

Mythology in Harry Potter Books

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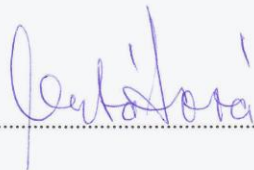
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ABSTRAKT

Tato práce stručně představuje mytologické jevy v knihách J. K. Rowlingové o Harry Potterovi. Hlavním cílem této práce je stručné seznámení s mytologií a následný rozbor jmen a stvoření v již zmíněných knihách.

Práce rovněž popisuje rozdíly v použití bytostí v Harry Potterovi a mytologii.

Klíčová slova:

Harry Potter, mytologie, mýtus, J. K. Rowling, stvoření, řecká mytologie, britská literatura, tajemno

ABSTRACT

This work briefly introduces mythological phenomena in books of Harry Potter. The main aim of the thesis is to familiarize oneself with mythology and the following analysis of names and creatures in books above mentioned.

This thesis also describes the differences of using creatures in Harry Potter and in mythology.

Keywords:

Harry Potter, mythology, myths, J. K. Rowling, creatures, Greek Mythology, British literature, mystery

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INTRODUCTION

First of all, I have decided for this topic because I have always been interested in mythology. I wanted to get more experienced in it and I also found searching for mythological terms very challenging.

Moreover, I wanted to connect mythology with a topic which is well-known, for all of us.

I have chosen books of Harry Potter by Joanne Kathleen Rowling because she is using mythological terms in these books permanently. Thus searching for mythological terms in books of Harry Potter I found as a perfect idea for me and for the topic of my thesis.

Before writing this thesis I knew there are some mythological phenomena in Harry Potter books, but I only noticed the evident ones - creatures (such as Phoenix, Minotaur, Centaur or Dragons). Then when I was working on the practical part I found out that even the names of characters are chosen from mythology, and almost all of them. This situation led me to think that J. K. Rowling didn't just write some fairy tale about a wizardly boy. She hid some message there.

Not all words which are written give us the concrete message together in the sentences or in the whole book. We should read between the lines to get the right message. We should think about what we read, to search for the message which the author wanted to communicate. And if we finally have found the information then we can say honestly that we have understood the book.

I did it, I was reading between the lines and searching for all of the names and creatures from Harry Potter books and afterwards I looked for them in mythology as well. If I found them in mythology I read the whole story of the character or creature and then I compared the story with the characters and creatures from Harry Potter books. In almost every case I found some similarities. I concerned these ideas in the practical part of my thesis. Some connections could be also found between mythology and books of Harry. I tried to find out if there are any other mythological features in J. K. Rowling's books.

In the theoretical part I wanted to give information about the mythology and myths in general and a brief overview of Rowling's life and of the main plot of Harry Potter books. I was also interested if there are any other mythological features in aforementioned books.

I. THEORY

1 MYTHOLOGY AND MYTHS IN GENERAL

1.1 Definitions

The word Mythology is from mythos "myth" (of unknown origin) + -logy "study." Meaning "a body of myths" and was first recorded in 1781. ¹

Myths are stories about gods and heroes. A body or collection of myths belongs to people and address their origin, history, deities, ancestors, and heroes.

Myths often account for the basic aspects of existence — explaining, for example, how the Earth was created, why people have to die, or why the year is divided into seasons. Classical mythology, the myths of the ancient Greeks and Romans, has had an enormous influence on European and American culture. Where the central actor is divine but the story is trivial, the result is religious legend, not myth. ²

Mythology is a science which explores myths, their origin and their broadcast. This science is understood as a tradition which passes on the faith and the culture from one group of people to another or among generations. Myths are usually stories based on traditional legends which explain the world order, its creation, natural powers and other phenomena and legends. Myths show the effect of different supernatural powers or Godhead. Many myths are simple stories, which were passed on among the generations.

Mythological characters are often connected with some religion. ³

1.2 Mythology and myths

To describe the term "myth" is a difficult task. Its roots are in Greek, and it means word, speech, narration or tale. Myth is a story with a religious-philosophical content, usually a legend explaining the origin of culture's basic elements and it is also allegorical.

From the earliest times, people fulfilled their need to explain their world and to realize their questions by creating myths about all kinds of phenomena. They were taking comfort and instruction from the idea of supernatural beings dominating and controlling the wonders of human existence.

¹ The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, "mythology. Dictionary.com," Houghton Mifflin Company, <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/mythology> (accessed April 23, 2010).

² Ibid.

³ terra-terrible, "co je mytologie," vse-o-fantasy.blog.cz, <http://vse-o-fantasy.blog.cz/0711/co-je-mytologie> (accessed April 23, 2010).

Mythology is filled with characters as heroes and gods, whose names live on in place-names, people's names and in history. Myths explain the genesis of worldly entities. There are also some widespread mythological motifs concerning human nature and behaviour.

Considering the diversity of legends all over the world, it seems to be a fact that mythology is being frequently reapplied in literature. J.K. Rowling took up mythological motives and elements in many ways. Her novels present obvious basic structures of mythology.⁴

1.3 The meaning of myths

We can understand myths as magical mirrors in which we can see the reflections of our own hopes and fears and even of hopes and fears of people from the oldest times of humanity. Some of the stories are so old that we can hardly imagine their age and almost certainly they were told a long time before the system of writing was invented. These myths form a base of the essential part of the world literature, philosophy and religion and they are considered to document human imagination. Myths served in many ways to people who were originally their narrators. They gave answers to big philosophical questions such as how was the universe created, what are the powers which affect it, what is the origin of first people and human community. They also gave answers to more intimate problematic questions because they were clue to personal behavior, social rules and what is hopefully going to happen in life after death. Altogether they gave psychological basis for understanding of the world and for faith which was very important because people in those days could base their lives on it. And myths did that in a spoken form. They were the stories which could people remember and they identified with them. They could cause laugh, tears and also fear.⁵

Myths have always evoked big interest because they deal with wide range of questions - almost universal.

This fact has also influenced me. I think that everyone of us will make some discovery or will find some answers to our questions if we spend some time reading and dealing with few of mythological books. It is impossible to be blind and not to see the common features

⁴ Anne-Christin Hirsch, "Names and their underlying mythology in J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter-Novels," GRIN, <http://www.grin.com/e-book/114910/names-and-their-underlying-mythology-in-j-k-rowling-s-harry-potter-novels> (accessed May 2, 2010).

⁵ C. Scott, "The meaning of myths," *Mythology: the Illustrated Anthology of World Myth & Storytelling*, (London: Duncan Baird Publishers, 2002), 6.

which connect our lives with myths.

