



**ESOTERIC VOYAGES: AN ALTERNATE
READING OF HARRY POTTER AND THE LORD OF
THE RINGS- THE SILMARILLION**

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THESIS APPROVAL PAGE

I certify that the dissertation submitted by İsmail TEKŞEN titled “ESOTERIC VOYAGES: AN ALTERNATE READING OF HARRY POTTER AND THE LORD OF THE RINGS-THE SILMARILLION” is fully adequate in scope and in quality as a dissertation for the degree of PhD.

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own work and all information included has been obtained and expounded in accordance with the academic rules and ethical policy specified by the institute. Besides, I declare that all the statements, results, materials, not original to this thesis have been cited and referenced literally.

Without being bound by a particular time, I accept all moral and legal consequences of any detection contrary to the aforementioned statement.

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FOREWORD

Praise be to Allah for there is no god but Him, the One, having no partner with Him. Sovereignty belongs to Him and all the praise is due to Him, and He is Potent over everything.

May endless peace be upon his righteous messenger Muhammed by whom faith has perfected over superstition.

AND

I feel indebted to share my most heartfelt gratitude with those who assisted me throughout this undertaking. I do thank my beloved family who not only let me meet with books at a very early age but also taught me to see beyond the already seen. I, also, thank Prof. Abdul Serdar ÖZTÜRK and Assoc. Prof. Harith Ismael TURKİ for counseling and guiding my studies. Finally, I owe many thanks to the jury members Prof. Dr. Sinan YILMAZ, Assist. Prof. Dr. Halil İbrahim ARPA and Assist. Prof. Dr. Yıldırım ÖZSEVGİÇ.

ABSTRACT

“That is what deconstruction is made of: not the mixture but the tension between memory, fidelity, the preservation of something that has been given to us, and, at the same time, heterogeneity, something absolutely new, and a break” contemplates Derrida while delineating a definition for deconstruction. In line with the preceding quintessence, the study intends to explore *The Silmarillion* and *The Lord of the Rings* stories by John Ronald Reuel Tolkien and the *Harry Potter* series by Joanne Kathleen Rowling in order to illustrate how these works of fantasy can occupy a significant ground to mediate esoteric teachings. To this end, the study makes use of deconstructive reading as the primary agent in eliciting a novel meaning and condenses its scope by focusing on two sub-branches of Esotericism which are namely Gnosticism and Hermeticism. The trends are hand-picked sects of beliefs which converge on the notion of gnosis for the soul's salvation. Moreover, both approaches handle materiality and earthly desires as the sheer reason in the degradation and downfall of the humans. All accordingly, the solution to aforesaid decay is prescribed through an act of total ascetism against the corrupting desires of the heart.

Keywords: Tolkien; Rowling; The Lord of the Rings; The Silmarillion; Harry Potter; Esotericism; Gnosticism; Hermeticism; Deconstruction

ÖZ

Yapısöküm için bir tanım çizerken Derrida onu “bir karışımdan ziyade hafıza, sadakat, bize verilen bir şeyin korunması ve aynı zamanda heterojenlik, tamamen yeni bir şey ve bir ayrışma arasındaki bir mola arasındaki potansiyel” şeklinde izah etmektedir. Mevzubahis öz gereği bu çalışma John Ronald Reuel Tolkien'in *Silmarillion* ve *Yüzüklerin Efendisi* hikayelerini ve Joanne Kathleen Rowling'in *Harry Potter* serisini ele alarak adı geçen kurguların ezoterik öğretilere aracılık etmek üzere ne denli öneme sahip birer zemin teşkil ettiklerini keşfetmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Bu maksatla yeni bir anlam ortaya çıkarmada birincil araç olarak yapısökümcü okumadan yararlanılmakta, ve çalışma Ezoterizmin Gnostisizm ve Hermetizm olmak üzere iki alt dalına odaklanarak kapsamını yoğunlaştırmaktadır. Mevzubahis eğilimler, ruhun kurtuluşu için gnosis kavramı üzerinde birleşen ve bu sebeple bhusus seçilmiş inanç mezhepleridir. Dahası, her iki yaklaşım da maddeselliği ve dünyevi arzuları, insanların yozlaşması ve çöküşündeki temel neden olarak ele alır. Bu doğrultuda, adı geçen çürümenin kalbin yozlaştırıcı arzularına karşı takınılacak tam bir zühd haliyle önüne geçilmesi salık verilmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Tolkien; Rowling; Yüzüklerin Efendisi; Silmarillion; Harry Potter; Ezoterizm; Gnostisizm; Hermetizm; Yapısöküm

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ABBREVIATIONS

LOTR: The Lord of the Rings

HP : Harry Potter

THE SUBJECT OF THE RESEARCH

In this study, *The Silmarillion- The Lord of the Rings* stories by John Ronald Reuel and *Harry Potter* stories by Joanne Kathleen Rowling have been analyzed through a deconstructive reading on the basis of teachings by Gnosticism and Hermeticism which can be cited as the sub-branches to the Esotericism and which, also, converge dearly on the gnosis concept. It has been targeted to reveal how these works of fiction can mediate the teachings under discussion on a deeper allegoric level.

THE PURPOSE AND THE IMPORTANCE OF THE RESEARCH

The research aims to explore beyond the widely accepted meaning patterns of the mentioned fictions in the light of ancient knowledge. Although the attempt first manifests itself as a process of discovery, the academic potential it heralds will have a say in the formation of a new literary morphology. For this reason, the study constitutes an initial step rather than a final conclusion.

THE METHOD OF THE RESEARCH

In the research, an approach other than the existing methods has been used. The aforementioned fictions have been reconsidered in the light of Esoteric teachings through a deconstructive reading and the common attitude of the storytelling on the basis of gnosis was tried to be discovered.

THE HYPOTHESIS OF THE RESEARCH

John Ronald Reuel Tolkien's *The Silmarillion* and *The Lord of the Rings* stories and Joanne Kathleen Rowling's *Harry Potter* series meet on a common ground in their worldview and argue that materialistic inclination and greed restrict and pollute the human spirit, and states that true and final salvation will be achieved by turning to the spiritual.

THE SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

The study is rare due to the approach it adopts and the themes it covers, but for the same reason, the number of reference sources that can be taken from literary critical studies is limited. Goals designed as a pioneering step sometimes emerge as the rule themselves, and the support that can be provided from similar studies that do not exist may be deprived of data. In addition, Esotericism, which covers a very wide area, loses its applicability without being subject to an ergonomic design and therefore has to be limited to Gnosticism and Hermeticism.

INTRODUCTION

A Hero's Otherwise Journey

Looming Luminousness

Having been written by a mind whose artistry, unfortunately, has been fostered by the bitter realities of the World War and the sheer radiance of alienation inflicted upon 'the Other', *Das Schloss* is a novel in which Kafka-in hands with his famous hero K. – struggles through a mentality that forces him to forfeit his own. In a way, Kafka invites his readers for a tour of his enigmatic labyrinth whereby doors open to walls both metaphorically and literally. What strikes the reader up-front is the Kafkaesque discrepancy alienating the characters. The gap between K. and the others is so unredeemable that though they speak the same language and the same subjects for the same goal, in the end, utter nonsense marks the closure.

The looming lunacy through the pages reaches a delirious luminousness at this point and Kafkaesque fiction places quite frankly a subtle sensation of madness at the heart of the fiction. There, the riddle reaches an answer: the bitter kind of madness which has befallen the village rules out the people around. As K. drifts into sleep by marking the end of the fiction, the imminent satisfying end dawns on the readers: willing audience, willing author. ...Nonetheless, similar to the post-notes of a deluxe perfume, Kafka grabs the readers by their suspicious side the moment he ceases telling the story and pulls them back to the fiction to have an alternate, critical viewpoint in his silence. At this moment another face of the story exposes itself to the readers through the silence of the author for it is a well-known fact that deconstructive readers are not willing buyers.

On the basis of the deconstructive principle of decentralizing the meaning, the madness under discussion could well belong to K. -the hero of the book, too. In this condition, the story is inclined to turn into the diary of a mad person. Likewise, an alternation in the viewpoint can isolate the audience from the storyline and this alienation may imply that the sort of insanity is the tone that colours the life of the modern human. The everyday life of a common person, who is in search of a job on the streets of Prague, is indeed not quite that different from the one belonging to K. who searches for the whereabouts of the fabled castle. In this respect, though the story is one,

the total sum strikes for at least three possible meanings through a deconstructive reading.

The multitude of meanings that have been debated above owes its matrix to the Derridean sense that once and for all the meaning is given fluidity by breaking away from the limitations of centralization, the text is gifted by a novel nature that promises positive plurality in meaning (Sallis, 1988). Under the light of this principle, once K.'s experience is treated in the traditional sense, the audience is immediately provided with the resolution that the hero is troubled by the rigmarole of a town which has undergone a total ailment of madness. However, if the process is re-prosecuted through a deconstructive reading: the altered state of mind subtly implies relocation of the lunacy, it may even encourage the reader to have a critical eye to question so as to the existence of possible insanity. In doing so, all sorts of meanings prove true and liable to be generated without refuting the other.

The richness debated above derives its mobility from the principle of giving an ear to what has been said in addition to what has been not. In this condition, faces of the storyline which have hitherto been shadowed between the lines emerge under the light. Unveiled dimensions of the meaning expose themselves to the reader. Such a kind of wake enables the text to achieve ongoing richness in terms of interpretation (Currie, 2013).

Derrida does not achieve this acquisition through a kind of destruction of the meaning. He, simply, encourages the readers for an alteration in their vantage point which directly brings about the mobilization of the meaning. Once meaning is disposed of the limitations of centralized fixedness, it promises infinite exploration within the vastness of reconstruction of what has just been deconstructed. To put it through a metaphor, a tower made of building blocks is but a tower, yet disassembled blocks may stand for any possible thing (Abrams, 1999).

The starting point for this dissertation is solely based on the belief that unearthing the hidden meaning through a deconstructive reading is not beyond the possible anymore. By altering the viewpoint and giving ear to the silenced elements of the text, the study undertakes the reading of the stories *Harry Potter* and *The Lord of the Rings* in order to elaborate on how both stories are inclined to morph into a Hermetic voyage for the ultimate acquisition of gnosis on deeper allegoric levels.

To this end, the research has been divided into three chapters in accordance with its proposed scope. In the first chapter, the Derridean understanding of deconstruction will be discussed with examples to show how an alternate reading may promise a variety of unique meanings in order to establish the methodology to be used. Following this, in the second chapter, esotericism will be defined and limited to the sects of Hermeticism and Gnosticism. The foundation of the study and the meaningful categorization of the data are established by a thorough discussion of these esoteric tendencies. The studies' findings are then organized in the third chapter based on how they are specifically related to the foregoing esoteric beliefs before reaching a conclusion.

1. ESOTERICISM

“In Pursuit of the Hidden in Revealed”

Veil of Isis

Though it may seem irrelevant to denote Esoterism with the old saying ‘can’t see the forest for the trees’, the condition at stake urges an immediate metaphor likewise. Today, what seems to be the major sects of beliefs stand as a vast forest, and esotericism, in this respect, occupies the period of time when long-withered trees were once seeding today’s woods. Despite the undeniable time gap between the forgotten old and the ever-livening present, every and each tree fostering in this groove carries hidden relics, refined remnants, and subtle but still efficient properties of the forefathers of late antiquities. Having been veiled from the eyes of the unconcerned majority, these hidden initiations are inclined to reveal themselves to those who are in search of them.

With these in mind, the term Esoterism comes from the ancient Greek word ‘esoterikos’ which means ‘belonging to an inner circle’. The term also has the connotations such as being initiated, enlightened, or revealed (Von Stuckard, 2005). For the efficiency of the movement, obscurity stands as an indispensable property due to the fact that the teachings and doctrines necessitate secrecy and eliteness (Hanegraaff, 2013). The schism under discussion results from a desire to be kept secret in order to avoid prejudice and possible hatred and consequent demonization. The secrecy of Esoterism also relies on a mental exclusiveness similar to the biblical mindset which proffers solid food for those who are ready and spares milk for others. In this respect, Esoterism can be best explained as a set of hidden teachings which are preserved and passed down to newer generations by means of secret societies. The initial and ultimate struggle of the movement relies on the acquisition of the deep mystical meaning of human life (Hanegraaff, 2013). In addition, determining the nature of good and evil is a crucial step for the movement. Questions pertaining to the nature of good and evil such as how they are defined and what they are and where they spawn from occupy the core of esoteric studies. The sect principally embraces the view that divine truths are overshadowed by life as we tend to interpret it. In other words, the truth itself is veiled by what is perceived as truth (Hanegraaff, 2013).

To break the shell, Esoterism delineates a subtle world in which truth reveals itself as it is and the penetration of this realm necessitates a radical alteration in the understanding of life, an obligatory shift in awareness, acquisition of gnosis and, in some cases, learning and practicing of occult arts. Hence, the repertoire of Esoterism can be defined as a vast corpus expanding from teachings from late antiquities to New Age movements of the 1970s and it includes properties from philosophy, religion, pseudo-science, literature, and even music (Audiopedia, 2016).

To elaborate more on the nature of Esoterism, in addition to its being transdisciplinary, the movement also derives its trademark meaning from its unconventional side. Traditionally, the sect welcomed and preserved what is labeled ‘the rejected knowledge’ (Tiryakiyan, 1974). To illustrate the condition, one may immediately recall Gnosticism which can be defined as an alternate and divergent reading of Jesus and his campaign which differs from the long-established norms of Christianity and thus is denounced apocryphal by the Church (Perkins, 1980). Another basic tenet of Esoterism manifests itself as a romantic resolution, for the sect advertises its campaign as an enchanted worldview in the wake of de-enchantment (Granholt, 2008). With this mantra, Esoterism challenges a materialistic and total science-driven approach to the world, condemning the modern fashion of lacking a spirit and ecstasy to drive the individual to the ever more spiritual ascensions.

As it has been mentioned earlier, for the sake of the spiritual advancement of the self, Esoterism encapsulates, either entirely or by selecting particles, a wide range of teachings that are traditionally dismissed as ‘the other or rejected’. Among these, Gnosticism, Hermeticism, Neo-Platonism, Occultism, Wicca, Thelema even Derridean Deconstruction can be cited, for all these sects are noted for breaking with the conventional norms (Sunshine, 2019).

Having elaborated so far on the nature of Esoterism by obviously mentioning its being a set of loosely related unconventional ideas, one may come up with a disposition to question the magnitude and significance of the movement. ‘Does it deserve any attention or serious approach as a respected field?’ may be one vantage point or ‘Is there any experiential resolution for Esoterism in life?’ can be another. Though it is possible to increase the number of questions as to the nature of the movement, all will be, up to a point, related to the practicality of it. At this point, scholarly revealed events of history

mention Esoterism as a hidden but powerful incentive for great events of life. A case example is F.A. Yates who traces Hermeticism in the development of modern science. Similarly, P. Kristeller, E. Cassirer and E. Garin mention Hermeticism playing a crucial role in the birth and development of the Renaissance (Von Stuckard, 2005).

In addition to the favorable and positive contribution to human life, on the other hand, when used for a violent purpose, Esoterism may well turn into a catastrophic weapon as in the case of Nazi Germany's rise in the hands of esoteric Thule Gessellschaft society. The group used esoteric teaching of Aryanism as a means of dissolution and imminently, the teaching turned into a warmongering call for the 3. Reich and resulted in the mass destruction of central Europe, the negative impacts of which shook the pillars of the periphery of the continent (Tekşen, 2008).

To have a deeper insight into Esoterism, Antoine Faivre, an academician, and expert in esotericism, defines the movement as a pattern of thought. To do so, he issues four core characteristics which are complemented by two additional-unesential ones (Von Stuckard, 2005). In his view, correspondences are basic components of all esoteric teachings. Simply, the correspondence principle deals with the link of a series of correspondences that attach various levels of reality thus contributing to the mantra of 'as above, so below'. A case example for the condition under discussion would be the orbiting of the planets due to a force of attraction (gravity) which manifests itself in the circular movement of the electrons on micro levels. From a different perspective, the principle unifies macrocosm with microcosm thus the universe is rendered into a coil of references through which a change on a particular level manifests itself on all levels accordingly (Von Stuckard, 2005).

The second characteristic of Faivre's study is the idea of living nature. In order to reach the concept of the cosmos, Esoterism advances through Pantheistic and Monist understanding of the universe and unifies everything in a Holist approach by ascribing a flow of living energy to the system. In a way, the cosmos is interpreted as a soul-possessing and complex entity rather than a lifeless-muted and passive materialistic mass. The very same mode of thinking also shaped Renaissance *Magia Naturalis* by Giambattista Della Porta, a book of popular science to deal with cooking, medicine, toxicology, and chemistry (Von Stuckard, 2005).

Now that various levels of reality are linked through each other, these correspondences require symbolic imagination. In a way, these symbols stand as hieroglyphs of nature and therefore constitute a language that is mediated to the adept by the spiritual authorities. In a broader sense, thanks to the symbolic representation of correspondences, the life force of nature can be directed for certain purposes (Von Stuckard, 2005). The spiritual art of Hermetic Alchemy derives its applicability from the foregoing potency by deciphering the same spiritual divine as the vast above in the heavens or the sparkling core below in the humans (Kybalion, 2016).

The fourth characteristic of Esoterism is based on the principle of change. The experience of transmutation handles the intrinsic processes of mutation of the initiate. Embracing the motto that there is a parallel between the outer world and the inner experience, the principle encourages the mind to follow a spiritual path for inner metamorphosis. The ultimate purpose of this change is to prepare the adept for a state of mind which is ready for understanding higher and absolute knowledge (Von Stuckard, 2005).

The next characteristic practice of concordance reports a common fundamental core in every esoteric teaching which is denominated differently but the same in nature. For instance, despite the fact that Gnosticism and Hermeticism are two different branches of Esoterism, they both advertise the hidden-God understanding. The divine transcendentalism under discussion draws a line to separate the divinity from the human senses. In this condition, the acquisition of awareness does not entail conscious acculturation into the theological teachings, but rather a spiritual journey of exploration in which mental readiness for the holy revelation plays the key role (Von Stuckard, 2005; Gündüz, 1997).

The final proponent of Faivre's resolution is the initiation through masters. Esoteric teachings are kept secret and this secrecy is revealed mostly by an obscure language. To whom these teachings are to be given necessitates crucial attention, for not everybody can bear the burden of the rejected knowledge. When all these are taken into consideration, meticulous selectiveness turns out to be an essential need to choose the true adept and such a deed demands the equally meticulous labor of a selected master (Von Stuckard, 2005).

By using Faivre's taxonomy, it is possible to compare and evaluate different branches of teachings under the umbrella term 'Esoterism'. As has been clearly mentioned above that the movement encompasses a variety of teachings and thus it is quite a formidable labor to undertake all at once for a scientific study, the scope of this thesis will be limited to Gnosticism and Hermeticism. These branches are hand-picked for the reason that the role they play had a bigger impact on the development of the modern mode of thinking. Additionally, these teachings show great compatibility with Faivre's taxonomy. Besides, the magnitude of these teachings manifests itself in the great successes of the literary world under the genre of fantasy. Even though it is still possible to trace these teachings from Baum's *Wonderful Wizard of Oz* to *Narnia Chronicles* by C.S. Lewis, the study will primarily focus on *The Lord of the Rings* series and *The Silmarillion* by J.R. Tolkien and *Harry Potter* series by J.K. Rowling. Before elaborating on Gnosticism, and Hermeticism in the following chapters, the gradual development of the Esoterism will be debated briefly for the sake of creating a mental outline of the movement.

The Development of Esoteric Mindset:

The development of esoteric ideologies dates back to antiquity (Von Stuckard, 2005). To be precise, the footnotes of Plato emerge in the same lineage with the first esoteric themes when the philosopher laid the basics of symbolic correspondence and living nature. According to him, God created the planets together with time (Von Stuckard, 2005). Moreover, Plato calls them living beings of an immortal divine nature. Such an understanding fostered a holistic-living nature. Furthermore, he passed the doctrine of the soul in saying that the soul can survive the death of the flesh (Plato B.C.E/1972). In delivering this message, the philosopher also helped consolidate the idea that the body is the tomb-prison of the soul. This bifurcate division brought about the dichotomy namely the inner person who is confronted by the outer person. Because the flesh was a crafted material lacking the qualities to ascend to the light, thus a hindrance for the soul, it fades into the background (Phillips, 2020). The soul is exalted over it for the very same reason and this mindset shaped European religious and intellectual history (Gillespie, 2009).

Another contribution to the development of esotericism came from Pythagoras who acknowledged his followers of the rebirth of the soul in the body of animals which

would directly shape the reincarnation concept later on (Huffman, 2014). The philosopher also mentioned mathematical principles as the structure of all beings. He regarded them as a guiding order of unity, namely a divine language of harmony-cosmos. What he called the unity of numbers would later turn into an enigmatic language to decipher holy texts in Jewish mysticism and Kabbalah (Von Stuckard, 2005).

Last but not the least, Orphics and Stoics contributed dearly to the evolution of Esoterism. While the earlier group practiced a mystery religion and proclaimed the end of the world and a new beginning by expanding on the idea of reincarnation, the latter developed a doctrine of ethics that was highly approved in the Roman Empire (Von Stuckard, 2005). According to this morality, knowing what is in your power and adapting yourself to what is not in your power posits high importance. Although it may seem a self-critique at first, the motto reinforced the ‘Nosce te ipsum¹’ mantra dearly which is another key concept in western Esotericism. Besides, the Stoics placed paramount importance on the laws of nature. Causality, in essence, is regarded as a means for perfect order and it is also a satisfying explanation of the world. Fate is a dynamic system of forces that elicits its effectiveness from causality law. Parts of the cosmos are linked to each other and causality enables a chain reaction that allows a minor act in the microcosm to resonate simultaneously in the macrocosm (Von Stuckard, 2005). A modern term for the better explanation of these correspondences can be illustrated here by the butterfly (cause) whose flaps causes a typhoon (effect).

Another contribution to Esoterism came from Hellenistic Egypt thanks to the studies of Hermes Trismegistus. Despite controversies as to his true identity, for he is portrayed as a god incarnate, prophet Enoch (Idris) or a knowledgeable priest; Hermes carries properties from Greek and Egypt traditions, which is why he is represented as a unified form of Greek and Egyptian gods, namely Hermes and Thoth (Tecimer, 2004). The title he bears next to his name ‘Trismegistus’ means three times great. This honor is bestowed to him for his profound knowledge and mastery of an esoteric science which would be later called Hermeticism after his name. Hermes not only initiated his priests into the occult and magic but also taught science, writing, astronomy, and astrology. In his view, knowledge is understanding and it is a vital possession in the acquisition of

¹ Know yourself

awareness. The book ‘The Divine Poimander’ includes his seminars and talks with his son, Tat. In these seminars, he mentions the body as a prison for the soul ascension of which is guided by the twelve zodiac signs which appeal to the body. By drawing an association between the celestial figures and body parts, Hermes comes up with an example of the correspondence principle. He acknowledges the spiritual ascend of the adept by means of planetary spheres with the ultimate purpose of reaching the light. Each planetary sphere stands for an obstacle removal of which emanates the soul gradually by the traversing of a torment into a virtue (Copenhaver, 1992; Kılıç 2017). The Hermetic discourse had an immense impact on western esotericism however upon the establishment of the Church it was excluded as the other and the Hermetic teachings resided in the realm of Esoterism (Clarke, 2008).

Jewish Kabbalah is another source directly affecting the esoteric resolutions. Combining elements from Egypt mythology and Torah, Kabbalah emerged as an oral tradition. The approach heavily relied on deciphering the hidden meaning in texts by going deeper levels while reading a scripture (Von Stuckard, 2005). The applicability of the method is based on the structure of Hebrew which is a consonantal language. A change in the vowels enables the word to obtain different meanings. The lining of the following letters may present an example for the better understanding of the condition (Liebermann, 1987).

If the same technique was applied to the English letters ‘GD BY’, the combination would remind ‘good bye’ initially, however upon extra labor, the letters may also stand for ‘good boy’ or ‘God bay’. A similar trend was the numerical ascription of the letters in Hebrew. Each letter has a numerical value and certain words are thus related to each other by means of a subtle mathematical formula. To illustrate the condition with an example, the letters of the following sentence need to be analyzed in the preceding fashion. ‘Adam rose and saw the gate up in the sky’. When the numerical values of the letters are assumedly as follows: D:4 G:1 H:4 K:3 M:6 R:7 S:2 T:8 Y:1 the words ‘rose, gate and sky’ have the same value which is 9. So, this word cluster obtains a different status within the sentence and carries a hidden meaning on a deeper level. For instance, the combination may stand for the meaning “stop being earthbound, salvation is through ascension into the heavens”.

In addition to preceding techniques, Kabbalah made frequent use of Sefirot (see figure 1) which is a scheme showing ten effective powers of God illustrated in the form of a tree whose branches are connected with each other in various ways (Ginsburgh, 2006). When all Sefirot are in harmony, the individual is regarded as ready for the fulfillment of his cosmic responsibility (Von Stuckard, 2005). Furthermore, God is represented as the unity of all beings, unknowable yet manifesting itself in nature. Thus, the approach to nature received another much more meaningful dimension. Instead of a live-cosmic unity, henceforth it turns into an exquisite language through which God mediates his holy message. Last but not the least, Lurianic Kabbalah had an undeniable effect on Esoterism in its perception of the creation. In this approach, creation is manifested as a process of God's self-exile. The god made space for the created, yet let his light emanate into it to create the primal man, Adam Kadmon. In the creation process, the divine spark is mingled with the impure material. In this respect, while Jews struggle to reclaim their original spiritual image, they help God to restore the divine light and repeal his self-exile. This resolution directly paved the way for the idea that in order to sustain the cosmic order Israel needs God as much as God needs Israel (Miller, 2005).

In a nutshell, teachings from antiquities reveal that intellectuals of that era were familiar with the correspondences by attaching minor beings to majors. Moreover, Nature, or the cosmos, was regarded not a passive lifeless being but rather as a soul possessing active energy manipulation of which was also possible due to the same reason. These two initial steps were enough to reapproach the universe and life from a different viewpoint which would be rejected by the majority of people and thus had to be kept secret. This very same notion would trigger the coming up Esoteric teachings.

1.1. Gnosticism

“A Quest for the Unearthing of the Divine Spark”

Though there is hardly any tangible evidence to suggest a direct link to attach either, it would not be a far-fetched claim to trace the evolution of Gnosticism to Existentialist Philosophical thinking. Modern Existentialism is attributed to the time period between 19th-20th centuries, and the movement can be encapsulated wholly in these questions: ‘Who are we? Where did we come from? Why are we here (on earth)? Where are we heading to?’ As it may well be observed easily, these questions have

always remained not only in the minds of the intellectuals but also in the core of nearly all of the religious legacies, and Gnosticism was not an exception.

Dating as far back as 200 BC, Gnosticism stands for a variety of interpretations, for a certain group it is a religion that is complete in every essence; some regard it as a radical approach to re-evaluate the divine religious teachings, while a certain fraction is vigorously inclined to render it a philosophical resolution (Williams, 1996). No matter from which angle the sect is taken into consideration, it is an undeniable fact that Gnosticism syncretizes hitherto existing religious teachings comprising the elements of Buddhism, Manichaeism, Kabala, Ancient Egypt Mysteries, Zoroastrianism and Platonic Philosophy (Pagels, 1989).

Owing to its diverse nature, the definition of Gnosticism in encompassing terms proves to be a challenging deed even for the experts of the esoteric area. Having said that, the true resolution of the teaching may well be lying in its very name “gnosis” which means “knowledge-understanding” or “insight” and all accordingly, the sect emphasizes the reviving of the divine spark through acquiring ‘insight into true wisdom’ which has been overshadowed by the material world. This revival, according to Gnostic theology, is the only pathway to true salvation (Gündüz, 1997).

To highlight the condition under discussion, Gnostics praise “a man” for possessing gnosis thus he is “a redeemed man”, a fully awake body among thousands of sleeping ones (Rudolph, 1984, p.56). To this end, Gnosticism openly favors personal experimental knowledge while pushing intellectual inclinations into the background (Hoeller, 1992). When asked so as to the true nature of the gnosis the only answer to be provided turns into a hinting riddle ‘know yourself’. At this point, gnosis openly speaks about its true nature which is a hard-to-reach state of awareness rather than a mere acculturation of the divine theologies.

Despite the overly obvious emphasis on the acquisition of the divine truths, the detailed explanation of the gnosis heavily relies on codices that were unearthed in the Nag Hammadi region in Upper Egypt in the year 1945. The intriguing story of two farmer brothers gives way to an astonishing discovery of long-buried manuscripts. The collection of the handwritten codices, deservedly, receives the name of the library of Gnosticism. And the core narrative of the theology seems to have taken root from the same source which inscribed the generation of the manuscripts under discussion (Burns,

2016). In this context, despite the fact that personal revelation of divine truths is a must in achieving gnosis, the basic tenets are conveyed so that initiates are demanded an action to break through the fraudulent realities (Piwowarczyk, 2021).

In the broadest sense, the sect informs the practitioners of a dualistic divinity system. The theology starts with the mention of an unknowable-transcendent God out of whom emanates the Sophia (wisdom) in the form of a self-thought. This emanation takes place as a downward movement and degradation for it is an act of distancing at the same time. Sophia diverts her attention to the darkness and there she gives birth to a second deity in the form of a dragon with the head of a lion and ember eyes. This deity is later named Ialdabaoth meaning ‘the blind god’ for he is born in the dark and has never met the unknowable God. There in the darkness, he creates the matter and continues this creation until he reaches what is known today as the materialistic universe. With a second vigor, he labors for the creation of humanity for the purpose of having subjects for his self-worshipping. The avarice of worshipping results in the creation of Adam and Eve both of whom are lifeless sculpted bodies at that time. To revive the corpses, the demiurge (Ialdabaoth) inserts a spirit in each, and while doing so, he inadvertently places wisdom in these first people on earth. The acquisition of wisdom exalts the degenerate nature of Adam and Eve and directs them toward true wisdom and salvation. The condition also hints at the pathway to the righteous transcendent god which is associated with light (Gündüz, 1997; Robinson, 1977).

According to the Gnostic narrative, the following incidents turn into a clash and struggle of light against the dark. To divert newly born people from the light, Ialdabaoth summons the help of other supreme creatures’ help. The creatures which are known as Archons, serve their master to materialize darkness to strangle and bury the light so that Adam and Eve are to be overly enmeshed with the material world meanwhile ignoring the means for light. While cherishing the beauty of Eden in a state of unawareness of the true nature of a diabolical god, Adam and Eve encounter discover the forbidden tree of knowledge. Even though the tree is forbidden by the demiurge, for it has been planted by the forces of the light and the fruits of which contain true wisdom, it also stands as a source of attraction for these people because an eagle (not a serpent as it has been mentioned in holy scriptures) tells them the truth as to the true nature of the tree and urges them to taste the fruit of wisdom. Once Adam and Eve remember the divine truths

upon devouring the fruit, they are expelled from heaven by the demiurge because they refuse to worship him anymore (Floramo, 2005).

In order to bury the light into the dark again, Ialdabaoth rapes Eve and fathers Abel and Cain who seem to take after their father. Since their father is a repressive archon rather than a human, Cain and Abel are inclined to rule over the material elements and also over the material bodies of future human beings. However, Eve begets another son by Adam, Seth, who is to be the prototype of ideal humanity to wend their way towards the light. Once a dichotomy is settled for the rest of the entire humanity, according fates are also predestined for them as well, namely: men of darkness under the control of the demiurge, Ialdabaoth, and men of light to be saved upon receiving the gnosis (Roof, 1993; Rudolph, 1987).

The theology of Gnosticism can be summarized in a nutshell by means of the falling motif. The first fall to take place delineates as a self-thought of the transcendent god for it paves the way for the emergence of Sophia (wisdom). Though this birth seems to be a favorable emergence at first, it is a kind of degeneration due to the fact that it is a process of distancing from the whole-perfect entity. The second motif of the fall pictures the birth of Ialdabaoth, nearly in the form of a miscarriage. Once fallen into the pits of the darkness, he proclaims his being the only god and labors materialized world to shape and rule the matter. Another fall motif narrates the creation of humanity and the arrival of the messengers of the light (Gündüz, 1997).

The theology depicts the human body more or less in the form of a prison consisting of the matter in which the divine spark is held captive. Meanwhile, it is a battleground for the powers of the light versus the dark. In this bifurcate division the dark forces, are in a persistent struggle to suppress the divine light in humans and keep these people engrossed with sheer materiality. In doing so, Ialdabaoth and his helping archons anticipate intercepting the revival of this divine spark. On the other side, the forces of light try to wake humanity and direct them toward the real wisdom which is gnosis. Gnostics mention about Jesus as a righteous messenger of the divine light in the same respect. According to them, he is the logos of the transcendent god and his campaign is to advertise gnosis to the people who are long deceived by the materialized traps of the fake-lying god (Tecimer, 2004).

Another point to be borne in mind as to the way the materialized world is given meaning through the Gnostic framework lies in the naming of Ialdabaoth-the demiurge. The name refers directly to the imperfection or deficiency as the name implies half side of creation or half-maker in the broadest sense. The demiurge is mentioned in gnostic texts as being flawed, a trait that manifests itself through creation. The sect gives meaning to the chaos, corruption, and suffrages taking place on earth as deficient by-products of a deficient creation process. Owing to the undeniable fact that the human body is also a piece of material carnation, it is also flawed and inclined to commit errors such as being forgetful and arrogant, lustful, cruel, and vulgar all of which are attributed to the characteristics of the demiurge (Pagels, 1989).

Gnostics mention the body as an obstacle for the divine spark to reach true wisdom. Without eliminating the earthbound urges of the body, true gnosis is to remain unreachable thus adjourning the salvation. On this very basis, Gnostics categorize people in three sections namely “pneumatics, psychics, and hylics (earthly)”. People belonging to the first category are denoted as being ready for salvation by means of the acquisition of the true gnosis. The second category stands for the people who are mistaken by their belief that the demiurge is the true-righteous god. As for the last one, hylics fall the least favorable among the three for being earthbound, and materialistic thus blind to the light (Rudolph, 1984:92).

Once the foreboding traits and according destinies are ascribed to each group of people, Gnosticism grants the chance for salvation for the pneumatics and psychics through a set of conditions. For an individual to be emanated from the dark, he needs to realize the dualistic nature of his creation which owes traits taken from two divine powers. To emphasize this vital step, Gnostics embrace the mantra “know yourself”. Despite the slogan may seem to be referring to the self-control of hedonist urges through a Buddhistic façade, it originally deals with the bifurcate dissolution of a human; one belonging to the transcendent divinity in the shape of a divine spark to guide the person to the true wisdom, and the other belonging to the demiurge which is basically what is known to be the matter as a crafted form of the darkness. At this point, it ought to be borne in mind that in the Gnostic worldview, darkness has been interpreted and referred to as an inferior being due to having been unaware of the divine unknowable god since the beginning of time. In other words, it will not be an unfounded claim to say that the cosmogony in Gnosticism commences by issuing two archetypal beings namely: Light

and Dark. Even after many aeons, eras, and the creation of countless creatures the two archetypal notions seem to be in essence (Robinson, 1977).

Once the initiate is abreast of the archaic polarization guiding his own creation, he is demanded to set out for a spiritual journey with the ultimate purpose of reaching salvation by means of light. This journey is bound by the absolute realization of truths and the attainment of according rules. Soon after the initiate is given insight into the duality ruling life, he is also notified of existing religions as futile and insufficient at best. The truth is, thereof, not a matter of acculturation, but a bestowment that can only be acquired through spiritual and psychical development (Rudolph, 1984).

The development under discussion can be explained as a state of awareness, and the only way to achieve this state is asceticism (Rudolph, 1984). Upon drawing a line to separate the spiritual and materialistic notions of life, the initiate is urged to turn away from the earthbound materialistic world. The reason behind this kind of perpetual abstinence is directly related to the fact that not only the urges of the body but also the means for the quenching of these desires are debauching tricks of the Demiurge. He uses these as a toy-rattle to keep people occupied with the material world and thus ignore the light. The total removal of materialized joys enables the initiate to be ready for the bestowment of gnosis. Once, the individual purifies his soul and purges the corruption of the demiurge, he becomes a competent adept to whom true gnosis can be revealed, thereby this person reaches light and achieves true salvation. In doing so, he recedes to his true, divine origins. The same notion forebodes the end of the days in gnostic narration when the struggle between the light and the dark turns passive after the triumph of the earlier thus bringing eternal peace (Gündüz, 1997).

1.2. Hermeticism

Having been a controversial phenomenon to provide a fulfilling definition as to its true identity, Hermeticism covers a variety of coinages ranging from the esoteric teachings of the ancients to the contemporary modes of thinking. Thus, it would be a restricting step to pin down the term to give it a precise meaning for such an act would amputate the abundance of lateral meanings. With this respect, Hermeticism is to be referred as an umbrella term for bringing together the wisdom of the ancients including the ones belonging to ancient Egypt and Hellenistic Greece with the mindset of the

modern man, particularly, with the mentality to give meaning to the mysteries of life. The wedding of the old and the new gives way to the third way, a philosophy that can be best nominated under this umbrella term, Hermeticism. For the pre-told condition, the sect of belief will not only supply old-esoteric teachings but also render this study as an elaborated mode of thought. Briefly, from this point on, Hermeticism embarks on a newer dimension to be referred as a modern philosophy, the origins of which were molded long ago by the wisdom of the old sages. All accordingly, this nature will enable the sect to bring esotericism, philosophy, and even science together to synthesize all and generate a common means that can also stand for each division equally. At this point, Hermeticism can be best-given definition through a metaphorical visual as in the case of a man with a multitude of faces yet a mind for all.

The cloud of mystery as to the true identity of Hermeticism originates with the debate about the true identity of Hermes who has the privilege to be the founding father of the system including the honor to name the sect after himself. The controversial allegations are inclined to identify the sage from different according points of view. For some, he is Enok (İdris in Islam) the messenger of God, for others, he is a gifted sage who achieved gnosis through esoteric initiations which had been transferred from the now-submerged continents Mu and Atlantis, and another group celebrates him as a non-corporeal identity which personifies the anthology of old esoteric teachings. Yet again, probably as the most celebrated fashion, there are attempts to regard Hermes as an amalgamated form of the Egyptian and Greek gods namely: Toth and Hermes which makes him great three times, a referential form of saying for the title Trismegistus. The diversity implied by the various struggles to identify Hermes seems to contribute to the definition of the sect itself edgewise. Despite the multitude of resolutions, Hermetic undertakings may well be compromised at a certain level (Kılıç, 2017).

The ancient mode of belief for Hermeticism commences with the genesis for the creation of lesser deities, arche spirits, and the universe. According to the narrative, the transcendental God labors an unidentified, shadow-like matter and crafts four arche elements. Meanwhile, he creates a second deity, Demiurge, in the form of a craftsman and appoints him to the creation of the seven celestial globes and administration of the fates. Next to him, the creation of the ethereal man takes place. Later on, Demiurge generates life that is bereaved of the nous (holy reason). At this point, the incorporeal man stares at the physical universe. Feeling enchanted by his own allure he forfeits his

divine spirituality with a corporeal carnation due to this materialist enmeshing (The Divine Pymander, 1650).

The passage illustrated above demonstrates 'the fallen man's motif, and Hermeticism is inclined to manifest its operative side at this point. Having mentioned the fall, and as suggested by the principle that everything is given meaning through its opposites, this degradation paves the way for a holy voyage of 'rise' in an according manner. A Hermetic principle, which is to be debated in detail later on, entails the correspondence and similarities between the macrocosm and microcosm through the parable "as above, so below" (The Emerald Tablet of Hermes). At this juncture, the fall of the man which resulted from being mesmerized by the physical matter necessitates the likewise rise in being charmed by the divine light. In this respect, life on the earth turns out to be a fighting arena for mankind in which he is called for the light by the holy reason but at the same time, his spirit is tempted by the material world incessantly. In this clearcut encampment, while the transcendental god and the traits spreading from him such as holy reason, love and light occupy the good; the material body and the earthly avarice erect the anti-side of this, thus the bad (Hermetica, 1992).

In the Hermetic worldview, life resembles to a carousel that is ever in motion, never losing impetus or appealing means to attract humans. This merry goes round and round through the administration of the Demiurge which manifests a circular motion. The circularity, at this point, embraces a special connotation for it depicts the movement of the seven celestial spheres in close semblance but at the same time alludes to 'the birth-death and rebirth cycles' in the background. In other words, Hermeticism depicts life on earth through a fall motif (Kılıç, 2017). Ethereal spirits of humans fall down to the earth from Saturn which is associated with nous and light. This fall brings about the carnation of the man in a corporeal body. At this point, he gains a new entity which is an amalgamation of the two opposing forces namely, light and matter, namely good and bad. Despite the unfortunate and pessimistic nature of the body at the hands of materialistic creation, man has the potential to rise above it and claim his once divine status and be present in the godhead. To achieve the state under discussion, man's unique pathway lies in the total abandonment of life's carousel with no attempts to come back. That is to say, he needs to leave his life, which is heavily enmeshed with the earthly, behind and set out on a spiritual-ascetic voyage towards the godhead through which divine reasoning is to be ever present to enlighten the whole pathway. A highly

celebrated principle of the sect has it that one who meditates and contemplates is summoned from the above. In brief, Hermeticism starts the illumination of the man by keeping him informed about his fallen state. Next, he is notified of his dualistic nature, the one which is vile and vain due to being materialistic and therefore bound by eventual perishing, and the other divine, which bears traces of the holy reason and the light. Now that the sect directly sets a border to differentiate one from the other, all that is left turns out to be responding to the holy call from the above (Ebeling, 2007; Evola, 1995; Kılıç, 2017).

Once a soul proves his merit to the divine wisdom and light, his ascension to the godhead takes place through the guidance and assistance of the celestial spheres. The soul purified of the material corruption is welcomed by the moon which is the reaper of the souls by separating them from the body(material). From then on, Mercury, Venus, the Sun, Mars, and Jupiter lead this divine voyage respectively for the ultimate destination ‘Saturn’. The soul to undertake this Jacobian ladder voyage obtains certain traits from each planetary globe by proving his merit and laudability. The genius of thought, nobility, love, beauty, justice, and wisdom stand as milestones embodied and marked by the planets. The soul who bears these virtues and proves his perfection reaches the great source of light, and regains his once-lost ethereal nature and state of immortality blessed by the divine light. In a way, the successful completion of the ascension grants a new identity for the man in the form of an astral god which is one level above the daimons, next to the artisan demiurge (Kılıç, 2007). Hermeticism makes use of the following quote to remind the followers of the divine potential which is present in their soul yet overshadowed by their material body. “Humans are mortal gods, gods are immortal humans” (The Divine Pymander, 1650, p.30)

The other scenario accounts for the downside of spiritual ascension. As has been highlighted before, the body is an amalgamated form of entity thus vulnerable to the temptations of divergent forces. The sect renders this composite nature by means of three units. ‘The spirit’ is created by the divine deity and falls captive in a ‘materialistic body’. Yet, this soul bears one more component which differentiates him from other living beings- ‘reason’, according to Hermetic mindset, is believed to be spreading from the holy god, quite similar to the light radiating from the sun. The way the light gives life to the beings, reason enables divine truth to root in the mind. Yet, once a soul turns back to the sermons of reason, the darkness of the matter encapsulates his spirit by drowning

the holy light. In such a condition, the intervention of the daimons takes place (Copenhaver, 1992).

These beings are ethereal entities and appear as messengers of the gods. Hence, a corrupt soul becomes subject to punishment which is to take place in the form of torments and difficulties by these divine beings. At this point, it must be borne in mind that the mishaps play the role of a strict tutor, rather than a cruel flogger. According to the sect, pain and stress are no different than shaking a sleeping man to wake up. Furthermore, the tutelage of agony enables man to control his will which is a vital gain in the rise for the light. However, once a soul terminates his life before emanating from the dark, upon his death the holy reason granted by the divine god leaves him thereon his soul is held captive in the dark and his cycle of life takes place again. This soul commences his reincarnation through the primitive forms of life and advances one more time to be a human again through different cycles of life to be given a chance to achieve holy gnosis (The Divine Pymander, 1650).

