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Holistic Principle and Motives of Re-Union:
(Re-)Enchantment in Philip Pullman's Religious Fantasy,
His Dark Materials

Ph.D. Dissertation

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Acknowledgement

I have known Philip Pullman's *His Dark Materials* book trilogy for almost over twenty-two years. It must have been sometime in 1997 (I was at the age of twelve) when my mother gave me the first novel, *Northern Lights* (in Hungarian translation), as a gift that, I am sure, she had randomly selected from the shelf of a bookstore. It was a fateful choice which established my deep fascination with Pullman's works. Strictly speaking, this research project, culminating in this doctoral dissertation, started in the autumn of 2008 when I completed two courses during my Master's programme in English Studies at the University of Szeged. One of them was "Cultural Memory/Memory of Culture: The Pullman Reader," instructed by one of my supervisors, György E. Szőnyi. The other one, because of my basic impression on the role of love as a plot-organizing device in *HDM*, was "The Art of Seduction" by my other supervisor, Anna Kérchy. The first result of this research was a Master's thesis, entitled "'The most sweet and desirable end': Desire for Death in Philip Pullman's Trilogy, *His Dark Materials*" (2010), a cultural-historical analysis of the surprisingly positive portrayal of mortality and death in all the three novels.

Having felt an eagerness to broaden the horizon of this research theme, I devoted the following years to an extensive doctoral research on the possible ways of, and reasons behind, Pullman's representations of the religious experience of completeness. Although these representations rely on Christian attributes, they lack the presence of the Judeo-Christian figure of God. My visits to the Bodleian Library (Oxford, UK) in 2015, the Cambridge University Library and the Anglia Ruskin University Library (Cambridge, UK) in 2014 (realized with the financial support of the Campus Hungary Programme), the Library of the Hungarian Academy of Science (MTA, Budapest, Hungary) in 2012, the Central European University Library (Budapest, Hungary) in 2010 or 2009, as well as my regular visits to the Klebelsberg Library of the University of Szeged (Szeged, Hungary) since 2008 enriched the secondary literature consulted in this research, and defined the direction of my research. Reading papers at international conferences in Central Eastern Europe as well as publishing articles and book chapters in peer-reviewed international journals and conference proceedings helped me to gradually build the arguments of this dissertation.[1]

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[1] See the attached "Theses of the Ph.D. Dissertation."

I also had a chance to make a personal interview with Philip Pullman in his hometown, Oxford (UK), on 1st June 2015. On his kind suggestion, the conversation took place in The Eagle & Child Pub (the venue of the Inklings, an Oxford writers' group, including J.R.R. Tolkien and C.S. Lewis, from the 1930s to the 1960s). The result is a manuscript in the form of a slightly edited tape script, which can be found in the "Appendix: An Interview with Philip Pullman."[2] Besides, upon my request, he sent me his short (so far unpublished) text, entitled "HIS DARK MATERIALS: The myth," about the cosmogony (origin) of the trilogy's fictive universe in 2015. Excerpts are used in my dissertation with his permission.

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[2] Some excerpts have been published in the ESSE Messenger as "'I don't think the world was ever disenchanted. It still is enchanted.' Excerpts from an Interview with Philip Pullman" (Part 1, 2016) and (Part 2, 2016).

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I. INTRODUCTION

The object of this doctoral dissertation is a fictional oeuvre where deep religiousness is slyly embedded within bold anticlericalism, where stark realism artfully lurks within boundless imagination. It is the fantasy trilogy, *His Dark Materials*, written by Philip Pullman (19 October 1946-), one of the most influential contemporary writers of English children's and young adults' literature distinguished by a unique fictional world-building ability. The three volumes of saga – *Northern Lights* (renamed as *The Golden Compass* in North America) (1995), *The Subtle Knife* (1997), and *The Amber Spyglass* (2000)[3] – are based on (both canonized and apocryphal) Judeo-Christian mythic narratives, and hence offer readers food for thought about theological-philosophical dilemmas, besides narrating the epic adventures of two preadolescent protagonists, Lyra Belacqua and William Parry.

Behind the two protagonists' exciting adventure story, by openly retelling the Judeo-Christian myth of the Fall of Man (with Lyra and William as the second Eve and Adam), Philip Pullman has the unconcealed intention of criticizing Christian religion, doctrines, organizations, and believers, and offering another alternative based on humanism, too. Pullman's antipathy to Christian religion is based on his opposition to fundamentalism (see Appendix), and his condemnation of the endeavour of organized religion to achieve secular-political power (see Mustich). Consequently, while the real target beyond the pages of *HDM* must be all authoritarian and totalitarian systems, Pullman focuses on Christianity in his attacks on religious oppression in HDM because of his own Christian background: "that's the world I'm familiar with" (qtd. in Roberts "A Dark Agenda" n.p.), he said.[4] His story starts in one of the uncountable parallel worlds, in Lyra's world, where religious institutions are free to preach (without considerable contradiction) the false words of a false God called the Authority whose followers, the clergy, are corrupted to the core. Not surprisingly, because of

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[3] In Hungary, the first two novels of *HDM* trilogy were published in Mária Borbás' translation in 1997 and 2002, respectively. The third novel was published in Zsuzsa N. Kiss' translation in 2003.

[4] Despite my interest in Pullman's reflections on his works, reconstructing his authorial intentions is *not* the objective of my research. Still, somewhat in line with the Post-Modernist idea of the revival of the author (a backlash to the Barthesian notion of the death of the author) (for more, see Hajdú's article, "The Death and the Revival of the Author"), I believe that Pullman's own opinions about religion, myth, fantasy, and his literary writing can be used as exciting secondary sources of my dissertation. However, I do not aim at a comprehensive theological exploration of his often simplified theological and historical knowledge of Christianity (about, for example, the nature of God or His relationship with Man). When Philip Pullman was writing the trilogy, he was not aware of either disenchantment, or re-enchantment. Consequently, my association of HDM with re-enchantment is independent of his views.

his impulsive assertions during and after the publication of *HDM*, Pullman has acquired a reputation of being an uncompromising enemy of God and Christians (see "Profile," Chrisafis, Rosin, Ezard, and Tóth "Who are God's Enemies?").

Although Pullman has been severely criticised by conservative Christian groups for radically revising the Judeo-Christian myth of the Fall of Man and the death of 'God,' yet the fictive world he created in his three novels is far from atheism. On the contrary, in the depth, a scholarly reading may uncover a religiosity inspired by Western literary, theological, and philosophical thought. Pullman, an erudite author who had graduated at Oxford University, and used to work as teacher of literature before turning into a full-time writer, created a monumental literary work grounded in a complex network of intertextual references to seminal texts of the Western cultural canon ranging from the Old Testament and the New Testament, John Milton's (1608-1674) *Paradise Lost* (1667), William Blake's (1757-1827) visionary poetry, to the Christian fantasies of J.R.R. Tolkien (1892-1973) and C.S. Lewis (1898-1963), as well as the writings of Pelagius (AD 360-420), Socrates (469-399 BC), and Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900), just to mention the most important sources of inspiration.

The overall aim of my dissertation is to prove that HDM is a deeply (re-)enchanted literary work of art. Because more and more contemporary Westerners are becoming surfeited with disenchantment (the negation, the transformation or the dissolution, and the secularization and the rationalization of the enchanted world), re-enchantment (new forms and new ways of religiousness) seems to be the most dominant operative force in the everyday life of the West. As I wish to prove the linkage of HDM to re-enchantment with the principle of *holism* (according to which parts of a whole are in intimate interconnection with each other), my dissertation works with three hypotheses. First, I aim to prove that as the holistic principle permeates the structure of *HDM*, the implicit theme of Pullman's trilogy is the ambition to re-unite. Second, with its implicit theme, HDM embodies a criticism of/a reaction to contemporary alternative spiritualities. Third, because of the principle of holism, Pullman's fantasy repeats the conventions of religious fantasy genre. Let me expound the birth of these hypotheses in detail.

What confirms the relevance of the principle of holism to HDM is the chronological correlation between two symbols, number 'One' and number 'Two,' in Judeo-Christian mythic narratives on which Western culture in general, *HDM* in particular relies. The beginning of humankind's history (the Creation) is traditionally seen as a painfully short period when creatures used to be in a pre-lapsarian Edenic union, in a happy state of non-differentiation, with their Creator(s), with whom the first human beings had an intimate

relationship. In Judeo-Christian traditions, the beginning is symbolised by the number 'One,' the symbol of "the primordial oneness, the completeness, the whole, the Supreme Being, the deity; [God as] the *prima causa* [the first cause] that includes continuity and totality, that is simultaneously feminine and masculine" (Pál and Újvári "One" n.p.). Because of the disobedience of the first human couple, God separated himself from mankind (see Genesis 2:16-17, 3:4-5).[5] Consequently, the primordial oneness is finally halved: Two is the number of "splitting [disconnection], complementarity, contrast, and duplication" (Pál and Újvári "Two" n.p.). While One belongs to the divine and creative world of ideas, Two belongs to the world of created beings and duplication; while One is the symbol of perfection and the whole, Two procreates distortion and confusion; while One is the number of infinite, calm self-contemplation and divine omniscience, the dualism of the Two gives birth to "dialectics which is the basis of all efforts, motion, struggle, and progression" (ibid). Being outside Paradise is subject to the rule of Two. Basically, as a model "from unity, fullness and freedom to disunity, crisis and fragmentation," the Fall is one of the founding myths of Western-European culture, and of Western subjectivity (Dollimore 91). Augustine's views of death and sexual desire, as forms of punishment, have heavily stamped Western Christian religion, and have deeply influenced the attitudes of Western secular culture to suffering, death, and desire (50).

Because Pullman appreciates the function of myths in every human society,[6] he intends to subvert the old Christian paradigm by retelling the most important Christian myth to him. Pullman thinks of religious questions as the *big* questions:

> We need a story, a myth that does what the traditional religious stories did: it must *explain*. It must satisfy our hunger for a *why*. (…).
> Of course, there are two kinds of *why*, and our story must deal with both. There's the one that asks *What brought us here?*[,] and the other that asks *What are we here for?* One looks back, and the other looks forward, perhaps. (Pullman "The Republic" 665)

In spite of being an unbeliever, Pullman acknowledges the powerful influence of Christian mythology: "[this very good story] gives an account of the world and what we're doing here

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[5] All Biblical quotations are from King James Bible Online, 2017, 13 March 2019, https://www.kingjamesbibleonline.org/.
[6] Myth reports "realities and events from the origin of the world that remain valid for the basis and purpose of all there is" (Bolle "Myth…" in Eliade, *ER* Vol. 10, 261). The imitation of the mythic pattern gives man a sense of meaning: "man living in profane time becomes real only to the degree that he imitates the sacred pattern and actualizes it within himself" (Hume 31). In other words, myth is "*a story with culturally formative power*" giving direction to the individual and the society by ennobling the past, explaining the present, and holding out hope for the future (Hexham and Poewe 81).

that is intellectually coherent and explains a great deal" (qtd. in Spanner n.p.).[7] Pullman claims that "[t]he story of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden and the temptation of the serpent is for me the central myth of what it means to be a human being" (qtd. in Fried n.p.). Totally refusing the orthodox view of the Fall narrative based on Augustine's doctrine of Original Sin (transmitted by concupiscence at the moment of conception), Pullman considers and cheers the myth of the Fall as the cause of mankind's self-awareness and independence. In his understanding, the prelapsarian (i.e. innocent and unspoiled) state of man was like a prison; therefore, man's disobedience to God and its consequence, the Fall, and mankind's self-liberation were all necessarily and desirable: "God didn't give us freedom," Pullman says, "we took it" (qtd. in Watkins "Interview" n.p.). He praises Eve whose sin was "clearly a turning point in human evolution. *Felix culpa* they used to call it: the happy sin. And I saw it as the point where human beings decided to become fully themselves instead of being the pets or creatures of another power" (qtd. in Fried n.p.). Moreover, "if we had our heads straight on this issue, we would have churches dedicated to Eve instead of the Virgin Mary" (qtd. in Parsons and Nicholson 119).[8] As Pullman wants HDM to raise doubts and questions, challenge conventions, and violate limits, he is viewed as a transgressive writer (Rayment-Pickard 5, 20).

The inspiration that led to the birth of this paper had come from my early disagreement with Philip Pullman about the basic pattern of HDM. As a matter of fact, he attributes great importance to little (and involuntary) patterns that, he argues, "can serve as a sort of invisible matrix for events" (qtd. in App.). Sometime in 2002, he declared that one basic pattern of his whole story is 'splitting':

> if you look at the book carefully you will see a lot of little patterns throughout that you might not have noticed, all of which have to do with two things or two people or a person and a place that were very close to each other are split apart. (Qtd. in "Philip Pullman" n.p.)

In June 2015, to my claim that most of his splitting pairs in his fiction (such as Lyra and Jordan College at the beginning of his story, Lyra and her mother, the whole idea of splitting children from their daemons at Bolvangar, Lyra and her daemon in the Underworld, and, of course, Lyra and William at the end of his story) would be reconnected sooner or later, he admitted – slightly reluctantly – that "[t]hey can have a temporary separation [that] can have

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[7] Yet, he finds the scientific account given by Darwinian evolution "far more persuasive intellectually" (qtd. in Spanner n.p.).

[8] The theme of losing Paradise appears in the so-called 'humanity poems,' such as John Milton's epic poem, *Paradise Lost* (1667) and *Paradise Regained* (1671), and the Hungarian Imre Madách's dramatic poem, *The Tragedy of Man* (1861). Although HDM is not a poem, due to its re-working of the myths of the Fall and the Redemption of Man, it is in line with these literary works in spirit.

permanent consequences" (qtd. in App.). However, Pullman did not manage to completely convince me; I still think that aspiration from temporary disunion to permanent (re)union is far more significant in *HDM*. On the basis of his humanism, he interprets his trilogy in the light of the symbol of number 'Two.' Consequently, he does not only place emphasis on the motives of splitting, disconnecting, cutting, struggling, and suffering, but he also identifies the explicit theme (the central idea or message) of HDM with growing up (see Spanner n.p.), i.e. change, endeavour and motion embedded into the mythic narrative of the Fall of Man (hence the two pre-adolescent child protagonists). While I see the sense of Pullman's conviction, I would like to prove the *raison d'être* of another interpretation based on the primacy of the symbol of number 'One.'

And this is my first hypothesis: I aim to prove that as the holistic principle permeates the structure of *HDM*, the other, implicit theme of Pullman's trilogy is the ambition to re-unite. (This ambition to re-unite derives from the synthetizing endeavour of Western Esotericism.) HDM seems to propagate that 'unity is strength.' Accordingly, the positive consequences of the motives of uniting to the fictive universe of these novels reside in the fact that, as every problem comes from the disconnection of what belongs to each other, the solution is, or will be, the re-connection of what has always belonged to each other. With regards to the agnosticism of Pullman and HDM, the holism on which the trilogy's world view is based is essentially non-theistic.

The next two hypotheses of my dissertation were inspired by the literature review of my research. The international success of HDM[9] made Philip Pullman a professionally recognized and unanimously canonized writer. By now a part of the contemporary British literary canon, HDM has attracted the attention of scholars of the humanities ever since its publication. A massive corpus of critical interpretations published between 2001 and 2010 established the research field now called 'Pullman-studies' which, in scope and in variety, is still a relatively new and niche phenomenon in academia. Scholarly interpretations of Pullman's trilogy can be divided into two, more or less overlapping groups in the humanities: literary studies and theology (combined with philosophy).

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[9] In 2003, the trilogy was ranked third in the 2003 British Broadcasting Corporation's contest called "The Big Read" (a national poll of viewers' favourite books), after J. R. R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* (1954) and Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* (1813). Besides, Pullman and *HDM* have been honoured with prestigious literary prizes. In 1995, *Northern Lights* won the Carnegie Medal for children's fiction. In 2005, Pullman received the Swedish government's Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award for children's and youth literature. In 2011, *AS* won the Whitbread Book of the Year award that was given to a children's book in the first time of its history. *HDM* was not only adapted for radio, theatre, and film, but Pullman also added a prequel novel *La Belle Sauvage* (2017) – the first volume in a planned trilogy entitled *The Book of Dust* – to *HDM*, and confirmed future plans to elaborate his fictional universe.

While my doctoral dissertation is devoted to a research of the interplay between literature and religion, it aims to reflect on literary studies. For this reason, my dissertation is backed up by two collections of scholarly interpretations: *His Dark Materials Illuminated* (2005) edited by Millicent Lenz and Carole Scott, and *Critical Perspectives on Philip Pullman's His Dark Materials* (2011) edited by Steven Barfield and Katharine Cox. Written by literary critics, these anthologies deal with literary traditions and trans-textuality (Antique literature, the Bible, John Milton, William Blake, and Heinrich von Kleist), theories of genre (children's literature, young adult fiction, epic, romance and fantasy fiction), and some literary critical theories (feminism, post-colonialism, post-structuralism, and reader-response criticism).

To most analyses, the trilogy's inseparability from what it criticizes (Christian metanarratives) is crucial. Pullman's re-telling of the Fall in a Post-Modern fantasy may have been due to the changed power relations of who narrates/whose narration is heard or read (which had been pointed out by Jean-François Lyotard): "[P]ostmodernism encourages the discrediting of grand narratives and the retextualization of history and reality so that overarching metanarratives, or *grands récits*, become replaced by micronarratives and multiple perspectives" (Casey in James and Mendlesohn 117). In the light of these, as the structure of the trilogy is dependent on the grand narrative logic of Christianity, the trilogy functions as pastiche ("one of the most visible forms of late postmodern fantasy"), Pullman is a *pasticheur* (122), borrowing specifically from the first and the last book of the Bible, the Genesis and the Apocalypse, without which HDM is not supposed to be *properly* understood (see Munt in Barfield and Cox 213, Rayment-Pickard 88, Gray *Fantasy* 172).[10]

The (below detailed) theological-philosophical interpretations of Hugh Rayment-Pickard, Donna Freitas with Jason King, and Arthur Bradley with Andrew Tate focus on the trilogy's embeddedness into an either Christian or a Post-Christian context. While the views and results of these authors (who are more familiar with Christian theology and mythology than I am) often support my argumentation so much that I do not find it necessary to engage in critical debates with them, under no circumstances do I consider Pullman as a theologian and HDM as Christian.

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[10] However, David Gooderham disapproves Pullman's focus on "what critical Christian orthodoxy would see as the more bizarre, sectarian and populist forms and aspects of the religion. He makes only oblique reference to the creation myth, but emphatic reference to *the fall*; there is no attention given to prophetic writing, but an evident appetite for *apocalyptic*; there is no allusion to the death and resurrection of Christ, central to Christian tradition, but unmistakably to "*the harrowing of hell*" (160-161).

In *The Devil's Account: Philip Pullman and Christianity* (2004), Hugh Rayment-Pickard identifies the 'theological/religious atheism' HDM displays with a legitimate criticism of contemporary religious institutions. In his interpretation, Pullman must be "an intensely religious writer" whose offer of "religious alternatives to God" to his readers is virtually a "*religious reaction against religion*" (89). In *HDM*, the lesson for the life-denying and authoritarian church is that "Christianity must offer itself to the modern world as the true religion of life and love, and rediscover its humanitarian and democratic values" (91).

In *Killing the Imposter God: Philip Pullman's Spiritual Imagination in His Dark Materials* (2007), Donna Freitas and Jason King enrol HDM into those alternative Christian theologies that are the 're-enchanted' successors of traditional Christian theology. After the death of Nietzsche's traditional God (as a necessary tragedy for humanity) opened up "space for a new sense of the divine to emerge in the old God's place," this new god today can be perceived in a wide variety of alternative theologies (Freitas and King 18): the so-called 'liberation theology,' 'feminist theology,' and Alfred North Whitehead's panentheism. Consequently, she does not only regard HDM as a contemporary Christian classic in line with liberation and feminist theologies, but she also portrays Pullman as a "[t]heologian in [s]pite of [h]imself" (ix).

In *The New Atheist Novel: Fiction, Philosophy and Polemic after 9/11* (2010), Arthur Bradley and Andrew Tate identifies HDM with a broken promise of anti-religiousness. The focus of their study is on a self-subversive atheist formation, a cult calling itself the 'New Atheism,'[11] which wages war against the irrationality, the immorality, and the dangerousness of religious belief (embodied in both traditional religions *and* re-enchanted spiritualities as "the modish mumbo jumbo of postmodernism and 'New Age' philosophy") (2). It began with the appearance of *The End of Faith* (2004) by Sam Harris, *Breaking the Spell* (2006) by Daniel Dennett, *The God Delusion* (2006) by Richard Dawkins and, finally, *God Is Not Great* (2007) by Christopher Hitchens. The so-called 'New Atheist novel' has become the new literary venue of free expression by representing

> a new front in the ideological war against religion, religious fundamentalism and, after 9/11, religious terror. Quite simply, the novel apparently stands for everything – free speech, individuality, rationality and even a secular experience of the transcendental – that religion seeks to overthrow. (11)

However, the New Atheist novel has lost its essence: for the New Atheist novelists (namely Ian McEwan, Martin Amis, Philip Pullman and Salman Rushdie) "belief in fiction's liberating

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[11] What put the 'new' into the New Atheism was Islamic extremism since "the al-Qaeda terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on September 11, 2001" (Bradley and Tate 5).

power to say anything and everything is elevated to the status of an article of faith" (61). These writers' substitution of 'faith in God' with 'faith in art' leads to the problem that New Atheism stops being "quite atheist *enough*" (106). Consequently, the New Atheist novel has become "part of a classically metaphysical, indeed theological story in which science, history, love and art play the same transcendental, redemptive role traditionally assigned to God" (107).[12] For this reason, these authors share a faith in "the saving power of fiction itself" (ibid). It is doubtful whether the New Atheist novel (for example, *The Satanic Verses* by Salman Rushdie) will continue to be "a free, open and rational space" (111).

To Bradley and Tate, HDM as a New Atheist novel read in a post-atheist milieu proved to be especially disappointing. While Pullman uses the New Atheist novel as an explicit criticism of the Christian meta-narrative "from within" (Bradley and Tate 58), and this criticism is "paradoxically carried out from a more authentically Christian perspective" (76), all he does is *re*-writing "a pre-existing story of fall, exile and redemption without actually transcending the structure of that narrative sequence" (80). For this reason, "the spectre of religion continually returns to preside over the triumphal atheist feast;" in other words, the Authority is replaced by "a new (and supernaturally ordained) form of transcendence in the inauguration of the Republic of Heaven" (107).

I wish to complete the above introduced Pullman-literature with two interpretations. First, the problem with the academic works of Freitas and King, Rayment-Pickard, and Bradley and Tate is the narrowness of their research perspective: their focus is only on HDM's interlacement with/inseparability from Christianity. For this reason, besides of acknowledging the relevance of their interpretation (and building on their views), my dissertation attempts to reveal an indirect linkage between HDM and contemporary alternative spiritualities by systematizing all symbols of oneness (unity of man and the divine, unity of man and woman, unity of man and nature) in HDM. This is exactly my second hypothesis: I wish to prove that with its implicit theme (the ambition to re-unite), HDM embodies a criticism of/a reaction to not only mainstream Christian religion, but also alternative spiritualities. To my knowledge, this investigation of the way alternative religious paradigms are promoted as well as opposed in HDM is so new in Pullman-studies that my dissertation will enlarge the critical perspective/reception of HDM in the direction of cultural history.

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[12] Gregory Erickson works with a similar hypothesis in *The Absence of God in Modernist Literature* (2007). The concepts of origin, end, and self-identity, which have been the founding concepts of God, are also "the very ones that twentieth-century art, music, and literature have both questioned and relied upon" (11).

Second, thanks to his efforts to distance HDM from the Christian fantasies of Tolkien and C.S. Lewis, Pullman is celebrated as an innovator of fantasy genre by scholars of literature. With regards to his contributions to the fantasies of alternative worlds, Millicent Lenz finds eleven features giving HDM outstanding quality (in Hunt and Lenz 162-165). Burton Hatlen argues that HDM challenges the works of Tolkien and Lewis by being a new kind of fantasy (a secular humanist fantasy) with a Neo-Romantic reading of John Milton's *Paradise Lost*[13] (in Lenz and Scott 75-94). Karen Patricia Smith details five key fantasy conventions to which Pullman contributes in HDM (in Lenz and Scott 135-151). However, these arguments are too weak to be convincing enough. In spite of being definitely anticlerical and sacrilegious (but only seemingly atheist, as I show), HDM is not as unconventional as it seems to be at the first (and even the second) reading. As my third hypothesis, I claim that because of the re-enchanted principle of holism, Pullman's fantasy repeats the conventions of religious fantasy genre. In this ways, HDM is not only anti-Christian, but it also presents itself as a pre-Christian religious fantasy.

In the following, the "Theoretical Background" details the concept and development of re-enchantment. Chapter II.1. unfolds Pullman's more open attitude to enchantment. Chapter II.2. describes the enchanted roots of the genre of HDM, fantasy.

The "Textual Analysis," which deals with the first and the second hypotheses of my dissertation, is devoted to the examination of holism in Pullman's mythopoetic representations (as symbols and motives) of oneness in HDM. With the method of close reading, these representations are compared to their (supposed) origins (in Platonic, Gnostic, and Judeo-Christian mythological systems) to see how Pullman modified the original element for the sake of his own mythopoetic purposes. For this reason, light is shed on the motives of uniting, combining, joining, bonding, cooperating, integrating, and completing. Holism is considered to be a heterogeneous unity because all of these motives are categorized into three dimensions of unity: unity of man and the divine; unity of man and woman; unity of man and nature. In accordance with this, the "Textual Analysis" consists of three chapters in which I explore how characters with mythic attributes support the principles of holism. In Chapter III.1., I study the motives of uniting man and the divine (also man with himself), which are manifested in the mythic figures of the divinity and the demiurge (as Dust and angels), the intermediaries (as daemons), and the world to come (as the Republic of Heaven). In Chapter III.2., I investigate the motives of uniting man and woman, which are connected to the mythic

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[13] I detail this kind of reading of HDM in Ch. IV.1.

figures of Satan and the Serpent (as Mrs. Coulter and Lord Asriel, Xaphania and Mary Malone), Eve and Adam (as Lyra Belacqua and William Parry). In Chapter III.3., I analyse the motives of uniting man and nature/cosmos, which I identify with the mythic embodiments of Mother Nature (as Dust and the Republic of Heaven), ecological role models (the *mulefa*), the hubris of science (as the subtle knife), and eschatology (as cosmic recycling). These three chapters are organized on the basis of a widening (spatial) perspective: I start with the harmony of the *psyche*, then I continue with the harmony of *society*, and finally I finish with the harmony of the *cosmos*. The examination of the mythopoeia of HDM covers every part of Pullman's re-interpretation of the quest myth, from the beginning (cosmogony), the present (cosmology), to the end (eschatology).

The "Genre Analysis" offers scope for the elaboration of the third hypothesis of my dissertation. Chapter IV.1. presents how the principle of holism in HDM revives the Romantic and re-enchanted yearning to a desired harmony in the past by the trilogy's textual connections to Romantic literary traditions. Chapter IV.2. reveals the way the principle of holism makes it possible for HDM to function as a moral guide in the life of its readers. Chapter IV.3. highlights that by the principle of holism, HDM propagates the overall importance of the community to the detriment of the individual.

II. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND: RE-ENCHANTMENT

This part of my dissertation serves to provide the theoretical foundations for the succeeding Textual Analysis. The root, 'enchantment' (without the prefix "re-"), is fundamentally identical with the pre-modern worldview in Europe. Enchantment is based on correspondences between the two worlds: the spiritual and the material, or "the large and the small, that is, the macro and microcosms, the latter being man who was seen as a miniature model of the universe" (Szőnyi *John Dee's Occultism*, 30). Enchantment is characterized by a hierarchy of beings, divine orders, and a supposed organic character: "in the late Renaissance the cosmos had been likened to a living organism governed and moved by sympathies, drawn by likeness and analogies" (29-30).[14] The best-known manifestation of the pre-modern hierarchical world model is the originally Platonic idea of the Great Chain of Being. In the light of these all, in the Middle Ages, the enchanted world was "the world of spirits, demons, and moral forces which our ancestors lived in" (Taylor 26), with the seemingly undeniable presence of God (25).[15]

The term, 'disenchantment,' means the negation, the transformation, or the dissolution of the enchanted world. There are two distinct aspects of disenchantment: (1) "secularization and the decline of magic;" and (2) "the increasing scale, scope, and power of the formal means-ends rationalities of science, bureaucracy, the law, and policy-making" (Jenkins 12). Accordingly, the universe in the disenchanted era was no longer compared to a living organism; instead, it was like a machine "ruled by causal laws, utterly unresponsive to human meanings" (Taylor 280). The so-called 'disenchantment of the world' (*die Entzauberung der Welt* in German) as a theory is generally attributed to the German sociologist Max Weber (1864-1920) who borrowed this phrase from Friedrich Schiller (1759-1805). The primary cause for the emergence of disenchantment was a dichotomy between the sacred and the secular: disenchantment is possible only "where there is a clear distinction between the 'religious' and the 'non-religious'" (Partridge *RW, Vol. II*, 45). Scholars, like Max Weber, Peter Berger, or Alan Gilbert, have traced the roots of secularization back to the emergence of

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[14] Enchantment seems to be so essential that the theory of correspondences, or "[t]he idea that reality consists of multiple 'levels' which in some manner mirror one another," has been found in all traditional societies; and correlative thinking may be considered as "a spontaneous tendency of the human mind" (Brach and Hanegraaff in Hanegraaff *DG* 275).

[15] Interestingly, modern Reformed Christianity (both Catholic and Protestant) have been built on the partial or total denial of enchantment (Taylor 553).

Jewish monotheism (*RW, Vol. I*, 9).[16] From its beginnings, there has been a dialectical tension between the sacred and the secular within Christianity (10). Yet Renaissance humanism, the scientific revolution, Protestant Reformation, and Deism during the Age of Reason also substantially contributed to the rise of disenchantment.

Nowadays, more and more contemporary Westerners long to be (re-)enchanted. According to Christopher Partridge, 're-enchantment' refers to the ongoing transformation of traditional Christian religion into those new forms and new ways of religiousness (non-, even anti-Christian alternative spiritualities) that are becoming more and more attractive to Western people (*RW, Vol. I*, 3).[17] Partridge specifies this religio-cultural shift to broad set of alternative spiritualities as 'occulture' (from 'occult' and 'culture'), a new spiritual awakening which is "the mélange of beliefs, practices, traditions and organizations" (67), which is "articulated in ways that do not carry the baggage of traditional religion" (4). Examples are Oriental religions, Eastern spirituality, mystical religions, Theosophy, New Age spirituality, Paganism, Satanism, Gaia consciousness and eco-spirituality, alternative science and medicine, and contemporary popular myths of UFOs. Nowadays, it is increasingly the new religions and alternative spiritualities that give answers to "[t]he big existential questions of life" (*RW, Vol. I*, 43).[18] The positive consequence of the rapidly expanding alternative spiritualities to Western societies is relativism which prevents "the emergence of social conflict by allowing people to view the world from whatever perspective they desire and to adopt whatever worldview they want. There is no one way to be religious, there is no orthodoxy" (34). Even though Christianity is marginalized, it has still remained the *dominant* eschatological influence in Western popular culture and contemporary political and religious thought. Because knowledge of the Christian metanarrative and traditional eschatological ideas has waned in Western secular culture, Christian terminology is "often used as part of a broader 'occultural' vocabulary" (185).

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[16] Monotheism is "the religious experience and the philosophical perception that emphasize God as one, perfect, immutable, creator of the world from nothing, distinct from the world, all-powerfully involved in the world, personal, and worthy of being worshiped by all creatures" (Ludwig in Eliade *ER* Vol. 10, 68-69). It is monotheism that "best describes the idea of God in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam" in the strict sense (69).

[17] Victoria Nelson identifies this era with the (so far) last transitory period in the history of Western culture where there have always been two complementary worldviews: Platonism, idealism, and *gnosis* (the process of knowing), and Aristotelianism, empiricism, and *episteme* (the state of knowing) (288). The most intellectually exciting and innovative times in Western culture have been those rare periods when the two coexisting and equally influential worldviews were "in open conflict" with each other (289): in the Renaissance, in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, and in the present age when the postmodern is turning out to be identical with the premodern.

[18] In this light, when religion is thought to belong to the past, and to be a "lifeless collection of words," spirituality is believed to be "vital and subversive," to break boundaries, and be "the life-enhancing" (Partridge *RW, Vol. I*, 48). In parallel with these, while religious people themselves are often considered "narrow-minded," spiritual people themselves are "seen as open-minded, something that is highly prized in our society" (ibid).

Since the twentieth century, popular culture, which has gained more and more ground to the disadvantage of elite culture,[19] has provided an arena for re-enchanted processes. Popular culture has become a key component of an occultural cycle by feeding ideas into the occultural reservoir, and also by developing, mixing and disseminating those ideas (Partridge *RW, Vol. I*, 4). At the same time, "occultural worldviews have been an important source of inspiration for popular culture" (126). The occultural process of *bricolage* means the particular re-ordering and re-contextualization of objects so as "to communicate fresh meaning" (121). De-traditionalization means the detachment of ideas and themes from their original contexts, and then the investment of these ideas and themes with new meanings, which serves the personal interests of the individual self (ibid). Both bricolage and de-traditionalization provide context to a general theory of religion and culture, the so-called *dilution thesis*:

> [m]ass culture and modern restatements of spirituality *dilute* traditional religious worldviews; they erode 'serious' occult beliefs by diluting them – thereby producing ineffective, utilitarian forms of belief; the occultural dressing-up box is raided for symbols of style and attitude; 'the occult' may even become, as is sometimes (not always) the case with astrology or Ouija boards, simply fun with a supernatural edge. (122)

However, particular concepts and cosmologies explored in popular culture lead, "first, to familiarization and fascination, and secondly, to the development of spiritualities" (141). Nowadays pop culture contributes to the formation of worldviews so much that it is influencing what people accept as plausible (123).