These similar features are considerable enough to turn heads of scientists from many intellectual groups who have been for in their fields searching for explanation of myths for ages. One of the lines of searching could be considered the theory of diffusion – a thought that myths were wandering from one nation to another, thanks to the direct contacts almost like goods in some trade market. For example in 19th century big importance was attached to the discovery of the spreading of Indo-European languages through the Eurasia in the time of Bronze Age. This spreading was attributed to the group of Aryans who migrated into India while the other group went through the Middle East and Greece to the North Europe. It was the evident route which explained how some common features could appear in Indian, Greek and in North Germanic mythology. This image became more complicated in 20th century when Europeans got familiar with myths of Australasia, Africa and whole America – hence the places, which in ancient times didn't have any direct contacts with Eurasian mythology but its myths had certain identical features. It came out that the myth The Deluge existed in Australia, South America and also in China and Mesopotamia and that the African stories about the creation of the world could be compared with the Hellenic one. It seemed that the creation of these stories had to affect some element which got over the distance what couldn't get over the ancient people from different cultures.⁶

1.4 Heart of myths

Myths are also holders of social message. They tell us that behind the huge language and opinion differences which divide each culture of the world could be some common foundation. In human mind there is something inexplicable which attracts people so much. They react equally all around the world to the plots and dramas in myths. They react with amazement. Myths talk with the universal language which dunned the world before the Babylonian Tower. They show us that cultures penetrate from one to another and the base is unity of humanity.⁷

⁶ C. Scott, "The meaning of myths," *Mythology: the Illustrated Anthology of World Myth & Storytelling*, (London: Duncan Baird Publishers, 2002), 6.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 7.

2 MYTHOLOGY IN PSYCHOLOGY

The problem of myths which got over the distance fascinated the great Swiss psychiatrist Carl Gustav Jung who noticed that many of the motives, which exist in mythologies all over the world –dark forests, sudden changes, monsters, abandoned children and narration of flying or falling - also appear in his own dreams and also in dreams of his patients.⁸

“In this connection he formed his theory of “*the collective unconsciousness*”. Certain patterns, appear over and over – childhood, growing up, dealing with parents, adolescence, puberty, sex, leaving home, marriage, parenthood, motherhood, aging, dying - over millions of years, our psyches have evolved to be attuned to these patterns, in the same way that our bodies have changed to match our environments - dark skin in sunny parts of the world, short noses that won't get frostbitten in the polar regions, and so on.”⁹

The term “collective unconsciousness” means that we have a lot of the same features in our deep unconsciousness. Therefore we tend to think along the same lines, and different people will often live out stories that sound similar. Many people fear death and myths deal with such things. Second idea of Jung was that mythology, on a large scale, is the same as dreams for individuals. It's a complicated web of stories that have been created over many centuries from stories, ideas and images told by individuals that unite with people around them. These weren't tales that just suit the psyche of a person in his or her dreaming. They were tales, symbols, or images that resonated with many people, because of the features in the collective unconsciousness. The myths of a culture are its collective dreams.¹⁰

Although many people contested this theory, his idea of archetype became the commonly used term. In Jung's opinion these archetypes were the missing component between the individual mind and the myth. And archetypes are the ones which make big topics of world mythology current in these days. We say:”That's only such a myth,” and we indicate by that something is not true or that something is funny. We also say about things which touch us highly and deeply that they have the “mythic dimension”. So far people turn for the old myths to help them understand the purpose of their own lives and world surrounding us. The fact is that the big topics of myths mingle with our experience – they

⁸ C. Scott, "The meaning of myths," *Mythology: the Illustrated Anthology of World Myth & Storytelling*, (London: Duncan Baird Publishers, 2002), 7.

⁹ boycottchapter27, "Mythology, Psychology, and Jung," HubPages, <http://hubpages.com/hub/Mythology--Psychology--and-Jung> (accessed April 23, 2010).

¹⁰ Ibid.

show us our own internal hopes and fears in the imaginative layer. We could identify with myths. Myths could move us to tears. And because of that they stand as objects of constant interest and also gain new readers. ¹¹

¹¹ C. Scott, "The meaning of myths," *Mythology: the Illustrated Anthology of World Myth & Storytelling*, (London: Duncan Baird Publishers, 2002), 7.

3 DIFFERENT MYTHOLOGIES AND MYTHS

As has already been mentioned, different mythologies from different parts of the world have similar patterns. It can just mean that people as a species have the same basis of thinking. Or it could also mean that humans had to have something which would clarify their questions and to which they could look up to. Of course they needed some faith to believe in and therefore they made up some explanation, which were appropriate for them and their questions.

But on the other hand there should be some differences. In different places over the world there are different conditions, different nature and different animals. These differences caused that myths had the same basis but the results were different. For example in Egyptian Mythology a cat is presented as a holy animal but in Greek and Roman Mythology horses of various types and shapes have the same fictional purpose. And here it is. The basis is the same – both of these birthplaces of civilization have some holy animal, but the difference is in the kind of the animal.

4 MYTHICAL CREATURES

Mythical creatures are legendary creatures that are believed to be real beings, but some have their origin traced from literary myths.

Mythical creatures can be divided into two groups:

- The first group consists of creatures whose existence everybody agrees on or still exists today.
- The other group consists of creatures whose existence not everybody believes in.

While the first group refers to the literary works and oral transmission, its impact becomes stronger during the course of time. The story changes legend and the legend becomes history. The second group consists of more unreliable sources such as fairy tales. Of course people have been interested if they are real or not. These creatures are depicted in more aggressive way. ¹²

¹²Ashish Makati "What Are Mythical Creatures?," Mythical Creatures and Beasts, <http://www.mythicalcreaturesguide.com/page/What+Are+Mythical+Creatures%3F> (accessed April 23, 2010).

5 J. K. ROWLING

5.1 The personal life of Rowling

Joanne Kathleen Rowling was born in July 1965 in England and grew up in Chepstow. She has one sister, Di, who is 2 years younger than J. K. It is interesting that Ms Rowling asserts that she has been writing since she was 5 or 6 years old. Her first story was called Rabbit and it was alive with fascinating characters, such as a large bee called Miss Bee.

After she graduated from Exeter University she moved to Portugal in 1990 to teach English as a foreign language. There, she met and married a Portuguese journalist. Their daughter, Jessica, was born in 1993. When their marriage ended she moved back to England to Edinburgh to live there with her daughter near her younger sister Di.¹³

In late December 2001, Rowling married anesthetist Dr. Neil Murray at the couple's home in Scotland. Her second child and first son, David Gordon Rowling Murray, was born in 2003. Shortly after announcing that the sixth book in the Harry Potter series was completed, Rowling gave birth to her third child – daughter named Mackenzie Jean Rowling Murray in 2005.¹⁴

5.2 Harry Potter books overview

The Harry Potter books are distributed in over 200 territories and are translated into 67 languages.¹⁵

In the first book of Harry Potter, Harry is an 11-year-old boy and in the last book he is 18. It is too wide period of time to put it in a few sentences to describe.

