales are transmuted into dark resonances of the self, more often than not pitting that evil force in direct and uncanny opposition to the hero, who is often not initially eager to brandish the sword of justice and has psychological baggage of his own. This dissertation has shown that the result of the conventions of fantasy is a unique encounter with our own reality, and one which this dissertation deems necessary for a balanced view on reality. As acclaimed television creator and writer Joss Whedon says:

> Stories come from violence, they come from sex. They come from death. They come from the dark places that everybody has to go to, kind of wants to, or doesn't, but needs to deal with. If you raise a kid to think everything is sunshine and flowers, they're going to get into the real world and die. And ultimately, to access these base emotions, to go to these strange places, to deal with sexuality, to deal with horror and death, is what people need and it's the reason we tell these stories. (Quoted in Stevenson 25).

Through examining *Harry Potter* and *The Belgariad* this dissertation has looked at the inextricable link between fantasy and myth to demonstrate that fictional fantasy narratives not only tackle subject matter that is relevant today, but that is universal, in the sense that it crosses cultural boundaries. Analysing two narratives that deal with essentially the same subject matter has brought some interesting psychological aspects of narrative to light. The key element is that of the ever-present binaries: light and dark, good and evil, insider and outcast. These binaries are ever present in myth and are, based on the findings of this dissertation, part of the reason why postmodern criticism is so quick to reject the genre. The fear of totalising to any degree is exacerbated by a narrative that focuses on totalisation in an obvious way and tries to present a solution. This fight (between totalities) has been mirrored not only in the critical readings utilised in this dissertation, but also in the internal conflict of the characters.

The heroes who have been analysed in this dissertation demonstrate the achievement of agency through finding a balance between these vastly opposite outlooks on life. As the characters are categorised as Everyman their journeys are more easily related to, therefore, rendering their boons in part attainable to the world. The universal undertones within these texts reveal universality not as a postmodern coercive homogenising tool but as the harking back to a sense of community that has been long lost. Furthermore, the question of agency is answered within these texts with the notion of choice. Our heroes inevitably, through identity integration, learn that they can choose what kind of agency they enact and how they enact it, regardless of their lot in life. Ultimately, fantasy opens both the landscape of the self and the world up to scrutiny, leaving the reader the task of deciding how much of an impact the texts will have on their lives.

Bibliography

Appelbaum, Peter. "Harry Potter's World: Magic, Technoculture, and Becoming Human." *Harry Potter's World: Multidisciplinary Critical Perspectives*. Ed. Elizabeth E. Heilman. New York: RoutledgeFalmer, 2003.

Attebery, Brian. *Strategies of Fantasy*. USA: Indiana University Press, 1992.

Baggett, David. "Magic, Muggles, and Moral Imagination." *Harry Potter and Philosophy If Aristotle Ran Hogwarts*. Ed. David Baggett & Shawn E. Klein. USA: Carus Publishing, 2004.

Barthes, Roland. *A Roland Barthes Reader*. London: Vintage, 1993.

---. "Myth Today." *Theories of Myth: Structuralism in Myth*. Ed. Robert .A. Segal. USA: Garland Publishing Inc., 1996.

Bidney, David. "Myth, Symbolism and Truth." *Myth: A Symposium*. Ed. Thomas. A. Seboek. USA: Indiana University Press, 1974.

Booker, Christopher. *The Seven Basic Plots: Why we tell stories*. UK: Continuum, 2004.

Campbell, Joseph. *The Hero with A Thousand Faces*. USA: Princeton University Press, 1973.

"Checkpoint." *Buffy The Vampire Slayer: Complete Fifth Season*. Writ. Jane Espenson and Douglas Petrie. Dir. Nick Marck. WB. 23 Jan. 2001. DVD. 20th Century Fox, 2003.

Cockrell, Amanda. "Harry Potter and the Secret Password: Finding Our Way in the Magical Genre." *The Ivory Tower and Harry Potter*. Ed. Lana .A. Whithed. USA: University of Missouri Press, 2002.

Coupe, Laurence. *Myth*. UK: Routledge, 1997.