Contrary to Gnosticism, which is inclined to regard the cosmos-physical world as vile and wicked due to having been created by an imperfect deity, Hermeticism approaches the cosmos through a different perspective. The theology acknowledges the followers of the merits of an observant mind which is praised for contemplating the universe. Mind and reason are akin to a mirror in which the holy god manifests himself. The meditational and observational interaction with the cosmos, therefore, occupies a crucial place in the awakening of the mind. The reason behind the preceding resolution lies in the assumption that this kind of enmeshment enables the initiate to explore and sense the holy art of creation and, all accordingly, the exalted state of mind through inspection of nature renders the ear more apt to hear the subtle language of Gods. In short, Hermetics do not deviate from the mantra 'unveil the artist through the art'. (Yalçın, 2022)

Despite the earnings by the cosmos, Hermetics warn the adept about a vital step that must be taken eventually for the rise of the soul. A mind which cannot give up on the earthly revels of the world is prevented from the journey for the light. The restrictive nature of the materialistic world stems from its being associated with evil and bad. Hermetics believe that evil is a by-product of the creation which does not emanate from the holy god or the demiurge but rather sprouts from the materialistic nature in a similar

fashion of rusting and corrosion. Briefly, Hermetics places materiality in the core of the definition for evil, following this, they exclude evil from the light and the holy by highlighting the fact that god is good and so he wants man to be (Silva, 2021).

In the light of the archaic notions which have hitherto governed the whole universe, Hermetics develop a philosophy that not only embodies common teachings of divergent Hermetic sects but also draw a route-map for the adept to achieve spiritual ascension. This philosophy is known by the name ‘Seven Hermetic Principles’. The philosophy synthesizes the cornerstone teachings of Hermes including the cryptic text ‘The Emerald Tablet’ and thus frames the principles under discussion (Kılıç, 2017).

The first principle goes under the name of ‘The Principle of Mentalism’. Hermetics regard everything as a colorful and multifarious manifestation of a living mind. They refer to this belief as the motto has it ‘The All is mind and the universe is mental’. For this principle, a living and active spirit can be credited for being the sole reality in everything that exists. In a sense, the spirit is a living mind which is universal and eternal, however unknowable and impossible to define in its nature. This mind projects itself through beings and phenomena which thus mediate a bridge for the mind of the man. Hermetics celebrate the vitality of this principle by emphasizing the fact that understanding this principle enables the adept to notice the laws which govern the Mental Universe and use these laws for his own good and development (Kybalion, 2009).

‘The principle of Correspondence’ notifies the followers of the philosophy that different levels of life and beings are correspondent with each other. The belief is verbalized by the famous saying ‘as above, so below’. The thorough comprehension of the principle provides the adept to decipher secrets of the nature. Man’s potential, in this essence, falls short to handle divine plans, yet again, the principle promises the discerning of the planes of reality beyond the comprehension of the human effort. Old masters of the sect would cherish correspondence as the most crucial means for the exploration of the Hermetic arcanum. Their mantra would render as reaching the unknown by reasoning on what is known (Kybalion, 2009; Lalvani, 2021).

Hermetics acknowledge the followers of a universal principle as to the nature of the beings. In essence, they regard motion as an ever-present feature governing the existence of every being. These entities are in an incessant condition of motion and

vibration. ‘The Principle of Vibration’ also accounts for the various manifestations of the universal mind by means of the divergent levels of vibration. The more the vibration is, the higher a being occupies a place in the hierarchy of things. Likewise, the same condition explains the spiritual and mental planes as energy vibrations tuned at different levels. Based on this, the right application of the principle may well enable the adept to control his own and even others’ mental vibrations (Kremmerz, 2019; Kybalion, 2009).

‘The Principle of Polarity’ derives its functionality from the duality of the beings. In other words, every being goes through existence by generating its opposite, however, in the end, the similar and the different are rendered the same in nature. A case example would be wisdom and ignorance. Though both are the intellectual planes of mind, the difference is the presence of the experience and learning or vice versa. That is to say, things are bound by polarity, however, this does not totally alienate each other. Hermetics believe that the nature governing the opposites is a unique one. Thus, these poles are apt to be brought together. The notion to enable this hard labor is mostly based on the vibration principle. Cold and warm are indeed different levels of vibration. All accordingly, similar to feeding cold heat to turn it warmer, Hermetics master the art of alteration for the purpose of transitions across polarities. By the right practice of the principle, therefore, evil and hate can be converted to good and love similar to any other traits which stand as opposites (Humble, 2019; Kybalion, 2009).

‘The Principle of Rhythm’ delineates the prime art of mental alchemy. In essence, the principle elucidates all beings in a flowing motion meanwhile commuting between opposite polarities. The pendulum-like swing of the alteration plays the role of a messenger reminding the other end of a certain characteristic. The one that rises is bound by falling and likewise, the inside brings about the outside. The same mode of logic can be applied to other opposites all of which are to prove that the rhythm of the pendulum applies the foregoing principle to all beings. Besides, this principle manifests itself in natural phenomena too. The rise and the fall of civilizations, youth and old age even inhaling and exhaling are the outward exemplifications of the condition. The swing is immense in its nature and therefore invincible. The adept who is aware of the principle may not be able to stop the swinging motion however he will be able to polarize himself at the desired point in order to neutralize the negative effect of the rhythm. In doing so, he achieves a balance of mind which brings harmony to his life and immunity to the destabilizations of the hardships (Browne, 2022; Kybalion, 2009).

The law of causality directly brings about a never-changing dynamic for the phenomena that have been and are to be experienced around the universe, and this dynamic can be best rendered as the mutual relationship between the effect and the cause. By way of the preceding explanation, every cause is bound by an effect and the same fashion predestines every effect to be the fostering force of another cause. The chain reaction that has been elaborated on is placed at the heart of life and the existence of beings. Thereby, this law denies any sort of existence which has been initiated per se. 'The principle of cause and effect' depicts life as an interwoven pattern of causalities that operates on differing levels. The divergent planes of cause-and-effect chains result in the domination of the lower planes by the higher ones. A Hermetic adept, at this point, has the privilege of mastering the art of rising over the lower planes toward the higher ones. In doing so, he can be a cause instead of a mere result. Hermetics believe that the customs of life, our hereditary nature, and personal characteristics are elements that are prone to be degraded to lower planes of causality. Nevertheless, the successful application of the principle enables the individual to swap his pawn-like position and gain the faculty to be the moving hand. What should be borne in mind at this juncture is that no matter how effective the wake of mind provided by the principle is, an adept is to never emanate from the principle totally, yet he has the prerogative of administrating his own plane (Brakke, 2011; Kybalion, 2009).

'The principle of gender' claims the presence of masculinity and femininity in every being across all levels of the creation. The principle itself is the sole core of the creation otherwise no kind of generation would be possible. Gender principle manifests itself on different levels including physical, mental, and even spiritual. It is an incessant force that flows through all beings by means of creation, existence, and revivification. According to the Hermetic worldview, all beings, including men and women, bear both male and female principles. The wedding of these two poles gives way to the generation of beings (Silva, 2021; Kybalion, 2009).

According to a Hermetic narration the world provided water, air, and earth for building what would be later on called a human, yet this sculpting was void of spirit. This essence was later on granted by the fire of the sun thus giving way to the emergence of the holy fire. Ever since mankind has been in an ongoing search for this fire to gain access to the mysteries of the universe. Quite the same as how it was gifted once, the holy sparkle awaits to light the holy fire within the Hermetic bodies up above. The sun

at this point appears both metaphorically and as a real body of agent in the rising of the man. Hermeticism lays the way before the adept which has been mentioned above. However, the holy voyage demands solemnly three challenging prequels. The adept to undertake this burden is tested by radical means. First of all, he is called for total desistance from pleasures and desires. Upon this, he is tested with rigorous mental examinations. The ones who prove their laudability are granted Hermetic axioms and road maps toward spiritual ascension. Hermetics strongly favor the mentality that once a self is in total accord with the spirit, eternal means cast an absolute reflection onto the mind. Thereof, the mind in this condition is equipped by the faculties of the holy spirit. In a way, this resembles to the wings Daedalus has been waiting for long yet, contrary to the myth, this time getting closer to the sun promises the ultimate salvation. To put it succinctly, Hermetics believe in the wake of the fallen man by means of holy light and divine truth. Emanated from his material handicaps, the soul is reminded of his archaic, elevated spiritual place and the ascension is initiated. If the sacred route map for the ancient Hermetics could be laid before the eyes, that would be, quintessentially, ‘there is no way but up’ ever since the celestial lights started to hint upwards.

2. THE OTHERWISE

2.1. The Dawning of an Idiosyncratic Overture

The Study of Harry Potter and The Silmarillion -The Lord of the Rings Series through Esoteric Resolutions of Gnosis and Hermeticism

“He who knows himself knows the All” Hermes Trismegistus.

“Gnosticism and Hermeticism both believe that a divine ‘spark’ is implanted in man, and that man can come to know God.

Glenn Alexander Magee

Through the Looking Glass

[Alice] “..Oh, Kitty! how nice it would be if we could only get through into Looking-glass House! I’m sure it’s got, oh! such beautiful things in it! Let’s pretend there’s a way of getting through into it, somehow, Kitty. Let’s pretend the glass has got all soft like gauze, so that we can get through. Why, it’s turning into a sort of mist now, I declare! It’ll be easy enough to get through-” She was up on the chimney-piece while she said this, though she hardly knew how she had got there. And certainly, the glass was beginning to melt away, just like a bright silvery mist... In another moment Alice was through the glass.

The reason for starting this chapter with an excerpt from Carroll’s fiction: *Through the Looking-Glass, And What Alice Found There* is to conduct a mental experimentation the results of which are to be expected highly operative in terms of justifying the approach this study has undertaken. The scrutiny, under discussion, questions the attitude Alice assumes towards the mirror. Is it her wish to change the mirror into a door opening to a fantasy world that inaugurates the story, or has the mirror always been a door and Alice is the first to discern this arcanum? Though presenting an answer to these questions in hopes of unanimous appraisal is a hard deed, the most plausible option would be ‘both’ for the fact that Alice’s wish for a passage through the mirror is responded with a helping hand by Carroll from the other side of the glass. Hero’s wish and writer’s hand come together to author a magical story in which the impossible is rendered possible.

By deriving incentives from the preceding resolution, this study embarks on exhibiting how *The Lord of the Rings* and *Harry Potter* stories, which are authored respectively by Tolkien and Rowling, can be re-evaluated through an esoteric approach. In deconstructing the face meaning of the texts, another dimension of meaning is believed to be dawning on the readers. Similar to the relationship mentioned above, for the exploration of the shadowed latent meaning both the reader and the authors collaborate on the edges of what is known and what is yet to be. In other words, the literal tango for this study must definitely take two parties: a writer having hidden the meaning with clues and a critical reader to trace and unearth it.

The marriage of the writer and reader for the esoteric genesis has two sub-branches in collaboration. In other words, the study makes use of the reference ‘esotericism’ as an umbrella term to denote Gnosticism and Hermeticism. The mentality behind this inclination lies in the fact that both sects favor spiritual purity for the development and ultimate salvation (gnosis per se) of humanity and they hint at total ascetism as the only means to this end. Despite minor differences to handle cosmos and chaos, both sects consider “materiality” as the responsible agent for the “downfall and corruption of man” (Demir, 2011, p. 21; Kılıç, 2017, p.148). W. Nicholas (2009) implies this fact “In the cosmos, space and time have a malevolent character and may be personified as demonic beings separating man from God.” (16) Furthermore, the sects demand the requisite insight into the holy spark in the body by advertising it as “Within each natural man is an "inner man," a fallen spark of the divine substance. Since this exists in each man, we have the possibility of awakening from our stupefaction..” After all, Hermeticism is generally regarded as a sub-branch to Gnosticism (Demir, 2011, p.19).

The reason for the selection of LOTR and HP as the focal sources of the study, therefore, can be cited best for the particularly convergent inclinations of the narrations to handle the nature of the darkness, thus malice. Despite being both governed by a Gnostic and Hermetic mindset, while LOTR manifests a primary orientation to locate the evil through Gnostic cosmogony, HP deals with the evil from a more materialized perspective by associating it with matter therefore the narration bears a more conspicuous Hermetic disposition.

As it has been debated in detail before, Gnostic theology informs the generation of the evil with the birth of a second deity who is named demiurge. This deity rules darkness, a referential place noted for being distant from the god and void of holy light. There, he unjustifiably, claims to be the sole divinity, and for the fact that he cannot discern the transcendental god, he is referred to as being stupid, arrogant, desirous, and wrong (Tecimer, 2004).

Following a rather similar lineage with Gnostic teachings, Tolkien regards the second deity in his fiction as the sole responsible for the emergence of malice. The celestial song inaugurated by the God-Eru is frequently interrupted after the discrepant chanting of the lesser deity Melkor. Contrary to divine theology in which Satan is a responsible agent for evil but has no talent whatsoever to create, Tolkien's Melkor stands in a pantheon of demi-gods who can contribute to the creation. In doing so, Tolkien opens an alternative channel for the relocation of evil. The fictionalized deity of *The Silmarillion*, thus LOTR, appears before the reader as a source for evil. For the preceding inclination, it can be deduced that Tolkien embraces a dualistic nature while debating the matter of evil and good. The degradation commenced by Melkor's disorder obtains another Gnostic semblance through the story of the Silmarils and trees of Telperion. The trees known by the name Telperion are unique creations because of the fact that they can illuminate the world with the holy light and make it a friendly place for life. This bothers Melkor's mind for two reasons. First, the light of the trees has its source in the archaic holy light which is in the monopoly of Eru and which, again, Melkor desires to possess alone. The light in fiction is presented as a stand-in for the force of creation. By holding it as the sole authority, Melkor wants to be the only one. When he fails to do so, he alters his stance toward the light by embracing a more violent approach: He destroys the trees by feeding the light of theirs to a monstrous spider incarnate of darkness, thus gives an end to the light on the earth. Nevertheless, he does not content with this destruction and embarks on searching for ways to acquire the Silmarils. These gems are celebrated unique object for containing the holy light inside, and this seduces the nefarious deity to take wicked actions to claim them at all costs.

When the demiurge of Gnostic theology is juxtaposed with Melkor of Tolkien's fiction, the desire to be the only god to cherish omnipotence marks them considerably similar. Tolkien's vile deity has primarily nothing to do with the folks of life, he is after means of overthrowing the transcendental god. The same trait is visible in Demiurge's

deeds too. Upon his generation in darkness, the blind god declares his being the ‘only one’ yet this claim is hampered by numerous interferences of light agents. When Melkor steals the Silmarils, he cannot touch them without burning his fingers. In depicting the gems as a reason for agony to Melkor, Tolkien not only separates the incompatible natures of dark and light but also marks the unmerited impotency of this vile deity to monopolize the holy light. Thereon, means of light have always been reasons for deterrence for the vile beings and Melkor makes his mark in history as being an eternal captive in darkness. The foretold condition reveals dearly in Gnostic terms because upon demiurge crafts the first man out of darkness, he cannot achieve to give him life. The sculpted body of the man gains motion and animation when the spirit is breathed into it by Sophia (wisdom). This spirit comes from the god in the form of a holy spark, and this very light is an agent for the man to challenge the demiurge and return the soul to its original divine position. By this means, Gnostics expect the total defeat of demiurge when myriad souls start shining in holy light and wash the dark away totally (Gündüz, 1997).

For debated reasons, Tolkien’s Melkor stands as a substitute for the Gnostic deity demiurge. The fictionalized notorious deity spoils the divine nature by fathering evil. He wants to dethrone the transcendental god and declare his sovereignty only. To do so, he struggles for the means of the holy light which indeed turns out to be an agent in his total defeat. When accompanied by numerous examples from Tolkien’s fiction in which darkness is defeated by holy light, ‘Melkor’ changes his face appearance as a diabolic entity to the primordial source for diabolicity as a discrepant deity. In this regard, the formidable ‘Sauron’ figure from LOTR series can be tagged as a powerful demon, Satan, or more precisely an archon who are malevolent assistants of the Demiurge.

The word Arkhon is translated into English from Greek as the ‘ruler’ and an archon is primarily preoccupied with intervening the thoughts, feelings, and actions of humans to alter them from spiritual ascension. They are cited among the furthest that a being could be from God and held responsible for evil temptations (Denzey, 2013, p.135). When the fact that Melkor’s avarice to be the only deity is condensed with Sauron’s ring to rule all folks of Middle Earth is taken into consideration, this villain can be deduced drawing great similarity to a diabolical archon in assistance with the deimurge. Tolkien manifests this fact in ascribing a different generation to Sauron from

that of Melkor's. While Melkor is a Vala, a secondary deity in the hierarchy after Eru, Sauron is an oblique primordial spirit that goes under the name Maia.

Tolkien's Sauron is a notoriously wicked character who does not hesitate to commit sorts of crime. Nevertheless, what distinguishes him as a diabolical being exhibits itself in his desire to rule elves, dwarves, and humans under his dominion by means of a fraternity of rings. The web of rings he weaved acts as vile agents for him to control others' emotions, thoughts, and actions. Once infiltrated into a mind, he seduces him to conduct evil deeds. When scrutinized in detail, all of these deeds prove to be serving his diabolical agenda to expand his dominion as the only ruler. At this juncture a trait of the villain proves great potential to unveil an esoteric side of the narration, to achieve his ambition Sauron sinks a prophecy on the ring as: "One ring to rule them all, one ring to find them, One ring to bring them all, and in the darkness bind them; In the Land of Mordor where the shadows lie." (Tolkien, 2019, p.254) In this context, darkness serves as a highly intriguing primary agent for the villain in his campaign. Tolkien directly refers to dark and shadow for the crowning of the wicked labor if completed successfully. His exquisite concern for the dark to associate evil with can be re-evaluated as an organic bond placing the narration in the same lineage with Gnostic theology. In the traditional sense, while the evil is clustered around terror, violence, destruction, and death; the author manifestly refers to dark itself as etiquette for the generation, expansion, and eternal incarceration of the evil all of which procure prominent similarities with Gnosticism.

On the other side, Rowling authors the story of a child who has recently stepped into the magic world. The narration does not mention about a genesis for the birth of magic or the evil, instead, the storyline carries features and references that can easily be associated with the initiation of an individual into the Hermetic world. In this respect, what Harry has been through during the whole narration has the potential to be reinterpreted as the successful completion of a Hermetic spiritual journey towards a Gnostic wake.

Rowling's sturdy villain Voldemort and his master guide Gellert Grindelwald are exceptional characters for choosing the dark side of wizardry. Grindelwald's separationist campaign for the sake of wizardry and muggle worlds turns into a feudal fascistic state in Voldemort's hands which is heavily ethnic oriented. Nevertheless,

neither character can be fully pinned as the source of the evil for the fact that they increase the destruction and magnitude of dark magic which has hitherto existed. Yet again, Rowling leaves no room for doubt that Voldemort's inner decay, despite his outward rising power, stems from being corrupted by dark magic. As a young student, when Voldemort consults with his teacher about the Horcrux spell, old but kind-hearted Slughorn warns him against it calling the magic 'very dark stuff!' repeatedly. Notwithstanding the words of caution, the young villain searches for means to perform the spell. Thinking that it would be a hypothetical question Slughorn discloses the following:

"Well, you split your soul, you see," ..and hide part of it in an object outside the body. Then, even if one's body is attacked or destroyed, one cannot die, for part of the soul remains earthbound and undamaged. But of course, existence in such a form ..."

...

[Voldemort] "But how do you do it?"

"By an act of evil — the supreme act of evil. By committing murder. Killing rips the soul apart. The wizard intent upon creating a Horcrux would use the damage to his advantage: He would encase the torn portion —" (Rowling, 2005, pp.631-633)

Voldemort not only ignores his teacher's warnings but also performs this dark magic seven times, all repeatedly making him more corrupt and earthbound. When Harry has encountered his enemy before, the Dark Lord mentions the preceding earthbound life form being "less than the meanest ghost. . . but still .. alive."(Rowling, 2005, p.653) When scrutinized in detail, it appears that Rowling associates corruption with darkness and dark magic, additionally she embodies the vile nature through dark and sinister objects. Deathly Hallows can be cited as clearcut examples in this respect. Elder wand to be the most powerful, the stone of resurrection to evade death and revive the dead, and the cloak of invisibility to escape the enemy eyes; they all serve for offensive, exploitative purposes and contrary to the common belief, they cause more damage than the benefit, if any, they provide.

Cursed relics in which Voldemort has encased parts of his soul are presented as dark objects in the forms of a ring, diary, diadem, locket, cup, and snake. In other words, the villain of the story achieves a pathetic kind of immortality by means of earthbound objects. This condition is rather significant in Hermetic terms due to the fact that the sect assumes the presence of evil as a by-product of materiality (Kılıç, 2017). That is to say, the evil nature and corruption result from the material side of humanity. Rowling's

fiction presents perfectly compatible examples for this Hermetic axiom. To be more earthbound, Voldemort defiles the pureness of his soul by dividing it into fragments and encapsulates these dark remnants through dark magic in dark objects. By the same token, he holds the fame to be known as the Dark Lord and he uses darkness (dark magic) as a binding force to control sinister beings such as Dementors and giants and to unite his followers under a flag. The preceding premises can be deconstructed to unearth the Hermetic relationship between worldliness-materiality and corruption. Similar to Tolkien, Rowling locates the dark and corruption at the heart of evil and malice. The bitter nature of divergent characters all sprout out of the foretold earthbound, therefore dark nature. The novel trend of both authors closely links the malice with the matter and the stories of the evil characters in either narration can easily be deconstructed to unearth the esoteric latency to assist the foretold claim so as to evil and dark.

In order to defeat the dark, both Tolkien and Rowling follow a Hermetic route map for ultimate gnosis. While the earlier esoteric approach endorses the mental and spiritual preparation of the initiate for the enlightenment through a set of challenges in which vile traits of materiality are interchanged by holy virtues, the latter refers to the ultimate destination for a purified soul in the god-head which takes place in the form of a spiritual knowledge beyond five senses, acquisition of which is a direct referent to the real divine human nature. Hoeller (1992) refers to this fact in the following words:

Man does not attain the knowledge that awakens him from these dreams by cognition but through revelatory experience, and this knowledge is not information but a modification of the sensate being... Before the awakening, men undergo troubled dreams (62).

To this end, both authors encourage their heroes to a spiritual journey in which hardships prepare them for the holy wisdom. Distancing from the desired, and ultimate total ascetism from the matter are placed as the key gains of the way. In return, each successful move of the heroes is awarded by a virtuous power of God. When attained as all, the powers under discussion function like a Jacobian ladder for the ascension of the soul toward the light. Thereby, the heroes convert from earthbound to divine by the bestowment of gnosis. Frodo's arrival at Undying land in peace and Harry's separation from Voldemort's dark soul in a train station which he has hitherto carried next to his own are the final milestones in their struggle. When the face meaning is stripped for a deeper one, the deconstructed ending for each narration blesses its hero with a new

nature: veteran but laudable, purified from the worldliness and equipped with virtues thus exalted to the true divine place.

2.2. The Endless Fight: Light versus Dark

In absentia lucis, tenebrae vincunt.

Upon forcing his way into the apartment of Picasso, a Gestapo police officer points his finger at the famous painting Guernica² and asks solemnly “Did you do that?” and the painter answers subtly “no, you did!” The wordplay between the two men would be congratulated as a mechanical manifestation of what Derrida would simply call ‘a deconstruction process’. The elusive notion of the text to denote a multitude of meanings has given way for the same face to stand for a variety of reflections, all different yet unique in their source. This multi-dimensional nature of the meaning not only provides a richer reading but also creates an aura of magic to mystify the text by promising yet-to-be discovered novel meanings.

The main incentive and motivation of the following study are derived from the ever-rising urge to explore the aforementioned latent resolutions. Despite the storylines of *The Lord of the Rings* and *Harry Potter* series stand as remarkable examples of what is broadly categorized as fantasy and adventure, for a critical eye neither work falls short to summon the reader into the realms of esoterism. The spiritual expedition under discussion necessitates the reconstruction of the story elements which have hitherto been given meaning as the structural fluctuating of the plot. Though the attempt undertakes to expose the potential readings through a deconstruction process, it, at the same time, does not diminish or push the adventure marvels of the stories. In other words, the labor is solely after enriching the meaning elucidation process of the texts by altering the point of view. To put it succinctly, a Derridean quotation can give insight for the scholars into the enigmatic cocoon of the undiscovered which enlightens the intellectual minds as to the nature of the language and writing as follows: “The traditional[!] statement about language is that it is in itself living and that writing is the dead part of language” (Derrida, 1983). In this respect, tracing down esoteric elements of the storylines under

² Pablo Picasso’s work depicting the German aerial bombing of the Basque town.

discussion can, in essence, no longer be mentioned as a struggle to dominate meaning through a frame but rather an attempt at the animation of a multitude of meanings on the dead textual fields.

A Struggle of Light versus Dark

In *Harry Potter* and *The Lord of the Rings* stories, respective writers Rowling and Tolkien author worlds which are elegant examples of the marriage between fantasy and magic. The writers' fiction allows the marvels of the brain reach to an astonishing level in terms of both creativity and adventure. The storylines advertise and depict in detail the extraordinary, sometimes exciting but mostly perilous journeys of two heroes. Despite the middle-agedness of Frodo of LOTR, neither character can be fully credited for having a vast knowledge of life and experience. In this respect, Harry and Frodo bear the blissful innocence of negligence. In their worldview, life is small and safely routine with hardly any room for thrill and excitement. Harry lives in a windowless cabinet under the stairs of his aunt's house. As for Frodo, he enjoys the life of a common Hobbit in a boringly dull village.

Until this point, readers are provided with nearly nothing to mark either as a distinguished individual from others. Both characters are predominantly made distinct for being ignorant, in a state of subtle innocence. Nonetheless, upon the intervention of a bizarre sort of risk that threatens not only the heroes' life but also the destiny of the whole world, neither cherishes the state of stagnant cycles of their lives.

Harry is initiated into the world of magic and is assigned the task of defeating his life-long feud Voldemort. Frodo, on the other hand, shares a similar destiny in his quest for destroying the ring whereby marking the end of a nefarious enemy, Sauron. Both stories exhibit great artistic geniuses in vivifying storylines with the diversity and plurality of elements that are to be found within a structuralist framework. Suspense provided by the elements of mystery and adventure, quite similar to two lighthouses: one in the beginning and the other at the end, keeps the readers on track all the time until the end; when two formidable enemies are defeated forever and happy days are promised by a veteran generation who have suffered too much for this.

The stories under discussion are presented to the reader within the context of fantasy-adventure for the debated points and such kind of resolution does not prove a fallacy. Still, an alteration in the vantage point and re-evaluating the texts through

likewise lenses enable the readers with a novel meaning which has been overshadowed and is yet to be explored. All accordingly, HP and LOTR stories promise a newer genesis of meaning through the framework of Gnosticism and Hermeticism. Once the principles of deconstruction are activated on the storylines, the dark sides of the texts expose themselves and latent elements of meaning start to loom within the newly lit aura of luminousness. In this context, Harry's and Frodo's fantastic journeys forfeit their façade meaning for a deeper one in which both characters set out for a Hermetic voyage in pursuit of achieving gnosis.

The structuralist scope of the fantasy, though not necessarily, follows a certain morphology via which elements of the genre are activated for the sake of advertising certain values such as courage, wisdom, and pure love (Harty, 1996; Prothero, 1990). *The tale of Beowulf, the Odyssey, Arthurian Legends, and the Story of Bluebeard* can be mentioned as fitting examples of the pre-told condition. Despite the fact that a similar inclined trend is observed to govern the storylines of HP and LOTR at the surface meaning, the latest fashion for the genre inspires the heroes heartily to dig deeper and unearth a latent but greater meaning out of the adventure. In this essence, it would be a restrictive and blinding step to ignore the vast layer of the secondary meaning and try to suffice by the apparent resolutions. What is meant at this point directly notifies the intellect that values of 'courage, wisdom and love', which have been traditionally referred to as the ultimate destinations for the genre fantasy, are indeed milestones to hint at a meaning beyond, which is greater in magnitude yet shadowed by the distancing from the critical eye. In this context, the study tailors the fashion under discussion to re-evaluate both fictions and to elaborate on how the traditional role of heroes in the genre undergoes a radical metamorphosis over the standard morphology to attach Gnostic-Hermetic resolutions with the storylines. Based on this, Harry Potter and Frodo Baggins are the deconstructed traditional characters who endeavour to venture beyond the sheer advertising of certain values by unveiling a sort of pilgrimage through which gnosis is to be earned through the parables of a Hermetic pathway.

Allah-the-Almighty delineates the difference between those who discern the truth and who fall short to do this in the following verse: "... Say, "Can the blind and the sighted be equal? Or can darkness and light be equal? ..."(Quran, 13:43) In this bifurcate dichotomy, while being sighted and light are qualities to be associated with the awareness and the righteous path; blindness and darkness pose the unfavorable

counterparts of these aforementioned traits, all accordingly entitling the wrong and the deviant path.

The analogy of the light and the dark does not limit itself to Quran. In the Bible, Jesus preaches to his followers to “walk as children of light” having called them “darkness once” (Ephesians 5:8) and in John 1:5 he mentions his campaign as a struggle of light to overcome darkness. A more drastic case example is illustrated out of Greek mythology where Zeus, the powerful and sovereign deity, rules life over clouds, in the sky (by drawing great similarity to the sun) and uses bolts as his favorable war weapon; his counterpart Hades rules the dead underground in the dark abyss and keeps a dark three-headed dog as his ever-notorious trademark. Even the gradual development of mankind owes much to this drastic division while naming its eras as ‘the Dark and the Enlightenment Ages’. Freemasons, similarly, use a checkered ground decoration to attract attention to the duality of human nature. Even works of art such as forms of drawing-painting and cinema make use of these qualities: while hideous-wicked figures are represented as shady silhouettes in dark clothes, the ones on the right path appear as people of light in white-clean clothes. Laconically speaking, birds sing under the morning sun and wolves prey at night.

The reference to the dark and light to create opposing camps for a struggle is also a quite trendy inclination in the art of literary fiction. The Bran castle which homes the notorious forefather of the vampires, Vlad Dracul, is a place on the edges in nearly all kinds of sinister terms. Stoker’s fiction wraps the castle in a veil of darkness (Stoker, 1993). Accordingly, Vlad Dracul’s fear of the light and his over agility and dashing dare in the dark are two traits that stand as a perfect fit for what has been hitherto debated. To sum up, while the light is a quality to ascribe the good, righteous, favorable, and heroic qualities; darkness delineates and connotes the bad, wronged, notorious and villain-like traits by occupying counterparts for the other.

The difference between the light and dark posits immense importance in Gnostic and Hermetic Theology and follows a similar pattern of thought. As it has been debated in detail earlier, the self-thought of the transcendental god gives birth to wisdom (Sophia) which is at the same time a kind of degradation due to the fact that it connotes a form of distancing from the god. Once wisdom gains consciousness, she gazes into the abyss(darkness) and there she gives birth to the demigod(demiurge) in the form of a

miscarriage. While the earlier deity rules wisdom and light and is referred to as the god of light himself, the latter one embarks on the materialistic creation of the universe in the darkness. There he tries to stir his dominion on created beings by elucidating his power from the dark (Demir, 2011; Gündüz, 1997).

As it may grab the attention of a critical eye, the archetypal elements of genesis appear to be 'light and dark'. The Gnostic beliefs mention the transcendental god as a benign deity who is beyond the perception of human minds and who tries to wake humans by means of bestowing them true wisdom. The demigod, on the other hand, is an evil deity born out of darkness. He crafts the darkness into a materialized form and uses it for deceiving humans in order to keep them in the dark, oblivious of the wisdom of the light (King, 2003). As it is clearly mentioned, the powers of divine use light as a means for providing awareness and breaking away from the materialistic prison of the demigod. The wicked powers, however, use darkness to suppress humans and exploit them. At the end of the day, what starts and finishes through hundreds of pages turn out to be a clash of light versus dark.

The storylines of *Harry Potter* and *The Lord of the Rings* narrate a grim and destructive war going on between two camps: namely light and dark. The writer of the story *Harry Potter*, Rowling, marks the hero with a scar on his forehead which reminds him throughout his life of a formidable enemy who is after him and who, also, managed to annihilate hundreds of innocent people including his parents and beloved ones. Yet, even before his name, Harry learns about his enemy's notoriety upon his title 'the Dark Lord'.

Through pages and volumes, those who suffer from his atrocities and are too intimidated to utter his name, therefore, call him 'the Dark Lord'. Voldemort is a figure which has many traits that can easily be attributed to or associated with the dark. He sets out his frenzy of mass killing parties at night preferentially. He wears dark and uses it as a means of disguise, a uniform for his fellow adherents and a lethal weapon quite occasionally. Needless to say, he-himself is a master of the dark arts. He practices unforgivable curses that are also named 'dark arts' to torture, to control even to kill his targets. His mastery of the dark lore advances beyond any known experiences. In a duel with Harry, an avid and dedicated Voldemort supporter Bellatrix LeStrange cries out her expertise on the dark magic while she is announcing heartily that her master (Voldemort)

has taught him forms of dark magic which is far worse than his childish mind can presumably catch the glimpses of (Rowling, 2003, p.811).

Moreover, dark is also a never-changing regalia for the forces of the evil. The dreaded dark mark is a black symbol in the shape of a skull and serpent which has to be carried by the adherents of Voldemort. It serves as a means for summoning the adherents of the Dark Lord when it grows black and starts to hurt. It is also a sign of the presence of the dark forces around when it is projected as a colossal figure in the sky declaring a recent murder at the hands of Death Eaters (armed militia of Voldemort). The terror of the dark mark is verbalized by Arthur Weasley who has long been challenging the dark forces on the good side as in the excerpt:

"...You-Know-Who and his followers sent the Dark Mark into the air whenever they killed. The terror it inspired...you have no idea, you're too young. Just picture coming home and finding the Dark Mark hovering over your house, and knowing what you're about to find inside... Everyone's worst fear...the very worst." (Rowling, 2000, p.142)

In this respect, darkness is not only a binding force to unite the dark fraternity, but it also serves as a means to notify and celebrate the accomplishments of the death eaters. When Voldemort achieves to murder his long-lasting enemy Albus Dumbledore who is also associated with the head of the forces of the good camp, his adherents congratulate this deed by casting a dark mark on the death scene. Though the following was not cited by the author word by word, the portrayal of the scene reminds the readers of the drowning of the light into the prevailing darkness.

Last but not the least, Voldemort is a militant figure not only with respect to his mindset but also in the way he is in pursuit of handling life and conveying his views. Though he has an army of foul wizards who dare eagerly to indulge in any atrocities in accordance with his Lord's will, he also reinforces his armed groups by including dark creatures such as deviant giants, serpents, spiders, and of all, his favorite: dementors. All folks of his army spread dread on great scales yet the latest group takes the lead. They are intimidating, merciless, and soul-seeking ghost-incarnate creatures. Even the most daredevil Death Eaters avoid them and feel panicked when threatened to be handed over to them. A soldier in Dumbledore's army, Remus Lupin, mentions them as follows:

"Dementors are among the foulest creatures that walk this earth. They infest the darkest, filthiest places, they glory in decay and despair, they drain peace, hope, and happiness out of the air around them... Get too near a Dementor and every good feeling, every happy memory will be sucked out of you. If it can, the Dementor will feed on you long enough to reduce you

to something like itself... soulless and evil. You will be left with nothing but the worst experiences of your life."(Rowling, 1999, p.193)

The semblance of these creatures to the Dark Lord is of an undeniable clarity in the fact that both characters feed on darkness, despair, and agony. Dementors are cloaked dark figures. Their appearance takes place at night or in dark weather, they bring gloom and fear wherever they go. Despite the fact that these creatures are supposed to be under the service of the Ministry of Magic to guard prisons, they prove to be loyal to Voldemort and join him in his campaigns. Quite often, the Dark Lord unleashes these creatures to hunt Harry and in the last battle, numerous Dementors augment their Lord on the dark side.

Similarly, dark is a major theme in *The Lord of the Rings* by exceeding the magnitude of the sinister connotations when compared to the *Harry Potter* series. In Tolkien's fiction, the dark emerges not only as a realm of sovereignty but also as a destructive and abusive operative force. It stands nearly as an arche matter. By showing great similarities to the Gnostic genesis, Tolkien's fiction augurates the creation process through the divine music of the sovereign god Eru Iluvatar. His song is accompanied by the lesser gods in coherence. The celestial music commences the genesis. All that is attributed to the good, beautiful and peaceful turn out to be the generation of the song. Yet, another lesser deity, who is named Melkor, breaks the harmony in the song by chanting his own. The uncompromising notes spoil the previous divine creation. Melkor's divergence not only infuses disorder but also disintegration. The other lesser gods who are expected to accompany the divine song become distracted and feel obliged to echo the chaos. The fractionalization of the music brings about another form of creation that can be rendered as different, deviant, unharmonious thus evil and unwelcome (Tolkien, 2007).

Upon the creation of the world, the lesser gods who are mentioned in the storyline as 'Ainur or Valar' take refuge in this newly built home and with their music, they continue the labor of creation further. One of these divine powers turns out to be 'Melkor' who has been mentioned before as responsible for the unharmony of the divine music. Rather than embellishing the world and making it a suitable place for the elves and humans who are yet to be born, Melkor uses his power for corrupting any good thing that may blossom. His intolerance of the divine creation is attributed to his jealousy of the transcendental god 'Eru Iluvatar'. He is in pursuit of the divine light that can be also

named the force of creation. Despite the undeniable fact that the power under discussion is in the sole authority of Eru Iluvatar, he embarks on a vigorous struggle to claim it at all costs or at least, spoil it if he fails which seems to be quite often.

Each Vala bears a unique realm of power and capability. Ulmo, for instance, controls the water. Tulkas has the greatest strength and Yavanna vivifies nature. Likewise, Melkor has a direct mastery of darkness, fire, and ice. In a very similar fashion to Voldemort from the *Harry Potter* series, he uses the dark as his sovereignty. It is his flag and a visible boundary not only for his expansionist agenda but also a veil for blinding the eye of awareness and a cocoon for corrupting the divine creation.

In the storyline, Melkor takes refuge in the remote parts of Middle Earth where he diffuses darkness. In this enigma, he ventures into defiling the divine creation by conducting his own. He forges fire, dark and other elements for the service of his sinister goals. This kind of darkness-smith gives way to merciless dragons and serpents, gigantic ever-hungry spiders, vampires, balrogs (demons), and other forms of beasts and monsters. Despite their destructive force and knack, these units are marked with their imperfection, decadence and degradation. The foregoing inherent deficiency motif has a great potential to remind the critical intellects of the flawed creation process that has been undertaken by the demiurge in Gnostic theology (Pagels, 1976).

The topic can be given insight with the following facts: Orcs who have been elves once, are now ugly and disproportioned beasts, though dragons breathe fire and are able to destroy a unit of men within seconds, they are quite arrogant and overly self-confident. When these traits run in with their never quenched greed, these creatures turn out to be untrustworthy allies on the battlefield. One quite striking example, at this point, is Ungoliant- a huge spider weaving a web of darkness. He hungers for light but at the same time hates it. When this never-satisfied spider is not fed by his master Melkor, he dares to attack him in force causing a scream of agony that echoes throughout centuries in the region. The ever-common trait in Melkor's creation is the flaw motif. All these folks of fantasy bear qualities that can be easily labelled drawbacks or defects. In this respect, Tolkien's fiction resembles darkness to a blinding workshop, in which an imperfect divinity reinterprets prodigies of the holy creation into flawed beings. It is also quite striking that even before Frodo's journey starts in LOTR, the story commences with an epigraph as follows:

"Three Rings for the Elven-kings under the sky
Seven for the Dwarf-lords in their halls of stone,
Nine for Mortal Men doomed to die,
One for the Dark Lord on his dark throne
In the Land of Mordor where the Shadows lie.
One Ring to rule them all, One Ring to find them,
One Ring to bring them all and in the darkness bind them
In the Land of Mordor where the Shadows lie."(Tolkien, 2019. p:II)

When Melkor is defeated and imprisoned in the abyss, his war chief and assistant Sauron uses his craft and intellect to forge the rings. Despite these rings being meant to be kind gifts, they serve a dark purpose. Through these, Sauron follows the footnotes of his master and craves total sovereignty over the Middle Earth folks. The only ring of power is forged with one purpose: to dominate the others thus turning all the folks including elves, dwarves, and humans into slaves. At this point, the fraternity which is meant to be by the ring is consolidated by the binding in the dark and this very fate is imprinted on the ring as “One Ring to bring them all and in the darkness bind them. In the Land of Mordor where the Shadows lie.” (Tolkien, 2019. p:II)

With these in mind, darkness is not only a creational force or the insignia of one camp. It is a binding force that unites the evil forces together. Sauron’s prophecy is proven true by the nine kings who have bowed to the power of the ring. Despite being ordinary humans once, they undergo metamorphosis in dark and reappear as undead kings whose presence is bound by the ring and their master. Therefore, it is not a far-fetched claim to denote the darkness as a prison to corrupt the soul, if not a binding power.

Melkor’s deep abhorrence of the light does not confine the villain into the shades but encourages him to take more offensive approaches to let the present dark prevail evermore. This deed urges the diminishing of the light at all costs. For it is a well-known fact that the presence of light depends on the absence of darkness vice versa. This solid truth marks each unit as the enemy for the other. In Gnosticism, the truth at stake is a foundational principle. For the individual to wake, he needs to leave the sleep behind; for the light to prevail, the dark must retreat, and likewise for the acquisition of the gnosis, one must leave his earthly traits aside (Nock,1964).

What has hitherto been cited is meant to magnify the boundary between the dark and the light while emphasizing the fact that for either to survive, one is to be removed for good. This condition is exposed to the reader in Tolkien’s fiction through the lenses

of Melkor. When the world is enlightened by means of light-bearing towers, he annihilates them. Upon Valar³ venture into the creation of the light trees, he summons his dark spider to vacuum the light away by causing the world to be encapsulated in the darkness again. Despite the fact that he is a deity and his power exceeds the ones belonging to elves and humans, he cannot defeat the armies of Feanor (an elf clan chief) due to the creation of the moon and the sun. These planetary spheres of light cause dread among the dark armies and Melkor cannot release his armies before covering the sky with ash clouds so that the moon and sun fail short to illuminate the land.

Melkor's deep intolerance and fear of the light is a common handicap among the folks of the dark creation. Born a hobbit once, Smeagol abhors the sun and the moon nonetheless, mentioning them as if dreaded monsters after having been overly enmeshed with the ring. Meanwhile, his road company Frodo, who is a hobbit as well, is guided by the light bestowed by the Elven Lady Galadriel. Though these characters are originally from the same creation: a hobbit per se, they appear before the reader as the consequences of their own choices: one hobbit belongs to the light and the other one to the dark. The juxtaposition of the two characters retells the story when the eye takes a critical viewpoint to unearth Gnostic resolutions of the text.

Another pivotal marking of the dark manifests itself in the naming of the evil lords. Even though Melkor is once a respected Vala among the others, once he dares to steal the Silmarils (shining gems) to take the divine light away from elves and other Valar and massacres those who stand in his way, his name is damned forever and he is renamed as Morgoth which means 'the dark enemy'. In time as he increases his avarice, cruelty, and darkness accordingly; he is given a second name 'Bauglir' which means restricting or depriving. Both denominations are closely linked to the darkness, for it is a well-known fact in middle earth that Melkor's darkness serves for a variety of reasons and two foremost of all are blinding and restricting those whom he regards enemies or victims and secondly torturing and tormenting these targets. All accordingly, when Morgoth is defeated and imprisoned in the abyss, his chief assistant embraces the name Sauron, which also means 'Lord of darkness'.

