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LITERÁRIOS

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**“YOU CAN (NOT) CALL ME MONSTER”
AESTHETIC AND ETHICAL MONSTERS IN THE *HARRY POTTER* SERIES**

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Orientador: Prof. Dr. Daniel Serravalle de Sá.

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Natália Alves
“You can (not) call me monster”
Aesthetic and Ethical Monsters in the *Harry Potter* series

O presente trabalho em nível de mestrado foi avaliado e aprovado por banca examinadora composta pelos seguintes membros:

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*"We've all got both light and dark inside us.
What matters is the part we choose to act on.
That's who we really are."*

J.K. Rowling

RESUMO

O presente trabalho tem como objetivo a análise dos monstros estéticos e éticos na série *Harry Potter*, de modo a compreender quais características classificariam os personagens como monstros. Com isso em mente, a hipótese a ser trabalhada aqui é que na série *Harry Potter* o monstro estético tende a ser mais discriminado pela sociedade bruxa do que os monstros éticos, porque a aparência é o que em última análise define os limites na negociação da relação entre humanidade e monstruosidade. Para a análise, foram selecionados alguns trechos dos sete livros da saga que ajudaram a ilustrar as características estéticas e éticas desses personagens, para entender se eles podem ser considerados monstros no que diz respeito a esses elementos. Junto com discussões acerca das características estéticas e éticas, temas sobre as fronteiras, miscigenação e alteridade foram fundamentais para a análise dos personagens. Identificou-se que os personagens que podem desequilibrar a sociedade bruxa não são discriminados por terem uma aparência humana comum, apenas quando julgados culpados de seus crimes. Os monstros estéticos aqui apresentados, embora sejam considerados monstros, nem sempre apresentam comportamento antiético, ao passo que monstros antiéticos podem viver dentro dessa sociedade sem levantar suspeitas.

Palavras-chave: Monstros, estética, ética, Harry Potter, fronteiras, alteridade.

ABSTRACT

The present work aims to analyze the aesthetic and ethical monsters in the *Harry Potter* series, in order to understand which characteristics would classify the characters as monsters. With that in mind, the hypothesis here is that in the *Harry Potter* series the aesthetic monster tends to be more discriminated against by the witch society than the ethical monsters, because appearance is what ultimately defines the limits in negotiating the relationship between humanity and monstrosity. For the analysis, some excerpts from the seven books of the saga were selected to illustrate the aesthetic and ethical characteristics of these characters, to understand if they can be considered monsters in regard to these elements. Along with discussions about aesthetic and ethical characteristics, themes about borders, miscegenation, and otherness were essential for the analysis of the characters. The research identified that characters who can disturb the wizarding society are not discriminated against for having a common human appearance, only when found guilty of their crimes. The aesthetic monsters presented here, although they are considered monsters, do not always exhibit unethical behavior, whereas unethical monsters can live within that society without arousing suspicion.

Keywords: Monsters, aesthetic, ethical, Harry Potter, borders, otherness.

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1. INTRODUCTION

This thesis seeks to discuss monstrosity in the *Harry Potter* series (1997-2007), more particularly its representation in terms of aesthetic and ethical values, embodying the ethical turn in literary-cultural studies have begun to appear since the early to mid-2000s. As a fantasy narrative, largely inspired by myth and folklore, the series feature many supernatural or unnatural beings which can be read in the light of an inherent “moral compass” that drives the story. The aim here is to investigate and understand how a series based on fantastic imagery and motifs engages with the notion of monstrosity both as a linguistic challenge (attempts of describing the unrepresentable) and as a matter of otherness (engaging with the dichotomy between them and us).

This thesis is particularly interested in examining cross-over beings i.e. characters whose bodies are aesthetically “pleasant” but whose “vices” qualify them as monsters, and, conversely, characters whose bodies are considered “grotesque” but whose “virtues” certify their graciousness and integrity. This approach will provide further understanding of how monstrosity is a discursive creation, materialized by means of narrative mechanisms such as genre, plot structure, social labeling, stereotypification of characters and their stories. Therefore, I seek to discuss monstrosity as an internal duality, not a binary good/wicked label, since there is monstrosity in all characters and their stories by extension. By exploring the potential that writing/storytelling has in creating monstrosity and otherness, I will discuss the paradoxical relationship some characters have with their inherent monstrosity, highlighting how they slide between labels, how they evade associated expectations, ultimately, subverting constructed, binary, stereotypical identities.

Created by J. K. Rowling, the *Harry Potter* series is comprised of seven books¹² that narrate the life story of the young wizard, from his first until his last year of study at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. The essential plot of the series can be summarized as follows: Lord Voldemort, the Dark Lord, who killed Harry’s parents, and nearly killed him, wants to take control over the wizarding world as well as to subjugate the non-magical people. Rowling

¹ These are the books by order of publication: *Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone* (1997), *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* (1998), *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* (1999), *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire* (2000), *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix* (2003), *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince* (2005) and *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* (2007). All of them published by Bloomsbury.

² After the release of the fourth book, this successful story has been transformed into films. The series was distributed by Warner Bros. and consists of eight films, beginning with *Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone* (2001) and ending with *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows - Part 2* (2011). The films will not be analyzed here.

creates an alternative world, more specifically a wizard community, inhabited by unique creatures and people, with its own social and cultural rules. In the universe of the series, the wizard people live among the muggles (people who are not wizards) as well as magical species such as goblins, dragons, and fairies.

However, wizards have authority over other magical creatures, which give them certain privileges, including the possibility of excluding or banning magical creatures from society. In other words, due to the hierarchical organization of the wizard society, some magical creatures are regarded monsters, especially because of their appearance (giants) or because they refuse to abide by rules and cannot be tamed (centaurs and werewolves) or because they are considered less worthy (house elves) and therefore are mistreated by wizards. Although some of these creatures are considered monsters, most of them are not a threat to society. Oppositely, there are wizards like Gellert Grindelwald and Lord Voldemort, who are not usually seen as monsters and yet they pose great moral danger to wizard society, practicing atrocities and leading the wizard community into wars against each other.

J. K. Rowling populates her magical world with creatures from a variety of mythologies, modifying some characteristics of well-known creatures (witches, elves, centaurs, werewolves, etc.), and also inventing her own monsters, such as thestrals, which are black, skeletal, bat-winged horses. Throughout the series, these magical creatures attend a wider range of purposes, fostering ideas about otherness, hybridity, miscegenation, border, among other concepts that ultimately serve to normalize social behaviors.

Therefore, this work concentrates on why/how some *Harry Potter* characters can be considered disruptive of social order, either because of their physical or moral characteristics. There is a plethora of characters in the series that provides different points of view and distinct interpretations of what is a monster. I will divide them into two categories and their crossovers: the aesthetic, which are categorized by their abnormal body, and the ethical monsters, which are defined by their anomalous behavior. The crossover cases include characters that are considered monsters because of aesthetic features; however, they are not necessarily evil. Moreover, it includes characters that are sheer evil, but who are not considered monsters due to their standard appearance. With this in mind, one hypothesis here is that in the *Harry Potter* series the aesthetical monster tends to be more discriminated by the wizard society than the ethical monsters, because appearance is what ultimately defines the limits in the negotiation of the relationship between humanity and monstrosity.

In order to discuss monstrosity in terms of aesthetic and ethical practices, the ideal situation would be to analyze all monstrous representations in the *Harry Potter* series. However, due to

time constraints and word limit, to achieve these objectives, this thesis will address some of the most prominent characters in the series, such as the giants, centaurs, werewolves (physical monsters), and Lord Voldemort and Dolores Umbridge (moral monsters), as those are the ones that carry out turning points in the story.

The purpose here is to provide a contribution to research on aesthetic and ethical monsters, highlighting complexities, paradoxes, subversions in the construction of this discursive monstrosity. I will draw discussions from different fields of knowledge, ranging from literature, mythology, anthropology, and cultural studies, represented here by theorists such as José Gil, Luiz Nazário, Joseph Campbell, Jeffrey Jeremy Cohen, Alexa Wright, and David D. Gilmore, to approach concepts about monsters. I will depart from their ideas about monsters to analyze which characters in the *Harry Potter* series can be considered monsters and how they also avoid, evade, scape constructed expectations at length, subverting binary identities. I will select some excerpts from the seven books in the saga that will help to illustrate the aesthetic and ethical features of these characters, to understand if they can be considered monsters in regard to these elements.

In the following sections, I will present a brief introduction about the author J. K. Rowling, discussing how her academic education on different mythological traditions contributed to the writing of the *Harry Potter* series. I will also debate etymological definitions and cultural concepts of monstrosity, including aesthetic and ethical characteristics, its historical constructions and perceptions in terms of otherness, hybridization, miscegenation, and borders.

1.1. J. K. ROWLING'S LIFE AND ITS EFFECTS ON HARRY POTTER

She was born Joanne Rowling, in Yate, England in 1965. Rowling wanted to be a writer from an early age, she wrote her first book at the age of six, and at eleven, she wrote her first novel – about seven cursed diamonds and the people who owned them. Rowling argues that her earliest influences as a child were *The Chronicles of Narnia* (1950-1956), by C. S. Lewis, *The Lord of the Rings* (1954), by J. R. R. Tolkien, and various plays by Shakespeare (notably *The Winter's Tale*), all of which influenced her later work.³

J. K. Rowling earned a Bachelor's degree in French and Classical Studies from the University of Exeter, in 1987. In the following year, she wrote a short essay on Classical Culture,

³ The biographical information about the author can be read in more detail in: <https://www.jkrowling.com/about/>

entitled “*What was the Name of that Nymph Again? Or Greek and Roman Studies Recalled*”, which was published by Pegasus, the University of Exeter newspaper. Her early literary preferences alongside her knowledge of Classics would one day be applied in the creation the *Harry Potter* series,⁴ which display a complex set of plots with many references to history, mythology and literature. In the following chapters I will engage in discussions about how Rowling proposes an update of ancient imagination about monsters, including playfully arranged puns regarding the characters’ names, creatures, items and places. In her creative renovation of tradition, names are one of the most common means to depict an intended personality to a literary character. In *Harry Potter*, many characters’ names have Latin origins/meaning that helps to understand the characters function or their characteristics in the fictional world. Some are comparatively straightforward: ‘Severus’ means severe, ‘Lupin’ is wolf, ‘Albus’ is white and some others not obvious, such as Professor Sybill meaning prophet/oracle – a reference to the sibyls, deities from Ancient Greece. All of these names are hints at characters’ function or characteristics.

In many ways, the *Harry Potter* series reproduces Joseph Campbell’s “the hero’s journey” scheme, which has been appearing in narratives since ancient times. However, rather than merely imitating the old, mythical archetypes, Rowling seeks to innovate the portrayal of well-known fictional creatures. One example of a mythological character that gains a different meaning in the series is the Centaur. In Greek and Roman mythologies, centaurs were savage beings with body and legs of a horse, and arms, chest and head of a man. Centaurs were endowed with much physical strength; they are usually rowdy, boisterous and violent creatures (the exception to this rule being Chiron). In Classical mythology they most likely served to admonish the Greeks against excessive drinking and unruly behavior, in general. One clear example of an aesthetic monster that can be traced back to Greek mythology is the Minotaur. The Minotaur is a monster composed of the body of a man and a bull’s head and tail. Born as a hybrid child of a white bull and the Cretan Queen Pasiphae (who was cursed by Poseidon), the Minotaur is the “hideous progeny” of an unnatural union, between man and wild animal. Locked in Dedalus labyrinth, the Minotaur had no natural source of food, to survive he killed men and fed on them. Nonetheless in the *Harry Potter* series, Rowling chooses to portray the centaur and the Minotaur beyond their bestial nature, making them more like Chiron, the wise and educated centaur who tutored Hercules, Achilles and Jason. In this sense, the author revisits this

⁴ http://www.exetermemories.co.uk/em/_people/rowling.php

mythological heritage, for example, reinventing the centaurs as scholars in the field of astronomy and astrology (even though they were banned from the wizard society, some centaurs, such as Firenze, are part of the faculty at Hogwarts, which relativizes straightforward dichotomies).

Rowling uses mythological structures and characters to create a narrative about a tragic childhood mingled with epic adventures where, echoing Campbell's "monomyth", the protagonist undergoes a self-development experience and ultimately consolidate his personal identity. The series is an example of a modern, contemporary text in which mythological and heroic structures are recognizable. Following this heroic narrative pattern, which organizes itself around views of Good and Evil, the *Harry Potter* series updates traditional, classic narrative formulas, creating a highly sympathetic protagonist who, in many ways, is the antithesis of the omnipotent and powerful hero. Arguably, the series became very popular because it mixes recognizable mythological structures with features from the modern novel, in which the protagonist is perceived as more humanized, although not less heroic.

Having sold more than 500 million copies worldwide, *Harry Potter* is currently the best-selling book series in history.⁵ Up to 2017, the series had been translated into eighty languages, placing Harry Potter among history's most translated literary works. Professor John Patrick Pazdziora, from University of St. Andrews (Scotland), states that "*Harry Potter* is the main narrative experience of an entire generation – the children who literally grew up with Harry Potter. This is their first experience of literature."⁶ Pazdziora (2012) also mentions how important and influential the series is to children's literature of the late twentieth and early twenty first centuries. The series has been the object of many conferences around the world, such as the conference A Brand of Fictional Magic: Reading Harry Potter as Literature, at the University of St. Andrews, conducted by Pazdziora in 2012; and the Harry Potter Conference at Chestnut Hill College, in Philadelphia (Pennsylvania, US) that, since 2012, has organized a forum for scholarly presentations arising out of J. K. Rowling's literature. As a global literary phenomenon, *Harry Potter* has been the object of numerous academic studies since then, including one that has been conducted at PPGI – UFSC, Joseline Caramelo Afonso's *What role do tasks play in an EFL environment? Unfolding 9th grade learners' perceptions on the implementation of a cycle of tasks on the first chapter of 'Harry Potter and the sorcerer's stone'* (2016). The present investigation contributes to the advancement of research on *Harry Potter* at

⁵ <https://www.pottermore.com/news/500-million-harry-potter-books-have-now-been-sold-worldwide>

⁶ <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-edinburgh-east-fife-18086644>
<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/books/news/data-show-uk-loves-harry-potter/>

PPGI, more specifically in the area of literary and cultural studies. Moreover, while there have been other academic studies that have discussed the idea of monsters in the context of PPGI, for example, Ricardo Heffel Farias' *Cthulhu is here: the monster as an allegory of history in Howard Phillips Lovecraft's Cthulhu Mythos* (2015), none has yet combined the two ideas and investigated the presence and the meaning of monsters in the *Harry Potter* series.