Harry as everyone else goes through certain levels of his life.

5.2.1 The main plot of Harry Potter books

The world where we live is not as it seems to be at first sight. People who live here are not the same as we are. Some of them are familiar with magic and with magic help they keep

¹³ Emerson, "J. K. Rowling Biography," Mugglenet-the rebellions begins, <http://www.mugglenet.com/jkr/biography.shtml> (accessed May 2, 2010).

¹⁴ Warner Bros. Ent., "Biography," J.K.Rowling Official Site - Harry Potter and more, <http://www.jkrowling.com> (accessed April 23, 2010).

¹⁵ Ibid.

their world, for us unbelievable, hidden. And there is more. The world of Harry Potter is something astounding and maybe more than that.

Everything starts before his birth. Even in the magic world bad people exist and the worst one is Lord Voldemort. He is sort of a terrorist of the magic world, whose name almost everybody is afraid to pronounce.

People don't know who they can trust and they live in fear. But then one woman says the prophecy which is connected with Harry Potter story.

Two people who fight with Voldemort will have a baby, who will have a power to kill Voldemort. These two men will have the same power. None of these two can live if the other one is still alive.

There is irony here. Two boys fit to this description. Voldemort heard only the first part of this prophecy and because of that for him the chosen boy is Harry Potter. His parents are Lily and James Potter. So Voldemort kills this parents but he can't kill Harry. He even loses his own power and body. People think that he is dead or that he is waiting for his chance. Otherwise Harry Potter is someone who killed a brute and therefore he is a hero.

Harry lives with his auntie's family. The Dursleys family. They are Muggles- name wizards use for people who can't perform magic. They refuse magic and therefore they refuse Harry. He has terrible life in this family. They bully him. But this changes when a letter comes from the Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. Harry starts to attend this school despite the disagreement with Dursleys. Harry meets his best friends on the train to school. Their names are Hermione and Ron. When students get to Hogwarts they are split in four houses. The houses are Ravenclaw, Hufflepuff, Gryffindor and Slytherin. Harry with his friends is chosen to attend Gryffindor. At this school Harry meets with Dumbledore, who is the head of the school and who is the only one who knows the secret of the prophecy which he has to say to Harry, one day. Harry has to know this secret because he has to be ready to fight with Voldemort.

Dumbledore is constantly putting off the day, when Harry finds out the truth. He wants to protect Harry.

During his studies he and his friends have many problems at school, because they don't respect the school rules. On the other hand Harry fends off the attacks of Voldemort for two times. But at the end of the fourth year of Harry's studies Voldemort again gains his body and his power as well.

In the wizardly world, there is again the same atmosphere of fear and panic. So Dumbledore has to step in. He tells the prophecy to Harry. When he reconciles with the fact that he is the one who has to kill Voldemort, Dumbledore starts to acquaint Harry with the Voldemort's past. During their talk they come to the fact that Voldemort created six horcruxes, the cases, where he put 6 parts of his soul. Until Harry destroys there horcruxes, Voldemort will be still alive. So Harry and Dumbledore start to search for these pieces.

Dumbledore died because of one horcrux and the burden of destroying horcruxes is up to Harry. He leaves the Hogwarts and starts fight with Hermione and Ron. Last horcrux is located in Hogwarts. There Voldemort notices that he is losing his soul and starts to fight with Harry. Harry arrives at Hogwarts earlier than Voldemort, also with his friends and supporters. Last fight between Harry and Voldemort is there. But thanks to Harry's wisdom he is the winner. And then Harry is the hero and the world of wizards is again happy.

II. ANALYSIS

6 MYTHOLOGY IN BOOKS OF HARRY POTTER

The mythology in books of J. K. Rowling is noticeable at first sight. There are many creatures which people know from fairy tales and of course, those who are more familiar with mythology find out that the name of each character and even of every creature is all chosen from mythology. I understand that Rowling at first chose the mythological characters and created Harry Potter's characters after mythological ones. Why did she do that? And what are the basic structures of mythology in the books of Harry Potter?

6.1 Evil and Good

The reason might be to emphasize the battle between the good and the evil. The whole mythology is based on this topic. The good and the evil are obvious in the two main characters. Harry is supposed to be the good one, and Voldemort the bad one. If the readers are attentive they notice that even Harry is partly bad. What detaches Harry from Voldemort? And what puts them together? Doesn't Harry consider that evil originates from himself in the Order of the Phoenix? These thoughts are inside his head. And he really has problems with his own darker side in the Phoenix part. We now know that his life is inextricably connected to Voldemort's – and his choice is to kill or be killed. But there is a third choice - Harry's potential redeem of Voldemort. So I have to say that in Harry was also the bad side. But what about Voldemort? Are in him some good fragments too?

We have to ask, what made the hatred in Tom Riddle (Voldemort's true identity)? Why can't he accept who he really is? Even in this characterization of monumental evil, there is an explanation. Tom has been beat by his own selfish behavior. He thinks that he is the deity of power over all others. Strictly speaking, the rebirth of Tom Riddle is the end of Voldemort and the end of Harry's obligation to the world. ¹⁶

6.2 The Hero

"All through literature the hero has been removed from the family setting."¹⁷ In Greek myths there is an example with Romulus and Remus. It shows the important function of

¹⁶ Milum, Lynne, "New World Mythology," MythicHero.com.

http://www.mythichero.com/new_world_mythology.htm (accessed April 23, 2010).

¹⁷ Anne-Christin Hirsch, "Names and their underlying mythology in J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter-Novels," GRIN, <http://www.grin.com/e-book/114910/names-and-their-underlying-mythology-in-j-k-rowling-s-harry-potter-novels> (accessed May 2, 2010).

facilitating the hero to behave without the fear of destroying his family and disappointing people who love him, or having to expect weakness in his parents. It shows an important function for readers, especially child readers, to be able to find out adult cruelty, whether or not they have some experiences with.¹⁸

What Rowling said:

„Heroes are peculiar actors in mythology. They usually differ from other, or one may say, ordinary people. Their singularity may for instance be grounded on special skills or powers, or it may otherwise be the result of particular circumstances. Harry's character is shaped by his personal experiences. Yet, his loyalty towards Dumbledore and his determination to defeat Lord Voldemort does not equally imply that he possesses a faultless personality. In this respect, Harry rather resembles the Greek demigod Heracles, whose violent temper provides for many disadvantages on his way“.¹⁹

6.3 The Mythical Child

A certain prototype of mythological hero is the child. Since they are the evidence of fertility and reproduction, children are also associated with importance. A child has a symbolical power, which contrasts with its momentaneous dependency. Myths from all over the world demonstrate this special power of the child, and literature follows them.