Because of its capability of renewing, re-enchantment seems to be an ever-present phenomenon. I agree with Jenkins that "the world has *never* been disenchanted": on the basis of historical record, disenchantment provokes "resistance in the shape of enchantment and (re)enchantment" (29). Similarly, Partridge observes that "secularization will always be accompanied by the formation of sects or, increasingly, cultic networks of individuals (perhaps meeting only in the chat rooms of cyberspace) and small localized groups which are, in turn, the beginnings of new forms of supernaturalistic religion" (*RW, Vol. I*, 43). Consequently, re-enchantment is taking place as "either a product of, or concomitant with secularization" (47). Besides of these, the de-traditionalized forms of popular spirituality are – and will be – flourishing because of their ability to sustain themselves outside traditional institutions and to increase within "a postmodern, Western consumer climate" (58).

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[19] By rejecting the artificial distinction between 'high' and 'low' culture, as well as the notion of the superficiality of 'mass culture' (*RW Vol. 1,* 119), Christopher Partridge stands for a positive conception of popular culture.

At the same time, in most parts of the Western world, especially in Pullman's country, the old Christian institutions are not yet sentenced to death. People who stand at a certain distance from a church in some sense also cherish it, "partly as a holder of ancestral memory, partly as a resource against some future need (e.g., their need for a rite of passage, especially a funeral); or as a source of comfort and orientation in the face of some collective disaster" (Taylor 522). Similarly, neither does Pullman think that either the Catholic Church or the Anglican Church (both of which with decreasing influence in the contemporary United Kingdom) will ever disappear from his country:

> One reason is that they do, at their best, what religion has always done; I suppose they provide comfort and consolation for people in times of trouble, they provide a sort of series of rites of passage, you know, staging posts in life: baptism, marriage, death, funeral, and so on. And the Church will always do that sort of thing. Nothing has replaced it yet and I can't see it being replaced for a long time. (Qtd. in App.)

The fact that religion is flexible enough to engage with the 'secular' social and intellectual world effectively is an "indication of life, not death" (*RW, Vol. I*, 55).

II.1. Philip Pullman, the (Re-)Enchanted Man

In this chapter, I would like to show Pullman's complex, yet open attitude to enchantment. First and foremost, he is remarkably close to Nietzscheanism. His motto is "[j]ust do away with God and everything is much clearer, much simpler" (qtd. in Watkins "Interview" n.p.), and he prefers regarding God as either a *metaphor* or a character in fiction (Chattaway n.p.). To him, the phrase – God is dead – seems to

> encapsulate a much more truthful way of looking at it than to think there never was a God. There was a time when we all believed in God – very important, a central part of all our lives. Then it became impossible to believe in it. It's *as if* God has died. That's the feeling I have. What are the consequences of this? Well, the consequences of this [are] that instead of seeing ourselves as creatures, children, or whatever, we've… Well, the parents are dead; we're in charge. We have to look after the place. (Qtd. in Watkins "Interview" n.p.)

Instead of experiencing this change of attitude toward God as a loss, Pullman thinks that it is "a gain of a wider perspective" (qtd. in Butler n.p.). Indeed, HDM can be interpreted as a response to Friedrich Nietzsche's theorization about God and Man (Bradley and Tate 56).

Basically, humanism provides meaning and goal to him.[20] According to the British Humanist Association, with which he is publicly aligned, 'humanist' is defined as someone

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[20] In parallel with this, Pullman also takes upon himself the quality embodied in the term 'broad church,' "a sort of humane liberal tolerance" which is one of the great characteristics of the Church of England (Pullman

who (1) "trusts to the scientific method when it comes to understanding how the universe works and rejects the idea of the supernatural (and is therefore an atheist or agnostic);" (2) who "makes their ethical decisions based on reason, empathy, and a concern for human beings and other sentient animals;" and (3) who "believes that, in the absence of an afterlife and any discernible purpose to the universe, human beings can act to give their own lives meaning by seeking happiness in this life and helping others to do the same" ("Humanism" n.p.). The plainest description of the world for Pullman is that in the absence of God, "human beings are capable of great goodness and great wickedness, and we don't need priests or Popes or imams or rabbis to tell us which is which" (qtd. in Chattaway n.p.). We can be motivated for virtue for "the joy you feel when a good action of yours brings a happy result for someone else;" for "the basic empathy we feel even for creatures who aren't human" (ibid). Religious or not, he would not separate morality from religion because of his conviction that "[m]orality is *inherent* in every human interaction" (qtd. in App.). For him, fiction and theatre function as "a school of morals" (ibid). Pullman' purpose is to replace the grand narrative of the Christian religion with an emancipatory humanism in the misotheistic HDM:

> What he places in the void created by his iconoclasm are important values that define modern liberal societies: gender equality (Lyra becomes the savior), tolerance of sexual orientation (there are homosexual angels), affirmation of sex (the salvation at the end of the book is keyed into sexual consummation) [I disagree with this, which is detailed in Subchapter III.2.3.], celebration of the life force (the daemons are a symbol of animal vitality), tolerance toward other races and ethnicities (the book's multicultural agenda is reinforced by its elaboration of multiple worlds), and anti-imperialism (one of the story's collective heroes, the *mulefa*, are threatened by foreign invaders), to name only some of the book's virtues. (Schweizer in Lenz and Scott 171)

Besides, all through *HDM* series Pullman had located benevolent paternal authority firmly in living human beings (Chattaway n.p.), who are John Faa and Farder Coram. Because Pullman offers an alternative (humanism) in place of Christianity, I would rather regard him as a conscious *innovator*.

Pullman's humanism (anthropocentrism) manifested in HDM only seemingly excludes the trilogy's connection to re-enchantment (or contemporary Western occulture). He himself refers to G.K. Chesterton, "a stout defender of orthodoxy in religion," who said that "when people stop believing in God, they don't believe in nothing, they believe in anything" (Pullman "The Republic of Heaven" 655). In Pullman's interpretation, it stood for "a warning

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"Customs of my tribe" n.p.): "[i]nclusive, not exclusive; more concerned with helping people in distress than in maintaining strict forms of worship and a literal reading of the Bible; and, above all, characterised by a dislike of fanatical inquisition into beliefs and motives" (ibid). At its best, the Church of England knew that what matters is not what people believe, but what they do.

against the occult, and astrology, and fashionable religions, especially those from that sinister place, the East" (ibid). In this light, he denies the importance of any 'enchantment' in his novels: "[t]here are no hereditary traditions or magic wands like in Harry Potter. There is the occult but (…) I don't give people magical powers" (qtd. in Vulliamy n.p.). Nicholas Tucker agrees that even though "[t]here are moments in the trilogy when Pullman too seems attracted to alternative belief structures, such as the I Ching form of reading the future originating from China," HDM is still a strongly humanist text at base (167). In contrast with this, Vanessa Crosby argues for Pullman's idealisation of Eastern spirituality (Crosby in Cusack 266). Christopher Wrigley also wonders "whether Pullman, after rejecting a 'great' religious tradition, is not falling prey to 'New Age' mumbo-jumbo" (100). No, he is not.

While the principle of *holism* links HDM to re-enchantment, Pullman's belief in connectedness confirms the relevance of the principle of holism to HDM. He is convinced of the existence of an inherent human inclination that "our nature is so formed that we need a feeling of connectedness with the universe" (qtd. from Ezard n.p.). It is the fulfilment of his Humanism: there is a sense that "things are right and good, and we are part of everything that's right and good. It's a sense that we're connected to the universe. This connectedness is where meaning lies; the meaning of our lives is their connection with something other than ourselves" (Pullman "The Republic" 656). This interpretation of meaning is identical with Charles P. Heriot-Maitland's definition of oneness, in other words cosmic consciousness, which refers to "an awareness of the absolute interconnectedness of all matter and thought" (317). The interconnectedness of all things implies the mutual causality of all events (both physical and mental): "everything is caused by, and causes, everything else. In this sense, every event can be seen to hold some kind of *meaning*, as it causes some other event to happen (i.e., it happens for a 'reason')" (318).[21] Pullman's conviction of connectedness is in opposition to one of the most deadly and oppressive consequences of the death of God, the "sense of meaninglessness or alienation that so many of us have felt in the past century or so" (Pullman "The Republic" 656). After the death of God, the meaning is not only connection, but also "to make things better and to work for greater good and greater wisdom," which comes from his understanding of his position (qtd. in Spanner n.p.). In the light of these all, Pullman's belief in connectedness, which is a quasi secular version of the premodern – enchanted – worldview, is realized as a desire for completeness-wholeness in HDM.

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[21] However, the danger of attributing meaning to events is a preoccupation or even an obsession with speculating the meaning of events (Heriot-Maitland 318).

Pullman has always respected above all the religious impulse, the urge to understand and to find meaning. It is certainly part of everyone's psychological makeup, of every culture; it is identical with our attempt to "make sense of what is incomprehensible to us, what is inexplicable, what is awe-inspiring, what is frightening, what moves us to great wonder" (qtd. in Mustich n.p.). In this light, religious impulse is "to feel extraordinary elation and delight when I see the wonders of the material world around us, the physical universe" (ibid). Pullman even believes that "[o]ur desire to do good, our understanding of what good is and what evil is, is somehow bound up with this feeling" (ibid). He subordinates himself to this inherent phenomenon: "I can't argue against an impulse which I myself feel" (ibid). Consequently, religion is "something impossible to eradicate, nor would I want to eradicate it. *I am a religious person, although I am not a believer*" (ibid, my emphasis). If religion remains uncontaminated by power, as he claims, it can be "the source of a great deal of private solace, artistic inspiration, and moral wisdom" (qtd. in Sims n.p.). The most important is his confession that "I don't think the world was ever disenchanted. *It still is enchanted. So I'm quite happy with that sort of thing.* I'm quite happy to be thought a mystic or whatever it is" (qtd. in App., my emphasis).

After all, Pullman can rather be called a Christian agnostic. He elucidated his self-definition of being both an atheist and an agnostic,[22] "depending on where the standpoint is":

> The totality of what I know is no more than the tiniest pinprick of light in an enormous encircling darkness of all the things I don't know – which includes the number of atoms in the Atlantic Ocean, the thoughts going through the mind of my next-door neighbour at this moment and what is happening two miles above the surface of the planet Mars. In this illimitable darkness there may be God and I don't know, because I don't know.
>   But if we look at this pinprick of light and come closer to it, like a camera zooming in, so that it gradually expands until here we are, sitting in this room, surrounded by all the things we do know – such as what the time is and how to drive to London and all the other things that we know, what we've read about history and what we can find out about science – nowhere in this knowledge that's available to me do I see the slightest evidence for God.
>   So, within this tiny circle of light I'm a convinced atheist; but when I step back I can see that the totality of what I know is very small compared to the totality of what I don't know. So, that's my position. (Qtd. in Spanner n.p.)

Because of the potentiality of those things of which he is not aware, he finally described himself with the strictest accuracy as "an agnostic – or, to use a term invented by the neuroscientist David Eagleman in his ingenious little book *Sum*, a 'possibilian'" (Pullman "Customs of my tribe" n.p.). At the same time, Pullman has no intention of totally breaking away with his Christian upbringing: "Christianity has made me what I am, for better or worse. I just don't believe in God" (qtd. in Chattaway n.p.). What is more, he acknowledges that he

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[22] Pullman feels distaste for "the harsh atheism that laughs at believers" (Appleyard "The Story" n.p.), and refuses to be the world's most outspoken atheist.

would hate to live in a world "where all the Christian art, philosophy, literature, music, and architecture, not to mention the best of the ethical teaching, had been obliterated and forgotten" (ibid).

II.2. Fantasy, the (Re-)Enchanted Genre of HDM

This chapter is devoted to the examination of those sources and characteristics of fantasy genre that connect it to re-enchantment. Although the two terms, *the fantastic* and *fantasy*, are often used as synonyms of each other, in my interpretation while the fantastic is an ancient literary mode, fantasy is a genre born at the beginning of twentieth century.

The fantastic is viewed as an antecedent of fantasy. The fantastic, which is "a broad label to set against the very large categories of 'history' and 'fiction'" (Kellegham 1), covers both the ancestor genres (such as fairy tale, romance, myth, legend, ghost story) and modern fantasy and science fiction. By definition, stories of the fantastic include "any set in a world different from our own" or "elements recognized as alien to our own, things that are not true or not yet true" (ibid). A restricted number of recurrent motifs and elements (or of archetypes) has become the defining characteristics of the literary mode of the fantastic: the wandering hero/king, the unlikely companion, the combination of king and savage, the elemental adventures, as well as a search for immortality, fabulous talking animals, and an emphasis on the transcendent and creative power of words (Mathews 7-14). A typology of the fantastic can be developed "according to various criteria: mode of expression, genre, or thematics" (Szőnyi in Kiss and Baróti-Gaál and Szőnyi 10). Such a typology

> should reflect the variety and versatility of the phenomena brought under the label 'fantastic,' which can be arranged along a continuum ranging from highly conventionalized symbolic sign systems to the extreme products of individual imagination. When looked at chronologically, these phenomena suggest a tendency to move from the traditional to the individual. (Ibid)

It was in the nineteenth century when the fantastic was finally recognized as an independent literary mode: "a supernatural 'economy' of ideas was slowly giving way to a natural one, but had not yet been completely displaced by it" (Jackson 24).[23]

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[23] Rosemary Jackson notes about the differently imagined and interpreted presentations of otherness: "[i]n what we could call a supernatural economy, otherness is transcendent, marvellously different from the human: the results are religious fantasies of angels, devils, heavens, hells, promised lands, and pagan fantasies of elves, dwarves, fairies, fairyland or 'faery.' In a natural, or secular, economy, otherness is not located elsewhere: it is read as a projection of merely human fears and desires transforming the world through subjective perception. One economy introduces fiction which can be termed 'marvellous,' whilst the other produces the 'uncanny' or 'strange'" (23-24).

Christianity has determined the development of the literary fantastic. It is not surprising, considering the fact that in virtually every high-cultural system, the literary tradition has developed in an intimate relation to "religious thought, practice, institution, and symbolism" (Yu in Eliade *ER* Vol. 8, 558). With the intention of admiring, warning, explaining, and educating, the aim of the Christian literary fantastic by Spenser, Bunyan, George MacDonald, Marlowe, Milton, Blake and Kingsley is to "persuade us of the supernatural reality of Christ and of heaven" (Manlove *Christian Fantasy* 7).

Christianity has also influenced the formation of the later fantasy genre: strictly speaking, the source of the genre of fantasy is the religious fantasy in the Inklings, an informal literary circle/society in Oxford from the early 1930s to the late 1940s. The four key members were John Ronald Reuel Tolkien (1892-1973), Clive Staples Lewis (1898-1963), Charles Williams (1886-1945), and Owen Barfield (1898-1997) (Duriez in Partridge and Gabriel 231). By definition, a fantasy of religion is "a text that depicts or makes use of commonly understood religious tropes, but which recasts them in the context of additional fantastic narrative elements" (Sleight in James and Mendlesohn 248). The motive for writing a fantasy of religion may be "an urge to critique or revise existing dogmas about larger epistemological questions" (256). The modern genre of fantasy came into being in England where the relative absence of universal folkloric and mythic traditions and the dominance of literary realism made the popular imagination starved for fantasy (Mathews 20). The Christian religiousness of Tolkien and Lewis dominates the nature of their complete oeuvres as well as their literary heritage. Tolkien, who was brought up as a Catholic, converted Lewis from atheism to Christianity (James in James and Mendlesohn 63). Lewis, however, became an Ulster Protestant (ibid). The modern genre of fantasy was born with Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* (1954), together with C. S. Lewis' *The Space Trilogy* (1938-1945) and *The Chronicles of Narnia* (1950-1956).

Tolkien and Lewis together laid the medievalist foundation for the genre of fantasy. The tendency to exploit pseudo-medieval settings suggests "a regressive element, a romantic yearning (by adults) for earlier 'innocence,' for an alternative world where motivations, actions, needs and gratifications are simpler and more direct than in the desperately complex and subtle real world" (Hunt in Hunt and Lenz 4). Although both of them were professional medievalists who spent most of their academic lives at Oxford, the areas of their academic interest were different: Lewis, the literary scholar, was above all interested in medieval literature, and in what the stories revealed about the way in which medieval people thought;

Tolkien, the philologist, was fascinated by the languages of the past, and by what language revealed of the way in which medieval people thought (James in James and Mendlesohn 63).

One of the possibly two sources of the medievalism that characterizes Tolkien's fantasy tradition so much must have been Roman Catholicism. Among Christian denominations, it is the (Roman) Catholics who "believe in the reality of everyday marvellous occurrences and powers, and also enact their beliefs in an innately theatrical manner" (Hansen in Hansen 5). For this reason, since the Enlightenment's belief in the supremacy of human reason, Catholicism represented "the irrational, blind faith not only in a supernatural God, but also in his earthly representatives" (7). During the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries, however, non-Catholic artists and authors (for example, the Pre-Raphaelites) found the spectacular strangeness of Catholic ritual "aesthetically and thematically attractive" (ibid). These Medievalist works could become "the foundation for modern fantasy literature and film" by having been taken up by C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien (8).

Tolkien's medievalism also comes from German fairy tales probably because of the insignificant number of fairy tales in England.[24] Although nineteenth-century fairy-tales and fantasy literature are indelibly associated with the German Romantics, these literary works are not their inventions. German Romantic writers, including Ludwig Tieck, Novalis, Joseph von Eichendorff, Franz Brentano, Friedrich de la Motte Fouqué and Ernst Theodor Amadeus Hoffmann, who developed the so-called "*Kunstmärchen* or invented literary fairy-tale" between 1796 and 1830, were inspired to "take up folk material and motifs and refashion them into a literary creation that was *fairy-tale-like* [*märchenhaft*], though not itself originally belonging to folk tradition" (Gray *Fantasy* 10). The Grimm Brothers' collection of folktales, *Children's and Household Tales* [*Kinder- und Hausmärchen*] (1812-14), has become the probably most influential collection of 'fairy-tales' (ibid).

Because fairy story was the most basic pattern or guide for Tolkien's fantasy, it has determined the physiognomy/essence of the genre. Tolkien's essay, 'On Fairy-Stories' (1940), which discusses fairy story as a literary form and attempts to explain and defend the genre of fairy tales or *Märchen*, has been "as influential as [*LOR*] itself in the construction of modern fantasy" (James in James and Mendlesohn 66). In this essay, Tolkien argues for four essential elements/features of fairy story: 'Fantasy,' 'Recovery,' 'Escape' and 'Consolation' (for more details, see James in James and Mendlesohn, Duriez in Partridge and Gabriel). *LOR*

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[24] "From the repression of Saxon culture by the Normans, through sixteenth- and seventeenth-century identification of fairies with the devil, and on to eighteenth-century disdain for vulgar culture, the fairy-tale has not had many sustaining breezes in England" (Manlove *The Fantasy* 10).

further established the basic structure of fantasy genre with 'Thinning,' 'Wrongness,' 'Quest,' 'Recognition,' and 'Eucatastrophe' – these terms have been introduced into fantasy criticism by John Clute[25] (for more, see James in James and Mendlesohn 64).[26]

This basic structure of fantasy genre is undeniably identical with the so-called quest-myth. 'Quest' is a phenomenon inherent in existence itself: "simply to exist is to be part of the great quest for survival" (Leeming in Eliade *ER* Vol. 12, 147). The quest myth is associated with the figure of the hero: the well-known model of a prince seeking and finding a princess to unite with her to bring prosperity to a kingdom is rooted in the primary concern of early societies with fertility and physical survival in a hostile environment. The hero undertakes a series of trials (148). The penultimate test of the hero, however, is "the descent into the underworld and confrontation with death itself" (149). The ultimate goal of the quest is life renewal consisting of a spiritual and a physical process (147). Besides, at the end of the quest, one awakens into permanent consciousness, in other words self-knowledge (152). The quest motif is especially unveiled in the fairy tale (149).

It is not so surprising that HDM is structurally categorized as a (portal-)quest fantasy by Farah Mendlesohn. By definition, it is "a fantastic world entered through a portal. (…) Crucially, the fantastic is *on the other side* and does not 'leak'" (Mendlesohn xix). Portals mark "the transition between this world and another; from our time to another time; from youth to adulthood" (1). The overwhelming majority of portal fantasies are also quest fantasies, because both kind of fantasies rely on the narrative strategy of entry, transition, and exploration (1-2). Accordingly, the taken for granted is denied, and both the protagonist and the reader are positioned as naïve (2). While the classic portal fantasy is, of course, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (1950), the classic quest fantasy is *LOR* (1954-1955). The more distant origins of the quest fantasy lie in epic, in the Bible, in the Arthurian romances, and in fairy tales (3).

Tolkien's religiousness characterizes his fictive world-building, or his creation of a secondary world ('sub-creation'). He believed in sub-creation as the art of true fantasy or fairy story: "creating another or secondary world with such skill that it has an 'inner consistency of reality.' This inner consistency is so potent that it compels Secondary belief or Primary belief

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[25] See John Clute and John Grant's "Introduction to the Online Text" on *Encyclopedia of Fantasy (1997)*, http://sf-encyclopedia.uk/fe.php?id=0&nm=introduction_to_the_online_text.

[26] The relationship between fairy tale and fantasy had finalized the connection between Structuralism and the genre of fantasy in literary criticism (see Attebery in James and Mendlesohn 81-89). Consequently, notable sources of structuralist insights into fantasy and the related genres are Rosemary Jackson's *Fantasy: The Literature of Subversion* (1981), Kathryn Hume's *Fantasy and Mimesis* (1984), Farah Mendlesohn's *Rhetorics of Fantasy* (2008), and *The Encyclopedia of Fantasy*, edited by John Clute and John Grant.

(the belief we give to the Primary or real world) on the part of the reader" (Duriez in Partridge and Gabriel 237-238). For Tolkien, sub-creation does unlock "the meaning of God's primary creation, even discovering hints of his plan to redeem mankind and set a spoiled world right" (247). For this reason, sub-creation gives important space to symbols and archetypes because sub-creation allows "the imagination to employ both unconscious and conscious resources of the mind" (238). While the Primary World-Making is the privilege of God, and the Secondary World-Making is the privilege of the human writer, the source of Human Imagination must always be God (Manlove *Christian Fantasy* 8). The fact that Christian writers have insisted that "their creations are in part divinely inspired" makes it possible to "talk of 'fantasy' in the same breath as truth" (3).

Within sub-creation, Tolkien's so-called *mythopoeia* (fictional mythology) was in the service of Christian belief. The literary genre of modern fantasy is characterized by "a narrative frame that unites timeless mythic patterns with contemporary individual experiences" (Mathews 1). Tolkien himself was convinced that "[s]uccessful sub-creation can achieve myth" (Duriez in Partridge and Gabriel 247). Originating from Tolkien's Middle-earth, mythopoeia was an important element in the Inklings: "[t]heir view of myth and story brings them under the lordship of Christ, the Logos – the epitome of myth, in their view, is the Gospels, where myth becomes fact" (245-246). Indeed, *The Lord of the Rings* is full of subtle references to Christianity, all of which show "how his fictional world prefigures Christianity just as medieval biblical scholars saw Old Testament stories as prefiguring Christ" (James in James and Mendlesohn 69).

Even though the genre of fantasy was born in the milieu of Modernism, it is definitely Post-Modern. None of the founding writers of fantasy genre (aka Tolkien and Lewis) is discussed alongside recognized modernist authors such as Virginia Woolf, Gertrude Stein or Joseph Conrad. Most literary works of fantasy which are more 'Tolkienesque' than Modernist resist "the appellative designation of modernist literature" (Casey in James and Mendlesohn 114-115). Fantastic works, which were shaped by myth, history, and fairy tale, "rarely embrace modernism's avid rejection of tradition" (115). Another reason for the Post-Modernism of fantasy is its manner of challenging "the dominant political and conceptual ideologies" (ibid). Fantasy has always let 'othered' voices speak "through the masks of elves, dwarves or dragons" (118). Besides, there has been a shift in Post-Modern fantasy from white, Western, patriarchal culture to greater representations of the so-called marginalized narrative groups (ibid). Indeed, the most recent works of fantasy, including HDM, adapt to the challenges of the twenty-first century.

After the formation of modern fantasy genre since the middle of the twentieth century, literary works which had been written in the fantastic mode were re-evaluated in retrospect. Tolkien's greatest achievement, in retrospect, was the normalization of the idea of a secondary world: "[a]fter 1955 fantasy writers no longer had to explain away their worlds by framing them as dreams, or travellers' tales, or by providing them with any fictional link to our own world at all" (James in James and Mendlesohn 65). At the same time, these established main characteristics have also been disadvantageous to the genre of fantasy: "[i]f multiple interpretations are to be denied, (…) then the novel becomes locked in the patterns that [John] Clute observed in the full fantasy" (Mendlesohn 17). This phenomenon is also observed by Peter Hunt in the so-called 'sword and sorcery' genre fantasy which is "doomed to die of repetition or parody" (in Hunt and Lenz 2).

Fantasy literature has rather belonged to the domain of re-enchantment, popular culture. This kind of literature is "either taken seriously (and enthusiastically), or seriously rejected" (Hunt in Hunt and Lenz 2). The reason is fantasy's resistance to and mock of "the elaborate classification systems of academia that have grown up around it" (ibid). While Modernist literature has been described as 'elitist,' Post-Modern fantasy has always belonged to a 'low' art form which is concerned with play and desire (Casey in James and Mendlesohn 115). Because of its intense demythologisation and desupernaturalising, Christian fantasy is not written by dominant literary figures. Instead, as Colin Manlove argues, it is written but by minor, and often eccentric writers, for example George MacDonald, Charles Kingsley, Charles Williams and C. S. Lewis (*Christian Fantasy* 158). The association of the fantastic mode's subversive nature with children has probably also devalued the fantastic mode in the literary canon (for more, see Nikolajeva in James and Mendlesohn 61).

In fact, due to their recycling, re-use, and mixing up of elements from different religious and mythological systems, most fantasy (and science fiction) literary work simultaneously originates from and contributes to re-enchantment. Indeed, it is a big business to commodify, routinize, organize, and rationalize the modern movement of (re)enchantment.

Even though there is no academic consensus about whether children have been the supposed target audience of the fantastic mode (and later the genre of fantasy) since the nineteenth century,[27] children's fantasy stories have actively contributed to the formation of occultural worldviews. According to Gordon Lynch, the development of popular culture in new ways has reached the point "where a generation of children and teenagers were becoming

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[27] See Nikolajeva in James and Mendlesohn, and also Hunt in Hunt and Lenz.

more dependent on mass-produced popular culture as a focus for their energies and as a way of learning about the world" (Lynch 54 qtd. in Partridge *RW, Vol. 1*, 120). Colin Campbell and Shirley McIver summarize the role juvenile fiction plays in occulture:

> there is at least one place where [occultism] has a secure and highly approved position within the culture of contemporary society, a place where it is not condemned but where it is heavily endorsed. This, of course, is in the context of the culture of childhood, which would be largely unrecognizable without the faeries, ghosts, alien beings and magical environments which are its stock-in-trade. Virtually all the themes of adult occultism are to be found in the books, plays and films aimed at children, although not, of course, in a fully elaborated form. Here the 'rejected' knowledge of adults is presented as the 'accepted' material for children, even if there is an attempt to do so within the framework of 'a willing suspension of disbelief'… [This] necessarily means that almost all members of modern society are introduced to occult material at a tender age. Occultism is thus a central part of the world-view which they inherit and one which they must subsequently learn to reject. It would hardly be surprising if some fail to do so. (Campbell and McIver 58 qtd. in Partridge *RW, Vol. 1*, 137-138)

As the supreme example of canonized fantasy drawing on the cosmology of Norse Paganism, *LOR* has encouraged a host of Tolkienesque fantasy written from "an explicitly Pagan perspective" (Partridge *RW, Vol. 1*, 139-140). Consequently, Tolkien especially contributed to the formation and development of Pagan identities.

While Christian fantasy has become rather peripheral (see Manlove *Christian Fantasy* 10-11), both Tolkien and Lewis still enjoy a canonized status in today's fantasy literature. As a result, "most subsequent writers of fantasy are either imitating [Tolkien] or else desperately trying to escape his influence" (James in James and Mendlesohn 62). Belonging to the latter group, Pullman feels a strong disinclination not only to the Christian fantasy novels of Tolkien and Lewis,[28] but also to the *whole* fantasy genre. The reason enroots in Pullman's appreciation of children's literature which, he believes, should discuss serious metaphysical issues, in other words "grown-up things": "Where did we come from? Where do we go? What is our purpose as human beings, and how should we conduct our lives?" (qtd. in McCrum n.p., in Lenz "Introduction" in Lenz and Scott 2). These kinds of questions are usually asked by children and philosophers (Lenz "Introduction" in Lenz and Scott 2). According to Pullman, "[fantasy writing] is such a rich seam to be mined, such a versatile mode, that is not always being used to explore bigger ideas" (qtd. in Chrisafis n.p.). HDM is a kind of response to the propaganda on behalf of Christianity in the books of J.R.R. Tolkien and C.S. Lewis.

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[28] Pullman's outspoken criticism as well as hatred of Lewis' Narnia-series is based on Lewis' fierce dissemination of fundamentalist Christianity to his child readers (see Parsons and Nicholson 119, Roberts "A Dark Agenda" n.p.). Pullman's problem with Tolkien is, primarily, the absence of psychological depth in *LOR* (see Chattaway n.p.). However, this psychological depth that he lacks in *LOR* is what he appreciates in *The Chronicles of Narnia* (see Chattaway n.p., Butler n.p.).

Instead of fantasy, Pullman prefers realism in his writings so much that he likes regarding himself as a realist author. By realistic, he means that

> if it is talking about human beings in a way which is vivid and truthful and tells me things about myself and my own emotions and things which I recognize to be true having encountered it in a story. I don't often encounter that sort of thing in fantasy because a lot of fantasy writing seems to me preoccupied with one adventure after another and improbable sorts of magic and weird creatures like orcs and elves and so on who don't have any connection with the sort of human reality that I recognise, so I am a little bit wary of fantasy (…). (Qtd. in "Faith and Fantasy" n.p., qtd. in Rayment-Pickard 30-31)

He insists that all of his novels are firmly rooted in the real world: *Northern Light* (and of course the other two books of the trilogy) is "a work of stark realism" (qtd. in Parsons and Nicholson 131). The structure/mechanism of fantasy provides Pullman freedom/basis to develop psychological insights on realist subjects, which he considers as his 'weakness': "[m]y imagination only starts to take fire when the talking bears come into it. I'm a little bit ashamed about this. I wish I could do realism" (qtd. in Bertodano n.p.). The characters of HDM are complex and unpredictable, and with the fantasy elements, he can say what he thought would be true and interesting about "what it's like to be a human being" (qtd. in Bertodano n.p.). With regards to the physical form of psychological and existential ideas (such as daemons, the Specters of Cittágazze, and Dust itself), Pullman states that "[f]inding physical embodiments for things that were not themselves physical was one of the ways I approached what I wanted to say" (qtd. in Mustics n.p.). While he finds it "slightly unusual" that he is telling a story about a realistic subject (the universal experience of growing up) (Weich n.p.). According to Rachel Falconer, Pullman's almost obsessive attention to visual detail is "one of the ways in which [he] signatures his writing as part of a realist tradition of writing" (Falconer in Barfield and Cox 19-20). Pullman is aware of how unlikely he would ever be defined as a realist author (see Meacham). Scholars are impressed by the way Pullman embeds fantasy into realism (see Falconer in Barfield and Cox 20, Gamble in Barfield and Cox 189). By now, Pullman seems resigned to the trilogy's characterization as fantasy (see Appleyard "Philip Pullman" and Appleyard "The Story").

Readers and scholars of HDM disagree about the extent of realism in Pullman's anti-clerical representations. Some of them – see Chantal Oliver (296), Andrew Leet (Leet in Lenz and Scott 176), and György E. Szőnyi (Szőnyi in Hites and Török 539) – claim that religion in Lyra's fictive world and the Christianity of our reality are *not* the same. In the light of these, some scholars – see Millicent Lenz (Lenz in Hunt and Lenz 158), Vanessa Crosby (Crosby in Cusack 263), and Sally R. Munt (Munt in Barfield and Cox 213) – even regard Pullman's representations of religion as a caricature or parody. Other scholars – see William Gray

(*Fantasy* 173), Nicholas Tucker (128), Rachel Robinson (Robinson in Greene and Robinson 33-34), and Hugh Rayment-Pickard (54-55) – consider religion in Lyra's fictive world and Christianity in our world virtually one and the same. Many – Rowan Williams (n.p.), and Rayment-Pickard (55) – consider Mary Malone as the connecting link between the fictive world of Lyra and our real world. David Gooderham even blames Pullman's use of religious language in HDM for spoiling/discrediting the fantasy genre (155-160).