The *Harry Potter*' series possess comes precisely from the author's imagination, uniting the vast and popular narratives traditions from around the world. Following the steps of J. R. R. Tolkien and C. S. Lewis, J. K. Rowling was able to condense her knowledge of mythology and folklore into a tangle of fantastic plots, which ultimately use characters and situations to address contemporary issues such as gay rights (Dumbledore), exploitation of labor (house elves), illness and disability (Lupin and Mad-Eye Moody) – as further examples of efforts to update Classic imagination.

Up to this point, I have been discussing how J. K. Rowling's early preferences for the fantasy genre and her knowledge about mythology has helped to build the *Harry Potter* series. I have also argued that she endeavored to modernize traditional plots, characters and narrative structures, acclimatizing their elements to present times in order to discuss pressing matters that afflict the spirit of our times. From now on, I will focus the discussion on the different concepts of monsters and monstrosity, seeking to establish a theoretical basis for my analysis of the series.

1.2. THE ETYMOLOGY AND THE CONCEPTS OF MONSTER

In this section, I will discuss the historical origins and meanings of the word monster, articulating a debate about its etymology and changing cultural definition. In addition, I will also discuss aspects of otherness, hybridization, miscegenation, and borders, focusing on its relationship with the concept of monsters. I will draw discussions from different fields of knowledge, ranging from literature, mythology, anthropology, cultural studies, sociology represented here by theorists such as Luiz Nazário, José Gil, Joseph Campbell, Jeffrey Jeremy Cohen, Alexa Wright, and David D. Gilmore.

In its modern definition, a monster is generally described as an imaginary creature that is large and frightening. In the English language, the origin of the concept traces back the early fourteenth-century word “monstre”, from Old French, meaning a malformed animal or human, a creature afflicted with a birth defect and comes directly from Latin “monstrum”, meaning a divine omen (especially of misfortune), a portent. The word is a derivative of the Latin verb “monere”, which means to remind, advise, warn, teach. The idea here is that narratives about

monsters are often cautionary tales, as they set examples, “de-monstrate” and delimit the borders that separate the acceptable from the non-acceptable, humanity from monstrosity.

In ancient times, abnormal or prodigious animals were regarded as signs or omens of impending evil, a definition that was later extended to fabulous animals composed of parts of different creatures (centaurs, griffins, hydras, unicorns) and which, figuratively, was used to describe a cruel or wicked person, someone who aroused horror because of moral defect or corporeal deformity. In that sense, the idea that monsters encompass both physical and moral aspects is the key notion that will guide this study, the concept will be further investigated in this section and debated throughout the thesis.

Mythological monsters have been an enduring and diverse presence in human imagination, feared, celebrated and worshiped for a long time in many different cultures. As part of the beliefs of ancient peoples, monsters embody all that is awe-inspiring, overwhelming and horrible, provoking feelings of admiration and fear. According to Joseph Campbell, in *The Power of Myth*⁷ (1988), a monster is “a horrendous presence or apparition that explodes all your standards for harmony” (1991, p. 52). They are often malformed, having multiple limbs (such as three heads) or combining elements from different forms (e.g. upper body of a human and the lower body and legs of a horse, like a centaur), and sometimes they can change their shape (like a werewolf). Frequently they are of vast size and enormously powerful. In this critical conception, they are invariably terrifying, malevolent, savage, and evil. Moreover, Campbell argues that many characteristics of mythological monsters from different cultures are “essentially the same” (*The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, 1949, p. 19). Campbell affirms that the monster is representative of the danger and instability that threatens social order, its security and values.

More recently, people use the word “monster” to describe what they find disgusting, terrifying, dangerous, colossal in size, supernatural and mythical. Monstrosity can be either physical (aesthetic), for example, a creature of abnormal size or appearance, or moral (ethical), the inherently evil or depraved creature. Both types of monsters are commonly treated with impiety as they represent dangerous objects of fear. The concept of monstrosity juxtaposes the idea of transgression, being a violation of natural laws. In his book *Monster Theory: Reading Culture* (1996) Jeffrey J. Cohen proposes seven theses to understand cultures through their monsters and how they reflect humanity’s apprehensions. The main assertion behind his thesis

⁷ *The Power of Myth* is a book based on the 1988 PBS documentary Joseph Campbell and the Power of Myth. The documentary was originally broadcast as six one-hour conversations between mythologist Joseph Campbell (1904–1987) and journalist Bill Moyers.

affirms that monsters are an essential part human existence; therefore, they cannot be hidden or killed off definitively. According to him, a monster is “an embodiment of a certain cultural moment – of a time, a feeling and a place” (1996, p. vii), and the monster’s body “incorporates fear, desire, anxiety and fantasy” (1996, p. 3-4) within a certain society or group, as it seems to be the case with the monsters in the *Harry Potter* series.

In accordance with Cohen, in the book *Monsters: Evil Beings, Mythical Beasts, and All Manner of Imaginary Terrors* (2012), anthropologist David D. Gilmore debates what human traits monsters represent and why they are so ubiquitous in people’s imagination, sharing many common features across different cultures. Some mythological monsters, such as giants or dragons, appear in different cultures, having survived through the centuries by means of processes in which they were recreated or updated to continue being meaningful. Traditionally, what is most visible in the figure of the imaginary monsters, as well in some mythological creatures, is the miscegenation between species: often combining divine and human nature or animal nature and human.

The monster appears when the difference is perceived as the division between, on the one hand, the voice that registers the existence of the “different” and, on the other, the definite subject (in this case the monster). The criterion of this division is arbitrary and can range from anatomy to religious belief, custom, and political ideology. In *Monstrosity: The Human Monster in Visual Culture* (2013), Alexa Wright maintains that there is “a surge of anxiety concerning the boundary between humans and animals on the one hand, and widespread fear of racial diversity on the other, the hybrid being was supposed to represent the ‘missing link’ between animal and human.” (2013, p. 40). In other words, monstrous is the adjective that defines the one who transgress the laws of nature, unacceptable hybrids that threaten established classifications. This refusal to be part of the order of things works for monsters in general: they are hybrids that disturb, whose bodies, externally incoherent ones, resist attempts to include them in any systematic structuring. This strange creature is a combination of categories supposedly separate, “divine” and “human”, “nature” and “culture”, and more.

The existence of laws that call for a clear division between animals and human beings indicates deep anxiety about the potential contamination of human identity by the primitive characteristics of animals. Those monsters who have transgressed the border between humans and animals are seen as a miscegenated race, for this reason society uses miscegenation as an excuse for policies of exclusion (on different levels). At this point it is particularly relevant to mention that in the *Harry Potter* series, that humans with at least one non-human parent are

designated “half-breed”. There is noticeable prejudice against half-breeds in the wizarding world, which also discriminates against non-human beings.

The point here is that monsters reflect the cultural values that transgress the social, moral, and ontological order of a particular society and are therefore considered as “others”. Alexa Wright (2013) demonstrates how monstrosity and the monster are social-cultural constructs. They are an expression of difference that, on individual level, defines the self and, on collective level, defines social norms through the manifestation of what is considered unacceptable, therefore, it is associated with the notions of “other” and “otherness.” However, this otherness is always constructed from the inside. In other words, the subjective position of the observer is a determining factor in the construction of the other, whether monstrous or not.

No matter where the monsters appear, they are always distant from their observers, they are creatures that must inhabit the borders. As remote social pariahs, they may pose threat to established social laws i.e., to the identity of individuals living in that society. “Monsters are social outsiders, and yet the monstrousness they represent cannot be fully contained in what the philosopher Margrit Shildrick has called ‘the place of the other’ (WRIGHT, 2013, p. 7). The monster is especially intriguing because it shows the existence of an established history of articulating narratives of “self” and “others” in the form of strange bodies and atypical behaviors.

The term “otherness” means a quality of being not alike; “the state of being different” (WRIGHT, 2013, p. 17) or something distinct from that which is otherwise experienced or known. Most of the time, otherness is interpreted by referring to two or more different groups distinct features or by referring to special qualities of each group that makes them different or unique in relation to another. This experience of “othering” can be expressed in many ways. Usually age, ethnicity, sex, physical ability, sexuality, social-economic class, gender, nationality, and other demographic indicators are the most common factors for an individual or a society to be leveled or identified.

Otherness and identity are two inseparable sides of the same coin and the asymmetry in identity-oriented power relations is central to the construction of otherness, which consists of applying principles that allow the creation of two or more hierarchical groups. Still in relation to identity and otherness, Ieda Tucherman discusses, in *Breve História do Corpo e de seus Monstros* (1999), that the figure of the monster is a regulating instrument, associated with the notion of identity, since “the process that establishes identity is what marks a border between

what is identical (same) and what is different (other)” (1999, p. 83)⁸ However, although the idea of otherness is inevitably bound to binary outlooks, and necessarily involves constructing border spaces, it is also an ever-changing category which expresses all that is antithetical to the self.

Monsters are intriguing because they reflect the cultural values invested in “otherness” and the transgressions they represent are often (but not always) displayed on their bodies. “Their hybrid bodies, which combine human and animal elements, cultural and natural, function as signifiers of the known and the unknown” (WRIGHT, 2013, p.16). They question the boundaries of what constitutes an acceptable human subject on a direct somatic level. The monster demonstrates that, even when physically located elsewhere, monstrosity is a construction closely related to the social and moral values of the observer. Humans demand more of the monsters because they need certainty about their identity.

By default, the monsters clarify what it means to be a valid member of a particular society. They are puzzling, intriguing figures, lurking on the fringes of society. They are strangers, lawbreakers and, above all, intrinsically transgressive characters who say more about those who create them than about those who are labeled as monstrous. The monstrous transgression is a force that challenges established laws, limits and social structures and compels them to respond to modifications in human understanding, values, and belief systems. In a nutshell, individual, social, and cultural identities are inseparable from those boundaries and peripheral figures that help define accepted norms.

Upscaling from the individual to a cultural level, monsters are never perceived as inhabitants of a given space or time. Summarily, they are the outsider. Being simultaneously what is understood to be neither an accepted part of nature nor an accepted part of a culture, the monster can act as a powerful and concrete mirror for social and cultural values, even if from an intangible place. According to Cohen,

Monsters, by inhabiting the gap between exclusive zones of intellectual or social meaning, deliver a threat to the zones’ integrity, or, more precisely, to the assumption that such zones can be delimited in the first place. In other words, monsters expose classificatory boundaries as fragile by always threatening to dissolve the border between other and same, nature and culture, exteriority and interiority. (COHEN, 1996, p. 266)

The idea of a monster surpassing the borders is why these creatures are so culturally threatening: their illogical existence cannot be rationally measured, and this is disquieting.

⁸ In the original: “O processo que estabelece identidade é o que demarca uma fronteira entre o que é idêntico (mesmo) e o que é diferente (outro).” My translation.

Irrationality, consequently, is the crib of fear and loathing towards monsters and explain the discriminatory behavior against them. In this sense, I add here that by inhabiting “exclusive zones of intellectual and social meaning”, the monster embodies what I call a linguistic challenge, an attempt of describing the unrepresentable. Therefore, monstrosity becomes a matter of discursive creation, wherein the illogical, the irrational and the unrepresentable seeks to be explained in terms of narrative mechanisms (genre, plot, description, representation).

Monsters must be considered not only as “others” in the group of definitions but also as boundary phenomena, anomalous hybrids that constantly make and break the boundaries between interiority and exteriority. Since they erase categorical distinctions with their heterogeneity and mobility, they become symbolic of displaced, and therefore threatening, subjects. The aversion to the ambiguity of such frontier phenomena comes under a reaction that disparages against any object or idea that may distract or contradict established values.

In every cultural tradition, monsters are said to live in borderline places, inhabiting an “outside” dimension that is not apart from but parallel to the human community. In addition, Cohen argues that the monster “exists to demarcate the bonds that hold together that system of relations we call culture, to call horrid attention to the borders that cannot—must not— be crossed” (1996, p. 13).

The border concept is not only a social-cultural matter; it is also geographically associated with the notion of monsters. They inhabit a peripheral space, marginal, in all cultural traditions, they “emerge from a kind of metaphorical exile, from borderline places. [...] whatever the people in a particular culture demarcate the wilderness, as noncultural space, the unexplored territory, there are monsters” (GILMORE, 2009, p. 192). A border, then, can be understood as being more than one line: it is also a physical limit. It locates the division between things, its beginnings, and their endings. Society draws boundaries between nation-states, transforming rivers, mountains, oceans, and other arbitrary characteristics into the difference between the sovereignty of “self” and “other”, delimiting with borders those things that identify as part of the rejected “other.”⁹ It is the line of opposition drawn between good and evil, dominant and subordinate: the hierarchical binary pairs built and supported by this society.

The border can be perceived, thus, as the place of monsters. Luiz Nazário points out, in *Da Natureza dos Monstros* (1998), the origins of the monster:

⁹ The immigration blockade that we are currently witnessing in Europe and in the United States is exemplary of how physical borders and the monstrification of other national subjects operate in the real world.