Mythical or divine children, because of their heroic role, display features that distinguish them from common children. They are orphans, of divine base. Or they are even created from enlivened materials. Usually, they are targets of assassination but they escape because of their power or their destiny. They use help from other mythological characters. “Several ancient rites were concentrated on mythical children.” We can discover particular allusions in Rowling's work. Harry Potter grows up orphaned and neglected. He escapes his vituperative sibship because of his supernatural powers, which is being a wizard. At Hogwarts he is like any other child, who has the fame of being the boy who lived, visibly recognizable by the scar on his forehead. Carrying an outward sign is a common mythological feature of a hero as well. “For example, Odysseus is identified only by his

¹⁸ Anne-Christin Hirsch, "Names and their underlying mythology in J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter-Novels," GRIN, <http://www.grin.com/e-book/114910/names-and-their-underlying-mythology-in-j-k-rowling-s-harry-potter-novels> (accessed May 2, 2010).

¹⁹ Ibid.

dog and his old nurse, who recognizes him after all this long years by a certain scar.” Harry is the unique person because he survived a killing curse. He owes these conditions to his mother who was sacrificing herself to give her child powerful magic protection against evil. “Rowling’s novels exhibit distinctive traits of mythology, a fact, which is highlighted by numerous characters’ names.”²⁰

²⁰ Anne-Christin Hirsch, "Names and their underlying mythology in J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter-Novels," GRIN, <http://www.grin.com/e-book/114910/names-and-their-underlying-mythology-in-j-k-rowling-s-harry-potter-novels> (accessed May 2, 2010).

7 COMPARISON OF NAMES OF CHARACTERS IN HARRY POTTER BOOKS AND MYTHOLOGY

Names are the key to people's identity. Names also have the function of differentiation. It means that we can recognize people thanks to their names. Some names have the ability to express character traits or personal appearance but they can also insinuate to places, professions or accidental circumstances, which were connected with the particular individuals. Later many of these descriptive names became surnames.²¹

“The naming of fictional characters is subjected to similar practices. In order to serve determining, expressive and distinctive functions, the characters' names must display relative features of their intended role or significance.”²²

ALECTO

In books of Harry Potter:

Professor Alecto Carrow was a witch and sister of Amycus Carrow, and a Death Eater. She appeared in Harry Potter in the sixth part. Alecto is the follower of Lord Voldemort. She became professor of Muggle Studies, and taught the students, that wizards should not be associated with Muggles.²³

In Mythology:

In Greek mythology, Alecto was one of the Furies. Her name is derived from the Greek "alektos," meaning "unceasing in anger."²⁴

Comparison between Harry Potter and Mythology:

Alecto in Harry Potter was very cruel and hated everyone and everything. Probably because of this fact, J. K. Rowling took this name for her from mythology, because of the Greek meaning.

²¹ Anne-Christin Hirsch, "Names and their underlying mythology in J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter-Novels," GRIN, <http://www.grin.com/e-book/114910/names-and-their-underlying-mythology-in-j-k-rowling-s-harry-potter-novels> (accessed May 2, 2010).

²² Ibid.

²³ Emerson, "Name Origins," Mugglenet-the rebellions begins, http://www.mugglenet.com/books/name_origins_spells.shtml (accessed April 23, 2010).

²⁴ Ibid.

ANDROMEDA

In books of Harry Potter:

Andromeda Tonks was a pure-blood witch, born into the Black family. She was as well as the sister of Bellatrix and Narcissa. She married Ted Tonks, a Muggle, and because of that she was erased from the Black's family tree.

In Mythology:

In Greek mythology, Andromeda should be married to her uncle Phineus but marries Perseus, a famous hero, instead. ²⁵

Comparison between Harry Potter and Mythology:

Phineus sounds like Phineas Nigellus, Sirius' great-great grandfather.

“In the Old Testament, Phineas kills an Israelite man for being in love with a woman who belongs to another ethnical group.” ²⁶ Here could be the connection with Harry Potter and Mythology. Probably parents of Andromeda expected that she will marry the poor-blood wizard, but she won't do that. She married the man who was a Muggle. Here is the similarity which J.K. Rowling took from mythology.

ARIANA

In books of Harry Potter:

She was a younger sister of Albus and Aberforth Dumbledore. At the age of six, Ariana was attacked by Muggle boys who saw her practicing magic and who left her traumatized to the point of rendering her magical abilities unstable and uncontrollable.

In Mythology:

Here could be the derivation of the Greek “Ariadne” meaning ‘most holy.’ Here exist many stories about Ariadne. In one of them she assisted Theseus when he wanted to find Minotaur to kill him. They were floating on the ship and when they finally got to their aim, Theseus abandoned Ariadne in his ship while she was sleeping. The other story is about

²⁵ “Andromeda Tonks,” Harry Potter Wiki, http://harrypotterwiki.org/wiki/index.php/Andromeda_Tonks, (accessed 2May, 2010).

²⁶ Ibid.

Ariadne, who married Dionysos and they were wandering through the world. But when he rode into battle against the Argives, she was turned to stone by King Perseus.²⁷

Comparison between Harry Potter and Mythology:

J. K. Rowling probably took the name Ariana from Greek Mythology to emphasize the inactivity of this character. In Harry Potter Ariana was left traumatized. Here is the similarity with mythology because in both aforementioned stories about Ariadne, she was left in her inactivity (sleeping or petrified).

ARGUS

In books of Harry Potter:

Argus Filch was a caretaker of Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. He usually wandered around the school corridors, trying to catch students breaking the school rules. He owned a cat named Mrs. Norris.

In Mythology:

In Greek mythology, Argos was a monster that had a hundred eyes and could see everything. Argos was also the guard.²⁸

Comparison between Harry Potter and Mythology:

Filch in Harry Potter wanted to have “hundred eyes” to see everything and wanted to be everywhere. Here is the connection with mythological Argus.

FENRIR

In books of Harry Potter:

Fenrir Greyback was a werewolf notorious for his attacking of children. He was the one who infected Remus Lupin with lycanthropy. He did that deliberately. He was waiting behind Lupin’s house, when the fool moon was, and then he attacked Lupin.

²⁷ “Ariadne,” Theoi Greek Mythology –Exploring Mythology in Classical Literature and Art, <http://www.theoi.com/Georgikos/Ariadne.html> (accessed 2May, 2010).

²⁸ Bořek, Neškudla, “Argos,” *Encyklopedie řeckých bohů a mýtů*, (Praha: libra, 2003), 38.

Fenrir likes that he is a werewolf. He even bites people when he is not metamorphosed into that creature.