Because Realism has had a determinative impact on the form of the fantasy genre, Pullman's insistence on realism makes him an authentic/true representative of fantasy genre. During the nineteenth century, there was a dialogue between the (back then) new literature of realism and the fantastic mode: the latter characteristically "*enters a dialogue with the 'real' and incorporates that dialogue as part of its essential structure*" (Jackson 36). The consequence is fantasy's introduction of "areas which [could] be conceptualized only by negative terms according to the categories of nineteenth century realism: thus, the im-possible, the un-real, the nameless, formless, shapeless, un-known, in-visible" (26). Although the most common peculiarity of the (Post-)Modern fantasy genre is an alternative reality with wondrous, magical or supernatural elements as main plot, or theme, or setting, this genre has remained still closely allied to realism: the alternative worlds of "very knowing" fantasy fictions must "*necessarily* be related to, and comment on, [and be a counterpart to] the real world" (Hunt in Hunt and Lenz 7). For this reason, fantasy cannot be the product of dream, madness or superstition, and escapism. Fantasy is neither allegory, nor symbol. As the alternative reality of fantasy must also be self-coherent and believable, there is a need for the so-called 'willing suspension of disbelief' (sourced by Aristotle and Coleridge's *Biographia Literaria*) a moral, cognitive attitude to believe the impossible. Besides, both the fantastic mode and fantasy were materialized in the form of the novel (which was the literary genre of realism) (see Jackson 25, Mathews 3).[29]

In this part of my dissertation, I revealed those traits of HDM's author (his humanism, belief in connectedness, respect for the religious impulse, agnosticism) that let him be re-enchanted. I also presented the already existing (or inherent) re-enchanted characteristics of the many genres and textual traditions HDM relies on (Roman Catholicism, German fairy tales, mythopoeia, Post-Modernism, popular culture, fantasy allied with realism). In the next part

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[29] Since then, however, the novel has become the experimental arena of religious concepts and ideas because of its gradually disappearing secular character. Arthur Bradley and Andrew Tate remark that the novel today has become "the primary space in which once deep-rooted, if widely forgotten and deracinated, religious ideas can be revisited, tested, and reshaped" (64).

(Textual Analysis), I would like to unfold and systemize the less known re-enchanted peculiarities of the text of HDM.

III. TEXTUAL ANALYSIS: HOLISM IN THE MYTHOPOETIC CHARACTERIZATIONS OF *HDM*

This part of my dissertation is devoted to the textual analysis of how the principle of holism is established (or recognizable) in the mythic and literary characterizations of *HDM*. The term was coined by Jan Christiaan Smuts (1870-1950), a South African and British philosopher, in his book, *Holism and Evolution* (1927). The word, *holistic*, literally means "of the whole" (Hexham and Poewe 96). According to the holistic theory, parts of a whole are in intimate interconnection with each other. Thus, they can neither exist independently of the whole, nor be understood without reference to the whole. The whole is therefore regarded as greater than the sum of its parts. It might not be a coincidence that the holistic world picture, which belonged to the pre-modern world, is gaining more ground: Western man longs for finding peace and completeness, security and comfort, meaning and purpose, and hope by being re-connected (namely, being re-*enchanted*). I wish to show that all of the characters (including personalized spaces) with mythic attributions in HDM display the principle of holism. (They are only temporarily separated from each other, as sooner or later they unite again either in the present or in the sometimes distant future.)

For Pullman, the best means to express his mostly negative feelings to Christianity is, in J.R.R. Tolkien's footsteps, to construct mythopoeia in *HDM* series. My impression, that the fictional world of *HDM* is much more mythological (as a collection of stories about answering the basic human questions) than theological (as a systematic and rational study of the nature and concept of God, the structure of the world, and religious truth), was confirmed by Pullman (App.). Nicholas Tucker denies any mythopoetic similarity between Tolkien's work and Pullman's work, on the basis of Pullman's lack of interest in working out "a complete cosmology for the largely imaginary worlds he is describing" (169). Indeed, there are neither accompanying maps in HDM, nor many notes on the language, history and geography of the different people and objects. In contrast with this, Rayment-Pickard supposes that Pullman must have arrived to the conclusion that (his) truth is best communicated in myth and story (Rayment-Pickard 15). Truly, Pullman claims that stories do not only entertain and teach, but they also help us enjoy and endure life (qtd. in Watkins

"Pullman" n.p.).[30] As the story-teller also challenges, resists and liberates with stories as instruments of truth, Pullman can be seen as "the lone story-teller standing on a chair before the crowds of religious unreason, superstition and authoritarian oppression" (Rayment-Pickard 17). While Tolkien constructed new myths for the sake of re-expressing the essence of the Christian message, the purpose of Pullman's mythopoesis is to 'outnarrate' both Christianity and the Christian myths of Lewis and Tolkien, to tell a better story (15-16).

The mythopoeia of *HDM* series is constructed from Pullman's literary eclecticism. At the end of the third novel, in the "Acknowledgements," Pullman declares that "I have stolen ideas from every book I have ever read. My principle in researching for a novel is 'Read like a butterfly, write like a bee,' and if this story contains any honey, it is entirely because of the quality of the nectar I found in the work of better writers" ("Acknowledgements" AS 467).[31] Karen Patricia Smith defends Pullman from the accusation of plagiarism:

> elements that remain in the mind of an author – either consciously or unconsciously – are assimilated and combined with that author's inventiveness, ultimately rendering the final product so different, so worthy of the distinction of an original contribution, and ultimately profoundly unforgettable. (Smith in Lenz and Scott 135)

Pullman's eclecticism can be identified as trans-textuality, "all that sets the text in relationship, whether obvious or concealed, with other texts" (Genette 83-84). In the occultural context, the mythopoeia of HDM is the result of Pullman's de-traditionalization: he had admittedly detached particular ideas and themes from their original contexts, and invested them with new meanings in the service of his personal interests.

From a mythological viewpoint, there are overlapping roles in the trilogy: some of Pullman's main characters play multiple roles in his scenario of the Fall of Man. William Gray observes that character analysis is "arguably not the primary concern of myth-makers" (*Fantasy* 180). Jonathan Padley and Kenneth Padley claim that "the characteristics and actions of single biblical characters are sometimes carved up between several figures in *His Dark Materials*" (333). Claire Squires argues that "[w]ithin the narrative frame of *His Dark Materials*, character, perhaps unexpectedly, is destiny" (87). When Pullman was reminded that he did not identify the Serpent with Satan, he pointed out that "[a]mbiguity is important because it keeps possibilities open" (qtd. in App.).

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[30] Furthermore, to Pullman, stories are central to the identity of the human species: "without stories, we wouldn't be human beings at all" (qtd. in Schroeder n.p., qtd. in Rayment-Pickard 21). It is in a noticeable parallel with Clifford Geertz's definition of culture: the ensemble of stories we tell ourselves about ourselves.

[31] In addition, Pullman stole things not only from every writer he has ever enjoyed, but also from writers he has not, "if they had a good turn of phrase or an interesting idea" (qtd. in Waldman n.p.). A good example for this is the little Lucy Pevensie hiding in the wardrobe at the beginning of C.S. Lewis' *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (1950). She seems to be an inspiration to the appearance of Lyra's character.

III.1. Unity of Man and the Divine (Inside)

This chapter is about the ways the transcendent divine is made immanent in HDM.[32] Philip Pullman's belief in a 'one substance' view of the nature of reality, as the philosophical doctrine of materialism, provides the context to this chapter. As materialism is "the view that matter is all there is," it excludes

> the existence of entities that are radically different in kind form, and in some sense superior to, the matter of our ordinary experience. It rejects, therefore, a God or gods on whom the universe would depend for its existence or mode of operation; it denies the existence of angels or spirits that can affect the material order while ultimately escaping its limitations; it questions the notion of a soul, if taken to be an immaterial entity separable in principle from the human body it informs. (McMullin in Eliade *ER*, Vol. 9, 279-280)

For these reasons, the two main targets of materialism are theism and dualistic views of human nature. In HDM, the different degrees of matter signal quality: the more concentrated and the more complex matter is, the stronger it is (such as human bodies); the less concentrated and the less complex matter is, the weaker it is (such as angels and human souls).

As a committed materialist, Pullman takes account of the existence of consciousness. To explain it, he assumes that "consciousness, like mass, is a normal and universal property of matter (this is known as panpsychism), so that human beings, dogs, carrots, stones, and atoms are all conscious, though in different degrees. This is the line I take myself, in the company of poets such as Wordsworth and Blake" (qtd. in Chattaway n.p.). By definition, panpsychism means "that everything that really exists *is conscious*" (Auxier in Greene and Robison 109), that "you are identical to the number of conscious bits of material that make you up" (Harris and Baer in Greene and Robison 160). Because of his belief in conscious matter, Pullman is connected to Lucretius and John Milton who share, in very different ways, "a common materialism, a denial that one can divorce spirit from matter. Each writer conceives of matter differently, but in all of them it appears a source of profound goodness" (Oram 418).

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[32] This chapter is based on two of my published articles: "Gnostic Spiritual Heritage in PP's *HDM* Fantasy Trilogy" (2013); and "Mirror-images, or Love as Religion in PP's Trilogy, *HDM*" (2013). This chapter is also based on a forthcoming article: "(Neo-) Platonism Revived: Literary Imagery of Daemons in PP's *HDM* Trilogy."

III.1.1. Cosmogony, Divinities: Dust and Xaphania

While the mythopoetic structure of the trilogy lacks a fully explicit cosmogony (creation myth), there is a central myth subtly embedded into the implicit cosmogony of the trilogy's fictive world. Pullman reveals that "[u]nderlying the trilogy there is a myth of creation and rebellion, of development and strife, and so on. I don't make this myth explicit anywhere, but it was important for me to have it clear in my mind" (qtd. in "Interview with Philip Pullman" n.p.). This particular myth has "allowed me to link together many aspects of the story in a sort of invisible way which might not be apparent to the reader, but which I have found helpful" (qtd. in Waldman n.p.). Pullman did write a creation story (as an unpublished prequel to *HDM*), entitled "HIS DARK MATERIALS: The myth." This writing gives explanation to the birth of Dust, the source of conflict between two angels, the Authority and the Sophia (Xaphania), the birth of the uncountable parallel universes, the birth of religion, the establishment of churches, the birth of consciousness (of daemons), the establishment of the Land of the Dead, and the raison d'être of the continual struggle between two great powers.

The creator in the mythopoeia of *HDM* is either unknown or inexistent. In *AS*, King Ogunwe informs Mrs Coulter that "[t]here may have been a creator, or there may not: we don't know" (AS 188). It is an eloquent evidence of Pullman's acceptance of the unknowable (agnosticism). This unknown entity might be characterized with being 'deus otiosus,' a Latin term which denotes that "god at leisure" or "god without work," that is, "a god who has withdrawn or retired from active life" (Eliade and Sullivan "Deus Otiosus" in Eliade *ER*, Vol. 4, 314). On the basis of the general rule according to which "there is no dualism where there is no question of cosmogony [creation myth] or anthropogony [the study of human origins], where there is no account of the principles responsible for bringing the world and man into existence" (Bianchi in Eliade *ER* Vol. 4, 506), Pullman's mythopoeia simply lacks the distinct dualism of Platonic metaphysics.

The mythopoesis of HDM revolves around the angels' cosmic fight over the freedom of intellectual and sensual consciousness. Angels are used as literary devices because, as Pullman claims, angels "illuminate something about human beings," "they embody certain human qualities and emotions" (qtd. in Fried n.p.).[33] "There are two great powers, […] and

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[33] The origin of angels as intermediaries is found in both Greco-Roman and Judeo-Christian traditions: "[t]he Greek word *angelos* means 'messenger.' If the gods wanted to send a message, they made use of special messengers, often birds or minor gods. The divine messenger *par excellence* was Hermes, who also functioned as guide of the dead to the underworld" (Broek in Hanegraaff *DG* 618). However, "the idea of angelic beings,

they've been fighting since time began" (SK 283). This battle started with a rebellion against the reign of a powerful being: "[t]he first angels condensed out of Dust, and the Authority was the first of all. He told those who came after him that he had created them, but it was a lie. One of those who came later was wiser than he was, and she [Xaphania] found out the truth, so he banished her" (AS 28). Since then, the followers of the angel called Authority, as an impostor god-figure, and the followers of the angel called Xaphania (also called Sophia), as a goddess of wisdom, fight against each other. While the first group consists of the trilogy's negative characters (the proponents of Christian religion and institutions as well as the opponents of Dust, the embodiment and condition of sensual and intellectual consciousness, i.e. in the traditional sense the Original Sin itself), the second power consists of all of the positive characters (virtually the opponents of ecclesiastical power as well as the proponents of Dust). Since then, "[e]very little increase in human freedom has been fought over ferociously between those who want us to know more and be wiser and stronger, and those who want us to obey and be humble and submit" (SK 283). Now the time has come to finish this ancient war: "[t]his is the last rebellion. Never before have humans and angels, and beings from all the worlds, made a common cause. This is the greatest force ever assembled" (AS 188).

The Authority, who is incorrectly identified with (the Old Testament's) God, is virtually a fraud. "The Authority, God, the Creator, the Lord, Yahweh, El, Adonai, the King, the Father, the Almighty – those were all names he gave himself. He was never the creator. He was an angel" (AS 28). The Authority is "[a]n imposter – an angel masquerading as God" (Freitas and King xiii). The Authority is "a self-appointed deity" (Bradley and Tate 71), who has "institutional power but lacks real transcendence" (76).[34] The Authority's dwelling place is the Kingdom of Heaven which "has been known by that name since the Authority first set himself above the rest of the angels" (AS 188). To where the souls of the dead get is a false heaven: "[e]ven the churches don't know [what happens in the world of the dead]; they tell

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serving at the heavenly court as servants and messengers of the gods, is not Greek but of Near Eastern origin" (ibid). Pullman's angelology (study of angels) largely relies on the Ethiopic, apocryphal *Book of Enoch* (second century BC-first century AD), and more importantly on the collection of texts found at Nag Hammadi, for example the so-called *Apocryphon of John* (also the *Secret Book of John*) (second century AD).

[34] The Authority, who is not a figure of love or mercy or grace, who is absent from human affairs, who opposes any freedom and individual thought (as a threat to his power), who prefers that humans should be automatons, fails to possess the Christian God's divine attributes: omnibenevolence, omniscience, and omnipotence. Rachel Robinson claims that "[t]he fact that the Authority was the first conscious being should not motivate worship (…), unless the length of his life has given him traits that make him worthy" (Robinson in Greene and Robinson 32). However, he became not wiser and more honourable, but rather weaker and more corrupt. Robinson also makes it clear that while HDM successfully shows that worshipping a God with the attributes of the Authority is bad, Pullman has not indicated that "believing in or worshipping the Christian God is a bad thing" (33).

their believers that they'll live in Heaven, but that's a lie. If people really knew…" (AS 29). As it turns out in *AS*, this place (called the Land of the Dead) is "a prison camp," established by the Authority "in the early ages" (AS 29). The Authority (and his successor, Metatron, too) could be identical with the Dark Lord, a characteristic figure of quest fantasy. He is "a satanic figure of colossal but warped power, who wishes to enslave and denature the world and its denizens" (Senior in James and Mendlesohn 190). As the religion represented in HDM is based on the Authority's lie, it is no wonder that the trilogy's seemingly central message is that "[t]he Christian religion is a very powerful and convincing mistake, that's all" (AS 393).

The shock of the first battle fought between the Authority and Xaphania gave birth to uncountable parallel universes (which provide basis to the moral of *HDM*). Pullman wrote that

> in the shock of battle, the first war that matter had ever fought with itself [as matter loves matter], the beautiful and intricate complexity that held the universe together was shattered. Instead of one universe there were millions, all beautiful but all separate, all occupying the same space and unknown and inaccessible to one another. (Pullman "HDM" n.p.)

Pullman makes it clear that "[t]here are as many different worlds as there are grains of sand in the universe. (…) But we can't reach them" (qtd. in App.). To the question whether there is any hierarchy or structure of the parallel worlds in the fictional world of *HDM*, Pullman answered no: "there's no hierarchy. They all exist simultaneously. But… they're all more or less equal, (…)" (qtd. in App.). And there is not a common frame of all parallel worlds, either.

However, a mysterious cosmic particle seems to be so central in the creation and the existence of all beings that it might be regarded as a kind of creator, or, at least, a deity. It is called Rusakow particles or Dust or shadow particles or *straf*. Most main characters are engaged in a quest either to destroy it or to preserve it. Dust is only "a name for what happens when matter begins to understand itself. Matter loves matter. It seeks to know more about itself, and Dust is formed" (AS 28). Furthermore, "matter loved Dust. It didn't want to see it go" (*AS* 404). "Matter is most fully embodied in the Dust" (Oram 422). Moreover, Dust grounds itself in relations:

> matter relates to itself in its striving to know itself, which striving actually constitutes Dust. But then, in the condensation that forms angels, Dust relates to Dust. Finally, Dust relates to beings (…) [who, by exhibiting an informed interest in the world,] (…) echo or extend the original relation (of matter striving to understand itself), which gave rise to Dust. Moreover, (…) Dust is the finite product of matter's interest in understanding itself and there is nothing at all in Pullman's universe to guarantee that Dust will continue to exist. (Colás 50)

Dust is rather a process, than a substance (Jobling in Barfield and Cox 160). The world in Pullman's trilogy is "uncreated, or is in a sense creating itself" (Wrigley 108). This conscious

substance, Dust, also functions as the building block of Pullman's universe which, in this way, appears to be "a self-creating, self-organizing, and self-sufficient one" (Colás 49).

Dust synthesizes/homogenizes/unites matter and spirit so that they are more than coequal; they are rather one and the same. Dust is made up of invisible self-conscious and communicative particles which state that "from what we are, spirit; from what we do, matter. Matter and spirit are one" (*SK* 221). It may mean that "the difference between matter and spirit is simply the angle from which we see them" (Oram 422); "[s]pirit is Dust acting in one way ('from what we are'), and matter is Dust acting in another ('from what we do')" (Freitas and King 50). "By envisaging everything as connected with everything else, Pullman effectively upsets and transforms the antithesis between conventionally divided entities, rendering them as two halves of a more complex and integrated whole;" in this way, Dust must be Pullman's "attempt to mend the dichotomies of religious division" (Bird "Without Contraries" 122).

The structure and nature of the immanent Dust implies that this mysterious cosmic particle embodies the ancient human desire for unity. Consequently, the trilogy's mythopoesis dissolves the sharp ontological dualism of 'good spirit versus evil matter' of Gnostic mythology, as well as the life-denial pessimism of Gnostic anti-materialism. Pullman consciously commits himself to biophilia, the love of life here and now: "[my myth] takes this physical universe as our true home. We must welcome and love and live our lives in this world to the full" (qtd. in Cooper 355).

In *HDM*, the roots of creatures' connectedness to each other are found in the *depth* of matter. Dust or Shadow Particles or *straf* is the central connective element of Pullman's mythopoeia: "[t]here's more stuff out there in the universe than we can see, that's the point. We can see the stars and the galaxies and the things that shine, but for it all to hang together and not fly apart, there needs to be a lot more of it – to make gravity work" (SK 76).[35] The concept of Dust is used to "connect the plethora of seemingly incompatible elements that make up the universe" (Bird "Without Contraries…" 113), thereupon the setting of the whole narrative equalises everything in its most simplistic form. Besides, the fact that "[m]atter and spirit are one" (SK 221) tells us how we might relate to (other) matter: "if we share with matter this propensity, then we would seem to be called to relate to it not as animate to inanimate, let alone human to animal, or even subject to object, but rather (…) as living

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[35] Pullman enthuses that "[i]t's just a wonderful gift for a storyteller to discover that most of the universe is made of this stuff called dark matter that nobody knew about until very recently. Astronomers don't know what it is. Nobody knows. That gives you a licence to imagine anything" (qtd. from Renton n.p.).

matter to living matter" (Colás 47). Pullman uses the complex metaphor of Dust to communicate a consistent vision of a united, even multi-dependent universe.

On the basis of its ontology, Dust is the manifestation of Love itself, the fundamental attractive force pervading and binding the universe. In Greco-Roman mythology, *Eros* was the cosmic basic principle operating the world, and it also was the personification of sexual desire. Although Marsilio Ficino, an Italian humanist philosopher, was responsible for the Renaissance revival of Plato in Western culture, the Jewish Portuguese philosopher Judah Leon Abravanel, better known as Leone Ebreo's work, entitled *Dialoghi d'amore* [*Dialogues of Love*], was one of the most important philosophical works of his time. The author seeks to define love in philosophical terms by structuring his dialogue as a conversation between two abstract characters, Philo as love or appetite, and Sophia as science or wisdom. Ebreo echoes the world view of antiquity, according to which love is responsible for the unity of the universe, also the source of the existence of all things in the world (Klaniczay 324). Freitas believes that Dust holds everything together because it is "the ultimate, unifying and animating principle of the universe" (Freitas and King 25). What is more, Dust is part and parcel of the world and human beings so intimately that "it is as if the universe and God [Dust] are *lovers*, and the erotic love enjoyed between creatures [is] a tangible expression of this divine intimacy" (135). Dust affirms life. Holism is based on a cohesive force, Eros, or Love, as a plot-organizing device in *HDM*.

Moreover, Dust is both the condition and the product of human self-consciousness, curiosity and knowledge, both intellectual and sensual, and wisdom. "Shadows are particles of consciousness. (…) they know we are here. They answer back" (SK 78); in other words, these particles gravitate to and cluster where human beings are. Besides, "[c]onscious beings make Dust – they renew it all the time, by thinking and feeling and reflecting, by gaining wisdom and passing it on" (AS 440). However, without this feedback system "to reinforce it and make it safe" (AS 403), Dust would all vanish. To maintain the cohesive force between creators and creations, one must take responsibility for the quantity and quality of his own mental images. To Pullman, Dust is a metaphor for all the things he firmly believes in:

> human wisdom, science and art, all the accumulated and transmissible achievements of the human mind. This is both material (located in books, etc, and in living people who can talk about it) and, like consciousness, seemingly non-material. But without matter, it wouldn't be there at all. Everything that is Dust is the result of the amorous inclinations of matter. (Qtd. in Chattaway n.p.)

He claims that "Dust should be in some sense emblematic of consciousness and original sin – what the churches traditionally used to understand by sin, namely disobedience, the thing that

made us human in the first place" (qtd. in Fried n.p.). In his definition, Dust is a way of picturing "the self-consciousness that human beings have, which is what makes us different from animals" (qtd. in App.). Consciousness in HDM becomes "a precipitate of the inherent goodness of matter – matter raised to a new power" (Oram 422). When the usually invisible Dust becomes visible, it appears to be "a strange faint golden glimmer, like a luminous misty rain" (*AS* 318). It is not a coincidence: light has been the symbol of knowledge, life and truth (Pál and Újvári "Light and Darkness" n.p.). Dust is the first cause and reason for everything.[36]

In the light of these, either Dust itself or Dust with the help of the rebel angels is supposed to have intervened human evolution thirty thousand years ago. Above all, as Pullman writes, "evolution is the inevitable result of matter loving matter" (Pullman "HDM" n.p.). The angels became interested in the newly evolved conscious beings: "[n]ew forms of being were emerging, made of matter that was self-organising but not self-conscious. These beings, animals, had bodies and senses far surpassing those of angels. Their capacity for delight was unbounded. These animal creatures were envied and admired by the angels" (ibid). The Authority tried to restrict these beings by setting up "churches and priesthoods to regulate their lives" (with the aim of alienating them from Dust), and by teaching them that "obedience to him was the highest good" (ibid). Yet, the rebel angels succeeded in finding "the best and the truest way for the creatures (…) to rejoice in the Dust that was the true state of the matter they were made of" (ibid). Nicholas Tucker calls attention to the issue that "[t]he causality of this relationship is not initially clear – did Dust cause the evolution of consciousness, or did the evolution of consciousness create Dust?" (Tucker 137).[37] Because the Authority's efforts were successful, the churches and their followers have believed Dust to be "the physical evidence for original sin" (*GC* 325) which must be destroyed.

Despite of its probable divineness, Dust is far from being omnipotent, omnipresent and immortal. This vulnerable substance needs all conscious beings for its own survival:

> Dust came into being when living things became conscious themselves; but it needed some feedback system to reinforce it and make it safe, […]. Without something like that, it would all vanish. Thought, imagination, feeling, would all wither and blow away, leaving nothing but a brutish automatism. (*AS* 403)

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[36] Dust as a divinity, as Donna Freitas claims, fits into our age because it is compatible with science, popular spirituality and contemporary theology so much that it is Pullman's Dust that the Death-of-God theologians of the 1960s were seeking and the feminist and liberation theologians of the 1970s found (Freitas and King xxi).

[37] Moreover, might there be someone *beyond* Dust and the angels made of Dust? "[W]ho or what is in ultimate control of everything? What force, for example, both powers and informs the alethiometer? Who exactly picked out Lyra for her great task of saving the world, and who originally prophesied that it would be a girl who would be the chosen saviour? Pullman offers no clear answers here, nor does he wish to" (Tucker 140).

It is interdependence: the existence of Dust depends on all human beings, just as their happiness (and consciousness) depends on Dust. The fact that this divinity "yearns to be loved through our respect for the body, the earth, and through our lives in the here and now" is the proof of Pullman's definite rejection of the classical notion of a distant, detached and transcendent God (Freitas "God in the dust" n.p.). The most obvious enemy of Dust is the Church itself that tried to "suppress and control every natural impulse" (*SK* 44). Indeed, the central task for the Christian religion has always been "to control sexual love and to make it subservient to religion" (Bertilsson 301). While Man in the Christian and Neo-Platonic systems is in need of God; the conscious, dependent and mortal divinity of Pullman's system is in need of Man.

Pullman's angels, as creatures of Dust (*SK* 220), are only seemingly superior species. They are holy in their venerable appearance and infinite knowledge:

> They shone not as if they were burning but as if, wherever they were and however dark the night, sunlight was shining on them. They were like humans, but winged, and much taller; and, as they were naked, the witch could see that three of them were male, two female. Their wings sprang from their shoulder blades, and their backs and chests were deeply muscled. (*SK* 123)

> Nor did she [the witch] know how far their awareness spread out beyond her like filamentary tentacles to the remotest corners of universes she had never dreamed of; nor that she saw them as human-formed only because her eyes expected to. If she were to perceive their true form, they would seem more like architecture than organism, like huge structures composed of intelligence and feeling. (*SK* 125)

Yet, these angels are not held up as the ultimate authority or model. On the basis of Pullman's myth taking this physical universe as our true home, the Christian angels' envy caused by man's status as God's favourite creature[38] turned into their envy of flesh in Pullman's reinterpretation: angels "long to have our precious bodies, so solid and powerful, so well-adapted to the good earth!" (AS 336).[39] For Pullman, "the thinness of angelic bodies is a disadvantage because it lessens one's participation in the material cosmos" (Oram 423). Moreover, these angels are also mortal.

Although the cosmic fight began with angels, although the fate of mankind's welfare used to be in the hands of angelic forces, the most decisive roles in the end are played by human beings. The key figures of this combat, also the protagonists of Pullman's trilogy, are

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[38] See Thomas Heywood's (1570s-1641) *The Hierarchy of the Blessed Angels* (1635), a didactic poem in nine books.
[39] As Will explains, "[a]ngels wish they had bodies. They [Baruch and Balthamos] told me angels can't understand why *we* don't enjoy the world more. It would be a sort of ecstasy for them to have our flesh and senses" (AS 392). According to William A. Oram, "[t]his use of 'ecstasy' typifies Pullman's characteristic inversion of traditional religious categories. Ecstasy is etymologically a standing-outside the body, leaving it to approach God. But in Pullman's universe, true ecstasy is immanence, being fully part of the sensuous physical world" (423).

the two twelve-year old children, Lyra and William, who as the new/second Eve and the new/second Adam wander through several parallel universes to fulfil the second, happy Fall so as to save Dust. Meanwhile, angels have a dominant part to play on both sides of the conflict between Lord Asriel and the Authority.

The over-aged opponent of the principle of holism, the God-the-tyrant, is fated to be defeated, and ready to die under miserably marginal conditions. "The Authority, in ceding his power to Metatron, has become a *deus absconditus*: absence at the highest level" (Rutledge 121). He is ready to die long ago: "he was so old, and he was terrified, crying like a baby (…). Demented and powerless, the aged being could only weep and mumble in fear and pain and misery, (…)" (AS 366). Yet, Metatron has prevented him from doing so because the Authority is needed to "serve as a figurehead for [Metatron's] own 'religious' policies. From a theological perspective, (…) an old-fashioned, rigid image of God fostered by an uncompromising religious organizational structure is both abnormal and unnatural" (Leet in Lenz and Scott 185-6). The death of the Authority is like a casual note on the margin. The whole thrust of Pullman's narrative is to reduce the Authority to "a footnote in the apocalyptic scenario" (Gooderham 165). Lyra and Will find the Authority left alone in a crystal litter. Not recognizing who he might be, they try to help him:

> Between them they helped the ancient of days out of his crystal cell; it wasn't hard, for he was as light as paper, and he would have followed them anywhere, having no will of his own, and responding to simple kindness like a flower to the sun. But in the open air there was nothing to stop the wind from damaging him, and to their dismay his form began to loosen and dissolve. Only a few moments later he had vanished completely, and their last impression was of those eyes, blinking in wonder, and a sight of the most profound and exhausted relief. Then he was gone: a mystery dissolving in mystery. It had all taken less than a minute, (…). (AS 366-7)

The two children involuntarily disburden the Authority from the weight of the extreme length of his being, giving him the gift of final annihilation. This act is a deicide:

> [t]he fact that this being – once god-like if not God – is helped to die by two children who act without malice (indeed, they are presented as guiltless) is symbolically important. Such a symbolic death, richly suggestive of the paper-thin presence of God in the modern mind, implies that no real ontological violence is necessary to rid humanity of an oppressive belief in providence. In the end, this wizened figure has outlived his time and, by implication, so too has the whole concept of a benign authority, a divine father who oversees the lives of mortal beings with mercy and infinite care. (Bradley and Tate 74-75)

The absence of God, as I have already expounded, does not lead to nihilism. There are still moral values to follow (for more, see App.).

Four thousand years ago, the Authority chose another angel far more proud, ambitious and merciless to be the Regent of the Kingdom of Heaven. He is called Metatron, who used to be "a man once, a man called Enoch, the son of Jared – six generations away from Adam"

(AS 334).[40] While Metatron assumes power step by step, he gradually reduces the significance of the more and more ageing, impotent and senile Authority. Metatron has the intention of intervening directly in human life with the help of clerical spies and inquisition.[41] For this reason, "[t]here's a war going to be fought, by all accounts, the greatest war ever known" (SK 193). However, the attractive Mrs Coulter successfully seduced Metatron: it is, ultimately, "Metatron's residual fallen humanity" (or "twin human failings," which are his lust for power and for female flesh) that leads to his destruction (Baker in Barfield and Cox 143-144). "In his cruelty and lust for absolute power, [Metatron] symbolizes Pullman's cynical view of organized religion" (144).

The angel who has contributed to the holistic principle of the cosmology of HDM is the first rebel angel. Just as Prometheus gave fire to man, Xaphania gave self-consciousness – civilization – to men. The expelled angels led by Xaphania have been fighting to overthrow the domination of this imposter god:

> All the history of human life has been a struggle between wisdom and stupidity. She [Xaphania] and the rebel angels, the followers of wisdom [also alias Xaphania], have always tried to open minds; the Authority and his churches have always tried to keep them closed. [...] Wisdom has had to work in secret, whispering her words, moving like a spy through the humble places of the world while the courts and palaces are occupied by her enemies.[42] (AS 429)

With the rebel angels she intervened in human evolution for "vengeance" (AS 221), exactly thirty thousand years ago, when the conscious particles of Dust, the vitalizing life-force, began to gather around human beings, when "the human brain became the ideal vehicle for this amplification process;" namely, "[s]uddenly we became conscious" (AS 211). By offering knowledge – alias Dust – to mankind, she (as the serpent, as the mythic Tempter of Eve) "inadvertently liberated 'man' from a spurious Eden: a place of temporal and moral stasis with no opportunities for growth or development" (Bird "Without Contraries" 121). She is the Tempter, a kind of figure of Wisdom, who leads us "to the

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[40] John Haydn Baker lists three possible sources which might have inspired Pullman in creating the figure of Metatron. First, it is the Old Testament in which Enoch "walked with God: and he was not: for God took him" (Genesis 5:23-24). The second source is "the Old Testament apocrypha," *The Book of Enoch* (also known as *1 Enoch*) (Baker in Barfield and Cox 148). The third source is *3 Enoch*, a Hebrew text dating from the fifth or sixth centuries CE., probably written by Ishmael ben Elisha. For more, see Baker in Barfield and Cox.

[41] In my opinion, Pullman transformed the biblical God's exceptional – even intimate – love to Enoch (excepting him from death as a reward for his steadfastness in his belief) into a kind of official alliance to subject all conscious beings to their domination. With regards to Pullman's anticlericalism, the biblical Enoch's high appreciation was the exact reason why Pullman depicted the Regent Metatron so antipathetic in HDM (qtd. in App.).

[42] As Pullman explains, the great moral leaders of mankind, Jesus included, were people "inspired by the rebel angels and Sophia, not by the Authority. Whenever such a one came along and upset the Authority's order, the Authority soon arranged for his churches and priesthoods to punish them and pervert their teachings, and so on and so forth – churches and popes, and the inquisition and the burnings of the heretics, etc." (qtd. in Watkins "Interview" n.p.).

kingdom of good and evil, which is wisdom, as an act of kindness towards those beings who had been kept as prisoners by the [A]uthority" (qtd. in Vulliamy n.p.).

Xaphania turns up as a kind of goddess of wisdom who is identical with Sophia of Gnostic mythology. Pullman tells about her that "the early church and, indeed, the writer of the Old Testament book of Proverbs, knows as wisdom, Sophia" (qtd. in Watkins "Interview" n.p.). 'Sophia' is a Greek word with the meaning of 'wisdom': "[i]n the Greek version of the apocryphal book[,] the *Wisdom of Solomon* (written in Alexandria at the beginning of the common era), Sophia is said to be the emanation of God's glory, the Holy Spirit, the immaculate mirror of his energy, nay, even the spouse of the Lord (Septuagint 8:3)" (Quispel in Eliade *ER*, Vol. 13, 416). In Pullman's creation myth, there is a reference that the Authority and the Sophia (alias Xaphania) might have been either a couple or siblings: "[t]he Authority loved her, and in his love for her he told her the truth: he was not the creator. She urged him to rule wisely with the strength and power he had acquired, and to make the truth known to all the angels; but he would not" (Pullman "HDM" n.p.).