[...] of an isolated town, the primitive jungle, a lonely island, from the depths of the sea, from eternal sleep, from an unknown world, from the endless abyss, from an extinct civilization, from the remote past, from stagnant ponds, of the unpredictable future, of a wild swamp, of abandoned wells, the kingdom of darkness, secret laboratories – in a word: the Unconscious. (1998, p. 22)¹⁰

The adjectives that the author uses (primitive, eternal, endless) point to what remains hidden or out of the known. These bordering adjectives make monsters even more frightening because most of them are portrayed as animals that are lurking ready to attack. Ultimately, the critic states that monsters are an expression of unconscious fears. In *Religion and Its Monsters* (2012), Timothy K. Beal argues that adjectives to qualify such spaces (as isolated, unknown, remote, wilderness) point to what remains hidden, unrevealed or repressed, and out of the knowledge of the society. “These monstrous figures indicate regions of dangerous uncertainty. They show where the limits of knowing are. They dwell on the threshold between the known and the unknown” (2012, p. 194). Once again, I highlight here that “the limits of knowing” point to the monster as an epistemological defiance (the illogical, the irrational), which ultimately leads to a breakdown in representation or linguistic challenge.

The understanding surrounding the existence or the nonexistence of monstrosity within the border is not a consensus view among the authors. To Luiz Nazário, there is no such possibility of the monstrosity or even the monster figure existing beyond the border, he argues that “only when the monster makes a public appearance everyone becomes convinced of their reality and try to save themselves, individually or through the union of society” (NAZÁRIO, 1998, p. 11,). Meanwhile, José Gil recognizes that there is no difference where the monster is situated, they will always come from a lawless territory, the monsters “[...] are located in an area of indiscernibility between the becoming-other and chaos.”¹¹ (GIL, 2000, p. 175) While roughly inserted in a society, the monster appears as a threat due to the fact of simply existing out of their place, while outside, in the border, their “home”, the monster eventually limits how far that society can go, because the moment the limit is broken, the border becomes evident and the monster reappears to threaten what was achieved.

If an individual crosses the border, there is a chance become the monster, and what is or is not considered monstrous depends and is defined against the prevailing conceptions of the

¹⁰ In the original: “[...] de uma cidadezinha isolada, da selva primitiva, de uma ilha solitária, das profundezas do mar, do sono eterno, de um mundo desconhecido, do abismo sem fim, de uma civilização extinta, do passado remoto, de lagoas estagnadas, do futuro imprevisível, de um pântano ermo, de poços abandonados, do reino das trevas, de laboratórios secretos – numa palavra: do Inconsciente.” My translation.

¹¹ In the original: “[...] situam-se numa zona de indiscernibilidade entre o devir-outro e o caos.” My translation.

human and normality. Although the central concept of monster remains the same, that which is deemed monstrous keeps changing, their appearance, functions and actions depend on cultural and historical contexts. On that regard, emerges a historicized notion of aesthetic and ethical monster.

The notions of aesthetic and ethical monster that have been discussed so far will be used as a tool for analyzing some specific characters from *Harry Potter*. The challenge here is that, as fantasy literature to young adults, *Harry Potter* presents a fertile “monstrous” imagination, with many characters embodying bestial features – a relatively common trace in this universe of wizardry. It is only through the analysis of literary language (or discourse) that matters regarding the “description of the unrepresentable” and its comments on the dichotomy “us vs. them”, that the moral/ethical principles that underpin the *Harry Potter* series may emerge.

As Gilmore puts it, the aesthetic monster “is always bestial in appearance and primitive in behavior” (2009, p. 188). Most of the time, monsters are grotesque hybrids, mixing animal species and humans. Such formal definition includes human metamorphoses like werewolves and vampires, as well as giants and cyclops from classical mythologies – all these archetypes appear in *Harry Potter*.

The aesthetic monsters are those who reveal their condition by the external aspects, that is, the disturbance by the state of their abnormal body (a grotesque image), which cannot be classified as a human or an animal. They provoke a mix of horror and terror that unites what is beyond the human, the superhuman, the terrible, and the unknown. It also a fear related to what the human body can become (deformed, ugly).

The idea of monster seems to be first and foremostly concerned with their hideous appearance; however, monsters can also be seen as an extreme of humanity. In the moral scope, the characteristics that involve such creatures undergo some changes. Impurity, for example, is no longer visible in the physical form of the monster, it is expressed metaphorically. The monster is now a human being walking among society, waiting to attack his/her next victim.

Attitudes dissociated from established by ethical and moral conventions can be characterized as monstrous. Human history is marked by “monsters” that despite not being scary-looking, grotesque figures were capable of immense atrocities. The moral monster is often seen as a metaphor for all that must be repudiated by a specific culture or society. The horror provoked by moral monsters cannot be visually identified, since they seem “normal people”. The impact of their monstrosity manifests itself in the existential threat to “social life, the chaos, atavism, and negativism that symbolize destructiveness and all other obstacles to order and

progress, all that which defeats, destroys, draws back, undermines, subverts the human project” (GILMORE, 2009, p. 188).

In this section, I discussed the etymology of the word monster and some key concepts (otherness, hybridization, miscegenation, borders) that surround the definition of monsters. I demonstrated here that the discussion is historically and culturally defined, and it orbits around matters of aesthetics and ethics. Using theorists such as Cohen, Gilmore, Wright, Gil and Nazário, I established that monsters have recurring traits, which allows tracing taxonomy of such creatures. Although monsters appear under different masks, the characteristics that define their monstrosity remain basically the same; they symbolize and materialize the anti-human. In the next section I will engage in a cultural-material discussion to show how matters of otherness, hybridization, miscegenation, borders have appeared in particular moments of Occidental history.

2. ON MONSTERS

In this section, I will examine here how monsters remained relevant through the ages. As a product of human imagination can be read as a response to a rapidly change in culture, society, politics, economy and moral values. I will cover key aspects of the history of monsters in the western world, ranging from Greek and Roman civilizations to medieval, to religious interpretation of monstrous creatures to literary monsters, particularly in the British literary tradition. I seek here to demonstrate how monsters serve specific purposes that are culturally and historically. I also intend to show how eighteenth- and nineteenth-centuries society brought a major shift in the history of monsters, displacing their presence from the mythical and the religious context into the realm of literature and fantasy. I will argue here that this major change does not consist of a downgrade in the power that monsters possess to scare and mesmerize, on the contrary, it made monstrosity more socially pervasive and culturally widespread.

More importantly, when literature incorporated the representation of monsters and monstrosity, it opened up the discussion in the sense of bringing a reflection about “what is monstrosity?” and “who are the monsters?”. This is historically unprecedented since myths and religious views do not allow questioning of the nature of monsters and monstrosity. Eventually, this section intends to situate the *Harry Potter* series and its monstrous characters in a long-standing debate, regarding the genealogy of monsters, a tradition from which J. K. Rowling draws extensively and also modifies in ways that are meaningful to our contemporary world.

2.1. A BRIEF HISTORY OF MONSTERS THROUGH DIFFERENT PERIODS OF TIME

In the western tradition, monsters reached their apex in the Classical Age, especially among the Greeks. In the world influenced by Greece, and later Rome, the classical, monster mythology they created was kept alive for thousands of years. For the Greek civilization, monsters were portents made by the gods to horrify, persecute, and bedevil humans, and most of all to represent the ineluctable evils of human existence.

According to Robert J. Lenardon and Mark P. O. Morford in *Classical Mythology* (2003), gods, heroes and monsters that were part of Greek mythology were later appropriated by the Romans who, in many cases, only changed their name, and yet, in this cultural transposition, the theme of the heroic rescue was perpetuated. Lenardon and Morford argue that the Romans outdid the Greeks in their morbid preoccupation with monsters and, still according to the authors, both Greeks and Romans held the belief that ancient monsters were ancestors to men.

For a society that identifies itself completely with its mythology, every action in this reverberates among humans until they eventually reach the gods. In classical thought, the legions of monsters, like the Satyr and the Minotaur, are often the product of miscegenation between humans and beasts or between humans and gods or also are sired by gods (demigods like Achilles, Perseus, Hercules) and are often the brothers of heroes. Regarding this miscegenation, some monsters were created by the union of gods, such as the cyclops, they were born with the union of Gaia (earth) and Uranus (sky), “she bore the Cyclopes, insulant at heart...They had only one eye, set in the middle of their foreheads but they were like the gods in all other respects.” (LENARDON; MORFORD, 2003, p. 54) Unlike the cyclops, the giants and other monsters were conceived after the defeat of Uranus by his son Chronos,

And his son from his ambush reached out with his left hand and in his right, he seized hold of the huge sickle with jagged teeth and swiftly cut off the genitals of his own dear father and threw them so that they fell behind him. And they did not fall from his hand in vain. Earth received all the bloody drops that fell and in the course of the seasons bore the strong Erinyes and the mighty giants (shining in their armor and carrying long spears in their hands) and nymphs of ash trees. (LENARDON; MORFORD, 2003, p. 63).

Although monsters were defined as ugly, these societies had the conception that the creatures were a result of miscegenation or ramification of gods, sometimes as a punishment for their bad behavior. Stemming from Greece and Rome, these representations endured in the following centuries and mingled with other representations of grotesque beings, from folkloristic and religious strata. Mythological creatures survived not only in classical literary texts but also in Christian literature and works of art. In Western civilization, classical monsters were used as symbols or allegories, they became vehicles for storytelling in the imagination of the Middle Ages.

Previously I have argued that J. K. Rowling is familiar with these traditions, and that she revisits and reinterprets Classical and Medieval imagination, using ancient monsters in her literature with different meanings and purposes. One example of this is Fluffy, a three-headed dog that echoes Cerberus, the Greek “hound of Hell”, guardian of the underworld. Fluffy appears in *Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone* (1997), it is the keeper of the entrance to the room, where the philosopher’s stone is kept,

“How do you know about Fluffy?” he said.
“Fluffy?”
“Yeah — he’s mine — bought him off a Greek chappie I met in the pub las’ year — I lent him to Dumbledore to guard the —”
“Yes?” said Harry eagerly.
“Now, don’t ask me anymore,” said Hagrid gruffly. “That’s top secret, that is.” (ROWLING, 1997, p. 137)

As Cerberus in Greek and Roman mythology, Fluffy has the duty of guarding an important place. Fluffy also inherited Cerberus weakness which was the inability to resist falling asleep to the sound of music, “Fluffy’s a piece o’ cake if yeh know how to calm him down, jus’ play him a bit o’ music an’ he’ll go straight off ter sleep —” (ROWLING, 1997, p. 191). Although clearly a threat in the imaginary of the rest of the wizarding world, Hagrid always tried to convince others of Fluffy’s unharmed behavior when treated kindly. This aspect of Hagrid’s personality also reflects into other monsters through the series. The argument here is that society did not make an effort to try to connect to those monsters, always establishing that the creatures have to live at the borders of society, with the only purpose of serving human kind.¹²

Rowling’s knowledge about ancient monsters also encompasses Old English and Norse sagas, composed between the eighth and tenth centuries, which are bursting with grotesqueness, such as the giant ogre Grendel and his dragon mother, in the epic poem “Beowulf”. Grendel is never described directly, but there is a reference to his humanoid form, and to his malevolent and destructive behavior.

Grendel and his mere-dwelling mother appear to both be giants. Enormous, humanoid, and children of Cain, they share the same fate, decapitation. Earlier the poet narrator (a Christian, unlike the pagan Scandinavians he describes) had said that God condemned Grendel as one of the kin of Cain, perhaps one of the “giants in the earth” mentioned in Genesis, a few of whom escaped Noah’s flood according to some traditions. (ACKER, 2010, p. 304).

In the post-roman period, monsters stopped being ambivalently portrayed as omens from the gods in ancient times to become pagan enemies of Christ. With the influence of early Christianity, the old monsters became images of evil spirits; or rather the evil spirits entered the monsters and took visible shape in the hideous bodies of such as Grendel.

In early Christianity, monsters became tropes of God’s opponents and were put in the service of the Catholic Church, being equivalent to the Prince of Darkness. The beliefs in monsters needed to be explained within the idea of a universal creator God. In Augustine’s theology, monsters did exist for, and their imposition on God’s plan is to remind us of our sins. The Augustinian vision of the monsters represents a transition from the dualistic eschatological vision of early Christianity, which takes on a great cosmic drama, a battle between Good and Evil, between God and the Devil. According to Luchesse and Toppe (2014), for Augustine “the

¹² Saint Anthony of Egypt (251 – 356), who allegedly survived supernatural temptation during his sojourn in the desert, and, Saint Augustine (354 -430), author of the influential book *The City of God*, each in their own way, believed that if we could talk to monsters, we could reach an understanding.

seemingly monstrous character of these beings, results from human ignorance about the correspondence of the individual parts of the universe to the whole, as well as the limits of the human intellect in grasping all God's works." (2014 p. 486). From the perspective of the Christian church, the existence of monsters raised not only concerns about their origins but also about their purposes. In addition to being interpreted as the expression of divine wrath, the monsters show to men, when desired by God, they were a necessary miracle. In this sense, in the Middle Ages, the monster (teratological and fabulous) gains a reason for being, since it had a role designated by God.

Christian beliefs also served as inspiration for *Harry Potter* series, in addition, some characters, it could be said that Harry and Lord Voldemort are representations of Jesus and the Devil, respectively. In the article *Harry Potter and Christian Theology* (2009), Peter Ciaccio argues that Harry, like Jesus, is considered a savior in the wizard society; many starts following him and believing in his battle to fight evil, "when [Harry] enters the world his parents belonged to, everybody has heard of him already and many people wish to befriend him" (CIACCIO, 2009, p. 38). Like Jesus, who was followed by the Jews after his Sermon on the Mount, Harry was also considered by many people in the wizard society, to be the one who could defeat the evil. Death and resurrection are also themes present in both in *Harry Potter's* and in Jesus's life, culminating with both dying (and resurrecting) to save people and freeing the world from evil.