Csapo, Eric. *Theories of Mythology*. USA: Blackwell Publishing, 2005.

De Rosa, Deborah. "Wizardly Challenges to and Affirmations of the Initiation Paradigm in Harry Potter." *Harry Potter's World: Multidisciplinary Critical Perspectives*. Ed. Elizabeth E. Heilman. New York: RoutledgeFalmer, 2003.

Deveal, David & Catherine Deveal. "A Skewed Reflection: The Nature of Evil." *Harry Potter and Philosophy If Aristotle Ran Hogwarts*. Ed. David Baggett & Shawn E. Klein. USA: Carus Publishing, 2004.

DiCenso, James J. "Symbolism and Subjectivity: A Lacanian Approach to Religion." *The Journal of Religion*. Vol. 74. Issue No.1 (1994): pages 45-64..

Douglas, Wallace W. "The Meanings of "Myth" in Modern Criticism." *Myth and Literature: Contemporary Theory and Practice.* Ed. John B Vickery. USA: University of Nebraska Press, 1966.

Eagleton, Terry. *The Illusions of Postmodernism.* UK: Blackwell Publishers, 1997.

---. *After Theory.* UK: Penguin Books, 2003.

---. "Enjoy!" *Paragraph.* Vol. 24. (July 2001): pages 40-52.

Eddings, David & Leigh Eddings. *The Rivan Codex.* USA: Random House Publishing Group, 1998.

---. *The Belgariad: Pawn of Prophecy.* USA: Random House Publishing Group, 1982.

---. *The Belgariad: Queen of Sorcery.*

---. *The Belgariad: Magician's Gambit.* USA: Random House Publishing Group, 1983.

---. *The Belgariad: Castle of Wizardry.* USA: Random House Publishing Group, 1984.

---. *The Belgariad: Enchanter's Endgame.* USA: Random House Publishing Group, 1984.

Edinger, Edward F. *Ego and Archetype.* Boston: Shambhala Publications, Inc., 1972.

Engmann, Joyce. "Aristotelian Universals." *Classical Philology.* Vol. 73. Issue No.1 (1978): pages 17-23.

Freud, Sigmund. "The Uncanny." *Penguin Freud Library, Vol. 14: Art and Culture.* UK: Penguin, 1990.

Frye, Northrop. *Anatomy of Criticism- Four Essays.* USA: Princeton University Press, 1957.

Grimes, M.K. "Harry Potter- Fairytale Prince, Real Boy and Archetypal Hero." *The Ivory Tower and Harry Potter.* Ed. Lana .A. Whithed. USA: University of Missouri Press, 2002.

Gould, Eric. *Mythical Intentions in Modern Literature.* USA: Princeton University Press, 1981.

Hollis, James. *Tracking the Gods: The Place of Myth in Modern Life.* USA: Inner City Books, 1995.

Jackson, Rosemary. *Fantasy – The Literature of Subversion.* London: Methuen & Co., 1981.

Kafka, Franz. *The Trial.* Trans. Idris Parry. London: Penguin, 1994.

Koelb, Clayton. *The Incredulous Reader.* New York: Cornell University Press, 1984.

Kübler-Ross, Elisabeth. *On Death and Dying.* USA: Scribner, 1997.

Le Guin, Ursula K. *The Language of the Night.* New York: HarperCollins, 1989.

Lonergan, Bernard J.F. "Reality, Myth, Symbol." *Myth, Symbol and Reality.* Ed. Alan M. Olson. USA: University of Notre Dame Press, 1980.

Mason, Herbert. "Myth as an "Ambush of Reality". *Myth, Symbol and Reality.* Ed. Alan M. Olson. USA: University of Notre Dame Press, 1980.

Matthews, Gareth B. "Finding Platform 9 ¾ : The Idea of a Different Reality." *Harry Potter and Philosophy If Aristotle Ran Hogwarts.* Ed. David Baggett & Shawn E. Klein. USA: Carus Publishing, 2004.

Meletinsky, Eleazar. *The Poetics of Myth.* London: Routledge, 2000.