In Mythology:

In Norse mythology is Fenrir a gigantic and terrible monster in the shape of a wolf. The gods learned of a prophecy which stated that the wolf and his family would one day be responsible for the destruction of the world. They caught the wolf and locked him in a cage, bound in chains made by dwarves. Fenrir then requested that one of the gods put their hand in his mouth before he was chained as a sign of good faith. Tyr, the god of war and justice, did and his hand was bitten off. ²⁹

Comparison between Harry Potter and Mythology:

Here is the connection between Harry Potter and Mythology obvious. Fenrir was a werewolf in both of them. There is the mention about the hand which was bitten off. And even the Fenrir from Harry Potter bit people, he bit Bill Weasley.

HERMIONE

In books of Harry Potter:

The main character. She is a friend of Harry and a girlfriend of Ron.

In Mythology:

In Greek mythology, was often known as the patron saint of high magic. She was the daughter of Helen of Troy and King Menelaus of Sparta. Hermione was kidnapped by Pyrrhus, but her loving Orestes came and murdered Pyrrhus while he was praying. ³⁰

Comparison between Harry Potter and Mythology:

The connection between mythology and Harry Potter here could be the fact that in mythology Hermione was the patron of high magic. In Harry Potter books, she is not the

²⁹ Emerson, " Name Origins." Mugglenet-the rebellions begins,
http://www.mugglenet.com/books/name_origins_spells.shtml (accessed April 23, 2010).

³⁰ Ibid.

patron, but she masters high magic more than any other student at Hogwarts. Also she goes through the pure love with Ron as the Hermione with Orestes in Mythology.

LILY

In books of Harry Potter:

Lily was Harry's mother. She died after she and her husband James were attacked by Voldemort. It was Lily who gave her life to Harry so he could keep on.

In Mythology:

Lily is a flower symbolizing purity and innocence. It is the flower commonly used during the Easter holiday and symbolizes immortality. The bulb decays in the ground, and from it new life is released. ³¹

Comparison between Harry Potter and Mythology:

Here is very nice connection with mythology and books. As the bulb decays in the ground, so Lily had to dye to give the life to her son. Her sacrifice saved Harry's live.

MINERVA

In books of Harry Potter:

Minerva McGonagall is a professor and head of Gryffindor House. She is very fair and strict. She can't show her emotions.

In Mythology:

Minerva was a Roman goddess of war, wisdom, the arts, and trade. She was also known as Minerva Medica, the patroness of physicians. The Quinquatria was the main festival of Minerva and it was celebrated by students. Minerva shared the main temple on the Capitoline Hill with Juno and Jupiter. ³²

³¹ Emerson, "Name Origins." Mugglenet-the rebellions begins, http://www.mugglenet.com/books/name_origins_spells.shtml (accessed April 23, 2010).

Comparison between Harry Potter and Mythology:

J. K. Rowling took whole Minerva's character and personalities from mythology. Students liked her, because of her fair and she loved students and teaching. She was very clever. Here are very big similarities with mythology and Harry Potter.

NARCISSA*In books of Harry Potter:*

Narcissa Malfoy was a pure-blood witch, the wife of Lucius Malfoy and the mother of Draco Malfoy. She was the youngest sister of Bellatrix Lestrange and Andromeda Tonks. She was very unfeeling.

In Mythology:

"Narcissism" means "the excessive love of oneself." In Greek mythology, Narcissus was a man who believed himself to be the most handsome man on the planet. He died of grief, because he could not get love from his reflection in the water. When he was buried, a flower bloomed on his grave - a narcissus. ³³

Comparison between Harry Potter and Mythology:

Here is the small contrast between Harry Potter and Mythology. Mythological Narcis loves only himself but Narcissa from Harry Potter was able to love her husband and her son. Even at the end she started to cooperate with the "good side" due to the rescuing of her son.

NYMPHADORA*In books of Harry Potter:*

Nymphadora Tonks was the daughter of Ted and Andromeda Tonks and a Metamorphmagus. She married Remus Lupin and gave birth to their son Teddy.

³² Emerson, "Name Origins." Mugglenet-the rebellions begins,
http://www.mugglenet.com/books/name_origins_spells.shtml (accessed April 23, 2010).

³³ Ibid.

In Mythology:

“Nymphadora translates as "Gift of the Nymphs." A nymph, in Greek mythology, refers to a member of group of female 'spirits' found in different types of nature." They are further classified according to where they were found. They had the ability to change shapes and colours. 'spirits' found in different types of nature." They are further classified according to where they were found. They had the ability to change shapes and colours. ³⁴

Comparison between Harry Potter and Mythology:

The connection between Harry Potter and Mythology is obvious. Tonks has the ability to change shapes because she is Metamorphmagus. Also nymphs from mythology could change their shapes.

PETUNIA

In books of Harry Potter:

She married a Muggle, Vernon Dursley, and they had a son, Dudley. However, when Lily (her sister) was killed by Lord Voldemort, Harry, her nephew was sent to her.

In Mythology:

Petunia is a flower, with white or purple blossoms. Petunia symbolizes anger. ³⁵

Comparison between Harry Potter and Mythology:

J. K. Rowling chose flowers' names for both sisters. At first sight they seem to be opposite, but here is even some connection between them. For example the motherly love.

Here is no connection with mythology.

³⁴ Emerson, "Name Origins." Mugglenet-the rebellions begins, http://www.mugglenet.com/books/name_origins_spells.shtml (accessed April 23, 2010).

³⁵ Ibid.

REMUS

In books of Harry Potter:

Remus Lupin was a professor and a werewolf. He was the best friend with James Potter, Sirius Black, and Peter Pettigrew. Together they created the Marauder's Map.

In Mythology:

Remus was in Roman Mythology the twin brother of Romulus (founder of Rome). The King sent the two twin babies out to a river and tried to drown them, but a female wolf, instead of killing them, nursed them after finding the two boys. He was killed by Romulus.

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Comparison between Harry Potter and Mythology:

Here is nice connection with Harry Potter and Mythology. Lupin is a werewolf and the mythological Remus was brought up by she-wolf.

SIRIUS

In books of Harry Potter:

Sirius Black also known as Padfoot, was elder brother of Regulus. He was the heir of the House of Black. As Sirius' relationship with his relatives deteriorated, he gained great friendship in James Potter, Remus Lupin, and Peter Pettigrew.³⁷

In Mythology:

He is called after the star. "Sirius is also known as the Dog Star or Great Dog. It is the brightest star in the sky, often called "scorching," which quite suits his personality. In Egyptian mythology, the star Sirius is where it was believed the souls of humans traveled after death. Archaeologists have discovered that long tunnels or airshafts in the Great Pyramid make the stars visible in daytime, and that the view is the part of the sky where Sirius appears. It is thought that the shafts were meant to guide one's soul to Sirius". This is very interesting considering the manner in which Sirius died.³⁸

³⁶ Emerson, "Name Origins." Mugglenet-the rebellions begins, http://www.mugglenet.com/books/name_origins_spells.shtml (accessed April 23, 2010).