Different from the Classical mythology, monsters in Christianity are said to be the condemned, the beasts that will distance the faithful from salvation. I have been arguing here that in the Classical Age and in Medieval Christianity monsters were made by gods or by God (Christianity) as a sign to horrify or to arouse religious fear. However, a significant change in the attitude towards monstrous races becomes evident from the sixteenth century on, when the belief in the actual existence of this polarized religious battle (Good v. Evil) is gradually replaced by Natural Sciences and monstrosity starts to be studied on scientific basis, natural, biological anomalies rather than myths and allegories.

Monsters in the Modern Era can be explained as pathologies or anomalies, contrary to a "healthy" normality.

The other early modern trend was a growing concern for morphological freaks called "monstrosities" or "prodigies", that is, real deformities and, notably, grotesque birth defects. This morbid interest gave rise to various pseudo-scientific enterprises, one of which was a rebirth of the discipline of teratology, the study of monstrous births, a field that persisted until the middle of the nineteenth century. (GILMORE, 2009, p. 62).

The monsters that once belonged to the mythological, folkloric, and religious imagination, with the advent of science (sometimes pseudo-science), become a common image:

they're humans. When science tries to explain the anomalies and deformities that occur at birth, the monsters stop being unnatural and start to become something closer to people's reality. Georges Canguilhem, in *A monstruosidade e o monstruoso* (2012), argues that at the end of the eighteenth century, the corporeal monster begins to lose its symbolic meaning, since the expansion of scientific thought endeavored in explaining or de-monstrating the nature of physical deformity by naming, classifying and explaining its causes. In the understanding of Canguilhem, the advancement of science made it possible to create monsters in the laboratory, but also to eliminate physical deformity and the perceived threat, leading to a gradual disappearance of the fear of monster. However, as pointed out by Cohen (1999), monsters cannot completely disappear, they "must be examined within the intricate matrix of relations (social, cultural, and literary-historical) that generate them." (1999, p. 5) In this sense, teratology may even explain why there are monsters, especially the physical ones, but it cannot eliminate the idea of monsters from society.

By the late eighteenth century, monsters become the subject of literature and fantasy due to a revival in the interest for imaginary beasts which, to some degree, was linked to scientific-technological discoveries such as galvanism and electromagnetism. In this sense, monsters make a comeback via the Gothic literature of the nineteenth century, led by Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818). The novel, whose subtitle is *The Modern Prometheus*, can be read in terms of fears related to technological advances. Victor's experiment also subverts what is regarded as human and simultaneously challenges the boundary of what is believed to be the roles of God and man. At the end of the century Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897), revives medieval imagination in the shape of a vampire that comes from Transylvania, a place in the borders of civilized Europe. Up until then, "attention was focused almost entirely on the Aesthetic characteristics as an indicator of character" (WRIGHT, 2013, p. 65) but when monsters enter the literary realm the debate about their Ethics comes into discussion.

In the British literary tradition, many characters embody the duality of being a monster and a man, for instance, in narratives like *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* (1886) or *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1890), both protagonists are civilized men who became monsters because of their social conduct and attitudes towards other humans. Dorian Gray, for instance, is a monster and a threat to society because he acts outside laws, both written (the legal code) and unwritten (good taste, Victorian "proper" behavior). He is nevertheless dangerously attractive for the same reason— he pursues his desires free of inhibition, social obligation or constraint. This monster is an ethical one, operating against human laws and moral values, and despite his good appearance, Gray represents chaos, fear and destruction.

If before, monsters of deformations, malformations and ugliness frightened society, in the mid-nineteenth and twentieth century, the literary monster of social medicine and psychiatric studies poses a serious problem for “social security.” In *Monstrosity: the human monster in visual culture* (2013), Alexa Wright presents ideas on the moral monster, saying that they are difficult to characterize because they are not perceptible to the gaze. While before there was an obviousness about monstrosity that could be pointed out in the body of the other, the absence of any apparent signs of identification is frightening, as it positions the moral monster in a place that is much closer to humans. In other words, the difference that constitutes the monstrosity is not so stable or definitive as it used to be.

In the book *Strangers, Gods and Monsters: Interpreting otherness* (2003), Richard Kearney discusses the notion of unpredictability in the modern monster in relation to its physical appearance. The critic points to the existence of a non-conformance to what is expected of monsters, who now hide their horrific side under a mask of beauty, such as the typical vampire-seducer, or a terrorist, who can be considered “beautiful” despite his atrocities.

Modern monsters are no longer outside the frontier, they inhabit the same geographic space as humans, leading to the conclusion that monsters do not just look like us, they are among us. The modern, literary monster is here to challenge what we hold as universal truth, forcing us to question our identity. More than upsetting these values, the monster disturbs, confuses, and attracts our curiosity to them. Society despises what is different, but it does not resist the temptation to examine and classify differences, even with the sole purpose of rejecting them.

In this section, I briefly discussed the genealogy of monsters from Ancient Greece to Medieval times to Modern, industrial society, examining how the socio-cultural debate about monsters moved from mythology to religion to literature. I will now use these examples to investigate and analyze how they operate in the construction of characters in the *Harry Potter* series.

3. MONSTERS IN HARRY POTTER

In this chapter, I will analyze the characters portrayed as monsters such as the giants, centaurs, werewolves (physical monsters), and Lord Voldemort and Dolores Umbridge (moral monsters), since those are the ones who act on turning points in the narrative. My aim here is to investigate, understand and explain how their aesthetic and ethical features are discursively related to othering. The following analysis will be divided in these two categories and their crossovers. I will start with the aesthetic monster, which is categorized by their abnormal body, followed by the ethical monsters, which is categorized by their anomalous behavior.

3.1. THE AESTHETIC MONSTER

In this section I discuss the monsters which are aesthetically different from the point of view of a standard human or wizard: their physical traits and personality, what makes them aesthetically and morally different from human beings and how they are perceived by the wizard society. The monsters to be analyzed in this section are the werewolves, the centaurs and the giants.

3.1.1. Werewolves

The following text on werewolves is an adapted version of a previous work called *A representação do lobisomem e a licantria como metáfora na série Harry Potter*, a book chapter I published in the volume *Monstruosidades: Estética e Política* (2019), organized by professors Daniel Serravalle de Sá and Marcio Markendorf.

Since ancient times, the fusion between man and wolf has been material of legends and folklore, perpetuating itself in fables and tales, becoming even more widespread in the nineteenth, twentieth and twenty-first centuries.¹³

¹³ Literature and cinema played a particularly important role in the diffusion and popularization of the werewolf: *Werewolf of London* (Stuart Walker, 1935), *The wolf man* (George Waggner, 1941) and *The curse of the werewolf* (Terence Fisher, 1961), and a film version of the novel Guy Endore's *The Werewolf of Paris* (1933) are examples of the werewolf in those areas. More recently, the figure of werewolf has gained prominence in fantasy and fiction films, as in the remake of *The wolfman* (2010), in *Twilight* (2008) and in the TV series *Teen wolf* (2011-2017).

Many cultures from different regions of the world have their own mythology, legends and folklore in relation to the werewolf, one of the oldest shape-shifter monsters of human imagination. The legends about werewolves have persisted for so long that its existence possibly precedes written records about this bestial being. The ancient Lycaon myth is one of the first accounts of the metamorphosis of a human being into a wolf, the story is told by Pausanias and Appollodorus (in the Second century A.D.), it also appears in the eighth century A.D., in *Metamorphoses*, by Ovid, a narrative in which Zeus transforms the King of Arcadia, Lycaon, into a wolf as punishment for serving a meal of human flesh to the gods (BERESFORD, 2013, p. 46).

J. K. Rowling's interpretation of this long-standing mythical archetype receives an initial mention in *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* (1997), but the werewolf only appears in fact in the third book of the series, *Harry Potter and the prisoner of Azkaban* (1999), in which the author highlights two characters, introducing two completely different views on the werewolf. The characters are named are Remus Lupin and Fenrir Greyback.

The *Harry Potter* series is set in a wizard world, where there are specific laws for the creatures that exist in that universe. One of these laws is a Code of Conduct for the Werewolf, created in 1637 by The Ministry of Magic. The werewolves should sign it and promise not to attack anyone and lock themselves securely every month during the full moon. However, no one signed the Code, as it means admitting to being a werewolf. For years, this Werewolf Record remained incomplete and unreliable, because many of the newly bitten ones tried to hide their condition and escape the inevitable shame and exile. Lycanthropy becomes, then, perhaps the most feared concern in relation to contagion within the wizard society, implying in the loss of werewolves' protection from the Ministry of Magic.¹⁴ The fear of contagion and the shame of being infected and becoming a werewolf is the key point about these character and issues of infection, contamination, disease are part of the theme update that J.K. Rowling brings to the contemporary world.

In relation to the characters's name, Remus Lupin refers to the story of Romulus and Remus, two twin brothers who in Roman mythology were raised by a wolf and founded the city of Rome and 'Lupin' is derived from the Latin *Canis lupus*, which is the scientific name for wolf. (STEIGER, 2011, p. 179). The author also uses mythology to give a meaningful name to

¹⁴ The Ministry of Magic and its laws are described by author J. K. Rowling in *Harry Potter* books; however, the author provides more details that were out of the books on the Pottermore website. <https://www.pottermore.com/explore-the-story/the-ministry-of-magic>

the character Fenrir Greyback. Fenrir is one of the many names of Fenrisulfr, the great wolf of Norse mythology and wolf son of the giantess Angrboda and the god Loki. Greyback is a reference to his gray hair and gray skin while in the werewolf form. (STEIGER, 2011, p. 107).

In the narrative, Remus Lupin was bitten by the werewolf Fenrir Greyback as a child and his parents always hid his werewolf condition from the wizarding world. Since his transformation occurs only once a month, Lupin manages to hide his condition most of the time. However, his attempts to fit among both humans and werewolves were unsuccessful for when humans discover his identity, they immediately start to reject him. Likewise, the werewolf population does not trust him because of his “signs unmistakable of having tried to live among wizards” (ROWLING, 2005, p. 313).

Lupin’s werewolf form is not as scary as the werewolves’ iconic imagery; his werewolf shape is thin and disfigured with long limbs and curved back and as a significant distinction from conventional werewolves, also his body, atypically, has less hair.

There was a terrible snarling noise. Lupin’s head was lengthening. So was his body. His shoulders were hunching. Hair was sprouting visibly on his face and hands, which were curling into clawed paws... As the werewolf reared, snapping its long jaws, Sirius disappeared from Harry’s side. He had transformed. The enormous, bear-like dog bounded forwards. As the werewolf wrenched itself free of the manacle binding it. (ROWLING, 1999, p. 260).



Figura 1: Lupin transformed in a werewolf in the movie *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*.

Lupin's physical condition is a metaphor for illness and contagious diseases that carry a stigma. This stems from ideas about contamination through blood, probably due to taboos surrounding the blood itself. For the generation that grew up reading *Harry Potter* books, the most common blood-borne, viral diseases are hepatitis and HIV.

In contrast with Lupin's appearance, Greyback is a large, cruel-looking man with gray hair and mustaches. His savagery sets him apart from other werewolves. While most werewolves bite and infect unintentionally in their transformed state, Greyback purposely infects and kills, even in his human form. This aspect of his personality finds a representation in his overall appearance, as described in the sixth book, *Harry Potter and The Half-Blood Prince* (2005):

[...] a big, rangy man with matted grey hair and whiskers... He had a voice like none that Harry had ever heard: a rasping bark of a voice. Harry could smell a powerful mixture of dirt, sweat, and, unmistakably, of blood coming from him. His filthy hands had long, yellowish nails (ROWLING, 2005, p. 553-54).



Figura 2: Greyback in the movie *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*.

Greyback was notorious for his savagery and preference for attacking children. He was a leader in his community and endeavored to infect as many people as possible with lycanthropy, hoping to build an army strong enough to eventually take over the wizard community. He abandoned his humanity long time ago and was driven by his animal hedonism.

He found joy in attacking people, and was amused with his own brutality. At some point, he became a cannibal, greatly increasing his notoriety.

Both characters have in their aesthetic features that makes them as monstrous. What becomes more visible in the werewolf figure are the hybridizations of species of different nature: animal and human. As Cohen (1996) argues, “this refusal to participate in the classificatory “order of things” is true of monsters generally: they are disturbing hybrids whose externally incoherent bodies resist attempts to include them in any systematic structuration.” (p. 6). The laws of nature are violated in the bizarre build of the monster’s body. A mixed category, the monster resists any classification built upon hierarchy or a mere binary opposition, requiring instead a system that allows internal duality, mixed responses and relativizations about the “integrity” of human nature. This hybridization represents the deregulation of culture, in this case, of the wizard culture. Lupin and Greyback are the personification of ambiguity; they are wizards, they have different ethical behaviors, and yet, their bodies classify them as monstrous.

I have been arguing here that J. K. Rowling’s update on the werewolf myth is a metaphor for contagion and illness. The character Lupin was infected when young, he is afraid he will infect other people. In *Illness as Metaphor*, Susan Sontag, argues that disease is poignant.

Disease metaphors become more virulent, preposterous, and demagogic. And there is an increasing tendency to call any situation one disapproves of a disease. Disease, which could be considered as much a part of nature as is health, became the synonym of whatever was “unnatural.” (SONTAG, 1979, p. 74).