As Wisdom gains only a temporary victory over Stupidity at the end of Pullman's story, Xaphania as a benevolent, graceful and compassionate divinity worthy of religious devotion should continue her graceful campaign for opening human minds. "[T]he struggle isn't over now, though the forces of the Kingdom have met a setback. They'll regroup under a new commander and come back strongly, and we must be ready to resist" (*AS* 429). Lyra and William return to their own worlds "to labour for justice, truth and liberty partly (…) because they have been compelled to do so by a quasi-divine (if not omnipotent) being" (Bradley and Tate 79). "The most explicit 'event of truth' occurs at the end of *HDM* with the appearance of the angel Xaphania in a kind of epiphany − or even annunciation, given the salvific role assigned to Lyra, the second Eve" (Gray *Fantasy* 179).

The figure of Xaphania may also challenge the traditional conceptions of organized religion as a male dominated community. She could satisfy the contemporary need to balance 'masculine' and 'feminine' archetypes. In connection to the Authority's banishment of Xaphania (AS 28), Andrew Leet claims that Pullman recollects "the historical point at which a male form of religious monotheism at last usurped Western society's previous acceptance of pagan gods and goddesses" (Leet in Lenz and Scott 185). Besides, recognizing Pullman's intention of challenging his readers' traditional conceptions of organized religion as a male-dominated community, it must be no coincidence that the primary theological 'movers' in HDM are "of the female gender" (ibid).

III.1.2. Intermediaries: Daemons

This subchapter is devoted to Pullman's daemons who function as the late twentieth-century literary embodiments of the Platonic love concept, or Eros himself. On a Platonist philosophical basis, Pullman's daemons play a central role in the author's adaptation of the myths of losing, seeking and hopefully regaining Paradise in the future.

The world of the gods and that of humans, which was sharply demarcated from each other, necessitated the agency of in-betweens (or go-betweens) or mediators. Stuart W. Smithers notes that "in a hierarchically ordered cosmos, the [spiritual] guide is situated in an intermediary world of subtle possibilities, between the realms of pure matter and pure spirit, between earth and heaven" (Smithers "Spiritual Guide" in Eliade *ER*, Vol. 14, 29-30). It convincingly explains why "[t]he belief in angels, demons and other intermediary beings has become an important aspect of Western religious thought and imagination" (Broek in Hanegraaff *DG* 616).

Platonism gave the most characteristic figure of the intermediary to Western culture. With the aim of making contact with the divine, Plato distinguished between four "sacred enthusiasms, or furies," namely religious enthusiasm, prophetic fury, love and poetry (Szőnyi *John Dee's* 22). Let me present an excerpt upon the purpose, the nature and the embodiment of love from one of Plato's philosophical texts, *Symposium* (c. 385-380 BCE):

> What I told you before – halfway between mortal and immortal.
> And what do you mean by that, Diotima?
> A very powerful spirit, Socrates, and spirits, you know, are half-way between god and man.
> What powers have they, then? I asked.
> They are the envoys and interpreters that ply between heaven and earth, flying upward with our worship and our prayers, and descending with the heavenly answers and commandments, and since they are between the two estates they weld both sides together and merge them into one great whole. They form the medium of the prophetic arts, of the priestly rites of sacrifice, initiation, and incantation, of divination and of sorcery, for the divine will not mingle directly with the human, and it is only through the mediation of the spirit world that man can have any intercourse, whether waking or sleeping, with the gods. And the man who is versed in such matters is said to have spiritual powers, as opposed to the mechanical powers of the man who is expert in the more mundane arts. There are many spirits, and many kinds of spirits, too, and Love is one of them. (Symposium 202d-e, 203a)

Even this small part of the dialogue between Plato's teacher, Socrates (470/469 BC-399 BC), and a fictional woman of Wisdom, named Diotima, highlights how much the Platonic tradition took Eros as a kind of sublimation of sexual desire, a direction of the libido towards the spiritual. Socrates "experienced a divine sigh or *daimonion*, which was a voice within

warning him against particular courses of action" (Ferguson 172).[43] It was the idea of "a personal *daimon* as a tutelary spirit or genius. Every human being has his own *daimon*, who is given to him at birth, or whom he chooses himself," as Plato says (*Republic*, X, 617e).

Daemons of *HDM* trilogy are highly popular with most readers. The author claims to get this idea "from paintings by Leonardo da Vinci ('The Lady with the Ermine'), Holbein ('The Lady and the Squirrel') and Tiepolo ('Young Woman with a Macaw'), where there seems to be a psychological link between the person and the creature" (Butler n.p.). Pullman also admitted that the source of daemons is "probably Classical Greek because Socrates refers to 'daimon'" (qtd. in App.). Pullman's daemons act as confidants, advisers, spies, look-outs, defenders, occasional scolds, best-loved intimates, and the voice of conscience. This idea of the main character who is blessed with a close and beloved friend has been a constant theme in literature written for children and adults alike. Pullman's idea of these creatures must be "one of the main raisons why this work is considered fantasy" (Freitas and King 38).

The nature of Pullman's daemons fits in the homogeneous cosmic structure of *HDM*. Each daemon made of Dust (AS 436) is such an integral part of a human being that they together form a whole complex of three units, "body and ghost and daemon together" (AS 356). None of these units has more importance than the other two. Pullman's whole retelling of the basic narrative of Judeo-Christian mythology focuses on the condition of meaningful human existence: the integrity of the both spiritual and material *connection* among human body, soul and daemon. The reason is "[w]hat we call a self is nothing more or less than the *relation* between our daemon and us. (…) this relation is also dynamic. So that we might say that the self in Pullman's universe is relational and becoming (rather than being)" (Colás 57). The relationship between human and daemon forms one point "around which, as in an elliptical orbit, the worlds and dramas of *His Dark Materials* turn" (50). Man and his daemon may constitute either one object or two objects. On the one hand, humans and daemons share a physical bond which can be cut with a physical knife, and that if one dies, the other also dies. On the other hand, they do not share all aspects of their consciousness, and that one can act independently of the other (especially after they willingly extended the physical bond they share, which gives them 'witch power'). The externalized daemon "models a differentiation which is nevertheless not dualistic; the two cannot be monistically reduced to one, but nor can they be split apart without violent harm, as seen in the procedure of intercision" (Jobling in

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[43] Originally, the Greek word, *daimōn*, designated "a god or, more vaguely, a divine power. From the latter it evolved into an indication of the undetermined superhuman power that causes the good or bad events of human life, i.e. of fate" (Broek in Hanegraaff *DG* 617).

Barfield and Cox 163). In *SK*, when Lyra and Will first meet, the girl is unable to accept the absence of Will's daemon because in her world "to be human means to say 'we,' and never solely 'I,' to be always a self-in-community, identifiable both sexually and socially" (Gamble in Barfield and Cox 196). Moreover, "[c]uriosity and imagination, interest and intellect, affect and expression then all appear to depend upon the integrity of the invisible, but material, bond between human and daemon" (Colás 52). It follows that any position threating the soul as "separable from or transcendent to the body, or as in any way immaterial," leads to cruelty and suffering (55).[44]

As visual sign, the animal-shape of Pullman's daemons relies on animal symbolism which has been used to orient people in their every-day social life. Animal symbolism characterizes the entire mentality of humankind:

> In all cultures, the symbolization of animals is an essential feature in reflections about the nature of humanity, of the characteristics of individuals and their societies, of the surrounding world and its forces, and of the cosmos as a whole. Human beings define themselves and their place in the world by integrating themselves with, or opposing themselves to, the other inhabitants of the universe. (Walens in Eliade *ER* Vol. 1, 291)

To the question why a daemon has animal shape, Pullman answered that "[i]t had to have some short of shape because she could see him and talk to him. An animal shape seemed a good one.[45] It seemed to fit. Well, there are a lot of ideas from shamanistic religions, you know, about the spirit animal or totem animal, or that short of thing" (qtd. in App.). Indeed, animal symbols are often used to express abstract qualities of thought, feeling, and action or to manifest the processes of being and becoming. For instance, in *GC*, a seaman says to Lyra that "[t]ake old Belisaria. She's a seagull, and that means I'm a kind of seagull too. I'm not grand and splendid not beautiful, but I'm a tough old thing and I can survive anywhere and always find a bit of food and company" (GC 147). The obvious advantage of a daemons in one particular shape is "[k]nowing what kind of person you are" (GC 147). And, "it helps to know what you're like and to find what you'd be good at" (AS 409).

Like mirrors, the shape of Pullman's daemons serves to reflect a person's true inner being. Pullman states that the animal form symbolises an aspect of someone's personality,

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[44] There can be an external and an internal separation between daemon and human. 'Intercision,' the brainchild of Mrs. Coulter, does not only turn human beings into shadows of themselves – zombies –, but it also severs human beings from their union with the divine, with Dust (Freitas and King 67). To the question, whether it could happen that a daemon turns against its human counterpart, Pullman answered yes: "[o]ccasionally, you might find a person and their daemon who just don't like each other. That's a terrible situation. It's a way of describing depression, I suppose. The psychological state, in which one feels self-hatred. It's one way in which this metaphor of daemons is very rich" (qtd. in App.).

[45] With regards to the shape and the size of daemons, there is a difference in their physical ability or disability (for example, it *does* matter your daemon has the shape of a dolphin or a monkey). To this thought, Pullman answered that "[m]ost daemons are… the sort of animals that can get around" (qtd. in App.).

"[b]ut our personalities have many aspects, and it might be a surprising one" ("Philip Pullman: a life" n.p.). His standard move is the externalization and the personification of the self. Millicent Lenz points out that Pullman can communicate to the reader an immediate impression of a character's essence (Lenz in Hunt and Lenz 139). Claire Squires claims that the form in which a daemon settles always depends on the character of its human, which has been informed by his or her previous acts and decisions (85).

Maude Hines sheds light to the discriminative viewpoint of freely reading the visible reflection of anyone's soul. In her opinion, "daemons make people legible to others as well as themselves" (Hines in Lenz and Scott 38). Hines insists that reading the body as a key to the self continues today "in a multiplicity of discriminatory practices against people with visible disabilities and racist, sexist and ageist practices" (39). Moreover, in Lyra's world, the form of the daemon is so much an important key to both character and class position that the figure of the daemon naturalizes the rigidity of the class system: if someone has a dog daemon, s/he must be a servant.

However, the conventional symbol of the given animal shape itself, let it be a repulsive toad or a peaceful-looking dove, does not influence whether a given character can be only positive or negative. The key word is the freedom of choice. Pullman claims that "[w]e're not all gifted in the same way. (…) and there's nothing we can do about those characteristics. But the things we *can* do something about still remain within our path" (quoted in Parsons and Nicholson 129). In other words, "[w]e can try to be good or bad, we can be a good snake person or a bad snake person. That doesn't say anything about the goodness or badness or morality or giftedness or attractiveness of anything. It's a basic sort of attitude to the world" (128-129). He has an action-based view of identity: "[w]hat we are is not in our control, but what we do is… simultaneously, what we do depends on what we are (on what we have to do it with), and what we are can be modified by what we do" (Pullman "Identity Crisis" n.p.).

In HDM, daemons are for guiding and encouraging people toward (sensual desire and) wisdom. Pullman modified Chapter Three of *Genesis* in a way that more prominent focus is given to the outcome of Eve and Adam's disobedience, sensuality:

> "And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden:
> "But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midts of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.
> "And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:
> "For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and your daemons shall assume their true forms, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.

"And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to reveal the true form of one's daemon, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.

"And the eyes of them both were opened, and they saw the true form of their daemons, and spoke with them.

"But when the man and the woman knew their own daemons, they knew that a great change had come upon them, for until that moment it had seemed that they were at one with all the creatures of the earth and the air, and there was no difference between them:

"And they saw the difference, and they knew good and evil; and they were ashamed, and they sewed fig leaves together to cover their nakedness. . . ." (GC 326-327, italicized by Pullman)

Since then, in the ignorant childhood of their human counterpart, daemons can have any shape, but in adolescence with the coming of "sinful" feelings and thought, they "assumed one shape, keeping it permanently" (GC 44).[46] It is quite obvious that what fixes the form of the daemon is the nature of the child.[47] In this way, as Pullman explains, daemons symbolise "the difference between innocence and experience, between childhood and adulthood" (qtd. in Fried n.p.). In addition, there is another important change during the years of puberty: Dust begins to settle on adolescents as much as it settles on adults (GC 325). During one's adolescence, the function of Dust is to act as some kind of catalyst initiating the child's journey toward adulthood. As a god-like embodiment of a kind of divine eroticism, Dust is "part and parcel of the world, part and parcel of human beings – so intimate that it is as if the universe and God are *lovers*, and the erotic love enjoyed between creatures a tangible expression of this divine intimacy" (Freitas and King 135). For this reason, it is not surprising that to the Church, "Dust symbolises the awakening of sexual awareness, humanity's rejection of the heavenly for the earthly, and thus, a descent from spirit to matter" (Bird "Without Contraries" 116). And since puberty, humans are in contact with Dust.

The material bodies of daemons need to get the same – hopefully respectful – attitude that the most intimate parts of the human body deserve. "[I]t was a gross violation of manners to touch something so private as someone else's daemon. It was forbidden not only by politeness, but by something deeper than that – something like shame" (AS 409). People, even little children, just know it, as instinctively as feeling "nausea bad and comfort good" (GC

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[46] As Anne-Marie Bird interprets this event, "[i]n their unfallen condition, Adam and Eve were trapped in a preconscious state – a state of infancy" (Bird "Without Contraries" 121). In Pullman's universe, Satan did not only offer Dust, as a rebel angel, he himself *is* Dust: "an essential and dynamic force which initiates the process of awakening from potentiality (as symbolised by the changing forms of the child's daemon) to actuality (symbolised by the fixed form of the adult's daemon). This process results in a fully formed individual, complete with an awareness of its own sexuality, mortality, and itself as a thinking being" (ibid).

[47] Were it not for daemons, Pullman could not convey so artfully "the fluidity of the child's nature versus the rigidity of the adult's" (Lenz in Hunt and Lenz 139). Pullman claimed that daemons help the story to develop "because children's daemons can change and adults' demons don't" (qtd. in App.).

126).[48] Nevertheless, attempting to get rid of Original Sin alias Dust or sexuality, the desperate clergy in Lyra's world manages to draw a parallel between the separation of a daemon from its human body (named 'intercision,' a monstrous abuse) and castration. Without a daemon as vim, even will to life, one has "no fear and no imagination and no free will" (SK 176), so s/he is a perfect subject to blind obedience.

Every detail so far suggests as if both in the evolution of humankind since the Fall of Eve and Adam, and in the personal development of everyman and everywoman since adolescence, Pullman's daemons functioned as the ancient Eros' not-so-secret agents. Beside of this, daemons have a more crucial duty in the mythopoeia of *HDM* trilogy.

In the light of his Platonic heritage, man needs to discover the divine potential deep inside himself. It is a kind of deity symbolizing "the transcendence of all the limitations of human consciousness and the movement of the human spirit toward self-identity through its encounter with the ultimate" (Panikkar in Eliade *ER* Vol. 4, 264).[49] (In HDM, a part of human beings' soul is materialized in visible and audible form, which is the daemon.) Deity also symbolizes "man's knowledge that he is not alone[,] nor the ultimate master of his fate" (ibid). Daemons are indispensable for recognizing and interiorizing this kind of deity. On the one hand, instead of being the external mediators of Platonic metaphysics, Pullman's fictional creatures are integral parts of their human counterparts who, therefore, share the divine nature of Eros, the all-pervading life-force. On the other hand, people are also connected to animals by the animal-ness of daemons. This silent reminder, that we are only one among many, helps mankind accept and express mutual responsibility for and respectful humility towards the Cosmos and all of its inhabitants.[50] With regards to this trustworthy wisdom, twenty-first-century man and woman *should* learn the acceptance of our temporal and spatial limits, as well as the abandonment of unattainable desires and ambitions endangering others.

III.1.3. The World to Come: The Republic of Heaven

The eschatological phrase, the world to come or heaven on Earth, reflects the belief that the currently cursed age will be replaced by a better age. With regards to the Christian term of the

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[48] Interestingly, in contrast to this deeply-rooted human instinct as well as daemons' animal instinct, "[t]he word 'taboo' suggests something created by human beings, something constructed rather than natural" (Hines in Lenz and Scott 42).

[49] In the light of the Gnostics' lamentation on the human soul's suffering from getting trapped in a body, as Pullman makes the daemon both material and spiritual (i.e. the product of Dust), he is, "from a Gnostic perspective, polluting the only pure aspect of human existence" (Freitas and King 42).

[50] There are more details about this issue in Chapter III.3.

Kingdom of Heaven (as the confidence in the afterlife and in the otherworldly compensation for abjuring worldly pleasures), Pullman Nietzschean position is:

> [t]he kingdom of heaven promised us certain things: it promised us happiness and a sense of purpose and a sense of having a place in the universe, of having a role and a destiny that were noble and splendid; and so we were connected to things. We were not alienated. But now that, for me anyway, the King is dead, I find that I still need these things that heaven promised, and I'm not willing to live without them. I don't think I will continue to live after I'm dead, so if I am to achieve these things I must try to bring them about – and encourage other people to bring them about – on earth, in a republic in which we are all free and equal – and responsible – citizens. (Qtd. in Spanner n.p.)

The story of HDM implies that people should not long for an immortal, omnipresent, omnipotent God in the middle of a remote heaven, all of which is based on the uncertain promise of a hypocrite priesthood. Accordingly, the overarching Christian metaphor of the Kingdom of Heaven expresses "the threat of disasters on the individual and collective levels: widespread despair and soul-loss, social chaos, political upheaval, ecological ruin, massive wars, a catastrophe of apocalyptic dimensions" (Lenz in Hunt and Lenz 123). Instead of a kingdom, people should work for a republic (a humanistic conception) by making this world of here and now as loveable and as homey for each other as humanly possible: "[w]e shouldn't live as if [any uncertain Heaven] mattered more than this life in this world, because where we are is always the most important place" (AS 464). Human beings should "apply their natural faculties and make use of the accumulation of human wisdom" (Rayment-Pickard 80). In practice, it means to build the Republic of Heaven which Pullman used as a deliberate contrast with either a kingdom or a king (App.). What Pullman's story implies is that an individual's daily choices to help others, repeated year after year, do not only create for a person a meaningful life, but they also contribute to the building of the Republic. The exemplars of self-sacrifice for the benefit of others are Lyra and William, the second Eve and the second Adam.[51]

The materialist cosmology of HDM (with the absence of God and the other world) predetermines the materialist character of the Republic of Heaven. Pullman is convinced that "this world where we live is our true home. (…) This is a physical universe and we are physical beings made of material stuff" (qtd. in Roberts "A Dark Agenda" n.p.). What Pullman is looking for is

> a way of thinking of heaven that restores these senses of rightness and goodness and connectedness and meaning and gives us a place in it. But because there ain't no elsewhere, that has got to exist in the only place we know about for sure which is this earth, and we've got to make our world as good as we possibly can for one another and for our descendants. (Qtd. in Watkins "Interview" n.p.)

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[51] About this issue, there are more details in Chapter III.3.

In accordance with this, Pullman condemns the Gnostic and the Puritan hatred of the physical world (Pullman "The Republic of Heaven" 658).[52]

Due to its materialist nature, the Republic of Heaven involves the appreciation of the body and sensuality. Pullman emphasizes that "[i]f there was one feeling or one idea that I would like readers to take away from the trilogy (…), I would like them to take away this emphasis, this continuing and strong emphasis that I put on the value of being alive and having nerves and senses — of having a physical body" (qtd. in Mustich n.p.). In HDM, it is illuminated by the difference between an angel's body and a human's body. Pullman completely disagrees with "the renunciation of the body, the *hatred* of the body which you find in various Christians,[53] especially Christian saints. They left the world and they went to live in a cave, or they lived on [the] top of a pillar or something and they had a miserable life" (qtd. in App.). Pullman necessitates the enjoyment of life to collect as much impressions, emotions and sensations of earthly existence as possible (for the sake of happy annihilation, which is discussed in Chapter III.3). Food, drink, music, touch, and taste, which mean the great joys of existence, are intimately connected to what it means to be an intelligent and embodies creature (Freitas and King 43-44). It is only through bodies (and daemons) that people come to know the truth about themselves and others in Pullman's universe.

In the light of these all, Pullman follows the *memento vivere* tradition (remember that you have to live).[54] C. P. Gilman distinguishes between 'death-based' religion, where the main question is "What is going to happen to me after I am dead?" and 'birth-based' religion which asks "What must be done for the child who is born?" (Pinsent in Lenz and Scott 205). This is why Pullman is definitely "more aligned with the 'birth-based' than the 'death-based' position in his vision of the behaviour needed to establish the 'Republic of Heaven' on this earth" (ibid). Moreover, *HDM* validates a view of human nature which is congruent with 'creation theology' in contrast to fall/redemption theology: the former one draws upon a mystical tradition that emphasizes 'original blessing' over 'original sin,' biophilia (love of life) over necrophilia (love of death) (Lenz in Hunt and Lenz 136).

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[52] Pullman's views on the Republic of Heaven are identical with the views of liberation theologians who focus on "human experience here and now, in *this* world" (Freitas and King xxii).

[53] Nicola Allen notes that "[l]apsarian shame is the Christian idea that human beings, but women in particular, discovered shame about their bodies (such as what it means to be naked), after Adam and Eve's ate from the forbidden tree of knowledge and were consequently expelled from Eden in the Fall" (Allen in Barfield and Cox 111).

[54] As the opposition of *memento mori* ('remember that you have to die'), the medieval Latin Christian theory and practice of reflection on mortality, *memento vivere* means to remember to live; it is a reminder of the pleasure of living, and implies the unwiseness and unhealthiness of a preoccupation with death ("Memento mori" n.p.)

For Pullman, the republican myth provides explanations to the two basic questions, "What brought us here?" and "What are we here for?" For the first one, "the overwhelmingly powerful evidence for evolution by natural selection" must be accepted (Pullman "The Republic" 665). In connection with this,

> Pullman himself has described the process of human evolution as blind and automatic, and accepts the Darwinian notion of natural selection as the only acceptable explanation for how it all works. But because humans have consciousness, he also believes that this potentially alters the future processes of evolution. As he says in his lecture on the republic of Heaven, 'We might have arrived by a series of accidents, but from now on we have to take charge of our fate. Now we are here, now we are conscious, we make a difference. Our presence changes everything.'" (Tucker 175)

The answer to the second question is found in Chapter III.3.

Building the Republic of Heaven goes along with the mission of saving Dust. People *must* be enlightened about the importance of intellectual and sensual curiosity, pleasure and wisdom, to preserve and make more and more Dust, the condition of consciousness. It has to be primarily preached by Lyra and Will as the second Eve and Adam:

> Conscious beings make Dust – they renew it all the time, by thinking and feeling and reflecting, by gaining wisdom and passing it on. And if you [Lyra and Will] help everyone else in your worlds to do that, by helping them to learn and understand about themselves and each other and the way everything works, and by showing them how to be kind instead of cruel, and patient instead of hasty, and cheerful instead of surly, and above all how to keep their minds open and free and curious… Then they will renew enough [Dust] to replace what is lost. (AS 440-441)

Pullman is convinced that a passionate love of this physical world will "both grow out of and add to the achievements of the human mind such as science and art" (Pullman "The Republic" 658).

As both the Authority and his Kingdom of Heaven are over, the formerly disjoined world could only be restored by creating humanistic values. It is not the organized church but the individual that should be the centre of religious life for establishing the Republic of Heaven. In this kind of heaven, each and every person has ultimate responsibility for humankind (a basically Protestant belief) to live full and worthy lives, to take this physical world, the here and now as their true home. In this case,

> [t]he unbeliever has the courage to take up an adult stance, and face reality. He knows that human beings are on their own. But this doesn't cause him just to cave in. On the contrary, he determines to affirm human worth, and the human good, and to work for it, without false illusion or consolation. And that means that in his moral beliefs he is also counter-mortification. Moreover, he has no reason to exclude anyone as heretic; so his philanthropy is universal. (Taylor 561-562)

Pullman's post-modern myth-recreation intends to replace Christian religion with an emancipatory humanism with plain human dimensions, tasks, and stories. In spite of the Christian sources of the symbolism of HDM, because the emphasis is mostly on how

Christianity went wrong, the trilogy is rather a reworking of a Christian text towards radically different conclusions (Tucker 174).

The Republic of Heaven is not only a humanist concept; it is also admittedly a religious one. For a non-religious person, there is a distinction between social ethics and a sense of social community on the one hand, and also a sense of wonder and awe on the other. For a religious person, the social ethics, the sense of social community, and the sense of wonder, awe and mystery together constitute a kind of complete package, which is provided by religious organizations. It seems much that the Republic of Heaven rather embodies this kind of complete package, which is a kind of religious concept. To this, Pullman answered that "I hope it does" (qtd. in App.). The only difference, he pointed out, is the unnecessity of God: "[i]n every other respect, you should say [the Republic of Heaven] is a religious idea" (ibid).

The Republic of Heaven encompasses the comprehensive morality of mankind. Pullman claims that "[m]orality is *inherent* in every human interaction" (qtd. in App.). The moral and social relations, as the embodiments of the Republic of Heaven, produce meaning on a microcosmic level: "[i]n the republic, we're connected in a moral way to one another, to other human beings. We have responsibilities to them, and they to us. We're not isolated units of self-interest in a world where there is no such thing as society; we cannot live so" (Pullman "The Republic" 664). And also on a macrocosmic level: "But part of the sense of wider meaningfulness that we need comes from seeing that we have a connection with nature and the universe around us, with everything that is *not* human as well" (ibid). Pullman's so-called 'materialist' visions reinforced his conviction of cosmic togetherness and attunement. It is a feeling of being 'at one' with another being:

> I have never had an experience that I could call religious, though I have known two or three short passages of intense, transcendental feeling – that is to say, experiences of about 15 to 20 minutes, during which my perception of things in the external world (one was a storm on a beach; another was a journey home on a winter evening on the Tube and bus from Charing Cross Road to Barnes) seemed to become enlarged and clarified to include many things, all of which I was able to see without losing sight of everything else.
>   These visions of the real world were laced through with patterns and connections and correspondences. They were accompanied by a feeling of intense, calm excitement. I felt that I was seeing the truth, that all things were like this and that the universe was alive and conscious and full of urgent purpose.[55]

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[55] These materialist visions made him see the connections between things "much more clearly, much more vividly. There were patterns, there were correspondences, there were shadows here of something there, everything was connected. With enormous excitement, I could see that the universe was alive and I was part of it. I saw this so clearly and intensely that I don't think I could sustain that state for very long" (qtd. in Renton n.p.). In the third novel, Mary Malone has the same experience.

> Perhaps 'transcendental' is the wrong word: there was nothing other-worldly about these moments, nothing 'spiritual.' Rather, this material world was more intensely present and alive than I had ever felt it to be before.
>
> I don't know what happened to evoke such a feeling. Certainly, drugs had nothing to do with it. But I think that if my mind had been inclined to religious explanations, it would have been easy to feel that I had been granted some kind of vision. (Pullman "Customs of my tribe" n.p.)

The Republic of Heaven also achieves the togetherness of past, present and future generations: this institution stands for "a sense of being connected to other people, to people who are not here any more, to those who have gone before us. And [it is also] a sense of being connected to the universe itself" (qtd. in Roberts "A Dark Agenda" n.p.).

Humankind's responsibility for themselves and, in this way, for Dust, makes man equal with the (absent) divine. By the realization of the Republic of Heaven, each human being can become the *middle* of his own world, the microcosm inside the macrocosm, the point around which the universe revolves, and the point containing all options (Pál and Újvári "Centre" n.p.). What is more, the significance of this institution is best captured by the theories of Leone Ebreo in his book, *Dialoghi d'amore*. By resembling the human and the cosmic forms of love, he advertised the comprehension of the central role of man as the reduced replica of the universe, imagined as a living organism always making love (Klaniczay 324). In this way, the Jewish philosopher created the theory of the perfect harmony of the microcosm and macrocosm, according to which man can become part of the true harmony – only with the help of love (ibid). In Pullman's story, the most prominent examples for man as the centre emanating and receiving love in the universe are the second Eve and Adam.[56]

However, the elevation of Man above other creatures places great responsibility on his shoulders. Pullman asserts, above all, "the sovereign autonomy of human beings, who are distinguished from all others by the power to choose" (Wrigley 104). He insists that the Republic of Heaven is a metaphor: "this is a way of behaving to one another" (qtd. in Watkins "Interview" n.p.). He emphasized that "[w]e have to act to protect one another, to make it possible for other people to live in freedom and peace and security, to educate the children, so that they can take part in the intellectual and emotional life of the world all around them. (…) We have to do what a decent human society does" (qtd. in App.). In other words, our purpose of understanding and helping others to understand, to explore, to speculate, and to imagine has a moral force (Pullman "The Republic" 665). The responsibility for making things better is only ours: "[g]oodness and evil have always had a human origin" (666). In HDM, what

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[56] As it is detailed in the next chapter, due to their cosmic role, when Lyra and Will fall in love with each other, the (rather contradictory) fulfilment of their true love – a *Felix culpa*, the second Fall – partly stops Dust leaking from the universe, or dying.

arises from these common responsibilities is a kind of union or fellowship – namely, *solidarity* –, to which Pullman claimed that "empathy is the important thing. We should feel a bond with other people, which will lead us to be tolerant of them" (qtd. in App.).[57]

The way Lord Asriel plans to build the Republic of Heaven is not compatible with the trilogy's holistic principle. He claims that "[t]he Kingdom of Heaven has been known by that name since the Authority first set himself above the rest of the angels. (…) We intend to be free citizens of the Republic of Heaven" (*AS* 188). He wants to set up an alternative to the Authority's Kingdom of Heaven, "a place of freedom and knowledge built in a single world where people from all worlds can come together" (Freitas and King 81-82). However, Lord Asriel's republic would function much like the Authority's kingdom, at least in structure, "imposed, however benevolently or malevolently, from above" (82). The republic of heaven envisioned by Lord Asriel is "an intensely political one, one which, it could be assumed, would necessarily involve political structures and organisations to replace those of the Magisterium" (Squires 79). Besides, his great project is "eventually rejected because of the arrogance and brutality of the science that it represents. To make his bridge between two worlds, Asriel not only killed an innocent child but wrecked the ecology of his own world" (Wrigley 101).[58] However, the desirable realization of the Republic of Heaven – that "[w]e have to be all those difficult things like cheerful and kind and curious and patient, and we've got to study and think and work hard, all of us" (*AS* 464) – is rather an attitude or "an orientation to life" (Lenz in Hunt and Lenz 160). Keeping their freedom in mind, even the powerless should reclaim responsibility for themselves. Everyone should be the useful citizen of his or her own world.

Building the Republic of Heaven is also identical with raising (self-)consciousness. Pullman argues that "our main duty, if we have a duty, is to increase the amount of consciousness in the universe, which means by teaching, by writing, thinking, talking, by being good, by being kind, (…). That's the absolute basic foundation of my morality" (qtd. in App.). While HDM is "the story of how human beings, at this critical time in history, might evolve towards a higher level of consciousness" (Lenz in Hunt and Lenz 123), the Republic of Heaven is rather "a state of consciousness" (Lenz in Lenz and Scott 3), "an open and joyful awareness of the splendo[u]rs of life" (9). Pullman's myth about the transformation of

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[57] People, who (metaphorically) refuse to be citizens of the Republic of Heaven, are punished with forcing them "to remain where they are [in the World of the Dead], to remain what they are [ghosts]" (qtd. in App.). If someone commits a serious crime, "there's no [god] to punish them, except other human beings" (ibid).

[58] The way Pullman represents and treats Roger's death on the basis of the so-called consequentialist ethics is exactly what Hugh Rayment-Pickard objects to in *HDM* (see Rayment-Pickard 46-47).

consciousness ultimately shapes readers' perceptions of the world (4). Moreover, HDM dramatizes the struggle between devastating intentions for terrorizing, for repressing thought, and for spreading materialism, selfishness, and cynicism (which are metaphorically expressed in the subtle knife and the Specters), and aspirations toward greater awareness, aliveness, and consciousness.[59] The so-called "creaturely self-consciousness," which is vital to the "(a-)theology of *His Dark Materials*," is identical with "the sin of Pride" defined by C.S. Lewis (Lewis 66, qtd. in Bradley and Tate 68).[60] Raising (self-)consciousness in the trilogy can be interpreted as the mental pilgrimage of the individual or the terminus of the quest for wholeness.

Daemons simultaneously catalyse and limit humankind in his obligation (and necessity) of building the Republic of Heaven. On the one hand, just like Socrates and Plato's intermediary spirits, Pullman's daemons also must help their humans by "guid[ing] them and encourage[ing] them toward wisdom. That's what daemons are for" (AS 424). In this light, "[t]he daemon is reminiscent of the animal guide in folklore, and like the animal guide, the daemon 'knows the way,' instinctively, the right path for the character to travel" (Lenz in Hunt and Lenz 140). On the other hand, the material needs of daemons determine their humans' spatial scales: "your daemon can only live its full life in the world it was born in. Elsewhere it will eventually sicken and die. We can travel, if there are openings into other worlds, but we can only live in our own" (AS 325). As a direct result, "we have to build the Republic of Heaven where we are, because for us there is no elsewhere" (AS 325). The Republic of Heaven must emerge as the result of people working together in their own worlds and in their own way. Consequently, "fantasies of escape to an alternative world are foreclosed" (Lenz in Lenz and Scott 9).

At first sight, the importance of the self is the common point between Pullman's Republic of Heaven and alternative spiritualities (especially the *contemporary* New Age in Christopher Partridge's interpretation).[61]

The New Age has largely been responsible for making the self again (one hundred years after the Romantic Movement) the centre of attention. In a re-enchanted culture, to

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[59] Meanwhile, Pullman has shown us that how fatal escapism is to consciousness: it means "missing out on the joys of being in the present moment" (Lenz in Lenz and Scott 8-9). "[T]he creativity and wholeness of mind realized in the 'Republic of Heaven'" represents metaphorically "[t]he antithesis of drugged or deadened consciousness" (9).