³ Demi-gods on the side of light and good

What has been hitherto told leaves no doubt that the separation which is augurated in holy genesis and which manifests itself throughout the ages in the storyline by means of bizarre wars and myriad characters deepens the chasm between the factions, and consequently forces entities to gather around two camps: evil and wicked are referred broadly as men of darkness, and the ones standing against them serve the light by praising virtues such as goodness, friendship, and harmony.

At this juncture, light plays the other pivotal role in the factionalism of the two opposing powers. Indeed, it would be quite a precise definition to summarize the storyline as the fight between the light and the dark. Through the pages, despite the characters and events change, between the lines, the dark tries to strangle the light, and in return, light tries to wash away the dark. Tolkien's fiction presents an immediate bifurcate choice for the residents of his fantasy. Once and for all a choice is decreed, an according destiny takes shape imminently.

Speaking of choices, Tolkien lets the holy light be dispersed across the elements of creation. All lesser deities, supernatural spirits, common folks of earth, and many other forms of creation bear the sparks of light, for the fact that Eru, who has the exquisite privilege to hold the holy light in his dominion deservedly, lets the creation take place by bearing traces of this divine motif. That is to say, things which come into being carry a fragment of the holy light inherently. These sparks are stand-ins for the holy-unspoiled nature or the true wisdom and reflect themselves in the form of pure light. Darkness, in return, does not exist in essence but emerges as a by-product of decay and corruption. Balrogs, for instance, are once Maiar which are high spirits created by Eru. When they are appealed to and corrupted by the sinister plans of Morgoth, they undergo metamorphosis and change into strong demons wearing darkness as a cloak and using fire as an arm. Other forms of creation and the gradual change in the atmosphere of the places occupied by the forces of Morgoth undergo a similar transition. Once green and peaceful lands are drowned into dark shades under the sinister power. Prodigies of life forfeit their elegance and beauty for a sort of bizarre ugliness. To sum the condition up with a metaphor, Tolkien stages those characters as blank white sheets and encourages them to pass through an examination in which there are those who keep the white color as it is and the others who spoil and feel obliged to stains. In a nutshell, Tolkien uses dark not as an equal counterpart to light but rather as a defiled and begrimed

form of it. In a way, dark means the loss of the light-the true wisdom and purity in essence.

Saruman stands as an elegant figure for the condition which has been told above. He is a Maia himself and the most respected and knowledgeable sage who is also quite competent in magic. To show his heavenly and high spiritual status, he wears white and is mentioned as ‘White Saruman’. Despite all his previous merits, when he is tempted by the dark power, he starts to wear different colors rather than white. When he is criticized by Gandalf for his choice of coloring, he defends his mindset very intriguingly as follows:

“I am Saruman the Wise, Saruman Ring-maker, Saruman of Many Colours!”[Saruman] I looked then and saw that his robes, which had seemed white, were not so, but were woven of all colours, and if he moved they shimmered and changed hue so that the eye was bewildered.
“I liked white better,” I said [Gandalf].
“White!” he sneered. “It serves as a beginning. White cloth may be dyed. The white page can be overwritten; and the white light can be broken.”
“In which case it is no longer white,” said I. “And he that breaks a thing to find out what it is has left the path of wisdom.” (Tolkien, 2019, p. 259)

Upon his departure from the good side due to his greed for power, Saruman experiences a fall process that is similar to Melkor’s, Sauron’s, and many other entities who choose the dark side. In fiction, this takes place in the form of debilitating degradation. He is no longer respectful to the other living beings, he embarks on the total destruction of the forests to run his newly found war machines and factories and invokes the anger of the Ents. He is condemned for having a “.. mind of metal and wheels”(Tolkien, 2019, p.473). With these accusations, his new stance towards nature is condemned for being more exploitative and accordingly less respectful. Furthermore, similar to the wicked generation of dark deities, he reproduces a new form of evil beasts who can endure the daylight despite suffering from it. He presses these creatures into service to achieve his selfish avarice which is nothing but the ring. His greed for power over living beings deprives him of his highly respected status. In the end, albeit he has been the chief of the sages once, he is discharged by Gandalf and his staff is broken which is an act of debilitation. Upon his exile in a tower, Gandalf takes his place with the title ‘the white’ he wears the same white color that has been Saruman’s privilege.

The link between light and wisdom is a key concept in LOTR. This study also derives its mobility on this very basis. As it has been clearly stated above, entities of creation-especially the living ones – bear some sparks of wisdom coming from the

transcendental god Eru-Iluvatar. This possession urges the subjects of creation to be conservative of their authentic beings. The necessity arises from the authenticity of the divine music which has been celestially composed and bears the harmonious art of Eru's. So long as these virtues are kept intact, they provide a link to the righteous god. In this case, light emerges as a divine entity and a guide for the master plans of the true creation. It is an insignia as in the case of darkness but with one nuance: it is bestowed at birth and its presence means being authentic away from corruption and deviation.

Light also serves as a means of exploration for the elves and men. When the world is created, the divine art is spread around and light illuminates the eye to discern it. To make the world a more livable place, among the very first deeds of Valar, the provision of light takes place. There are numerous attempts at this: including stars, light towers, trees of light, the moon, and the sun. All of which help the folks of middle earth sustain a life that is more liveable.

Additionally, in the storyline, light serves as a mark of the exceeding divine power. Bearing traits such as being dressed in white or using the sacred flame of secrets are directly associated with being enmeshed with light thus an elevated status. Apropos of transcendence, the power emerging from the secret flame -or light in this case- is of a relic that is a remnant from the holy art of the transcendental god.

Tolkien's fiction leaves an abundance of chances for characters to examine themselves through their urges and more frequently with each other. When the evil beings invoke the powers of the darkness, this appears in the form of horrifying creepiness on top of extreme destructiveness. Though this condition is an ever-present trait in the units of darkness, one of the most salient examples can be the Balrog. This beast is a huge monster coming from ancient times. He is named Balrog-a strong demon-for his power and his divergence from the righteous path because of the fact that he has been an angel-like creature once. Upon his metamorphosis, he wears dark and fire. He uses a whip of flame and on the battlefield, he poses a threat even armies avoid challenging. Even so, in the old days, hundreds of them are killed by elves thanks to the sheer fact that these individuals are bearing the divine light in their eyes.

As another according example to the nature of light that can be used as an agent to defy darkness, Gandalf's duel with a Balrog in dungeons poses high value. When the wizard is confronted by the demon on a bridge, he challenges it crying out loud: "You

cannot pass... I am a servant of the Secret Fire[holy light], wielder of the flame of Anor. You cannot pass. The dark fire will not avail you, flame of Udûn [destructive fire of Morgoth]. Go back to the Shadow! You cannot *pass*.”(Tolkien, 2019 p.350)

Despite the fact that the story advertises chivalric struggle, courage, and accordingly many characters indulge in sword fights quite frequently; when the enemy is a supernatural entity, the sole weapon for the fellows of the good side turns out to be the light. When Frodo says farewell to Lothlorien forests which have been dwelt by the elves for many years, he is given a glass container as follows: “ ‘In this phial,’ she said [Galadriel], ‘is caught the light of Eärendil’s star, set amid the waters of my fountain. It will shine still brighter when the night is about you. May it be a light to you in dark places, when all other lights go out.’” (Tolkien, 2019 p.376) Lady’s soothsaying proves right when Frodo is attacked by a demon in the shape of a huge spider. Though this spider is immune to the attacks of steel, she is vulnerable to Galadriel’s light. Her defeat comes thanks to this light as well. Last but not the least, Frodo carries a sword that has been given as a gift by his uncle Bilbo before his departure from Rivendell. Though at first sight, it is an ordinary elvish blade, it proves its merit due to a faint light to warn Frodo of the dark forces nearby. In other words, the sword serves as a watch to detect and declare the presence of the enemy by means of light. With these in mind, another function of the light turns out to be its defeating power over the darkness.

Light is a major camp in the Harry Potter series as well, though Rowling’s story does not mention a genesis chapter for the appearance of the magic powers and the source for light or the dark, the roles played by the dark and good deities in LOTR series are staged out by the two ever powerful master wizards namely: Voldemort and Albus Dumbledore. Light is regarded as a pathway for the good wizards in the story. Those who choose the Dark Lord are regarded as deviants or lost ones. In a way, Rowling fosters the idea of being pure and spoilt in the same fashion as Tolkien. As a skilled writer, in her seven-volume fiction, she highlights incessantly that light and dark cannot coexist. Despite the fact that the storyline starts with a bitter kind of feud and long before Harry knows why, he finds himself in a cruel rivalry. Harry’s ignorance is not a condition affecting the character solely, Rowling keeps the readers in suspense till a prophecy is revealed years later. This prophecy is encoded in a glass globe. Though both enemies know that it bears great news as to their destinies, they do not know what

it encodes exactly for this prophecy can be received by its addressee first, in this case, Harry who has long been unaware of its presence.

"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...The one with the power to vanquish the Dark Lord will be born as the seventh month dies..."(Rowling, 2003, p. 453)

The prophecy above does not mark the inevitability of the feud only, when the stand-ins are brought to daylight, the unnamed ones gain an entity, then these entities peel off to wear new entities and as the process of deciphering reaches an end, there stands light versus dark again and as the prophecy states by leaving no space for doubt that "*and either must die at the hand of the other for neither can live while the other survives*". This is a direct reference to the truth that light and dark cannot coexist as a complete entity. The storyline is full of characters who appear as a member of one of the factions and, all accordingly, they regard possible salvation forever in defeating the other completely.

A rather striking support for the foretold claim lies in the life story of Harry. As an ordinary child at façade, he bears knacks and traits that no other kid may well be bestowed upon. Even before he starts mastering magic, he is quite competent in prompting phenomena that can be cited as brilliant examples of magic. Yet, on occasions, these ventures pass beyond the limit of the innocent and friendly. Harry can talk to snakes and understand them. He can read the ideas of Voldemort which, though seldom, helps him to gain the upper hand. Such luck is not a merit of fortune as it may seem at first, Harry's capabilities result from a previous mishap that dates back to his infancy years. Inadvertently, Voldemort turns Harry into a Horcrux, which means a part of Voldemort's soul lives in the child.

Every now and then, Harry feels this sinister presence with bitter experiences. If he is lucky, this takes place in the form of an acute headache. Worse still, he finds himself furious, gloomy, and ready to deem dark deeds, on top of this, the foretold presence alters his memory and haunts Harry to forfeit his hope for good days.

The presence of Voldemort in Harry is a secret that is shared by only a few people. In his final plan to defeat the dark lord, Albus Dumbledore confines this secret to one of his fellow-comrade saying that Harry is the last Horcrux and to defeat the dark lord for good, the hero is to die and this death must take place by the hand of Voldemort.

Quite clearly, what Rowling tries to pass to her reader with these lines is the condition that so long as one cannot purge his soul from the dark, light may not foster and prevail.

Upon Voldemort kills Harry and the latter revives thanks to a miracle, Harry finds himself in a train station in a dream-like condition. Despite the place being familiar to him, it is somehow different in his vision because a source of great light washes everything to clean and white. There he meets Dumbledore who passes away a while ago. While asking his mind so as to clarify the enigmas of his story, Harry also encounters the deceased soul of Voldemort in the form of a wounded helpless creature. Even though he asks repeatedly for a way to save him, Dumbledore stops the hero saying there is no help that they can provide. Upon this, the mist covering the station dissolves, and Harry knows for sure that the place is the famous King's Cross train station that students use to go to their magic school. There he separates himself from the miserable part of Voldemort and before he comes back to life to defeat him, Dumbledore encourages and congratulates Harry saying that "his soul is whole and completely his own" (Rowling, 2007, p.708). This scene marks the great ending for the series. The annihilation of Voldemort's soul can be deciphered as having credible Gnostic references in this respect, and on deeper allegorical levels, the departure from the station revoices what is coined in the theology as the purification of the soul: light shines, only after the dark washes away.

As previously mentioned, dementors are a group of scary-ghostly monsters who feed on the happy memories of their victims, and these creatures are known to inhabit the darkest places. When they target a person as their victim, they drain peace and hope to substitute them with dark feelings such as despair, decay, and soullessness. Once a body is exposed to their salient attacks, it turns out to be a lifeless corpse lacked of any good feeling, a state which is quite similar to these monsters'.

Another peculiarity of these grim creatures lies in the difficulty to defeat them. To ward off a dementor, a powerful sort of magic has to be cast. While muttering the words of charm 'expecto patronum' the wizard must reminisce a really happy memory as well. When these two come together, a magical creature-frequently in the form of an animal- appears in a body of light, and radiating light waves out of it expel the dementors so long as the magical creature exists. This is a difficult conjuring and not every wizard has the privilege to summon a Patronus guardian. Yet, to defeat the dark forces Harry

uses a perfectly shaped Patronus charm in the volume *The Prisoner of the Azkaban* as follows:

And there were the Dementors. They were emerging out of the darkness from every direction, gliding around the edges of the lake... They were moving away from where Harry stood, to the opposite bank... He wouldn't have to get near them...

....

And then it hit him — he understood. He hadn't seen his father he had seen himself — Harry flung himself out from behind the bush and pulled out his wand. "EXPECTO PATRONUM!" he yelled.

And out of the end of his wand burst, not a shapeless cloud of mist, but a blinding, dazzling, silver animal. He screwed up his eyes, trying to see what it was. It looked like a horse. It was galloping silently away from him, across the black surface of the lake. He saw it lower its head and charge at the swarming Dementors... Now it was galloping around and around the black shapes on the ground, and the Dementors were falling back, scattering, retreating into the darkness... They were gone. (Rowling, 2000, p. 406)

As it may be clearly observed by the example above, Rowling advertises light as a means for defeating the dark forces. Her fiction associates sad and gloomy feelings with the dark and she also underlines the idea that these dark feelings impeded the individual and hinder him to a miserable condition. The restrictive and alienating effect of the dark is embodied in the form of a dementor, all accordingly, the defeat of this creature lies in the successful completion of magic which incarnates in the form of light. In the end, it is no different to illuminate a room by means of lighting a candle. While talking about the condition at stake, Albus Dumbledore, the de facto chief of the good side, contemplates as indicated:

A word of caution: dementors are vicious creatures. They will not distinguish between the one they hunt and the one who gets in their way. Therefore, I must warn each and every one of you to give them no reason to harm you. It's not in the nature of a dementor to be forgiving. But you know happiness can be found even in the darkest of times, when one only remembers to turn on the light. (Ibid P:45)

Before drawing a conclusion, it will be illuminating to re-illustrate that in Gnostic theology, the genesis takes place in the form of degradation. This process is initiated by the self-thought of the transcendental god and it gives way to the birth of wisdom. The fall motif of the creation results from the condition that the birth of wisdom does occur as a form of distancing, hence the expression degradation. Once wisdom stares into the darkness, there she gives birth to the demiurge, a lesser deity who is responsible for creating the physical universe by reshaping the darkness. In his realm he declares his sovereignty and to be worshipped, he crafts humans. At this point, Gnostic theology acknowledges its adherents the ever-continuing struggle between the two deities. While the transcendental god is in pursuit of the emancipation of the person

through the bestowment of wisdom; the demiurge, on the other hand, wants him to be held captivated by means of the materialistic contexts, just to be his subjects (Luttikhuizen, 2004).

Even though scripts do not tell much about the nature of the former deity which results partly from its being transcendental and partly due to the lack of written texts, he is both mentioned as and associated with 'Light'. The light is also his medium in emanating the individuals from the dark and a guide in letting them trace and acquire true divine wisdom. It must be borne in mind that despite the light being referred as the opposite of dark in the sect, it also implies the connotations of seeing and discerning, thus awareness (Corrigan & Rasimus, 2013).

Dark on the other hand is a force that is used as the creational unit in the physical material and flesh of the individual. In this way, dark turns out to be an omnipresent quality in the universe which manifests itself as an inherent handicap or flaw. Gnostics regard this presence of darkness as responsible for the miseries and troubles ruling out life. In their view, anything that causes pain such as the birth of a baby, sickness, getting older or accidents-all result from the flaw that is encoded in the material creation. Furthermore, the soul is depicted by the Gnostics as imprisoned in a material body that craves for the light of wisdom and, at the same time, is taken aback by the material handicaps. In a broader sense, wisdom in the form of light and darkness in the form of matter play pivotal archetypal forces in Gnostic theology. While light is in search of awareness or awakening of the individual, the dark labors for the opposite, namely keeping him enslaved, unaware and dependent (Kwiatkowski, 1998).

Both Rowling and Tolkien foster their fiction in footnotes of gnostic theology. Major forces cluster around two camps and they are differentiated as dark and light as well. Tolkien's fictional genesis draws quite a striking semblance to what Gnostics have long been advertising. The dualistic concept of divinities is reflected in the fiction by the struggle of Eru and other lesser gods versus another lesser infamous god Morgoth. Rowling, on the other side, eschews the genetical resolutions, yet again, ascribes the major factionalism over the dissolution between light and dark and lets these two archetypal forces incarnate as two legendary wizards namely: Albus Dumbledore and Voldemort.

Both authors follow a similar agenda while contemplating on the nature of these forces. The characters find themselves tested and bound by the obliged selection of the either. Dark appears as a source of mystery and possible promises of earthly riches for the examinees who are yet to select it. Such and many other similar examples in the storyline manifest clearly that evil forces cluster around the dark and distinguish themselves from the others by means of the very same agent. As of an undeniable fact that when dark does not emerge as a genetic trait which happens to be quite often, it posits a foul choice of life. This condition is saliently exposed to the readers. Not only the villains of the storyline but also the characters which can be referred as a group of astray-goners are those who choose the dark path.

In both fictions, dark emerges with promises. This promise is never divine or lofty. In most cases, it takes place in the form of an earthly provision that debilitates rather than securing a permanent emanation or comfort. These gifts appear such as excessive power at the service of destruction, sinister artifacts or gold treasures, immortal life in the form of an undead ghoul, and most of the time false but sweet promises. The common trait of these awards is making their owners more dependent on the presenter. The Nine is a group from LOTR who have been human kings once. Having accepted the ring by Sauron, they turn into undead kings who are immortal but bound by the lifelong service of their master. Ungoliant is a spider who feeds on his master's gems, yet her hunger is never satisfied; the more she eats, the more she hungers and eventually, she turns into a horrid monster to haunt mountains. Similarly, the ring of power degrades Smeagol into a creepy small, skinny creature who lives a long but miserable life in a schizophrenic state of obsessiveness for the ring.

Rowling's Voldemort and other characters who lust for dark blessings are portrayed as bodies who do not hesitate to do whatever it takes to achieve the deed. The Dark Lord craves for being the unanimously acknowledged ruler of the magic world, to do so, he needs more power and as he possesses more power, he becomes more confident in his campaign. this initiates an outright grim vicious cycle in which thousands of innocents suffer and die and many more become affiliated. In this respect, as a great source of the darkness himself, Voldemort is also an obsessed candidate for more of dark power. The obsession blinds his eye and corrupts his soul. The promise of power creates a delusion of a possible triumph, this assurance leaves the aspirant in a state of dependency. In this context, the dark serves as an inhibiting and enslaving force. When

young Voldemort asks his school teacher about Horcruxes which is one of the vilest charms, he is warned against due to the fact that it is irreversibly dark magic as in the following excerpt:

A Horcrux is the word used for an object in which a person has concealed part of their soul.”
“I don’t quite understand how that works, though, sir,” said Riddle [Voldemort].
“Well, you split your soul, you see,” said Slughorn, “and hide part of it in an object outside the body. Then, even if one’s body is attacked or destroyed, one cannot die, for part of the soul remains earthbound and undamaged. But of course, existence in such a form... few would want it, Tom, very few... Death would be preferable.
“How do you split your soul?”
“Well,” said Slughorn uncomfortably, “you must understand that the soul is supposed to remain intact and whole. Splitting it is an act of violation, it is against nature.”
“But how do you do it?”
“By an act of evil — the supreme act of evil. By committing murder. Killing rips the soul apart. The wizard intent upon creating a Horcrux would use the damage to his advantage: He would encase the torn portion. (Rowling Half Blood Prince P:398)

In action, Voldemort kills hundreds, and accordingly, gains a great many enemies too. To survive his enemies’ assault, he finds salvation in dark magic which demands killing more. The excerpt above is an example to show how dark blessings trigger a vicious cycle. To perform a dark spell, one substantial step is the violation of the true nature of beings, in this case: the act of murder. Once the dark magic is completed, it never bestows great gains as envisaged before. Having conjured a set of Horcruxes Voldemort talks about his survival as follows: “I was ripped from my body, I was less than spirit, less than the meanest ghost . . . but still alive.” (Rowling, 2000, p.653)

All these examples and many more consolidate the truth that dark bears an intrinsic flow that manifests itself in the form of agonies. Though this claim is taken directly from Gnostic theology, it is a silent truth that waits in the background of the storylines, yet this quiet agent plays an ever-present role throughout pages, and across the chapters. When the stories of Morgoth, Voldemort, and hundreds of suffering characters are deconstructed, the dark shows its restricting, blinding, and exploiting face. Neither of the stories shows the exception of a figure who ends up with a win, if the slightest, at the hands of darkness. However, there is a very active mantra guiding the stories: the more enmeshed with the dark one is, the worse he ends up. Sauron’s annihilation results from the destruction of the ring he has crafted before thanks to dark magic. Voldemort kills a part of his soul inadvertently while attacking Harry. In a way, the dark relic he has made before brings about his death.

Gnostic theology does not divert from what has hitherto been visualized by the stories. Dark serves as a rattle toy to lull the attention of people. The demiurge crafted it and gave shape so that his subjects would be too busy with it to remember the holy wisdom. So long as one is materialistic in his deeds, there is no possible way for him to gain the gnosis. For the bestowment of it, one must reject the material world and its earthly comforts and blessings. Such kind of abstinence prepares the individual so that true gnosis can find an ear and eye to appeal. Otherwise, it would mean a little, if not any, and Gnostics regard this abstinence as a vital initial step for the ultimate salvation. Colors would mean nothing to the blind is their motto in this campaign (Lewis, 2013).

Both authors let the good characters claim this trait upon proving themselves righteous after being tempted by the dark blessings. Once these characters achieve to refuse the earthly prizes, virtues of the true wisdom sparkle in them. Gandalf promotes to white from grey when he turns down Saruman's proposal to join the forces of evil. He takes the lead in the fight against the dark. His worldview fosters merits of modesty, contentedness, and respect for other creations. Dumbledore is an akin figure to Gandalf not only in his fight but also in his worldview. Once he has been appealed by the segregationist propaganda of the evil wizards and the power of the Deathly Hallows, however, he proves his merit later on by leaving them both and searching for a life in harmony.

Tolkien's Frodo and Rowling's Harry are extraordinary examples of the aforementioned condition. They are both tempted by the mesmerizing gifts of the darkness. Despite these gifts being presented to them as easily available, these characters show laudable endurance against them, and in the end, reject them never to return. Frodo destroys the ring which he has carried on his chest. Harry, on the other hand, turns a deaf ear to the whispers of Voldemort despite being continuously tempted by the wicked soul of his enemy to perform a deed that is condemned for being dark. Both heroes' abstinence pays off their sufferings. Frodo has the privilege of going to the blessed lands of Undying Lands to live in peace for the rest of his life. As for Harry, he fathers children just like many of his peers and lives happy days by cherishing the values he has always held dear.

Although these stories are famous for employing many characters to elaborate the sub-themes, what marks Frodo and Harry as different from the others is their being

exposed to the temptations of the dark forces to a maximum level, and beyond this, they play the ultimate role for the removal of the most precious dark gifts. To elaborate the claim more, the nature of the ring from LOTR can be scrutinized at this point. Even though powerful wizards avoid even laying a finger on the ring, Frodo carries it on himself throughout a long journey. On the other side, though people are afraid of even saying his name, Harry carries a part of Voldemort in his body which manages to instill into his mind in the form of dark thoughts. This dark presence enables him to achieve outstanding successes in magic craft yet haunts him with miseries.

Both heroes show notable endurance against the dark temptations which are readily available to them. They defy foul thoughts and whenever they find themselves on the brink of giving in, they reinforce their resilience by means of sticking to the virtues of their life evermore. The abstinence from the dark charms till the final step employs a huge place in stories by showing great similarities with Gnosticism.

When the stories draw an end, the final step appears in the form of the annihilation of the darkness which happens to be condensed as a desired gift in both cases. The authors prescribe for the heroes a destiny that shows its rigidity to the maximum level in the moment of choices. In that final moment, the heroes are demanded to leave the desired object with which they have been afflicted for long. Frodo carries the ring until the Mount Doom, where he is tested for one final time and this test proves to be the most difficult one for the hero. The rigidity of his destiny forces him to destroy the ring forever. This phase turns out to be evidently the most difficult moment of the journey in terms of defeating the charm of the darkness, yet it is also next to the most celebrated moment as it has the potential of both the total removal of the darkness, and thus acquisition of the gnosis. Tolkien's skilled fiction employs another character Gollum in the form of a doppelganger for the hero. When they start to fight each other, the ring falls into the fire of the mount together with Gollum and it is destroyed permanently. What is notable here is that the destruction of the ring takes place out of a fight of greed, quite similar to the purpose of its creation.

In Harry's case, the Deathly Hallows are presented as objects of the test. These are old relics that date back to the story of three brothers who have lived in the old times. These brothers trick death with their cunning. To despise death more, they demand unique objects as gifts. For the oldest brother death makes the most powerful wand to

defeat his enemies, the second brother asks for the power to revive the dead: an ability bestowed in the body of a stone. And the third brother requests humbly a means for being invisible, which he achieves thanks to a cloak. When all these hollows are possessed by a person, he becomes the master of death, thus the undefeated one.

In the final fight against Voldemort, Harry leaves these objects behind. He doesn't beseech the help of invisibility or resurrection. At that moment, he is tested by his own life as well. Because he possesses a part of Voldemort, to defeat his enemy, he must die. When he leaves everything behind, including his life, the impossible renders possible: the undefeated Dark Lord is gone for good. Upon his triumph, Harry promises to give up the wand by rendering it powerless again, an act for refusing the charm of unexcelled power too.

Gnosticism regards leaving the material world and earthly comforts behind as a congratulated step and the unique condition for true salvation. 'So long as dark exists, light cannot shine or vice versa' is the sole mantra in the sect's gradual ascend towards the light. Followers of the disciple envisage dark in two forms: the absence of light and its crafted form which is materiality. There is a source of attraction of charm and appeal for each person, this evil temptation arises mostly as a material body yet bears the common creational unit of the darkness in itself and when one manages to leave this flawed appeal behind for good, he proves his soul ready for gnosis-true wisdom. The sufferings along the way serve as mentors preparing the person for the final test. Ore is to be excavated, heated, and hammered to shine, and an individual must pass the tests to prove and render himself shine with the light of wisdom (Floramo, 2005).

All accordingly, both authors subject their heroes to harsh tests in which these characters are observed suffering dearly. They endure physical pain, lose beloveds or feel obliged to question their own presence or self-values. All these misfortunes serve as tutors to prepare them for the final step of saying 'the ultimate no' to the charms of darkness. In the beginning, Frodo and Harry appear as people who are full of life, and happier but ignorant. Along the way they suffer; the more they suffer, the more they mature, and in the end, reconstruct their identities. The latest self of these characters rises on the basis of the wisdom achieved out of their perilous and difficult campaigns.

In a nutshell, Tolkien and Rowling invite the readers for a spiritual voyage in which not only the characters but also the readers are tested through the touchstones of

Gnostic light versus dark, wisdom against desire per se. Though the parables alter for a variety of tales, indeed it is nothing but the flipping faces of the coin which is tossed in the air. So long as one shines the other keeps dark but never the both. This is an omnipresent lesson across the pages of the stories, in the Derridean sense, not outside the text but between the lines.

2.3. An Otherwise Journey

Nosce te Ipsum

“It’s a dangerous business, Frodo, going out of your door, ... You step into the road, and if you don’t keep your feet, there is no knowing where you might be swept off to”(Tolkien, 2019, p.74) despite the obvious attachment of the preceding words of caution to the corporal perils of a physical journey, the very same utterance unveils and renders a mystical warning on a deep allegorical level when it is taken into consideration that this has once been said to Frodo who is to embark a rather difficult task later to set out on a journey to defeat a formidable threat. Along the way, though there are mortal threats in physical terms, the most disruptive agent of agony for the hero turns out to be the deviant appeal of the ring itself.

By the same token, Harry Potter enters the world of magic in a bizarre sort of adventurous voyage through which he is addressed by fatal attempts continuously, he suffers physically and emotionally; along the way, he bears the agony of wounds, bitter memory of the deceased loved ones, fear of a formidably bloody-minded enemy, yet again, what torments the hero at the end of the day turns out to be a deathly possession which bestows him some dark privileges however assures well-preserved immortality for his life-long enemy too.

Both stories introduce a number of characters who are somehow cast into a journey of challenges, along which certain forms of torments emerge as barriers to further progression. In other terms, these characters are challenged by bitter means to and fro and they are expected to prove their merit not merely by defeating but mostly persevering against them. In the end, endurance and total ascetism mark the characters who are celebrated for being on the good side, all accordingly, those who are disfavored

for being deviant keep clustering under the common traits of being enmeshed with the lowly and having unquenchable greed for more of it.

What has hitherto been advertised broadly in preceding paragraphs is inclined to gain a deeper dimension as the heroes' otherwise journey steps are re-arranged under the dim light of the framework of the dissertation. The pivotal motivation of the study has been manifested beforehand as the deciphering of a Hermetic voyage for the ultimate goal of gnosis behind the face meaning of both fictions. Correspondingly, both sects of esoteric teachings are in a continuous struggle for an alternate wake of the individual. This wake is to take place in the form of the acquisition of a new dimension of awareness, by implication both Gnosticism and Hermeticism regard the common man as a sleeping body in the hands of ignorance. Though this kind of unawareness may seem blissful outwardly at first look, it is referred as a blinding prison by the followers of the sect and if not interrupted by a gnostic wake, then a burial pit for the holy spark. Before, and maybe after, all; ignorance is cited by the esoteric sects as the main torment to suppress the rise of the individual towards the light (Evola, 1995; Gündüz, 1997).

Frodo from the LOTR series enjoys the unimportant life of a small folk in a village far-far away from the conflicts and the intimidating presence of the ring, life is simple and repetitive. Similar to the other members of his community, he cherishes the blessings of his appetite, the comfort of a cozy house, the relative fame of an old family name, and hyped marvels of the stories which have ventured to linger beyond the safe boundaries of their land. In a way, Shire is a comfort zone for Frodo but at the same time, it stands for a cocoon of ignorance.

Similarly, Harry Potter from the HP series portrays the life of an orphan boy who lives on less than average conditions. Despite the involuntary minor demonstrations of magic, he stands as a common child wearing ordinary clothes in a simple neighborhood. Due to the exploitative treatment of his uncle and aunt, he sleeps in a cabinet under the stairs and is even forced to remember and celebrate his birthdays for there is no one to care for them. The strikingly dull and abusive life of the hero turns out to be a veil to keep him unaware and ignorant of what has long been going on as to his true nature and magic world.

Though the number of characters who are awakened from their ignorance and initiated into the world of holy knowledge can be increased with the examples of some

other minor figures such as Beren, Luthien, and Galadriel from LOTR and Dumbledore and Snape from HP none of these can be comparable to the archaic stories of Melkor and The Tale of Peverell Brothers for these narrations reach to the very root of the issue and mark the first phase in Gnostic and Hermetic resolutions within series.

Melkor is a lesser deity who disrupts the harmony of the divine song contrary to the other gods who try to make the holy music as it has been fashioned by the Supreme God. His intrusion manifests itself as corruption and degradation of the creation. Despite there are multiple attempts to commence the holy music, each conduct ends similarly due to Melkor's persistence in making his own music. When this celestial dispute is scrutinized in detail, the breaking of the harmony for the holy music results from Melkor's greed and envy for the 'Holy Light' which also stands for the power to create. Despite Melkor's vigorous effort to disharmonize the holy music to spoil the creation if not annihilate it, Eru (the supreme god) informs him that "...no theme may be played that hath not its uttermost source in me, nor can any alter the music in my despite. For he that attempteth this shall prove but mine instrument in the devising of things more wonderful, which he himself hath not imagined." (Tolkien, 2007, p.51) As the quotation implies, Melkor's vigor in bringing disharmony to music, despite emerging as a successful attempt to break the unity in holy creation at first, serves to a bigger scheme of the supreme deity. In this respect, Melkor's insistence in going astray marks his deep oblivion of a greater holy attempt, that is to say, Melkor's catastrophic uprisal results from a rash kind of ignorance for he is informed, later on, by Eru that "And thou, Melkor, wilt discover all the secret thoughts of thy mind, and wilt perceive that they are but a part of the whole and tributary to its glory[Holy Music]." (Tolkien, 2007, p.52)

A similar fashion gives color to Peverell Brother's Tale from the HP anthology. Even though the tale is an ancient one and is told to children as a bedtime story, it proves to possess paramount importance in the magic world for the fact that it has really happened once when three wizards attempt to match wits with death. Initially, death feigns to lose and grants three wishes for each brother quid pro quo. The first brother demands the most powerful wand for a felonious agenda which causes his soon death; the second brother demands power to resurrect the deceased ones to belittle death forever more, yet again, this bestowment drives him insane and claims his life at the hands of a suicide. As for the third brother, death tailors a cloak of invisibility so that he can escape without being followed by death for he was humble and wiser than the others. Of three

brothers, only the youngest one lives a long happy life for he does not let his ignorance take control of his reason, besides he does avoid the trap his brothers have fallen into, by gaining insight into Death's scheme. While granting their wishes to be more powerful than him, Death lures the brothers into their end however by keeping his modesty the youngest brother emanates his wisdom over ignorance which unfortunately manages to capture his unfortunate kin.

Now that so much has been debated as to 'ignorance' and how it results in the downfall of beings, it must be noted with extra attention that in Gnostic beliefs, Ialdabaoth (demiurge) is a lesser deity who announces his sole sovereignty in the darkness. Yet this delusional, self-claimed solitary is caused by his being negligent of a transcendental power, who indirectly gave birth to his presence too. Hermetics share a similar attitude towards 'ignorance'. In their worldview, so long as a soul is kept in the prison of the materialistic world, thus in the darkness of ignorance; he is bereaved of the vital means for the ascension towards the light, holy wisdom, and the ultimate salvation. (Gündüz, 1997; Kılıç, 2017)

With these in mind, Hermetic wake towards gnosis urges the individual's transition from ignorance to wisdom. Although this step is the initial one, which is to take place in a similar form of wake through the notifying of the adept about the altering states of mind; it also reposit itself as the ultimate step for the acquisition of the gnosis. From a broader perspective, it wouldn't be an exaggerated reasoning to redefine the spiritual Hermetic journey for the gnosis as a total shift from ignorance to wisdom (Evola, 1995).

At this juncture, similar to putting a soul to sleep with sweet lullabies; a soul is to wake by means of a bitter cry. The esoteric teachings are inclined to interpret the suffrages of life as hard tutors. The followers of the sects cite a number of these torments that render as challenges and route guides. It is an undeniable fact that the gnostic wake is not meant for everybody, it necessitates the approval of the self through hard challenges, and a hard voyage of initiation must be undergone for this sake. In this respect, laudability marks the process with elitism in secrecy (Candan, 2013).

Both Harry and Frodo are characters who have been encouraged to leave their prosaic ignorant lives behind and are initiated into the world of gnostic wisdom by bitter means. Both heroes have attained a task that entails utmost secrecy. Frodo bears a ring

that has to be kept away from not only eyes but also from tongues and even minds. Likewise, Harry is after Horcruxes and deathly relics with the ultimate goal to defeat his enemy. Yet, for possessing enormous power, these relics are meant to be kept in dark and the search for them is to take place in secrecy too. The pre-told conditions alienate heroes in their individual status. Even though Harry receives help from his friends and other wizards and similarly Frodo is assisted by a number of fellows, these heroes are stripped alone in their struggle to carry their burden and defeat it. A part of Voldemort's soul incessantly resides in Harry which neither relocates itself nor can be shared with anyone else. This remnant turns out to be the final source of darkness to remove by the hero on his own. Frodo avoids the idea of lending the ring to his gardener and road companion even for seconds, when the ring reached the Mount Doom, he knows his task for sure that he is destined to destroy the ring alone. These conditions unarguably highlight that the Hermetic journey of the initiation is meant to be undertaken for the individual's sake and again by his very self, that is to say: no other person can do it on somebody's behalf. And gnosis is an illuminated state of mind at the hands of holy wisdom that no words suffice in elucidation, a spiritual condition that is only meant to be perceived by the successful initiates. Now that if words do not suffice, all that is left behind is silence in secrecy.

As it has been stated earlier, the esoteric pathway requires an initiation period for the followers. Along the way, the initiate is tested by different means against various torments and charms of life. Even though the whole process bears the characteristics of a long-lasting examination, indeed at the end of the day, the success of the adept comes out of these painstaking challenges, for the fact that they also function as a tutor in the background. With each successful step, the initiate is given a new virtue, all of which come together to enable the total spiritual rebirth of the individual. At this juncture, it must be taken into consideration with extra attention that, the esoteric metamorphosis, under discussion, brings about a requisite initiation process (Candan, 2013; Tecimer, 2014). This entailment marks the first cornerstone of a long journey and both fictions, in accordance with the esoteric mindset, strike their heroes by putting this imperative at the heart of their adventures. Frodo finds himself dragged into a rather perilous journey with a quest to bear a heavy burden and later on destroy it even though he has shown no effort of possessing the ring nor has had any knowledge of it whatsoever. Yet, there is something for sure in his fate, he is chosen for this task despite his will. Likewise, Harry

meets the necessities of his journey at an infant age. His parents are murdered, and he is targeted by a fatal attack despite being a baby in his cradle. Even when he learns about the magic world for the first time, this is confined to him subsequent to his family legacy and the task he is expected to undertake.

These literal obligations not only urge the heroes for a mandatory journey but also start their initiation process. In time with each torment, loss, danger, and challenge; the heroes pass the milestones of the Hermetic voyage to prove their laudability for the bestowment of the gnosis. Once, the urgency of the journey is laid before the eyes, the immediate second step dawns over the hero as a need for a route map. Both Gnostics and Hermetics place paramount importance on the guide. The esoteric sects admit the difficulty of the way to salvation and they exalt the role and responsibilities of a wise mentor who has reached the holy light before and thus knows how to guide the initiate through the dark jungles of torments. However, despite being gifted by the holy light and salvation from the darkness, these old sages can only show the gate yet cannot make the initiate pass through.

With an according change in the lenses to rehandle the text, the major role played by the characters Gandalf and Dumbledore gains another dimension. As shared in preceding paragraphs, both Frodo and Harry are distinguished figures for their ignorance and ineptness when compared with the grievance of the capital task they are attained to. To put it with a metaphor, they stand as lambs among the wolves in a dark forest whose defeat is expected easy as abc not only by their enemies but also by the majority of their fellows too. Furthermore, quite often, these characters fall short to keep the hopes and confidence they have for themselves, and frankly, they make it visible to the reader that what they do not know mostly outnumbers what they are supposed to.

Frodo accepts the task of bearing the ring with these words “I will take the Ring... though I do not know the way.” (Tolkien, 2019, p.270) Harry’s adventures, on the other hand, can easily be likened to moving in the dark by hand for there are myriad mysteries waiting for an explanation and these are provided along the way by the characters who serve as the role of wise guides.

Frodo’s campaign starts with the incentive of Gandalf. He is the one who discerns the presence of the ring and notifies the hero of a perilous journey that must be taken. Even before the first step into the marvels of an enigmatic adventure is taken, this

wise man informs the hero of the sink-or-swim condition he has been involved. The arcanum of the ring unfolds two sides of a struggle. If Frodo fails to resist to ring and claims it for himself, this brings his end bitterly; however, on the other side, if he challenges its power and turns away from its temptations, this results in the total defeat of dark powers and brings about salvation. This sheer fact is, also, provided to the hero by his mentor Gandalf.

He is the one who guides his journey on the map and wards him against possible dangers most of the time. The sage, thanks to his unique previous experiences and respected status, is consulted to and praised as a trustworthy veteran. What marks him as a distinguished character lies in his authority in counseling Frodo for his struggle to defeat the ring. Though the advice provided by the other fellow characters tends to be more material and physical such as: which road to take, what to eat, or how to avoid enemies' eyes; Gandalf's warnings and advice seem to be much more spiritually oriented. In fact, this kind of counseling is a common trait among the other characters who bear the blessing and elevated spiritual status of the light. Galadriel, Glorfindel, and Elrond may be elegant examples who foster a subtle spiritual wake through their words. All these are noted figures for successfully residing with the holy light and challenging the dark once before. Therefore, it would be quite a proper reasoning to say that having achieved a spiritual wake earlier, these people of light try to direct Frodo in his journey towards the holy wisdom. Nonetheless, the main and vital spiritual assistance for the hero is provided by Gandalf at the end of the day.

When Frodo decrees upon the death of Gollum, he is the one to preach about the merits of mercy. Upon Frodo's despair as to his doomed fate and the curse of the ring, he advises the hero to be patient and ever on the side of light. In the darkest hours of Moria, he posits himself as an example of endurance and courage against a nefarious demon. Upon defeating a powerful wizard on the dark side, he counsels forgiveness to the Ents who have been steadfast in an act of murderous revenge.

In a similar narration, Harry is, literally, cast into a perilous journey that initiates with a fatal attack he has been exposed to in the early ages of his infancy. This marks a bolt-shaped scar on his forehead making him quite famous in the magic world. However, the hero neither discerns this fame nor knows the true reason for the scar because he lives the life of a common muggle. Here at this point, the term 'muggle' bears an

extraordinary function because the word delineates people who are both lacked knowledge of magic and are unaware of a parallel magic world. For a critical eye, the state of muggles reminds the reader of people who are sweetly yet blindingly lulled to be unaware of the marvels of wizardry. Harry is a notable character due to the fact that once a member of muggles, he is initiated into the magic world, thus demonstrates an elegant example of the spiritual esoteric wake. When the new life he has been drastically gravitated into, is compared to the previous unawareness of the hero, all the discrepancies contribute dearly to the possibility, and in time to the probability of the existence of another face and dimension of reality. Rowling uses her fiction, not only to strike her hero with awe but also to sparkle an incentive in her readers to question and explore alternate spiritual realities life has been potentially conceived. Similar to the mindset of a riddle that is bound by an answer, all the mysteries in life are subjects of exploration and the newly emerging magical world is to be discovered in extenso by the hero. Yet, due to his young age and inexperience, Harry needs the guidance of some competent wizards. As in the case of the foregoing example, even though the other characters seem to be much more domestic and common-oriented in their way of counseling, Dumbledore is a distinguished one since he provides the hero with crucial and necessary advice most of which turns out to be towards a spiritual wake.

Even before Harry is given birth to, Dumbledore is one of those far-sighted sages to foresee the great deeds the kid has been destined to do. Quite similar to a staff officer, he weaves a series of meticulous plans to defeat the dark forces but before that to enable a spiritual wake for the hero. Because when the boy is subjected to a dark curse, he is the only one to discern that Harry has been turned into a Horcrux, that is to say throughout his life, he has to bear the part of a dark and sinister soul in his body which has hitherto belonged to his enemy Voldemort. Thus, the part of the soul that Harry is cursed to live and suffer all the time can easily stand as a trope for the esoteric downfall and enslavement of the soul.

The reason for such a claim can be elaborated at length with the effects of this relic on the hero. The part of Voldemort in Harry forces him to be attracted and tempted to align with the dark side. Every now and then Harry senses a jolt of a different presence in him that affects his mood towards the worse in every essence when it does not encourage him to perform dark deeds. In Gnostic and Hermetic belief systems, the individual is subject to the temptations of the material world in a numbered form of

attractions which result in his downfall and subjugation to darkness. His susceptibility results in his two-dimensional creation which is an amalgamation of material darkness and holy light. Thus, he is the battlefield of an everlasting clash between light and dark. The Horcrux trope, in this respect, acts as an organic bond to attach the doomed situation of the hero with the esoteric perception of the fallen man. Therefore, the dark soul in Harry functions as a stand-in for the material side of the individual, a similar trend governs LOTR by presenting the ring to the reader as a source of dark temptation thus, a stand-in for material temptations.