Many times, it is an irrational fear that causes the infected to be excluded from society. According to Sontag, many diseases “were bound to be commonly used in a figurative sense” (1979, p. 39) and this opened space for prejudice and repression. Metaphors of disease are used to judge society not as unbalanced, but as repressive. Making it a metaphor is an excuse to discriminate “in the name of the disease” (metaphor), transferring the prejudice to other things and matters. In other words, the disease starts to be used as a synonym for the disgusting or ugly.

Werewolves are excluded from the wizard society because they cannot be controlled or repressed. They are considered not only impure but also repulsive. The threat and fear they arouse normally appear associated with disgust. In accordance, Noël Carroll (1990) states that,

“They are putrid or moldering things, or they hail from oozing places, or they are made of dead or rotting flesh, or chemical waste, or are associated with vermin, disease, or crawling things. They are not only quite dangerous but they also make one’s skin creep. Characters regard them not only with fear but with loathing, with a combination of terror and disgust.” (p. 23)

Social delimitation determines that werewolves should live in the borders, where there is nothing but dementia and disorder, a world without laws (monstrous). The wizard's fear of being contaminated and becoming monsters is what makes them exclude werewolves of the society. To wizard society werewolves are the others, werewolves are then convenient representations of illness and disease but also of other cultures, demonized to impose a strict notion of group identity. They are the embodiment of the fears of contamination, impurity, and loss of identity.

Although Lupin and Greyback are similar in terms of aesthetic features, Fenrir Greyback is a wild werewolf and faithful supporter of Voldemort, who attacks children for fun. Fenrir Greyback is perhaps the most vicious werewolf in the *Harry Potter* universe.

“You haven't heard of him?” Lupin's hands closed convulsively in his lap. “Fenrir Greyback is, perhaps, the most savage werewolf alive today. He regards it as his mission in life to bite and to contaminate as many people as possible; he wants to create enough werewolves to overcome the wizards. Voldemort has promised him prey in return for his services. Greyback specializes in children. . . Bite them young, he says, and raise them away from their parents, raise them to hate normal wizards. (ROWLING, 2005, p.185).

Despite his savagery, he fears those who are more powerful than him. Fenrir is self-aware about the lack of respect he receives from the Death Eaters: Voldemort himself snubs the werewolf, but he knows that Fenrir Greyback is an important ally. The revulsion that the Death Eaters feel about Greyback is probably because of his lycanthropy, as well as his implicit sexual perversions.

While Lupin and Greyback represent different takes on the werewolf, Greyback is considerably more lupine or animal than his counterpart. Greyback is not ashamed of being a werewolf and hurting other people, on the contrary, he uses people's fear of werewolves to his own advantage. One of the reasons why both are portrayed differently may be related to the fact that Lupin chooses to minimize the threat he presents to society while he is turned; contrarily, Greyback chooses to position himself in a manner that will increase the threat he presents to others. Lupin explains to Harry that he originally felt sympathy for the other werewolf, “thinking that he had no control” (ROWLING, 2005, p. 314). “But,” he continues, “Greyback is not like that. At the full moon he positions himself close to victims, ensuring that he is near enough to strike. He plans it all” (ROWLING, 2005, p. 314). Greyback also endangers wizarding society through both his transformations and his alliance with Lord Voldemort. Although he is unable to control the act of transformation, Greyback manipulates the circumstances surrounding it; he deliberately goes out of his way to endanger other people. Nazário (1983) argues that insatiability and ferocity are key points to identify monsters. These characteristics make the

monster want to bite and feed on the victim. “Every monster is voracious and devours everything they find: objects, substances, bodies.” (p. 14).¹⁵

The *Harry Potter* series provides new ways of reading these characters, such as the relationship between lycanthropy and contagious diseases. Regardless of both characters being classified as werewolves and being feared by the society they are in; Greyback is classified as monster because of his aesthetic and behavior, whereas Lupin is seen as a monster by others because of the unstable behavior while transformed in spite of his good conduct when not in werewolf form. Lupin represents the danger that society cannot control. Society creates the otherness, therefore, whereas both characters are distinct in relation to their behavior, wizards will ostracize both because of their appearance.

In this section, I discussed the characteristics of the werewolves, focusing on the characters Remus Lupin and Fenrir Greyback and their position in relation to notions of border, miscegenation and otherness.

3.1.2. Giants

In this section, I will discuss the giants in the *Harry Potter* series, seeking to understand and explain how their aesthetic and ethical features are discursively created in relation to othering. The main characters to be analyzed in this section are Hagrid, Madame Maxime and Grawp. However, other giants will also be debated in the analysis.

From ancient times in Egypt and Greece to the creatures described by travelers, to fairy-tales, a strong mythology was developed around gigantic creatures. Most cultures have some version of these monsters, “probably because the giant amounts to nothing more than a body enlarged to the point at which the human figure becomes estranged” (WEINSTOCK, 2014, p. 280). Giants are usually described as humanoids of extremely large size and near-human intelligence. Usually, giant trigger feelings of terror, some; however, invite to bodily pleasure: food, sex, mirth. The Biblical Goliath and the Cyclops Polyphemus are two of the famous giants depicted as abnormal in size.

In the *Harry Potter* series, giants are already mentioned in the first book, however they only appear in the fifth book. Giants are not as smart as wizards, but they can use magic and

¹⁵ In the original: Todo monstro é voraz e devora tudo que encontra pela frente: objetos, substâncias, corpos. My translation.

communicate in their native language and also in other languages. There are only a few giants left in the wizarding world, and the giants that do exist are often hidden in the mountains, where they are rarely disturbed by humans, as they are not very sociable (even among themselves). Unfortunately, giants need hunting on a large scale, forcing them to dispute game and territory, this often leads to fights between them, often fatal. During the First Wizarding War, the giants allied themselves with Lord Voldemort. As a result, the Ministry of Magic aimed and killed many giants, and those who survived were forced to hide in remote areas of the world, consequently, the number of giants decreased.

In the series, the mountains landscape is often linked to the giants.

'So, you have been to look for giants?' said Harry, grinning as he sat down at the table. Hagrid set tea in front of each of them, sat down, picked up his steak again and slapped it back over his face.
'Yeah, all righ',' he grunted, 'I have.'
'And you found them?' said Hermione in a hushed voice.
'Well, they're not that difficult ter find, ter be honest,' said Hagrid. 'Pretty big, see.'
'Where are they?' said Ron.
'Mountains,' said Hagrid unhelpfully. (ROWLING, 2003, p. 322)¹⁶

As mentioned before, the borders of the magical world and what could be considered part of the wizarding society were created by the wizards themselves, causing other creatures of the magical world, even the ones versed in magic, such as giants, to be excluded from that society. As Barbara Creed (2007) explains, the concept of border is fundamental to the construction of the monstrous. Those who do not adapt to the expected social model are in positions that can be considered suspect and, therefore, are cast outside the limits of the community. Whether this happens intentionally or not, in a certain sense, anyone who crosses the limits can be expelled from society and, in doing so, he/she becomes the other, the monster.

The giants that survived the wizarding wars were isolated in the mountains; however, even before the wars they were already ostracized from the wizarding society. Despite having magical powers, it is largely because of their physical appearance that wizards excluded them from this society. The giants in the series embody many characteristics that are deemed monstrous, their aesthetics features are: large size and deformity, they are often grotesque hybrids, an assemblage

¹⁶ Hagrid, a gatekeeper of Hogwarts School uses unique utterances that differ from other characters' utterances in the novel. Rowling attributes the dialect to Hagrid for a reason that people from West Country are very simple and humble.

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/331899467_An_Analysis_of_West_Country_Dialect_Used_by_Hagrid_in_JK_Rowling's_Harry_Potter

of animal and human features, or a mix of animal species in lurid ways. Grawp is the main giant in the series; he is depicted with all the aforementioned characteristics of a giant.

Unlike Hagrid, who simply looked like an oversized human, Grawp looked strangely misshapen. What Harry had taken to be a vast mossy boulder to the left of the great earthen mound he now recognized as Grawp's head. It was much larger in proportion to the body than a human head, and was almost perfectly round and covered with tightly curling, close-growing hair the color of bracken. The rim of a single large, fleshy ear was visible on top of the head, which seemed to sit, rather like Uncle Vernon's, directly upon the shoulders with little or no neck in between. The back, under what looked like a dirty brownish smock comprised of animal skins sewn roughly together, was very broad; and as Grawp slept, it seemed to strain a little at the rough seams of the skins. The legs were curled up under the body. Harry could see the soles of enormous, filthy, bare feet, large as sledges, resting one on top of the other on the earthy Forest floor. (ROWLING, 2003, p. 526).

Grawp's abnormal body makes him to be perceived as an aberration by the wizarding world. Luiz Nazário points out that gigantism is deemed a sign of evil. He argues that in the popular imaginary "the evil is enormous, massive, has an excessive form." (NAZÁRIO, 1983, p. 11)¹⁷ In the wizard society, aesthetic features are an important factor regarding how you are seen within the society. Grawp's brother, is the keeper of keys of Hogwarts, and one of Harry Potter's main friends in the story, he is also a half giant. Despite their immense stature, half-giants seem indistinguishable from humans, since their proportions in relation to their size are not mentioned as abnormal, which means that they simply appear as oversized humans. However, although Hagrid is depicted as a man of large proportions, it can be perceived that he is a miscegenated race.

If the motorbike was huge, it was nothing to the man sitting astride it. He was almost twice as tall as a normal man and at least five times as wide. He looked simply too big to be allowed, and so wild – long tangles of bushy black hair and beard hid most of his face, he had hands the size of dustbin lids and his feet in their leather boots were like baby dolphins. In his vast, muscular arms he was holding a bundle of blankets. (ROWLING, 1997, p. 16)

¹⁷ In the original: [...] o mal é enorme, maciço, tem a forma excessiva [...]. My translation.



Figura 3: Grawp and Hagrid in the movie *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*.

The first attribute that stands out in both Grawp and Hagrid's description is his size. Despite how the giants differ from humans (or, otherwise, are similar to humans), they are represented as grotesquely oversized. This represents a special challenge, since immense in size, hybrid forms and superhuman physical power are discursively combined to provoke shock and terror. In the animal world, to be bigger often implies superior resistance; which translates into advantage in confrontations. To Gilmore "this element of gigantism combined with a sense of mystery and power was a defining feature of all monsters." (2009, p. 174) To the wizard society this aesthetic feature (and perceived threat) is a one of the main reasons that made the wizards kill and expel the giants from society. However, it was not the only one.

The wizard society depicts giants as grotesquely repellent; they are loathsome half-human hybrids, combining the worst of animal features with debased human traits such as wrath, and cruelty.

Bloodthirsty and brutal, the giants brought themselves to the point of extinction by warring amongst themselves during the last century. The handful that remained joined the ranks of He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named, and were responsible for some of the worst mass Muggle killings of his reign of terror. (ROWLING, 2000, p. 310)

This quote points to a discursive creation in which giants may be great in size, but they are uncivilized, unmannered, prone to violence, therefore, inferior. The association here is that physical power implies brutality (and lack of intelligence). Since the giants are seen as dangerously violent by wizards, this narrative construction reverberates in the whole of the wizarding world, causing them to be feared and hated. This perception was further exacerbated when they joined forces with Voldemort and caused some of the most devastating catastrophes. As such, wizards and witches tend to refuse any relation to these creatures in general. Voldemort and his Death Eaters, however, see the giants as useful tools and recruited them for both wars. Albus Dumbledore tried to make an alliance with them, as an attempt to strengthen the link

between the species (as well as to prevent Voldemort from using his immense strength for his army), despite Minister Fudge's absolute refusal of Dumbledore's idea.

The second step you must take - and at once," Dumbledore pressed on, "is to send envoys to the giants."

"Envoys to the giants?" Fudge shrieked, finding his tongue again. "What madness is this?"

"Extend them the hand of friendship, now, before it is too late," said Dumbledore, "or Voldemort will persuade them, as he did before, that he alone among wizards will give them their rights and their freedom!"

"You - you cannot be serious!" Fudge gasped, shaking his head and retreating further from Dumbledore. "If the magical community got wind that I had approached the giants - people hate them, Dumbledore - end of my career -" (ROWLING, 2000, p. 495)

Although giants generally live detached from wizarding society, the slightest hint of their presence already disturbs the order. As the Minister of Magic points out, wizards hate giants, it may be because they have joined Lord Voldemort in the past, however, the wizards themselves also fought alongside Lord Voldemort. Therefore, this could not be the only reason for this hatred. Identifying the monstrous as an expression of the different and chaos demonstrates how those creatures carry signs of stereotypes of persecution - especially those of physical and moral deformity and the "stranger" supposedly responsible for the crisis in the community. According to Kearney (2002), when portraying giants as a criminal alien of indescribable bestiality, the persecutors (in this case the wizard society) planned to project moral guilt for a crisis in a stranger whose physical characteristics suggested an affinity with the monstrous. In this sense, it could be argued here that, to some extent, the giants could be associated with the "racial other".

The demonization of the "other" in the image of the monster also suits as a political analogy; they are those that the rules of society consider impure or unworthy - the transgressors, deviants, and pariah. For this wizard society, then, the monster symbolizes this threat to organized society, everything that is subversive or threatening to the prevailing political order: "the other enemy". Also, in this perspective, the impulse to create monsters stems from the need of the majority to denigrate those who are different and, in this case, physically more powerful, the giants and half-giants.



Figura 4: Hagrid and Madame Maxime in the movie *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*.

Madame Maxime is half-giantess and director of the Beauxbatons Academy of Magic in France. When she first appears in the series, Hagrid says to her that he “never met another one before!” (ROWLING, 2000, p. 302), she immediately replies to him asking what he means with the word another, and when he calls her half-giant, she reacts as if she has been insulted. “I 'ave nevair been more insulted in my life! 'Alf-giant? Moi? I 'ave - I 'ave big bones!” (ROWLING, 2000, p. 302).¹⁸ Her denying of her own identity indicates that she knows how half-giants and giants treated in the wizard society. So, this could be interpreted as an act of self-defense, because she does not want to be excluded or suffer prejudice, she understands fully well that to the wizard society she is a stranger, a foreigner. From this perspective, everything that reaffirms and reproduces the wizard society, is considered good, while those elements that differ are considered obnoxious and should be avoided. Susan Sontag (1978) identifies the ‘other’ as a figure of exclusion that make a society to seek “itself in the exotic . . . the ‘other’ is experienced as a severe purification of the ‘I’ (p. 175).