[60] "Lewis, following Augustine, notes that the 'perversion' of 'good things' occurs 'when a conscious creature becomes more interested in itself than in God (…) and wishes to exist 'on its own'" (Lewis 66, qtd. in Bradley and Tate 68).

[61] Hippies, as the members of the U.S.A.'s counterculture in the 1960s, originally did not emphasize individualism. They rather emphasized cooperation with the Earth.

discover my route to wholeness and spiritual depth, the focus should be on the individual, and on his/her experience: "[t]he basic mode of spiritual life is thus the quest" (Taylor 507-508). Spirituality is understood "in terms of the turn to the self" (Partridge *RE, Vol. II*, 6). Consequently, what the Western world is witnessing is "a massive and well-documented subjective turn" (7). There are six key themes in the self-centeredness of the New Age religion, as a "broad brand of beliefs and practices" (Partridge, *RW, Vol. I,* 71):

> 1. New Age belief systems teach that, in some sense, the self is divine or that the self can, by some means or other, become divine. (…) this is a religion of divine-human *continuity* presupposing the innate goodness of humanity, not a religion of divine-human *discontinuity*, supported by a doctrine of sin. Again, in the terms suggested by Woodhead and Heelas, the New Age is not a 'religion of difference', but a 'spirituality of life.' Hence, true religion is located within, not without; one focuses on the good self *per se*, rather than the self over against the Good (i.e. God).
>   2. The problem with this form of religiosity is that it leads to epistemological individualism. There is no higher authority than the self.[62] Personal experience is the final arbiter of truth.[63] (…)
>   3. Epistemological individualism leads, in turn, to eclecticism. As their own priests and spiritual directors, individuals prescribe what they feel best meets their spiritual needs: (…). (Partridge *RW, Vol. I*, 32)
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> 4. (…) New Age spirituality emphasizes holism. It rejects what it perceives to be the reductionism of modern scientific worldviews. It bemoans modern medicine's treatment of people as a collection of parts, rather than as whole persons, and the separation of the spiritual and the material. Hence, themes of connectedness pervade New Age worldviews.
>   5. Epistemological individualism and eclecticism necessarily lead to relativism. Truth claims are relativized or, more likely, the implications of them are simply not noticed. The general claim is often the essentialist/perennialist one that no path is better than another, all generally leading in the same direction, and there is a unifying cosmic something behind the apparent diversity.
>   6. The *goal* of much New Age spirituality is health and happiness, rather than health and happiness being a potential *by-product* of the religious life.[64] (33)

Considering the emphasis on choice and the commodification of spirituality, New Age religion seems to be well-suited to the modern world: as individuals are encouraged to choose on the grounds of their preference and presumed personal need, they are also encouraged to become consumers. What characterizes the so-called *world-affirming* new religions is an emphasis "not on *collective liberation from* the world, but *individual liberation within* the world" (Partridge, *RW, Vol. I*, 28). Self-chosen individualistic faith is increasingly popular. The reason is the eclectic, individualized religion that alternative spiritualities provide for

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[62] The epistemology of the experience, according to which only personal experience can provide "immediate and uncontaminated access to truth," is paired with antipathy to organized religion: "[m]ediated knowledge communicated by sacred texts, by the Church, by society cannot be trusted" (Partridge, *RW, Vol. I*, 75). At the same time, channelling, guru, sacred text, or astrology, all of which are of course detraditionalized, are not understood as external authorities, but rather as "aids to assist us on our experiential journey within" (77).

[63] To New Age believers, "[t]ruths cannot be communicated without being in some way interpreted and therefore 'contaminated.' Hence, the immediacy of personal experience is understood as epistemologically crucial" (Partridge, *RW, Vol. I*, 76). Partridge claims that "for New Age epistemology the self becomes supremely significant, in that the truth [the self] seeks is *within*" (73).

[64] For more details, see Steve Bruce's "The New Age and Secularization" in Steven Sutcliffe and Marion Bowman eds. *Beyond New Age. Exploring Alternative Spirituality* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2000), 220-236.

disenchanted Westerners ("who want to hang on to the remnants of belief without inconveniencing themselves too much") ignore omits to claim absolute truth, require devotion to one religious leader, insist on the authority of a single set of sacred writings (Partridge, *RW, Vol. I*, 36). Instead, what it rather encourages are "exploration, eclecticism, an understanding of the self as divine, and, consequently, often a belief in the final authority only of the self" (ibid). This focus on the individual, and this emphasis on feeling, intuition and imagination draw a close parallel between Romanticism and the New Age.

Holism in the New Age, which is totally subordinated today to the motto of "a healthy mind in a healthy body,"[65] corresponds to the ideology of Pullman's Republic of Heaven. Strategies for healing and wellbeing are now a central part of a responsible person's self-care (Partridge *RW, Vol. II*, 4). Furthermore, as this idealization of the health of the self increasingly includes 'the spiritual,' "a growing emphasis on *spiritual* health" is central to notions of wellbeing (ibid). The holistic milieu, as the cultivation of the subjective life, is far from being egoistic:

> while spirituality is about *me*, *my wellbeing*, *my personal journey*, and the fulfilment of *my potential*, this is very often not a *selfish* path. (…) In other words, the concern with the wellbeing of the self is not, generally speaking, concerned with the individual in isolation. Rather, it tends to be a path that encourages individual responsibility. (12)

While my wellbeing strengthens the community, my diseases and weakness weaken it. For this reason, the rising demand for wellbeing is to facilitate contact with the so-called 'transpersonal': "that experience of the self as being part of a greater whole, and of partaking of what is spoken of in traditional religious systems as the divine, something which exists both within and beyond time and the particular" (Brady and Considine *Holistic London* 175, qtd. in Partridge, *RW, Vol. II*, 16). In the Nietzschean mythopoeia of HDM, where people have only one world to live in, where they have only one body to live in, they should look after their body by leading a healthy life-style. To this idea, Pullman said that "I wouldn't say it's an inevitable consequence from reading *HDM* that you will stop smoking;" and "I would never say you won't go to heaven unless you stop smoking" (qtd. in App.). However, the excessive enjoyment of material pleasures, hedonism, is against the health of our body. To this, he answered that "hedonism is just looking one aspect of everything and making that one thing the world. The world is too interesting and too important to be hedonistic" (ibid).

Another parallel between Pullman's Republic of Heaven and alternative spiritualities is citizens/converts' awareness of their choice and responsibility. Partridge argues that *chosen*

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[65] This is the translation of a Latin phrase, *Mens sana in corpore sano*. It comes from "Satire X: Wrong Desire is the Source of Suffering," a poem written by the Roman poet Juvenal (late first century-early second century).

spirituality, understood as a *bricolage* project, is both a weakness in traditional, hierarchical religion and also *a strength* within the new subjective milieu: many of those who are part of 'the holistic milieu' seem to have the commitment of recent converts because of their understanding of "the spiritual life to be *their choice*, *their responsibility*, *their journey* towards wholeness and wellbeing on which *they* are *regularly required* to make real choices with real outcomes" (Partridge, *RW, Vol. II*, 9). This implies an appreciation of a kind of grown-up attitude (especially exemplified by the final decision of Lyra and Will at the end of *AS*) which is important for Pullman's metaphor on the one hand, and counteracts the disadvantages of too much emphasis on the self (weakness and destabilization) on the other hand.[66]

At the second sight, however, Pullman's Republic of Heaven seems to contradict to the focus on the self and individualism in alternative spiritualities (especially the New Age).

It is Pullman's secularizing intentions that subvert the credibility of his so desired republic. "As the belief in immortality (…) becomes less and less certain, more attention is paid to time, and time achieves a spatial quality" (Hoffman 4). In parallel with this, personal immortality is dissolved into a social immortality: the citizen, who is working toward that future condition of bliss (not for himself but for his grandchildren), share posthumously in it (6). There is an almost absolute faith in futures, while the past is valuable "only in showing what we ought to avoid in the present to make the future pure" (ibid). Accordingly, history becomes "the story of man's movement from an imperfect past toward a perfect future, an attempt to place heaven in time" (99). A human being, who is the agent of human futures, cannot "yield to the temptation to idealize his present state" (100). The demand of total investment into this spatial-earthly heaven is irreconcilable with Pullman's life-loving ideology.

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[66] Some New Age spiritualities come close to "narcissistic subjectivism" (Partridge, *RW, Vol. I*, 74). Besides, as 'diffuse religion,' a term by Bruce, New Age is "fundamentally precarious" because "it does not submit to a central authority and therefore, unlike traditional hierarchical religions, is difficult to order socially" (Partridge, *RW, Vol. I*, 34). This leads to several related problems: the lack of commitment ("once-powerful religious hierarchies have become commodities to be chosen in accordance with individual likes and dislikes"); the lack of cohesion ("[t]he sense of community, which binds individuals together and enables the construction of orthodoxies is very weak in diffuse religion"); the "little social impact" of the spiritual individualism of New Age devotees; the negligible affect of the New Age spirituality on "the lives of the individual believers;" "little incentive to evangelize;" "a need to present something *new and fashionable* for each season;" "a vulnerability to dilution and trivialization," the detraditionalization of doctrines and practices from the world religions ("[t]hey are taken out of their original systematic theological contexts and have their original meaning diluted, in order to serve personal whims and desires") (34-36). Steve Bruce states that a chosen religion is weaker than a religion of fate because of our awareness that we chose the gods (Bruce "Pluralism and Religious Vitality," 170, in Partridge, *RW, Vol. II*, 9). As the result of this process of destabilization and recomposition of earlier forms of religious life, "the religious life of Western societies is much more fragmented than ever before, and also much more unstable, as people change their positions during a lifetime, or between generations, to a greater degree than ever before" (Taylor 594).

Neither the second Fall, nor the great sacrifice of Lyra and Will bring us the second Paradise. The time period of the realization of Pullman's Republic of Heaven is highly problematic. The chronology of Pullman's mythopoeia resembles to the so-called 'historical' (usually prophetic) religions which "postulate a creation when time is said to have begun and a final eschaton when time as we know it will reach its conclusion" (J. I. Smith in Eliade *ER* Vol. 1, 112). Many religious traditions envision a certain period as an 'ideal time' which may be an era having existed before the beginning of time and will be realized again when time ceases. Ideal time may also be conceptualized as "having occurred within the framework of history and, thus, having the potential to be realized again in time" (113). In HDM, the Republic of Heaven is the ideal time to come, a kind of 'Golden Age,' a mode of utopian existence located temporally in the distant future. Pullman's Republic of Heaven is only "an article of faith in the human future: that everything will be good and bright so long as we all work together to make it happen" (Rayment-Pickard 80). Moreover, the idea that human beings can make their own perfect future is one of the (now discredited) dogmas of the Enlightenment:

> Over the past two centuries, there have been a thousand variations on the idea of republic of heaven – from Coleridge and [Robert] Southey's pantisocracy to William Morris's Earthly Paradise, from socialist utopias to capitalist dreams of the 'end of history.' Without exception, human attempts to design perfect societies have failed spectacularly, and some have generated brutal tyrannies. Pullman does not give us sufficient reason to think that his republic will not fail as miserably as all the rest. (83)

As only the chance is given to each and every man and woman to work for the Republic of Heaven to be realized in a distant future, Pullman understands time linearly, which resembles to the belief in the future arrival of heaven of historical, usually prophetic religions (such as Christianity).[67] This linear time-conception contradicts Pullman's celebration of the Fall happening to everyone in adolescence in a cyclical time conception.

The basic characteristics of the Republic of Heaven (the appreciation of the here and now, this material world; the connectedness with each other, with other people, with the Nature and the whole Universe; and taking responsibility for each other) correspond to the principle of holism. In contrast with the theological term of *Imago Dei* (Image of God), that human beings are created in a superior God's image, Pullman's fictional mythology represents mankind blessed with the opportunity of perfecting themselves by recognizing their divine potency inside – yet, without the (false) notion of human superiority.

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[67] For these belief-systems, "history is a given, a once-and-for-all process that begins with the divine initiation and is often understood as depending at each moment on the sustaining, re-creating act of the maker" (J. I. Smith in Eliade *ER*, Vol. 1, 112).

However, Pullman's metaphor with its unbearable requirements and uncertain outcome has been – somehow – distorted. The all-encompassing price for building the Republic of Heaven is the sacrifice of individual interests for the sake of a vague dream realized in a distant future. Probably for these reasons, Pullman is also aware that "[w]e won't ever finally get [to the Republic of Heaven]," "[b]ecause of entropy. There's always a struggle against that" (qtd. in Watkins "Interview" n.p.). I wonder whether he would really like to live there.

III.2. Unity of Man (Masculinity) and Woman (Femininity)

This chapter highlights the – literal and figurative – fusion of masculinity and femininity.[68] With regards to Pullman's praise of materialism and sensuality as well as his anticlericalism, it makes sense that there is greater emphasis on female characters in *HDM*. In his representations of Satan, the Serpent, Eve, and Adam, Pullman occupies a position against Christian androcentrism.[69] This term refers to "cultural perspectives where the male is generically taken to be the norm of humanness" (Ruether "Androcentrism" in Eliade *ER*, Vol. 1, 272). The point is that androcentric culture translates all dialectics of human existence (for example, superiority/inferiority, right/left, light/darkness, active/passive, life/death, and reason/feeling) into androcentric gender symbolism in which the female is always the 'other': "inferior in relation to superior, weaker in relation to stronger, negative in relation to positive" (273).

> Even when the qualities assigned to women are positive, such as love or altruism, these are defined in such a way as to be supplemental or auxiliary to a male-centered definition of the self. The female becomes the unconscious that completes the conscious, the affectivity that completes rationality. Thus, despite the appearance of balance in such gender complementarity, the female is always relative and complementary to the male, rather than herself the one who is complemented or completed in her own right. (273)

This attitude is clearly recognizable in the Christian symbolism of the female which splits into the good feminine (Virgin Mary), who represents "creaturely existence totally submissive to divine initiative, self-abnegating of any pride or activity of its own," and the bad female

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[68] This chapter is based on two of my published articles: "Dreadful Monsters or Self-sacrificing Parents? Satanic Characters in PP's Trilogy, *HDM*" (2013); and "Eve Discovering Adam or the Bloom of Romance: Northrop Frye's Anatomy of Criticism and PP's *HDM* Trilogy" (2014).

[69] And even against sexism and misogyny in the Christian tradition, about which Rosemary Radford Ruether writes that "[t]he oppressive patterns in Christianity toward women and other subjugated people do not come from specific doctrines, but from a patriarchal and hierarchical reading of the system of Christian symbols as a whole" ("Sexism and Misogyny" 83). At the same time, a prophetic and liberating perspective provides another interpretation of these symbols.

(Eve), who exemplifies that "[w]oman acting on her own initiative can only do evil and cause chaos" (274).[70] As Pullman is on Eve's (and the Devil's) party, his second Eve (Lyra) is so independent. While if the main sinner is female, the redeemer must be male in Christian androcentrism, the anti-Christian Pullman's Lyra is both the sinner and the redeemer. Sophia as Wisdom also falls prey to Christian androcentrism: in all versions of the notion of divine androgyny, "the feminine roles or aspects of God are thought of as secondary and auxiliary to a male-centred divine fatherhood" (ibid). The point there is an assumed analogy between maleness and spirituality (or rationality), and between femaleness and corporeality or the passions. Pullman's materialism involves the preference of that sex which symbolises matter. It is also no wonder that the bringer of intellectual and sensual curiosity, awareness, and knowledge to humans is the female angel, Xaphania.

III.2.1. Satan(s): Mrs Coulter and Lord Asriel

The contemporary understanding of Satan has developed out of Christian and Jewish demonologies. Christian demonology changed the meaning of the word, *daimon*, which had originally been used in the Classical Greek of any malevolent or benevolent spirit that mediated between the transcendent and temporal realms (Partridge *RW, Vol. II*, 208). By the late Graeco-Roman period, however, the term *daimonia* was specifically applied to evil spirits whose main work was to frustrate, to harm, and especially to tempt humans into sin (ibid). The Septuagint, the New Testament and the early Church finally adopted this understanding of the term *daimonium*. Since then, Christian demonology has made a clear distinction between the demonic and the angelic, as the forces of light and the forces of darkness (207). Besides, Jewish demonology gave birth to *the* antagonist to God: while the term *satanas* (which means 'adversary' or 'opponent') could originally be used of any adversarial demon, this term in apocalyptic literature, and particularly in the New Testament, is focused on a particular *satanas*, 'Satan' (209). In mythic and literary narratives, the essential function of the Adversary's character and existence is to oppose God, His Son, or Man: being both paradoxical and tragic, Satan's name defines "a being who can only be contingent: as the adversary, he must always be a function of another, not an independent entity. As Augustine

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[70] Nicola Allen depicts that "[w]hile there may have been gender before the Fall, it is the postlapsarian world in which femininity becomes an important construction" (Allen in Barfield and Cox 111). In the light of this, it is worth having a look at the Lappland witches living in Lyra's world. In many respects, they occupy "a long-established version of the feminine, which locates the female within the broader category of nature, and links woman to the lunar cycle" (123).

and Milton show, it is precisely when Satan imagines himself independent that he is most deluded" (Forsyth 4). In this sense of the word, his character is a *fiction* (ibid). However, Satan and God are never understood in terms of an absolute dualism, just as good and evil in Christian faith have never been two equal and co-eternal adversaries. The reason is the strength of Christian monotheism; that God alone is the only creator (Partridge *RW, Vol. II*, 209).[71] While the Satan figure in the Hebrew Bible is portrayed as one of the 'members of the court of heaven," in later Jewish legend he is banished from heaven (210). In apocalyptic literature, the distance between God and the Devil gradually widens: "[n]o longer is Satan God's agent in the world, accusing and harming humans with divine permission" (212). Evil becomes exclusively the Devil's business. The source of evil went *outside* man: "Jewish apocalyptic demonology is responsible for a shift away from the prophetic insistence on interior human responsibility for one's own sin, to an exterior source other than God" (213). In general, the ultimate aim of a demon was to corrupt the soul, to tempt, and to disrupt a person's relationship with God.

As a recurring character in Western literature, Satan has perfectly personified the human impulse toward evil. In religious discourse, the Devil and the demonic are always, as Michel Foucault argued, "markers of alterity, manifestations of 'the Other'"[72] (Partridge *RW, Vol. II*, 208). Since the era of Romanticism, and due to William Blake, Satan has been interpreted as a tragic, heroic figure, also as one of the embodiments of man's intellectual freedom. Besides of Blake's re-evaluation of Satan as "an intractable and energetic individual who stood in opposition to an autocratic God" in *Marriage of Heaven and Hell* (1790-1793) pervaded by the pathos of struggle and the feeling of irreconcilable antagonism, Percy Bysshe Shelley and Lord Byron also made Satan a representative icon of the Romantic Movement:

> the Romantic Satan appeared as an embodiment of vitality, strength, boldness, and political and cultural rebellion. Indeed, the Romantics sought to treat the Devil as a tragic or heroic figure worthy of pathos, thereby inaugurating the tradition of the Promethean Satan, an indefatigable rebel, long since abused by the oppression of Heaven. ("Representation of the Devil" n.p.)

The most prominent examples starring this kind of Satan are John Milton's *PL* (1667) – in a Neo-Romantic interpretation –, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's *Faust* (1808; 1832) and Mikhail Bulgakov's *The Master and Margarita* (1966). The list continues with Philip Pullman's HDM which wittingly disposes close trans-textual connections with Milton's and

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[71] Besides, in Christian theology, "the death and resurrection of Christ firmly exclude any possibility of demonic supremacy, let alone victory" (Partridge *RW, Vol. II*, 210).
[72] Here Partridge suggests Foucault's essay, "The Prose of Acteon" (*Religion and Culture by Michel Foucault*, ed. Jeremy Carrette. New York, NY: Routledge, 1999, 75–84).

Blake's works unconsciously or consciously starring Satan in the Christian context of questioning the existing power.

I propose that Satan's character in HDM is divided into two people: the predatory and obsessive Lord Asriel *and* Mrs. Coulter.[73] My argument for these two characters as Pullman's Satan-figures is based on those individual dynamics that these he-Satan and she-Satan as a symbolic androgynous unit create from the traditional satanic roles of the catalyst of the plot, the death-bringer and the seducer. It is not the ontology (because they are not supernatural beings), but the traits and the symbolic roles of two amorally powerful, yet charismatic characters, Lord Asriel and Mrs Coulter, that make them Pullman's equivalents for Satan. This man and this woman are binary oppositions to each other: as the most powerful antagonists, the former is in the party against the Authority and for Dust, and the latter is in the other party in the cosmic war.

Satan, who has been endowed with an androgynous nature, has been associated with death since the sixteenth century. The German art historian Carl S. Guthke notes that the devil may have adopted one or the other gender in the myth-making imagination of the church fathers, the Middle Ages, and next centuries (Guthke 126). The reason is "[i]n earlier centuries the dichotomy of male and female allegories of death […] could be seen in connection with the identification, common in the Renaissance, of Death and the devil, who for his part was believed to assume either male or female shape, or both" (176). On this theoretical basis, both Lord Asriel and Mrs Marisa Coulter can be viewed, in a figurative sense, as two death-bringers, Pullman's he-Satan and she-Satan, respectively. Both are characterized with a "highly focused, predatory, obsessive mentality" (Lenz in Lenz and Scott 8), probably because of their conviction that the end always justifies the means, involving the abuse of the innocent, ruthless torment and premeditated murder.

The she-Satan, Mrs Coulter is an irresistible femme fatale with angelic beauty, the widow of a politician, not only a scholar, but also a devout agent of the Authority's Church. Obsessed with pursuing a victory over the enemies of her 'God' (the Authority), she is the antagonist of Dust. Concerning her personality, in the traditional sense she is the true embodiment of evil:

> Corruption and envy and lust for power. Cruelty and coldness. A vicious, probing curiosity. Pure, poisonous, toxic malice. You [Mrs Coulter] have never from your earliest years shown a shred of compassion or sympathy or kindness without calculating how it would return to your advantage. You

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[73] Although the Authority could also be interpreted as Satan, because of his denial of his own creaturely identity in order to rise above creation (Bradley and Tate 76), I rather identify him with a demiurge.

have tortured and killed without regret or hesitation; you have betrayed and intrigued and gloried in your treachery. You are a cesspit of moral filth. (AS 356)

Even when she does good, her actions are still double-dealing (Freitas and King 61). Unlike the he-Satan, Mrs. Coulter does not take a major role in the great battle between good and evil. Instead, she always chooses to play her own game, "seeking out every advantage first for herself and then, if it seems convenient, for her employers too" (Tucker 149).

There is definitely something demonic in Mrs. Coulter. Among others, when she is furious, Lyra can feel a kind of metallic smell coming from her body,[74] which must be a satanic character. At Bolvangar, the researchers compare Mrs Coulter to a vampire, whose figure in contemporary culture is "[a]rguably the most conspicuous example of [a] celebration of the other-than-Christian as both demonic and iconic" (Partridge and Christianson 13). Her daemon is a golden monkey, the symbol of vanity, luxury and malevolence, thus the Evil in Christian culture (Pál and Újvári "Monkey" n.p.). One aspect of Mrs. Coulter's furtiveness is the fact that her daemon is nameless.[75]

Moreover, Mrs Coulter's most definite satanic characteristics are irresistible seduction, persuasiveness and falsehood connected to death. It is no wonder that the identification of the demonic with the erotic is a prominent theme within Western demonology (Partridge and Christianson 5). Mrs Coulter is like the true seductress who, according to Jean Baudrillard, "can only exist in a state of seduction" (Baudrillard 86). On the basis of Baudrillard's definition of the strategy of seduction as it is one of deception (69), she has two principles. First, as seduction is rooted in the attraction of like to like, all seduction is narcissistic (68), which explains how she succeeded in enchanting the also selfish and evil Lord Carlo Boreal and Metatron. Second, "[w]e seduce with our weakness, never with strong signs or powers. In seduction we enact this weakness, and this is what gives seduction its strength" (83). Accordingly, Mrs. Coulter is pretending to need help to have power over the children of the poor:

> She looked so angelic in the hissing naphtha light that all the children fell silent.
> "We want your help," she said. "You don't mind helping us, do you?"
> No one could say a word. They all gazed, suddenly shy. They had never seen a lady like this; she was so gracious and sweet and kind that they felt they hardly deserved their good luck, and whatever she asked, they'd give it gladly so as to stay in her presence a little longer (GC 39).

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[74] Pullman could not explain the reason: "[i]t was just something that occurred to me. I don't know why" (qtd. in App.).

[75] When Pullman was asked whether it was a conscious decision not to give him a name, he answered that "I just couldn't think of a name. So I just called him… Mrs. Coulter's daemon. He also rarely speaks, very seldom I think" (qtd. in App.).

She convinces them to follow her to the North where the scientists of the Church need these kids for their experiments with 'intercision.' This scene calls for the portrayal of death as two female figures who were not always neatly distinguishable from each other in the history of Aestheticism, Symbolism, and Decadence (Guthke 186): the angel of death and the seductress whose ontological status "remains suspended between death and the promise of death" (188). Mrs Coulter can also be compared to Lilith, a heterodox figure of Jewish mythology,[76] who was blamed for the death of babies and young children (Lima in Kiss and Szőnyi 14).

The most important child in Pullman's story, however, must resist the demonic Mrs Coulter's charms to fulfil a cosmic mission. Lyra succeeds: there is a failed 'devil's pact' between Lyra and Mrs Coulter's admirer and mediator, Lord Boreal in *GC*.

Mrs. Coulter's masculine counterpart, the he-Satan, Lord Asriel, is a bachelor aristocrat, an explorer of the North as well as a politician with an imperious and passionate nature. He is destined to challenge the foundations of traditional Christianity. Accordingly, Pullman's creation story ends with these two sentences: "finally there was born a man who set out to challenge the power of the Authority as the rebel angels had done so long ago, and tried to establish a world where the Authority's writ did not run: a Republic of Heaven. That man was Lord Asriel. / With his enterprise, the story begins" (Pullman "HDM" n.p.). He has a distinctly Byronic aura of injured merit, which owes much to Milton's Satan (Hatlen in Lenz and Scott 87). Like Milton's Satan against God, Lord Asriel has a single-minded mission to defeat the tyrannical Authority, the Kingdom of Heaven and all religious institutions so as to establish the Republic of Heaven where everyone will be equal citizens. Even Xaphania, the leader of the rebel angels, decides to pledge "[her] alliance to Lord Asriel, because [she] see[s] in his great enterprise the best hope of destroying the tyranny at last" (AS 186). In spite of being a human being, Lord Asriel does not lack some supernatural power: as "the greatest commander there ever was" (SK 242), "he must have been preparing this [the war] for a long time, for eons. […] he commands time, he makes it run fast or slow according to his will" (SK 239).

The battle to be fought between Lord Asriel-Xaphania (the force of good) and the Authority-Metatron (the force of evil) seems to be the last, decisive battle. It will determine the shape of the universe: "a world of liberty or one of eternal suppression" (Bradley and Tate

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[76] Lilith is known to have been the first female companion of Adamic Man. However, the difference between their status created discord between Lilith and Adam, as she had been "unwilling to be subject to a being not her equal. (…) Lilith soon left her mate (some accounts say that by speaking the ineffable name of God she was able to leave the ground […] and literally fly away)" (Lima in Kiss and Szőnyi 13). After becoming the enemy of God and Man, Lilith chose to consort with demons and populated the world with their offspring (14).

60). However, for Pullman, who refuses to "predicate Good and Evil as cosmic forces," "the words 'good' and 'evil' (lowercase now) describe certain potentials mixed together in every human being, and the relationship between them is worked out within the human heart" (Hatlen in Lenz and Scott 80). It is perhaps for this reason that the final battle in HDM seems to be so anticlimactic: "the real battles are internal, not fought with arms" (ibid).

As the Authority and his believers are so oppressive and cruel, their most resolute antagonist, Pullman's he-Satan is expected to be sympathetic; but he is not. As a savage leader, Lord Asriel is a morally ambiguous character, which is symbolised by his daemon, a snow leopard, the symbol of ferocity, strength, and cruelty; moreover, the leopard in Christianity is the symbol of the Evil, the Antichrist (Pál and Újvári "Leopard/Panther" n.p.). Lord Asriel is reminiscent to the medieval King Death. Even Asriel's name implies a capacity for ruthlessness: his name is an alternative spelling of Azrael, the angel of death, who severs the soul from the body in Jewish and Muslim mythology (Freitas and King 79). Lord Asriel also severs the link between the soul and the body, with no sign of regret. As a freedom-fighter he reminds one that however justified a revolution may be, it is rarely accomplished without the loss of innocent life; since for him the end justifies the means (80).

Lord Asriel is on the merge of hubris. As the representation of self-making man, Lord Asriel seeks to control his environment with science (Gruner 285). He gives the impression of being characterized by a kind of Nietzschean *übermensch* who is willing to go beyond good and evil in quest of his goals (Hatlen in Lenz and Scott 88, Gray *Fantasy* 175). He condemns the 'slave morality' which is approved by religious establishments (Bird in Lenz and Scott 193). When Lord Asriel boasts to Mrs Coulter that "[y]ou and I could take the universe to pieces and put it together again" (GC 348), there is a hint that he is beginning to identify himself with God (Tucker 148). Probably because of the kind of republic Lord Asriel wishes to establish, "the war between Asriel and God is one that neither must be allowed to win" (Wrigley 98). This must be the reason why, although Lyra and Will are supposed to rally to Asriel's support, they both demur, and then refuse to do so because they have discovered an agenda of their own, which is different from his. "So, as in *The Lord of the Rings*, the heroic journey of the two children moves in counterpoint with a more conventional battle between cosmic powers that deploy for the most part military forces" (ibid).

The he-Satan and the she-Satan are the biological parents of the new Eve, Lyra. Both of them are far from being ideal parents. Lord Asriel and Mrs Coulter fell in love as soon as they met, later they had a daughter. Unfortunately, Mrs Coulter had been married, and as the baby took after her biological father, she abandoned her. Lord Asriel entrusted an old woman

with looking after the baby but when Mr Coulter learnt about his wife's love child, he intended to murder both the child and her father. In a duel Lord Asriel killed him, and then sent the baby to Jordan College in Oxford where she was brought up in the belief that she was an orphan and Lord Asriel was her awesome uncle. Lyra is twelve when Mrs Coulter turns up in her life to take her as an assistant to London. Even though later Lord Asriel is revealed as Lyra's biological father, he does not show any affection for her (for this reason, Lyra unconsciously endows other characters, like Iorek Byrnison, with the role of father).[77] After the cold welcome Lyra receives from her father, she accuses him in despair:

> You en't human, Lord Asriel. You en't my father. My father wouldn't treat me like that. Fathers are supposed to love their daughters, en't they? You don't love me, and I don't love you, and that's the fact. I love Farder Coram, and I love Iorek Byrnison; I love an armoured bear more'n I love my father. And I bet Iorek Byrnison loves me more'n you do. (GC 323)

While what characterizes Lord Asriel as a bad father is rather indifference, Mrs Coulter as a bad mother is much worse:

> Lyra now realized, if she hadn't done so before, that all the fear in her nature was drawn to Mrs. Coulter as a compass needle is drawn to the Pole. (…) the thought of that sweet face and gentle voice, the image of that golden playful monkey, was enough to melt her stomach and make her pale and nauseated. (GC 232-3)

It is hard to deny Millicent Lenz's argument that a mythic archetype is presented in Mrs Coulter who plays the fearsome stepmother role, therefore, "she is better understood as a kind of fairy-tale figure than as a realistic mother" (Lenz in Hunt and Lenz 155). As the enemy of the rebels led by Lord Asriel, Mrs Coulter even considers the opportunity of murdering her own daughter when she learns that Lyra is going to be the new Eve who will commit the second Fall: "I shall have to destroy her," said Mrs. Coulter, "to prevent another Fall" (SK 278). However, she finally changes her mind.

Mrs. Coulter starts to feel something like a mother's love to Lyra. She kidnaps her daughter and keeps her asleep in a deserted mountain in order to protect her from the hired assassins of the Church. Since this moment, Mrs Coulter appears more contradictory and, paradoxically, more predictable: "I love Lyra. Where did this love come from? I don't know; it came to me like a thief in the night, and now I love her so much my heart is bursting with it" (AS 362). This forming maternal predictability of the she-Satan is best formulated by the quest for maternal identity emerging as the centre of her actions (Russell in Lenz and Scott 216). Pullman noted that "Mrs. Coulter is about as evil as I could make her, and yet, I found,

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[77] As Pullman points out, "she has many fathers in the book. The Gypsians. Farder Coram is a father. Iorek Byrnison is a kind of father. Lee Scoresby is a kind of father" (qtd. in App.).

on the way through, I was also having to write about her love for Lyra, which is tiny at the beginning but it grows and it grows and it grows… Finally, it consumes her completely, and I found that very interesting" (qtd. in App.). Everyone is a mixture of good and evil, he said (ibid). It is undeniable that Mrs Coulter only becomes "ethically generous once she loses her allegiance to the Authority" (Bradley and Tate 73).[78]

It is the fatherhood of Lord Asriel and the motherhood of Mrs. Coulter that raise the issue of their character-development. As the events progress, both Satan-figures realize that it is also their own interest to give up their previous disagreement (involving Mrs Coulter's realization of the limits of her fundamentalism, which leads to her changing sides), and to cooperate for a common aim to finish the cosmic war by destroying the leader of the enemy, Metatron, the regent of the old Authority. Lord Asriel says to Mrs Coulter: "[w]e came here to give Lyra time (…) to live and grow up. If we take Metatron to extinction, Marisa, she'll have that time, and if we go with him [to annihilation], it doesn't matter" (AS 362). This final and heroic deed unites the He-Satan and the She-Satan once and for all into a symbolic androgynous unit, the manifestation of ancient oneness: "[Mrs Coulter] sacrificed herself with Lord Asriel to fight the angel [Metatron] and make the world safe for Lyra. They could not have done it alone, but together they did it" (AS 429-430).[79] In my opinion, the sacrifice of Mrs. Coulter and Lord Asriel to save their daughter is Pullman's cosmic irony: the second Eve was given birth by the allegorical Satan-figures twice, after her conception and by her parents' death.