Once it is laid before the eyes that both heroes are undeniably subjects of attraction by dark forces, the roles played by Gandalf and Dumbledore gain momentum as otherwise mentors. The unaware therefore ignorant heroes are notified about a gnostic wake and initiated into the Hermetic journey with the incentive of these guides. Rather than heroic swordplay and wand duels, these heroes are entrusted with self-control over their will and are expected to challenge the temptations of the darkness, a condition which can be pinned down as the summary of the Hermetic and gnostic wake. Along their journeys, the heroes are to be provided with further assistance and guidance by these mentors to overcome the 12 torments of daimons by emanating 10 Hermetic powers of God on them.

Otherwise Mentors in the Guise of a Road-Guide

Gnostic and Hermetic sects inform their followers about the vital role played by the guide. Upon the individual is explained about the true nature of life and his inner self, the subsequent phase appears as the breaking away from the material world and setting out for a journey with the ultimate purpose of a gnostic wake. The journey is demanding and hosts traps and deceits for the adept in addition to being a mystery for the beginners. For this reason, the help provided by an experienced mentor turns out to be the only aid that the initiate can receive along the way. That is why this sort of assistance is of great importance and indispensable for the targeted spiritual rebirth (Gündüz, 1997; The Divine Pymander, 1650).

As the case implies, the mentor is a soul who has completed the journey earlier and achieved the spiritual wake. To put it another way, being a guide necessitates the successful completion of the same examination, forfeiting the material world for the sake of holy light. Both Gandalf and Dumbledore stand as handpicked characters for the

pre-told condition. The transition of Gandalf from gray to white is a Hermetic and Gnostic milestone in the LOTR series. At the heart of darkness in Moria mines, he challenges a balrog, which is a formidable demon monster in the form of flames coated by darkness. There he fights the monster on a rather narrow bridge with the help of conjuring the divine light. At this moment, Gandalf is tested for his laudability for the holy gnosis. The instantiation portrays the challenge of an old man against a powerful demon who is reincarnated into a body of darkness and flames. The author leaves no room for doubt that the monster is of an excessively destructive power, a cursed remnant of rather ancient times. Upon sensing his presence, not only the company's elegant warrior fellows but also the surrounding orcs in great numbers find refuge in escaping and hiding. The reason for this spread of horror and terror lies in the nature of a Balrog. Tolkien's fiction explains the creation of balrogs as a dark sort of metamorphosis. Once heavenly entities, some Maiar (primordial spirits in the service of gods [valar] for the holy creation to take place) are corrupted by Melkor's appeal. Once they forfeit their spiritual light for darkness and fire, they turn into sturdy demons to serve their master's campaign. In this respect, a balrog can be noted as the core of darkness himself and a flag bearer on the dark side. Through an esoteric perspective, the staging of a monster born out of darkness into the darkest pits of an old mine can be reevaluated as the hard challenge an initiate is exposed to by the temptation or torments of the demiurge, the daimons or simply the materialistic world (archaic darkness per se).

The preceding claim proves its merit when Gandalf explains what he has been through with the demon when he falls into the abyss. After descending for a long time into the heart of darkness, Gandalf fights the demon in places that bear no trace of light and host archaic sinister beings even the naming of which Gandalf likens to the darkening of the day. From the bottom of the underworld, the fighting is carried to the endless stairs and continues for a long while till to the summit of a mountain where Gandalf manages to defeat the demon forever. When put simply, despite his old age and being confronted by a fierce monster, Gandalf resorts to the summoning of the holy light and wards off the enemy crying out "go back to shadows, flame of Udun [dark pit]" (Tolkien, 2019, p.330)

In addition to this, he holds a sword named 'Glamdring' which is a special arm for being created by the high elves who are celebrated for witnessing and bearing a part of the holy light, a remnant from the transcendental god and is associated with holy

wisdom, pureness, and virtues. Accordingly, the fame of the sword also results from shedding a bluish light in the presence of dark beings. What is more, the staging of the fight from the dark bottom of the world to the peak of the mountain in light, shifts the narration to a different dimension when allegory promises much to mediate for a critical eye.

By deriving mobility in the text with the pre-told deconstructive dynamics, the fall of Gandalf into the darkness has the potential to stand for the fall motif in esoterism. The sect narrates the degradation of the man from an ethereal being to the prisoned soul in a material body as a falling, downward process. Gnostic theology explains this condition as the capturing of the non-corporeal soul in darkness once the divine spark is encapsulated in the material body.

Hermetic theology draws an akin conclusion to the earlier in that the soul, once a spiritual entity next to daimons, becomes a degraded fallen being when reincarnated in a material body. With these points in mind, the FALL of an old man into the DARK while wrestling with a demon of DARKNESS and beseeching power to resist from the HOLY LIGHT accounts for the esoteric fall of the soul and its harsh examination through materialistic challenges which stand for the crafted darkness in sect's worldviews. The second phase of the fight, which takes place in an ascending movement towards the sky, carries high compatibility with the esoteric mindset. Once fallen, a soul is given hope for salvation through a rising process towards the heavens which host celestial lights. These sources of light act as path guides for a soul who is ready for the spiritual wake. Besides, for the living beings, they stand as reminders of the holy spark with which they are born thus is the saying: 'Ad astra per aspera!' (Yalçın, 2022; Kılıç, 2017)

When the downward and gradually exacerbating examination of Gandalf hits the bottom, declaring the hardest levels of the Hermetic-Gnostic test in allegory, his ascension towards the holy light starts to take place. The location for the total defeat of the dark monster posits a highly intriguing nature with regard to being close to the sky. When death strikes them both at the end of the fight, the demon falls off the mountain peak where Gandalf lies motionless. Then, the sage is taken by spiritual forces on a journey in which neither time nor thought bothers him anymore. After a while, he is sent back with the titular Gandalf the white to his body again, which has been residing on the

summit of the mountain. He mentions his voyage as a journey through fire and deep water and comments on it with these words “I have forgotten much that I thought I knew and learned again much that I had forgotten.” (Tolkien, 2019, p.495) Tolkien’s fiction lays the basis for the juxtaposition of the old and new nature of the sage. His journey to the nether world marks a great esoteric transition. While gray is a color famous for being a midway between dark and light; white, on the other hand, has a direct association with enlightenment. Therefore, Gandalf the white is a referential term for gnostic rebirth and the successful completion of a Hermetic journey. Forgetting much that he thought to know can be credited with breaking away from the conventions of the material world and learning again what he has forgotten, in this respect, is a trait that can easily be reconciled with the gnostic revival of the holy wisdom.

From this moment on, Gandalf the white acts as an emissary for the Valar (Benign Gods, on the side of light). His power and determination to defeat the darkness gain considerable upsurge. The revived sage turns out to be more self-confident when compared to the times he has been called the ‘gray’. His dedication does not govern his precise decision-making only, people who are negatively affected by the harms of dark powers seek comfort and governance from this wizard. From a broader perspective, Gandalf the white stands as a reincarnated body of holy light and gnostic wisdom. At this point it must be taken into consideration that the esoteric worldview mentions about darkness and light, which are indeed visualized stand-ins for matter and wisdom, as two anti-archetypal beings. The presence of either necessitate the absence of the other. Once filled with holy light, Gandalf stands and acts as an antidote for the darkness. The scene which depicts him saving Theoden (king of Rohan), who has been sick with delusions of dark magic bears great importance in delivering the condition under discussion.

..He [Gandalf] raised his staff. There was a roll of thunder. The sunlight was blotted out from the eastern windows; the whole hall became suddenly dark as night. The fire faded to sullen embers. Only Gandalf could be seen, standing white and tall before the blackened hearth....'Now Theoden son of Thengel, will you hearken to me?' said Gandalf. 'Do you ask for help?' He lifted his staff and pointed to a high window. There the darkness seemed to clear, and through the opening could be seen, high and far, a patch of shining sky. 'Not all is dark. Take courage, Lord of the Mark; for better help you will not find. ... Too long have you sat in shadows and trusted to twisted tales and crooked promptings.' (Tolkien, 2019, p.514)

Upon his accession to the white, Gandalf relocates his forerunner, Saruman, in the white council which is also known as the council of the wise. The reason for this substitution lies in Saruman’s being corrupt by the dark forces because he fails to resist the charms of the dark lord and picks his side next to him. The condition can be

accounted for through esoteric reasoning. Gandalf's successful completion of his Hermetic journey results in his spiritual wake and grants him the honor of the title 'white' however the degradation of Saruman relates to the incomplete or renounced adherence to the holy wisdom. In this perspective, being enslaved in his tower and losing his staff symbolizes the loss of holy wisdom and light in addition to being captured and spoiled by darkness. The esoteric theology envisages the unsuccessful life cycle in Gnostic and Hermetic perspectives as being sunk in the darkness where the holy spark in the soul is bound by dimming and dying away. By the same token, if the journey is successfully completed, the divine spark fills up the soul, leaving no room for darkness. Based on this, it is a highly congruous reasoning to juxtapose these two wizards as two antibodies through which Tolkien exemplifies two differing consequences of an esoteric examination.

The mentorship or 'guiding' to put it properly, is also common for the dark side of the campaign. Similar to Gandalf and Frodo's relationship, Melkor stands as an exemplary character who leads the flourishing of evil. When he initiates the disharmony, thus giving birth to corruption and evil, he uses these two means to spoil the holy creation, members of which are now bound slaves to their master. Moreover, he uses all his power in the destruction of what is present in the name of good and beautiful.

As explained in the preceding chapters, his intolerance for the holy creation lies in his jealousy for being the sole sovereign for the light (the ability to create per se). When the holy light starts to spread through Telperion and Laurelin (two ancient trees which are created by gods to illuminate the dark world), Melkor grows too envious to tolerate them. Upon feeding the life of the trees to his monster spider and obscuring the world dark again, he ventures upon stealing the Silmarils. These are three gemstones that have captured the light of the trees and thus bear the potential to revive the killed light sources of the world. To claim them, Melkor commits homicide and causes indirect mass killings. Despite the fact that gems burn his hands and cause him pain, he does not accept giving up on them. With this mind, we can scrutinize Melkor as a character who is obsessed with power, his craving for the Silmarils can be reinterpreted as being overly world-bound oriented. Thus, he is a corrupt figure indeed who has lost the privilege of bearing the holy light. For the sake of holding possession of the Silmarils, he commits crimes and triggers more of them. In the end, this obsession brings about his total defeat and eternal imprisonment in the dark abyss.

Once again, Tolkien draws great correspondence with the esoteric views in the imprisonment of his formidable villain in darkness. The destiny of a soul who falls insufficient to complete his journey for the ultimate purpose of gnosis ends in the darkness as the holy spark drowns away. In his fiction, the author highlights this esoteric fact clearly by destining the villain to the endless dark. Yet again, his fiction lets this woeful character foster his successor along with similar values, manners, and ambitions. Following his master, Sauron manifests the typical traits of an obsessed villain. He is power-oriented and inclined to abuse it to elicit more of it for the ultimate earning of being the only one. To do so, he schemes a plot and delivers his cunning in the form of power rings which, in fact, act as a binding force for the enslavement of folks under his dominion. With these points in mind, Sauron appears as a typical example of his master, and similar to his mentor who developed a blinding obsession with the Silmarils, he places the ring at the core of his campaign. In order to capture the ring, he commits a series of crimes ranging from severe torturing to defilement of sacred things and holocausts. The more his determination grows, the worse he transforms exacerbating his spiritual downfall dearly.

These exemplary villains fit perfectly into the esoteric definition to the bereavement of the holy light. A similar fate envelops the adventure of Sauron, who in the end loses all his power and becomes forced to live as a feeble haunted being among the shadows. By issuing these villains and attracting pivotal attention to their corruption for being too earthly-oriented, Tolkien preaches to his readers the merits of self-control and total resistance to the charms of corrupting material world. He posits two enormous examples before the eyes so that how corruption can consume souls as a contagious being can be scrutinized in detail. After all, through all these characterizations, he places the esoteric duality at the heart of the whole narration. On one side there are those who renounce the charms of the world for the sake of spiritual rebirth and on the other side, there are depraved ones for being too much earthbound.

The role assigned to Dumbledore follows a similar lineage to that of Gandalf. As prescribed by the esoteric sects, the sage undergoes a similar examination process before guiding the hero's Hermetic journey. Rowling's fiction spares no room for doubt that Dumbledore is one of those characters who has proved his merit in challenging the charms of the darkness and has ever stood beside the light and wisdom. However, the storyline narrates old times, when young and callow Dumbledore makes the mistake of

being overly enmeshed with earthly appeals. As a young but rather promising wizard, he is in pursuit of means for making the world a better place; to this end, he and his companion Grindelwald, who is also a skilled and dedicated wizard, starts to search for Deathly Hallows. According to the myth, possessing these three relics grants the wizard excessive power and makes him the master of death. This great appeal lures young wizards' ambition to suppress their reason and the condition yields to the tragic loss of Dumbledore's family members.

The tragedy tutors the sage and acts as a mirror through which he can see his corrupt sides and get rid of them immediately. Nevertheless, this turns into a breaking point in the pact. While Dumbledore understands that much of any earthly blessings is a source of destruction and agony and thus gives up on his struggle, Grindelwald becomes even more dedicated in his pursuit of a new world and Deathly Hallows. Despite the fact that the separation seems to be a minor fraction between two people, the actual gravity of the alienation exposes itself after the catastrophic war that is to take place by the initiation of these two magical figures in close future.

At this juncture, Rowling's presentation of these two sages occupies pivotal importance once the narration is reinterpreted through an esoteric framework. The nefarious appeal of the Deathly Hallows is laid at the core of these two characters' campaigns and this craving fictionalizes the corrupting charms of the material world through stand-ins. When the hallows are mentioned about, they are given in presumed connotations with being as powerful as death itself, invincibility, and immortality. However, as it can be easily understood from the original tale itself, the first owners of the hallows who have managed to outwit death fall in for inevitable destruction acting as archaic precursors for those who claim them and share a similar destiny later on. By turning away from the appeal of the hallows, Dumbledore posits an elegant example of the Gnostic and Hermetic enlightenment; on the other hand, in his lifelong and devoted struggle to claim them, Grindelwald stands as an antipole, a corrupted soul having sunk the holy spark in material darkness.

The brilliance of the author in contrasting the two characters exposes itself to the reader when the sages start acting as mentors for their successors. Dumbledore uses his wisdom and virtuous preaching to lead Harry on the righteous path, showing how power and desire can corrupt a soul by turning it into a slave; for this cause, he does not ignore

being a model for the young hero. When he wins a duel against Grindelwald and manages to own the Elder Wand (the most powerful wand and one of the three relics of the Deathly Hallows) he does not celebrate it with joy or pride. Rather, he addresses it as a vile burden he is doomed to bear.

“...I[Dumbledore] was fit only to possess the meanest of them, the least extraordinary. I was fit to own the Elder Wand, and not to boast of it, and not to kill with it. I was permitted to tame and to use it, because I took it, not for gain, but to save others from it.”(Rowling, 2007, p.720)

The otherwise sage, Grindelwald imbues his wicked ambition to make the wizarding world a better place and his dedication to own hallows for this end with his notorious successor, Voldemort, who is to exceed the level of his master’s evil on exponential growth. Again, the irony of fate enables the presentation of a skilled orphan wizard to the audience. Young Riddle masters his magic skills at Hogwarts, a school for teaching magic. In time, as the boy gathers more and more knowledge, his dedication to suppress and rise over magical beings as a sole sovereign becomes ever more augmented.

After changing his name from Tom Marvolo Riddle to Lord Voldemort, he commences his atrocities by shedding great destruction and claiming countless lives and after all causing a great chasm to separate people as those who assist him in his campaign and those who stand in the way. Even before the tension starts to escalate, Voldemort regards Dumbledore as a formidable enemy and his phenomenal defeats result in confronting this old sage. Moreover, because of a link between his wand and Harry’s, a kind of wand fraternity, these two enemies cannot kill each other. The conditions and most importantly, his desire to be the only lord, forces him to find the Deathly Hallows which, he achieves by acquiring two.

The relics under discussion turn out to be the resurrection stone and the elder wand. Now that these relics possess great power and privilege to exalt their owner to a major level and they have been reinterpreted as the charms of the material world in an esoteric sense; the attempt to own them is the bartering of the holy light with darkness in this respect.

As a skilled writer, Rowling’s fiction executes likewise destinies for the characters’ relationship with the hallows. Voldemort’s mentor Grindelwald acquires the elder wand by stealing and loses it after being defeated by Dumbledore. When

Voldemort reaches Grindelwald while searching for the wand, two like-minded wizards have a quick conversation in which Grindelwald emphasizes his successors about the pointlessness of his journey for the wand will not let him. Upon this Voldemort murders his mentor-guide.

A similar fate rules Morfin Gaunt's bitter life. Kin to Voldemort, Morfin is the last heir to the resurrection stone which has been passed down from many generations. When young Voldemort visits his relative, he steals the ring and murders his (Voldemort) family members including his father and paternal grandparents then hexes Morfin to take the blame on himself with delusions.

As it can well be understood from the preceding points, both bearing and claiming of these hallows mark the undertaker with the corruption of crimes and agonies. Grindelwald has to be a thief to own the wand and pay it with his life; as for Morfin, he has to spend the rest of his life in prison for a crime he has not committed in addition to the sadness of losing the family heritage. Voldemort, on the other hand, has to defile his soul with murders, torture, theft, and many other crimes in his campaign for owning the hallows. The atrocities which emerge in every cornerstone along the development of hallows' tale act as veiled sinister markings for the inner esoteric corruption motif. No matter who attempts to own the hallows pays the price with a bitter kind of loss. This condition directly relates to the esoteric worldview in that enmeshing with the world entails the degradation of the individual from praised divinities to condemned inferiorities.

The falling into darkness summons the torturing torments of daimons which manifest themselves in twelve grievous forms. In such a condition; grief, ignorance, incontinence, and anger come together to reinforce the vice nature that has taken root in the body (The Divine Pymander, 1650). From a different perspective, Rowling's fiction encourages the reader to contemplate the notion that evil has the potential to conceive nothing but the worse. The ever-escalating race for the hallows carries cruelty and bloodshed to ever-widening magnitudes. What starts as an arrogant wish in an antique tale carries on with theft, torture, murder, and mass massacres. When the esoteric narration is unveiled through the lines, the fiction associates greed for earthly blessings such as power or wealth with blinding folds of the material world. If a soul is frail to these traps, the holy light is stained with corrupted deeds as in the atrocities of the dark

characters. Like any sinister nature, corruption feeds on itself. Much of it promises evermore. Antioch Peverell's greed fosters Grindelwald's deceit which inevitably mothers Voldemort's malice. It is also quite striking that despite their similar nature and agenda, Grindelwald's relationship makes him a victim and turns his follower into a killer. The fiction directly attracts attention to the fact that corruption turns the corrupt elements of its systems into building bricks for expanding its sovereignty.

The pre-told condition can find great correspondence in esoteric worldviews. Esoteric approaches inform the creation of the universe as the flawed artistry of a half-maker (demiurge, Ialdabaoth). The inherent flaw in the creation manifests itself as a sign of the imperfection of this lesser deity. The purity of the soul which stems from the holy wisdom is susceptible to defilement with the intervention of corruption. Despite the fact that the initial degradation may take place as the staining of the pure soul, the further phases have the potential to emerge as great darkening. In severe conditions, a corrupt soul may well, turn into a corrupting force once the holy spark has been totally removed from it, and as it has been clearly emphasized by the esoteric mindset, in pursuit of more of the lowly means these lost souls hesitate not to prey on each other (Litwa, 2016; Gündüz, 1997). The condition under discussion retells the relationship between the hallow owners and their successors through the merciless law of jungle principle which, indeed, forms the basis for the corrupting dynamics of the material world.

The way Dumbledore deals with the hallows reveals dearly in terms of the esoteric resolution of the fiction. Having been a dedicated searcher of them, he finds the true power in the virtues and wisdom which he manifests clearly in his words: "I took it, not for gain, but to save others from it." (Rowling, 2007, p.720) In other words, he understands that the relic is nothing but a heavy burden, a handicap rather than a blissful privilege. The reasoning under discussion aligns with the esoteric principle of asceticism. As the sole principle lying in the heart of the struggle, giving up on what is earthly enables the acquisition of whatever is heavenly. For this sake, members of the path explain the way to the heavens a widespread one with a narrow door. When Dumbledore abandons his desire for the hallows and finds salvation through true wisdom, he proves his righteous spiritual wake and stands for those blissful souls. As a true guide, he preaches to Harry likewise about power and relics which are associated with it. Upon Voldemort's defeat, Harry, quite modestly, returns the elder wand to the tomb of his mentor by proving that he has been a true follower of him in addition to

positing proof to imply the successful completion of his own esoteric journey. This situation will be elaborated on in the following paragraphs, yet the relationship of Harry with his guide Dumbledore presents utmost importance. Similar to that of Grindelwald and Voldemort which manifests itself as an aggravating form of victimization and corruption, Dumbledore's virtue in resisting the charms of power shines through Harry and enables the hero to pass the same test successfully.

With the preceding cases, Rowling leaves the door of the esoteric world ajar. In her fiction, she preaches the merits of a spiritual wake that has to take place by resisting the appeal of the material world. To do so, she assists both the hero and the villain with like-minded old mentors. When he dies by his student's wand, Grindelwald appears as an old and skeletal man who has long been kept isolated in a prison. Similarly, When Voldemort dies, Harry encounters his lonely soul as a repulsive, wretched, and helpless being. On the contrary, when Dumbledore falls victim to an assault by the adherents of Voldemort, his dead body is honored by many friends. Besides, when Harry is subjected to the fatal curse, his soul meets Harry appearing as a merry and husky man through white mists and withering back in it. At this point, the fiction discloses the esoteric truth that what starts with corruption ends in greater corrosion, however, once the holy spark fills up the soul, the holy light of the salvaged soul has the potential to sparkle many more.

Esoteric Barriers: Grief versus Joy

Now that so much has been said about the urgency of an esoteric journey for the gnostic enlightenment under the guidance of a wise mentor, the very next step turns out to be standing steadfast through the steps of a demanding and tricky journey. The esoteric teachings cite twelve torments to be overcome with the help of the ten powers of the god (The Divine Pyramider, 1650). That is, an initiate on the way to the spiritual wake has to set the powers of the god sovereign over the grievous torments of the daimons. These torments stand as the milestones along the way for the Hermetic journey. The successful overcoming of one torment heralds the reign of a divine power, all of which come together to enable spiritual rebirth through the acquisition of gnosis (Kılıç, 2017).

Both Tolkien and Rowling invite not only their heroes but also the audiences for a dark and adventurous journey through which the alternate faces of the narration tell an

otherwise-esoteric story. The watchmen of this shadowed route, Hermetics, mark 'grief' as the second post next to 'ignorance'. Rather than a sheer agonizing process, the term delineates the stress and pain that arises due to being overly enmeshed with earthly blessings. In time, any soul grows a familiarity and fondness with some earthly blessings giving up on which causes sadness. Moreover, if an abusive orientation develops in the individual's life, the very same earthly pleasure gradually transforms into a source of grief. Esoteric masters recommend the substitution of this haunting feeling with joy that can only be acquired through the emanation of the gnosis in the soul.

Both Tolkien and Rowling destine their heroes to witness the unpleasant face of a tall order. Both characters face the bitter sides of life and become challenged by the excessive agonies that await them along their journey. They suffer physical and emotional torments, lose beloved ones and feel forced to give up on hope for any good. Frodo for instance, rejoices a simple but boringly repetitive way in his house, far far away from the havoc of the war. Nevertheless, upon learning about the ring and its destructive power, dark days dawn upon him. Along the journey, he suffers the physical challenges of hostile regions, becomes the target for sinister attacks of enemies, even gets fatally wounded by a specter, loses loved ones, sheds sweat and tears but above all, feels the decaying from inside due to the evil force of the ring which he has been entrusted with to carry and destroy. It takes him days of suffrage, a bare-knuckle fight with a ghoul, and a finger to defeat the ring for good, yet again, his will is tested to its maximum when he is challenged for the last phase of the test. What he has hitherto carried as a burden, turns out to be an invaluable item, the disposition of which causes the greatest stress the hero has ever experienced. Based on these points, Frodo is a hero who is severely tested against grief. Even after, the ring is destroyed he continues to feel something bitter in his soul.

"Are you in pain, Frodo?" said Gandalf quietly as he rode by Frodo's side. 'Well, yes I am,' said Frodo. 'It is my shoulder. The wound aches, and the memory of darkness is heavy on me. It was a year ago today.'
'Alas! there are some wounds that cannot be wholly cured,' said Gandalf. 'I fear it may be so with mine,' said Frodo. 'There is no real going back. Though I may come to the Shire, it will not seem the same; for I shall not be the same. I am wounded with knife, sting, and tooth, and a long burden. Where shall I find rest?'
Gandalf did not answer." (Tolkien, 2019, p.989)

Frodo's questioning of a place where he can find solace and comfort bears great esoteric significance in that despite the hero rejoices the triumph over a formidable enemy, living large, and accepting praises for achieving a deed that even the kings and

queens have been insufficient to claim, he feels the great emptiness in his soul. The void under discussion results from the immense dark the ring has infested Frodo with, in addition to the haunting curse of the Morgul-blade which has been stabbed in the hero's flesh to turn him into a ghostly being cursed to live in shadows.

The gap in Frodo's soul has an immersive esoteric correspondence to the transmutation of the adept from the earthly to the divine. The removal of the ring and the cleansed wound of the blade symbolizes the purifying of the corrupt nature, in other words, getting rid of the material downward nature. In such a condition, the soul is likened to an empty bowl, in terms of being ready for the fill with holy wisdom and light. When the sequel of the fiction is scrutinized, the esoteric approach embraced by the narration demonstrates itself through Frodo's final voyage from the grey heavens to the Undying Lands (Land of Valar [Righteous Gods on the side of light]) where no mortals are permitted. The land is famous for hosting pure holy wisdom which is conserved by the protection of gods on the side of light. When the other passengers to board the ship are taken into consideration the esoteric nature of the narration becomes more salient. In his voyage to the undying lands, into the silver glass light, Frodo is accompanied by Gandalf the white, two celebrated high elves who endured the charms of the evil by protecting their rings from defilement: Elrond and Galadriel, and finally Bilbo Baggins, another hobbit who bears the ring and shows great merit in desisting from it. The condition can be summarized by reasoning that the characters who are associated with light and holy wisdom are given the privilege to take the journey. When Sam Gamgee watches these spiritual people embarking on the ship, he observes them carrying star ornaments and radiating a soft light. In this respect, Frodo's final journey to find peace turns out to be to the land of holy wisdom and his companions are virtuously awakened people who either proved themselves ready for gnosis such as Bilbo, or have already acquired it as in the case of Gandalf. In a nutshell, Frodo's emanated soul from the dark needs the light of gnosis, and Tolkien's final journey is a jest of substituting his grief with joy.

By the same token, Harry is an unfortunate child who has met grief at a very early age by losing both of his parents. Similar to that of Frodo, his destiny tutors him the bitter forms of agony. The sadness he has been marked with since his birth gains another tone with the abusive nature of his caretaker relatives. As the story progresses, he suffers even greater torments and losses. The so-called privilege of being chosen mars

his life in every possible way by turning him into a target for evil attacks. When the story draws a closure, the sadness he feels reaches the maximum level. His miserable life turns out to be the only link to bind his long-lasting enemy's soul to life. In such a condition, it can be concluded that so long as the hero lives so does his enemy. In other words, Harry is ultimately tested by his life.

From a broader perspective, the suffering of the hero acts as a severe form of tutelage. These hardships enable him to understand the value of righteous virtues. Each time he is targeted as a victim, Rowling lets his hero reach joy and remove his grief by strictly clinging to Hermetic ethics. Thanks to his perseverance in staying on the good side, Harry's grieves are consoled by the joy of the ultimate victory. Similar to Frodo, Rowling narrates a happy and peaceful ending for the hero.

To conclude, both writers adhere to the second Hermetic transmutational ascension. The esoteric views regard people as vulnerable beings to the torments of the daimons. These suffrages take place by serving two different purposes: the first reason for grief is cited in the form of punishment for being too much earthbound, and the second kind proves more intriguing in that this type of grief functions as the tutor for the soul. It is not much different from shaking a person to wake up. The authors' fiction gives much room for both of these esoteric renderings. Grief, on one hand, marks the end for the corrupt characters with deep regret and stress, on the other hand, it also tests the ones on the good side to prove themselves and hearten the frail souls for the rest of the esoteric journey.

Altering Milestones: Incontinence versus Self-control

As the initiate progresses into the length of the esoteric journey, the third challenge waiting for him turns out to be 'incontinence'. The esoteric masters beware their followers of the colorful charms of the world. These sources of attraction are compared to a trap in which the soul may fall into the dark pits and lose the holy spark. The loss of the holy spark prevents the soul from ascension to the divine positions. To put it shortly, if the initiate falls victim to incontinence, this marks his susceptibility to corruption and consequently yields to irreversible devastation. To ward off the threat, the Hermetic masters mention 'self-control' as an antidote. They regard the appeals of the world as means for testing: endurance, and abstinence, and above all, having strong

control over the self (will) is a great step towards the gnostic wake (The Divine Pymander, 1650).

Tolkien tests his hero by exposing him to an extremely dark charm. The attraction of the ring on Frodo emerges as the main challenge on its own. Despite the fact that the other characters such as Aragorn, Legolas, or Gimli seek the threat from the outside; Frodo carries his enemy next to his heart. The power of evil places a heavy burden on his shoulders and feeds his urges for a diversion against which he has been warned gravely beforehand. As Frodo's journey progresses, the ring appears to be a more formidable enemy than the dark riders, orcs, and even Nazguls. By placing the enemy in his hero's bosom, Tolkien makes an esoteric reference to the dual nature of man. The body is susceptible to corruption for being material, at the same time it is divine for hosting the holy spark. The ring on the hero's chest is a reminder of the fashioned menacing fact.

Rowling tailors a similar, maybe a more salient approach in underlining this truth. Harry stands as an extraordinary child-hero for bearing the part of a soul which belongs to the most skilled and darkest wizard of all times. While even the mentioning of his name causes terror among the magic folks, Voldemort infests not only the hero's soul but also his mind which he uses occasionally to tempt evil deeds. The dark soul in Harry haunts his life, it gives him pain and despair. In critical moments, this haunted side struggles to take control and revive a monstrous person akin to itself. In addition to this, Harry is tested by the sinister items, charms of which ruin the lives of a great many. Proving fit for Dumbledore's realistic presumption of a man in a million, he discards the Deathly Hallows denying the position of master of the death.

In this respect, both authors provide means for testing their heroes against incontinence. Along a hard and rather long journey, these heroes must endure the repetitive appeals and urges of the wicked powers. The authors exemplify the otherwise scenario through a multitude of scenes in which the incontinence of the characters brings about their downfall. Yet again, by showing great resistance to evil, the heroes consolidate their self-control and thus advances one step closer to the gnosis. With the preceding feature of the heroes, Tolkien and Rowling exalt the premise of the genre from the exoteric heroic gallantry to the esoteric enduring abstinence.

Perseverance against Lust and Desire

Along the way for the gnosis, 'desire-lust' stands as the next torment which prevents the soul from reaching the holy light. Despite appearing as an ordinary obstacle in itself, indeed this torment has the potential to mother all the other torments for the fact that esoteric worldview regards desire as the primer in the rising of other impediments (Hermetica, 1992). Once desire roots in the mind and develops into a lust under the governance of greed and incontinence, it starts feeding the soul with corruption, thence malice reigns the body and accelerates the losing of holy light. Nevertheless, esoteric masters present the elixir for the nihilation of desire in 'perseverance'. Similar to incontinence, this virtue differs from the former in being an active struggle rather than steadfast withstanding (Wunder, 2008).

Tolkien authors a magical world in which evil roots and expands due to uncontrolled desire. Melkor's unmerited craving for the holy light, and Sauron's will to dominate the world results in pre-told conditions on maximum levels. Despite being an elf, Feanor's desire to avenge his father and reclaim the Silmarils ends in the loss of many lives. On the other side, Earendil's perseverance in saving the folks of the earth enables the holy help and defeat of the Melkor. As a great honor, he turns into a star in the sky with a Silmaril on his chest while the nefarious deity is imprisoned forever in total darkness. The same motif of perseverance leads to the struggle of many characters throughout the narration. Beren and Luthien fight hard to confront the evil, Gandalf's enigmatic fight from pits to peaks with a demon can be accounted as a salient example, Saruman's and Isildur's desire for power and their final collapse, all come together to tell this esoteric polarization. Frodo's resistance to ring, in this respect, is attributed to self-control, and accordingly his journey to the Mount Doom through hardships credits for perseverance in esoteric conveyance.

Rowling places Horcruxes at the heart of his hero's campaign. Harry shows great effort not to give in to the evil temptations of Voldemort, meanwhile, he struggles painstakingly for the removal of the damned containers which bear parts of his enemy's soul. The active fight he is indulged in stirs up various forms of trouble and nuisance, all of which he has to overcome. It is quite intriguing that, during the nullification of a Horcrux, Dumbledore has to show perseverance against the hauntingly bitter taste of a liquor hiding the locket of Slytherin. Despite his evident agony, he cautions Harry not

to stop. The aforementioned condition, not only teaches Harry but also the audience how esoteric perseverance is expected to be against hardships of life. On the other side, unfortunately, Dumbledore gives in to his desire to use Gaunt's ring (resurrection stone) to see his deceased family members, which proves a grave mistake to curse his life to death. Despite being an experienced sage, his carelessness, even for a second, claims his life with dark magic; and between the lines, an esoteric door opens to the parabolic depths of the fiction. The old man's craving tempts him to use the stone, which directly relates to the enmeshing with materiality. This relation is a condemned one in esoteric views for it causes the defilement of the soul with the staining of the concretized darkness. With these in mind, Dumbledore's being the target of fatal dark magic is a veiled scene for the esoteric corruption of the soul with worldly means (darkness per se).

In light of the preceding findings, it can be concluded that both fictions embrace an esoteric approach to deal with material attractions. The authors manifest palpable intention for their heroes to conduct a war of will on two levels. These souls have to prove themselves by initially showing endurance and later struggling actively to overcome earthbound temptations. In doing so, writers condemn desire or lust for what is earthly by envisaging these as restricting agents which prevent the soul's ascension towards wisdom and aggravate the sinking into darkness at the same time. Thus, if perseverance and self-control can overcome desire and incontinence, an adept is considered to progress dearly in pursuit of gnosis. For this very same reason, both Tolkien and Rowling set this power of God as the key acquisition and manner in defeating the darkness and achieving spiritual rebirth.

Veritas Lux: Justice versus Injustice

Justice plays a crucial role and is regarded as another vital acquisition for the ultimate gnostic wake. Esotericism emphasizes this condition as essential for sustaining an atmosphere to foster other Hermetic values. In addition to bearing its literal meaning, virtue also relates to being close to God and keeping divine virtues. The adversity of the trait, which is named 'injustice' and sequenced as the following torment, occupies what is conversed by the definition of virtue. The torment delineates the abusive and unfair nature of corruption and connotes distancing from the god (The Divine Pymander, 1650).

The preceding polarization is observable in both writers' fiction. Frodo's adventure takes place in a warmongering world in which two camps target each other as the enemy. The ones who favor the darkness are marked for their jutting iniquities. Melkor is a deity who wants the holy light in his monopoly. His undeserved claim shakes the pillar of the holy creation and results in the birth of what can be listed as evil. The emergence of corruption can be redefined as the offspring of injustice. Sauorn, likewise, conducts a war for the sake of gaining dominion over living beings. His undeserved labor ends in nothing but terror, catastrophe, and defilement of good things. The injustice is not only handled as the distancing from the god. The abusive nature of dark forces impedes harmony in the world. It victimizes innocent beings and lacks them of their right to live. Certain forms of life are favored over others, hence the practice of slavery is mobilized on a bigger magnitude. Saruman, for instance, violates Ents' habitat and starts chopping down trees to sustain his arms industry with no remorse for corrupting the sacred grooves. By forcing free and fair elves to undergo a wicked metamorphosis to turn into orcs, Melkor enlists them as his obedient malformed soldiers. In doing so, both evil characters pose clear exemplifications to unjust treatment that is conducted by an abusive mindset.

The very same fashion governs the dark camp in the Harry Potter series. Lord Voldemort rises above his adherents with a claim to be the sole authority in the magic world. He conducts his racist and fascist propaganda with atrocities and violent manifestations of power. His lordship is based on the idea of unfair separation of wizards and non/half-wizards. While guaranteeing a life in peace for the pure-blood magicians, he diminishes other ethnic groups to inferior, unwelcome, and servile positions. The destruction he and his followers inflict upon their targets end up with nothing but deepening their corrupt nature. Voldemort's obsession with power lacks him of any possible virtues as to light and good.

People of justice, however, are a selective group for possessing a closeness to god. These people derive their power from the holy virtues that they strictly adhere to. When scrutinized in detail, these virtues show great convergence with the esoteric-Hermetic powers of god. To prove their worthiness for the spiritual wake, these characters are in a constant struggle to purify their souls by swapping the torments of life with the divine powers. The removal of the injustice sequences as the next step in

the spiritual ascension. Both Frodo and Harry, together with the enlightened characters of either fiction, constitute matching examples for the condition.

Despite his initial hatred and impulsive offensiveness when Frodo encounters Gollum, he respects him as a living being following the advice of Gandalf and even shows sympathy for his devastated nature which indirectly contributes to the destruction of the ring. The whole narration delivers the adventure of the good characters in the form of companionship. When Frodo is chosen as the ring bearer, a company of fellows from different ethnic backgrounds comes together to assist him. Despite the chronic and xenophobic alienation between the pact members, the journey brings them together around the same virtues and one purpose. In contrast with the dark camp which disposes of the living beings through a hierarchy based on lordship, the fellows of the journey illustrate an example of the equality in which an elf, a dwarf, and a human can be friends.

Harry, accordingly, is a distinguished boy for treating every living being with respect and love. This trait is common among good wizards. Appearing as the basic tenet for fostering harmony to reign peace in a multiethnic world, justice and equality are exalted as indispensable bonds. Despite the vast abundance of evidence to support the writer's agenda in this respect, the most salient example can be posited in mentioning the sole reason for separation among the wizarding world. While the dark forces embark on the labor of cleansing the magic world on an ethnic-based classification, members of virtue challenge this unfair judgment by regarding the differences as means for harmony, rather than reasons for disintegration. A case example of the pre-told condition is the house elves who are mistreated exploitatively by the master wizards. Harry, on the other hand, approaches them as respected peers and even befriends some. Similarly, Hermione Granger, a skilled witch on the side of the good, stands as an exceptional character who fights for the rights of suppressed magical creatures. Similar to Frodo's mercy for Smeagol which ends up with the destruction of the ring, Harry's modest, virtuous and fair nature earns him friends who help the hero dearly in his fight.

With reference to the preceding points, Tolkien and Rowling locate justice as the focal point for the fostering of a peaceful atmosphere in which differences can be reconciled. In doing so, on deeper allegoric levels, both fictions author the merits of an esoteric power while undermining its tormenting counterpart. Justice, under discussion, functions as a two-fold term in Hermetic vision. By providing equality, the authors give

way for the principle to render its alter face which operates as bonding with the god-head through esoteric virtues. To sum up, whenever Frodo and Harry smile upon the marvels of the worlds they are attracted to, one power of the god gains the upper hand in removing a torment of corruption and authors spin a subtle thread stretching from the heroes' minds to the divine.

Sparkling the Bonfire: Generousness versus Greed and Envy

Along his spiritual journey, an initiate has to face 'greed' and 'envy' as debilitating torments. Despite being two in number, these traits are given together for the fact that each has the potential to feed the other and, if not controlled, act detrimentally to turn into a vicious cycle to cause irretrievable fall. In the rooting of these frailties within the soul, rampant risings of lust and desire play the main role. In such a condition, when desire trespasses its bounds, it gradually turns into greed and envy, both of which are pseudo-folds to blind the eye from following the path to the light. The esoteric arcanum speaks the tongue of simplicity in the negation of these wicked traits in advising generosity to the adherents. A generous heart has immunity to the invocations of greed and envy for the fact that generosity starts by sacrificing. Giving away carries utmost importance in the esoteric approach on the ascetic grounds that a soul is ready for divine wisdom only when he abandons anything that is earthly. In brief, generousness is esoterically marked as a primer trait that can develop into an essential ascetic nature (Hermetica, 1992; The Divine Pymander, 1650).

It wouldn't be an accredited claim to place greed and envy as the focal point for Tolkien's villains. The narration inaugurates the fall of the once divine beings due to fostering evil desires in their hearts. The desires turn out to be the excessive craving for positions or privileges which are demanded undeservedly. Melkor's craving turns into stubborn greed to possess the holy light at all costs, and he holds this passion so dear that he does not welcome the idea of sharing it with another. Thence, the greed he cultivates gradually develops another bizarre face: envy, and as stated above, these two vile tempers feed each other in magnitude. Sauron's power orientation, as well, is stimulated into dim-sighted greed by Melkor's envy.

With the preceding claim, the purpose is not to match each immoral trait with a villain but to provide a causality between the master and the student, because either shows abundant evidence to be condemned for possessing excessive levels of both greed

and envy. On common grounds, both villains are doomed for inevitable destruction for being stuck in the vicious cobweb of greed and envy, cycles of which earn nothing but depth in degradation. In addition, these immoral natures lend support for the aggravation of other torments, all contributing in unison to the loss of divine spark.

Tolkien contrasts the envy and greed of his evil characters with the ample generosity of the ones on the side of light. Along his journey, Frodo is granted unique and invaluable items by numerous characters. Despite being priceless items, Bilbo does not hesitate to give his magical armor and elvish sword to his cousin. Thanks to these gifts, Frodo evades inevitable deathly attacks and sturdy wicked enemies. As guests in Bombadil's house, the company of hobbits enjoys a rich banquet, furthermore they are granted by the host Daggery of Westmarch, a jest of generosity which will mark the end for Angmar the Witch King. The gifts of Galadriel, lembas, and the phial, respectively regenerate the hero's energy and guide him through the dark tunnels of a spider hideout and save his life against fatal attacks. Quite strikingly, Boromir's gallant fight to death while guarding the hobbits, Sam's painstaking aid through perils, and thousands of soldiers' willful sacrifice of their lives in order to save Frodo from the attention of the eye, all come together to contribute dearly to the defeat of Sauron (evil per se) and are executed as brilliant examples of generosity.

In Rowling's fiction, Voldemort appears as a highly abusive lord who does not accept a fair share of magic power and equality. By placing himself as the sole authority over the living beings, he erects a hierarchy and occupies the top position to justify his monopoly on nearly every means. Besides, he is intolerant of any attempt to outrun his sovereignty. As a matter of fact, his greedy nature lures him so strongly for playing the top that for this sake, he does not hesitate to kill even his supporters. The greedy nature of this villain also aggravates his envious side. The fact that the Deathly Hallows belong to the others but not him gives impetus to the violent nature of the villain. In his esteem, only he can fit perfectly to the top position and this mere fact justifies his claim to possess these relics, and the so-called manner can range from severe violence to mass killing frenzies and holocausts.

The mantra of 'get whatever it takes' by the villain is conversed to 'give up whatever it takes' on the side of the hero. Despite the fact that Harry has been fortunate enough to capture the three hallows, the virtuous teachings of his mentor place asceticism

as the sole means of salvation. Bearing in mind that true power lies in a heart that is emanated from the restrictions of earthly desires, the hero abandons these relics of his free will and clings to the esoteric advice that one who gives up truly gains.