Culturally and socially, the relationship between “self” and “other” is hierarchical, based on the need to justify and sustain existing power relations. In these terms, the wizarding society projects its values on the giants, and half-giants. For them, even the half-giants, who have almost no physical traits that could prove they can be vicious or can become dangerous, should not be part of the wizarding society. Its aesthetic features are the only characteristics that can make

¹⁸ To omit the sound of “h” in Britain (elision) is a feature of certain dialects and often considered a characteristic of uneducated speech. From a linguistic point of view, it is a social class marker. In this excerpt, Rowling mixes the h-dropping with French vocabulary (a marker of education), this means that Maxime is trying to pass for someone or something else.

them be deemed monsters. According to Wright “the subjective position of the observer is always implicated in the construction of the ‘other’. (Wright, 2013, p. 17) In all cases, the wizards are in this position of deciding who is the other.

In this section, I discussed the characteristics of the giants and half-giants, trying to argue that their aesthetic features are not be enough to classify them as monster (even though, they are). The discourse constructed around giants operates in ways that associate their large size to violence and anti-social behavior. The discussion offered here orbited around the notions of border, miscegenation, and otherness.

3.1.3. Centaurs

In this section, I will focus on the analysis of the centaurs, to understand and explain how their aesthetic and ethical features are articulated. There is not a specific character in this section to be analyzed but, the centaurs as a representative of a group; however, there will be some recurrent characters that will appear more often.

The half-human, half-horse, some of the first descriptions of centaurs trace back to ancient Greek mythology. Those creatures traditionally represented the divided nature of man: they have a capacity for intelligence and wisdom, but keep the aggressive, untamed animal instincts. According to Kaleta (2014), “the earliest mythological accounts... describe the centaurs as simply a race of “uncivilized” humans inhabiting the forested mountain... in northern Greece” (p.75). For a demythologizing explanation, centaur could have emerged from admonishing tales about horseman. Whatever their origins, the major characteristic about centaurs reflect the contradictions of the hybrid nature of these creatures.

In the *Harry Potter* series, centaurs appear in the first and fifth books, however they are also mentioned in the other books. They often represent instinctive, animalistic behavior, but they also appear as wise teachers. The centaurs in the *Harry Potter* series demonstrate both traits. The centaurs’ habits are not human-like; they live in the wild, refuse clothing, prefer to live apart from wizards and Muggles alike and yet have intelligence equal to humans. They stick up for their own kind, and manage their own affairs, only intervening with witches and wizards at the Battle of Hogwarts when absolutely necessary. These creatures, on the borderline between humankind and animals, provoke both fascination and fear on the wizard society.

Unlike the characters analyzed so far, the centaurs in the series do not necessarily cause repulsion for their appearance, in fact, they are often admired not only for their physical

characteristics but for their intellect, so much so, that one of the centaurs that inhabit the forbidden forest ends up becoming a professor at Hogwarts.

And into the clearing came – was it a man, or a horse? To the waist, a man, with red hair and beard, but below that was a horse’s gleaming chestnut body with a long, reddish tail. (ROWLING, 1997, p.184)

A centaur was standing over him, not Ronan or Bane; this one looked younger; he had white-blond hair and a palomino body. ‘Are you all right?’ said the centaur, pulling Harry to his feet.

‘Yes – thank you – what was that?’ The centaur didn’t answer. He had astonishingly blue eyes, like pale sapphires. (ROWLING, 1997, p 187)

Professor McGonagall turned next to Parvati Patil, whose first question was whether Firenze, the handsome centaur, was still teaching Divination. “He and Professor Trelawney are dividing classes between them this year,” said Professor McGonagall. (ROWLING, 2005, p 120)

Adjectives used here to describe centaurs as, astonishingly, gleaming and handsome, are not commonly used to describe monsters. Usually, physical appearance would be the first step in identifying a monster. In regard to the centaur's bodies, as Tucherman (1999) point out “it is not the simple opposition that marks the difference between monsters and men, but a complex system of relations of approach and distance, of mixtures and hybridization” (p.78)¹⁹. This refusal to participate in the classificatory order is true of monsters in general. However, in the case of centaur’s hybrid corporeal aesthetics, they resist attempts to include them in any systematic structuring. In that particular sense, they become dangerous, as they threaten to destroy distinctions.

Luiz Nazário (1983) argues that evil can be recognized first by physical appearance, however, as he mentions, there are some monsters that cause fear because they are simply lurking, like the centaur. In the series, as in Greco-Roman mythology, centaurs are known to be a species skilled in astrology and divination. They are also excellent archers. However, they prefer to isolate themselves from humans; inhabiting woods and forests. In the *Harry Potter* series, there is a large herd of centaurs living in the Forbidden Forest around Hogwarts.

‘What are you doing in our Forest?’ bellowed the hard-faced grey centaur Harry and Hermione had seen on their last trip into the Forest. ‘Why are you here?’ ‘Your Forest?’ said Umbridge, shaking now not only with fright but also, it seemed, with indignation. ‘I would remind you that you live here only because the Ministry of Magic permits you certain areas of land -’. An arrow flew so close to her head that it caught at

¹⁹ In the original: [...] não é a oposição simples que marca a diferença entre monstro e homens, mas um sistema complexo de relações de aproximação e distância, de misturas e de hibridização. My translation.

her mousy hair in passing: she let out an ear-splitting scream and threw her hands over her head, while some of the centaurs bellowed their approval and others laughed raucously. The sound of their wild, neighing laughter echoing around the dimly lit clearing and the sight of their pawing hooves was extremely unnerving. (ROWLING, 2003, p. 573)

The centaurs in the series are on the threshold between the magical world and the unknown. They dwell on borders, these ambiguous locations where the demonized or deified (or something in between) present themselves as hazy concepts. Despite their great knowledge, centaurs are pushed to live on limited spaces granted by the ministry of Magic. According to Cohen (1996), the monster lacks mobility; it must live in spaces in which the regular inhabitants of that society must be aware if entering. To leave the established spaces and geography, incur in risk of being attacked by some monstrous inhabitant of the border. As mentioned in the werewolf section, the Ministry of Magic has a regulation for magical creatures and, even though centaur's intelligence can be compared to wizards, and that they are classified as magical beings, the Ministry rules that they can only live in demarcated areas. Consequently, the wizard society sees them as creatures that have to be extirpated from wizard social life.

Notably, like all monsters, the centaurs reflect cultural values linked to “otherness”. The transgression they represent are literally inscribed on their bodies, they provide an example of the historical function of the monster as an embodiment of social, moral disorder, etc. Their hybrid bodies, which combine human intelligence and horse power, reflect the known and the unknown. Although, centaurs have great knowledge, to wizards they are seen as nothing but beasts.

'You are from the Ministry of Magic?' said Magorian, as many of the centaurs in the surrounding circle shifted restlessly.

That's right!' said Umbridge, in an even higher voice, 'so be very careful! By the laws laid down by the Department for the Regulation and Control of Magical Creatures, any attack by half-breeds such as yourselves on a human -' 'What did you call us?' shouted a wild-looking black centaur, whom Harry recognized as Bane. There was a great deal of angry muttering and tightening of bowstrings around them [...] she continued, 'Law Fifteen “B” states clearly that “any attack by a magical creature who is deemed to have near-human intelligence, and therefore considered responsible for its actions —”

“Near-human intelligence”?’ repeated Magorian, as Bane and several others roared with rage and pawed the ground. 'We consider that a great insult, human! Our intelligence, thankfully, far outstrips your own.' (ROWLING, 2003, p. 573)



Figura 5: Centaurs in the movie *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*.

Centaurs see themselves as more intelligent and more aware of the world and the universe than humans; this is why the more excitable among them, notably Bane, get so angry when their intelligence is impugned by, as centaurs call, "mere Humans". This is exemplary of how the relationship between self and other is a hierarchical one, based on a need to justify and sustain existing power relations. The centaurs have been subordinated standards of wizard culture, by which they are judged. In the series, professor Umbridge treats the centaurs as "half-breeds", meaning they are less important to the world than the wizards. The way she calls them is an insult and a provocation to the group; they do not like to be compared to wizards when she affirms "near human intelligence". To the wizard society they are uncivilized, even though they understand the laws and rules of the wizards. Because centaurs do not follow wizard's laws, the perceived connections between otherness and wildness became more explicit. As Cohen (1996) states, "the monster threatens to destroy not just individual members of a society, but the very cultural apparatus through which individuality is constituted and allowed." (p. 12), therefore centaurs arouse fear in the society by being equally intelligent and hence able to defy the rules and confront the wizards.

Despite of being a threat to wizards, centaurs prefer to live among their own kind and they do not like when humans trespass their territory. They became especially angry when someone underestimates them, as professor Umbridge did belittling their intelligence. They also do not like to be compared to other animals; as they believe their kind stand out due to the combination of knowledge and strength. Imagining the centaurs as monstrous can serve political agendas as well. Professor Umbridge treats them with disdain thinking they would comply just because she works for the Ministry of Magic. She reckons they must obey Minister's order and obey.

“Whose Forest is it now, human?” bellowed Bane.

‘Filthy half-breeds!’ she screamed; her hands still tight over her head. ‘Beasts! Uncontrolled animals!’

‘Noooo!’ he heard Umbridge shriek. ‘Noooooo... I am Senior Undersecretary... you cannot - Unhand me, you animals... nooooo!’ Harry saw a flash of red light and knew she had attempted to stun one of them; then she screamed very loudly. Lifting his head a few inches, Harry saw that Umbridge had been seized from behind by Bane and lifted high into the air, wriggling and yelling with fright [...] Harry saw Umbridge being borne away through the trees by Bane. Screaming non-stop, her voice grew fainter and fainter until they could no longer hear it over the trampling of hooves surrounding them. (ROWLING, 2003, p. 573 -574)

Even though they are in their territory, centaurs were disavowed by Umbridge who believes to have rights over them, in her mind they should submit to her. She even resorts to her status as representative of the ministry of magic to subdue the centaurs; who respond securing her an removing her from their territory. The confrontation between Umbridge and the centaurs is a reminder that monsters can sometimes stand up to human tyranny and oppression. They are ambiguous creatures in the sense that they are a different kind of social organization, either knowledgeable creatures, although capable of violence and assault.

Once more, the aesthetic features presented in the centaurs are not the only characteristic that makes the wizard society to place them as monsters. It is also the penchant for violence that wizard society deems “monstrous”. Moreover, centaurs demonstrate that, even when physically removed from society, monstrosity is a construction that is closely related to the moral values of the observer.

In this section, I discussed the characteristics of the centaurs, trying to argue that their aesthetic features are not being enough to classify them as monster. I also discussed the woods and forest (the border) as the space in which their otherness is allowed to be expressed. Despite of the intelligence and notions of moral of the centaurs, as well as the capability of living in society, which differs them from the giants, they again are considered monsters. It can be perceived that their moral conduct does not matter to the wizarding society, both because of their appearance and because of their disregard to the coexistence rules established by the wizards.

Up until now, I have been analyzing monsters which are aesthetically different from the point of view of a standard human or wizard: their physical traits and personality, what makes them aesthetically different from human beings and how they are perceived by the wizard society. These aesthetic differences are further “otherized” by projections of brutality and violence, as if hybrid bodies were naturally prone to violence, constituting a moral flaw which derives from miscegenation. I discussed here in this section werewolves, the centaurs and the giants. From now on, I will present the ethical monster in the *Harry Potter* series.

3.2. THE ETHICAL MONSTER

In this section, I will analyze some villains that could be considered monsters regarding their moral and ethical practices or behavior. I will include characters that are sheer evil, but they are not considered monsters in wizard society due to their standard appearance, however, it will be argued here that their anomalous behavior puts them in the category of monsters. The characters to be analyzed in this section are professor Dolores Umbridge and Lord Voldemort.

3.2.1. Dolores Umbridge

Dolores Jane Umbridge was a witch who was part of the British Ministry of Magic; serving as senior undersecretary for the wizard government. In 1995, by order of Minister Cornelius Fudge, she became Professor of Defense against the Dark Arts at the Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry and, later, High Inquisitor at Hogwarts and Headmaster of the Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry, after Professor Albus Dumbledore was fired. In all positions at Hogwarts, she held enormous power over students, teachers, and the curriculum. As I have previously argued, J.K. Rowling often uses the name of the characters to convey meaning and delineate types and personalities. Dolores is a popular Spanish name, although it also occurs as an English name. In Spanish and Latin, “Dolores” is the plural form of “dolor”, which means pain. In English, the similar sounding word “Dolorous” means causing or expressing grief and suffering. ‘Umbridge’ is a play on ‘umbrage’ from the British expression ‘to take umbrage’, meaning to take offence or be offended. Arguably, this means that Dolores Umbridge is hurt and offended by any challenge to her world-view.²⁰

She became the senior undersecretary of the Minister for Magic and took a seat in the wizarding parliament. Umbridge was placed at Hogwarts as the new Defense against the Dark Arts teacher, by order of the Ministry of Magic, under the terms of Educational Decree Number 22, without the consent of Albus Dumbledore, who was the headmaster at the time. At first impressions, Umbridge resembles someone who the students would not be intimidated by, for her appearance is not frightening.