Similarly to the death of the Authority, the death of Lord Asriel and Mrs. Coulter is also anti-climatic. Following Neil Forsyth's train of thought, that "[t]he essential role of Satan is opposition," and "as the adversary, he must always be a function of another, not an independent entity" (4), when Lord Asriel and Mrs. Coulter defeat Metatron in a heroic, hand-to-hand fight, there is no more need for them. As a result, this man and this woman perish together with the angel, falling down into an endless abyss.

Are Mrs. Coulter and Lord Asriel really motivated by parental love? Lisa Hopkins argues that with typical lack of sentimentality, Pullman has already shown us the entire compatibility of love for one's own child with the most extreme forms of selfishness and

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[78] However, she turns out to be neither an ally of Lord Asriel, nor a member of the faithful. Instead, the newly renegade Mrs Coulter becomes "the mouthpiece for rational – even devout – scepticism" (Bradley and Tate 73). It is when she wonders whether it would be kind to give the gift of death to the old Authority (see the issue of euthanasia in the next subchapter).

[79] This act signifies that Lord Asriel belonging to the outdated world of theological argument and conflict, Mrs. Coulter to the outdated world of fanatical church, and Metatron to the bizarre fantasies of outdated apocalyptic imagination collapse down into the abyss, and the world is ready for its new human-scale regeneration (Gooderham 164).

ruthlessness (Hopkins in Lenz and Scott 54). Yet, if it was not for the importance of Lyra's destiny to repair cosmic balance, I am not so sure whether either Lord Asriel or Mrs Coulter would ever pay more attention to their daughter than they did in her infancy. Although in the end Lord Asriel and Mrs Coulter appreciate Lyra and her cosmic task of being the new Eve, the girl herself does not even know about the heroic self-sacrifice of her parents for a long time.

Moreover, it is *not* parental love that Lord Asriel finally feels for Lyra. It is rather her cosmic importance that makes her so important in his eyes: "[o]nly in the closing pages of the trilogy does he realise that her life is actually more important than his own" (Tucker 148).[80] He even realizes his inferiority:

> [a] deeply flawed hero, he always runs the risk of turning into just the type of bullying authority he had made it his life's work to destroy. Sacrificing his life to save Lyra is not just a noble act; it is also a final admission that he is ultimately expendable, and to that extent a servant of fate rather than, as he once believed, its potential master. (148-149)

Pullman agrees with me that in the end Lord Asriel has not become a father in a traditional way: "[n]ot really. He sees her importance, he understands that, but he's not cut out to be a father. It's not his major weakness" (qtd. in App.). Anyway, being a parent is why a weakness? As Lord Asriel is determined to save his daughter and to protect Dust, he finds himself on the side of essential human freedom.

At the end of Pullman's story, both the aims of Lord Asriel and Mrs Coulter diametrically change by becoming from antagonists into minor characters helping the protagonists. Even though the sacrifice of Mrs Coulter and Lord Asriel suggests that the antagonists' views have neared to that of the protagonists, therefore Lord Asriel and Mrs Coulter become well-developed (or dynamic) characters, in fact there is no question of change in their nature.

Neither Lord Asriel, nor Mrs Coulter is hero. "[T]heir joint sacrifice is too sudden and unexpected, and smacks too much of the 'deus ex machina' to earn them the status of heroes" (Gray *Fantasy* 180-181). According to Tucker, "while Lord Asriel stands for intellectual ambition gone mad, Mrs Coulter symbolises the emotional world of strong, distorted feelings, where self-love battles against an underlying need to provide maternal care when it is most needed" (150). Besides, both Lord Asriel and Mrs Coulter serve as reminders that any final division of characters into good and evil is often impossible (151).

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[80] By this time, he has also understood that his determination to live in other worlds has been fundamentally mistaken. Details are analysed in Subchapter III.3.4.

As both of them remain what they are, it is doubtful whether Satan could go through authentic character-development without losing the characteristics of his or her nature. If not, what kind of character-development does satanic nature make possible? Pullman's guiding principles – "you cannot change what you are, only what you do" (GC 276) and "good and evil are names for what people do, not for what they are" (AS 398) – give relevance to these suggestions. The change of Mrs Coulter and Lord Asriel concerns what they have done. All the two Satan-figures could do for their daughter is not to be parents in the way ordinary humans do (to be present in her life). By sacrificing themselves, they give their daughter a second life in a whole new world where the natural (sexuality, self-knowledge, and ultimately growing up) can remain natural thanks to the absence of institutional restrictions in the name of some god. In the end, Lord Asriel and Mrs Coulter apply the power of their satanic nature – the catalyst, the death-bringer and the seducer – to show a grandiose present attributed to supernatural beings to Dust, the true deity, the new Eve and Adam, and all conscious beings in Pullman's mythopoesis. This is how the British author proves to be on the party of William Blake's devil in *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* (1790-1793).

Even though there is *no* Satan worship in *GC*, *SK*, and *AS*,[81] some traits of (Romantic and) contemporary Satanism are still recognizable in Pullman's trilogy. Satan, who today inspires more retrospection than fear, has become a fictive icon for the modern imagination (Lima in Kiss and Szőnyi 19-20). The satanic other is becoming increasingly attractive to many contemporary Westerners (Partridge *RW, Vol. II*, 208), probably because popular culture encourages a widespread fascination with the diabolical and the dark side in the West (Partridge and Christianson 12). Satanism is often understood to be *a cult of opposition* whose raison d'être is the subversion of an established culture or religious tradition. Such a cult of opposition, however, would be "essentially parasitic upon the host culture, being dependent upon its symbolism and theology" (Partridge *RW, Vol. II*, 222-223) – hence Western occulture's dependence on Christian demonology because of its familiarity and accessibility. Instead of subverting Christian culture, Satanism is rather a positive self-religion which encourages egocentricity and personal development (223); by utilizing the rebellious, offensive, and provocative symbolism provided by the figure of Satan (*RW, Vol. 1*, 82). In the light of Satan/the demonic becoming iconic of the independent self, the encouragement of self-interest, and individualism, *HDM* could be called Satanist.

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[81] Pullman had a witty reply to letters accusing him of promoting witchcraft or Satanism: after having read all three books, "if you find that you've inadvertently become a Satanist, you can write to the publisher and get your money back" (qtd. in Bertodano n.p.).

III.2.2. The Serpent: Mary Malone

Although the fulfilment of Lyra's fate (as Eve) is finally facilitated by Dr Mary Malone, an apostate ex-nun, currently a physicist, she is *not* another Satan-figure. The reason is even though the serpent is probable the best known symbol of Satan, the serpent and Satan have not always been thought to be identical with each other in Christian traditions:

> Genesis (3:1ff.) mentions the serpent but not Satan; in *Romans* (16:20), however, Paul suggests that the serpent was Satan, an association already made in apocalyptic literature. This would imply that Satan tempted Adam, but the consensus of early Christian tradition was that Satan fell after Adam.[82] There may be good reason for believing that not until Origen in the third century CE was it clearly established that Satan's sin was pride, that he fell before Adam's creation, and that he was the serpent in the [G]arden of Eden. (Sharma in Eliade *ER*, Vol. 13, 83)

In his work, *Creation and Fall: A Theological Interpretation of Genesis 1-3 and Temptation* (1937-1938), Dietrich Bonhoeffer insisted on this narrative's unnecessity of *diaboli ex machina*: "[t]he serpent symbolizes the ambiguity of man, his human relationships, and his environment" (Häring "Temptation" in Eliade *ER*, Vol. 14, 392).

The character in the role of the Temptress/the symbolic Serpent in *HDM* is either an innocent means or a tool of supernatural powers. Angelic messengers inform Mary Malone through her computer that "[she] must play the serpent" (SK 221) and "[she has] been preparing for this as long as [she has] lived" (SK 222). Although she in the role of the serpent is not completely aware of what she is supposed to do, she finally succeeds in tempting Lyra and Will with her own story of first falling in love.[83] In other words, Mary provides Lyra and William with the necessary information about falling in love so as to make them realize their love for each other. She is identical with "the serpent mother, the initiator into knowledge –

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[82] Here Arvind Sharma refers to Jeffrey Burton Russell's *The Devil: Perceptions of Evil from Antiquity to Primitive Christianity* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1977), 232.

[83] Pullman explains the necessity of Malone's educating story-telling: "I do think that there's a profound psychological truth in that episode of Dante in which he's talking about the two lovers, Paulo and Francesca, who happened to fall in love because they were reading together the story of lovers, and this put the idea into their heads and they committed adultery so they ended up in hell and that's why Dante talked about it. Somebody asked the question – I forget who it was – 'would anybody ever fall in love if they never read a love story?' and I think that there's a lot of truth in that. It's an aspect of the general stress on telling stories which comes all the way through *[HDM]*, and perhaps most importantly in the world of the dead sequence. We have to tell stories in order to tell the true story of our life. And Mary is telling a true story. She's telling a story which educates, which tells Will and Lyra something they didn't know before" (qtd. in Watkins "Interview" n.p.). Moreover, Pullman compares all of his wisdom-figures in HDM to the figure of the 'fairy godmother': "[w]hat [Mary Malone] is doing, what the serpent in doing in Genesis, and what my Sophia and all the others are doing are bring enlightenment, bringing wisdom, helping us to go to the next [level]. They're being fairy godmothers in the Cinderella sense" (ibid). These characters contribute to the subject's transition from a child to an adult: "the function of the Fairy Godmother in the Cinderella story is to help the girl who's on the brink of adulthood to take the next step and become a mature grown-up, ready for sexual experience civilised by marriage, and maturity and so on. So you could say that the Cinderella story is a variant on the Adam and Eve story, and the Fairy Godmother plays the part of the serpent: 'This is what you must do in order to go to the next stage – eat this fruit'" (ibid).

rational knowledge and sensual knowledge" (Russell in Lenz and Scott 217). Mary's story of unconversion from Christianity[84] is primarily rooted in her desire to experience sensuality and erotic love (Bradley and Tate 70). What constitutes Mary Malone a powerful figure as temptress/mentor for the pre-adolescent Adam and Eve is the "combination of intense, virginal commitment, together with adult sexual experience and high-status knowledge" (Gooderham 168). Mary, who is "the figure of a guide to download information into the text," is a figure who is used by almost all portal and quest fantasies (Mendlesohn 13).

As a wisdom-figure, Mary Malone is not only a source of knowledge; she herself is also a seeker of knowledge. It is her, as the prototype of the curious (wo)man (a scientist), who finally succeeds in understanding the meaning of being (aka connectedness) to save Dust: "Matter *loved* Dust. It didn't want to see it go. That was the meaning of this night, and it was Mary's meaning, too" (AS 404). It was important for Pullman to have a character "like her who could see certain things at certain moments" (qtd. in Watkins "Interview" n.p.). Despite the absence of God, "[t]he meaning is that I've got to make it explicit. I've got to discover what it is and make it explicit. That's the meaning, that's the purpose! The world is full of purpose!" (ibid). Mary Malone, who "embodies both rationalism, and a return to intuitive spirituality shown in her fascination with both quantum mechanics and the I-Ching," also represents an ideal toward which the West should turn in its search for the truth (Crosby in Cusack 264).

III.2.3. Eve and Adam: Lyra Belacqua and William Parry

There used to be a unity of the different sexes. Man and Woman stand for the parted primordial unit, and also the two halves of the androgyne, "[a] single being coupling the male and female powers and energies" (Ferguson 12), which symbolises primeval unity, the undifferentiated wholeness, and perfection (Pál and Újvári, "Androgyne/Hermaphrodite" n.p.).[85] In numerous mythologies, while at the origin of things the sexes were not disjoined, at the beginning of the world the unity was broken into two 'world parents' (ibid). The *Book of Genesis* consists of two versions. According to the first one, Adam as an androgynous creature must have been created in the image of an androgynous – or bisexual – creator: "So

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[84] As Pullman has no intention of replacing the worship of God with the worship of science, the story of Mary Malone about abandoning her faith and taking up a scientific career must be symbolic (Wrigley 100).

[85] At the same time, more often androgynes represent "a desirable or undesirable distortion of the male-female relationship or a tension based on an unequal distribution of power" (O'Flaherty and Eliade in Eliade *ER*, Vol. 1, 276). In many myths, "the permanently fused androgynes is, technically, the one creature in the world who is certain to be unable to copulate" (278).

God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them" (Genesis 1:27). According to the second version, Eve was formed from one of the ribs of Adam: "So the Lord God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs and then closed up the place with flesh. Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man" (Genesis 2:21-23). The mystery of marriage symbolises integration into wholeness, primordial oneness, where the disconnection of the sexes disappear (Pál and Újvári, "Man and Woman," n.p.). This is the law of togetherness after creation and disconnection: "Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh" (Genesis 2:24).

Sexuality and reproduction have been at the centre of interest in the religions of most ancient and traditional societies. Christianity, however, has never been comfortable with either the emphasis on life here and now, or sexuality as "a potentially noble part of his being" (Davies in Eliade *ER*, Vol. 8, 578). There have always been literary works protesting against that attitude, embodying "a demand that religion should include sexuality and the distinctively feminine element in the human spirit as it shows itself in both sexes" (ibid). Propagating the *memento vivere* tradition, HDM belongs to this group of books. Accordingly, in the trilogy's fictive mythology, special emphasis is devoted to the body itself, to multitudes of sensory impressions and sensual pleasures, and sophisticated representations of erotic desire from the low-key to the almost bestial. The mythopoetic structure of HDM as a quest-romance, which is framed according to the dichotomy of fertility and sterility, is based on the existence of Dust, the divine life-force animating the whole cosmos. Following the tradition of the 'combat myth' (a battle between order and chaos), there is a cosmic struggle revolving around Dust: those who are against Dust are associated with an unnatural state of affairs; those who support Dust, the meaningful life itself, are the positive characters.

The whole story of HDM revolves around the awakening sexual awareness of the second Eve. According to Pullman, what happened to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden is that

> [t]hey become aware of sexuality, of the power the body has to attract attention from someone else. This is not only natural, but a wonderful thing! To be celebrated! Why the Christian Church has spent 2,000 years condemning this glorious moment, well, that's a mystery. I want to confront that, I suppose, by telling a story that this so-called original sin is anything but. It's the thing that makes us fully human. (Qtd. in Rosin n.p.)

Pullman links 'the falling in love business' with 'the coming of wisdom' because "this is what happens to us – at the age of adolescence, when our bodies begin to change, when we have

strange new, exciting, troubling, passionate feelings towards other people, towards members of the other sex usually" (qtd. in Watkins "Interview" n.p.). Indeed, in HDM Pullman tried to present the idea, that "[t]he Fall is something that happens to all of us when we move from childhood through adolescence to adulthood," as something natural and good (qtd. in "The Dark Materials debate…" n.p.). Lyra and William are on the threshold of adolescence with which Pullman associates the myth of the Fall:

> [o]ne of the most interesting things for me about this notion of the Fall, is that the first thing that happened to Adam and Eve is that they were embarrassed, with consciousness. For me it's all bound up with consciousness, and the coming of understanding of things – and making the beginning of intellectual inquiry. Which happens typically in one's adolescence, when one begins to be interested in poetry and art and science and all these other things. With consciousness comes self-consciousness, comes shame, comes embarrassment, comes all these things, which are very difficult to deal with. (Qtd. in "The Dark Materials debate" n.p.)

Together with the growing Lyra, the reader of HDM is "accumulating new experiences and seeing the world in a wider and more complex way" (qtd. in Weich n.p.). Accordingly, "[t]he structure of the trilogy is mirroring the consciousness of a growing, learning, developing consciousness" (ibid). While the positive characters redound the new Eve and Adam to 'fall,' the negative characters attempt to prevent it.

Pullman's interpretation of the adolescent transition from being innocent into being experienced was inspired by Heinrich von Kleist's essay, "On the Marionette Theatre" (1812?). The central idea (or the theme) of the whole trilogy, what Pullman manages to bring into consciousness without full explanation, is "the way in which preadolescents suddenly become aware of human sexuality and that loss of innocence which changes the way they perceive reality" (Parsons and Nicholson 117). Kleist's three wonderful metaphors for the myth of the Fall (the inanimate puppet, the innocent and unformed young boy, and the bear), as the business of losing innocence and finding experience, were profoundly important for Pullman (qtd. in Parsons and Nicholson 117). The conclusion Kleist and his friend come to is that "the further we go from the human – into the semi-consciousness of the bear, into the entire unconsciousness of the puppet – the more clearly grace emerges. It's self-consciousness that kills it off" (qtd. in Fried n.p.). Here the profane meaning of 'grace' (simple elegance or refinement of movement) is used, which is in contrast to Grace in Christian belief, the free and unmerited favour of God to escape from Original Sin. Instead of lamenting the loss of the unconscious grace, Pullman emphasizes that a more valuable grace needs to be acquired:

> the only way out of this impasse, they agree, is not back towards childhood: as with the Garden of Eden, an angel with a fiery sword guards the way; there is no going back. We have to go forward, through the travails and difficulties of life and embarrassment and doubt, and hope that as we grow

> older and wiser we may approach paradise again from the back, as it were, and enter that grace which lies at the other end of the spectrum. (Qtd. in Fried n.p.)

In accordance with this, at the end of AS the angel Xaphania explains to Lyra that "[y]ou read [the alethiometer] by grace, and you can regain it by work" (AS 440). True, HDM is expressly hostile to "the notion of unwarranted, unearned grace" (Bradley and Tate 67). Man is forced to gain *wisdom*[86] to retrieve grace.

By regaining grace, Man has the possibility of elevating himself to the status left empty by God. What Pullman finds so exciting and optimistic about this particular vision of Kleist is the possibility/ability of "get[ting], at least part of the way, to the state of being a god" (qtd. in Parsons and Nicholson 119). All things considered, Pullman's promotion of grace regained by hard work, effort and pain (without the help or approval of any god!) is the basis of his representations of religious completeness.

In Christianity, the sins of Adam and Eve are redeemed. The phrase of Adam as the essential man (and Eve as the essential woman) means that "the sin committed in that time of beginning is perceived as formal and archetypical, timelessly part of the human condition" (Sproul in Eliade *ER*, Vol. 12, 538). In other words, the first parents are the prototypes of the whole mankind. In almost all living religious traditions, there are some variations on the idea of a saviour or restorer to appear at a future time (J.I. Smith in Eliade *ER*, Vol. 1, 114). For Christian theology, the atoning death of a new Adam, Jesus, restores the innate corruption of human nature that resulted from Adam's fall (cf. *1 Cor.* 15:22) (Fishbane "Adam" in Eliade *ER*, Vol. 1, 27).[87] What is more, thanks to Saint Irenaeus, in medieval Mariology (the theological study of the mother of Jesus), the Virgin Mary turned up as the new Eve (Pál and Újvári "Eve" n.p.). For this reason, Sin and Grace are both connected to woman. In *HDM*, there is neither Christ, nor Virgin Mary. Instead, there needs to be a second Eve.

Pullman's story starts with the troublesome disappearance of children by unknown kidnappers, generally called 'the Gobblers,' in the England of Lyra's world. It gradually turns out that a politically stronger and stronger religious organisation called the Magisterium stands in the background of these events. The reason for the nation-wide kidnapping is the churches' fear of consciousness and vim, in theological terms the Original Sin, whose physical sign is identified with Dust, the "physical proof that something happen[s] when innocence change[s] into experience" (GC 327) in early adolescence. Their motto is "better a

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[86] To Pullman, innocence and wisdom are "the two ends of the spectrum of human experience" (qtd. in Watkins "Interview" n.p.).

[87] Saint Paul drew a parallel between Adam and Jesus Christ (Pál and Újvári "Eve" n.p.): "For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive" (1 Corinthians 15:22).

world with no Church and no Dust than a world where every day we have to struggle under the hideous burden of sin" (AS 63). Rayment-Pickard identifies this church's fear of Dust with "really just a fear of 'being human'" (65).

Unfortunately, the Magisterium succeeds in recognising the connection between Dust and the natural process of growing-up. "During the years of puberty [children] begin to attract Dust more strongly, and it settles on them as it settles on adults" (GC 325). In parallel, "daemons bring all sort of troublesome thoughts and feelings, and that's what lets Dust in" (GC 248). However, "[a] quick operation before that, and you're never troubled again. And your daemon stays with you, only …just not connected" (GC 248). It means that if the intimate and sacred bond between preadolescent children and their daemons is cut (an operation called *intercision*), years later these severed patients will not attract Dust, thus will escape from the 'sin' of self-knowledge and sexuality associated with growing-up. This totally anti-life operation – when part of either the human psyche or personality remains maimed for a lifetime in a state of a soulless zombie or undead indifferent to anything and easily dirigible – is the perfect method for not only destroying Original Sin, but also making an individual an obedient subject. Religious institutions are portrayed as cruel fanatics without mercy: "[f]or all its history (…) it's tried to suppress and control every natural impulse. (…) [E]very church is the same: control, destroy, obliterate every good feeling" (SK 44-45). This threatening clerical control, planned by Metatron, concerns all parallel worlds.

The approach of this impending disaster necessitates the appearance of a hero(ine). The twelve-year-old Lyra Belacqua lives in that alternative world where the Magisterium rises to power. As a secret and abandoned love-child "conceived in sin and born in shame" (SK 33) of Lord Asriel and Mrs. Marisa Coulter, Lyra is brought up as an orphan among the walls of the Jordan College of Oxford.[88] Although she lives in the citadel of science, this resourceful, brave and usually disobedient child spends most of her time on the streets in the company of gutter children, as "a coarse and greedy little savage" (GC 33) – this life-style is a preparation for the forthcoming difficulties she will have to overcome. The combination of ordinary naughtiness and (later) extreme responsibility under pressure makes Lyra "a splendidly well-rounded character, neither oppressively good nor monotonously rebellious" (Tucker 108). She is motivated to begin her quest by the fact that one day her best friend,

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[88] It is fortunate that Pantalaimon gives Lyra "all the love and support she needs. This is vital for the plot, since it would otherwise be difficult even to start believing that a ten-year-old girl on her own could be equal to any of the acts of daring and courage that Lyra manages to carry off throughout this story. In real life, a child as deprived as she is might instead have major and sometimes disabling psychological problems to deal with long before getting to the fearful adventures she confronts in this story" (Tucker 142).

Roger Parslow, disappears and Lyra, who is also a reliable and loyal friend for whom promises are sacred – "[o]ur business is to keep promises, no matter how difficult they are" (AS 174) –, decides to rescue him from the hands of the Gobblers.

Prophecies about the future arrival of the saviour reveal her identity. The hero must be "clearly recognizable and ordained for his task, a task (…) that is a matter of life and death for us all" (Leeming in Eliade *ER*, Vol. 12, 148). Accordingly, the appearance of Pullman's child saviour who will restore the distorted harmony of the cosmos has already been predicted by supernatural beings, probably angels:

> "The witches have talked about this child for centuries past," said the consul. "Because they live so close to the place where the veil between the worlds is thin, they hear immortal whispers from time to time, in the voices of those beings who pass between the worlds. And they have spoken of a child such as this, who has a great destiny that can only be fulfilled elsewhere – not in this world, but far beyond. Without this child, we shall all die. So the witches say." (GC 154)

The subject of this prophecy turns out to be Lyra. However, she is more than a sympathetic child heroine: "there was a name that would bring to mind a parallel case, and which would make the Church hate and fear her" (AS 59). Lyra is "in the position of Eve, the wife of Adam, the mother of us all, and the cause of all sin" (AS 60).[89] 'Sexual awareness' is the key concept in Pullman's subversive reinterpretation of the Judeo-Christian myth of the Fall: "[n]ature and opportunity will come together like spark and tinder" (AS 292), that is a *pre-adolescent* Eve is to be tempted. In this way, with the true purpose of giving life back to the diseased universe, she is the key figure in a cosmic war fought by the fundamentalist, obscurantist churches on the one side and the rebellious free-thinkers on the other side. The fate of Pullman's heroine is unconsciously fulfilled in the bloom of first love, for which, given the Biblical scenario of the Fall, an Adam is also needed: "she must fulfil this destiny in ignorance of what she is doing, because only in her ignorance can we be saved" (AS 154). Here 'ignorance' can refer to Lyra's unawareness of the significance and power of her love. As soon as the enemy becomes aware of Lyra's grandiose task, the girl becomes the target of their obsession of destructing 'sin.'

Behind Pullman's choice of a female protagonist there seems to be a presumable dissatisfaction with the patriarchy of the Christian clergy and the general misogyny of Christian theology (both of which are responsible for making Eve the causer/embodiment of Original Sin, and the symbol of corporeality and matter, and sensual recognition). Female

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[89] Pullman insists that "Lyra is a very ordinary girl. (…) I can't work up much interest in stories where the hero or heroine is 'special' in some way. I know the witches say that Lyra has a special destiny, but that's something outside her. She has no special gifts or talents or magic" ("Philip Pullman: a life" n.p.).

sexuality has been considered sacred, and it stands as "the positive condition contrary to both infertility and asexuality" (Brereton in Eliade *ER*, Vol. 12, 520). However, Christianity has always been reluctant to recognize motherhood as the divine creative power of femininity; on this basis, "[t]o control sexual love and to make it subservient to religion has always been a central task for the Christian religion" (Bertilsson 301). Max Weber is said to have observed that "the more developed and the more rationalized the religion, the stronger is its agony of sex and of women" (ibid). Pullman disapproves the constant uneasiness of Christianity about women (qtd. in App.). The pre-adolescent Lyra is the heroine of his trilogy because, he said, "Eve was the one who was curious enough to be interested in the difference between good and evil" (ibid).

The partner of the extraordinary Lyra is a no less extraordinary boy from another world, the also twelve-year-old, also semi-orphan[90] William Parry. (As their names indicate, they embody 'lyre'/'art' and 'will,' respectively.) Born to be a warrior (SK 283) with "a nature that was savage, and courteous, and unhappy" (SK 24), he is of course the other key figure in the cosmic war. Tucker shows that "[w]ithout his own visible daemon for emotional support, Will remains a rather closed personality for most of the trilogy, much in need of more mothering himself" (110). Throughout *SK* and *AS*, there are images reinforcing the sameness of Lyra and Will: when "each of them [the children] saw their own expression on the other's face" (SK 51), and when "her [Lyra's] tears found their own reflection in Will's eyes, and so those photons wove the two children together in a silent web" (AS 175), one cannot help thinking of Plato who compares the beloved person to a mirror in which the lover beholds himself (Phaedrus 255 d). With their differences, the two children also complete each other: while Will lacks Lyra's "outgoing confidence," he has "a solidity that she initially lacks" (Wrigley 90). While Will's character is more or less fully formed at the first time we meet him, Lyra still has some growing up to do. Will's skills of invisibility, silence, and discretion are diametrically opposed to "Lyra's aristocratic confidence as a liar" (Cantrell 312). As the Biblical Adam is complete with Eve, Lyra and Will are not only "worthy of each other" (AS 175), but they also seem to be soul mates who can "recognize sadness in the other, the weary signs of battles fought, and past experience deserving of respect" (Freitas and King 128). "Pullman's Christ-child consists of a boy *and* a girl" (Wrigley 79). Pullman models a

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[90] It is not an accident that both children are, in practice, orphan. While the absence of parents is necessary in a story about growing up – the *Bildungsroman* – to force the hero to become mature earlier than other children, Pullman simply has no faith in familial love, only in Eros (Freitas and King 127). It is enough to look at the practically orphan Lyra's and Will's heart-piercing longings for a family at all, one to be adopted (GC 75), the other to find his lost father (SK 272), respectively. Pullman finds it evident that "the background is not important. It's who you are, how you live your life" (qtd. in App.).

'partnership' quest by giving balanced roles to Lyra and Will: "[i]n an era of increasingly fluid gender roles, Pullman shows masculine and feminine qualities in a balanced yin-yang relationship" (Lenz in Hunt and Lenz 165). Lyra and Will together are the prime example of heterosexually gendered pairs who are given distinctly complementary characteristics: "Will and Lyra behave very much as a young Miltonic couple in *The Subtle Knife*, Will gaining self-reliance, and the feisty Lyra learning patience and submission" (Falconer in Barfield and Cox 15). Even Pullman himself reinforces their equality:

> They're equal. She [Lyra]'s realizing that. There was always going to be this form to the book. The first one starts with the word *Lyra*, the second one starts with the word *Will*, and in the third book they're of equal importance. …Eve is the equal of Adam and shares in whatever it is that happens. (Qtd. in Parsons and Nicholson 127)

This androgynous unity of female and male recalls David Adams Leeming's definition of the true goal of quests: it is the preservation of *fertility* by the ritual marriage ending many quest tales that expresses the achieved goal of wholeness, when "[t]he masculine principle is joined to the feminine" (Leeming in Eliade *ER*, Vol. 12, 150). Christopher Wrigley identifies HDM with a romance, "both in the sense of a tale that re-uses themes of prehistoric myth and in the modern sense of a personal love story" (91).

The relationship of the two children gradually develops from *philial* or *agapic* love between friends or siblings beginning in *SK* into *true* and *mutual* erotic love expounded in *AS*. Donna Freitas calls attention to an age-old experience:

> Before ecstatic or erotic love becomes possible, a strong bond of trust must be forged between them. Without trust, there can be no mutuality in love, and without utter mutuality, they cannot truly become 'conscious of' or 'know' the other in *eros*. Before real trust is possible, Lyra and Will must become equally vulnerable to each other. (Freitas and King 130)

In this light, the commonly experienced adventures serve to reinforce their relationship in which Will has a good influence on the often bossy and reckless Lyra: "[h]e was truly fearless, and she admired that beyond measure; but he wasn't good at lying and betraying and cheating, which all came to her as naturally as breathing. When she thought of that, she felt warm and virtuous, because she did it for Will, never for herself" (AS 152).

As a part of her coming-of-age, Lyra has to manage, even overcome, the expressly androcentric social structure in her world. *HDM* appears to endorse "a traditional binary that naturalizes masculinity as the norm, while femininity is only recognizable to the extent that it operates as the opposing principle within a dialectic that ultimately endorses the superiority of the male" (Gamble in Barfield and Cox 192). Lyra does not wish to subvert this system which is inherently discriminatory towards her gender; she is even its faithful advocate. The models

of power and authority to which she aspires (namely Lord Asriel, and later the Gyptian leaders John Faa and Farder Coram) are all male. Femininity is presented as both the ultimate state of nature and 'performativity' by Judith Butler (191). Mrs Coulter, whom Lyra rejects, is "[t]he prime representative of the performative characteristics of femininity" (ibid).[91] The paradox with which Lyra has to contend is "how to evolve a conception of female subjectivity that does not depend upon identification with the male as the only legitimate source of agency" (192). As long as Lyra is pre-pubescent, she is free to play as if she was a boy.[92] However, without such an option, an adult female in her world becomes either a despised anomaly (such as a scholar) or properly feminine. Lyra must move away from her state of male identification so as to evolve a feminine sense of self (196).

To grow up into a man, William has to re-orient his relationship with his mother. First, he has to work hard to be able to sever a dynamic attachment to Elaine Parry, his mother (Gamble in Barfield and Cox 196). Second, it is the journey he makes that takes him away from her and towards "the elusive paternal figure" (197). Virtually, he is Will's father, John Parry. Besides, Will's device, the subtle knife, symbolises "masculine mastery," "the precariousness of masculine identity as much as its authority to control" (198).[93]

To be able to fall in love with each other, both Lyra and Will also have to re-orient their re-enactment of femininity and masculinity, respectively. To reach their destination at the end of the road to sexual maturity, both of them have to evolve "a coherent gender identity within the boundaries of the heterosexual matrix, a process in which daemons play an integral part" (Gamble in Barfield and Cox 196). In the light of Pullman's approval of an extremely conventional conception of gender (as dualistic and oppositional), the whole point of the adventure of Lyra and Will seems to be

> to re-orientate them in relation to their 'proper' gender identity. Lyra begins the trilogy as a feisty tomboy while she ends as a dutiful young woman; Will starts as a feminized carer of his mother and ends as a masculine warrior. (…) It is only having gone through this process that the two can adopt their ordained symbolic roles as the new Adam and Eve, orchestrators of a truly fortunate Fall. (198-199)

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[91] Remember my analysis on Mrs Coulter's strategies of seduction in Subchapter III.2.1.

[92] The sexes of the daemons also reinforce the androcentrism of the society in Lyra's world: "fluid as the *bodies* of children's daemons might be, their *gender identities* are irrevocably fixed at birth, for they cannot experiment with changing sex. And because the daemon takes on the opposite sex to its human, this fixes both human and daemon within a binary gender system in which no configuration other than male/female is possible" (Gamble in Barfield and Cox 194). The reason for the silence surrounding same-sex daemons stems from "the central role all daemons play in the enactment of desire – which, in the trilogy, is almost always heterosexual" (195). The only example in *HDM* trilogy to same-sex daemons is the daemon of Bernie Johansen, the pastry cook of Jordan Collage (GC 110).

[93] As Sarah Gamble continues, "the assumption of Will's role as knife bearer is signalled by another symbolic castration, when he loses two fingers in course of the fight which wins him the subtle knife" (Gamble in Barfield and Cox 198).

Their union is ensured to be "an utterly conventional heterosexual union;" and the trilogy's heterosexual principle is externalized in the daemons (199).