Both Tolkien and Rowling prepare their heroes for the total ascetic detachment from the esoteric darkness with small tests of generosity and sacrifice. As explained above, throughout the narration, Frodo and Harry witness a significant number of examples in which other characters prioritize the welfare of others over their self-ease. To this end, they suffer and sometimes sacrifice their lives. The tutelage of illustrated examples along the narration appears as the vital method when the heroes are esoterically tested against the utmost agent of the darkness. Frodo's ascension to Mount Doom to destroy the ring, and Harry's marching to his own death to get rid of Voldemort's dark soul pave the way for what started as simple generosity to transform into the final state of total asceticism. The claim under discussion owns its credibility in that both Frodo, by destroying his precious ring; and Harry, by sacrificing his life, achieve the most difficult and final task of the esoteric journey and prove their laudability for gnosis. To this end, a simple tracing can display the organic bond between the virtue of generosity and its final evolution into a means for total salvation.

Key to the Door: Truth versus Deceit and Treachery

Subbranch to esotericism and the compassing basis for this dissertation, Gnosticism mentions the degradation, corruption, and evil in the presence of an archaic inferior, flawed deity. Claiming his single-handed sovereignty, the demiurge embarks on a creation process in which the new forms of life are to be subjugated to his will which is to be worshipped. Because of the inherent flaw in his nature, the half-maker deity distinguishes his creation by passing this flaw motif to his generation. This erroneous nature makes forms of creation vulnerable to corruption and, in this condition, the real agent for the fall of the man lies in his being flawed due to his materialistic side (Gündüz, 1997). A similar trend governs the approach of Hermeticism in that, the sect regards materiality as responsible for the degradation of man. According to Hermetics, the material nature of the body can be reenvisioned as a prison to withhold the holy spark to exalt the soul back to its divine position. This bifurcate division clusters deceit and treachery on one hand as units of corruption; on the other side, truth is praised as a piety

related to the god-head and a Hermetic virtue in the defeat of esoteric devilry (Kılıç, 2017).

Esoteric secrecy confines to its followers the primordial deceit as the Demiurge's struggles to posit himself as the righteous and the only god. Upon the first people's taste from the forbidden tree of knowledge, the holy wisdom sparkles in their souls thus letting them discern the deceit. As the new sight renders before the enlightened heart, the old world and its means are reinterpreted on the basis of the holy wisdom. Under the preceding circumstances, once dear blessings of the world now reappear as treacherous deceits for the fact that the pleasure and the consequent obsession, they inflict on man hamper his ultimate wake (The Secret Book of John, 2005).

The treacherousness is given a place in Tolkien's fiction as an insignia for the presence of evil nature. As the author's narration lingers subtly on the first phases of holy creation, Melkor rises as an antagonistic entity with excessive intolerance against anything that can be cited as good or beautiful. To corrupt the cosmos from the inside he disguises a benevolent deity. Through deceitful good deeds, he achieves to gain the trust of other gods and many lesser living subjects. As expected, he crowns the web of his deceits with treacherous moves. As soon as he rests assured that the other deities and folks of life regard him as harmless, he breaks his promise not to spread corruption and destroys the trees of Valinor before stealing the Silmarils. Along the way, he does not hesitate to murder innocents and cause even more bloodshed. What is more, his archaic ventures towards the transcendental god Eru, stand as elegant examples of treachery which is to be replicated by the divergent characters as the narration progresses. The spoiling of holy nature through a corrupting metamorphosis ends in the transmuting of once high spirits into ugly beasts and demons. The sweet tongue he blandishes to gain support for his camp turns out to be a dark one in disguise. The fortunes he pledges appear to be nothing but a delusional fantasy which yields to the degeneration and destruction in reality. Sauron follows his master by embracing a similar mindset in the ways he deals with other beings. By gifting cursed ornaments to friends, he discreetly searches for dominion over the beings. What seems to be an act of jest, turns out to be a deceit of treachery.

Harry Potter series can be redefined as the compilation of biographic narrations belonging to a number of characters around a thrilling story with a subtle message.

Rowling issues the deceit and treachery motif along the narration in clear association with the downfall of her characters. The cunning of the Peverell brothers weaves a bitter common fate for those who use their wit to aggrieve others. Antioch's pride in belittling the death by grasping the ever-powerful wand and Cadmus's imprudent wish to revive the dead from emanating them from the death's reign sound as inaugurating moves of a chess game against the old-wise death. Yet, the brothers' smart moves fall short to outwit death, and what initially sounds like gifts of indemnity turn out to be deceitful baits. In doing so, Rowling reflects the scene through an esoteric framework in which, deceits prove no good or benefit save for the victimization of those who set it. Antioch's wand attracts the attention of other evil wizards and targets him with a deadly attack soon. Cadmus' necromancy stirs a madness to lure the wizard to end his life by suicide. Rowling's position of view towards deceit and treachery follows the same esoteric inclination throughout the whole narration. Voldemort stands as a rather gifted, yet evil-minded wizard even at a very young age. He uses his sweet pledges to abuse and victimize those who believe in him. The wizards on his side follow their lord by familiarizing themselves with this cunning. The murder of Harry's family, for instance, appears as an act of deceit and treachery. When a close friend of the Potter family becomes appealed by the power of the dark wizard, he confines the whereabouts of the Potters to the Dark Lord so that he can launch a merciless attack on them. Peter Pettigrew's treason not only deprives Harry of his family at an early age but also slanders an innocent man and results in his incarceration for many years. What is quite striking after all these is that albeit the magnitude of the suffering, Peter's treason does not end in a kind of substantial gain. In addition to the fatal wounding of Voldemort, the treachery inadvertently triggers a set of events-causality of which turns Harry into a Horcrux to carry his enemy's soul next to his own and this condition eventually leads to the end for this villain in the same fashion of Peverell brothers' perishment.

From a broader perspective, both authors contemplate on the evil and abusive usage of the intellect as an act of self-deceit and corruption. The characters who seek benefit over treason and trickery inevitably start a process of downfall for themselves. The earthly blessings they seek to grasp by deceits relocate these unfortunate men not as a plotter anymore but as prey of the scheme. This notion of the narrations bears a high esoteric tone in that the appeal of what is earthly is a doomed entanglement that is notorious for bringing in one's corruption. Deceits, in this respect, are guideposts for a

flawed mind to divert him from the halo of the holy light and lure him into the darker tones of corruption and, before drawing a conclusion on this matter, treason can be redefined through the metaphor of bait in the trap. It mongers the evil scheme of corruption by turning those who have once been plotters into new baits presently.

Both Tolkien and Rowling advertise their fiction to underline the fact that treason and deceit are means of an acquisition which is delusional. Those who seek a quick earn after fooling and abusing the weak prepare a bitter end for themselves and in trading their desire they forfeit the holy pureness with which they have been born since deceit and treachery are dirty coins. The authors undertake a mission to traverse these demerits to exalt truth and righteousness. Tolkien urges his characters on the side of light to fight against the dark by strictly clinging to certain virtues, and honesty-decency are central traits to govern the hearts of these beings. Rowling, similarly, places this arid nature as the most distinct signpost towards the gnosis. What is striking at this point is both fictions do not fall insufficient to add adventure to the narration with heroic challenges and suspenseful fights, yet again, on a deeper level the heroes' main struggle unveils an esoteric purification undertaking. As expected, truth is a praised virtue for being the building block of the painstaking labor.

The authors advertise this virtue in a challenging condition. Both heroes are distinguished figures for having innocent minds which are not competent in devising schemes and plotting trickeries. Their arid nature forces them to a disadvantageous position for being vulnerable to deceits. Along the way, they suffer a lot accordingly. Whenever the heroes stick to the truth, the narration seems to favor the evil side. Yet, the face value of the delusional upper hands results in crestfallen defeats in reality for those who seek gain in cunning moves. Following the footsteps of their mentors, the heroes opt for truth no matter what condition they are in. Frodo proves his true nature by avoiding the ring despite its appeals to corrupt his heart with false hopes. Harry, similarly derives the power he needs in love, perseverance and truthful merits whenever he needs assistance. His stance away from the corruption of the hallows grants him the ultimate victory despite being disadvantageous and weak initially.

Voldemort's cunning and deceit seduce him to own the elder wand, an archaic mistake repeated for generations by the corrupt characters. However, Harry's *true* heart encourages him to seek *true* strength in the pureness of his *true* soul. By the same token,

Sauron has been in pursuit of abusive power over the folks of the world and to achieve this, he crafts a number of rings and curses this selection by crafting the one ring as the lord over them in darkness. He posits nearly all his skill and power in this ring, an act of being enmeshed with materiality and loss of spiritual nature. Later on, he turns the ring into an obsession and the ultimate purpose of his life. Nevertheless, no matter how powerful it is, Frodo proves his true nature by resisting the ring and seeking the assistance he needs in his virtues.

The juxtaposition of Frodo and Smeagol carries remarkable esoteric resolutions in that when the hero grants a chance of life for his hideous way guide, this gesture is responded by acts of deceit and treason. In the disguise of a trustworthy and humble friend, Smeagol guides the group to a monstrous spider's hideout and in the end, tries to capture the ring by snatching a finger from Frodo. The final clash of the foes vividly veils what actually happens to be the judgment of a purified virtuous soul against a robust corrupt flesh. In unison, while Voldemort's Sauron's and Smeagol's power lust turns them into a victim of the trap they have once laid, by giving up on the ring and hallows, both Frodo and Harry distance themselves from the material pits by strictly choosing what is true and they, eventually, emancipate their souls to ascend the holy light. In this essence, Tolkien and Rowling condemn deceits and treasons as means for material corruption, the wicked characters who opt for cunning as means for gain end up with the severe deterioration of their vile conditions. By exalting truth as a vital piety, the writers foster an esoteric change and advance one step closer to the spiritual wake of gnosis. The focal mantra in this veiled journey is similar to a lock being bound by the key and the pertinacious doors of esoteric light open only for a true heart.

The Divine Compass: Good Nature against Anger – Rashness

Along the quest for the acquisition of gnosis, anger and rashness stand as other devastating torments. Esoteric sects ascribe destruction, remorse, and thus an inevitable vile nature to these tempers. If not controlled anger is inclined to turn into violence and when accompanied by rashness it certainly results in conditions of regret and remorse. The masters of secret knowledge condemn haste for clouding the reason. As can be expected, deeds of quick decisions are notorious for ignoring details which in the end alter the whole course of an event and in this respect, both LOTR and HP are elegant esoteric examples (Evola: 1995; The Divine Pyramander, 1650).

Tolkien's narration deals with the villains as flawed beings not inherently but due to possessing vile traits. Having been created as a Vala (the second-class divinity in the hierarchy), Melkor inaugurates the condemned path of the divergent. The discrepant melody he chants breaks the harmony. He executes the disharmony without contemplating much on the possible results of the deed. His rashness gives birth to destruction and spoilage quite similar to the way he has broken the harmony. When assisted with envy, his haste yields to his intolerance against anything that is an art of holy creation. This cluster of vile tempers triggers his anger which paves the way for a destruction era. In catastrophic wars, supernatural creatures shake the pillars of the world, and eventually, Melkor's rashness causes his endless imprisonment. Moreover, Tolkien illustrates haste and anger as two vile traits to undermine on a respectively smaller scale via Feanor character. Yet, this exemplification bears all the essential esoteric inclinations in dealing with the foregoing characteristics in Gnostic and Hermetic terms. Born to a respected elvish family and son of an elf clan leader, Feanor is likened to fire for his rage and impetuous nature. Upon the losing the Silmarils to Melkor and the murder of his father by this wicked deity, he does not hesitate to vow revenge and mobilize a vast army. His rage provokes the mass murdering of his kin when another elvish group refuses to provide ships for Feanor to move his army. Feanor's anger and rashness push this character to indulge in fierce wars without much precaution. This results in bitter defeats, loss of lives, and even the character's own death. Tolkien ascribes an esoteric subtle message to the funeral of Feanor whose body blisters and turns to ashes autonomously, a unique phenomenon indeed that other elves attribute to his rash and furious nature. He has lived like a bonfire and fire itself enveloped his deceased body.

Rowling's villain, together with his evil adherents, can be cited as perfect fit for having a quick and destructive temper and a rash reason. These characters are heavily desire-oriented sadistic and violent figures. The dauntless moves of the dark forces are indeed self-confident but at the same time spontaneous steps toward the desired goal without much thinking. Harry knows this frail side of his enemy very well and carries it as a mark on his forehead. Dumbledore's words as to this scar reveal much about the debated condition.

"Your mother [Lilly Potter] died to save you [Harry]. If there is one thing Voldemort cannot understand, it is love. He didn't realize that love as powerful as your mother's for you leaves its own mark. Not a scar, no visible sign . . . to have been loved so deeply, even though the

person who loved us is gone, will give us some protection forever. It is in your very skin. Quirrell, full of hatred, greed, and ambition, sharing his soul with Voldemort, could not touch you for this reason. It was agony to touch a person marked by something so good.” (Rowling, 1997, p.382)

Trusting his vast magical power, Voldemort does not hesitate for a second to attack infant Harry, yet his rashness nearly causes his own death when the curse he hexed ricochets back. As for anger, it appears to be the primary agent in this villain’s problem-solving or treating differences. In the fiction, his anger is illustrated as a primer to trigger his rousing violence and the rage of the villain unexceptionally ends in deaths and great destruction. When Voldemort learns that the vault in which he has hidden a Horcrux is raided, he does not hesitate to kill the bank workers and a number of security guards within seconds. Judging from these points, it can be concluded that rashness and anger are referred in both texts as building blocks for the ultimate corrupt body with no hint of spiritual light. What is attention-grabbing though, is manifested through the fact that with a bond of causality these vile traits either yield to or are yielded by one another.

Both Tolkien and Rowling contrast rashness and anger by praising a ‘good’ nature. In their esteem, a kind heart and benevolent mind would be considerate enough to oversee the regretful results of thoughtless deeds. That is to say, the writers base an effective reason on a good heart. All accordingly, they obtain a selective approach in the presentation of their heroes to the audience. Both Frodo and Harry are notable characters for having innocent and good hearts. They are entrusted with impossible tasks on the basis of carrying hearts that are not spoiled by evil temptations. Frodo’s austerity and Harry’s commitment function as great bonds to attach the heroes to the pieties and virtues which can be labeled as good. Along the journey, they receive the sermons of their mentors and experience numerous events which reinforce the importance of having a good heart for the sake of their quests and lives in peace. Despite the fact that the heroes are subjected to numerous forms of miseries, they try to resist these suffrages by always struggling to be on the side of good. Consequently, what the heroes have been through turns the narration into a grand sermon in which esoteric language delivers the message that anger and rashness are vile traits and stand as means of corruption while ‘righteous good’ serves as a compass to direct the initiate towards the holy spiritual wake. In this essence, both authors send their heroes on a journey through a dark forest but with an ever-true compass. That is to say, the writers underline the fact that a good heart will always find the way to the desired destination of salvation.

Ariadne's Thread: Life and Light versus Vice and Malice

The journey of the adept for the ultimate purpose of gnosis is not an easy task to fulfill. The person is challenged by a variety of torments and sacrifices. He is openly demanded an exact distancing from the material world and its colorful pleasures for the sake of the acquisition of a state which can achieve the bond with the god-head. Through an esoteric scope, gnosis is a wave of holy wisdom that is ever present in the human soul inherently, yet it necessitates the requisite spiritual tuning for the activation and further transmission. In this essence, the gnostic wake can be likened to the frequency tuning of a radio which results in the transmission of the holy wisdom if done properly. To this end, esoteric masters of the field lay the roadmap and mark each step as a challenge of distancing from torments and closure to a virtue (power of the god) in return. The masters urge the adept to take this cryptic journey, which indeed stands for a complete process of spiritual change, in the accompaniment with explicit cautions that gnosis is not a state of mind to achieve through acculturation or informative schooling. It barely necessitates a soul open and ready for the ascension. At this point, the last, first, and maybe all the complete milestones of the torments emerge before the adept as a 'vile' nature and 'malice' spreading from it. Despite these being posited as the last phases of torment, for a critical eye, the wicked attributes stand for all the preceding ones, for the fact that not a single torment that has been cited above can be classified other than a vile trait. Incontinence for instance is an outward manifestation of inherent corruption. Greed roots in a soul that has gone awry. Grief, accordingly, marks the end for any other divergent inclination. In short, vileness is a nefarious decadence that has the potential to mother all the other esoteric torments. It must be borne in mind that both Gnosticism and Hermeticism regard materiality and worldliness as responsible for the darkness thus vileness and malice. (Gündüz, 1997; Hermetica, 1992; The Divine Pymander, 1650; The Secret Book of John, 2005)

The esoteric guide for the total removal of this umbrella decadence is also prescribed by an encompassing virtue which is namely 'life and light'. The sect condemns the torments of the darkness for breaking any bond in support of a virtuous life. That is to say, life in corruption is a delusional one which, indeed, is a masked decaying. Now that so much has been revealed about the dark and how it haunts the perception of life, by presenting light as an antidote, the undertaking of the esoteric masters can be summarized as the emancipation of the holy spark so that it can

completely fill the initiate's self. Once the condition is achieved, the soul becomes purified of any vile, leaving no room for the corruption to root. This blessed state, in other words, the total removal of darkness and becoming integrated with the light is the final step to mark the successful completion of the spiritual esoteric journey (The Divine Pymander, 1650). And this requisite can be put into words best by a quote from Tolkien who once contemplated as follows: "Look, up at the sky. There is a light, a beauty up there, that no shadow can touch." (2019, p.922) And the methodology to this end is suggested by Rowling who once spoke words of high esoteric esteem through Dumbledore character who had had a soon yet to be a martyr while fighting against the dark: "It is our choices, ... that show what we truly are."(1998, p.393)

Following the mindset that is illustrated above, both Tolkien and Rowling farewell their heroes to their spiritual journey through in which a multitude of events and experiences test them with torments and assess their laudability for the acquisition of gnosis. The successful emancipation of ten divine powers purifies the heroes' souls of any traces of corruption and darkness. As the quote above reveals clearly, Tolkien separates light from the dark by attributing purity and innocence to the latter, while the darker tone signifies corruption, spoilage, and downfall. A similar division governs the encampment in Rowling's fiction and the writer reminds the hero of his choices and according fates. In light of these premises, the state of pureness plays an esoteric key role in the successful completion of heroes' tasks. Given that pureness is a celebrated end to bearing an inherent light and by these means, only a blessed form of virtuous life can be cherished, the main tasks of the heroes of each narration appear as a hard barter through which light of wisdom ousts darkness of worldliness. In a nutshell, if reinterpreted in an esoteric vein both fictions can be quintessentially summarized as the purification process of the soul, and the happy endings they illustrate are the celebrated procurement of the divine godhead within the cleansed soul. What stands between the reader and the narration to this end is the veil of superficial meaning that can easily be removed with an according alteration in the point of view to deal with the text. "awaken!" (149) is a one-word sermon the Gnostic Jesus preaches to his follower in the book of John and *verbum sapienti satis est*.

Light plays a significant role in both narrations considering that it enables the spring of other powers of God. When enlightened by the holy light, a mind becomes eager to show generosity, do truthful deeds, gain control over wishes and desires, and

thence he enjoys a life of piety and wisdom. In short, redeeming the holy spark within the soul consequently leaves no room for the dark thus no chance for corruption. While authors test their side characters for love, courage, wisdom, loyalty, and forbearing; the heroes become a subject of examination for purification.

Despite numerous examples as to the merits of a good nature such as Beren and Luthien, Earendil and Tom Bombadil; the most remarkable one is exhibited in Frodo's good heart against Smeagol's irreversibly corrupt mind. The hero's mercy towards the frail creature bears bitter fruits when the two figures start fighting for the ring. Yet again, what Frodo cannot achieve himself, comes into being through a touch of luck. In a state of ecstasy, Smeagol falls down to fire destroying both himself and the ring. With these events, Tolkien places fortune on the side of light. Frodo's clemency for a feeble and miserable creature culminates in the total removal of the evil although it has not been meant that way whatsoever. The push of the author in the last minute not only favors the hero but also discloses an esoteric secret. The moment Smeagol blisters to death in fiery pits, Frodo is carried to the skies by eagles. If unveiled, in esoteric esteem, the scene notifies the critical eye of the downfall of a corrupt soul who lost the holy spark in him and thus condemned to the depths of torment while a blessed soul gains the privilege to ascend into the heavens towards the holy light (gnostic wisdom per se) after successfully completing a purification process.

As Frodo turns a blind eye to the charms and appeals of the ring, he advances towards the holy light and upon the destruction of the ring, he is given a chance to spend the rest of his life in Undying Lands at the heart of holy wisdom. The final journey of the hero is delivered through obscure esoteric rhetoric for the declaration of the successful acquisition of gnosis since this journey takes place through 'grey' heavens into the land of 'light'. It is highly intriguing that Gandalf's triumph over a dark demon turns him *white* from *grey*, likewise, his student's success in enduring and defeating the ring lets him go through *grey* into the *light*. Like a raindrop traveling through streams and rivers into the ocean, Frodo's spark in his soul reaches the source of light, the metaphor of the writer bears tangible evidence to denote the god-head by means of the Undying Land for the fact that the arrival to these lands has hitherto been prohibited for the mortal folks due to these people's being corrupted by the temptations of the dark.

Harry is the other examinee who has to go through the vile charms of the dark. The remnant of Voldemort's soul incessantly tempts the hero to give in to the evil and cruel intentions he has infested Harry's mind with. Whenever the hero senses the presence of this dark relic, it gives him immense pain. Besides, the fragment of soul operates similar to take full control of the hero's mind. The moment Harry is assaulted by Voldemort in ministry, the Dark Lord uses this bond to make Harry beg for his own death by Dumbledore's wand. Following a similar fashion to Tolkien's, Rowling places an indispensable condition for the salvation of her hero. In a prophecy to foretell Harry's fate, she underlines an esoteric truth in auguring "either must die at the hand of the other for neither can live while the other survives" (p.453). On deeper allegorical levels, the preceding oracle denotes the incompatible nature of two opposites: dark versus light (evil versus good per se). When Harry challenges Voldemort, he gives him a chance to attack, nonetheless the fatal curse the Dark Lord hexed targets his own part of the soul in Harry's. In a state of dream, disposed of Voldemort's soul Harry finds himself in a train station washed in white mist. There he meets his deceased mentor beaming with light and to his surprise, the old man does not seem to be a suffering spook but rather a man of great relief. Rowling (2007) describes the peace of the enlightened mentor depicting him as follows: "Happiness seemed to radiate from Dumbledore like light, like fire: Harry had never seen the man so utterly, so palpably, content" (p.708). The blissful state under discussion stands for the so far possible literal explanation for the state of gnosis. The competency of the writer locates this meeting in a train station where the adept Harry meets his elated late mentor and the remnant of his enemy in a miserable condition. As explained above, the station under discussion is notably colored in white and serves as a point of dissolution as the phrase is. The claim owes its merit thanks to the assistance provided by Dumbledore who, in a dialogue with Harry, says:

[Harry-] "I've got to go back, haven't I?"
[Dumbledore]"That is up to you."
"I've got a choice?"
"Oh yes." Dumbledore smiled at him. "We are in King's Cross, you say? I think that if you decided not to go back, you would be able to . . . let's say . . . board a train."
"And where would it take me?"
"On," said Dumbledore simply.(Rowling, 2007, p.722)

In accordance with his mentor's wise words, Harry leaves the station by separating from the cursed part of Voldemort and he moves on to a different phase of his life which is cleansed from the corruption of the Dark Lord's vileness. The train

station event bears a high value in esoteric terms with reference to the fact that a soul proves ready to acquire gnosis upon completion of his pureness by leaving the torments of worldliness and emancipating the powers of the god. When equipped by the virtues of light, the holy spark expands itself through the body and shines through the person, by leaving no room for dark which has been traditionally associated with earthly desires.

Rowling's train station and Tolkien's Mount Doom stand as the esoteric destinations of the cryptic journeys the heroes have hitherto taken. Both authors mark the foretold locations with extra significance in the narration for these locations are presented as points of dissolution. Frodo's destruction of the ring and Harry's disposal of Voldemort's soul posit a greater evolution than the imminent marvels of an adventure story. If re-observed through esoteric lenses, the mentioned phenomena can be accounted for a total purification of the heroes' souls and detachments from evil and corruption. In doing so, the authors follow a Hermetic agenda for the ultimate gain of gnosis while emphasizing the fact that the esoteric undertaking of the initiate can successfully come to an end when the holy spark reigns in the body and the darkness of the corruption is removed. Rather than a sheer tour de force, the authors invite the readers for a spiritual journey of change in which darker tones are to be swapped with lighter ones.

The writers not only preach the values of divine virtues but also place them as a series of touchstones end of which is crowned with gnosis. Frodo, by enduring and discarding the ring, and Harry by forbearing and eliminating Voldemort's soul, provide the readers with distinguished examples of the esoteric journey to this end. When bereaved of the evil, the heroes' spiritual rebirth takes place in the realm of light granting them a divine nature equipped with virtues, and the sparkling flashes that linger behind them can easily be spun together to lay a thread of Ariadne through the stories to the ultimate gnosis. As it has been the focal mantra of the study, there is nothing outside the text but between the lines into the depths of the reader. With this metaphor, Tolkien and Rowling can be commented on simply as moving one step beyond Carroll by pointing at the rabbit hole for Alice.

3. THE ALCHEMY OF ASCENSION

3.1. Piety by the Stars

Ad astra per aspera

“Once purified, the soul could ascend to the heavens psychically or mentally” (p.127) contemplates Kılıç (2010) in his comprehensive study elaborating on the Hermetic teachings. The way he delivers the issue reminds those who are interested in the sect of Daedalus’s wings. Yet, in this version of the tale, rising towards the sun as much as possible is a deed that is highly recommended for neither the wings are made of wax nor the adept is prone to falling back to the darkness.

The preceding claim owes its merit to the Hermetic axiom that by leaving the senses of the body, in other words, the “torments of matter”; the student of the Hermetic art inaugurates his “divine birth” (Merkur, 1999. Pp: 83-84) With these in mind, the Hermetic journey towards gnosis can be envisioned being a two-dimensional series of spiritual development. While the earlier vigor of the adept to remove the torments of the matter and emanate the powers of God can be accounted for breaking away from the restrictions of the material body, thus recoined ‘purging of the soul’; the ascension of the adept towards the godhead renders a second extent which takes place in the form of sparkling the divine spirit of heavenly spheres which account for a holy virtue (Stavish, 2016). The total gathering of these virtues enables the adept to a novel pious disposition and they stand similar to the parts of a puzzle for the fact that one missing piece breaks the unity and hampers the completion of the spiritual ascension (Mildenberger, 2018; Kılıç, 2017).

As has been debated above, the soul who is selected to take the Hermetic journey has to undergo a set of challenges to prove his merit. Under this obligatory condition is he given a chance to rise towards the holy light. The purification of the soul from the matter is an irrevocable must and it is manifested through a total ascetic life. The examination of the initiate is a gradual one and urges the student to be patient and perseverant. If successfully completed, the holy spark in the soul starts shining ever more leaving no room for the darkness to root. In this phase, the adept is regarded as a free

man who has broken away from his slavery. Though his feet are on the ground of the corrupting world, his eyes are steered above.

At this point, Kılıç mentions “the moon” as the first heavenly sphere and likens it to the “reaper of souls separating them from the flesh”. The genius of this agent is informed to be “thought” and its role is to select those gifted ones from the corrupt mass (149). The word ‘thought’ is emphasized clearly on the grounds that both Gnosticism and Hermeticism necessitate the awareness of the adept of his true nature and the imperative labor to break away from the darkness. In an esoteric vein, it is a direct referent to the Hermetic art of spiritual transformation from worldly to heavenly (divine).

Despite the multitude of side characters who indulge in sorts of esoteric approaches, the heroes of the stories, Harry and Frodo, separate from the mass in that they prove perfect examples to achieve a piety level that has been advertised above and is to be debated in detail with the following paragraphs. Nevertheless, despite their ostentatious furthest development, these characters start their journey in a way similar to others’. That is both Frodo and Harry are initiated into an adventure upon learning the condition they are in. The ring Frodo has been assigned to carry and destroy and the dark soul of Voldemort in Harry that has to be removed for the total defeat of the enemy are stand-ins through which Tolkien and Rowling deliver their esoteric doctrines.

The Moon-the genius of thought

Rowling’s *Harry Potter* series start with the first volume which is titled ‘the Philosopher’s Stone’. The item possesses great significance in esoteric esteem for it is reported to procure means for achieving miraculous things such as “converting base metals into gold” (Laport & Gabrielsson, 2015, p.13), “rejuvenation, and achieving immortality” (Menna, n.d, p.3).

Despite the salient claims as to the possible benefits, there remains one more utility of the stone that has been pushed behind, and according to Hindu sages, the Philosopher Stone is a metaphor referring to “the accomplishment of gnosis”. (Morrisson, 2007, p.6) Accordingly, three initiate writers of the book *Kybalion* (2016) account for the stone being a similitude for the Hermetic philosophy. Additionally, the writers comment on the stone’s supernatural power to turn base metals into gold by of being a parable to explain “the Hermetic art of spiritual transmutation for the adept”

(20). With these in mind, the aforementioned object possesses significant esoteric esteem for uniting immortality through gnosis thanks to a Hermetic alteration in human spirituality.

In light of the exposed inclinations of the stone, Rowling's designation of her first book under the sub-title '*the philosopher's stone*' grants another dimension to Harry Potter's adventure into the magical world. The novel aspect of the story bears abundant evidence to assist the study's claim that Harry's painstaking struggle to defeat an evil wizard is projected as vivid manifestations of an underlying vigor to achieve gnosis by means of Hermetic arts.

To gain insight into the condition, we can relocate the hero's initiation into magic. Now that the moon is acknowledged for possessing the genius of thought, Harry's acculturation into a subtle but hidden world can be redefined as the acquisition of awareness. The quality of thought is, thereof, an umbrella term to encompass not only a mind driven by reason but also discerning the true nature of one's self. Once the pre-told condition is provided, the subsequent step appears to be the application of Hermetic art to transform the initiate from worldly to divine. Hermetics veil the process through a parable of transforming base metals into gold and Hermes purports the labor in his words "Separate thou the earth from the fire, the subtle from the gross sweetly with great industry... By this means you shall have the glory of the whole world. Thereby all obscurity shall fly from you!" (Emerald Tablet, n.d, 7-9-10)

Harry's discovery of the magic world takes place next to learning the bizarre jeopardy he has been in since his birth. Harry is not an ordinary child and he is marked as a lifelong enemy by the notorious Dark Lord after a prophecy. The situation compulsorily exposes him to choose his path to stand against the dark camp for it is the only way to his salvation. Through a deconstructive reading, the preceding obligation can be reinterpreted as the Gnostic & Hermetic demand to resist the matter (darkness per se) and seek ways to achieve triumph over it, which indeed can be realized by means of gnosis. The informing of the hero about magic and the dark lord (enemy), thus symbolizes confining the esoteric secrets to the initiate so that he can gain awareness about the true nature of life and his-self.

The genius of thought by the moon performs the first Hermetic task for the hero upon his gaining true insight into the realities of life. Nevertheless, the virtue of thought

does not limit itself to a comparatively small extent when Rowling's agenda is scrutinized from a broader perspective. When the first volume of the story reaches a climax, Harry grows anxious that some dark wizards might be after the philosopher's stone which has been well preserved in Hogwarts (the school for the teaching of magic). Therefore, he investigates the preservation room to find that his corrupt teacher, Quirrel, is trying to locate the whereabouts of the stone in the hopes of giving it to Voldemort. To the hero's surprise, upon removing the turban covering his head, Harry witnesses that Quirrel has hitherto been carrying a part of Voldemort in his body. The Dark Lord's face in the back of Quirrel's head demands the help of Harry for neither Quirrel nor Voldemort has been successful in finding the stone. In the scuffle, Quirrel tries to hold Harry by obeying his master's order to kill the boy. However, the protective charm of love placed on the hero by his mother prevents him from doing it. In addition, the mark of love forces the remnant of Voldemort to flee by inflicting fatal damage on Quirrel.

The preceding resolution for the first volume of the story may present a subtle but highly esoteric inclination if the excerpt is reinterpreted on the basis of the genius of the moon. Given that it is associated with the 'thought' and likened to a reaper separating souls from the flesh. In doing so, the sphere renders the spiritual ascension possible for the selected ones. Rowling conspicuously marks the climax of the first volume by separating Voldemort as a sinister soul from Quirrel's flesh with the intervention of Harry. The dissolution owes its significance to the fact that when these characters are relocated in esoteric veins they stand respectively for corruption, material body, and holy spark. Harry's touch acts similar to a scythe to tear the soul apart from the flesh because the holy light does not spare room for corrupt darkness in the body. Yet again, Quirrel's degradation proves unredeemable for a pardon and leaves the character in a fatal condition.

By issuing the preceding facts, Rowling lets her hero experience the moon's operation on a corrupt soul who is void of esoteric awareness. The departure of the evil from his flesh is subsequent to his devastation. So, when the moon reaps the body, Quirrel does not stand a chance for salvation. If unveiled further, Rowling advertises the unsuccessful life cycle for her readers. When irreversibly corrupted, a soul is lacked of any chance for ascension to the god-head and is, therefore, condemned to the perishment in dark (*The Divine Pymander*, 1650).

In the long run, Rowling delineates the second half of the esoteric tenet by completing and revealing the big picture when Harry learns that he is, also, carrying a part of Voldemort in a similar way Quirrel has once done. The conditions demand the hero confront the Dark Lord with a feigned defiance so that there may not be another chance for the enemy to revive by means of the relic Harry keeps alive with his own life. In doing so, Rowling restages the philosopher's stone scene for a soul who is ready for gnosis and away from corruption. Drawing great compatibility with the esoteric teachings, Voldemort's assault on Harry ends in the removal of his dark soul, in esoteric terms, the moon reaps Harry and separates him from the remnants of worldliness and grants the hero ascension towards gnosis by means of staging the scene in a train station washed in light.

Additionally, Harry's mentor Dumbledore comes up with the brilliant idea of hiding the philosopher's stone in a magical mirror by the name 'the mirror of Erised'. It is a peculiar object for reflecting one's vision of the way he desires to be. For instance, Harry sees himself in the mirror accompanied by his deceased parents. Dumbledore, similarly, confesses finding himself holding a pair of socks in the mirror. While debating as to the nature of the mirror the old wizard confesses to the young hero that the happiest people can see themselves in the mirror as they are. In doing so, Rowling promises much operative liberty for deconstructing the fantasy to unearth the esoteric tenets. The mirror indeed does not cast the reflection of the appearance but it reveals the deepest desires a character has been fostering in his heart. Upon checking himself in it, Ron Weasley revels in holding a quidditch cup to exemplify the simple craving of a child. Yet again, Quirrel and Voldemort use it to find the philosopher's stone in order to gain immortality. Despite all, Dumbledore's caution shifts the mirror from a self-care object to an esoteric touchstone. It not only reveals a key Hermetic acquisition but also the biggest advancement towards gnosis by highlighting the fact that by removing all the desires from the heart, one can render the mirror an ordinary one and prove happiest. The pre-told claim manifests its proof in the following excerpt in which Dumbledore explains how Harry has achieved to get the stone from the mirror:

“Ah, now, I'm glad you asked me that. It was one of my more brilliant ideas, and between you and me, that's saying something. You see, only one who wanted to find the Stone — find it, but not use it — would be able to get it, otherwise they'd just see themselves making gold or drinking Elixir of Life.. (Rowling, 1997, p.342)

When the volume of the story draws a closure, Harry successfully passes a Hermetic test and advances one step closer to the gnosis by extracting the philosopher stone from the Mirror of the Erised. In doing so, the hero reveals the first transition in his spirituality. The earning of the stone is, therefore, a stand-in for the Hermetic art of mental transformation towards a more pious nature. Hence, the initiate not only raises his awareness about material corruption but also elicits Hermetic means for purifying it. In a nutshell, Rowling's manifestation of the first scene, in which the child hero can beat an evil wizard and witness Voldemort's sinister soul being reaped of the victim's flesh is restaged at the end of the whole narration when Harry is obliged to sacrifice his life in order to destroy the part of the Dark Lord's soul in him. Rather intriguingly, when his time comes, the Hermetic agent 'the moon' operates an esoteric revelation on him and separates Harry from the dark soul that he has hitherto endured. The merit of the scene can be based on the fact that, at that moment, Harry is targeted by a fatal curse that cannot be evaded, yet again this curse does not operate as expected but performs an esoteric miracle in granting life to the hero while bringing the total destruction of the wicked villain. In this respect, it wouldn't be a far-fetched claim to say that Rowling's agenda follows a clear Hermetic checklist toward the gnosis. The hero's dark burden in his body can be repositated as a proxy for the Hermetic and Gnostic belief for inherent vileness for humans. Thereby the disposal of the dark remnant by means of holding strictly on to virtues for a pious life is a message by the writer that is emphasized to the utmost.

To put it simply, Rowling leaves a word to wise to trace and expose the Hermetic facet of the narration by entitling the first volume 'the philosopher's stone'. She introduces two differing sorts of people in pursuit of the stone. On one side those, who are gone astray, desire it for earthly gains such as an immortal life and power to generate gold, however Rowling authors the other side of the search through an esoteric language in which the mirror of the Erised stands for an esoteric examiner. The mirror puts forth one criterion, to get the stone you must want to get the stone as it is and this wish must not be spoiled by the company of a further wish. The condition is highly attention-grabbing and esoteric if scrutinized elaboratively. Attempting to get the philosopher's stone as it is renders the object useless. That is to say, Rowling attaches a hidden but greater importance to the stone when compared with the assumptive marvels of immortality and gold making. Given that, the bestowment of the stone to the person

who, indeed, does not want anything is a direct referent to the pacing spiritual development. At this point, the writer's real magic lies in her true interpretation of the emerald tablet in that separating the subtle from the gross with great industry brings the glory of the whole world and removes all obscurity from the body. In light of this, what changes from base metal to gold is indeed the allegorical referencing to the spiritual change. Hence, Rowling's narration encourages the readers for a Hermetic spiritual transition towards the more pious if the writer's surface story is left ajar to read what lingers in the background. And as the first acquisitions of the septette gains, awareness appears as a word to wise and functions more like a seed that has the potential to blossom into holy wisdom.

Mercury: the Genius of Nobility

As debated in the earlier chapters, the alignments of the planetary spheres towards the gnosis follow the order with Mercury subsequent to the moon. This sphere is associated with the nobility and it guides the souls toward the light. In essence, the celestial agent functions as an intermediary for the ascensions of the souls who have proved their awareness and thus stand a chance to claim their nobility by this means (Kılıç, 2010; Labouré, 1994). And Rowling's second volume is entitled "the chamber of secrets" and without violating the tradition, the writer passes a great esoteric teaching when the narration reaches the climax and resolution in the chamber.

The background information can be provided briefly as follows: the school of wizarding is under threat of a cryptic monster with a highly esoteric designation. The allegoric side of the narration owes its dynamics to the fact that the monster is an ancient colossal snake by the name 'basilisk' with peculiar eyes to petrify people to death in addition to fatally poisonous bites. The creature has been hidden in the school long before by a dark wizard who also has been one of the founders of the institution. The reason for placing such jeopardy lies in the struggle for preserving 'nobility' in the magic world. Salazar Slytherin's fear of racial degradation justifies his wicked deed to protect the magic blood against the alien intrusion by means of a snake which is to be controlled by a descendant of his. The instrument of control turns out to be the rather rare language of snakes (parseltongue) which cannot be taught yet passed through newer generations through kinship. If looked closely, the preceding condition requests a certain kind of nobility by blood.

The last heir of Slytherin with parseltongue is known to be Voldemort, and after him, nobody has hitherto experienced anything about the monster. Nevertheless, recently there have been fatal assaults leaving petrified bodies behind with threats of more violence written on the walls in blood in addition to the declaration of the heir's return and the opening of the chamber of the secrets.

Despite his young age, Harry is a distinguished child for speaking the parseltongue, and for this reason he is accused of being the heir to Slytherin and conducting the assaults. By following the traces, Harry locates the chamber of secrets located deep into the underground of the school. There he meets the soul of Voldemort in the disguise of a young student by the name Tom Riddle. He has revived thanks to a diary which indeed turns out to be a Horcrux. Yet, at that time, Harry neither knows what a Horcrux is nor can attach the boy's presence to the diary. To the hero's dismay, Tom uses parseltongue to summon the snake to set it on Harry.

Before moving on, it will be enlightening to share that in Rowling's fiction ancient forms of magic and creatures constitute a special group that has a unique nature in that they are immune to the common magic. For this reason, the defeat of the basilisk (snake), is not a probable deed not even for competent adult wizards without the aid of the same kind of ancient magic.

At this moment the phoenix who belongs to Harry's both mentor and teacher Dumbledore comes to aid the hero carrying the sword of Godric Gryffindor. With the sword, Harry manages to kill the serpent and uses one of its teeth to destroy the diary thus he removes a Horcrux unknowingly. Still, the hero feels rather confused about having the ability to speak the tongue of the snakes. For this reason, he fears being kin to Slytherin and sharing the same traits. At this moment, Dumbledore wants him to inspect the sword which appeared out of nowhere when he needed it desperately. The sword belongs to Gryffindor, another founder of Hogwarts school, and it is famous for showing itself to the person who proves to be a real member of the Gryffindor house.

In light of these, the esoteric dimension of the story can be brought to daylight on the matter of nobility. Harry's condition posits great significance for enmeshing two ties of nobilities. The parseltongue is closely associated with Slytherin thus being corrupt. On the other side, he proves another facet of a noble nature by procuring the Gryffindor sword. In the chamber of secrets, Rowling lets the hero experience both sides

he has been blessed with. While the serpent tries to claim his life, the phoenix and sword save the hero from this lethal threat. In doing so, the writer consolidates the esoteric teaching that nothing else but further corruption is brought by corrupt deeds. On the other side, good (light) is an agent for the salvation of the soul. By killing the monster with the help of the sword, not only Harry defies the dark side but also passes an esoteric teaching to the readers. For ultimate salvation, it is a must to choose the holy spark over the material darkness that every human has been born with.

Furthermore the aid of the Gryffindor sword carries strong esoteric inclinations for the fact that if the word is scrutinized etymologically, it may stand for ‘golden gryphon’ in French. A gryphon is a legendary creature “with the body of a lion, and the head and wings of an eagle”. It is “a symbol of divine power” (Von Volborth, 1981, p. 44). Besides, it has been revealed in the earlier chapter that gold is a Hermetic similitude for the spiritual transition towards perfection.

The nobility by ‘Slytherin’, on the other hand, reminds the reader of a serpent for the fact that etymologically the word is an alternate form for the English verb ‘slither’. When compared, while a gryphon can fly and rise towards heaven, a serpent must slither to the depths of the world (matter per se). With this wordplay, Rowling unfolds the esoteric secrecy to the critical eye, the Hermetic crossroads pave two paths with according destinations. Though some seek nobility in being more privileged in terms of earthly blessings, the celebrated ones expect it through spiritual development. In grasping the Gryffindor sword and killing the serpent Harry proves his spiritual laudability and the writer highlights the fact even more that the true nobility of a human lies not in the blood but in the holy spark that awaits to be revived through piety and according virtues.

Last but not the least, when the hero opens his eyes in the infirmary of the school, there he meets his mentor Dumbledore and he questions so as to learn why he can speak the parseltongue despite not being a descendant of Salazar Slytherin. The old man confides the hero about Horcruxes quite implicitly without mentioning the sinister term and informs the presence of Voldemort in him regretfully. The preceding dialogue takes place in the sharing of a grave secret in simple words for the addressed is a child who has been exposed to dark magic which can mar even adults’ lives.

Overall, Rowling shows a particular inclination in titling the second volume of the narration as *'the chamber of secrets'*. Following the Hermetic tradition, the house of mercury is gifted with the genius of nobility and the passenger who is summoned from the above must pass through this celestial agent. In the chamber, Harry learns about his dualistic nature one divine and the other corrupt. There he experiences the secret in him by interacting with the diary of Tom Riddle. Just like the object he destroyed and thus managed to kill a part of his enemy, he learns that he is also a living object to carry his enemy's soul. However, he challenges this side and tries to stay on the path of the purified. In doing so the writer, indeed, discloses the esoteric secret of the inherent corruption to her readers with which they have been born and hitherto lived. Furthermore, she reminds the readers of the holy spark with which they have been gifted since birth as well. She associates the spark with true nobility for the fact that according to Hermetic teachings the true human is the one who achieves his true spiritual state by means of a gnostic wake. To sum up, it can be concluded with much evidence that Rowling delivers a fictitious secret to her hero but between the lines, her words echo a Hermetic teaching for the readers who lend an ear.