³⁷ "Sirius Black," Harry Potter Wiki, http://harrypotter.wikia.com/wiki/Main_Page (accessed April 23, 2010).

³⁸ Emerson, "Name Origins." Mugglenet-the rebellions begins, http://www.mugglenet.com/books/name_origins_spells.shtml (accessed April 23, 2010).

Comparison between Harry Potter and Mythology:

In Harry Potter book Sirius has the ability to transform into dog and here is the connection with mythology, because mythological Sirius is also known as the Dog Star.

8 COMPARISON OF CREATURES IN HARRY POTTER BOOKS AND MYTHOLOGY

BASILISK

In books of Harry Potter:

The Basilisk is a giant serpent, also known as the King of Serpents.

It can grow up into the giant size and live for many centuries. It is born from the chicken egg which sat upon by a toad. It has deadly poisoned teeth and stare. Anybody who looks in its eyes will die immediately on the spot. Nobody died in the second book of Harry Potter because nobody looked in his eyes directly. They saw Basilisk in a puddle, mirror, and camera or through the ghost. So in this case they were just petrified. It is a creature bred by Dark Wizards.

Basilisk was the monster which belonged Slytherin house. It waited on the day, when the Slytherin inheritor came and did away with all students of Muggle's blood – the Muggle's bastards.

Basilisk lived in the Chamber of Secrets and the entrance to this den was in the girl's bathroom. He also moved in the pipeline of Harry Potter's school.

In Mythology:

The Greek basiliskos means "little king" or "little tyrant." Some mythologies describe it as a cockatrice, a huge bird with a serpent's tail that could kill with its stare and also breathe fire. Basilisk is also called the king of all serpents and is considered to be as powerful as the gods. In European Mythology, the basilisk is a small serpent that has an ability to kill any living thing with its glance or a breath. It is usually shown as a monster with a body and wings of a dragon and a serpent's head. The basilisk first emerged in legends from ancient Greece and Rome. In the 1100, St. Hildegard wrote about the serpent coming out of an egg sat upon by a toad. Early myths mentioned that weasels and cocks were enemies of the basilisk. It was believed that a basilisk would die if it heard a cock crowing. Another method to destroy a basilisk was to hold a mirror up to its face. It would die straight away after seeing its reflection. Travellers always carried cocks, weasels, or mirrors for

protection when they travelled to places where basilisks lived. Basilisk was often associated with the devil and symbolized the deadly sin of lust.³⁹

Comparison between Harry Potter and Mythology:

J. K. Rowling directly followed the mythological track. There are almost no differences between her books and the mythological facts about the basilisk. The only thing which she made up is that the basilisk in HP books was moving through the pipelines. This fact wasn't mentioned in Mythology. Of course it couldn't be, because in those days there weren't any pipelines, so J. K. Rowling had to come up with this idea at first.

CENTAUR

In books of Harry Potter:

Centaurs, which are in books of Harry Potter, live in the Forbidden Forest. They have the body of horse and from the waist up are humans. There is no reference to the female

Centaur there, so maybe there exist only males. They have the ability to foretell the future from stars (primarily), but even from burning of some herbs. But if they know the future, they can't tell anyone. One of Centaurs – Firenze broke this rule and he was expelled from their flock, because he shared the secret of Centaurs with people. When he broke this rule, he took the place of teacher of foretelling in Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry.

In Harry Potter books the intelligence of Centaurs is noticeably than human intelligence. I think they are arrogant. If somebody wants to come to the Forbidden Forest Centaurs come and tell him that there is no way to go there (it was the situation when Hagrid brought there a Giant, but when Hagrid brought to the Forbidden Forest Harry with Hermione, Centaurs let them be, because they don't hurt the young ones – as they say. They don't like if somebody speak about them as hybrids.

In Mythology:

³⁹ Advameg, Inc. "Basilisk." Myth Encyclopedia- Myths and Legends of the World. <http://www.mythencyclopedia.com/Ar-Be/Basilisk.html> (accessed April 23, 2010).

In Greek mythology, centaurs were creatures that were half man and half horse. They had the head, neck, chest, and arms of a man and the body and legs of a horse. Most centaurs were brutal, violent creatures known for their drunkenness and lawless behaviour.

Not all centaurs were barbarous brutes. One such exception was Centaur Chiron, who became a teacher of medicine, music, hunting and archery.⁴⁰

Comparison between Harry Potter and Mythology

The image of Centaurs is the same in Harry Potter's books and in Mythology. I think that there is some connection with Firenze – the Centaur from Harry Potter and Chiron – the Centaur from Mythology. Firenze was too good to tell the fortune to people. In mythology it is mentioned, that Chiron was the only nice Centaur. And I think this is a feature they share. They were good to people. Also their destiny is the same because both of them became teachers. I suppose, that Rowling wanted to soften the character of Centaurs, their barbarous behaving is not mentioned.

DRAGONS

In books of Harry Potter:

In books of Harry Potter there are many species of dragons. For example in the fourth part of Harry Potter books were ten kinds of dragons (Antipodean Opaleye, Chinese Fireball, Common Welsh Green, Hebridean Black, Hungarian Horntail, Norwegian Ridgeback, Peruvian Vipertooth, Romanian Longhorn, Swedish Short-Snout, Ukrainian Ironbelly)

Dragons are the one of the most amazing magical creatures in the world. They are horrifying and awe-inspiring as they take wing and breathe fire. Muggles know them only as beasts from mythology, which is a credit to the lasting efforts of the Ministries of Magic in many countries who work unflaggingly to keep these huge beasts hidden. Wizards who work with them are called dragon keepers. In the first part of Harry Potter, Hagrid had one, its name was Norbert. It was his pet. And when Norbert saw Hagrid it could even recognize him, so it was not such a stupid animal. At the end, Hagrid has to put Norbert away,

⁴⁰ Advameg, Inc. "Centaurs." Myth Encyclopedia- Myths and Legends of the World. <http://www.mythencyclopedia.com/Ca-Cr/Centaurs.html> accessed April 23, 2010).

because it is illegal to breed dragons. So in this case they were dangerous. Not evil, but dangerous.

In the fourth part there was the task for champions to go around the dragon.

In the last book dragon guarded the strongroom of Gringots and Harry, Ron and Hermione flew away from there on his back.

Dumbledore found out that there is the twelve ways of using the dragon's blood. And also dragon's membranes are used as a supplement for production of wands.⁴¹

In Mythology:

In myths and legends of the world, dragons are often fire-breathing, reptilelike creatures with wings, huge claws, and a long tail. They are usually presented as frightening and destructive creatures. Gods and heroes must kill them in symbolic battles of good against evil. But a few cultures, as those of China and Japan, view dragons in a positive light and use them as symbols of good fortune, power, wealth and happiness.⁴²

Comparison between Harry Potter and Mythology:

We all know dragons from fairytales and legends. Heroes have to save some princess from evil dragons. There is a fight and the princess is rescued. Also this idea is mentioned in Harry Potter, when champions have to go past the dragon, when they have to overcome the fear of it, in the part of fight of the Goblet of Fire.