The two protagonists' greatest trial, their Harrowing of Hell in the third book, moreover, signifies their symbolic rebirth. This terrific journey for the dead Roger's forgiveness precedes the final fulfilment of Lyra's fate as Eve. Without their daemons who are forbidden to enter this desolate space, surrounded by uncountable billions of lethargic ghosts, Lyra and Will are "the only two human beings in that vast gulf of death" (AS 323). The painful distinction from their daemons is as if "both children needed to let go of a part of themselves before each could make space for a new level of relationship to emerge between them" (Freitas and King 132). After leading out the ghosts from the Land of the Dead as a kind of Exodus, which the second Eve mistakenly thinks to be her destiny – "[w]hat I got to do, Roger, what my destiny is, is I got to help all the ghosts out of the land of the dead forever" (AS 277) –, Lyra and Will come out of the Land of the Dead safe and sound, but something has changed: it is the perfect trust and a connection between them that "grow[s] to resemble the bond between human and daemon" (Freitas and King 129). At the same time, the reliable sign of their emerging erotic love also appears: "[Lyra] happily used to swim naked in the river Cherwell with all the other Oxford children, but it would be quite different with Will, and she blushed even to think of it" (AS 387). It is embarrassment or shame.

Lyra is tempted by Mary Malone, the Serpent. The task that Mary *consciously* decides to undertake is the evocation of the curiosity of Lyra for sensual knowledge in an alternative Paradise (the strangely amazing world of the *mulefa*'s), with the help of her probably invented narratives about how she fell in love, and why she chose to live her own life instead of a total subordination to the Catholic Church:

> As Mary said that, Lyra felt something strange happen to her body. She felt as if she had been handed the key to a great house she hadn't known was there, a house that was somehow inside her, and as she turned the key, she felt other doors opening deep in the darkness, and lights coming on. She sat trembling, as Mary went on: (...) (AS 396)

As the result of Mary's vivid recollections of the erotic desire preceding her first kiss in a party at the age of twelve, Lyra is tempted. She is ready for the erotic love resulting in the second Fall: "Lyra knew exactly what she [Mary] meant, and half an hour earlier she would have had no idea at all. And inside her, that rich house with all its doors open and all its rooms lit stood waiting, quiet, expectant" (AS 396). This initiation scenario of female to female also invokes a motherly bond between the woman and the girl – it may not be a coincidence that Pullman named the Temptress of his Saviour after the mother of Jesus, Virgin Mary.

Thanks to Mary's story, Will and Lyra are enabled to express their love for each other. They do it in words and, more significantly, through their bodies because in Pullman's mythopoesis the truth about oneself and the other can only be known through the body (Freitas and King 43-44). The bodily expression of their love comes about twice in two different ways, with two different purposes.

First, in the absence of their daemons, there is a kiss as the sign of recognizing the mutuality of their love.

> She could see from his eyes that he *knew* at once what she meant, and that he was *too joyful to speak*. Her fingers were still at his lips, and he felt them tremble, and he put his own hand up to hold hers there, and then *neither of them could look*; they were confused; they were brimming with happiness. Like two *moths clumsily bumping together*, with no more weight than that, their lips touched. Then before they knew how it happened, they were clinging together, *blindly* pressing their faces toward each other. (AS 416-417) (My emphasis)

And kiss is the symbol of the deepest religious rapture and immortality, which refers to the episode when God breaths life into Adam in Genesis 2.7 (Pál and Újvári "Kiss" n.p.).

The two protagonists' love is finally completed by the contribution of their daemons. "It was a gross violation of manners to touch something so private as someone else's daemon. It was forbidden not only by politeness, but by something deeper than that – something like shame" (AS 409). It means that touching another's daemon can be as much a sexual act as touching the most intimate part of the other's body. Nevertheless, meanwhile taboos[94] are generally respected in the so-called profane time of work; taboos can be transgressed in the sacred time of celebrations (Bataille 257).[95] Following this train of thought, the girl and the boy are empowered by the sacredness of love to consciously break the taboo concerning daemons:

> Knowing exactly what he was doing and exactly what it would mean, he moved his hand from Lyra's wrist and stroked the red-gold fur of her daemon. Lyra gasped. But her surprise was mixed with a pleasure so like the joy that flooded through her when she had put the fruit to his lips that she couldn't protest, because she was breathless. With a racing heart she responded in the same way: she put her hand on the silky warmth of Will's daemon, and as her fingers tightened in the fur, she knew that Will was feeling exactly what she was. (AS 446-447)

With this erotic and emotional excitement, in parallel with conscious mutuality, the protagonists' innocence is permanently lost: "neither daemon would change now, having felt a lover's hands on them" (AS 447). The moment in which Will reaches out for Lyra's daemon

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[94] "Taboo is a social prohibition or restriction sanctioned by supra[-]societal (innate) means or a socially sanctioned injunction alleged to have the force of such a prohibition. Taboo stands at the intersection of human affairs and the forces of the larger universe. Generally it is determined by divine or animistic mandates" (Wagner in Eliade *ER*, Vol. 14, 233).

[95] As taboos are forbidden to be broken in profane time (Bataille 257), Lyra's molestation in Bolvangar represents gross unnaturalness (Hines in Lenz and Scott 42).

is identical with a metaphor of sexual union, and it is entirely in accord with the laws Pullman has set up regarding daemons: "[t]he two children are depicted as lovers, and their daemons' settling marks their ultimate transition to adulthood" (Squires 81). It is the unquestionable sign of the end of childhood (i.e. innocence) and the beginning of adulthood (i.e. experience). Rayment-Pickard considers this second act as a more 'spiritual' intimacy which is more powerful than the kiss: "Lyra and Will make contact, symbolically, with each other's private, inner and vulnerable selves" (67-68). The reason, he thinks, must be the supposition that for Pullman the sexual interaction of bodies must have a spiritual meaning, too (69-70). On the contrary, Freitas insists on the pure material aspect of the two already-not-children's love-makings: "[i]f Dust is made when matter begins to 'know' itself, it makes sense that created beings would begin to attract Dust when their bodies discover themselves through loving other 'matter,' other bodies" (138-139). The fact that both Rayment-Pickard's and Freitas' arguments make sense testifies to the complexity of Pullman's text. Without doubt, Lyra's and Will's ambiguous act of love is figured as salvific (Bradley and Tate 70). How?

In a figurative sense, it is a symbolical *Hieros Gamos* (sacred marriage) of Will and Lyra that revive Dust. This technical term with Greek origin refers to "a mythical or ritual union between a god and a goddess, more generally a divine and a human being, and most especially a king and a goddess" (Bolle "Hieros Gamos" in Eliade *ER*, Vol. 6, 317). The sacred marriage rite is explained as "a stimulus or magic for bringing about fertility in people, animals, and fields" (ibid). This *Hieros Gamos* may be identified with the kiss of Lyra and Will, and even with the children's touching of each others' dæmons. The first sexual encounter of Lyra and Will is "the one which casts Lyra as the new Eve, and their act as a second, positively constructed, Fall" (Squires 82).[96]

From the end of the plot, it does not matter whether Lyra and William make love. Despite the impossibility of verbalization, of spectatorship and unknowing unawareness, Pullman rejects those critics who have accused him of advocating underage sex: "[n]owhere in the book do I talk about anything more than a kiss. And as a child, a kiss is enough. A kiss can change the world" (qtd. in Meacham n.p.). Nevertheless, if anything follows Lyra and Will's kiss at all, it is left to the reader's imagination due to the author's preservation of "an aesthetic distance and ambiguity in his treatment of the rapture of first love," with a delicacy and subtlety that Millicent Lenz finds rare in contemporary literature (Lenz in Hunt and Lenz 137). Although Lyra's sexuality is central to the plot, it is both subtler and more subtle

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[96] Their first sexual encounter is also "the point at which the trilogy fulfils Pullman's ambition of rewriting *Paradise Lost*, and indeed the Bible" (Squires 82).

described than the sexual activity of her parents (Squires 81). On the whole, their union is depicted "glancingly rather than explicitly, turning it into one of the loose ends of the trilogy" (82). In general, eroticism, which is defined by secrecy, traditionally cannot be public (Bataille 252).

As the result of the reviving power of the love of Lyra and Will, Dust stops leaking out of the universes. Mary Malone, who recognizes the positive change in the movement of Dust, wonders what might have happened:

> Something tiny but crucial …If you wanted to divert a mighty river into a different course, and all you had was a single pebble, you could do it, as long as you put the pebble in the right place to send the first trickle of water *that* way instead of *this*. Something like that happened yesterday. I don't know what it was. They saw each other differently, or something …Until then, they hadn't felt like that, but suddenly they did. And then the Dust was attracted to them, very powerfully, and it stopped flowing the other way. (AS 428)

According to Freitas, "[i]t is a couple then – a loving relationship between embodied beings – that can redeem a relational world, can save the divine-embodied relationship" (Freitas and King 136). The New Adam and Eve need to "be working – and loving – together" (ibid). As a result of seeking to know more about each other, Lyra and Will literally become the image of matter loving matter, the fulfilment of Dust's desire (139). In Tucker's understanding, the loving and intimate relationships between Lyra and Will to each other as well as to their daemons represent "an ideal to which humans have constantly aspired" (144-145).[97] In Pullman's joyous and life-affirming 'Fall,' the new Eve "not only halts, but actually reverses the environmental catastrophe which threatens the destruction of the universe" (Oliver 294).

As soon as Pullman's second 'Fall' befalls, and the grown-up second Eve and the second Adam start attracting Dust in one of the parallel universes, they indirectly become the so-called 'axis mundi' (the centre of the world, the point around which the universe revolves). In cultures thinking of the universe "as multiple realms of heavens, hells, and strata for various kinds of beings," the centre of the world is that point "where all realms intersect," the place where communication and even passages among all essential modes of being is possible (Eliade and Sullivan "Center of the World" in Eliade *ER*, Vol. 3, 166). Being axis mundi together, Lyra and Will are "saturating the macrocosm with loving awareness" (Lenz in Hunt and Lenz 136-137). By the cohesive power of love, every one and every thing becomes the reflection of each other, in other words the *mirror-images* of each other. In this way, mutual Love turns out to be something like Pullman's materialist 'religion.'

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[97] In addition, when the seemingly 'daemon-less' Will finally realises that he loves Lyra, "he becomes a whole person at last, able to admit to the strong feelings he had up till then kept hidden away" (Tucker 110-111).

However, the mythic narrative of HDM is not yet closed, the journey of the protagonist is not yet finished. William and Lyra, as well as Pullman's readers, have to learn and understand that bringing the Republic of Heaven into existence is an on-going task (Cantrell 320). This attitude is not a specificity of *HDM*, because quest fantasies "posit a cyclical history so that the possibility of the reappearance of the Dark Lord, or of another, in the future remains" (Senior in James and Mendlesohn 190).

Because of its focus on sexual maturation, *HDM* series is also labelled as a 'rite of passage' story.[98] Contemporary fantasy involves the traces of rite of passage stories:

> [i]n the far-off times when the basic tales were first told, childhood and adolescence made up at least half the normal life span, and the crucial aim was that people should succeed in growing up and reproducing, so that the community could go on. What else they did with their brief adult lives was much less important. In fact, the stories originated in the symbolic instruction that was given to boys in the puberty-initiation camps and to girls in the period of seclusion that followed first menstruation, telling them how they should live their lives. These fundamental myths resurfaced in the Middle Ages in the guise of Arthurian and other heroic romance, and have now appeared again as fantasy. (Wrigley 4)

However, the fact that a boy and a girl go through the trials and the journeys for the most part *together*, which is unusual among rite of passage myths, makes HDM different (74). If Lyra's story is understood to be about "her *initiation* into the *mystery* of truth," then the Fall is precisely the great rite of passage (Gray *Fantasy* 182). *HDM* must belong to the new wave of realistic children's books which deal with teenagers' feelings about their changing bodies, or show young people questioning authority (Yuan 59).

Personal freedom which has outstanding importance in occultural movements (such as Satanism) seems to be unimportant in HDM. Given the guiding principle of holism in Pullman's trilogy, one reason might be the incompatibility of oneness with free will. According to Charles P. Heriot-Maitland, the concept of Oneness implies that

> the Self no longer has ultimate control over one's actions and thoughts. The depersonalization of actions may lead to the belief that there is a natural order to the universe and a predetermined course of events, i.e., a *destiny* or *fate*. (…) [I]n the context of Western (monotheistic) religions, fate will be understood in terms of *God's guidance*. (318)

Besides, "Oneness (and mutual causality) also challenges fundamental principles about the temporal relation of cause and effect (that their onset is divided by a period of time)" (ibid). For this reason, "if two simultaneous events with no 'ordinary' causal connection are seen to

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[98] By Victor Turner's definition, "[r]ites of passage are a category of rituals that mark the passage of a person through the life cycle, from one stage to another over time, from one role or social position to another, integrating the human and cultural experiences with biological destiny: birth, reproduction, and death. These ceremonies make the basic distinctions, observed in all groups, between young and old, male and female, living and dead. The interplay of biology and culture is at the heart of all rites of passage, and the struggle between these two spheres asserts the essential paradox of our mortal heritage" (Turner in Eliade *ER*, Vol. 12, 380).

possess certain parallels, they may now be perceived as being connected (*meaningful coincidences*)" (ibid). Given the genre of HDM, the other reason might be the rarity of free will in quest fantasy. When a narrative is driven by prophecy, typically in quest fantasy, the hero does not have free will (Mendlesohn 42). In the light of this, "the moment of *recognition*, the point at which the hero realizes his place in the story and loses free will, is usually displayed in snapshots rather than in gradual change" (ibid). Moreover,

> [f]antasyland is constructed, in part, through the insistence on a received truth. This received truth is embodied in didacticism and elaboration. While much information about the world is culled from what the protagonist can *see* (with a consequent denial of polysemic interpretation), history or analysis is often provided by the storyteller who is drawn in the role of sage, magician, or guide. While this casting apparently opens up the text, in fact it seeks to close it down further by denying not only reader interpretation, but also that of the hero/protagonist. This may be one reason why the hero in the quest fantasy is more often an actant than an actor, provided with attributes rather than character precisely to compensate for the static nature of his role. (7)

In other words, the absence of free will is so characteristic of the genre of fantasy that even Pullman could not avoid it. Maybe he did not have the intention to do so.

Despite of the seeming presence of free will in HDM, predestination is predominant. "We are all subject to the fates" (GC 271). At the same time Lyra has "the power to make a fateful choice, on which the future of all the worlds depend[s]" (AS 59). She is also aware of the grandiose task she has to perform because she overheard the consul's words: "I *know* I got something important to do, and Dr. Lanselius the Consul said it was vital I never found out what my destiny was till it happened, see – I must never ask about it… So I never did" (AS 277). And Lyra accepts her destiny. However, if her destiny must be fulfilled, then her future is fixed, and she does not have real choices (Michaud in Greene and Robison 122). Besides, neither of the two paths that Lyra can take is under her control: in the first path, she stays ignorant of her role, and thereby it is her destiny to save humanity. In the second path, if she learns of the prophecy, she will fail to save the world. Either way, she seems to be far from being free (ibid). The final conclusion, whether she saves humanity, is not under her control (123). Pullman overcomes the problem over freedom of choice with characters seemingly fulfilling the various prophecies previously made about them by making both Will and Lyra "fiercely independent characters" (Tucker 113). It is their sense of what should be that drives them, on the basis of their own values and personalities (ibid). Pullman thinks that belief in free will is the only way we can live – "[i]f we started to believe that everything is predestined, life would become horrible" (qtd. in App.) –, even if he considers free will as an illusion, as a sort of psychological confirmation (see Chattaway).

III.3. Unity of Man and Nature (the Cosmos)

This chapter is about the required symbiosis and circulation of every material inhabitant of the Earth.[99] With regards to humankind's place in the imagined hierarchy of the cosmos, today's dominant Western attitude is excessively distancing and exploitative. *Anthropocentrism* is the assumption that "the interests of humans are of higher priority than those of nonhumans" (Buell 134). The underlying model of this virtually oppressive mastery is based on an "*alienated* differentiation and denied dependency: in the dominant Euro-American culture, humans are not only *distinguished* from nature, but *opposed* to it in ways that make humans radically alienated from and superior to it" (Garrard 25). The roots of this indifference, even depreciation of nature are found in the Hebraic (Semitic) divorce between divinity and nature, and also in Gnostic ascetic tendencies (Hultkrantz in Eliade *ER*, Vol. 4, 581). In the Old Testament, it reads that "Then God said, 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth'" (Gen. 1:26). The creation narratives of Christian tradition are often interpreted to encourage humans to see themselves as "distinct in some special, divinely ordained sense from the natural world" (Partridge *RW, Vol. II*, 52). Due to the rise of monotheistic Christianity, the natural world was evacuated of animistic spirits and sacred forces, and became simply the physical arena in which one obeyed God (45).[100] In addition, the theological and philosophical works of Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274), Francis Bacon (1561-1626), and René Descartes (1596-1650) also reinforced, or contributed to, man's destructive attitude to nature.

In the growingly secularized Western societies, the political and ethical movement of environmentalism is becoming more and more dominant. Modern ecological movement appeared after World War II, when the Western world finally became aware that "the view of

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[99] This chapter is based on one of my published articles, "Decoding Green Encouragement: Ecocriticism on PP's *HDM* Trilogy" (2017). This chapter is also based on my MA thesis, entitled "'The most sweet and desirable end': Desire for Death in PP's Trilogy, *HDM*" (2010).

[100] The so-called 'White thesis,' published by Lynn White in 1967, argues that this dualism between humanity and the rest of the natural world, as well as Christianity's rejection of the Pagan worldview (as a nature religion encouraging a holistic, ecocentric attitude of respect for the natural world), led to "a theological rationale for the exploitation of the Earth's resources" (Partridge *RW, Vol. II*, 51). The result of desacralized nature and the divorce of humans from their relationship with the Earth was the formation of "the theoretical foundations for a scientific revolution which objectified nature, viewed it as passive, and thus encouraged humans to control it and manipulate it for their own ends. Disenchanted, nature became little more than raw material" (ibid). In the defence of Christianity, however, a flaw in the White thesis should be mentioned: as there never seems to have been "an ecological golden age when *homo sapiens* were not exploiting the environment," "the environmental crisis is more of a *human* problem than a particularly *Christian* problem" (53).

nature as a resource [was] destroying nature as a human environment" (Hultkrantz in Eliade *ER*, Vol. 4, 581). The so-called "greening of the Western consciousness" is a current phenomenon: "what was once primarily the concern of counterculturalists in the 1960s has now become mainstream" (Partridge *RW, Vol. II*, 42).

Besides of legitimizing environmental destruction with its view of nature as mundane matter, and placing exclusive importance of the other world, Judeo-Christianity also has a more eco-friendly attitude. Having created the first human couple, "God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth" (Genesis 1:28). The words "subdue" and "dominion" have not only been interpreted as divinely approved "transformation," but also as "pious stewardship" (Buell 2). In recent decades, pairing this less known Christian view of nature with contemporary environmental concerns – because of a new wish "to modify Christian thought and message so as to be credible and relevant to people facing the questions and problems of rapidly modernising world" – led to the emergence of so-called "ecotheology" in both Catholic and Lutheran Churches (Binde 20). Man's this kind of protective care, however, still demonstrates supremacy: we are believed to be the rightful Gardeners approved by God.[101]

The most extreme tendency for the sake of maintaining the ecological balance is called *ecocentrism*. It is the view or rather acknowledgement that the interest of the ecosphere overrides the interest of individual species (Buell 137). In effect, the origins of the propaganda for giving up our central position have nothing to do with orthodox Christianity:

> The notion of ecocentrism has proceeded from, and fed back into, related belief systems derived from Eastern religions, such as Taoism and Buddhism, from heterodox figures in Christianity such as St Francis of Assisi (1182-1286) and Teilhard de Chardin (1881-1955), and from modern reconstructions of American Indians, pre-Christian Wiccan, shamanistic and other 'primal' religions. (Garrard 23)

Within ecocentrism, moreover, there are two distinguishable scientific trends, the so-called 'shallow approaches' to nature "arguing for the preservation of natural resources for the sake of humans" and 'deep ecology'[102] demanding "recognition of intrinsic value in nature" (21). The solution of deep ecology to the dualistic separation of humans from nature, identified with the origin of environmental crisis, is the claim for "a return to a monistic, primal

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[101] In parallel with this, Michelle Ann Abate defines a common agreement upon the environment's need for management by humans as "a viewpoint that ironically overlooks the fact that humans do not exist above or even outside the ecological environment" (73).

[102] Deep ecology was introduced in 1973 by the Norwegian eco-philosopher Arne Naess (Partridge *RW, Vol. II*, 56).

identification of humans and the ecosphere" (ibid).[103] Nowadays, deep ecology is "*both* an orientation within environmental ethics *and* an Easternized, occulturally oriented rethinking of 'the self'" (Partridge *RW, Vol. II*, 57). In more details, at the heart of deep ecology, there is the belief that all forms of life have intrinsic value, moral worth, and the right to 'self-realization.' As the rigorously non-anthropocentric deep ecology demands that human intervention is likely to be negative rather than positive to nature, "the aim is to live *with* nature, respecting the inherent rights of the entirety of the ecological web, and accepting our position as *part of* that web" (58). The particular methodology of deep ecology is seeking to "overcome concepts of nature's 'otherness' by focusing on 'the whole,' of which we are a part" (59). The radicalism of deep ecology and the altruism it requires anticipate its relative unpopularity.

Analysis upon the representations of the natural world in literary fictions has recently relied on ecocriticism. The term first appeared, as the Hungarian ecocritic Judit Horgas reports in her book *Hálóval a szelet: Ökokritikai tanulmány a reneszánszról* [*An Ecocritical Study on the Renaissance*] (2005) (13), in Joseph W. Meeker's book, *The Comedy of Survival: Studies in Literary Ecology* (1972), then in William Rueckert's essay, "Literature and Ecology: An Experiment in Ecocriticism" (1978). Today this hardly three-decade old interdisciplinary critical theory is largely dominated by the *Association for the Study of Literature and the Environment* (ASLE),[104] a principal professional association for American and international scholars of ecocriticism which, in a close relationship with the science of ecology, focuses on artistic representations envisaging "human and nonhuman web of interrelation" (Buell 138).

The role of nature in *HDM* has been, to my knowledge, either overlooked or ignored by both readers and scholars. Raymond Williams distinguishes three principal denotations of the word "Nature": the essential character of something; the "inherent force which directs the world," as in the capitalized Nature of classical mythology or eighteenth-century Deism; and the material world including human beings (223, quoted from Buell 143). In this light, my analysis works with the conception of Nature as spiritual force and matter.

The mythopoeia of *HDM* trilogy defines mankind's place in the cosmos, and specifies a certain attitude to the ecosphere. Pullman's establishment of a new myth of human dignity

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[103] Neo-Platonism, as a rigorously holistic philosophy, could be seen as "a prototype of some forms of contemporary deep ecology" (Partridge *RW, Vol. II*, 50).
[104] Their website is http://www.asle.org/.

happens to be far from the superiority of human omnipotence and omniscience. His myth strongly affects human attitude to the Other, i.e. non-humans:

> Environmentalists also tell a story about us and ourselves and *our place in the universe*. In a sense it's a religious story, because that's the big question of religion. Why are we here? What is here, what does it consist of? What have we got to do now we are here? What *responsibilities* does being conscious place on us?
>
> And those are questions which the environmental movement, over the past 25 years, and certainly since the global warming issue has come up, has been very much engaged in. What does it mean to us to be *conscious of* what we are doing to the world? (Qtd. from Simms n.p., my emphasis)

In parallel with the above words, the key words in the holistic principle of the trilogy's mythopoeia are also "humbleness," "responsibility" and "consciousness." Pullman also claims that Lyra and Will come to realise that "the world is a wonderful place whose destiny is not their birthright" (qtd. in Vulliamy n.p.).

Accordingly, Pullman's trilogy propagates the desirable restoration and respectful preservation of the meaningful entirety of the natural environment (i.e. all living and non-living things on the Earth). While Pullman perceives that "[the place we live in]'s in some danger; and that despite the danger, we can do something to overcome it;" the basic or real story he would like to hear, see, and read is "the story about how connected we are, not only with one another but also with the place we live in. And how it's almost infinitely rich" (qtd. from Simms n.p.). It follows that the story of *HDM* embodies the expounding of togetherness in line with *biophilia* (the love of life). As a theoretical guide for interpreting his recognizable desire for (re)integrating mankind into a harmonious connectedness, I am concerned with Judit Horgas' train of thought, according to which by interpreting a given work of art as part of a complex, global system, the eco-critic widens the circle from social relations to the cosmic ones; that is "if everything is connected to everything, all we need to think about is why man seeks at all costs for 'independence,' life without linkage" (14-15, my translation).[105] While William Gray identifies Pullman's 'high argument' with "his attempt to suggest the possibility of a reconciliation of humanity with itself and with nature" (*Fantasy* 4); and Deirdre F. Baker observes Pullman's emphasis on ecology and his encouragement of his readers "to become activists for the health of this world" (243); my analysis provides the answer to the question to what extent Pullman's story propagates ecocentrism.

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[105] Although Horgas differentiates three environmental concepts in mainly the Renaissance literature of England – the forest as the topos of the wilderness and barbarism (37-38), the garden as the reined boondocks and refuge (128-129), and the island as the symbol of escapism (163-164) –, Pullman's trilogy does not go into such details. What are worth for an ecocritical analysis, I think, are the artistic embodiments of his comprehensive, egalitarian convictions.

'Greenness,' or the preference of nature over convention, was an integral part of the English Romantic Movement. From a theological viewpoint, "the Romantic tendency was towards immanentism, towards an understanding of deity in terms of 'an all-pervading cosmic principle or power'[106]" (*RW, Vol. II*, 48). The Romantics made their respect for the natural world grammatically evident by "giving terms such as 'Universe' and 'Nature' upper-case initials" (ibid). Schleiermacher, Spinoza, and Goethe were all proponents of this tendency.

The idea of unity with nature also appeared in English literature. Despite the Romantic period's "pastoral tradition" (Garrard 33), as well as a new inclination toward a so-called "geo-piety" (Hultkrantz in Eliade *ER*, Vol. 4, 581), Nature was paradoxically never described for its own sake.[107] As the Romantic poets were rather distrustful of the human world, they tended to believe that a close connection with nature was mentally and morally healthy. By first redefining the notion of nature as "a healing and spiritual force," Coleridge, but rather Wordsworth were "the pioneers in what has since become the 'back to nature' movement" (Ackroyd n.p.). What is more, later, for the Victorians Wordsworth was not simply a poet but a religion, and the Lake District was a national shrine (Raine 106). The Wordsworthian Nature as the "all-embracing presence" had a character of femininity and maternity:

> [s]he is the sweet familiar aspect of hills and streams, woods and fields and sky. In Protestant England a too masculine, too moralistic, too rational deity had left man without that 'refuge of sinners' the Catholic world finds in the Blessed Virgin Mary; and through Wordsworth a whole nation too long deprived of the archetype of the feminine, compassionate, protective embrace of the Great Mother found shelter and respite in Wordsworth's Nature, (…). (119-120)

In other words, "[a] century that had lost faith in God found its comfort in nature" (121). Wordsworth's "Lines Composed a few miles above Tintern Abbey" (often abbreviated to "Tintern Abbey") (1798), and "I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud" (also commonly known as "Daffodils") (1807) are distinguished poems outlining his general philosophies on nature: her moral (positive) influence on the poet and the almost spiritual union of people and nature.

In the trilogy's mythopoeia, the traits of the Wordsworthian nature worship can be identified with the sincere, out-of-doors feelings of bliss, holiness and awe. Mary Malone is walking "along the floor of the grove [of huge, special trees] feeling much as if she were in a *cathedral*: there was the same *stillness*, the same sense of *upwardness* in the structures, the

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[106] Here Partridge refers to H. H. Farmer's *Revelation and Religion: Studies in the Theological Interpretation of Religious Types* (London: Nisbet, 1954), 116.

[107] What Wordsworth valorised is not what contemporary environmentalists would protect: "Romantic nature is never seriously endangered, and may in its normal state be poor in biological diversity; rather, it is loved for its vastness, beauty and endurance" (Garrard 43).

same *awe* within herself" (AS 76) (my emphasis). Later, when she has succeeded in climbing up one of these trees,

> She was as *happy*, in one way, as she had ever been. That one way was physically. In the dense green of the canopy, with the rich blue of the sky between the leaves; with a breeze keeping her skin cool, and the faint scent of the flowers delighting her whenever she sensed it; with the rustle of the leaves, the song of the hundreds of birds, and the distant murmur of the waves on the seashore, *all her senses* were lulled and nurtured, and if she could have stopped thinking, she would have been entirely lapped in *bliss*. (AS 326) (My emphasis)

The beauty and delight, peace and safety and happiness perceived simultaneously by all of her sensory systems, which is thanks to having been made of matter, evoke the unconscious unification with the rhythm of flora and fauna in the Garden of Eden. What is more, natural phenomena can also induce unsophisticated admiration, even fascination, in Pullman's characters. For instance, the sight of the Aurora Borealis of the Arctic[108] impresses Lyra:

> The *sight* filled the northern sky; the immensity of it was scarcely conceivable. As if *Heaven* itself, great curtains of delicate light hung and trembled. Pale green and rose-pink, and as transparent as the most fragile fabric, and at the bottom edge a profound and fiery crimson like the fires of *Hell*, they swung shimmered loosely with more grace than the most skilful dancer. Lyra thought she could even *hear* them: a vast distant whispering swish. In the evanescent delicacy she *felt* something as *profound* as she'd felt close to the bear. She was *moved* by it; it was so beautiful it was *almost holy*; she felt tears prick her eyes, and the tears splintered the light even further into prismatic rainbows. (GC 161) (My emphasis)

Just like Mary, Lyra also sees, hears and feels the magnificent manifestations of a kind of divineness equally animating all dweller of the cosmos. To Christopher Wrigley, "[o]ne of the many merits of Pullman's work is the lyrical evocation of landscape, from the English Fens to the cold splendour of the Arctic, the lush foothills of the Himalayas to the vast, blue prairie sky" (106).[109]

Besides of Wordsworth's nature worship, Pullman's artistic imagination on the connectedness of all living and non-living things probably was also shaped by William Blake's prophetic rebellion against the Enlightenment. Although Blake cannot be called a 'nature poet' in the Wordsworthian sense, he had no less than Wordsworth to say about

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[108] To the question, why Pullman chose the North as a mysterious place, full of secrets and a place where these secrets are revealed (and why not, for instance, the South), he answered that "I didn't choose it, it just happened to me. I always felt an attraction towards the ice and the snow, and the six month of darkness. They're mysterious and they're exciting, and the idea of the Northern Aurora is thrilling to me. (…) Anyway, it is because I love all that, all that list of associations, that list of things that are summed up for me by the idea of the North" (qtd. in App.).

[109] After Pullman's realistic and vivid descriptions of landscapes in the trilogy was praised, he was asked whether he had already visited these places, for example, the Himalaya. He answered that "I'm glad it comes off like that because I've never been there. I don't like travelling very much, I'd much rather stay here at home. But there are kinds of books you can read, there are libraries that one can go to, these days, with Google, you know, one can see maps of everything. Pictures are already [available]. It's not hard to find out what places look like" (qtd. in App.).

nature:[110] "[w]here Wordsworth stands in awe before the vast, so does Blake before the minute" (Raine 110). In more details, while Wordsworth's "grandeur lies in the spaciousness, the freedom, the majestic solitude and the all-embracing wholeness of his 'nature' " (108), Blake's chosen symbols of "the infinite in all things" are "[t]he least of things, flowers, worm and fly, grain of sand and particle of dust" (112), which is vividly illustrated, for instance, in his poem entitled "The Sick Rose" (1794). In short, the views of Pullman's two literary inspirations, Blake and Wordsworth, are based on orthodox Christianity in the sense that, with their nature-conceptions, Blake opposed it, Wordsworth completed it.

Environmentalism relies on fears of the end of the present world and apocalyptic narratives. Eschatological terminology is often used as a reference to natural and political disasters: "it seems to be a small step *from* speculation about cataclysmic earthquakes, tidal waves, volcanic blasts, asteroid impact, and war (especially conflict in the Middle East) *to* divine intervention, apocalypse, and Armageddon" (Partridge *RW, Vol. II*, 279). The meaning of the term 'apocalypse,' which is derived from the Greek word *apokalypsis*, is principally informed by the book of Revelation. Since then, it has been applied more broadly to comparable literatures and ideas. For this reason,

> although literally meaning 'revelation' or 'unveiling,' the term apocalypticism, certainly in the study of new religions, has tended to refer to catastrophism and, more often than not, to eschatological scenarios which, despairing of political or religious transformation of the world, look to cataclysmic intervention of a divine, otherworldly, or superhuman kind. (281)

As a rhetoric, apocalypse proposes a solution to the problem of evil and suffering by locating it in time and looking forward to its imminent resolution (284). From a very early period, speculation about the end has been central features of Western Christendom: eschatological expectation has accounted for a great many prophets, movements, and moments of religious enthusiasm throughout history (288). The thought of the Iranian prophet Zoroaster, or Zarathustra, around 1200 BCE seems to be likely to have given rise to the distinctive construction of apocalyptic narratives (Garrard 85). The apocalyptic narrative is considered in environmental and radical ecological discourse because some of the most striking successes of the green movement have been based on end-of-the-world rhetorical strategies. Today the literary genre of apocalypse is denoted to be one of the pre-existing ways of imagining the place of humans in nature, which is traced back to Revelation, the last book of the Bible (the other one is the literary genre of the pastoral, based on the Biblical Genesis) (2).

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[110] However, Blake's visions on nature are not his own, but they belong to the Swedish scientist, philosopher, theologian and Christian mystic Emanuel Swedenborg (1688-1772) (Raine 116).