The witch spoke in a fluttery, girlish, high-pitched voice that took Harry aback; he had been expecting a croak. (ROWLING, 2003, p.112)

²⁰ <https://www.wizardingworld.com/writing-by-jk-rowling/dolores-umbridge>

[...] Professor Umbridge already seated at the teacher's desk, wearing the fluffy pink cardigan of the night before and the black velvet bow on top of her head. Harry was again reminded forcibly of a large fly perched unwisely on top of an even larger toad. (ROWLING, 2003, p.182)

She looked, Harry thought, like somebody's maiden aunt: squat, with short, curly, mouse-brown hair in which she had placed a horrible pink Alice band that matched the fluffy pink cardigan she wore over her robes. Then she turned her face slightly to take a sip from her goblet and he saw, with a shock of recognition, a pallid, toad like face and a pair of prominent, pouchy eyes. (ROWLING, 2003, p. 156)



Figura 6: Dolores Umbridge in the movie *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*.

After a short stint at Hogwarts, Umbridge convinced the Minister of Magic to name her High Inquisitor. She then had the power to dismiss teachers and whoever dissented from her opinions. Subsequently, she founded the Inquisitorial Brigade to promote “turns state’s evidence” (crown witness) among students and, therefore, being able to investigate all student groups. In addition to persecution, she also engages with censorship practices, as she banned the circulation of *The Quibbler* magazine, which had published an interview with Harry about Voldemort’s return. It was no surprise that she would make Hogwarts follow the Minister’s rules, especially about Voldemort. Dolores denies Voldemort’s comeback, as the Minister ordered, and punishes any and everyone who defies the order. Harry tries to argue with her about the return of Voldemort, but she insists in to follow the Ministry of Magic rules, and Potter ends up in detention.

'I want you to write, I must not tell lies,' she told him softly. 'How many times?' Harry asked, with a creditable imitation of politeness. 'Oh, as long as it takes for the message to sink in,' said Umbridge sweetly [...] Harry placed the point of the quill on the paper and wrote: / must not tell lies. He let out a gasp of pain. The words had appeared on the

parchment in what appeared to be shining red ink. At the same time, the words had appeared on the back of Harry's right hand; cut into his skin as though traced there by a scalpel [...] She was watching him, her wide, toad like mouth stretched in a smile. [...] 'Hand,' she said. He extended it. She took it in her own. Harry repressed a shudder as she touched him with her thick, stubby fingers on which she wore a number of ugly old rings. 'Tut, tut, I don't seem to have made much of an impression yet,' she said, smiling. 'Well, we'll just have to try again tomorrow evening, won't we? You may go.' (ROWLING, 2003, p. 204)

Umbridge starts to control the students with iron hands and uses her power to silence anyone who has different opinions to the Minister. When Harry confronts her, Umbridge denies his story. If anyone dared to contradict her who passes her authoritarianism for the Minister authority will be punished, as to set example. According to Wright (2013) "this type of monstrosity is not readily accessible to the gaze. It resists visual representation, is difficult to regulate and, most disturbingly, difficult to categorize as 'other' (p. 112). When the person seems to be in accordance with standard normality, in this case without a noticeable physical characteristic, it is difficult to establish a clear and tangible boundary between them and the clear-cut abnormal, hybrid monster. The traditional notion of the monster as admittedly the "other", is often marked by its aesthetics (and consequently evilness), therefore, unmistakably separable from the ordinary. However, in the light of figures such as professor Umbridge, monstrosity is no longer visible in the physical form, but expressed metaphorically.

Many times, she subdued students into telling what their parents were doing, if they believe in the Minister, or if they were on Harry's side, when he blown the whistle against about Voldemort. When Dolores banned all study groups in Hogwarts, some students were interrogated about how Dumbledore's management of the school, whether he wanted to become the Ministry of Magic (something that Umbridge would not let happen). Harry was her first and foremost nemesis, the student she most had issues with, for he sided with Dumbledore, because was alerting people Voldemort was back, and, most of all, because he used to defy her.

'You are forcing me, Potter... I do not want to,' said Umbridge, still moving restlessly on the spot, 'but sometimes circumstances justify the use... I am sure the Minister will understand that I had no choice. Malfoy was watching her with a hungry expression on his face. The Cruciatus Curse ought to loosen your tongue,' said Umbridge quietly. 'No!' shrieked Hermione. 'Professor Umbridge - it's illegal!' But Umbridge took no notice. There was a nasty, eager, excited look on her face that Harry had never seen before. She raised her wand. The Minister wouldn't want you to break the law, Professor Umbridge!' cried Hermione. 'What Cornelius doesn't know won't hurt him,' said Umbridge, who was now panting slightly as she pointed her wand at different parts of Harry's body in turn, apparently trying to decide where it would hurt most. (ROWLING, 2003, p. 567)

With Umbridge, the abuse of power spreads in the school and in the ministry of magic. Upon her arrival, the Ministry starts to interfere with Hogwarts and Harry cannot even report on her torture

during detention: there is no one above her. Her mission to suppress and deny any rumors that Voldemort returned is engraved on Harry's flesh, whose punishment was to repeatedly write the verses "I must not tell lies" - with a pen that uses his own blood as ink. Umbridge acts as a foreman to the Ministry, she passes over laws and regulations by using torture as a means of controlling the school. Carrol (1990) argues that "monsters need not be ugly or grotesque ... ugliness does not seem to be a necessary mark of monsters even in ordinary language [...] (monstrosity and impurity may be more than skin-deep)." (p. 41). Human monsters are referred to as social predators that violate society's rules for self-gratification. In this context, then, Umbridge constitutes a form of monstrosity because; she turns evil into local effect, a matter of micropower, not generalizable to society. Hence, as Wright (2013) states, this human monster label defines certain unacceptable human characteristics, lack of empathy and awareness.

Umbridge, being opportunistic and power-hungry, was ashamed of her father, who was a low-level worker in the Magic Maintenance Department. She denies she comes from a Muggle family, but, in self-hatred, claims that she is pureblood instead of half-blood. Dolores Umbridge hates hybrid creatures. At the Ministry, she introduced an anti-werewolf law and suggested that merpeople should be registered and closely monitored, as she considered them unreliable. Umbridge personifies a type of prejudice that amounts to a phobia of beings that are not quite or wholly human. While working at Hogwarts, she enjoyed humiliating Rubeus Hagrid for being half-giant and her terror of centaurs, reveal a terror of the unknown and the wild.

They backed slowly into the centre of the clearing, Umbridge uttering odd little whimpers of terror. [...] 'Filthy half-breeds!' she screamed; her hands still tight over her head. 'Beasts! Uncontrolled animals!' (ROWLING, 2003, p. 572- 573)

'Be quiet!' shouted Hermione, but it was too late: Umbridge pointed her wand at Magorian and screamed, 'Incarcerous!' Ropes flew out of midair like thick snakes, wrapping themselves tightly around the centaur's torso and trapping his arms: he gave a cry of rage and reared on to his hind legs, attempting to free himself, while the other centaurs charged. [...] 'Nooooo!' he heard Umbridge shriek. 'Noooooo... I am Senior Undersecretary... you cannot - Unhand me, you animals... noooooo!' Harry saw a flash of red light and knew she had attempted to stun one of them; then she screamed very loudly. Lifting his head a few inches, Harry saw that Umbridge had been seized from behind by Bane and lifted high into the air, wriggling and yelling with fright. (ROWLING, 2003, p.574)

Despite being a hybrid, Umbridge passes as pureblood, which means she can circulate in places of power and decision. Her space is not the border, on the contrary, the social place she occupies further masks her monstrosity. Inserted in a context not only geographic, but also professional that, in principle, upholds a position of impartiality, Umbridge, does not allow to glimpse its condition of difference. In this sense, her moral monstrosity can be thought of as

tyranny which is closely related to the absence of limitations, the freedom that the lack of social restraints provides.

Designating certain groups as “monstrous beasts” serves political agendas quite well. As a form of political stereotyping, “monstrifications” creates negative categories in order to justify specific interests. According to Cohen (1999), “political or ideological difference is as much a catalyst to monstrous representation on a micro level as cultural alterity in the macrocosm.” (p. 9). Umbridge acts with superiority not only to wizards but also in relation to other magical creatures. In her view, she must be respected for occupying the position of a pureblood, even though she is a mix of wizards and muggles. Although she uses her political influence to attack Hogwarts and hybrids, within the wizarding world, many of her ideas are not taken into account.

Despite her appearance of normality, Umbridge is a highly monstrous figure, not only on account of the tyrannical acts she performs, but also as a result of the way in which she blurred the boundaries between monstrous ‘other’ and the norm. Dolores Umbridge is not the ostracized “other” and yet she displays a “monstruous” behavior. Although her physical appearance passes for a wizard, her engagement in practices of harassment, persecution, censorship and oppression qualify her as a moral monster.

In this section, I discussed the characteristics of the Dolores Umbridge, arguing that her acts of tyranny are self-serving, making her not just an evil character, but an ethical monster. Her internal complexity lies in the fact that she is a half-blood who subdues and oppresses other half-bloods and hybrid creatures.

3.2.2. He Who Must Not Be Named

Tom Marvolo Riddle, also known as, Lord Voldemort, is the main villain in the *Harry Potter* series. He was a half-blood wizard considered the most powerful dark wizard of all time. He was the son of the wealthy muggle Tom Riddle, and the witch Merope Gaunt. His mother died giving birth to him, so until he goes to Hogwarts around the age 11, he lives in an orphanage. Abandoning his “muggle” name, he became the self-proclaimed Lord Voldemort, (an anagram of his birth name). Once again, J. K Rowling uses name to speak of characters’ features and characteristics. His Muggle name Tom Marvolo Riddle was given in honor of his father. The Aramaic meaning of Tom is twin; his middle name comes from his maternal grandfather who

was a heir of Slytherin²¹, and his last name also comes from his father, although Riddle was a very suitable name because he is considered an enigma. Tom Marvolo Riddle was such a singular character perhaps it is not surprising he disliked his common name, especially because reminds him of his muggle father; then he created a name that could represent what he really was. Voldemort has French origins – ‘vol’ means, variously, ‘flight’ or ‘theft’; ‘de’ means ‘of’ or ‘from’; and ‘mort’ means ‘death’ – which gives the name a sinister spin, very appropriate to Voldemort’s image.²² He is also known as He Who Must Not Be Named, You-Know-Who, and The Dark Lord. In the series, many wizards do not say his name, which is considered a taboo or a bad omen. He uses his own name to trap those working against him. Dumbledore seems the only one who does not fear Voldemort’s name; he used to say that the fear of a name only increases the fear of the thing itself.

I AM LORD VOLDEMORT

“You see?” he whispered. “It was a name I was already using at Hogwarts, to my most intimate friends only, of course. You think I was going to use my filthy Muggle father’s name forever? I, in whose veins runs the blood of Salazar Slytherin himself, through my mother’s side? I, keep the name of a foul, common Muggle, who abandoned me even before I was born, just because he found out his wife was a witch? No, Harry — I fashioned myself a new name, a name I knew wizards everywhere would one day fear to speak, when I had become the greatest wizard in the world!” (ROWLING, 1998, p. 218)



Figura 7: Tom Marvolo Riddle, as a Hogwarts student, in the movie *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*.

²¹ Salazar Slytherin was one of the four founders of Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry along with Godric Gryffindor, Helga Hufflepuff and Rowena Ravenclaw. He disliked taking students from Muggle families, seeing them as untrustworthy and unworthy of being taught magic, and tried to persuade the other founders to only take students from pure-blood families.

²² <https://www.wizardingworld.com/features/the-different-meanings-behind-lord-voldemorts-many-names>

His obsession with power leads him to reject, in his view, what is weak, in this case his father for being muggle. The trajectory from rejecting his father, and then claiming his pure-blood line, are the first signs of Tom's villainy. While he was still in the orphanage, his actions were already considered dangerous, he showed no signs of remorse for his acts or any affection towards people.

“What is it that you can do?”

“All sorts,” breathed Riddle. A flush of excitement was rising up his neck into his hollow cheeks; he looked fevered. “I can make filings move without touching them. I can make animals do what I want them to do, without training them. I can make bad things happen to people who annoy me. I can make them hurt if I want to.” [...]

“I knew I was different,” he whispered to his own quivering fingers. “I knew I was special. Always, I knew there was something.”

“Well, you were quite right,” said Dumbledore, who was no longer smiling, but watching Riddle intently. “You are a wizard.”

Riddle lifted his head. His face was transfigured: There was a wild happiness upon it, yet for some reason it did not make him better looking; on the contrary, his finely carved features seemed somehow rougher, his expression almost bestial. (ROWLING, 2005, p. 184)

Even if his first actions did not show his monstrosity (only that he was a mean figure) many of his actions could be deemed harmful. From a perspective that takes the body as a physical and symbolic expression of certain qualities in society, the monster's body has historically represented what is disproportionate, ugly or out of place. However, if the monstrosity is not identifiable to the naked eye, the moral monster often goes unnoticed in society, as it is the case with Dolores Umbridge and Tom Riddle.

When Dumbledore visits him at the orphanage, he fails to identify Riddle's monstrosity, mainly because Tom has a regular physical appearance. “There was no trace of the Gaunts in Tom Riddle's face. Merope had got her dying wish: He was his handsome father in miniature, tall for eleven years old, dark-haired, and pale. (ROWLING, 2005, p. 183)” Tom Riddle is a powerful symbol of what it means to choose a life of darkness. Even if the monster has a human face, his or her unassimilable behavior must be removed from society. The threat posed by the monster is intensified once it no longer reveals itself in its physical appearance. Monstrosity is now invisible at first sight, lacking apparent signs of aesthetical identification. This contributes to positioning the moral monster much closer to the human subject, increasing feelings of unpredictability. Consequently, as pointed out by Kearney (2003), moral monsters are ‘flawed beings, scapegoats, the enemy, the unknown, and the damned must all be willed into being as foils to our own inherent beauty, virtue, integrity, truth.’ (p.118). in this sense, they seem more monstrous than before, as they hide their evil under a mask of beauty.