Venus: the Genius of Love

As for the third step of the celestial ascension, Venus appears to be the genius of love. Metaphorically, this planet is envisaged by the Hermetics holding a mirror in which souls who forgot each other can reunite there. Venus, therefore, is a distinguished sphere for bringing gifted souls together and binding them through the bond of love. In this respect, love appears to be another Hermetic key piety acquisition of which is essential for gnosis (Kılıç, 2017; Saunders, 2018).

When matched with the HP series Rowling authors the third book under the title *'the Prisoner of Azkaban'*. The naming of the story bears great esoteric significance for it is highly related to the Hermetic principle of love. From a more detailed perspective, the story evolves around a blood-thirsty criminal who is infamous for being an impenitent follower of Voldemort. The very same person is also held responsible for the murder of Harry's parents because he is suspected to report the whereabouts of the family. Furthermore, this wizard is a close friend to the family and has the honor of being Harry's godfather. After serving a long time, the felon escapes the prison and is suspected to be after Harry.

The name of the person under discussion is Sirius Black. Contrary to rumors, he is an innocent man and has always been loyal to Potter's family. He has been held captive for a crime he has not committed and the reason for his escape is to find and punish the true informer who is, also, a family friend known by the name 'Peter Pettigrew'. Before advancing any further into the depths of the issue, it would be highly revealing to depict the notorious Azkaban. This place is a dark and gloomy prison for criminal wizards and is controlled by Dementors who are magical monster-like creatures and are deterred by all. In a conversation one of Harry's teachers comments on the dementors as follows:

"Dementors are among the foulest creatures that walk this earth. They infest the darkest, filthiest places, they glory in decay and despair, they drain peace, hope, and happiness out of the air around them. Even Muggles feel their presence, though they can't see them. Get too near a dementor and every good feeling, every happy memory will be sucked out of you. If it can, the dementor will feed on you long enough to reduce you to something like itself... soulless and evil. You'll be left with nothing but the worst experiences of your life. (Rowling, 1999, p.155)

And upon his visit to Azkaban on business; George Weasley, despite being a cheerful person in general, mentions about this experience being "the worst place he'd ever been" due to the dementors (Rowling, 1999, p.78). At the heart of the darkness, Rowling masters her fiction in order to hold Sirius captive in a similar way to the shining of a star in the dark night. Sirius is a carefully selected name for the fact that it is also the name of the brightest star in the sky. Metaphorically, by keeping an innocent man among the darkness of foul creatures, Rowling's fiction refers to the Hermetic-Gnostic worldviews of the holy spark surrounded by material darkness. In this respect, dementors turn out to be archons or daimons to bring torments for holding the holy spark captive and restricting it from holy ascension.

As the story progresses, Harry learns the truth as to Sirius' real fame. The two characters are thereof bound by a deep love. In addition, Harry meets Lupin, another close friend of the family and a companion to his father at hard times. To be precise, *Prisoner of Azkaban* turns out to be a sequel for the hero in which he experiences love and reunites with people whom he has forgotten for long drawing a great parallel to the genius of love by Venus.

To elaborate even further, the defiance of the dementors posits great esoteric significance. It is a difficult deed to ward off a dementor and the only possible way is to conjure 'Patronus' charm. In brief, the charm necessitates the reminiscing of a very

happy memory, only then it casts a shield of light to oust these foul creatures. Despite trying many times, Harry falls short to conjure a complete Patronus charm. Yet, when he meets with Sirius and becomes attached to him with deep love, the blissful memory he has been searching for desperately unfolds. The affection Harry feels for his godfather is so strong that the Patronus energized by it expels numerous dementors.

In a nutshell, Rowling lets her fiction '*the prisoner of Azkaban*' grow under the Hermetic guidance of Venus. She associates love with light closely. Her fiction promises much credibility to trust love and light as primary forces in the annulment of various torments and seductions of daimons and archons that draw an analogy to fictionalized dementors. Given that she keeps her readers well informed as to the true nature of love, she relocates it as the source of spiritual enlightenment, and Hermeticism draws a great parallel in this essence too. Referring back to Venus and how it reunites the souls who have forgotten each other by means of love, Rowling's fiction can be relabeled as the outward manifestation of the pre-told tenet. Hence the writer embraces a rather frank tone in exalting love as an indispensable piety in the defeat of evil and eventually, she discloses another esoteric teaching by proving substantial proof as to how love can defeat the corrupt darkness. With all these in mind, she lets not only Harry but also her readers get one step closer to the gnosis by discovering the true nature of love. The following lines encapsulate the Hermetic lesson on this matter briefly as follows:

Your mother died to save you. If there is one thing Voldemort cannot understand, it is love. He didn't realize that love as powerful as your mother's for you leaves its own mark. Not a scar, no visible sign... to have been loved so deeply, even though the person who loved us is gone, will give us some protection forever. It is in your very own skin. Quirrel, full of hatred, greed, and ambition, sharing his soul with Voldemort, could not touch you for this reason. It was agony to touch a person marked by something so good. (Rowling, 1997, p.341)

The Sun: The Genius of Beauty

73-74: But I, giving thanks, and blessing the Father of all things, rose up, being enabled by him, and taught the Nature of the Nature of the whole, and having seen the greatest sight or spectacle.

And I began to Preach unto men, the beauty and fairness of Piety and Knowledge. (The Divine Pymader, 1650, p.14)

The ascension of the adept towards the divine origins entails the fourth stop as the Sun possessing the genius of beauty. In Hermetic esteem, the star is celebrated for

being a celestial agent helping the souls soar toward immortality. On the way to the ultimate destination, the adept adds the trait as another pillar to support gnosis and an outward insignia for divine wisdom and advanced spirituality. Wunder (2008) detects the preceding condition as the common “reverence for the beauty of the Hermetic philosophies!” (14) and Hermes heralds his followers the following as a vital gain towards immortality. “For it is possible for the Soul, o Son, to be deified while yet it lodgeth in the Body of Man if it contemplates the beauty of the Good.” (1650, p.22)

The perception of beauty occupies a significant place in Rowling’s fiction. The writer ascribes this blessing to the righteous folks, nearly as a trademark to differentiate from those whom she condemns with ugliness and malformation for being astray. The fifth volume of her fiction is titled *‘the goblet of fire’*. The attention-grabbing word choice of the writer promises much for the Hermetic studies to operate on the text. As it is a well-known fact that the sun is the source of energy for life and it is depicted as a colossal globe of fire. Additionally, the sun governs beauty and highlights this merit as a key to unlock the gates for immortality (Kılıç, 2017). Given that the sun stands as an esoteric agent to unite beauty with immortality. Rowling’s literary genius takes over the issue at this point and veils the Hermetic tradition by means of a magical object that goes under the name ‘goblet of fire’.

This volume evolves around a tournament in which three wizardry schools come together to choose a champion. In order to select the candidates, the goblet is consulted as a trustworthy jury. It basically operates as follows: The students who want to participate in the tournament write their names on a piece of parchment and put it in the goblet. After the due time for application is over; the goblet, traditionally, chooses three champions by selecting one from each school and shoots their name out with flames. (This time it chooses exceptionally four champions including the hero Harry). Albeit implicitly, the choice of Rowling’s goblet sorts out characters who are distinguished by their beauty or charm. For instance, Victor Krum and Cedric Diggory are male champions who possess virility and attraction. While confessing their charm Harry conducts an interior monologue:

Then there was the fact that Cedric looked the part of a champion so much more than he did. Exceptionally handsome, with his straight nose, dark hair, and gray eyes, it was hard to say who was receiving more admiration these days, Cedric or Viktor Krum. Harry actually saw the same sixth-year girls who had been so keen to get Krum’s autograph begging Cedric to sign their school bags one lunchtime (2000, 296).

As for the female champion of Beauxbaton School, Fleur Delacour is chosen by the goblet and declared by stretching tongues of fire. The character is a strikingly beautiful woman who owes her beauty to being a half Veela by her grandmother. The accurate definition of a Veela is provided to the reader through Harry's eyes who feels stupefied just like any other male student who has experienced looking at one of them:

Veela were women . . . the most beautiful women Harry had ever seen . . . except that they weren't — they couldn't be — human. This puzzled Harry for a moment while he tried to guess what exactly they could be; what could make their skin shine moon-bright like that, or their white gold hair fan out behind them without wind . . . but then the music started, and Harry stopped worrying about them not being human — in fact, he stopped worrying about anything at all. (Rowling, 2000, p.103)

By depicting the champions with salient references to their beauty and virility, Rowling speaks an esoteric tongue deciphering of which provides latent resolutions to the Hermetic appraisal of beauty as a sign of righteousness and getting closer to immortality. Now that the Hermetic path is laid before the initiate to grant him the astral-agnostic identity; while knowledge, nobility, and love can be clustered as inherent traits, beauty has a privileged status to manifest itself both inwardly and outwardly. The true nature of the mentioned characters is proven by the goblet and this is highlighted by the aura of beauty and charm that surrounds them. On the other side, Rowling visualizes material corruption by means of ugliness. Similar to the way beauty operates in two ways, the unesthetic façade of the vile characters symbolizes an inherent decay. A case example of the foretold condition can be illustrated with the depiction of Voldemort by Harry.

"... ugly, slimy, and blind — but worse, a hundred times worse... [He] had the shape of a crouched human child, except that Harry had never seen anything less like a child. It was hairless and scaly-looking, a dark, raw, reddish black. Its arms and legs were thin and feeble, and its face — no child alive ever had a face like that — flat and snakelike, with gleaming red eyes." (Rowling, 2000, p.640)

The climax of the story tells the revival of Voldemort through dark magic. The way he gains a proper life posits great importance in terms of furnishing esoteric inclinations, the search for immortality if to put it precisely. Through a wicked plot, he achieves to capture Harry thanks to the aid of his servant. In order to reincarnate, he has been in need of blood taken from his enemy. Having learned the catastrophic consequences of touching someone marked by the protection of a love spell, he does not demand the blood of an ordinary wizard but Harry's. This way he cherishes the hope of deactivating the old charm that forbids him from any physical contact. His hopes prove

right though in a manner he has not perceived thoroughly. Upon embodying, he confesses to his followers that he has primarily been preoccupied with finding means to evade fatality. He verbalizes this wish thus and so: “I, who have gone further than anybody along the path that leads to immortality. You know my goal — to conquer death” (Rowling, 2000, p. 653). In search of this ambition, he loses a servant and experiences another near-death condition while searching for the philosopher’s stone. In doing so, Rowling projects an example of the awry ideal of immortality through worldliness. Voldemort’s hope for eternal life through an object is therefore a stand-in to anchor the wish to darkness and corruption due to being material bound. Nevertheless, the present erroneous understanding of immortality is confronted by the deeper and broader liability of the hero who traces it by way of piety and wisdom. Surprisingly, the piety under discussion turns out to be ‘love’.

In order to gain insight as to how, it should be remembered that Lily Potter’s love for her child conjures an old magic that renders Harry invulnerable to Voldemort’s threats. In order to nullify this charm of protection, the villain uses the hero’s blood. However, by this means, he unknowingly permits Lily’s protection for Harry to persist. And this protection is thereof assured by Voldemort himself. So long as the dark wizard lives, so does Lily’s protection for Harry. From a broader perspective, similar to Voldemort infesting Harry with his dark soul, the transfer of blood enables Lily’s love to reside in both. The foretold fact is explained to the hero by his mentor Dumbledore in the following excerpt:

“He took your blood and rebuilt his living body with it! Your blood in his veins, Harry, Lily’s protection inside both of you! He tethered you to life while he lives! ... He took your blood believing it would strengthen him. He took into his body a tiny part of the enchantment your mother laid upon you when she died for you. His body keeps her sacrifice alive, and while that enchantment survives, so do you and so does Voldemort’s one last hope for himself.”(Rowling, 2007, pp.709-710)

This is a crucial phenomenon for the fact that subsequent to his embodiment, Voldemort tries to finish his incomplete deed by killing Harry. Yet, due to a fraternity of wands for possessing the same core, the Dark Lord’s inconsiderate rashness, and above all, the novel bond provided by Lily renders Harry unkillable by his enemy, thus immortal. In doing so, Rowling weaves a web of Hermetic values to encompass immortality. By placing love at the core of beauty that functions like a key in the lock she opens the doors to spiritual immortality. As expected, the writer’s inclination converges with the ideal of immortality in Hermetic terms. The sect contemplates this

state as achieving the astral position back in the godhead (gnosis per se) rather than an incessant biologic life on earth. Furthermore, Hermetic believers disfavor life in the flesh likening it to a prison to withhold the divine spark. In this vein, the true life is indicated to be the one that is spiritual and accordingly, as every hope Voldemort has cherished for an endless life fades away, the author reinforces the bond that attaches immortality to a divine rebirth by adding one more tick to the esoteric agenda of the narration.

Mars: the Genius of Justice

The next level for the ascension of the soul renders before the eyes of the adepts as the genius of justice and this Hermetic trait is associated with Mars. The planet is embodied in the form of a celestial body holding a sword. It acts as an intermediary by welcoming the blessed souls dispatched by the sun and guides them towards the might of knowledge which is under the reign of Jupiter (Kılıç, 2017; Labouré, 1994); meanwhile, Mars delineates the adepts with justice and Hermes (1650) preaches this piety reminding that the control of the desires is regarded as the key acquisition for this end.

9. Now I call forth Continnence, the power which is over Concupiscence. This, O Son, is the stable and firm foundation of Justice.

40. For see how without labour she hath chased away Injustice; and we are justified, O Son, when Injustice is away. (p.45)

The foretold nature of the Hermetic ascension is unrevealed in the *Harry Potter* series with the fifth book titled '*the order of the phoenix*'. While keeping the suspense at maximal levels, Rowling changes the tone of her fiction by the revival of Voldemort, and the dim colors of the narration alter for even darker ones. What has hitherto been told as near-dangerous escapades develops into a bizarre sort of struggle for survival. The hero of the narration is not a sanguine teenager anymore who delights in discovering the marvels of the magic world. Rather, he gradually grows mature, less cheerful, and more insightful into the fight he has been dragged to. The hero can see thestrals, a kind of magical creatures who owe their fame to being visible only to those who have seen death. The hero suffers the agonizing memory of his deceased friend Cedric Diggory and above all; together with everybody, who confronts the Dark Lord, senses the increasing fear and unease due to a powerful enemy at large.

Before we deliver the issue in detail, it will be highly revealing to describe Voldemort briefly. He is the most wicked wizard history has ever recorded. His fame is

a notorious one including nearly all sorts of crimes and atrocities. The power he possesses is beyond even the imagination of an ordinary wizard and the lordship he executes involves wicked forms of creations such as giants, snakes, spiders, dementors, and groups of obedient militia under the banner 'death eaters'. In short, the excessive destructive power of the wizard is assisted by a vast and nefarious army.

In order to confront this force, a group of righteous wizards comes together around certain values and they name themselves as the members of 'order of the phoenix'. Despite being decisive and courageous devotees, the power they possess proves very little when compared with that of Voldemort. For the very same reason, similar to the way it has once happened, the Dark Lord's rise inaugurates with missing people and unidentified murders. For this reason, the imbalance of power shades the narration darker with gloom, fear, and despair. The way Rowling depicts these phenomena can be interpreted as an attribution to the vast and intimidating power of materiality. The gaping of Voldemort's power posits liable inclinations to conceive the compelling force of material corruption. Hermetics regard the position of man being in between two polars. Those who gain salvation through spiritual wake are known as immortal on one end, as for those who cannot purify themselves from the worldliness corruption are regarded bound by death. The Hermetic fact is informed to the followers by Hermes (1650) as follows:

Why, O Men of the Offspring of Earth, why have you delivered yourselves over unto Death, having power to partake of Immortality? Repent and change your minds, you that have together walked in Error, and have been darkened in ignorance. (p.16)

The word choice for the adherents of Voldemort, in this respect, bears a different nature if inspected through the pre-told vantage point. These people are referred as 'death eaters'. By a simple touch of deconstruction, the banner can be redefined as 'feeding on death'. Similar to Hermetic and Gnostic darkness which are held responsible for the spiritual death of humans, these fellows of the dark side are verily desire-driven beings and their corruption turns them into irreversible units of this malice. They use a skull and a serpent as their regalia and bring death wherever they reach.

Rowling occupies the other side of the struggle with a magical creature 'phoenix' which is famous for being immortal thanks to rising from her ashes (Broek, 1972, p.146). Furthermore, rather than simply calling themselves 'phoenixes', the members of the group prefer to mention their gathering as an 'order' by which being a phoenix is

rendered bound by initiation. While talking about the Order, Hermione discloses the following: “It’s a secret society... Dumbledore’s in charge, he founded it. It’s the people who fought against You-Know-Who last time[Voldemort].” (Rowling, 2003, p.50) Upon this, Harry wants to join the Order heartily yet his young age and according inexperience hold him back for a rather short while because a couple of months later he and his friends are to be de facto members to wage a war against the death eaters.

With all these in mind, Rowling associates corruption with death and immortality with purification by drawing great similarities to the Hermetic teachings. The more death eaters shed destruction, the deeper they sink in the swamp of darkness. Similar to a phoenix being born from her ashes, the righteous characters of the narration gain immortality through a spiritual rebirth. At this juncture, Rowling weighs in by exalting Hermetic immortality over material death. The way she delivers this choice encourages the reader to contemplate spirituality not as old wives’ tales but as a well-preserved secret to true life through generations. After all, as Napoleon Hill puts it: “All great truths are simple in final analysis, and easily understood; if they are not, they are not great truths.” Therefore, the word selection by the writer occupies a significant place in terms of providing an esoteric bond between the face narration and the latent potential for the esoteric meaning.

Even though the preceding resolution is within the reach of the readers of the study, Harry falls short to perceive it for being too young to be initiated into the order. Despite Sirius’s conspicuous willingness to make him a member of the order by means of disclosing a secret, Molly Weasley interrupts the initiation saying “You’ve given Harry plenty of information. Any more and you might just as well induct him into the Order straightaway!” (Rowling, 2003, p.73) In time, due to a series of unfortunate events, Harry opens his mind to Voldemort and believes in a delusional vision and is lured into an ambush by death eaters. Rowling titles this chapter ‘beyond the veil’ for not only Harry but also for her readers to learn about the enigma that governs the whole mystery. Voldemort is after a prophecy in hopes of deriving information about how to kill Harry. The prophecy is encrypted in a globe made of glass and has been kept hidden and well-protected in the vaults of the ministry. Yet, when the death eaters blow their cover to capture the prophecy, they are confronted by the members of the Order. During the fight, the globe gets broken and Voldemort loses hope to learn its content. Nevertheless, Harry learns about the prophecy’s being a copy of a fortune-telling session

that has been witnessed by Dumbledore. Subsequent to this, the old man confides with Harry the following:

“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... the one with the power to vanquish the Dark Lord will be born as the seventh month dies... ” (Rowling, 2003, p.628)

If the literary language is disentangled to force the phenomena to their bare forms, the deconstructed elements of the prophecy unravel a condition of equation in power balance, a state which can be renamed as justice. Regardless of the exorbitantly crushing upper hand in possessing power, Voldemort is rendered as equal before Harry in this fight. The language prophecy employs is rather clear in that Harry has the potential to defeat Voldemort and both sides are thenceforth equalized. Harry carries a dark remnant from Voldemort in his body, in return, the Dark Lord keeps Lily's protection in his blood. The state of tie can be deciphered as the writer's willful amalgamation of the holy spark with the corrupt dark in each camp. Despite the obvious and imminent disadvantage of the hero, things sort out quite unexpectedly and Voldemort's crushing superiority is reduced to even conditions. The preceding miracle of justice is explained by Moreschini (2011) who traces the origins of this bliss in purification along these lines:

The mind, once purified (that is, once it has reached the teaching of the true doctrine), gains freedom from the body, for it is divine by nature and has received a body of fire, whereas it abandons the soul to judgement and to the justice it deserves. (p.23)

To sum up, Rowling provides means for the readers to experience the Hermetic tradition of justice. Once a soul proves his true nature after a painstaking purification period, he achieves to emancipate his soul from the restrictions of the material body. In this state, his carnation evolves into a spiritual one which is likened to a body of fire. Thanks to this alteration the blessed initiate gains the justice he honorably deserves. The way the writer delivers the preceding resolution eventuates the equation of forces. Despite the crushing superiority in terms of possessing power, Voldemort is forced to even conditions in this fight against Harry. In accordance with the Hermetic inclination, the justice cherished by the hero comes after his being pure thanks to Lily's love and his self-righteousness. With all these in mind, Rowling praises the merits of being pure and promises the readers that an arid soul eventually reaches the justice he is in need of. What matters though is consistency and perseverance in following the right path. To put

it in a nutshell, maybe this quote by Churchill will suffice “If you are going through hell, keep going!”

Jupiter: the Genius of Knowledge

The sixth step in the adept’s ascension passes through Jupiter which governs knowledge. The sphere is depicted holding a scepter of might. This symbolizes the grand change in the adept’s position towards a more respected divine one and the aforementioned might is the according result of the acquisition of knowledge. The present phase bears similarities with the genius of the Moon in that both are intellectually oriented. Yet, while the first phase is related to the awareness of the real nature a human body possesses, Jupiter’s knowledge delineates perceiving the holy status and enlightening with divine wisdom (Kılıç, 2017; Saunders, 2018).

27. And the wickedness of a Soul is ignorance; for the Soul that knows nothing of the things that are, neither the Nature of them, nor that which is good, but is blinded, rusheth and dasheth against the bodily passions; and unhappy as it is, and not knowing itself, it serveth strange bodies and evil ones, carrying the Body as a burden, and not ruling but ruled : And this is the mischief of the Soul.

28. On the contrary, the virtue of the Soul is Knowledge; for he that knows is both good and religious, and already Divine. (The Divine Pymander, 1650, p.23)

Pereira (2010) comments on “the Hermetic gnosis” as the state of discovery of one’s spiritual dimension. To this end, he highlights the essential tracing of the moral virtues which eventually renders the initiate “worthy of a connection with god’s mind”. He, additionally, underlines the fact that intellectual gains prove vain if not accompanied by “deep moral values”. He places “the moral transformation” at the heart of the awakening that takes place by remembering “his true spiritual condition”. Distancing from the material world is a vital deed for this end.(163) And Hermes (1650) associates knowledge with being good and already divine and redefines it as the “end of senses”. (23)

Rowling’s narration continues with the sixth volume under the title ‘*half-blood prince*’. The story has an aura of mystery and obscurity for the fact that Harry’s mentor Dumbledore is after a memory held by Horrace Slughorn. The deciphering of the memory carries momentous priority in order to defeat the Dark Lord. Yet again, the reluctance and peculiar nature of Slughorn makes the acquisition of the memory nearly impossible. In other words, the veil of ignorance hides any possible means to defeat the darkness and Harry suffers mostly due to having little, if not any, information.

Meanwhile, thanks to an old course book and side notes taken by handwriting, Harry learns about the bygone presence of a student under the moniker ‘the half-blood prince’. In time, the hero develops a kind of intimate sympathy with this mysterious student, yet at the same time meets the dark side of him for when he tries to use the charm prescribed by the prince, he nearly causes the death of another student.

As the story reaches climax, Harry achieves to get the memory by which he learns that Voldemort has achieved to separate his soul into seven parts and hidden each in an object in hopes of evading death and gaining an immortal life. This is strikingly sad news because without destroying these objects, Voldemort’s death will prove useless. Rowling defines these relics through a special name ‘Horcrux’. The way she posits these objects remind the readers of pins to attach Voldemort into the darkness. First of all, they are objects and therefore manifestations of materiality. Secondly, the fragments of the soul they contain latch the owner into the materialistic life which is indeed condemned for being mortal in esoteric esteem. With both in mind, the role played by Voldemort is quite akin to a Hermetic demon. “Souls, that lay hold of immortality, are changed into Demons.” (23) says Hermes (1650) and proceeds with the following:

But to the foolish, and evil, and wicked, and envious, and covetous, and murderous, and profane, I am far off, giving place to the revenging *Demon*, which applying unto him the sharpness of fire, tormenteth such a man sensible, and armeth him the more to all wickedness, that he may obtain the greater punishment. (14)

Throughout the whole narration, Voldemort appears to be a character void of any traces of good virtue. Since his childhood, he is depicted as a body of gaping corruption. If there is a bottom for the degeneration in this struggle, he stands there to define the limits. The way he acts draws great similarity to a demon prescribed by Hermes for two reasons. His loss of immortality by being world bound is accompanied by his delirious inclinations to torment even (and most of the time) to those who prove their corrupt nature by assisting him. He uses a variety of dark curses to torture, cripple, control, and murder people around him. The death of his mentor Grindelwald, the torturing of Avery, Lucius, and Draco, crippling of Snape are examples of the pre-told condition. The more Voldemort becomes enmeshed with materiality and thus corruption, the more salient he becomes in the way he abuses the lives around him. Rowling posits this trait as a reminder of the Hermetic axiom that the torments of the demons not only punish but also act as guides for the righteous paths. Similarly, the change of sides by Malfoys who

do not support the Dark Lord anymore due to suffering his exploitative side constitutes one of many examples in this respect.

Yet again the greatest transition from the dark to the light happens to be the one belonging to Severus Snape. Despite being a devotee of the dark side, the love he keeps in his heart for Lily Potter forces him to change sides, and from then on, Snape is depicted as an elusive double-sided agent. Not until mysteries are solved in the final volume is his true nature revealed. However, the fact that he killed Dumbledore-which is part of a secret plan and has been requested by the old wizard himself, put him again in a nefarious thus trustworthy position in the Dark Lord's eye. As the story progresses, the readers are provided with the details that he is the one by the nickname 'half-blood prince'. Yet his nobility does not come from a blood tie but because of being half-dark and half-light.

Even though Rowling's characters appear to be picking one side from the moment they are indulged in the fight, only a few selected ones achieve to be transitional by passing from the dark side to the light and the most salient example belongs to Snape. By pretending to be a loyal servant to the Dark Lord, indeed he conducts a detailed plan carefully for his defeat. The hidden love he feels for Lily and his only son Harry is the only tie that tethers him to life and wages a silent war against Voldemort. He plays a key role in finding and destroying the Horcruxes and contributes as dearly as Dumbledore does in the defeat of darkness.

If simplified, Rowling places a man on the stage who is corrupted by worldly avarice but nevertheless purifies his soul with love and other virtues provided by it. When he was fatally injured and left as a helpless prey for Voldemort's snake, his last words come out as a desire to see Harry's eyes for they resemble that of Lily's. Before giving his life, the half-blood prince shares a memory with Harry in the form of a tear by which the hero learns that he is a Horcrux and to defeat the dark forever the hero needs to be killed. In this respect, it can be concluded that by picking the side of virtue, Snape contributes dearly to the removal of the darkness. Harry's might in this bloody fight results from possessing the knowledge that has been shared by only a few elites and Snape is one of them and provides Harry with it.

To put it briefly, Harry's distinctness results from possessing the knowledge that he carries a part of Voldemort's soul in addition to the presence of other Horcruxes,

besides he knows that his life is assisted by his enemy through the blood transfer which enables Lily Potter's protection to persist so long as his enemy lives. The preceding claim is further assisted by the prophecy about Harry and Voldemort: "The one with the power to vanquish the - Dark Lord approaches... .. and the Dark Lord will mark him as his equal, but he will have power the Dark Lord knows not." (Rowling, 2003, p.628)

To sum up, it can be concluded that Rowling exhibits both his hero and the villain on a Hermetic ground in terms of knowledge and ignorance. While associating corruption with a blinding lack of knowledge, the good characters are justified with holy knowledge. The writer also reminds her readers that despite its massiveness, the darkness is bound by defeat when the individual gains a novel birth through divine wisdom. Once it happens the adept swaps his material self with a spiritual one, and this birth is highly celebrated for being "divine by nature" and is envisaged as a "body of fire." (Moreschini, 2011, p.23) This supports the Hermetic teaching that darkness of materiality and holy spark cannot be in a body forever. Eventually, one side achieves to nihilate the other. Rowling attracts attention to this fact in the rest of the prophecy: "and either must die at the hand of the other for neither can live while the other survives". Although the preceding delineates the fictional end for the narration, indeed the incompatible nature of the light and dark, which are personified by means of Harry and Voldemort, keeps preaching the realities of Hermeticism, and knowing this is not only the first step in Hermetic rituals but also the final if completely perceived.

Saturn: the Genius of Holy Light

43· See, o Son, how the Good is fulfilled by the access of Truth ; for by this means Envy is gone from us; for Truth is accompanied with the Good, together also with Life and Light.

44· And there came no more any torment of Darkness, but being overcome, they all fled away suddenly and tumultuously.

...

46. Whosoever therefore hath of Mercy obtained this Generation, which is according to God, he leaving all bodily sense, knoweth himself to consist of divine things, and rejoiceth, being made by God stable and immutable. (The Divine Pymander, 1650, p.45)

The ultimate and blessed destination for the spiritual rise of the initiate is embodied by means of Saturn which stands for the source of the holy light, divine wisdom, and immortality. The initiate who achieves to reach this level is regarded as a blessed and salvaged soul for the fact that he is no longer material or earthbound, but rather, his new disposition is of a spiritual one as is his status of immortality. Having reached the source of light the initiate upgrades to a Hermetic master by means of a

sanctifying state. As it has been debated earlier, the gnosis to be reached at the end of the Hermetic labor is similar to a divine revelation. If attested, the acquisition of it is congratulated by Hermes (1650) as he verbalizes “Therefore, rejoice, my Son, from henceforward, being purged by the powers of God, to the Knowledge of the Truth. For the revelation of God is come to us, and when that came, all ignorance was cast out.”(44) And the same fact is assisted and elaborated further by Pereira (2010) with the inclusion of the motif ‘remembering the true divine origins’ in the following excerpt:

To achieve the capacity of coming back to the God’s side, he [adept] must realize/remember his original spiritual condition and set himself free of the material world. This process of realization/remembering is gnosis in the Hermetic literature. (163)

In general, gnosis is beyond an exact definition for it is a state of mind that is revealed to the merited elite. Its acquisition cannot take place through acculturation or instruction, accordingly, a process of change in human nature is regarded essential in order for gnosis to be experienced. Those who can advance to this level have their lips sealed for the fact that the revelation of the divine wisdom transforms the individual into another being in which only silence can suffice the fact words cannot tell. Maybe this veil of secrecy is removed to the most possible in Hermes’s words to describe the disposition of people who achieved gnosis in the following:

17. For the knowledge[gnosis] of it is a Divine Silence, and the rest of all the senses; for neither can he that understands that, understand anything else, nor he that sees that, see anything else, nor hear any other thing, nor in sum move the Body.
18. For shining steadfastly upon and round the whole mind, it enlighteneth all the Soul ; and loosing it from the Bodily senses and motions, it draweth it from the Body, and changeth it wholly into the Essence of God. (22)

Rowling terminates her Harry Potter series with the last volume entitled ‘*the Deathly Hallows*’. The word choice of the writer reaches the maximal degree in its opacity to reveal a Hermetic message. As briefly mentioned above, the hallows are unique magical objects which are held dear to defeat death. The wizard who achieves to gain dominion on the three hallows is referred as the master of death for being immortal. Yet, despite the reality of the tale and the existence of the hallows, the belief in immortality proves delusional with myriad examples. The wizards who cherish the possession of the hallows for this end gain nothing but a sooner death rather than the assumed evasion of death. To ascribe the foretold contemplation to the hallows, Rowling qualifies them as ‘deathly’. The deconstruction of the phrase promises plurality in terms of deriving meaning. For one thing, the hallows are fashioned by the death itself and this

accounts for their being deathly; for another, these hallows are expected to grant the powers of death rendering the owner as strong as death itself and it justifies their fame 'deathly'. Nevertheless, one last meaning looms in the background if the whole narration is deconstructed in regards to unearthing the Hermetic tradition that lies behind. The hallows are called 'deathly' because they bring the death of the owners contrary to the popular belief. In doing so, Rowling condemns the search for eternal life by means of worldly agents. Furthermore, she takes this earthbound thus vile nature the sole responsible for the perishment of the individual. Even after the death of Voldemort, Harry is tested one more, yet final, time by the presence of a Deathly Hallow which happens to be the Elder Wand. Despite his friend Ron's visible desire and loud suggestions to withhold it as a dear object, he regards the wand as a source of distress not gain. That is why Harry returns the hallow back to the tomb of Dumbledore who has once followed a similar mindset as to the wand calling himself an unfortunate keeper of it for the sake of others. The denial of the hallow, in this respect, is an outward manifestation of Harry to prove his being purified of desire for material charms. This is a Hermetic gain and to put it precisely, the final proof to mark the end of the esoteric examination. The claim obtains greater credibility when Harry consults about the wand to his mentor through his picture on a canvas:

"I'm putting the Elder Wand," he told Dumbledore, who was watching him with enormous affection and admiration, "back where it came from. It can stay there. If I die a natural death like Ignotus, its power will be broken, won't it? The previous master will never have been defeated. That'll be the end of it." Dumbledore nodded. They smiled at each other. (Rowling, 2007, p.749)

The preceding motivation of the hero underlines his ambition to nullify the charms of material darkness. Rather than simply destroying it, he acts similar to a master adept in his mature manner to invalidate the hallow. With this mentality, Harry constitutes a clear-cut example of Hermetic attainment. The hero does not simply relinquish from the material charm but by deriving bitter lessons from it, he learns to value the virtues of a pious life.

Having caused great destruction and countless deaths with the last attack he launched on Hogwarts, Voldemort defies Harry to face him in the dark forest and threatens for more catastrophe if this challenge is not accepted. Despite possessing the other two hallows, which happen to be the resurrection stone and the cloak of invisibility, Harry faces the Dark Lord without the assistance of them. He simply takes off the cloak

and lets the stone slip down his fingers. The choice of the hero provides further evidence to his purified nature. By making Harry relinquish the hallows, Rowling contrasts him with the villain who seeks immortality and survival through materiality by means of cursed objects (Horcruxes). In the end, Lily's love, , renders both sides invincible to each other, and Voldemort's curse results in emancipating Harry from the part of the dark soul he has placed long before. That is to say, the villain's blindfolded rage and avarice yield to his own deterioration towards the ultimate defeat, and what is targeted to be a triumph of powerful objects appears to be the unexpected victory of a Hermetic virtue: 'love'. If deconstructed in this essence, objects provide no gain except that they give impetus to the fall of the corrupt, and on the other side, despite being regarded as minor and useless by the majority, the virtues of a pious life end up with great deeds and precious acquisitions.

Upon receiving the lethal curse, in a state of dream Harry finds himself in King's Cross train station washed in mist. Here the peace and harmony are disrupted by the presence of a miserable creature that happens to be a part of Voldemort's soul from which Harry has just been separated. The body is depicted as having " 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"(Rowling, 2007, p.643) Even though the hero tries to help him, Dumbledore informs that there is nothing they can do. As to corruptness, Hermes (1650) cites the following by deriving great similarity to Rowling's fiction:

25. But the Soul entering into the body of a Man, if it continue evil, shall neither taste of immortality, nor is partaker of the Good.
26. But being drawn back the same way, it returneth into creeping things ; And this is the condemnation of an Evil Soul.. (23)

There the hero learns that the love of her mother achieves to oust Voldemort's dark relic from Harry's soul. If deconstructed, this can be attributed compatibly to the motif of the purification of the soul. As it is a well-known fact, stations are places where a person departs from and moves on. The scene carries symbolic significance in this respect, for it metaphorically signifies the hero's total relinquishment from the corrupting darkness and what lies beyond is thereof nothing but blessed silence. The enigmatic train metaphor is left ajar to the Hermetic spectacles by Dumbledore who beams in light while commenting on it:

“We are in King’s Cross, you say? I think that if you decided not to go back, you would be able to . . . let’s say . . . board a train.”
[Harry]“And where would it take me?”
“On,” said Dumbledore simply. (Rowling, 2007, p.722)

Having defeated his life-long enemy, Harry feels immutably safe and lives a life in peace with his wife and three children. This world is ridden from the abusive torments of Voldemort and his irreversibly corrupt followers. In such an atmosphere, Harry and similar-minded righteous people can cherish the virtues of life even more by acting as mentors for the following generations. While sending his son to Hogwarts from this-time-real King’s Cross train station, Harry preaches to him the merits of being courageous and exemplifies it with two people who are namely Dumbledore and Snape. Before bidding farewell, the hero reminds his son that he is named after these two people as Albus Severus Potter. If inspected etymologically Albus stands for ‘light, bright and white’ in Latin, and Severus can be translated as ‘strict and inflexible’ in English. Furthermore, the child is different from Harry’s other two kids in having the eyes of Lily Potter which have been associated with love and sincerity throughout the whole narration.

With all these minds, it can be concluded that Rowling has her final word by means of an esoteric word-play which has its spirit from an old tie. Albus Severus thereof may be deciphered as the ‘persisting light’ that has sparkled with ‘love’. This is either a revealed word to the Hermetic wise or a simple child’s boarding on an ordinary train. Nevertheless, before choosing a side, Dumbledore’s comment on trains once can imply hints as to the true option. While drawing a conclusion and saying the last words, Rowling depicts Harry weaving goodbye to his son. A few seconds later his hand lowers and touches the scar on his forehead. The emergence of it dates back to the hero’s childhood when he is attacked by Voldemort and turned into a Horcrux to carry a bit of his corrupt soul. The scar also acts as a channel for the dark wizard to connect with the hero, torment him bitterly and tempt him for evil deeds. Whenever Harry gets close to his enemy, the scar gives him acute pain too. However, after Voldemort, together with his cursed relic on Harry, are gone forever; the scar heals and turns into a simple sign reminding old memories and Rowling says her last words: “The scar had not pained Harry for nineteen years. All was well.” (Rowling, 2007, p.759)

3.2. Hermetic Alchemy

“He who grasps the truth of the Mental Nature of the Universe is well advanced on
The Path to Mastery.”

The Kybalion

Man is a little world--a microcosm inside the great universe.

Helena Blavatsky Isis Unveiled

In their book dedicated to master Hermes; Three Initiates, known by the names W.W. Atkinson, P. F. Case, and M. Whittey, bring the Hermetic corpus together by rendering it to a simple philosophy that can be applied to life as a series of principles for the acquisition of Hermetic enlightenment. The initiates exalt Hermes and his teachings for calling him the great sun in the center of esoterism for the fact that all the essential teachings which are embedded in esoteric doctrines can be traced back to Hermes, and according to esoteric occultist Michael Greer, their work is highly esteemed for being “the most influential work in American occultist societies” (Kybalion, 2016, p.13).

The initiates mention about their struggle through the metaphor of the ‘alchemy to transform the metal into gold’. Yet, the writers expose what they mean, in simplicity, as a transitional change in human mental faculties. That is to say, the initiates are after a spiritual alternation by means of applying a set of principles in daily life. They further claim if carried out properly, the methodology under discussion has the potential to enable Hermetic enlightenment for the practitioner. (Kybalion, 2016; Browne, 2022)

In the Emerald Tablet by which the gnosis of all is believed to be revealed, Hermes assures his followers of the trueness of what he is about to clarify initially so that the initiate can be sure about the steps he takes. Though the lines of the tablet seem primarily to deal with a chemical methodology, with a close look, the lines alter their disposition for addressing a spiritual change. “Separate thou the earth from the fire, the subtle from the gross sweetly with great industry” preaches Hermes for the acquisition of the “glory of the whole world.” (Emerald Tablet, n.d.) By this means further, he heralds the removal of ‘obscurity’ from the soul. Following the implications of their master, the initiates take part in the teaching by explaining as to how the principles can be applied to daily life, in other words, they provide ground for the theoretical Hermetic knowledge to operate as practical methods (Corradi, 2013).

The initiates start unraveling the Hermetic Alchemy to alter the states of mind with the first ‘principle of mentalism’. With this, they try to express the mental nature of the universe through the mantra “The All is mind” (Kybalion, 2016, p.24). In other words, they believe in the presence of a substantial reality behind the manifested materiality. They call it ‘the All’ and liken it to be a “universal living mind” (Kybalion, 2016, p.24). Moreover, the complete perception of the universe’s true nature is regarded as a key gain in Hermetic Alchemy for the fact that the principle “enables the individual to readily grasp the laws of the Mental Universe, and to apply the same to his well-being and advancement.” (Kybalion, 2016, p.24)

The writers of the book inform the transmutable nature of the mind that can be altered from state to state and pole to pole. “True Hermetic Transmutation is a Mental Art”(Kybalion, 2016, p.120) they disclose the labor they have undertaken simply. In order to do so, they bring about certain methodologies in addition to criticizing the popular belief that the laws of the universe can be defied. However, Kybalion relates the true wisdom in using higher laws to negate the lower laws. They call this ‘the art of alchemy’ and respect the inclination as a substantial step in the initiate’s triumph for the correct application of the principle that has the power to alter the “undesirable into worthy” (Kybalion, 2016, p.49). Quite intriguingly, the initiates (2016) share a quote while contemplating the differing poles of life calling it a divine paradox as in the following: “Transmutation, not presumptuous denial, is the weapon of the Master.” (49)

The altering state of mind bears significant importance in Tolkien’s fiction. The writer presents a variety of characters who undergo a process of transmutation. However, the alternation in the characters’ psyche does not always take place towards the good and favorable. In addition to those who achieve Hermetic mastery in transmuting the mind, there are those who prove the total reverse in either avoiding the change or having undergone a transition towards the worse.

According to what has been revealed by the initiates, the correct application of the principle does not aim to achieve sheer distancing or blinded denial, the Hermetic art necessitates a process of transformation in mentality (Lalvani, 2021). In light of these, Frodo’s expedition to destroy the ring shows great compatibility with the aforementioned inclination. Upon receiving the duty to carry the ring, Frodo sets out on a journey through which he shifts from differing states of mind all of which can be

divided as the edges of two contrasting poles. In a way, the change which can be observed by the readers clearly mark a slow but gradual metamorphosis in the hero's mentality.

Despite his late age; before the start of the journey Frodo appears as an ordinary figure with common interests of the folk he belongs to. He cherishes a dull but pleasant life in blissful ignorance. Life has not tested the hero with real hardships. Yet by the intrusion of the ring, the hero undertakes a perilous task throughout which he undergoes a series of changes. Reminding the advice of Hermes who encouraged his followers to separate "the earth from the fire, subtle from the gross with great industry for the glory"(The Emerald Tablet, n.d) Frodo struggles painstakingly to separate the darkness of the ring from the light of his soul. To do so, not only does he have to carry the ring to its ultimate destination but also gains total control over his will to resist the dark temptation. The reason for his selection as the ring bearer comes from his potential to transmute his mind so that ring's power will be rendered useless.

Before elaborating on the topic any further, it must be reconsidered that Hermetic Alchemy undermines denial as a means for challenging the laws of the universe (Kybalion, 2016). Based on this, Tolkien verbalizes the tendency by means of his character Tom Bombadil. Having received the ring, Tom puts it on but does not disappear or feel the surge of power. The deactivation of the ring in Bombadil's hand results from his mind's being already divine and away from such charms. Before it was decreed upon the destruction of the ring in Mount Doom, he had been suggested as an option to undertake the custody of the ring. Gandalf objects to this proposal for the following excuses: "if he were given the Ring, he would soon forget it, or most likely throw it away. Such things have no hold on his mind. He would be a most unsafe guardian; and that alone is answer enough." (Tolkien, 2019, p.265)

In doing so, Tolkien underlines the fact that despite the struggle is an outward one via the motif of the ring, the real triumph has to take place inwardly through the Hermetic change in the hero's mind. Whenever tested to his limits by the dark and charming appeal of the ring, the hero discerns his potential and learns how to control his will. The cheerful naivety is thereof forfeited as grim experiences. Albeit bitter, these suffrages act as tutors to trigger a spiritual alteration in mind, the evidence of which is revealed in the hero's final voyage to the Undying Lands (to the source of life) despite

having been quite content once to live in his old village. The prioritized holy light, therefore, pushes pipe-weeds, celebrations, the taste of strawberries, and similar earthly blessings into the background. To achieve this end the hero is observed to be benefiting dearly from the mentality principle. Even though the major characters of the book deter from the ring for they are prone to the temptation of it, the hero endures its presence and vast power with his accordingly profound innocence. In a way, rings lower law is annulled by Frodo's higher innocence.