GIANTS

In books of Harry Potter:

Giants and Trolls are depicted in Harry Potter as huge monsters, really strong ones, but very stupid. "Giants are evil". That is what Ron says about them.

Giants don't like if someone use magic against them. Hagrid's mother was a Giant. And also his brother was a Giant. The funny thing is, that Hagrid is half Giant, half human. I can't even imagine how a huge Giant female could mate with little human male.

⁴¹ Warner Bros." Dragons."The Harry Potter Lexicon. <http://www.hplexicon.org/bestiary/dragons.html> (accessed May 2, 2010).

⁴² Advameg, Inc. "Dragons.", Myth Encyclopedia- Myths and Legends of the World. <http://www.mythencyclopedia.com/Cr-Dr/Dragons.html#ixzz0leWbQntp> (accessed April 23, 2010).

In Mythology:

“The word giant comes from the Greek Gigantes (meaning earthborn).”⁴³

Giants were half monsters, half men, with serpents’ tails in a place of legs.

Giants are in many different roles in myth and legend. These mythical creatures, much bigger than people, usually have human base, but some are monstrous in appearance.

Giants are often cruel and evil, although they may be simply clumsy or stupid. In some myths and legends, however, they are friendly and helpful or at least neutral.⁴⁴

Comparison between Harry Potter and Mythology:

In this case J. K. Rowling didn’t come up with any new idea. Giants in Harry Potter are completely same as in Mythology. They are big but stupid. They are evils but when they appear in some stories or legend or in this case in book of Harry Potter they are good and neutral to people.

HIPPOGRIFF*In books of Harry Potter:*

It appeared in the third part of Harry Potter, when Hagrid took Hippogriff on the first lesson about keeping of magic creatures.

The hind legs, body and tail of Hippogriff were horses. The other part of its body was eagles. It is very proud and distrustful animal. When someone wants to get closer to Hippogriff, he has to bow before it, then to looks in its eyes without any wink and if Hippogriff also bows before him, the person can get closer to it, pats it and flies on his back. People shouldn’t be offended otherwise it attacks them.

In Mythology:

Hippogriff is the only known relative form gryphon. It was living far beyond the seas in the Rhiphaean Mountains. Hippogriff is the baby of male gryphon and a filly. It has wings, the head and front legs from gryphon. The back and hind legs are from the horse. It has cruel, steel-colored beaks and large, brilliantly orange eyes. The talons on their front legs are half

⁴³ Advameg, Inc. “Giants.” Myth Encyclopedia- Myths and Legends of the World. <http://www.mythencyclopedia.com/Fi-Go/Giants.html> (accessed April 23, 2010).

⁴⁴ Ibid.

a foot long and appear deadly. Hippogriff is a giant powerful creature that can move through the air quicker than the light. Griffins and horses were supposed to be mortal enemies. It symbolizes an impossible thing and love. The Hippogriff seemed easier to tame than a griffin. In the few medieval legends when this fantastic creature makes an appearance, it is usually the pet of either a knight or a sorcerer.⁴⁵

Comparison between Harry Potter and Mythology:

The common thing of Harry Potter and Mythology is that Hippogriff was the pet from somebody. In Harry Potter Hippogriff was a pet of Hagrid and in myths is mentioned that they were pets of knights or sorcerer.

The structure of their bodies is again same in mythology and also in Harry Potter. In mythology is mentioned that Hippogriff is the symbol of love and impossibility. Hagrid really loved his pet. But it was impossible to have him. When he thought his first lesson about keeping of magic creatures, Malfoy didn't behave well to Hagrid's Hippogriff and therefore it scratched him. After this accident Malfoy played the role of harmed boy, so his father decided that Hippogriff is dangerous and therefore it has to be killed. When the day of its execution came, impossible things happened and Hippogriff could live.

PHOENIX

In books of Harry Potter:

Fawkes was a Phoenix that was owned by Albus Dumbledore. He was Albus' pet. He used Phoenix to send his messages, same as owls do. But Fawkes had the ability to relocate so he was quicker than the owls.

When Dumbledore needed to relocate, he only touched Phoenix and he could do that (and this was in the school not possible). Between the Dumbledore and Fawkes was wonderful relationship. When Dumbledor died, Fawkes was singing sad songs and after it he disappeared. Harry knew that he go back to Dumbledore. And that was the moment when Phoenix, strictly speaking, died because his owner died too.

Phoenix was also the patron of Dumbledore.

⁴⁵ Lady Gryphon's Mythical Realm., "Hippogryff," Beasts of Myth/Mythical Creatures & Arthurian Myth and Legend Creatures. <http://www.mythicalrealm.com/creatures/hippogriff.html> (accessed May 2, 2010).

Fawkes lived with Dumbledore at Hogwarts Castle for a large part of his life. He was instrumental in helping Harry Potter to defeat Salazar Slytherin's Basilisk.

His abilities:

His tears healed. When he dyes he is born from his own ashes again. Wizards use his feathers for the production of wands and potions. He can carry a heavy burden.

In Mythology:

Phoenix is a mythical bird which appears in many mythologies of many cultures. The oldest Phoenix, who is known, is Egyptian Bennu bird, which is depicted as a falcon or with heron head. In ancient times the old Phoenix arrived every 500 years to the temple at Heliopolis, where at the end of each life cycle, the phoenix burned itself on a funeral pyre, and another one rose from its ashes, with renewed youth and beauty. The new bird carried the ashes of its father (as the Phoenix was always male). In China Phoenix was called Feng-Huang, although he is very different from the European one. Phoenix is a universal symbol of rebirth.

The abilities of Phoenix:

It is not discoverable, because the places where it is are mysterious and undiscoverable. If someone would like to hurt it, he was judged to be eternal damned.

It has incredible divine power, but it uses it rarely. Its quills have magical powers and they could be used for the production of wands and potions. ⁴⁶

Comparison between Harry Potter and Mythology:

I think that Ms Rowling was inspired by Greek Mythology. Where Phoenix was known from the temple at Heliopolis. The situation about burning itself is the same. Also the abilities are the same as in Mythology. For example in Mythology was Phoenix not discoverable for people. And in the books of Harry Potter it was the same. Fawkes lived in the workroom of Dumbledore and no one knew about him. He was hidden there. And therefore he was undiscoverable by wizards and also by Muggles. Everybody knew that he existed but no one knew where.