While in Tom Riddle was in Hogwarts, he started to have followers, who would later be known as Death Eaters.

“I must say, I’d like to know where you get your information, boy, more knowledgeable than half the staff, you are.” Riddle smiled; the other boys laughed and cast him admiring looks.

“What with your uncanny ability to know things you shouldn’t, and your careful flattery of the people who matter — thank you for the pineapple, by the way, you’re quite right, it is my favorite —” Several of the boys tittered again. [...] Tom Riddle merely smiled as the others laughed again. Harry noticed that he was by no means the eldest of the group of boys, but that they all seemed to look to him as their leader. (ROWLING, 2005, p.334)

Wright (2013) questions the reason that leads such villains to reach celebrity status. One of the factors pointed out by the author concerns the power and charisma these individuals possess, which transforms them into a mythical figure – half real, half fictional, omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent, so they can be exciting and engaging. In accordance with Wright, Gilmore (2003), explains that the moral monster can be “malevolent, the monster is demonic of course, but it is also paradox... in its mystery and power, an object of reverence, and of admiration-even of identification-as well as of fear and loathing...Evil is not without its attractions...” (p. 192). During Tom’s seventh year at Hogwarts, he was appointed head monitor and gained honorable mentions in all the exams he received, he also earned a Medal for Magical Merit. He was considered to be one of the most brilliant students who ever went to Hogwarts, a fact admitted by Albus Dumbledore himself. Tom Riddle was already looking for followers in his school years; they would later become his faithful death eaters when, years later, he tries to dominate the magical world. His power is closely related to the absence of limitations, and to his freedom. Tom Riddle sees the attainment of power as the only rule to which he owes obedience; he becomes extremely powerful, because he can roam freely in all social spaces.

Tom Riddle becomes obsessed with his heritage and starts researching keenly about the subject. While investigating his heritage, Riddle focuses only on his father, believing that he was a wizard; also, he thought his mother could not have been a witch, once she had died. He was eventually forced to accept that his father was a Muggles and that his mother was a witch. It was at this time that Tom Marvolo Riddle gave himself the nickname "Lord Voldemort", to avoid remembering his "filthy Muggle father". From this point onwards, Voldemort began his journey for power. One of the main points that Voldemort sought was the wizard's sovereignty, mainly of pure bloods, over other magical races and even over the muggles.

After leaving Hogwarts, Lord Voldemort, as Tom was exclusively called, spent the following years gathering followers among wizards and witches. Some supported their cause to

dominate Muggles; while others were hungry for power, wealth and fame; and yet others joined the Dark Lord out of fear. Voldemort considered them more as servants than friends or family. They freely used the Unforgivable Curses and killed mercilessly. Voldemort commits these atrocities as an expression of arbitrary power; he is consciously evil with fiendish intentions.

When trying to dominate the wizarding world, Voldemort appeals to an idea of racial superiority. His polygenic ideology makes many of the wizarding society believe that pure-blood wizards are a superior race. Asma (2009) argues that the polygenic doctrine of divisions between races made it easy to think of other races as the "other". Even though Asma is talking about Nazi Germany, the similarities here between their leader and Lord Voldemort can be established. Adolf Hitler himself invoked this theme of racial identity.

The Nazis rejected monogenism because the idea that all races had a common origin lent itself to the democratic contention that Jews, blacks, and Aryans were essentially brothers and sisters, descendants of common parent stock. (ASMA, 2009, p. 238)

Just as the Aryan race was superior in the view of Hitler and his allies, the pure-blood wizards were seen as superior by Voldemort and followers. Obviously, race has played a large role in those societies. Seeing other races and ethnicities as monstrous has helped to subjugate those who were not only different aesthetically, but also culturally and morally different. It is with this eugenic agenda that Voldemort begins the first wizarding war. The moral monster is no longer found on the borders, they inhabit the same geographical space as humans. These monsters are not just like us, they are among us.

Voldemort cherished so much his wizard descent, that he believed his mother was the muggle of the family, [...] "My mother can't have been magic, or she wouldn't have died," (ROWLING, 2005, p.186). According to him being a wizard meant that he could overcome death. Voldemort exercises great power over others, who are motivated by admiration/fear of his Dark Magic, entranced by dreams of the glory. He is concerned with only death, destruction, and thirst for vengeance against anyone who he believes has thwarted him. His obsession with immortality and his desire for power causes him to create horcruxes.

A Horcrux is the word used for an object in which a person has concealed part of their soul." [...] "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. [...]

"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. (ROWLING, 2005, p. 336)

“Yes, sir,” said Riddle. “What I don’t understand, though — just out of curiosity — I mean, would one Horcrux be much use? Can you only split your soul once? Wouldn’t it be better, make you stronger, to have your soul in more pieces, I mean, for instance, isn’t seven the most powerfully magical number, wouldn’t seven —?”
 “Merlin’s beard, Tom!” yelled Slughorn. “Seven! Isn’t it bad enough to think of killing one person? And in any case . . . bad enough to divide the soul . . . but to rip it into seven pieces . . .” (ROWLING, 2005, p. 337).

The search for immortality makes Voldemort willing to create horcruxes, using him to engage with great atrocities. The main horcrux is Harry, the boy who survived a vicious attack. With no intention of creating this specific horcrux, Voldemort goes looking for a newborn baby who can defeat him according to the prophecy. "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 equal, but he will have power the Dark Lord knows not ..." (ROWLING, 2003, p. 640). In his attempt to defeat death and become immortal, he has no mercy for those who cross his way. He often kills just to show his power, as he did with Cedric Diggory, or to show he has no mercy, as he did when he killed Severus Snape, considered one of his obedient Death Eaters. In regard to moral monsters here, Gilmore (2012) discusses that they are harbor hostile with aggressive impulses. These monsters then “retain human characteristics and the worst of human traits. Characterologically speaking, monsters are fully human: their unmotivated malice and destructiveness are human.” (p. 193)

Voldemort goes deeper into the Dark Arts, travels extensively. He begins to become physically deformed, losing his youth and beauty, due to dividing his soul so many times. Within a perspective that understands the "normal" human body as an ideal physical and symbolic expression of certainty and order in society, the monster's body historically represented what is disproportionate or out of place. Wright (2013) argues that “as a counterpart to the rational order of the ‘normal’ body, the deformed body of the monster visibly manifests troubling boundary confusions in the form of excess, deficit or bizarre and illegal combinations.” (p. 48). Voldemort then begins to show signs of his moral monstrosity in his physical appearance. Conversely, Cohen (1996) argues that monsters mean the condition in which an individual may degenerate, the result of the inside becoming as horrible as what was imagined outside. However, in Voldemort’s case is the opposite. He is not ugly and bizarre on the outside, he is handsome, but, because of his unethical behavior towards muggles and wizards, his features start to mirror his monstrosity.

Where there should have been a back to Quirrell’s head, there was a face, the most terrible face Harry had ever seen. It was chalk white with glaring red eyes and slits for nostrils, like a snake. ‘Harry Potter ...’ it whispered. (ROWLING, 1997, p. 212)

His hands were like large, pale spiders; his long white fingers caressed his own chest, his arms, his face; the red eyes, whose pupils were slits, like a cats, gleamed still more brightly through the darkness. (ROWLING, 2000, p. 451)

It had the form of a small, naked child, curled on the ground, its skin raw and rough, flayed-looking, and it lay shuddering under a seat where it had been left, unwanted, stuffed out of sight, struggling for breath [...] He ought to comfort it, but it repulsed him. (ROWLING, 2007, p. 488)



Figura 8: Lord Voldemort rising in the movie *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*.

Voldemort now inhabits the realms between monster and men. He is, as Gilmore puts it, “bestial in appearance and primitive in behavior” (2009, p. 188). Voldemort can be compared to another character in literature who also gradually becomes a hideous figure. Dorian Gray and Voldemort are both constructed as doppelgangers whose external beauty earn them many fans but, on the inside, they are narcissistic hedonists who only care only about themselves, destroying lives in the process. So, naturally, both use people to get their ways of making their wishes happen. With Tom, it was a matter of coaxing out the details of the whys and hows of horcrux magic from his adoring instructor, Professor Slughorn. Likewise, Dorian’s radiance affects Basil, the portrait artist, so thoroughly that his masterpiece magically becomes an accidental conduit for Dorian’s everlasting youth. Gil (2000) points out that, the zone of indiscernibility is what intrigues. The monster can appear “between becoming-other and chaos ... in the manner of these aberrant cultural figures who are the ‘miscegenation’, the ‘double (or

triple) culture’, the ‘double identity’” (p. 177)²³ One of the most recurring points in relation to the monster is exactly this lack of classification that they have. This happens with Voldemort; he loses his body, divides his soul, inhabits the most inhospitable places on earth and undergoes a transformation both that is both ethical and aesthetic.

In this section, I discussed the characteristics of the Lord Voldemort, trying to argue that his ethical behavior and his aesthetic features could be enough to classify him as a monster, instead of just an evil character. I also mention that Lord Voldemort appeals to an idea of racial superiority. His polygenic ideology makes him similar to the Nazi dictator Adolf Hitler and to his idea of a superior race.

²³ In the original: “entre o devir-outro e o caos... à maneira dessas figuras culturais aberrantes que são a “mestiçagem”, a “dupla (ou tripla) cultura”, a “dupla identidade”. My translation.

4. FINAL REMARKS

This work had the objective of analyzing the aesthetic and moral monsters in the Harry Potter series. Throughout the series many magical creatures serve to depict a wider range of purposes, fostering ideas about otherness, hybridity, miscegenation, border, among other concepts that ultimately serve to normalize social behaviors. There is a range of characters in the series that provides different points of view and distinct interpretations of what is a monster.

I divided them into two categories and their crossovers: the aesthetic, which are categorized by their abnormal body, and the ethical monsters, which are defined by their anomalous behavior. The crossover cases include characters that are considered monsters because of aesthetic features; however, they are not necessarily evil. In the series, I chose the characters of centaurs, giants and werewolves to talk about aesthetic monsters. On the ethical issue, I chose characters that are sheer evil, but they are not considered monsters due to their standard appearance, there were Dolores Umbridge and Lord Voldemort. In addition to analyzing the aesthetic and ethical characteristics, themes such as hybridization, borders and otherness were important for the analysis of these characters.

Society often recognizes that the boundaries of what is considered a monster is not so clear; perhaps because these labels represent not so much the intrinsic characters of their features and actions, but society's judgments about them, judgments which are shaped by differences in perspective and personal bias. According to Gilmore (2003),

The power of monsters is their ability to fuse opposites, to merge contraries, to subvert rules, to overthrow cognitive barriers, moral distinctions, and ontological categories. Monsters overcome the barrier of time itself. Uniting past and present, demonic and divine, guilt and conscience, predator and prey, parent and child, self and alien, our monsters are our innermost selves. (p. 194).

Sometimes, society characterizes monsters for their aesthetics, even if these “monsters” do not show acts of violence. However, this same society does not recognize the “monsters” for their evil actions. Since different societies decide differently according to their perspective, the monster then becomes something relative: what is “monstrous” for one society may not mean the same for another. In this perspective, Alexa Wright claims that “the subjective position of the observer is always implicated in the construction of the ‘other’.” (WRIGHT, 2013, p. 17). In this case, the giants, centaurs and werewolves, characters considered monsters in the series, are treated as such because their physical characteristics are undesirable within the wizard society, which oppresses and underestimates these characters, obliging them to live in bordering places.

Werewolves, giants and centaurs have their own characteristics and behaviors; after all they belong to different species. Still the concept of otherness takes into the consideration the perception of a society towards the individuals, and, in this case, each one of them is classified as monsters, not taking part of the wizarding society. The problem, here, is their appearance, and somewhat their way of living, even when it causes no harm to that society.

However, it is necessary to understand that their aesthetic characteristics alone could not classify them as monsters; they can also be monstrous beings in behavior. Nevertheless, for the wizarding society, their aesthetic and unclassifiable body interferes with the order of society and that is why they are seen in this way.

What also happens is that wizard society does not accept that the monstrous can be within it, corrupting the moral order, and making the monstrous identification that exists difficult, because that monstrous being hides under the mask of normality and beauty. As with Dolores Umbridge, wizarding society imposes a different value, rather than an intrinsically negative value, as it does with aesthetic monsters. Even though she is a half-blood, Dolores upholds these values when dealing with other half-blood creatures. She is seen as a bad person, but is not classified as a monster for her detectable human aesthetic. While the wizarding society has assumed that aesthetic characteristics are inherently linked to the monstrous, they end up creating a problem; their aesthetic perspective results in letting Voldemort attempt to take over the magical world. He hides under a mask of normality and beauty that the wizarding society cannot identify as being monstrous; this opens up several possibilities for him to commit his atrocities without being seen as a monster by that society. Only when he shows signs of his monstrous body that society begins to realize the monster will not only be on the borders of that society but that it is also part of it.

This body of work has the hypothesis that in the *Harry Potter* series the aesthetical monster tends to be more discriminated by the wizard society than the ethical monsters, which is confirmed through a series of examples. The characters who are more disruptive and can disbalance the wizard society are not discriminated when having a common human appearance, only when found guilty of their crimes. The aesthetic monsters here presented, although being considered monsters, do not always present unethical behavior, whereas unethical monsters can live within that society without raising suspicion.

Bearing in mind that, due to the time and length of this work, I could not analyze all characters in every book that could be considered aesthetic or ethical monsters. Nevertheless, the analysis was made with characters that have turning points and are relevant to the story. As it can

be pointed out in this thesis, the classification of the characters as monstrous is not always easy, and often depends on who is the observer and who is the other.

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