A similar condition is made manifest by the interior monologue of Sam Gamgee who looks at the ring in his grip and ponders on the possible consequences of two choices namely: forbearing or claiming it. The rest of the story illustrates a short but to the point of accurate application of Hermetic Alchemy to alter the state of mind through the mentality principle. In essence, the haughty appeal of the ring is neutralized by Sam's modesty:

“Already the Ring tempted him, gnawing at his will and reason. Wild fantasies arose in his mind; and he saw Samwise the Strong, Hero of the Age, striding with a flaming sword across the darkened land, and armies flocking to his call as he marched to the overthrow of Barad-dur. And then all the clouds rolled away, and the white sun shone, and at his command the vale of Gorgoroth became a garden of flowers and trees and brought forth fruit. He had only to put on the Ring and claim it for his own, and all this could be. In that hour of trial it was his love of his master that helped most to hold him firm; but also deep down in him lived still unconquered his plain hobbit-sense: he knew in the core of his heart that he was not large enough to bear such a burden, even if such visions were not a mere cheat to betray him. The one small garden of a free gardener was all his need and due, not a garden swollen to a realm; his own hands to use, not the hands of others to command. 'And anyway all these notions are only a trick, he said to himself.'” (Tolkien, 2019, p.901)

The second Hermetic principle deals with the ‘correspondence’ between the various planes of life and governing laws. The initiates explain the fact through the parable “as above, so below” (The Emerald Tablet, n.d) and highly esteem it as a method to explore the unknown by reasoning what is known. Despite possessing divergent essences, the principle unites physical, mental, and spiritual planes of life through a link of correspondences. Hermes, accordingly, notifies his followers of the aforementioned parallelism and summarizes the multitude of the phenomena as “the miracles of one only thing.” (The Emerald Tablet, n.d)

Tolkien's fiction starts with the divine music initiated by the God Eru. Yet, the harmony is disrupted by a Vala (a second-class deity). This divergence brings about the generation of evil and corruption on earth. However, the spoilage of this nefarious god is terminated by other Valar, and Melkor is imprisoned in the darkness. Upon this,

Sauron rises as the second villain to break harmony in life following in the footsteps of his master. He does not respect the right of living in peace for the folk of Middle Earth and conducts a scheme to subjugate them to his dominion. During the siege of Barad-dur, Sauron loses the ring and gets his body broken losing his corporeality.

If inspected closely, the archaic disunity started by Melkor and the likewise strife, though respectively smaller on the scale, of Sauron can be traced back to the archaic modes of thinking namely: jealousy and uncontrolled desire. Even a smaller depiction of the mode reveals itself through the character Gollum. Although the character has the creation of mortal life and far-far away from the powers and knowledge possessed by Valar or Maiar, he finds himself examined by the same vile temptations. He craves the ring and abhors the idea of sharing it with anybody else. Such traits are closely observed by Sam, Frodo, and readers as well. The aforementioned characters have not witnessed the spoilage of the celestial music nor do they have a vast knowledge of Sauron and how he has forfeited his holy-arid nature for the dominion of the world. Yet again, by observing Gollum as a weak, rotten, and frail creature due to the malice of the ring, Frodo is given the means to operate the principle of correspondence. The embodied degradation of Gollum turns him into an ugly, disproportioned, and corrupt being despite having been born a hobbit before. So as to his de facto status, Gandalf passes the following through a rather esoteric language which not only delineates topics such as material corruption and piety of mercy (being good and perseverant) but also creates a bond to attach the ring and the deterioration of Gollum.

“I have not much hope that Gollum can be cured before he dies, but there is a chance of it. And he is bound up with the fate of the Ring. My heart tells me that he has some part to play yet, for good or ill, before the end; and when that comes, the pity of Bilbo may rule the fate of many – yours not least.” (Tolkien, 2019, p.59)

By stretching a web of correspondences Tolkien aligns the physical, mental, and spiritual Hermetic planes of the story by means of his outstanding characterization respectively: Gollum, Sauron, and Melkor. Throughout the grand narration of his fictional universe (including the volumes *The Silmarillion* and *LOTR*), Tolkien provides an immediate means for the readers to enmesh themselves with the corporeal exemplification of an inherent decay due to material corruption thanks to the character of Gollum. As for the mental plane, Sauron stands like a conductor to orchestrate the mental phase of corruption via the tricks and deceits he generates. The web of rings to lure the folks of life under his dominion is an outward manifestation of the following

mode of thought. Finally, on the largest and primordial terms, Melkor appears on the stage to fit the spiritual part of the vice. The jealousy and rampant desire he has cherished in his heart pass through according lower planes as a common trait. In this regard, it can be concluded that Tolkien spins a thread of Hermetic-Gnostic corruption to align them in a corresponding position. In essence, while lingering before the hero's eyes throughout the journey, Gollum provides an instance for Frodo to explore the unknown by reasoning on what is known for the same trait of envy and desire have been solely responsible for the downfall of the superior and inferior beings. Given that Tolkien's campaign here can be summarized as an attempt to encourage the readers to draw a parallel across the different levels of life. Namely, a child's jealousy of his toys which has the potential to develop into violence can also account for global-scale wars.

All accordingly, the other side of the confrontation rises on a hierarchical lining in which Frodo, Gandalf, and Valar (including Eru) stand for material, mental and spiritual planes correspondingly because Eru and other Valar are notable figures for their holiness and bearing the holy light. Thus they occupy the spiritual plane of the struggle. Gandalf, in this respect, fulfills the mental phase of the correspondence for being a messenger sent by the gods to praise the holy light and keep the hero on this path, besides his creation belongs to a spiritual group under the name Maiar. As for Frodo, he appears to be an examinee through which Tolkien's lining of three planes via the divine light makes itself manifest through a materialized stand-in. In order to provide the reader with an illustration of the condition, Sam's vision constitutes a perfect fit:

Sam saw these two rivals with other vision. A crouching shape [Gollum], scarcely more than the shadow of a living thing, a creature now wholly ruined and defeated, yet filled with a hideous lust and rage; and before it stood stern, untouchable now by pity, a figure robed in white [Frodo], but at its breast it held a wheel of fire. Out of the fire there spoke a commanding voice.

'Begone, and trouble me no more! If you touch me ever again, you shall be cast yourself into the Fire of Doom.' (Tolkien, 2019, p.944)

In doing so, Tolkien grants mobility to the principle of correspondence to operate, additionally, he demonstrates how to apply the principle through his minor characters. The holy light that the righteous characters of the story have been blessed with stands as the basis for the emergence of the different planes of this power, by the same token darkness due to uncontrolled earthbound avarice unites and binds superior

and inferior dimensions of the tale. However, as depicted by the Hermetic axiom ‘as above, so below’ the spark in Frodo and the dark in Gollum act as diminutive paragons to reproduce the grand clashes of the same natures. In essence, the victory of Valar against Melkor is not quite different from the defeat of Gollum by Frodo. To conclude, the aforementioned traits of the narration not only advertise the correspondence principle but also provide the reader with examples to teach how to apply it in daily life. After all, taking candy from a baby is basically the same as armed robbery in that they are both uncontrolled desires, so are pardoning a simple insult and ending a war out of sheer mercy.

The third Hermetic principle entails ‘vibration’. The followers of the sect believe in the constant state of motion that governs everything. They further elaborate on the premise as nothing standing the same and characterize every being in a continuous condition of vibration. Quite parabolically, the initiates notify the following that those who perceive the principle of vibration has acquired the scepter of power. (Kremmerz, 2019; Kybalion, 2016)

To reveal even further on the principle, the Hermetic believers comment on thoughts, mental states, and emotions having a mode of vibration. This frequency can be reproduced by the conscious will of the person and the condition is likened to the replaying of a tune by a musical instrument. This technique provides the practitioner with the ability to alter both his and others’ states of mind. Under the skin of Hermetic Alchemy ‘power of the will’ lies as the sole agent (Humble, 2019).

By a knowledge of the Principle of Vibration, as applied to Mental Phenomens, one may polarize his mind at any degree he wishes, thus gaining a perfect control over his mental states, moods, etc. In the same way he may affect the minds of others, producing the desired mental states in them. (Kybalion, 2016, p.146)

When the struggle here is reinterpreted as in the following mode of resistance against the earthbound corruption, the charms of the ring and Sauron’s wicked temptations by infiltrating or directly penetrating into the minds render the dimension into a war in which the principle is used either as a weapon or a shield.

Despite his obvious weak nature, Frodo is chosen as the ring bearer for his latent competency to master the vibration principle in order to negate the ring’s charms. By polarizing his mind on the side of light, he endures most to the ring and this trait exalts him to the position of the hero. Even though the idea of getting the ring is a great charm

for a majority of people, Frodo faces it wishing it had never come to him. When the journey tires him to death, he derives the power he is in need of proclaiming: “I Feel that as long as the Shire lies behind, safe and comfortable, I shall find wander more bearable.”(Tolkien, 2019, p.62) Similarly, upon the growing burden of the ring reaches unbearable levels, the hero is counseled to polarize his thought in accordance with the belief there's some good in this world and it's worth fighting for.

Tolkien spares room in his fiction for the abusive usage of the principle as well. The ring achieves to control Smeagol who fails short to polarize himself on a certain mode of vibration to challenge its power. Eventually, the ring achieves to penetrate into and spoil his brain and diminishes him into a frail creature thenceforth called ‘Gollum’. Likewise, Denethor is a character who conducts a war of mentality against Sauron by means of Palantir. The object is a stone orb that is used to gather intelligence. When Denethor ventures into exploring the mind of Sauron, the latter counters this attempt so immensely that it lures the king into madness to burn himself alive.

Concisely, Tolkien lays the basics for the vibration theory so that the readers can benefit from it as a method to alter their lives for the better through Hermetic Alchemy. It must be noted with extra care that Hermeticism is not after achieving triumph over the hardships of life by mere denial, rather it stresses the potential power of the mentality and tries to unearth it. By means of anchoring the mind on an aimed goal, the individual can render himself invulnerable to undesired influences; likewise, the dedicated masters of the principle can, also, reflect their own will across minds to alter mentalities thanks to the correct application of the principle. This condition is exemplified clearly in the scene when Sam fights against a demonic spider, incarnate of darkness. The minute he loses all his hopes, he raises the phial given by Lady Galadriel and calls her name. Despite not knowing the Elvish language, he utters the following miraculously and conjures a magical light to oust the dense darkness from the spider cave. Quite implicitly the scene makes the readers perceive the phenomenon as Lady’s taking control of Sam’s mind. In doing so, the character provides an illustration by which a divine mind achieves to vibrate and resonate over another:

<i>A Elbereth Gilthoniel</i>	O Elbereth Starkindler
<i>o menel palan-diriel,</i>	from heaven gazing afar,
<i>le nallon sí di'nguruthos!</i>	to thee I cry now in the shadow of death!

A tiro nin, Fanuilos! O look towards me, Everwhite! (Tolkien, 2019, p.729)

According to Hermetic Alchemy, the next step of transmutation aligns under the title 'the principle of polarity'. According to this principle, the opposites are indeed two edges of the same quality. The case example to the preceding can be provided via comparing dark with light, which indeed stands for the differing quanta for the presence of light photons. Cold, for instance, can be defined as a low temperature, and accordingly, ignorance is the state of having little or no wisdom. The principle is famous for rendering what has been regarded impossible a possible deed for the fact that the art of polarization has the potential to turn what is bad into good. However, the initiates warn the followers that only the qualities that are bound by polarity can be transformed. That is to say, slow can be accelerated or white can turn into black nonetheless slow cannot be made white. (Hayes, 2008)

..the Slothful man may change himself into an Active, Energetic individual, simply by polarizing along the lines of the desired quality...(Kybalion, 2016, p.155)

LOTR series can be praised for being a rich narration that provides an ample number of examples through which the principle of polarity is observed in charge. Despite being terrorized even by the nearby presence of a dark rider initially, Meriadoc Brandybuck undergoes a period of transition from timidity to boldness and defies the witch King of Angmar and contributes to his ultimate defeat at the end of the narration. The reckless nature of Peregrin Took at the beginning of the narration transmutes to a mature sensibility to save Faramir's life. Servile obedience of Sam Gamgee is altered to confidence and authority when he feels obliged to take a measurement in the absence of his lord. Above all, the great change of the hero, Frodo posits a clear-cut example to the principle as he travels across the opposite poles from naivety, simplicity, and ignorance to maturity, heroicness and wisdom. When the characters are reexamined under the Hermetic light, it is observed that the transition of the characters are marked for being across the opposites and about the qualities they have long been in need of.

On the other side, the divergent characters of Tolkien seem to be practicing the same principle however this time, not for a good end. Melkor's transition from light to dark, Sauron's forfeiting his spirituality for a demonic reincarnation, Saruman's dismissal from the leadership of the white council are cited as instances by which the characters manifest a transition from the higher end to the lower. Although both ends

are reached by the principle of polarity, Hermetic practitioners recommend the methodology for a spiritual change for the better. With this in mind, the great transition of Frodo can be referred as being a grand picture by which readers can juxtapose the old and new hero, differences of whom provide proof for the successful application of the polarity principle.

The next principle of Hermetic Alchemy can be labeled as the 'principle of rhythm'. The followers of the sect try to explain it by the metaphor of a pendulum. By the same token of a swing to the left which is compensated by the one to the right, the initiates observe everything in motion interweaving between the poles. The rising ones fall and the falling ones rise, similarly old grows new, and new gets old. This swing of the pendulum is the mechanic dynamic of the universe in Hermetic view. This is a fate that cannot be evaded but neutralized. (Virtue, 2015)

They [Hermetic masters] discovered that there were two general planes of Consciousness, the Lower and the Higher, the understanding of which fact enabled them to rise to the higher plane and thus escape the swing of the Rhythmic pendulum which manifested on the lower plane. In other words, the swing of the pendulum occurred on the Unconscious Plane, and the consciousness was not affected. (Kybalion, 2016, p.163)

Tolkien delivers the operation of the principle by means of the hero's interaction with the ring. As has been highlighted by the sect, the rhythm compensates itself. That is another form of stating the foundational perception of traversing. In a simple definition, a high rise promises a drastic fall. Similarly, when Frodo wends his way to reach Mount Doom, the ring does not reveal its true burden on him at first. In time, as the hero advances further, the object gains a gradually rising severity to the extent that towards the end, Frodo cannot achieve to walk properly and cannot resist the evil temptation of it. This stands for a point in which turning back is not an option and has a greater risk of the total destruction of Middle Earth.

Upon the hero's arrival at the cavern opening to the fire chambers where the ring can be destroyed forever, the pendulum reaches its utmost position and the magnet of the ring traverses the process toward a catastrophic fall. While ignoring the temptations of the ring successfully in the beginning, Frodo fails to turn a deaf ear to the appeal and claims the ring for himself. The minute Frodo puts on the ring, the Hermetic pendulum rotates the swing back and the days of painstaking progress and advancements for the sake of the annihilation of the ring elude all at once. The location for the divergence of the hero carries great importance in that the cavern he enters through is called 'doom

cracks' and the chamber in which he claims possessing the ring is located at the heart of darkness.

Based on this, the hero can be commented on as a failing figure in terms of neutralizing the ring's power. However, Tolkien compensates for this loss through a touch of luck by which Gollum finds himself falling down into the fire together with the ring. Before the pendulum could find a chance to alter the status quo towards the worse, the adventure is terminated by the removal of the ring thus bringing an infinite cessation to the ebb and flow that has governed the narration. Nevertheless, there is one more example to exemplify the principle which belongs to the juxtaposition of Gandalf and Saruman.

Though they are both wise and gifted sages, the latter proves insufficient to neutralize the swing's backward motion and gives in to the charms of the darkness. Despite bearing the title 'white' once to denote his higher spirituality, he gives up on this aridity and wears a robe of differing colors to signify his new incarnation. On the other side, Gandalf proves a subtle mastery in neutralizing the charms of the dark by holding on to a spiritual mood. When he is held captive, tormented, and threatened by death in Isengard, he refuses to bow to the power of Sauron and condemns Saruman for condescending to the lowly. Even when he is tested by a powerful demon, he does not leave his grasp on the moral values and the backward motion of the pendulum does not affect the sage; on the contrary, upon defeating the Balrog the returning surge of the pendulum carries the old man even higher in spiritual terms and grants him the title 'the white'.

Considering these, Tolkien can be acknowledged as a gifted esoteric writer whose agenda draws great parallels with the Hermetic mindset, the narration he has authored promises much feasibility to trace the Hermetic principle of rhythm. Similar to the wisdom counseled by the Persian proverb 'Those who laugh on Friday will cry on Sunday', the writer knows the fluctuating side of a life well and makes use of the spiritual values as anchors to hold on so that no matter how hard the wind blows, the vessel of the dignified man is not carried away.

You sow what you seed say those who have gained a deep insight into the dynamics of life, and the Hermetic Alchemy adds a detailed commentary to this mindset with the 'principle of causation'. According to the rule of causality, there is no room for

randomness in the way the universe orchestrates life. ‘By chance’ is a mantra that does not bear any legitimacy in this respect. To elaborate more on the resolution, they claim the following “Every cause has its effect; every effect has its cause” while attaching events of life through a link of causality. “Nothing evades this law” they comment on the universality of the dynamic and in Hermetic esteem chance is nothing but an undeciphered causation. (Kybalion, 2016, p.30, 95)

Hermetics theorize on the practical usage of the principle as an ability to shift from being an effect to a cause. The writers of the book *Kybalion* liken this situation to being a hand to move the pawns rather than being a pawn to be moved. Yet again, while providing a detailed explication of the condition they pass the following words of caution: “The Masters obey the Causation of the higher planes, but they help to RULE on their own plane.” (Kybalion, 2016, p.30) As it can be concluded from the preceding, causality is an ever-encompassing dynamic that cannot be evaded but made use of. People in general are regarded as passive and ignorant for being oblivious to the power of the will. They are referred vulnerable to external or internal influences which contribute dearly to their obedience in being an effect. However, Hermetic masters are mentioned as the awakened elite who can dominate these influences and rise above material life. Therefore, a master to achieve proficiency in the principle is expected:

“... not to escape the Causation of the higher planes, but fall in with the higher laws, and thus master circumstances on the lower plane. They thus form a conscious part of the Law, instead of being mere blind instruments. While they Serve on the Higher Planes, they Rule on the Material Plane.” (Kybalion, 2016, pp. 39-40)

The way Tolkien conducts his authoring encourages his readers to observe long-term causalities along the narration. Despite being a claim by the author of this study, the writer’s literary genius lies in the discovery of these far-reaching cause-and-effect relationships. When the story starts and develops gradually by evolving around the motif of the ring, a reason-driven reader does not give much credit for the probable survival of a hobbit when targeted by such formidable beings. A hobbit, for instance, is comparable only to a human child in his physicality and bears no feature that can be defined as magic, save for the inexhaustible determination to live a life away from the perils. In time, Frodo and his company have to confront wild beasts, undead riders, hordes of Orcs, ghosts, and sturdy demons on top of a restless evil eye. Nevertheless, the hero achieves to annihilate the ring by means of the magical intervention of ‘chance’,

which indeed is reinterpreted as ‘a not recognized end of causation’ by the Hermetic masters.

At one stage of their journey, the company of hobbits are exposed to dark magic and each of them sleeps to death in a barrow-down due to a ghostly dark creature. The place is an artificial hill to host the deceased people of the past. Desperately in need of assistance, Frodo summons the help of Tom Bombadil who is an extraordinary figure in the story for rendering the ring useless on his finger and having no desire to own it. At that moment, Tom tears the barrow and saves the hobbits. Before bidding them farewell, he gives each hobbit blades of the barrow he has found in the crypt. These blades are made with ancient wisdom and are distinguished for being able to kill the wraiths. The interesting gesture of Tom bears fruit towards the end of the narration. Despite being a simple and maybe an irrelevant act of gesture, the blades come in quite handy when Meriadoc Brandybuck uses it to break the spell on the witch king which has hitherto protected him against the attacks of common arms. Therefore, it can be concluded in this way that the second most deterred enemy next to Sauron dies by a small intervention of a hobbit. Yet, when the big picture is brought under the daylight, Merry’s success in defeating the enemy results from Tom Bombadil’s rather cryptic gifting. If stripped from the veil of adventure marvels, this is an act of drawing a line to separate Meriadoc standing as the pawn from Tom who has the moving hand. In this respect, Tom Bombadil reappears through Hermetic lenses as a master figure who achieves to benefit from causality to serve the higher planes of life while ruling his own material one. Despite being held by a hobbit’s hands, the blade is wielded by a spiritually awakened mind in very deed.

As for the way Frodo is in relation to the principle, Gollum plays the role of an effect while Frodo rises over him as the cause. When the hero learns about the presence of Gollum and his corrupt past, he behaves quickly to take his life. However, after hearing his words of advice as to the merits of mercy by Gandalf, he gives him a chance to live and join the company to guide it to Mount Doom. Even when Gollum is about to be killed by Faramir’s soldiers in an ambush, he uses his verdict for his life, not death. Because his mentor’s words keep echoing in his mind that: “Many that live deserve death. And some die that deserve life. Can you give that to them? Then be not too eager to deal out death in the name of justice, fearing for your own safety. Even the wise cannot see all ends.”(Tolkien, 2019, p.615)

With the preceding, Gandalf proves his mastery in the usage of the causation principle by operating similarly to a hand. In time, upon his departure from the group, Frodo mimes his mentor and rises from a passive state to active causality in bestowing a life chance for Gollum simply rendering him an effect. The deed proves its righteousness when the hero fails to throw the ring into the fire; Gollum, whom he has decreed to live, grabs the ring by force, and in a state of euphoria by the victory he falls down into the pit of fire and destroys the ring together with his body.

For the aforementioned analyses, it can be concluded that the writer makes use of his fiction as a checkered board on which while some characters act like chessmen the other awoken ones get them to be the targeted effects by playing the veiled causes. In doing so, the text advertises the principle in action with concrete examples and the writer seeks a way to the mind of the reader so it can be fully realized that a butterfly in the Amazonian rain forest has the potential to change the weather half a world away. At this point, the Hermetic principle places a cocoon inside the hands of a reader.

The final element of Hermetic Alchemy renders before the initiates as ‘the principle of gender’. The principle can be understood best as the presence of masculinity and femininity that is present in everything. To exemplify the condition the anatomy of an atom or vegetation can be illustrated. The relation of an electron to a proton which bears respectively negative and positive energy ends in the creation of an atom. With this analogy, the subatomic particles are considered to obtain feminine and masculine roles. By the same token, the marriage of the earth and water brings about the birth of a plant. Yet again, Hermetic masters make use of the principle as a tool for mental alchemy rather than contemplating on the ways nature works. To be precise, they ascribe two different notions to the ways a mind works: on one side “The Masculine Principle of Mind corresponds to the so-called Objective Mind; Conscious Mind; Voluntary Mind; Active Mind” on the other side the feminine principle denotes the “Subjective Mind; Sub-conscious Mind; Involuntary Mind; Passive Mind”(Kybalion, 2016, p.110). According to the Hermetic presumptions, the feminine mind is depicted as being receptive, as for masculinity, it is closely associated with expressing and giving out. That is to say, while the female part of the mind is preoccupied with the generation of thoughts, ideas, and other sorts of imaginary works, the male notion manifests itself as the will to govern the creational process. (Kybalion, 2016) A separation between the notions can be projected on the mind of the reader with an easy experimentation in this

fashion: if an initiate is requested to dream a 'pink daisy', the part of the mind which generated the picture stands for the feminine notion, however, the side witnessing this image accounts for the masculine form.

Now that the notions of the mind have been separated dualistically, Hermetic Alchemy ascribes certain traits to the individuals who can make use of their male side to infiltrate the minds of others by means of a vibratory energy stream. Similar to the attraction of the opposites or, more precisely the flow of the positive charge towards the negative in atomic physics, people with strong will are privileged to benefit from a strong expansionist mentality. By influencing the female part of others, these people can accord their thoughts as well. The Hermetic sect mentions the conveyance of thought in this way:

An idea thus lodged in the mind of another person grows and develops, and in time is regarded as the rightful mental offspring of the individual, whereas it is in reality like the cuckoo egg placed in the sparrow's nest, where it destroys the rightful offspring and makes itself at home. (Kybalion, 2016, p. 112)

Thus, it is concluded that the strongest men and women in the world's history are observed to be using this principle successfully. Rather than living a life pre-tailored by an external mind, they take control of theirs by the vigorous use of 'will' and weave a desired pattern of thought to live accordingly. Moreover, the liberated state of the mind they possess can be used like a radio transmitter henceforth for addressing the minds of others by generating alike and aimed mentalities. A case example of this kind of mental evolution can be cited as strong political and spiritual leaders who are noted for affecting moods and altering the way people think. In this respect, both Hitler and Gandhi are elegant examples of the aforementioned status.

If categorized, it is highly possible to classify Tolkien's characters by the gender-based orientation of their mind. On one side, there are those who have proven mastery in using their masculine side to conduct the Hermetic Alchemy to alter the minds, on the other side, however, feminine-oriented folks are portrayed as open and vulnerable to these infiltrations and are delivered as obedient entities to the masterminds. Nevertheless, there emerges one more final group that can be tagged as the transformational minds who achieve to shift from feminine submissiveness to masculine imperium.

Upon commencing the bifurcate fraction in the magical world he has authored, Tolkien draws attention to Melkor who rises mightily as the mastermind of the dark side. By tempting the entities of light, he transforms them into evil creatures such as monsters and demons (balrogs). Though on a smaller scale, Sauron follows the footsteps of his master in order to infiltrate the minds of the others. The resonating mental powers of these villains pose exceptionally perfect manifestations of the successful usage of the masculine side of the alchemy. Smeagol, for instance, stands for a character whose female orientation yields to the infection of his mind by Sauron. An alter ego by the name 'Gollum' attempts to take the control of his deeds and lure him to behave as his servant. In the following excerpt, Tolkien exemplifies the aforementioned condition through an interior monologue.

Fissh, nice fissh. White Face has vanished, my precious, at last, yes. Now we can eat fish in peace. No, not in peace, precious. For Precious is lost; yes, lost. Dirty hobbits, nasty hobbits. Gone and left us, *gollum*; and Precious is gone. Only poor Sme'agol all alone. No Precious. Nasty Men, they'll take it, steal my Precious. Thieves. We hates them. Fissh, nice fissh. Makes us strong. Makes eyes bright, fingers tight, yes. Throttle them, precious. Throttle them all, yes, if we gets chances. Nice fissh. Nice fissh!'(Rowling, 2019, p.686)

A more salient example can be illustrated by the character who is a high-ranking lieutenant to Sauron and is named after this 'the mouth of Sauron'. The character is depicted as a terrifying rider having the face of a skull and fire orbs in his eye sockets—a symbol to signify his close relation with the eye. He derives his incarnation after the evil knowledge provided by his dark lord. Similar to the Nines who are embodied hands to their master's will, the messenger carries a mind that serves as a receptor for Sauron's thoughts and voices them. In this respect, while Melkor and Sauron are classified as advanced figures in terms of mastering the gender principle; Gollum, the Nines, and the messenger signifies the femininity-based minds which are in control by the former masters.

A similar pattern of thought is also visible among the characters of the good side. For instance, though not as an act of invasion or abusive infiltration, Gandalf uses his spiritual counseling to sparkle according spiritual transition in Frodo's mentality as a preparational step to trigger the masculine side of the hero so that he can challenge the

power of the ring. Despite being a naïve, docile, and inexperienced hobbit all of which are cited as outward signs of female mentality, Frodo conducts a Hermetic Alchemy to alter his state of mind and gain a masculine pattern of thought. When Sam witnesses his master's fight with Gollum through an altered state of vision, he hears an imperious voice coming from the ring carried by Frodo which deters Gollum awfully and commands him to be gone. The order is obeyed by the creature immediately, and the scene has the potential to explain the successful completion of the Hermetic Alchemy to conduct a mental transition from the feminine state to masculinity. The reason for this claim can be cited through the comparison of the states the hero has been through. Initially, while avoiding the power of the ring thinking that it can corrupt his mind and take control of him, he rises above the dark charm by a mental transition to force the ring to obey his command.

This is one of the very few instances Frodo makes use of the ring, however, this utilization is away from the material degeneration for the fact that in Sam's vision, he sees Frodo in whites. A trait to symbolize the hero's inherent spirituality. By the same token, Sam who bears a female-oriented mind is depicted as open to the influence of Galadriel. The moment he fights Shelob-the monstrous spider in darkness, he holds the phial carrying the lights of the stars yet does not know how to set it ablaze. At this moment, though mentioned implicitly, Sam utters the name of the Lady of the Woods and hears voices coming from the distance, and repeats a plea in Elvish though not knowing the language to make the phial shine and blind the spider. This example as well procures a perfect manifestation of the gender principle across minds and Sam turns out to be one of those transitional characters advancing towards masculinity in the following chapters when he successfully challenges the appeal of the ring by picking the side of modesty.

Thus, it can be concluded that both the hero and his road companion Sam evolve into Hermetic masters in achieving the mental shift from female passiveness to male effectiveness. Rather than being susceptible to alien intervention, the hobbits fortify their thoughts by the vibration of an active mind conditioned by the strong will. Henceforward, the characters are 'leaders to follow' contrary to their former states of being 'followers to lead'.

Before drawing a conclusion on the matter, one last figure poses great significance in terms of being a transitional mind across genders. Having been the mastermind of the white council and bearing the title to be the most powerful wizard; when Saruman opens his heart to the temptation of Sauron, he degrades to female passiveness from masculine sovereignty by giving in to the evil thoughts. Rather than being a man of light, he serves as a hand to his new master and forfeits every privilege has been benefiting for long. He becomes trapped in his tower like a criminal in prison and in the end, dies a beggar by the blade of a fellow man.

In view of the foregoing exemplifications, Tolkien introduces a number of characters who are related to each other by a mental link. Across the narration, the link is used as a means for conveying thoughts and ideals. It is a tool neither good nor bad but bears the potential for both. As observed, while the evil powers use the mental link provided on the basis of gender qualities of the mind for gaining hegemony over the minds, the light side of the struggle cherishes the altering states as a binding force of assistance. Having fought in the WW1, Tolkien knows well how unfair ideologies can turn people into war machines to cause great destruction. That is why he can be repositioned as a writer to find means to make the minds invulnerable and the methodology he prescribes for this end carries great compatibility with Hermetic art.

In a nutshell, if the fabulous rumors of bygone times to find an elixir to transform base metals into gold are unveiled, the real struggle of Hermes and his followers turns out to be a mental transition through which not the base metals but minds are altered into gold. That is to say, Hermeticism is in pursuit of a transition towards the wise and spiritual man and they regard the path to this end only through a change in spirituality. Such a change necessitates a radical metamorphosis in the human mind and the exploration of the latent power it possesses. The writers of the book *Kybalion*, bring the Hermetic anthology together and condense the ancient teachings into seven principles right application of which fosters the Hermetic Alchemy of mind. Though it would be an over-the-line claim to notify Tolkien as following the principles, it is also undeniably true that the transitions projected over the hero and other characters draw great parallels with the principles. That is why, though the journey of the hero is classified as a heroic adventure in a fantasy world, the spiritual transition that takes place in the background accounts for the Hermetic art of gnosis. Similar to an answer's being bound by a riddle,

the preceding deciphering needs a veil so that the word may sound to the wise: 'Tolkien walks along the Middle Earth, so does his shadow!'

4. THE RELOCATED

I can't explain myself,

I am afraid, sir.

Because I am not myself you see!

Alice in Wonderland by L. CARROLL

Though being a modest academician, the owner of this study carries the belief that great and lengthy scientific theories can be diminished to simple, daily life events. Otherwise, they would not be worthy enough to occupy exalted places as the pivotal matters the intellectual minds have long been dealing with. A six-year-old kid, in this respect, comparing himself to his mother, and his mother to his father in size can be contemplated in dealing with relativity. An average reader's judgment as to the Turkish tv series saying: 'love triumphs no matter what!' may stand for a structuralist analysis to explore the grand narrative. In the same vein, it wouldn't be a far-fetched claim to define Pollyanna by H.Porter as a great deconstructionist.

The way the hero gives meaning to the phenomena around her life conducts a splendid process of deconstruction. The glass scoffed at by the majority for being half empty is celebrated at the hands of Pollyanna for being half full. Despite the cliché, the example provides the essentials of the theory in that, though contradictory, the very same condition yields two different ends namely: empty and full. The resolution reminds the reader of Schrödinger's cat: both dead and alive at the same time, and in this respect, the dazzled state of the mind accounts for Derridean Aporia. There is one thing for sure that can be derived from this paradox, that is so long as the condition persists remaining on the elusive ground of différance, any possible meaning promised by the text will remain valid (Derrida, 1978, 1981, 1997).

By the same token, the relocated vantage point to observe the elements of Tolkien's and Rowling's narration provides opportunities to unearth the latent meaning layers lingering beneath the surface story. With this in mind, the chapter is in search of relocating the objects so that the way the narrations deal with the esoteric themes can be elaborated in extenso. To this end, the very first item of analysis is chosen as 'the white tree' of Tolkien.

The White Tree of Gondor

Gnostic theology mentions the demiurge's labor to create the first humans, Adam and Eve, ending in a grave mistake. The half-maker God does fall short to give life to the sculpted bodies and receives the help he has needed from Sophia (wisdom). The transfer does not only take place by a sheer revival, at the same time the holy spark is transferred to the humans. Feeling jealous of Adam and Eve who are now blessed with the holy light, the demiurge and the archons banish them to the lowest level of the material world. The couple is reported to live life in a state of sleep due to being surrounded by materiality, yet embodied as an eagle Jesus visits them and counsels the couple to taste the fruit of the tree of knowledge (Smoley, 2007). In Gnosticism, Jesus is regarded as a supreme spiritual being who guides humans to the gnosis. In the Apocryphon of John, Jesus mentions the condition as follows:

I appeared as an eagle perched on the Tree of Knowledge!
[Which is the Epinoia from the pure Providence of Light.]
In order to teach them
And raise them up from sleep's depths
For the two of them were fallen and aware of their nakedness.
Epinoia appeared as a being full of light
She enlightened their minds. (The secret book of John, 2005, pp.122-123)

After eating from the forbidden tree, Adam and Eve revives the holy spark in them and refuse to worship the demiurge. For this reason, they are expelled from heaven which is also believed to have been created by this flawed deity. Despite being banished to the wilderness, the new state of the couple is an enlightened one after the emancipation of the holy wisdom in their body. Fearing that his creation may rise above the darkness, the demiurge rapes Eve and fathers Abel and Cain offspring of which stand for the incarnated darkness who are overly materialistic in their mindset. However, Eve has another son by Adam who is named Seth, and this child symbolizes the light owing to his path towards the gnosis. (Pearson, 1980)

The last stronghold against the power of Sauron, which indeed stands for materialistic darkness and corruption, is a kingdom fortified by walls and is named Gondor. The city is symbolized by a special white tree which is also embroidered on the flag of the kingdom. The tree is a blessed one in addition to being one of a kind. Its origins date back to the sacred trees of light also known as trees of Telperion. The ancestral origin under discussion is not a prodigy of nature as it may well be assumed so, however, the emergence of them is a direct intervention to the expanding darkness

by the gods of light for making the world a hospitable place to live. The trees are highly praised and held sacred for encasing the pure holy light and its offspring is respected for having a tincture of it. In this regard, it can be concluded that Tolkien associates the tree with holy wisdom and purity.

Contrary to the Abrahamic divine theology, in which the forbidden tree results in the downfall of the first humans in Eden, Gnostic theology regards it as a means for holy wisdom and true salvation (Brakke, 2011). In this respect, two contradictory definitions arise in order to handle the 'tree concept'. As briefly mentioned above, the tree motif bears a prominent place in Tolkien's authoring which delivers the fictionalized genesis of the narration following the footnotes of the Gnostic theology. The trees of Telperion in the story not only illuminate the endarkened world but also stand for a concrete example of divine light. The descendants of the trees are held sacred for the aforementioned reason and due to the increasing power of the darkness the tree is dying out. However, when the ring is destroyed and Sauron is sentenced to an infinite punishment, Gandalf heralds Aragorn, who has been bothered by the withering of the last white tree, about the existence of another sapling saying these: "Verily this is a sapling of the line of Nimloth the fair; and that was a seedling of Galathilion, and that a fruit of Telperion of many names, Eldest of Trees. Who shall say how it comes here in the appointed hour? But this is an ancient hallow." (Tolkien, 2019, p.971) Gandalf's rhetorical question as to the origins of the tree can be rendered as being factual from the viewpoint of this study. When the darkness and its materialistic agent -in the form of the ring- is destroyed forever, the sapling of the white tree unravels the Gnostic theology and implies subtly the revitalized holy wisdom.

Eagle is another symbol that is frequented by the writer at the crossroads of the narration. Gwaihir is a gigantic eagle who is constantly depicted in assistance of the people of light. Many years ago, when Beren and Luthien achieve to get one Silmaril (a precious gemstone to contain the light of the trees, holy light per se) from the crown of Melkor; the eagle, accompanied by his father and brother, evacuates the couple from Angband.

Similarly, upon Gandalf is held captive in Isengard for refusing to join the forces of the darkness, the eagle saves him from the tower. Moreover, having defeated an ancient and powerful demon, Gandalf the grey is summoned for an ethereal and spiritual

journey and returns as Gandalf the white. The situation discloses the reader of the successful acquisition of the Gnosis for the old sage has achieved to defeat a Balrog (demon-archon per se) dressed in darkness. Setting the light triumphant over the darkness, the sage comes back to his body that has been residing on the top of a mountain. However, being too weak to move, the hopeless wizard is rescued by the eagle one more time.

Last but by no means least, after destroying the ring, Frodo and Sam are stuck due to the torrents of lava erupting from Mount Doom. The minute defenseless hobbits lose their hope for survival, the eagle comes for aid and takes both away to a safe place. Now that so much has been revealed to generate a background for the emergence of the eagle, it can easily be passed as a credible judgment that Gwaihir acts on the stage whenever there is a great advancement towards the light and gnosis. Beren's capturing of the Silmarils, Gandalf's refusal of the darkness and rebirth as the white, and the destruction of the ring by the hero are all accompanied subsequently by the intervention of the eagle.

At this point, the motif of the eagle can be revised through the Gnostic perspective as a highly significant omen. As explained above, the theology depicts Jesus as a spiritual entity embodied as an eagle to counsel the first humans to taste from the tree and discern the holy wisdom in them that has been silenced (Gündüz, 1997). The analogy to bind Tolkien's eagle with the Gnostic one on certain grounds gains momentous credibility when LOTR narration can finally bring about a solution to defeat Nazgul-birds. Also known as fell-beasts, these flying monsters which are mounted by dark riders who use 'black breath-black shadow' to cause a state of deep dark sleep ending in death for the victims who are exposed to it. Nazgul birds are fierce monsters that are not easy to stand against. Yet, in the final battle, the darkness-breathing monsters are hunted down by the attack of the eagles. Though at façade it appears to be a clash of magical units; if the nature of the sides is scrutinized in detail, the true face of the fight turns out to be a Gnostic struggle. Now that the analogy has been derived to link Jesus, holy wisdom, and light with the eagle; Nazguls bear undeniably great potential to be repositated as archons who are darkness incarnate Gnostic demons at the eternal service of their master the demiurge.

Altered Visions

Gnostic and Hermetic theologies make use of a dualistic nature in defining the position of humans. As it has been debated in detail earlier, the human body is a battlefield on which darkness and light are in an incessant fight. The ultimate destination of the individual relies on the triumph that is to take place by either. Accordingly, if light cannot achieve to purify the body from the darkness, the latter drowns the holy spark and obliges the soul to irreversible corruption. (Gündüz, 1997; Kılıç 2017; The Divine Pymader, n.d.)

Tolkien can be cited as a celebrated author whose literary style delineates the preceding notion with clear examples. In the series, the corrupt, evil, and material-bound beings are either associated with the dark or directly referred so. The ghostly servants to Sauron, the Nazguls are referred to as dark riders and are dressed in the same color. When they are stripped from clothes, their true face appears as deep dark feeding the flames of fire. A noncorporeal being in itself, Balrogs are fierce demons dressed in darkness and fire, yet inside they carry their once spiritual essence in the form of a defiled shade. When Frodo sees the Balrog approaching from afar he describes it as: “What it was could not be seen: it was like a great shadow, in the middle of which was a dark form, of man-shape maybe, yet greater; and a power and terror seemed to be in it and to go before it.” (Tolkien, 2019, p.329)

As for the blessed spiritual beings, the momentary altered visions of the characters provide spectacles for the readers to observe the true essence governing them. These people are either given inside an aura beaming with light such as Galadriel and Gandalf or as shining figures of white light which can be exemplified by the following:

[Gandalf]: ... They do not fear the Ringwraiths, for those who have dwelt in the Blessed Realm live at once in both worlds, and against both the Seen and the Unseen they have great power.

[Frodo:] ‘I thought that I saw a white figure that shone and did not grow dim like the others. Was that Glorfindel then?’

[Gandalf] ‘Yes, you saw him for a moment as he is upon the other side: one of the mighty of the Firstborn. (Tolkien, 2019, p.223)

In the same fashion, Sam observes the fight between Gollum and Frodo through an altered state of vision which reflects their essence on the other side. While Gollum is projected as a hideously dark and deterred figure, Frodo appears in white robes. A more salient example can be illustrated as Earendil who receives a particularly honorary place in the narration. Despite being a mortal man and forbidden to step the Undying Lands,

he sets out for a voyage to the destination under discussion by carrying a Silmaril. With the sacred light, he begs assistance from the Valar against Melkor. At the end of the war, the biggest source of the evil, Melkor, is eternally imprisoned in the dark, and for this merited deed Earendil is turned into a star in the sky by the light of the Silmaril to give hope for the elves and humans through difficult times.

With this in mind, bodies of light and dark have the potential to stand respectively for gnostic enlightenment and material corruption. If scrutinized with respect to specifying the common grounds to cluster these characters, those who are associated with the dark can be commented on pursuing means to fulfill earthbound desires. They are materially oriented in that these characters regard objects as the sole tools for corporeal gains. It is rather meaningful that; Gollum, whose life has been marred and is to be terminated bitterly by the ring, addresses this object as ‘my precious!’

As for the illuminated folks of light, they stand for virtue-oriented, spiritual characters. The way they think and behave consolidates dearly the idea that true salvation can only take place by being good and holy wisdom. The elevated ethereal state they are in, which is visualized as embodied light, poses outstanding examples of the concretized purity of the soul. In this regard, Tolkien’s characterization does not fall far from the Hermetic and Gnostic views thus the esoteric checklist of the study can be added one more tick to this end.

Unlike Accords, Dissonant Tunes

In spite of sharing common ground in praising a virtuous life and even citing similar traits as exalted pieties, the Gnostic and Hermetic beliefs exhibit a major divergence from the Abrahamic religions on cardinal points. Having faith in God is prioritized and regarded as an indispensable necessity in divine theology. Accordingly, Abrahamic religions do not regard materiality as inherently corrupt and define the position of man as the outcome of divine creation. In the same vein, the purpose of man is to worship God in order to gain his blessings. To this end, theological education bears great importance, and religious activities are regulated and subjected to religious formalism (Faruqi, 1991).