⁴⁶ Advameg, Inc. "Phoenix." Myth Encyclopedia- Myths and Legends of the World. <http://www.mythencyclopedia.com/Pa-Pr/Phoenix.html> (accessed April 23, 2010).

In mythology is written that Phoenix's quills had magical power. We don't know what power exactly, but in J. K. Rowling's book *Fawkes's quills* has also magic power, that somebody could relocate immediately only by touching them. Also they were used for the production of wands.

I think that in this case J. K. Rowling was not digressing from Mythology so much.

SPHINX

In books of Harry Potter:

Sphinx appears in the fourth part of Harry Potter as the third task for champions of the Goblet of Fire. It is golden. It has the body of lioness and the head of woman. When Harry wanted to go through, it gave him question and he had to answer correctly.

In Mythology:

The Sphinx from Greek Mythology was a legendary winged creature that was consisted of the body of a lion and the head of a woman. The Sphinx lived on a rock outside the city of Thebes, where she frightened the local people. "The Sphinx posed a riddle to any passer-by: "I have four legs in the morning, two legs at noon, and three legs in the evening, but I am weakest when I have the most legs. What am I?" No one was able to solve the riddle, and the Sphinx killed and devoured anyone who failed to answer correctly."⁴⁷

Comparison between Harry Potter and Mythology:

There is the same base. Sphinx gives questions and people have to answer if they want to go through it. Also the appearance is the same.

In Harry Potter J. K. Rowling again soften the behavior of Sphinx because in Mythology is written, that these creatures were beasts. In J. K. Rowling's book is Sphinx very clever and good.

UNICORN

In books of Harry Potter:

⁴⁷ Advameg, Inc. "Sphinx." Myth Encyclopedia- Myths and Legends of the World. <http://www.mythencyclopedia.com/Sa-Sp/Sphinx.html> (accessed April 23, 2010).

Young Unicorns are golden colour. Later their mane gets white and the horn grows. They are distrustful and men shouldn't get closer to adult Unicorns. They don't mind women. Their horsehairs from tail are supplements to the production of wands. Their blood could keep person alive even if he would be close to death. To kill the innocent Unicorn is disgusting.

In Mythology:

The word unicorn originates from the Latin for "one-horned" and refers to an imaginary creature that appears in the legends of China, India, Mesopotamia, and Europe.

Unicorn looked like a horse but with the horn on its forehead. Therefore its name means "one horn". The horn has white colour at the base, black one in the middle and red on the top. The unicorn had white body, red head and blue eyes. Although unicorns were considered to be fierce fighters, they were also symbols of purity. This was maybe because the ancient Greeks and Romans connected them with virgin goddesses such as Artemis, whose chariot was drawn by eight unicorns. It was said that one way how to capture a unicorn was to send a very young virgin into the forest. The unicorn would be attracted to her and would put its head in her lap, and in this situation a hunter could catch the animal.

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Comparison between Harry Potter and Mythology:

I understand Unicorn as something special in Harry Potter and also in Mythology. According to my opinion J. K. Rowling wanted to emphasize the purity of them and the beauty of these creatures. If unicorn appeared, it was something extraordinary and even from the book, when I was reading Harry, was felt the beauty of the moment.

The differences are maybe in the appearance, because in Harry Potter is not written, that the horn of Unicorn consists of more than one color. But eyes and the body is the same.

In Harry Potter was forbidden to kill the Unicorn, but in Mythology it was an ordinary occasion.

⁴⁸ Advameg, Inc. "Unicorn." Myth Encyclopedia- Myths and Legends of the World. <http://www.mythencyclopedia.com/Tr-Wa/Unicorn.html> (accessed April 23, 2010).

Maybe from that mythological part, where is written, that Unicorns were killed when they gave their heads into ladies laps, J. K. Rowling took the information that adults Unicorns were afraid of men.

WEREWOLF

In books of Harry Potter:

Werewolves are ordinary people who just, when the fool moon is, change to the animal. One of them from Harry Potter is called Lupin.

People became werewolves if they are bitten from another werewolf. This exact description students got from Snape, the teacher. Werewolf has shaggy tail, the shape of muzzle is different from the wolf. It has jutting out fangs and dilated pupil.

In books of Harry Potter exists the so called werewolf potion, which if the werewolf drinks regularly before the fool moon, it could curl up into ball during its change and waits until the end. Otherwise werewolf could hurt people because it is uncontrollable.

In Mythology:

Legends from around the world mention men who could turn into wolves and then back into human base. In their animal form, werewolves were bloodthirsty monster that ate up people, both living and dead. Legends of people changing into animals arise in all parts of the world. In countries where wolves are unknown, such legends have covered tigers, leopards, hyenas, bears, panthers, snakes, boars, and other animals. Perhaps these stories mirrored a universal unease about the bestial aspects of human soul and behavior. Some scholars have advised that these transformation legends are weak echoes of ancient ceremonies in which people wore animal skins and masks. ⁴⁹

Comparison between Harry Potter and Mythology:

If I hadn't seen the filmed Harry Potter, I would have never said, that the Rowling's werewolf is evil. Maybe it happened just because I know his story and that I know his human site. In the film this creature was really frightening as the mythological one. It

⁴⁹ Advameg, Inc. "Werewolves." Myth Encyclopedia- Myths and Legends of the World. <http://www.mythencyclopedia.com/Wa-Z/Werewolves.html> (accessed April 23, 2010).

intimidates the fear. So I don't know if I should compare J. K. Rowling with Mythology or the director of the film Harry Potter and Mythology.

Well, if I compare the film and mythology, there are no differences. But Again the book and Mythology is little bit different, because Rowling wanted to soften the view of werewolf and she took it from the human side. I think, that this is really nice of her, because she probably wanted to emphasize, that even if somebody is evil, there is something good in him.

CONCLUSION

The aim of this work was to search for some connections between books of Harry Potter and mythology. I honestly have to say that I fulfilled my task. I discovered many connections here. After studying of J. K. Rowling's books from the mythological side I came to a conclusion that she mostly used characters and beasts from Greek Mythology. She created her characters on the base of mythology and gave them some extra personalities. Mostly she tried to soften their behaviour.

I also found some other mythological features in Rowling's books (as mythical hero, mythical child and the fight against evil and good).

Furthermore, I have to admit I really enjoyed working especially on the practical part because I came through a lot of interesting information from mythology. I liked spending time with considering what the characters and creatures from Harry Potter have in common with mythology. I found that J. K. Rowling wrote her book in very clever way, especially when she was giving names to her characters.

I believe that I have devoted a lot of hard work to my bachelor thesis and I hope that my efforts have changed into a valuable piece of work.

I acknowledge that this thesis gave me experience. I improved my English skills and also the knowledge of mythology. Now I also can honestly say that I know much more information about Harry Potter than before the writing of my thesis and that I admire Ms Rowling and her wisdom.

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