Natov, Roni. "Harry Potter and the Extraordinariness of the Ordinary." *The Ivory Tower and Harry Potter.* Ed. Lana .A. Whithed. USA: University of Missouri Press, 2002.

Nikolajeva, Maria. *The Magic Code: The use of magical patterns in fantasy for children.* Sweden: Graphic Systems Göteborg, 1988.

Olson, Alan M, ed. *Myth, Symbol, and Reality.* USA: University of Notre Dame Press, 1980.

Propp, Vladimir. *Morphology of the Folk Tale.* USA: University of Indiana & The American Folklore Society, 1968.

Rowling, J.K. *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone.* USA: Scholastic Inc., 1997.

---. *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets.* USA: Scholastic Inc., 1999.

---. *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban.* UK: Bloomsbury, 1999.

---. *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire.* USA: Scholastic Inc., 2000.

---. *Harry Potter and the* Order *of the Phoenix.* UK: Bloomsbury, 2003.

---. *Harry Potter and the Half Blood Prince.* UK: Bloomsbury, 2005.

---. *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows.* UK: Bloomsbury, 2007.

Ruthven, K.K. *Myth – The Critical Idiom.* London: Methuen & Co., 1976.

Seboek, Thomas A, ed. *Myth: A Symposium.* USA: Indiana University Press, 1974.

Segal, Robert A, ed. *Theories of Myth Vol. 4*. USA: Garland Publishing Inc., 1996.

---. *Theories of Myth: Psychology and Myth* USA: Garland Publishing Inc., 1996.

Silberstein, Michael. "Space, Time, and Magic." *Harry Potter and Philosophy If Aristotle Ran Hogwarts.* Ed. David Baggett & Shawn E. Klein. USA: Carus Publishing, 2004.

Skulnick, Rebecca & Jesse Goodman. "The Civic Leadership of Harry Potter: Agency, Ritual and Schooling." *Harry Potter's World: Multidisciplinary Critical Perspectives.* Ed. Elizabeth E. Heilman. New York: RoutledgeFalmer, 2003.

Steege, David K. "Harry Potter, Tom Brown and the British School Story: Lost in Transit?" *The Ivory Tower and Harry Potter*. Ed. Lana .A. Whithed. USA: University of Missouri Press, 2002.

Stevenson, Gregory. *Televised Morality: The Case of Buffy The Vampire Slayer*. USA: Hamilton Books, 2003.

Swinfen, Ann. *In Defence of Fantasy –A Study of the Genre in English and American Literature since 1945*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984.

Teare, Elizabeth. "Harry Potter and Technology of Magic." *The Ivory Tower and Harry Potter*. Ed. Lana .A. Whithed. USA: University of Missouri Press, 2002.

Todorov, Tzvetan. *The Fantastic – A Structural Approach to a Literary Genre*. USA: Cornell University Press, 1975.

Turner-Vorbeck, Tammy. "Pottermania: Good, Clean Fun or Cultural Hegemony? ." *Harry Potter's World: Multidisciplinary Critical Perspectives*. Ed. Elizabeth E. Heilman. New York: RoutledgeFalmer, 2003.

Waardenburg, Jacques. "Symbolic Aspects of Myth." *Myth, Symbol and Reality*. Ed. Alan M. Olson. USA: University of Notre Dame Press, 1980.

Walker, Steven F. *Jung and the Jungians on Myth: An Introduction*. UK: Routledge, 2002.

Weed, Jennifer Hart. "Voldemort, Boethius, and the Destructive Effects of Evil." *Harry Potter and Philosophy If Aristotle Ran Hogwarts*. Ed. David Baggett & Shawn E. Klein. USA: Carus Publishing, 2004.

Wiesel, Elie. "Myth and History." *Myth, Symbol and Reality*. Ed. Alan M. Olson. USA: University of Notre Dame Press, 1980.

Williams, Gardner. "Individual, Social, and Universal Ethics." *The Journal of Philosophy*. Vol. 45. Issue No.24 (1948): pages 645-655.