On the other side, however, the esoteric sects do not follow this order. The most obvious contrast can be cited as the altering ways for ‘fidelity’. The foregoing virtue is not regarded as a key gain for gnosis though it doesn’t necessarily mean that followers

of the sect do not believe in the existence of God. However, this faith issue is altered to an inward, internal discerning of the holy wisdom given by birth. Man is oblivious of his true condition until he pierces his body of darkness to unearth the divine spark. That is to say, instead of seeking God through external means, the followers of the esoteric sects conduct an internal journey where a tunnel of light opens to the god-head. Additionally, the sects do not believe in the benefit of religious teachings for salvation. In their view, these will prove vain until a man's mental and spiritual state is ready for gnosis. When gnosis is achieved, it takes place similar to a divine revelation of a spiritual state of mind, a condition in which religious acculturation is thenceforth rendered needless again. Finally, both Gnosticism and Hermeticism are primarily interested in a spiritual wake in humans to carry them to their original ethereal divine position. To this end, rather than following routines, rules, teachings, and structuralized practices; they favor a change in the human condition from worldliness to the spiritual. What starts 'in the name of God' by the Abrahamic religions is altered to 'in the name of spiritual me' in esoteric perception. In this respect, it can be concluded that esoteric sects prioritize the active struggle of man to reach God-head by digging deep inside the self, contrary to the common belief in the absolute need for a Jacob ladder stretching to the heavens. (Ebeling, 2007; Gündüz, 1997; Kılıç, 2017)

LOTR and HP series converge on the same spiritual essence that governs each narration. Despite the presence of much theological knowledge and a plethora of magical tales to account for the emergence of good and evil, the stories push the informative approaches to the background and counsel an inward exploration. Various experiences the heroes have been through are observed to foster a change in their state from worldly torments toward spiritual virtues. The stories posit materiality as a concretized form of corruption and evil. Rather than seeking help and salvation from God and having true faith in Him for this sake, both Frodo and Harry undertake vigorous labor to beat the evil by means of the successful using of the will. The methodology they apply does not carry religious structurality nor follow tailored routines or teachings. In the end, the heroes achieve gnostic states which are depicted via esoterically veiled stand-ins. The departure of Frodo from the harbor and Harry from the train station mark their total break away from the darkness and the mentioned travels signify reaching the godhead. In doing so, both narrations can be regarded to break away from the conventional norms of presumed salvation, the new norms they have been advertising manifest exact

convergence on the spiritual preaching of Gnosticism and Hermeticism. While the basic tenets of divine theologies such as faith in god, praying and the practice of worshipping in order to gain salvation are pushed into the background; the concept of the esoteric rebirth for the spiritual man by means of reviving the holy spark and purifying the soul from the darkness gains currency (Jonas, 1958).

Phial, Ring and Horcruxes

Gnostic and Hermetic theologies regard man in a paradoxical state in which two contradictory forces are amalgamated within the body for lifespan. However, the balance provided by the birth does not continue forever and a force achieves triumph over the other. The clashing powers under discussion are acknowledged to be namely holy light and corrupting dark. These arche elements indeed stand for something beyond corporeality, a subtle essence with archaic resolutions per se. To speak in simple terms, while the darkness gives birth to concrete materiality, it is indeed the embodied form of ignorance. The trademark dates back to the demiurge's claim to be the only god who has passed a mistaken judgment being oblivious of the transcendental god. (Barnstone & Meyer, 2003)

Hermetic ideology also ascribes materiality as a molded form of darkness and identifies each as both reasons and the results of ignorance. In this division, light is a sign of spirituality that stands for divine wisdom thus gnosis. One's destiny cannot eventuate in a state of balance or withholding both in the soul. Either dark drowns the light or the light washes the dark away. The foretold consequences specify the condition of the man accordingly. If a soul achieves to gain gnosis, he reaches spiritual maturity and regains his true divine origins. Thence life cycles end for him. If corrupted by the darkness, however, a soul is bound by sinking into the darkness of materiality one more time until his cycle gives him a chance to test himself again. The aforementioned cycles of life indicate the reincarnation of a soul that has failed to reach gnosis. (Tecimer, 2004) A sacred book by the Gnostic anthology, the Apocryphon of John explains the situation with the following:

“When they come forth from the body, such a soul [a corrupt one] is given over to the powers created by the rulers, bound in chains, and cast into prison again. Around and around it goes until it manages to become free from forgetfulness through knowledge. And so, eventually, it becomes perfect and is saved.” (2005, p.135)

Hermes (1650), in a similar fashion, acknowledges the inevitable weariful cycles of lives for the unsuccessful souls, yet again, at the same time the sage heralds the ultimate salvation too by means of the acquisition of gnosis: “Thou seest, o Son, how many Bodies we must go beyond, and how many Choirs of *Demons*, and what continuity and courses of Stars, that we may make haste to the One, and only God.” (85) In addition, he cites verses in Divine Pymander that evoke reincarnation of the flawed souls. A case example can be cited as follows:

“As likewise it is the greatest misfortune and impiety, for any to be separated from men, without children; and this man is punished after Death by the *Demons*, and the punishment is this : To have the Soul of this childless man, adjudged and condemned, to a Body that neither hath the nature of a man, nor of a woman, which is an accursed thing under the Sun.” (1650,59)

Frodo in the LOTR series conducts a rather simple rendering of his-self. Despite his middle age, the way he thinks and lives reminds the reader of the innocence of a child, therefore the mental and spiritual transitions of the hero are rather clear to notice and observe. However, Tolkien makes use of his literary genius when he places cryptic items in the hand of the hero. That is to say, the childish simplicity of Frodo is contrasted with the veiled magnitude of the relics he has been entrusted with. An ordinary Hobbit he is indeed, and an extraordinary one at the same time for carrying the Ring and the Phial. The ring is a symbol for material bonding and has the power to “bind” folks of Middle Earth “in darkness”(Tolkien, 2019, p.50) as for the Phial, it is a sacred container filled with water that captured the light of Earendil. The star is not an ordinary one for having been kindled by a Silmaril. And tracing back to the origins, The Silmarils are gemstones in which the holy light has been encased. Briefly, the hero is posited as a coy adventurer whose long-cherished, blissful simplicity is violated by a paradoxical riddle. This is an obscure esoteric condition reminding the reader, who is as oblivious as the hero, about the archaic mysteries they have been hitherto living with. Obviously, the ring and the phial respectively symbolize the material and divine sides of a common man.

Along the journey, Frodo is tested by each object. He challenges the temptation of the ring, and during hard times, derives assistance from the phial. At the end of the narration, when the ring is destroyed permanently, the hero sets out for a final voyage to the Undying Lands. Even in this final journey, Frodo is depicted carrying the phial. That promises much to be rendered as an esoteric language interpretation of which marks the

final destination a place where the holy light can suitably accommodate. In doing so, the whole narration stages a simple examination of will. Through the colorful details of the adventure, the hero unveils a rather solemn spiritual secrecy. This is a grand picture with rather few figures: the ring on one side, the phial on the other, and the hero in between is nothing but a self-reflected image of the reader. Similar to Alice who ventures to travel inside a mirror, this is a lesson to be learned with daring looks into the depths of the narration.

On another note, the reincarnation of the corrupt soul occupies a prominent place in both LOTR and HP series. Sauron for instance comes back to life after being torn apart from the ring by Isildur. Even though this separation does not kill the villain in the common perception, it cripples him to a ghostly lesser being while tethering him to life only by the presence of the ring. The reason for this is explained by the tale of the ring's emergence during which Sauron attaches much of his soul to this ornament. For this reason, he cannot die and cannot live at large either.

A more salient example of reincarnation comes from the HP series. The villain of the story Voldemort generates Horcruxes which are magical objects to contain parts of his soul. Whenever the wizard is attacked fatally, the remaining part of his soul attaches him to life. Yet, this revival does not take place in a dignified way. In order to regain his fully-abled body, the Dark Lord has to advance through primitive forms of life such as rats, snakes, and undefined feeble embodiments reminding the reader of a malformed fetus.

When both cases are taken into the consideration, the reincarnation motif applied by the authors converges exactly on the principle of materiality. The ring and Horcrux objects are distinguished items in being concretized evil. Thinking that this is an ultimate gain, the villains of the stories beseech help form the material objects. Though the items seem to give them a secondary chance to live, these characters do not gain insight into the Gnostic and Hermetic truths. Each time of revival ends in deeper corruption on the villain's side. Rather interestingly, both authors envisage coming back to life accompanied by bitter forms of torment. At this point, it should be remembered that the esoteric divisions of the study notify the reincarnation cycles being governed by the archons-demons whose torments not only punish but also tutor in a hard way. That said, the crippling of the Sauron and dishonorable embodiment of Voldemort are, therefore,

visualized manifestations of the fact under discussion. When the aforementioned objects are relocated in this fashion, the narration alters its face meaning as a Gnostic and Hermetic struggle for divine wisdom. What remains henceforth is a state of *seeing* the forest for the trees.

The Return of the King!

Jesus is mentioned as a supreme being on the side of light in Gnostic theology. Rather than being a soul to be tested, he acts as a messenger of the holy wisdom to guide the sleeping, unaware people toward the light. As explained in the earlier chapters, he is the one to advise the fruit of the forbidden tree to Adam and Eve. In this, he descends to the lowly matter as a messenger of the holy wisdom. “I am light, I am dwelling in light, I am the remembering of Providence, I entered the midst of darkness, I came to the deepest part of the underworld.” (Secret Book of John, 2005, p.148) he says in order to define himself. This descending does not take place once. According to the Apocryphon of John, he is reported to visit the world three times. The final time the messenger walks among the people he cries out the following in order to let people know about their true nature and escape the ignorance they have been lulled by for a long time. The unconscious state is likened to deep sleep orchestrated by the demiurge and archons:

I let my face light up
Thinking of the end of their time
I entered their prison
The body is that prison

I cried out:
“Anyone who hears,
Rise up from your deep sleep!”
...

Awaken!
Stay awake!
Rise out of the depths of the underworld! (Secret Book of John, 2005, p.149)

The tale of LOTR can be classified as an exquisite work to produce a variety of characters whose success after the examination of the ring yields a gnostic gain. Even though Frodo, Bilbo, Sam, Galadriel, and Gandalf are elegant examples of the condition, the share of Aragorn is rather meaningful in an esoteric vein. The otherwise tale of the character relocates him not as a strider nor a king but as a veiled noble messenger of gnosis.

Before getting to the details of the issue the following statement by Aragorn must be scrutinized cautiously: “If I was after the Ring, I could have it – now!”(Tolkien, 2019, p.171) Similar to Tom Bombadil whose indifference renders the ring useless, Aragorn demonstrates a praiseworthy disinterest in this object. Contrary to the other blessed characters such as Gandalf and Galadriel who shun the ring for the strong appeal it has, Aragorn does not show a hint of desire for it. With this, he marks his spiritual maturity and the proof to the claim entails a cryptic scene assuring high esoteric resolutions.

Faramir, Eowyn and Meriadoc fall fast asleep due to the black breath by the Nazguls. The sleep is a magical one that lures people to endless dreams and withers their life to death meanwhile. The healers fall short to provide treatment to the curse. However, an old lady remembers an old lore saying: “The hands of the king are the hands of a healer, and so shall the rightful king be known.” At that moment, Aragorn visits the infected people and witnesses the grave condition they are in. Seeing the futile efforts of the healers, he uses the spiritual power he possesses that stems from his decent and noble being. There he addresses the sleeping ones as follows making each wake up from deathly dreams: “walk no more in the shadows, but awake!... Awake! The shadow is gone and all darkness is washed clean!” (Tolkien, 2019, pp.866-867)

The deciphering of Aragorn character draws a great analogy to the Gnostic depiction of Jesus. Despite being a mortal man, he is one of the very few that does not have a desire for the ring. This notion, indeed, can be explained by an already divine nature. The moment he proves his true noble essence, he uses a distinguished lexicography to awaken the sleepers which corresponds with the words of Jesus reported in the Apocryphon of John. Last but not least, his regain of the crown is celebrated as ‘the return of the king’. To mention ‘the return’, a certain destination has to be attended beforehand. The intriguing wordplay by the ‘king’s return’ may be repositied, in this respect, as the resonating echoes of ‘the Gnostic descensions of Jesus’ to the world. The common war going on against darkness is the proof of this claim. After all, the bodies may not be the same, but the spoken word is essentially one.

Deathly Hallows

Rowling's long-term adventure actually develops around ancient objects made up of three pieces. These items are about death and are also derived from Death himself. For this reason, they were considered valuable by the public and were called ‘the Deathly

Hallows'. The narrative, which is full of magical objects of various kinds, deals with the subject with a peculiar seriousness. The magical and adventurous tone that permeates the entire text takes a firm vehemence when it comes to relics. The objects, which cannot go beyond fairy tales for many people, turn into a difficult test for the sages who have the inside of the matter. Still, another aspect of the matter that remains in the shadows can be brought to daylight with a deconstructive approach.

Indeed, the emergence of the hallows does not take place until Voldemort achieves to reincarnate in a corporeal body. His revival not only turns the tone of the narration darker but also initiates the rumors about the Deathly Hallows too, and hitherto adventures of the hero turn out to be a matter of life and death. In this respect, the condition can be contemplated on rendering the most serious and crucial messages through these relics. For the fact that Voldemort's rise from death is not a matter of animation, rather it symbolizes the resurrection of a bygone surge of dark magic. At this point, the hallows appear as an intriguingly meaningful smile of fate.

As informed at length in earlier chapters, these relics are made up of a wand, a stone, and a cloak. When they are brought together in the hands of a wizard, they render him master of death. In other words, the wizard can evade his own death. However, when the earlier initiations to claim the hallows and how they end are taken into the consideration, the belief proves wrong. The last person to try the trueness of the tale, Voldemort, pays the price with his own life. That is to say, rather than rendering the owner immortal, the relics forces their pace for a soon death. With these in mind, the coinage 'Deathly Hallows' gains another dimension of meaning that can be articulated as objects promising imminent destruction, and with the pre-told illustration the claim does not fall far from the realities. Nevertheless, thanks to the freedom of mobility in the perspective that deconstruction enables the reader, the coinage unravels one final dimension of meaning that lingers further beyond the initial two.

According to Collins dictionary, the word 'deathly' is defined secondarily as 'of death or pertaining to the death'. In this vein, one of the distant connotations of the word can also be considered as 'mortal' (Collins, 2022). As for the word 'hallows', the Oxford Dictionary traces the root of the word back to 'hālga' in old German which can be translated into contemporary English as 'holy' (Oxford University Press, 2022). Viewed

from this perspective, the coinage Deathly Hallows may be referring to the esoteric description of the man namely: 'mortal holiness'.

The literary scrutiny of the relics that go under the name of hallows does not provide evidence to call the objects sacred or holy. These items, except for the cloak, emerge as sinister beings exploitation of which yields losses more than gains. Given that, with the word 'hallow' the writer may be indicating something that is shadowed by the objects and not imminently visible to the reader at first look. The literary genius, therefore, leaves a faint trace to reach a momentous change in the meaning. In simple terms, Rowling's 'Deathly Hallows' can be redefined as 'humans' who are 'mortal and holy'.

From the viewpoint of esotericism, man is holy for carrying a spark from the transcendental god, at the same time he is mortal for being materialistic. If he cannot achieve to set the divine spark emancipated over the darkness in his body, this means the death of the holy wisdom in him. The followers of the sect believe that such kind of fading of the light is what stands for real death. However, if the person is merited enough to achieve his spiritual goals and complete his gnostic rebirth, he can be celebrated for being holy and evading the material mortality. This does not necessarily mean that he is immortal in biological terms, rather the novel spiritual condition he reaches transmutes his soul to divine perfection. From then on, the person can be contemplated living a permanent life on the other, spiritual side. (Barnstone & Meyer, 2003)

The proof to the condition can be cited as Harry's relinquishment from the hallows. When he is defied by his formidable enemy, he does not seek help from the objects but trusts in the good old powers of the virtues. Throughout the narration, Harry not only witnesses the ruining of earthbound corrupt people but also learns well how to distance himself from these charms. When he is destined to give up on even his life, he walks to death without seeking help from the hallows. He stands before Voldemort as he is. The defy of the hero can be deciphered in an esoteric vein as the completion of his holiness. Therefore, it can be concluded that when Harry welcomes even death for the sake of others, he transcends from the mortal side to the holy leaving the deathly part to his enemy Voldemort who, in great haste, kills a part of his soul while targeting Harry. In simple terms, when the hero separates from Voldemort's soul, he fulfills gnostic holiness and thus occupies the position hallow. However, by annihilating a fragment of

his soul, Voldemort approaches his final death one step more and renders himself mortal-deathly again.

In a nutshell, Rowling's coinage of the term 'the Deathly Hallows' is a double-veiled term in the esoteric sense. Between the lines, it implies much to comment on the materiality as deathly, for in Gnosticism and Hermeticism, the matter is regarded as responsible for the corruption of the man. However, if the allegory is deepened on deconstructive terms, the title reveals an esoteric secret as to human nature by addressing his mortality as a cocoon to encase his holiness. The writer's true magic, therefore, can be ascribed to her genius to turn the text into a literary mirror so that the readers can view the reflection of their true selves. In this respect, by authoring a story of high esoteric mana, Rowling fulfills the duty of a mentor to provide her reader-initiates with a Gnostic and Hermetic mindset. 'Deathly Hallows', therefore, is a multi-faceted coinage and a cryptic key to the door opening to the esoteric secrecies.

CONCLUSION

This study has targeted to decipher the esoteric grounds that permeate *The Silmarillion*, *The Lord of the Rings* tales by J.R.R. Tolkien, and the *Harry Potter* series by J.K. Rowling. To this end, the scope of the esoteric framework is focused on Gnosticism and Hermeticism which stand as exotic belief systems of ancient times on the common ground that both sects favor the salvation of man through the acquisition of gnosis. In order to conduct an efficient study for this purpose, the aforementioned narrations are reinterpreted through a Derridean deconstructive reading.

The study is authentic and uncommon in the pattern of thought it follows. The consistency of the findings assures the reliability of the dissertation on solid grounds. Therefore, the scientific undertaking with this work can be considered as a pioneering move into the either slightly or not at all discovered latency of the meaning. Despite the fact that deconstruction has been utilized as a trendy mode of thought in the deciphering of the multitude of meanings in certain texts, and esotericism has recently frequented in appearing as the topic of scientific theological studies, there have been only a few attempts to bring each together to conduct a literary study. In this respect, the dissertation has much potential to feature a new category in the classification of literary studies.

Nevertheless, the assertions and claims brought about by the study may easily get confused with the congratulated good deeds of an Abrahamic Religion by a reader who is not familiar with esoteric thinking. By the same token, the lack of information may coerce the reader to familiarize what is presented within the understanding of a different religious mode. In this respect, the findings of the study may well be attributed to the theological resolutions of another religious sect. This does not imply a fault in the judgment of the reader nor can be posited as groundless reasoning by the owner of the study. It must not be forgotten that deconstruction enables privilege to elicit an infinite number of meanings in the same textual field. In this respect, the philosophy resembles to a number of unlike impressionistic drawings of the very same figure. To this end, the study receives appraisal and encouragement from Derrida himself who contemplates the following:

“In the delineation of differance everything is strategic and adventurous. Strategic because no transcendent truth present outside the field of writing can govern theologically the totality of the field. Adventurous because this strategy is a not simple strategy in the sense that strategy orients tactics according to a final goal, a telos or theme of domination, a mastery and ultimate reappropriation of the development of the field. (Derrida, 1982, p.7)

In line with its purpose, the study has been organized into three chapters. Initially, in order to provide the methodology to be applied, the Derridean sense of Deconstruction is explained with exemplifications to illustrate how an alternate reading may promise a multitude of novel meanings. Upon this, in the second chapter, Esotericism is given a definition and narrowed down to certain sects namely: Gnosticism and Hermeticism. These esoteric inclinations are debated at length to provide a basis for the study and to classify the findings accordingly through a meaningful categorization. Finally, the results of the analyses are arranged in the third chapter with respect to how they are particularly related to the foregoing esoteric doctrines.

As stated earlier, by deriving mobility on the meaning thanks to the deconstructive transition in the vantage point, the foretold works by Tolkien and Rowling can be altered fittingly as veiled and paraphrased narrations of the Gnostic and Hermetic corpora. The incentive in this mode of thought, however, does not result from a desire to tailor a dress for the body nor a body for the dress. What appears, in the end, is a subtle bonding between the stories and esoteric aspects that overlap compatibly. In this respect, the study fulfills the role of a literary explorer wandering in the dim-lighted periphery of the textual fields.

Esotericism is a grand term covering a huge area of less-known yet voluminous information. The coinage refers to the state of being obscure to outsiders while meaning to be understood by a small number of people. It entails connotations such as the revelation of the hidden truths to the follower or being initiated into the secret knowledge. The discreet and elitist nature of the trend is regarded as essential in preserving the esoteric corpus. Above all, the primary purpose of the movement is to explore the mystical meaning of human life.

The vastness of the coverage by esotericism forces the study to limit the scope with Gnosticism and Hermeticism for the fact that the branches are among the most salient trends in the movement and pose perfect fits when scrutinized in the light of the targeted texts. Hence, the term esoteric has been employed to denote the aforementioned scope. Nevertheless, it must be borne in mind that drawing a distinct line to separate Gnosticism from Hermeticism is hardly possible. Despite having different theological backgrounds, both trends are regarded as ‘gnostic’ for holding onto the belief in the revelation of divine wisdom. To this end, the sects demand total reclusion from the

material charms regarding the matter as inherently corrupt and defiling. Moreover, the esoteric inclinations envisage the human as a dualistic being by which the holy light and spoiling dark are united. While the biological side of the man refers to his being earthbound therefore a vile nature, the divine spirit occupies the counter side as a relic from the transcendental God. Yet, this marriage is not meant forever and is doomed for an imperative and inevitable clash. If the holy spark fails to revive and permeate the body, it fades away leaving the soul sinking in the materialistic darkness, and the person is subjected to a series of reincarnation cycles until he is given one more chance to achieve gnosis.

Both sects regard the status of man as being ignorant of his true self. Therefore, the initiation of the person into ancient wisdom is a preliminary must. Immediately afterwards, the route map is given with emphasized references to a virtuous and pious life. To this end, a process of transformation is openly demanded from the initiate by which he swaps the torments of the demons with the powers of God. Yet again, the very first and the ultimate transition expected from the person is an ascetic life. Relinquishing from the matter ends in livening the holy spark. Thus and so, the person who undergoes these phases of examination successfully lets seven base virtues root in his soul that paves the way for the famous godhead, divine gnosis. Lastly, it must be borne in mind that the sects do not favor intellectual development as a means for achieving divine wisdom. In simple terms, a change in mental and spiritual conditions towards the more virtuous is the only way to this end.

In the main, these esoteric approaches can be manifested as the confrontation of two archetypal phenomena. The dissolution of the holy light from the materialized darkness turns the human an examinee under the influence of these two forces. Consisting of a material body in addition to bearing a holy spark from God renders him vulnerable to both sides. Here at this point, both sects simplify their purpose to the basics while avoiding detailed religious rules, teachings, and regulations. Renouncing from the world and approaching the holy god is placed at the heart of the struggle. The deed necessitates radical changes in the self, by the self, and for the self. The conventional norms of religious formalism are avoided for the sake of a true inclination for the good.

Despite converging on the views as to the man and the matter, *The Silmarillion* and *The Lord of the Rings* diverge from *Harry Potter* in dealing with the origins of evil.

Drawing great parallels to the Gnostic genesis, Tolkien ascribes the emergence of malice to a secondary flawed deity who stands for the Demiurge. This fictional deity, assisted by his viceroy Sauron, uses darkness as a weapon to defile holy creation and as the binding force to unite the divergent beings under a banner. Later on, this darkness is materialized in the form of a ring that mars the lives of those who desire it. By placing the ring in the hands of his hero, Tolkien starts an encrypted journey with the ultimate purpose of destroying it. The foregoing condition reminds the initiation of a person into the Gnostic secrecies. Charmed by the evil power of the ring, the hero learns how to defy it and meanwhile experiences numerous events in which the virtues of a pious life are exalted over material earnings. These lessons indeed are visualized forms of the powers of the God, emancipation of which renders the torments of the demons useless. The ring-bearing journey, therefore, stands for a process of transmutation of the mind towards the spiritual.

Rowling, likewise, authors a fictional world where conditions and events can easily be reconciled with Hermetic views. The writer does not give a full account of the emergence of evil. However, she explicitly associates vileness with being earthbound. Similar to Hermeticism which condemns the matter for bringing about malice, Rowling portrays the evil spawning from a desire to profit. The gain under discussion is worldly and has been symbolized by materialized objects. The Deathly Hallows, in this respect, substitute Tolkien's Ring with a similar purpose. Additionally, the motif of inherent corruption is made manifest by means of a stand-in that appears to be a fragment of a dark soul in Rowling's hero: Harry. Even though the villain of the story achieves to hold excessive power thanks to these dark objects, he fails short to destroy his enemy. Moreover, the materiality he trusts with being on his side results in totally the reverse by ending the life of this corrupt magician. Similar to Frodo, what Harry has been through across thousands of pages teaches him the requisite lesson of the 'true salvation by gnosis after a virtuous life'.

With this in mind, both writers' narration bears qualities that can be rendered esoteric in that spiritual dignity is held praised over the material orientation. Accordingly, the foregoing stories provide an abundance of liability to attach evil and corruption with earthbound desires. The writers make this fact conspicuous through symbols. Tolkien's ring and Rowling's hallows in addition to cursed Horcruxes may be repositated as signified materiality. Though promising dearly, the objects yield to no good

cause but destruction, mostly to the owners. Rather remarkably, these objects also play a key role in the gradual rise of the heroes after a harsh examination. The strong appeal of the objects tests the hero's will, and in accordance with the esoteric frame of the study, these characters achieve salvation by resisting the charm and renouncing the relics forever. Frodo's desire to destroy the ring and Harry's relinquishment from the hallows and destroying the Horcruxes, therefore, can be reinterpreted as ascetic behavior which is stated as a fundamental deed in achieving true life. In the light of the preceding, Frodo's journey to Mount Doom and Harry's life in perils may well be deciphered esoterically as the unearthing of the divine spark concealed in the material darkness of the body.

The mentioned discovery necessitates non-conventional otherwise mining for which dig and shovel are replaced with mind and will. In accordance with the Hermetic metaphor of transforming metals into gold, the narrations apply Gnostic-Hermetic art to conduct a mental metamorphosis in the heroes towards what can be defined fittingly as more virtuous, spiritual, and divine. From a broader perspective, while the heroes undergo a transitional process, the writers can be credited for providing the mental means that are essential for the same alteration of the mind of the reader. In this sense, the main character has a bipartite dimension including the reader, and the expedition he has taken promises the same kind of metamorphosis that can be ignited within the mind of the reader. Therefore, it can be concluded this way: what starts as the journey of the hero gradually evolves into the esoteric transmutation of the readers alike.

As stated earlier, the esoteric inclinations of the study are in search of an alteration process in mind. The course of the change is targeted to be the less worldly, the more spiritual. However, the aforementioned sects of belief do provide the followers with a set of goals in which the torments of demons are nullified by the emancipation of the divine powers. If scrutinized from this angle, both LOTR and HP series carry great compatibility with the foregoing esoteric frame. The adventures of the heroes in particular, including the experiences of the other characters, contribute dearly to this mindset. In the end, the grand picture of the narrations posits an example where Gnostic-Hermetic Alchemy can be observed in action to transmute a base-man to the divine. Overshadowed by the marvels of a suspenseful adventure, the veiled periphery of the stories illustrates the initiation of the two ignorant heroes into the arcana of esotericism. Subsequent to getting rid of their ignorance by means of the encrypted hidden

knowledge, the bitter and painstaking experiences the heroes undergo portray the exchange of personality traits. What could be labeled as a part of malice is thereon turned into good and divine. The ignorance of the heroes turns into a deep knowledge of life. Self-control and perseverance are emancipated over the vile natures of incontinence and desire. Once purified of anger, greed, envy, and rashness the heroes escape the injustice of material life and find solace in the justifying truth of the divine light. Imminently, the grief they suffer from is replaced by the joy of an eternal triumph for the fact that vice and malice are totally removed from the body leaving room for the good and truth to root. Both Tolkien and Rowling weave a detailed narration in which encrypted patterns of thought can be deciphered as the exertion to sustain a change in the aforesaid fashion. In essence, Frodo and Harry seem to oppose matter with an esoteric approach, and the effort is made possible through these changes.

The above-mentioned transitions prepare the individual in a way that he is now competent enough to be blessed by a set of divine virtues which is crowned by the targeted state of gnosis. The virtues are symbolized by the planetary spheres stretching to Saturn as the final destination and are numbered seven. Once untethered from the material bonds of the world, the soul ascends toward the source of light. With every step of this heavenly pilgrimage, he proves his laudability for the gnosis further. Along the way, celestial spheres mark the completeness of his soul by accrediting the emancipated state of the virtue. Thought (awareness), Nobility, Love, Beauty, Justice, Knowledge, and finally the Holy Light line up to complement the individual's competence in gnosis. The soul who reaches this state is a celebrated holy one and can be accredited for his spiritual rebirth. At this stage, he becomes a corporeal example of the Gnostic axiom that 'men are mortal gods, gods are immortal men!'

The preceding esoteric condition has been scrutinized at length via Rowling's fiction which, drawing great similarity to the seven virtues by seven planets, is divided into seven volumes. The intriguing word choice of the writer to denominate the books shed light on the targeted esoteric discoveries and are placed as words to the Hermetic wise in this respect. In each volume, as the story draws a closure, the hero is examined by a severe incident. The successful completion of each test awards Harry with the appreciation of a Hermetic virtue. In the end, all of these seven traits come together to generate a spiritual Harry who can defeat the earthbound villain of the story. By the metaphor of the wizarding fight, Rowling indeed authors a world in which esoteric

virtues triumph over the materialistic torments of the darkness. In this respect, when the hero is targeted by a fatal curse for the second and final time in his life, the villain of the story ends in killing himself by emancipating the hero from the last fragment of the darkness. In this respect, efforts of Rowling can be envisaged as sculpting a Gnostic hero whose full recognition by the readers takes a seven-volume story and accordingly seven great mental changes.

The alteration in human mentality is an indispensable must for the acquisition of the gnosis. The change to be performed, however, is not an easy process for the fact that it includes relinquishing the most desired earthly blessings. To derive a dignified recluse from an avaricious epicure, therefore, entails vigorous labor. The esoteric masters allude to this kind of transition as ‘the Hermetic Alchemy’. The tale has it that the alchemy has been applied to transform the base metals into gold, however, the followers of the sect perceive it as a metaphor for referring to the Hermetic spiritual change. The set of seven principles that operate on minds by means of the true practice of the will opens the door for the individual to mastery in exploring the esoteric potential of the spiritual self. In this vein, the principles play the role of Daedalus Wings for the person trying to reach the heights of gnosis.

At this point, Frodo by Tolkien stands quite similar to Icarus trying desperately to escape the prison. However, the hero of the story is trying to break away from the custody of his worldly nature. His initiation into the ancient secrecies of evil is an encrypted staging of the esoteric fact of an inherent imperfection in the human condition due to material enmeshing. The fact is condensed and symbolized via the ring. When the hero is entrusted with the demanding task of destroying the source of evil, he is informed that the strong and correct use of willpower is the only shield against the ring’s dark appeal. As the journey unfolds, the hero -together with the readers- is exposed to the mental principles of the Hermetic Alchemy. Gaining insight into the potential of the human mentality, he masters the principles to trigger and conduct the transmutation of his mind. In the end, the weak and ignorant Frodo reaches the level of a competent Hermetic master who can alter his state of mind from passive to active. The most salient trademark of this competency lies in his resistance to wear the ring and harnessing its power under his command albeit using it very few times. With these, Tolkien himself can be reposit as an experienced Hermetic master to demonstrate the alchemy to his readers with fictionalized elements of a magical narration. By denouncing the ring and

rising over its appeal through the activation of the latent powers of human will, his pen mediates esoteric methods to alter the states of mind toward more efficient, aware, and independent. Having experienced world wars, he knows well that it is not a hand that pulls the trigger but the mind. Therefore, it is undeniably true that Tolkien addresses the hearts of his readers in order to undermine wars for material gains and to praise the worthiness of peace for a sustainable life, meanwhile the states of mind his hero undergoes are inclined to provide these readers with the know-how for the alchemy.

Lastly, the study targets to unearth the esoteric potential the narrations conceive by means of relocating the objects and characters through a deconstructive reading within the general course of the study. This time, however, the objects are scrutinized as the focal points with respect to their relation to the esoteric realm. The findings contribute dearly to the thesis of the study and reveal further on the exploration of the spiritual side of the fictions. Tolkien's Melkor, in this respect, bears great potential to stand for the demiurge in Gnostic theology. The labor of this secondary deity results in the emergence of matter out of the darkness. This situation generates a low counterpart for the spiritual domain. The dualistic genesis is also made manifest in the body of a human who consists of a spiritual holy spark and corrupting material flesh. The same resolutions are projected to the reader by means of stand-ins. Melkor's uprisal to the holy God results in the spawning of evil and corruption in the story. The emerging corruption is condensed in the body of a ring by the right hand of Melkor. Sauron curses the ring with an irresistible aura of charm. This ring, therefore, acts like a trap for those who are attracted to its power, and for the salvation of all, it needs to be destroyed. In light of these, Tolkien's fiction conceptualizes a dualistic fashion while contemplating on the theology. From this point of view, Melkor posits much to signify the demiurge of the esoteric realm. Sauron, accordingly, plays the role of an archon or daimon under the service of his master to prevail the darkness. Hence, the ring crafted by them is a conspicuously emphasized stand-in to denote and connote the materialized darkness that causes the downfall of humans.

Tolkien counterparts the wicked darkness with the archaic holy light that is under the dominion of the holy God and has always been associated with it. The hero of the study is given a fragment of this light when he accepts the task of carrying the ring. The light not only protects him from evil but also gives him strength and motivation to continue his undertaking. The light is a remnant from a Silmaril which is a gemstone

precious for encasing the light of Telperion trees. The trees under discussion are unique prodigies of life that shed the holy light and oust darkness in the world. When the cited range is taken into the consideration, it can be concluded this way: when the darkness of the flawed deity and his once ethereal assistant is placed on the shoulders of the hero, it is also balanced by the light of the holy god. The resolution is a direct referent to the human condition consisting of light and dark.

The tree motif does not occupy a prominent place only in the narration. According to Gnostic theology, Jesus is defined as a supreme messenger of the light and is reported to descend the earth a few times. The first descension takes place during the time of Adam and Eve. Embodied in the form of an eagle, Jesus advises the couple to eat from the tree of knowledge so that they can revive the holy spark in them thus they worship the demiurge no more. The other descensions of Jesus aim at reminding the Gnostic truths to the people which the messenger delivers with repeated warnings to wake from sleep and leave death behind.

Tolkien's fiction exhibits patterns of events that remind of the facts in question. Aragorn first appears as an armed watchman rambling in the wilds. He proves his true merit against the charm of the ring, for the only love in his heart is for an Elven Princess (A folk marked for their purity). As he successfully defies the evil forces, he rises to his deserved position of the crown. The change is celebrated as 'the return of the king'. However, to prove that he is the righteous king, he needs to pass one final test. People in Gondor are sick with dark magic that put them to an irreversible sleep ending in death. There is no possible cure for it except for an old tale saying the king's hands deliver the cure. At this point, Aragorn steps beyond a strider and starts behaving as a wise messenger. He summons back those who are asleep repeating 'wake up, leave the death behind!'. His word choice reminds Gnostic version of Jesus who has used the same words to lead people to gnosis. Both as a reward and a symbol of his divine rebirth, Aragorn is gifted with a sapling of the 'White Tree'. The tree is a descendant of the Telperion trees which have been famous for sparkling with the holy light. In doing so, Tolkien adopts an esoteric language, by means of stand-ins he deciphers the true nature of the war between the holy light and dark and lets the triumph belong to the divine over the corrupting darkness. 'The White Tree' in this respect exceeds fiction weaving a web of connection reaching from 'Telperion Trees' to the Gnostic 'Tree of Knowledge'. Thus, the victory symbolized by the white tree promises much for the Gnostic prophecy

that the end of the days is to come when the demiurge is defeated forever as all the humans wake into the light from the darkness.

The 'Deathly Hallows' and 'Horcruxes' by Rowling can be displayed as referential terms for the writer to comment on the esoteric nature of humans. She delivers the Horcruxes as cursed dark objects in which foul wizards can hide fragments of their souls to escape death. They also perform the role of a starter for a reincarnation cycle. The objects are closely associated with the materialized evil concept of esotericism. According to Gnostic views of the study, souls who fail short to awake are degraded into the depths of the matter by a death-rebirth cycle. The cycles are depicted as tormenting lifespans due to the cruel treatment of the daimons (archons-demons).

Even though the villain of the story seems to gain a prolonged life thanks to these relics, his reincarnation takes place in the same way described above. To rise again as a fully-abled body, he needs to go through the primitive forms of life. Nevertheless, the secondary chances given to the villain do not yield any gain for the flawed nature of materiality ends up in a sort of catastrophe again and again. In this, Rowling criticizes worldliness while highlighting the inherent deficiency possessed by the matter. The materialized gain is carried one step forward by the Deathly Hallows. These relics are said to have been crafted by the death itself. They are three in number and the total acquisition of the hallows bestows a man mastery of death. However, contrary to the beliefs and rumors, the relics do not aid their owner to this end, rather they give impetus to the master wizard's destruction. Following the foregoing mindset, Harry renounces them while his lifelong enemy, Voldemort-the villain seeks help from the relics to annihilate his lifelong enemy. As expected through a Gnostic-Hermetic view, the relics act totally the reverse killing the dark wizard himself. In short, neither the infamous Horcruxes nor the famed hallows grant the upper hand to the villain in this fight. With the preceding, Rowling's fiction criticizes the perception of worldliness as a medium for gain, she undermines the exploitative and quenchless desires of the heart on the basis of an esoteric inclination. What she is after, therefore, can be put into words simply as unearthing the spiritual human potential. The base methodology she applies to this end is a change towards the more spiritual.

Before advancing any further into the finding, Rowling introduces a riddle to her cautious readers namely: now that the fame of the Deathly Hallows is refuted, what

could be her incentive to denominate the final chapter of her book by the same words? The style applied by the reader is a distinct one for those who follow the HP series from the very beginning. Rowling is an author who spiritualizes the answer by gaping at the aura of the mystery first. The answers to the questions the readers come up with are delayed until the end of the volume where everything is clarified. However, she leaves her tradition once and for all when she finalizes the whole narration with a couple of echoing words. If this is not a clue in this sense, Rowling can be regarded as highly content with her sheer cautions against the matter, however as stated earlier, deconstructive readers are not willing buyers and they cherish more of the meaning by exploring beyond what has already been. With a simple touch of etymologic deconstruction, the word 'deathly' can be paraphrased as 'mortal'; as for hallow, it dates back to old German and connotes the meaning 'holy'. That said, Rowling's wordplay involves more than a word of warning and the otherwise facet of the title can be reconciled with an esoteric secret: 'Gods are immortal men, and men are mortal gods'. (Pyramander:71) All in all, the writer does not answer the biggest riddle in her anthology in a literal sense, rather she follows the esoteric fashion of saying everything without saying anything.

In light of all these findings, a common opinion can be stated as follows; The *Silmarillion* and *Lord of the Rings* series by Tolkien and the *Harry Potter* series by Rowling have an allegorical dimension that is strongly compatible with esoteric teachings. Despite being concealed by the outward meaning, the deeper realm of the meaning can be unearthed through a Derridean way of deconstructive reading. The change in the vantage point enables the mind to explore the silenced elements of the narration through an otherwise accord. The altered perception of the stories unravels a world in which Gnosticism and Hermeticism function as the main themes that are advertised and exemplified.

By means of the emerging novel facet, stories condemn materiality for the corruption of the soul while exalting a virtuous life as the sole condition for ultimate salvation. The intriguingly spiritual endings by each writer exert much to remind the congratulated state of gnosis. To this end, they place paramount importance on the effective use of 'will'. "All we have to decide is what to do with the time that is given us." Speaks Tolkien to his hero and likewise, Rowling cautions Harry that "it is our choices that show what we truly are, far more than our abilities". To conclude, the worlds

of fantasy authored by the writers provide means for the readers to explore the ancient teachings as to life. The matter is closely associated with darkness and evil while divine spirituality stands for light and good. The preceding lesson can be envisioned as a brief but concise summary of both Gnosticism and Hermeticism. In this division, the individual is entrusted with one task. He must renounce the matter and hold on to the divine light. The base methodology to this end is presented as a persistent control over the will. What is beyond then is silence, for when the words do not suffice, all that remains is a blissful silence.⁴

⁴ Hermes contemplates on the gnosis with the following “For the knowledge of gnosis is a Divine Silence” (Divine Pymander:22)

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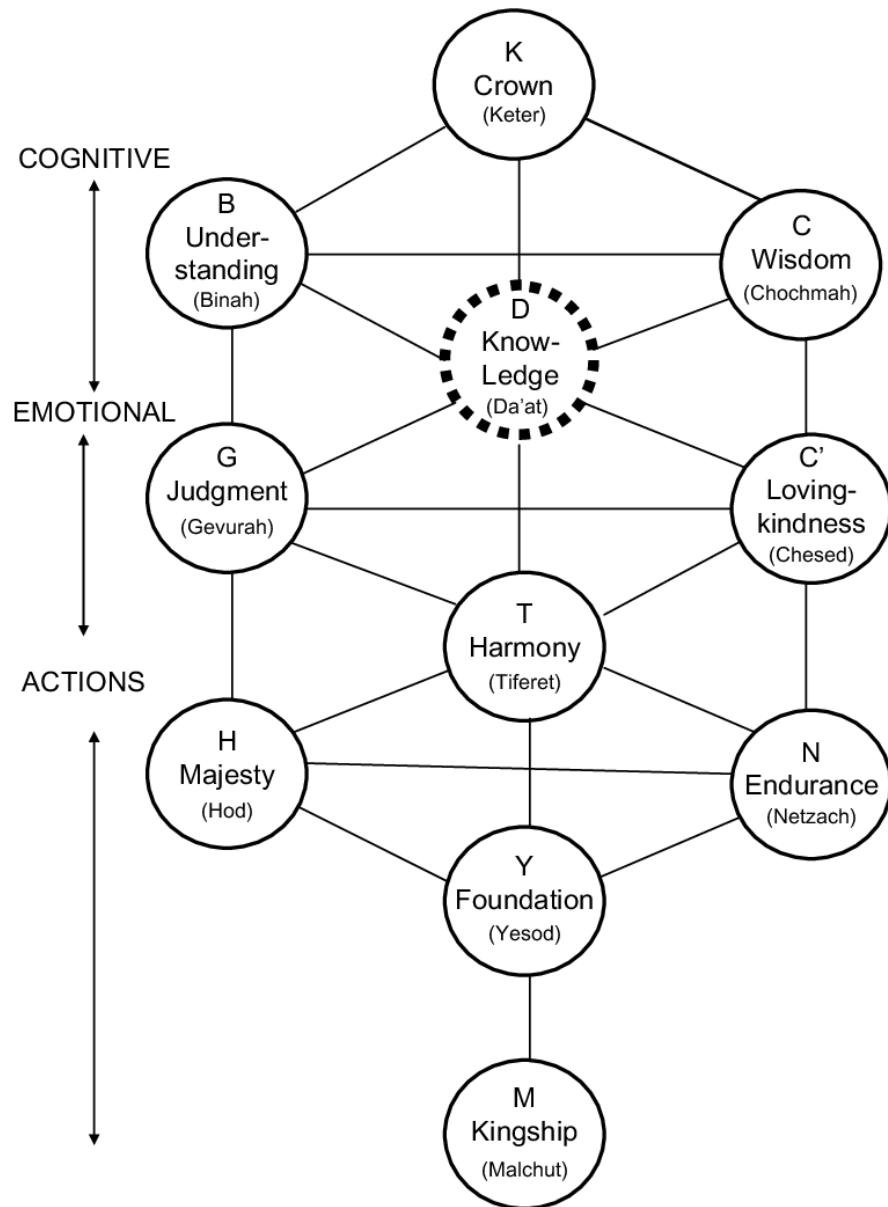
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Visual.1



Note: A system of interconnected fundamental attributes describing creation and the cognitive, emotional and action levels of any created system

CURRICULUM VITAE

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