An approaching end-of-the-world shadow is temporarily cast on the mythopoeia of *HDM*. It is generally identified with John Clute's terms, 'Thinning' or 'Wrongness.' The trilogy itself can be identified as "an apocalyptic text in a double sense":

> the narrative both explores apocalypse in its primary meaning as revelation (moments of epiphany occur throughout a trilogy that is fascinated by the possibility of bringing to light that which is hidden) and in its secondary (though, perhaps, more widely recognized) signification as that which attends to last things, the end of the world, the representation of death, judgement, heaven and hell. (Bradley and Tate 63)

Pullman has "an explicit *eschatology*, or teaching on the End" (Gray *Death* 107).

III.3.1. Mother Nature: Dust

Dust's mode of existence can be associated with pantheism, the belief in oneness with all living things. Pantheism is a doctrine coined by John Toland (1670-1722) in 1705, but formulated by Baruch Spinoza's (1632-1677) *Deus sive Natura* [*God or Nature*]: God and nature/the universe are identical, even interchangeable (Ferguson 142), which involves the absence of a personal God, immortal soul and free will (173). Spinoza and G. W. Friedrich Hegel are considered to be the leading Western philosophers of pantheism. Anne-Marie Bird finds Dust and the universe interchangeable because "there is no distinction between the 'source' and the 'product'" (Bird in Lenz and Scott 192). Indeed, Pantheism rejected the Neo-classical idea of the Great Chain of Being which assumed a hierarchy between forms of existence. Nicholas Tucker claims that Pantheism, which is far older than Christianity, forms the basis for many other world religions (135). In this ancient belief, supernatural gods play no part, and animal as well as human rights are respected. Neither is there any otherworld: "[h]umans themselves are held to be made of the same matter as the universe, and only in this life do they have the chance to witness this earthly paradise face to face. When they die, they are reunited with nature by being re-absorbed into it" (ibid). At the same time, the absence of the otherworld has a serious consequence: if humans destroy nature, they risk creating a hell on earth for all species and for themselves (ibid).[111] As a conclusion, Pullman's notion of Dust may also have links with a particular mystical-ecological approach to the earth. In this view, the world – like Dust – has always been "a living organism with its own needs and feelings" (ibid). John W. Grula, who expresses today's relevance of pantheism in the context of environmentalism, is convinced that Judeo-Christianity and the Enlightenment as

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[111] In other words, "[f]or Pullman, bad behaviour towards other humans is inseparable from behaving badly towards the living environment" (Tucker 136).

postmodernism's predecessors are so exhausted that they fail to provide "a conceptual framework conductive to ensuring the long-term health of earth and its inhabitants" (160). Instead, pantheism, as a successor to the Judeo-Christian, Enlightenment, and postmodernist paradigms, is proposed to provide "a theological foundation for the deep ecology movement" (ibid), to "recognize our limits and our kinship with the rest of the cosmos" (174).

Because of its insistence on God being *in* the world, or God's separateness from, or rather superiority to the created world, the doctrine of pan*en*theism coined by K. C. F. Krause (1781-1832) seems to be inappropriate in connection with Dust. By definition, God is both immanent and transcendent in all things, so that "every part of the universe has its existence in God; but He is more than the sum total of those parts" (Ferguson 142). Donna Freitas identifies Dust with the doctrine of panentheism on the basis of "the intimacy between God [i.e. Dust] and humanity" (Freitas and King 31); "[e]very person and every world, and every spiritual and material aspect of each, is interconnected because they are all made of Dust" (51-52); "[a]s we are made from Dust, so we are remade after death into Dust" (117-118).[112] Yet, what she writes about – connectedness by homogeneity – seems, to me at least, rather pantheism than panentheism.

Pullman's pairing of the meaning (of life) with the desire for being linked to others is also in parallel with (nature) mysticism. Mysticism, or mystical union (*unio mystica* in Latin), is a search for hidden knowledge to *experience* identity with, or conscious awareness of, an ultimate reality or God. Mystical experience itself is "a transitory state of consciousness in which an individual purports to come into immediate contact with the ultimate reality. It involves the awareness of an abstract, non-physical power which is far greater than the individual self" (Heriot-Maitland 302). Bound to the names of Saint Augustine (354-430), Francis of Assisi, Jacob Boehme (1575-1624), Meister Eckhart (c. 1260-c. 1327), the Cambridge Platonist John Smith (1618-1652) and Rudolf Otto (1869-1937) and even Wordsworth (Ferguson 130-131), Christian nature mysticism is an urge "to escape from a sense of separation, from the loneliness of selfhood, towards a closer participation and reunion with Nature or God" (Happold 40); or when God is revealed in nature (Ferguson 201). Although mysticism is associated with religion, it needs not to be religious: "it is feasible to be a materialist and an atheist, and still be a mystic" (Heriot-Maitland 302) – just

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[112] She also argues that "[l]iberation theologians focus on relationships, on the interconnectedness of friends, families, and even those we consider our enemies – often giving their theology a *panentheistic* slant, which not only understands God as central to all relationships but understands creation and the divine as so intimately connected that, though God may indeed 'transcend' God's creation, the universe is also God's body" (Freitas and King xxii).

like Philip Pullman. For him, seeing clearly comes from consciousness and responsibility, "to make things better and to work for greater good and greater wisdom" (qtd. from Spanner n.p.). To the question whether he had ever had any experience that could be described as a mystical state, his answer was the following:

> Yes I have. Usually *outdoors*. Not very often, I may add. Probably only three or four times. It is to do with seeing things more clearly. Mystical experience is sometimes described as a cloudy state when the real world dissolves. For me it has not been like that, or else, what I have had has not been mystical experience. What I seemed to feel, was that I saw the connections between things much more clearly, much more vividly. There were patterns, there were correspondences, there were shadows here of something else, *everything was connected*. With enormous excitement, I could see that *the universe was alive* and *I was part of it*. I saw this so clearly and intensely that I don't think I could sustain that state for very long. (Qtd. from Renton n.p.) (My emphasis)

"Outdoors" here is likely to imply natural setting where "pantheistic intuitive insights or mystical experiences nearly always occur," without the presence of human aspect or imagery (Grula 162). Pat Pinsent's argument, that "this sense of feeling connected to other living beings, and indeed to nature itself, sometimes involving a degree of awe and a recognition of some form of presence, […] is often expressed by people who feel alienated from religious bodies" (Pinsent in Lenz and Scott 207), corresponds to Pullman's confession on how disappointed he is about organized Christianity.

Due to its central importance,[113] Dust equals with Mother Nature. Nature is commonly personified as 'Mother Nature' or 'Mother Earth' when people in modern Western cultures acknowledge the experience of the entire natural realm as female (Falk in Eliade *ER*, Vol. 5, 303). The positive aspects of feminine sacrality are "its role in producing life and nourishing growth of all varieties" (309). At the same time, the exploration of concepts of the earth as feminine power reveals a darker aspect, too:

> For this power who brings forth life also reabsorbs it into herself as the dread goddess who rules the subterranean land of the dead. Moreover, the terrible aspect of certain female deities is not merely a product of association with the bowels of a feminine earth; rather, it is the other side of the processes of growth and transformation that many female deities represent. For life and growth inevitably entail death and decay, and misdirected spiritual striving readily deteriorates into madness. (Ibid)

Mother Nature is also identified with Mother Death. This kind of death personification is the nurturing mother to whom all living beings will eventually return – the mother as the principle of origin and extinction of life (Guthke 200-1). One of the two principal areas of contemporary science where deep ecology finds verification is the so-called 'Gaia' hypothesis posited by geochemist James Lovelock and microbial biologist Lynn Margulis in the 1970s.[114]

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[113] It is detailed in subchapter III.1.1.
[114] The other one is the so-called "new physics" (Partridge *RW, Vol. II*, 61).

Lawrence Joseph identifies the Gaia hypothesis with "the first comprehensive scientific expression of the profoundly ancient belief that planet Earth is a living creature" (Joseph 1, qtd. in Partridge *RW, Vol. II*, 61). Of course, the ancient understanding of the Earth as Mother, who is life-giving, nurturing, caring, and wisdom, is central to the contemporary popularization and sacralization of Gaia (63). This is a holistic spirituality in the sense that "to attend to one's own wellbeing is also to attend to the wellbeing of the Earth Mother" (65). In HDM, Nature and Dust are so much intrinsically intertwined that the damage of both can bring the end of all parallel worlds. Laura Peters finds the basis of Pullman's argument about the environment in Will's instruction to Lyra in SK: "We've got to treat this place *right*" (Peters in Barfield and Cox 108).

III.3.2. Respect and Humility to Nature: The *Mulefa*

The cosmic mutuality between Pullman's ecological divinity and conscious beings is best perceptible in the harmonious symbiosis characterizing a particular people in the trilogy. They embody an ecological Eden, populated by a quasi utopistic society – it is not surprising that they are the creatures of authorial fantasy. They have "a diamond-shaped frame, with a limb at each of the corners" (AS 109), yet not a spine, and they look like "a cross between antelopes and motorcycles," with horns and "trunks like small elephants" (AS 378). All their movements are "full of grace and power" (AS 80). Despite this Chimera-like appearance, these creatures are neither mythic monsters nor animals but "individuals, lively with intelligence and purpose" (AS 378). In other words, they are *people*, with language, fire and society: "it's not *them*, they're *us*" (AS 109); and "[t]heir word for themselves [is] *mulefa*, but an individual [is] a *zalif*" (AS 111).

The environmental management of the *mulefa* is exemplary. In their community nothing is wasted (AS 113). For instance, while their technology (which is comparable to humanity's Stone Age) is primitive, all of their houses are built

> in much the same way out of wood and clay and thatch. There was nothing crude about them; each door and window frame and lintel was covered in subtle patterns, but patterns that weren't carved in the wood: it was as if they'd persuaded the wood to grow in that shape naturally. (AS 388-389)

Their way of working relies on working "not on their own but two by two, working their trunks together to tie a knot" (AS 114), contrary to human beings in general, Mary Malone in particular: "[a]t first she felt that this [being able to tie knots on her own] gave her an advantage – she needed no one else – and then she realized how it cut her off from others.

Perhaps all human beings were like that" (AS 114).[115] The *mulefa*'s dependence and reliance on each other to be able to prosper at all is coupled with their high effectiveness, even elegance in work: "[t]hey could discuss without quarrelling and cooperate without getting in each other's way" (AS 326). The *mulefa*'s paradise-on-earth community embodies the central value of the narrative, "the value of collaboration and not confrontation" (Peters in Barfield and Cox 109). Briefly, there are "all kinds of order and carefulness in the [*mulefa*] village" (AS 389). The mulefa with their balanced relationship to their environment presents "Pullman's ecological zenith" (Cox in Barfield and Cox 137).

If that is not convincing enough, the *mulefa* live in peaceful symbiosis or coexistence with other species, including Dust. Their society and culture, thus existence, depend, first, on their physical structure. The diamond-shaped *mulefa* move with the help of wheels which are peculiar "seedpods": "[p]erfectly round, immensely hard and light – they couldn't have been designed better. The creatures hooked a claw through the center of the pods with their front and rear legs, and used their two lateral legs to push against the ground and move along" (AS 78). As a gift of nature, this tool is an integral part of the *mulefa* body: "[i]t was as if the *mulefa* and the seedpod really were one creature, which by a miracle could disassemble itself and put itself together again" (AS 204-205). Second, one special member of the flora of the *mulefa*'s world provides them with the most important things for meaningful life. It is special, extremely tall trees – whose "foliage was dense and dark green" (AS 74) – that supply the *mulefa* with the seedpod used as a wheel on the one hand, and some special oil that through contact with the seedpod, is "the center of their thinking and feeling; that young ones didn't have the wisdom of their elders because they couldn't use the wheels, and thus could absorb no oil through their claws" (AS 115). In exchange, the trees also benefit from this interchange: "the seedpods needed the constant pounding they got on the hard roads if they were to crack at all, and also that the seeds were difficult to germinate" (AS 115). Briefly, "[w]ithout the *mulefa*'s attention, the trees would all die. Each species depended on the other, and furthermore, it was the oil that made it possible" (AS 115). Third, what makes the usage of these wheels possible, even worthy, is the geology of the *mulefa*'s habitat. All around there are "rivers of stone," ever "some kind of [solidified] lava-flow," "as smooth as a stretch of well-laid road in Mary's own world, and certainly easier to walk on than the grass" (AS

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[115] This last sentence recalls humankind's archetypal pain of being discontinuous and separated. Cf. "Introduction" of Georges Bataille's *Death and Sensuality: A Study of Eroticism and the Taboo* (1962).

75).[116] It is so well designed that one begins wondering what was first: the *mulefa* or the lava-roads. In sum, the *mulefa*'s "shape, and the roads, and the wheel trees coming together all made it possible" (AS 390). Millicent Lenz directly refers to this people as "living exemplars of ideal ecologists" because of "their respect for the integrity of nature, their sustainable energy source (the 'renewable' seed pod 'oil'), and their creatively synergistic relationship with other sentient beings" (Lenz in Hunt and Lenz 132). Pullman, of course, approves the *mulefa*'s life-style:

> [t]hey live in a world without self-division. They are at ease with themselves, they're happy in their surroundings, they're comfortable with the way they live and with each other… Their mythology doesn't have any place for sin. There are things that are unfortunate. If a tree falls on you and kills you, that's unfortunate, but it's not evil. (Qtd. in App.)

Besides, the *mulefa*'s idyllic ecology in itself is far from developing into catastrophic disruption.

There is a seeming parallel between the *mulefa* people and environmentally-themed myths around indigenous people. Contemporary ecocritics like Garrard defines dwelling on the earth "in a relation of duty and responsibility" as the implication of "the long-term imbrication of humans in a landscape of memory, ancestry and death, of ritual, life and work" (108). As Western peoples (i.e. Europeans and North Americans) have proven to be unable to dwell in working harmony with nature (120), they have turned to other cultures for models to appreciate the environment. Therefore,

> [s]ince the sixteenth century at least, 'primitive' [i.e. non-Western] people have been represented as dwelling in harmony with nature, sustaining one of the most widespread and seductive myths of the non-European 'other.' The assumption of indigenous environmental virtue is a foundational belief for deep ecologists and many ecocritics. (Ibid)

However, the basic motive behind, among others, American Indian environmentalism, Åke Hultkrantz argues, is their "conception of nature as a manifestation of the supernatural or the divine" (581); – just like the already introduced, less known views of Christianity. These all led to the formation of the figure of the "Noble Savage" or the "Ecological Indian," an ideologically heavily charged piece of rhetoric. Introduced by the humanistic philosopher Michel de Montaigne (1533-1592) and Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778), the concept of the Ecological Indian is a construction of "intra-human difference" (Garrard 124) which

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[116] The location of these roads, moreover, involves Pullman's direct critique on contemporary infrastructure, too: "[t]he road was more like a watercourse than a highway. In places it broadened into wide areas like small lakes; and at others it split into narrow channels, only to combine again unpredictably. It was quite unlike the brutal, rational way roads in Will's world sliced through hillsides and leapt across valleys on bridges of concrete. This was part of the landscape, not an imposition on it" (AS 379).

"responded to, and in turn influenced, European encounters with indigenous Americans"
(125). Due to the metaphor of the "primitive," Indians or aborigines were seen as "being
behind Europeans in an inevitable progression from a natural to a civilised state" (ibid). This
metaphor, seen as an ideological mystification, has been shared, from the seventeenth century,
"both by those who viewed Native Americans as noble savages and as irredeemable heathens
and cannibals" (ibid). It was in the twentieth century when "an alliance between this frontier
primitivism and anti-modernist environmentalism" led to the birth of the Ecological Indian
(ibid). Pullman agreed that the *mulefa* in *HDM* can be as much idealized as the Noble Savage
was idealized by Rousseau (qtd. in App.). As another parallel with indigenous peoples, the
mulefa's use of the seedpod is considered to be demonic by the Church that wants to colonize
and convert them. Father Gomez thinks that "[t]he first thing to do here would be to convince
the four-legged creatures, who seemed to have the rudiments of reason, that their habit of
riding on wheels was abominable and Satanic, and contrary to the will of God. Break them of
that, and salvation would follow" (AS 415).

Nevertheless, the *mulefa*'s environmental attractiveness does not rely on such
nostalgic idealization but on their understanding of their ecological footprint. Blake refused
"Rousseau's virtuous Natural Man, the height of perfection until corrupted by civilization"
(Damon 351), and so do I. Pullman also reinforces that the *mulefa* are not such stock
characters in literature:

> [the *mulefa*] embody harmony with the environment. (…) They stand for a state of happy fulfilment in
> the physical processes of life – they manage their world completely – because they have what we call
> *consciousness*. They impose certain things on their world, but unlike human beings, who impose
> agricultural chemicals and nuclear power and so forth, the *mulefa* go about it in a *gentler* way,
> *respecting* the integrity of the things that they're dealing with. (Qtd. from Fried n.p., my emphasis)

The keyword is "consciousness," which is closely connected to the fact that the *mulefa* are the
only specie among the trilogy's characters that can see the otherwise invisible Dust, without a
helping device (such as Mary Malone's amber spyglass): the *mulefa* "visibly perceive
universal *cosmic* consciousness in place of experiencing the overlayered, sometimes self-
contradictory *individual* consciousness of other sentient beings" (Shohet in Lenz and Scott
32). Consequently, the *mulefa* worldview is ecocentric. The mulefa may best exemplify
Pullman's resistance to the secularizing impulse to explain, to understand, and to objectify
(Gruner 285). The presence of Dust and its apotheosis within the *mulefa* environment is
characterized by being "pro-marginal, ant[i]-bourgeois and anti-Monotheistic" (Cox in
Barfield and Cox 140). Due to Dust's symbolisation of redemption through collective

engagement with one another and our planet, emphasis is placed firmly upon "the ecological relevance of dust and our individual and collective responsibility to our planet" (ibid).

The small-scale symbiosis between the *mulefa*, seedpod trees and Dust on the one hand, and the large-scale cycle of Matter and Dust on the other hand – in other words the cosmic togetherness – could survive forever if there were not human selfishness and greed, i.e. anthropocentrism.

III.3.3. Hubris of Man: The Subtle Knife

Besides of the Authority's followers, the other cause of problems in Pullman's trilogy is a wicked device made by selfish intention. In one of the uncountable parallel universes there is an ancient settlement, a mercantile city, called Cittàgazze. The most notorious and harmful citizens of this ever flourishing town were the so-called philosophers (more properly alchemists or occult scientists) of the Torre Degle Angeli [the Tower of Angels]. Three hundred years ago they invented the imaginable most powerful instrument, called the subtle knife. The power of this device is based on its ability to "split open the very smallest particles of matter" (SK 283), in other words to undo what belongs together – here is an unmistakeable parallel with nuclear research that resulted in splitting the atom (Lenz in Hunt and Lenz 141-142) –, which empowers the knife's user to cut opening as a portal from one world into another. These passages helped these philosophers to "steal (…) and bring back what they find. Gold and jewels, of course, but other things too, like ideas, or sacks of corn, or pencils" (SK 120). Cantrell identifies the un-doing of the bonds between shadow particles with "the un-doing of conscious, human life" (316). As Randall E. Auxier claims,

> Pullman is toying with the idea that modern science, and its fetish for technology, is a sort of Faustian bargain human beings made with *themselves* (not the devil) by being overly curious and greedy for knowledge. Every world has suffered from their unwise quest for a kind of truth that destroys beauty. (Auxier in Greene and Robison 112)

The subtle knife plays "the part of the one ring [after Tolkien's *LOR*], which is the reason it has to be destroyed, in the end (and that is an old trope in imaginative literature, that the power that tempts us must be destroyed)" (117). Pullman does not blame on the Church for the abuses of scientists.

The openings made by either the subtle knife or by other devices are virtually so unnatural – when one formerly separate world is making contact with another one – that they disturb each other's natural environments, even the cosmic balance on which the destinies of

entire worlds hang. The signs of this disturbance are best observable in Lyra's world where Lord Asriel split a gap between the North Pole of his world and an equatorial zone of a neighbouring world:

> All the Arctic peoples had been thrown into panic, and so had the animals, not only by the fog and the magnetic variations but by unseasonal crackings of ice and stirrings in the soil. It was as if the earth itself, the permafrost, were slowly awakening from a long dream of being frozen. (SK 38)

This climate-change caused by the heat coming from another world causes natural catastrophes:

> There had obviously been a recent flood: walls were marked with mud to halfway up the doors, and broken beams of wood and loose-hanging sheets of corrugated iron showed where sheds and verandas and out-buildings had been swept away.
> But that was not the most curious feature of the place. (…) the buildings were two or three degrees out of the vertical, all leaning the same way. The dome of the little church had cracked badly. Had there been an earthquake? (AS 86)

Global warming, flood, earthquake… consequently, not only the habitat, but the existence of local animals and peoples living in the North – the Eskimo, the armoured bears and the clans of witches – are also in crisis. Pullman's artistic reflections on contemporary environmental problems are easily recognizable, which he also reinforces: "I've been aware of the terms 'global warming' and 'climate change' for as long as they've been around" (qtd. from Simms n.p.).

The subtle knife also threatens the existence of Dust that starts deceasing in simultaneously all parallel universes for two reasons. First, "[e]very time anyone made an opening between the worlds, (…) the knife cut into the emptiness outside. (…) [I]t was quite enough for Dust to leak out (…) of the worlds and into nothingness" (AS 433). Even the damage of a "small-scale, low-level leakage" makes a whole universe suffer (AS 403), while the absolutely helpless shadow particles are aware of what is happening and sorrowful (AS 329). Second, the subtle knife's disruption of relations and connectedness – whenever a portal between worlds is opened – entails the birth of hardly extricable specie of monsters (because of their almost invisible, transparent substance), called Specters. A local resident of Cittàgazze informs us that his

> predecessors, alchemists, philosophers, men of learning, were making an inquiry into the deepest nature of things. They became curious about the bonds that held the smallest particles of matter together. (…) We thought we knew about bonds. We thought a bond was something negotiable, something that could be bought and sold and exchanged and converted… But about these bonds, we were wrong. We undid them, and we let the Specters in. (SK 165)

Unfortunately, "[t]he Specters feast as vampires feast on blood, but the Specters' food is attention. A conscious and informed interest in the world" (SK 247). It follows that these ethereal vampires "grow by feeding on Dust" (AS 436), without which "[t]he universes will all become nothing more than interlocking machines, blind and empty of thought, feeling, life…" (GC 272). This is the result of commercial interests corrupting scientific knowledge: "[b]y undoing the 'bonds,' these scholars with more knowledge than wisdom and more desire for gain than for protecting the sanctity of relationships, let the Spectres into the world of Citagazze" (Lenz in Hunt and Lenz 141-142). The use of the knife can be interpreted as an act of rape: the subtle knife as a phallus penetrates into matter/Mother Nature, and the result of this rape (or wound) on nature is the unwanted birth of Spectres.

Consequently, the disappearance of Dust also endangers the ecological Paradise of the *mulefa* people. The wheel-pod trees on which the *mulefa*'s existence integrally relies on are dying. Sattamax, a senior of the *mulefa* says:

> [*T*]*hree hundred years ago the trees began to sicken. We watched them anxiously and tended them with care and still we found them producing fewer seedpods, and dropping their leaves out of season, and some of them died outright, which had never been known. All our memory could not find a cause for this.* (AS 208, italicized by Pullman)

Mary Malone, the committed friend of the *mulefa*, soon realizes that it is the particles of Dust that fertilize the flowers of the tree: "[these] flowers are turned upward, and if the sraf were falling straight down, it would enter their petals and fertilize them like pollen from the stars" (AS 245). In this way, the oil fertilizing the mind of a *zalif* by the use of seedpods is nothing else but fluid Dust. Unfortunately, the openings and windows cut with the subtle knife have made a kind of draught within each universe, and as a consequence, "the sraf [Dust] isn't falling down, it's moving out toward the sea" (AS 245). Mary comes to realize that all variants of spiritual matter and material spirit desperately struggle to keep back Dust so as to maintain the loving unit, the purposeful linkage in the whole Cosmos:

> At the summit of the slope she looked for the last time at the Dust stream, with the clouds and the wind blowing across it and the moon standing firm in the middle.
> And then she saw what they were doing, at last: she saw what that *great urgent purpose* was.
> They were trying to hold back the Dust flood. They were striving to put some barriers up against the terrible stream: wind, moon, clouds, leaves, grass, all those lovely things were crying out and hurling themselves into the struggle to keep the shadow particles in this universe, which they so enriched.
> Matter *loved* Dust. It didn't want to see it go. That was *the meaning of this night*, and it was *Mary's meaning*, too.
> Had she thought there was no meaning in life, no purpose, when God had gone [i.e. when she became disappointed in the Church]? Yes, she had thought that.
> 'Well, there is now,' she said aloud, and again, louder: 'There is now!'

> As she looked again at the clouds and the moon in the Dust flow, they looked as frail and doomed as a dam of little twigs and tiny pebbles trying to hold back the Mississippi. But they were trying, all the same. They'd go on trying till the end of everything. (AS 403-404) (My emphasis)

This mystical vision of the renegade Mary reveals the purpose of her and everyone else's life: to maintain the loving bond between Matter and Dust, to restore the integrity of cosmic unit by becoming "the 'Catcher' of Consciousness' " (Lenz in Hunt and Lenz 136).

The subtle knife symbolises nothing else but the abuses of technology and science, in other words the scientists' *hubris*. This ancient Greek term, Garrard argues, can be used for the criticism of the arrogance of anthropocentrism: "[t]he history of the world in the last 200 years, and especially the history of the developed world in the last 50 years, supplies ample evidence of such hubris" (178). Horgas states that put forward by mainly Francis Bacon, René Descartes and Isaac Newton (1642-1727), the mechanistic worldview, which changed the view of Nature as a nourishing Mother into that of Nature as a great dirigible machine, led to the cultural approval of the unlimited exploitation of the environment from the Renaissance era up to today (20). By this transformation of Nature, "man became likeness to God, and this hubris drove him in the pursuit of scientific-technological development: the smallest details and the more gigantic measures he was able to influence, the larger he grew – in his own eyes" (149). The cultural historical development of this self-arrogance is undeniably inwoven into Pullman's story: the virtually harmful subtle knife was invented three hundred years ago, when "the Royal Society was set up: the first true scientific society in [our] world. Newton was making his discoveries about optics and gravitation" (AS 326-327). I wondered whether it had been Pullman's conscious decision that, on the one hand, it was thirty-thousand years ago when the Dust started to approach to human beings; on the other hand, it was around the time of the eighteenth century, the Age of the Enlightenment, when Dust started to leak. His response to the questions why he had chosen the eighteenth century, and whether he was against the irresponsible use of science, was that

> the scientific method and science as a whole is a wonderful, extraordinary, magnificent human invention. But it does carry enormous power with it. It's invented nuclear power, the atom bomb. It's invented (…) applications of energy which have resulted in oil, gas, coal, which have resulted in the change of the climate and all those things. It's a phenomenon of (…) enormous power, which human beings must use, must learn to use responsibly. And I don't think we'd be better off if we hadn't had science. No. We'd be much worse off. We're much better off because we have science. But above all things, it's something that we must use *responsibly*. (Qtd. in App.)

It is a great responsibility for human beings. "For the whole world," Pullman added. Colás is absolutely right that "the preservation of Dust and so of the possibility of creativity and Life in the universe depends precisely on refusing the temptation of employing the transcending

gifts of the knife" (60). Based on these all, the responsibility of the scientist involves an acceptance of not trying to play God,[117] and also a resignation that ignorance is sometimes better than knowledge.[118]

The dangers of excessive ambition for more knowledge than wisdom, more desire for gain than for protecting the sanctity of relationships have been most famously formulated by William Blake. Although he had a low opinion on material science, for him science had two contrary meanings: "True Science is eternal and essential, but it turns bad when it cuts loose from Humanity and runs wild, abstracting, generalizing, and domineering" (Damon 359). In line with Blake's way of thinking, Horgas insists that the advancement of natural history prevents mankind from feeling one with the universe (200). Unfortunately, our (Everyman's) dependence on the responsible consciousness of scientists, just like the sword of Damocles, is always hovering above our head because our life today proves to be unimaginable without all the everyday comfort and security that technology and science can provide us.

The thought of condemning science has its roots in the Renaissance era. According to Victoria Nelson, the Western popular imagination did choose to assign the good magus and the bad magus: on the one hand, "[t]he good magus role, with its benign demiurgic powers first divorced from divine inspiration, then aestheticized and psychologized, was ultimately absorbed into the figures of the artist and the writer" (as a Renaissance cultural aftermath, secular artists and writers enjoyed greater and greater cultural prominence); on the other hand, "the bad magus role, with its supernatural powers linked to the dark grotto of the underworld, was absorbed into the figure of the scientist" (8). Moreover, in popular entertainments, the act of scientific creation (which was manifested in a trend bookmarked by Christopher Marlowe's *Dr. Faustus*, Goethe's *Faust*, and Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, and this long before the H-bomb) has been almost universally depicted as malevolent (ibid). The natural philosopher turned scientist is typically represented as "a power-mad, misguided tinkerer" (ibid). Even though it is commonly believed that the figure of the 'mad scientist' arose "from a mistrust of the new empirical science's stupendous achievements, good and bad;" this figure rather arose "from a much older mistrust of those who mediate with the supernatural outside the bounds of organized religion. Now as then, it represents a disguised fear of sorcery" (ibid).

At the same time, the nature of Pullman's understanding of wisdom seems to be quite scientific. According to Kathryn Hume, science gives us a sense of meaning by the power of

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[117] In the English Medieval poet, Geoffrey Chaucer's (c. 1343-1400) words, "certain knowledge is 'God's *privetee*,'" or it is "not to be revealed to mere humans" (Lenz in Hunt and Lenz 141).

[118] This conviction is best exemplified in Mary Shelley's (1797-1851) Gothic and science fiction novel, *Frankenstein; or The Modern Prometheus* (1818).

naming, by data gathering – "when the unknown converts to the known, and chaos turns into cosmos" –, all of which gives man a sense of control and relief (Hume 193).[119] "All the value systems of science come down to established networks of relationships" (ibid). Fantasy is important to the cycle of creation and consumption "because most of the networks of relationships are not scientific, but are moral, aesthetic, social, or personal" (194). Man nourishes his sense of meaning through these kinds of structures. Pullman's definition of wisdom is in parallel with these: "[t]he meaning of something is its connection to other things. The more connections you see, the more meaning you see" (qtd. in Renton n.p.).

On the basis of Pullman's representations of the disturbance in the biosphere made by mankind (which echoes contemporary doubts in the future survival of the Earth), the question is to what extent *HDM* may belong to apocalyptic literature. It is implied that Dust will be saved, all the opening will be closed and the subtle knife will be annihilated, thus the cosmic balance will be restored. It seems as if Pullman was on the same opinion with Garrard who argues that

> the real moral and political challenge of ecology may lie in accepting that the world is *not* about to end, that human beings are likely to survive even if Western-style civilisation does not. Only if we imagine that the planet *has* a future, after all, are we likely to take responsibility for it. (107)

In the trilogy's mythopoeia, the true purpose of each and every conscious being is to live a life worthy for living so as to produce as much Dust as possible in order to be (re)integrated into a harmonious connectedness (see the following subchapter). Obviously, it is not only the subtle knife that can cause the death of Dust, but also the incompetent hands using it.

III.3.4. Eschatology: Cosmic Recycling

The eschatology of the mythopoeia of HDM echoes one desire of man. According to Dezső Csejtei, the Christian comprehension/realization of death is the completest metanarrative man has ever conceived about death (19). While the Greco-Roman experience of death had been surrounded by an unexplainable serenity, after the appearance of Christianity, death in the European man's mind turned from a sad phenomenon into a fearful mystery (ibid). Making visible the inconceivable is a way of comprehending it. Imagination (arts) endows the shapeless with meaning by giving it shape *and* making it approximate to the familiar (Guthke 8). Modern Western cultures have found it necessary to decorate, contextualize and

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[119] In this respect, Hume points out, "the scientist is the descendant of the wizard or shaman, to whom naming was also a form of power and spells were a way of controlling Nature" (193).

mythologize death to prevent a devastating loss of orientation and morale (Watson 2). Man refuses to accept death (as his punishment – the Original Sin – for having been disobedient to God), and he deeply desires to "live unendingly in a long and happy life" (Ries in Eliade *ER*, Vol. 7, 138). In the following, let me present a material kind of immortality in Pullman's "implicit (or mythologized) thanatology" (Gray *Death* 107).

In *HDM*, both Heaven[120] and Hell in the traditional Christian sense are absent. Usually, what these terms suggest are "polar components of a religious vision: a state of bliss and/or an abode of deity or sacred reality on the one hand, and a state of spiritual impoverishment and/or an abode of evil or demonic spirits on the other" (Tober and Lusby in Eliade *ER*, Vol. 6, 237). Pullman aims to shake up organized religion's intention of reinforcing the heaven and hell reward/punishment schemas so as "to bolster its own importance in people's lives and establish itself as humanity's conscience" (Leet in Lenz and Scott 178). As it is still not known what lies beyond this world of the living, in the grand scheme of things "the fear of not following the rules of organized religion and being punished in hell or, in contrast, following the rules and being rewarded with eternal happiness in heaven, makes little sense" (ibid). However, the modern self does not easily overcome doubt because modern writers develop the intricacies of religious obligation more fully to define a hell than to suggest a heaven (Hoffman 381).

Pullman's idea of every single human being having an own death personification is charming. The function of these creatures is, after this human being's death, to guide him or her to cross a lake to go to the Land of the Dead (AS 233). To my mind, Pullman's death personifications represent the faithful friend from Romanticism when death was admirable in its beauty (Ariès 58) – for example, English romantic writers welcomed death as the comforting brother of sleep, Hypnos (Guthke 156). The reason is in HDM, the own death is "your special, devoted friend, who's been beside you every moment of your life, who knows you better than yourself" (AS 238).[121] An own death is a constant companion as much as a dæmons, however, the former is not as highlighted as the latter. Lyra points it out in a scene reminiscent to Death and Everyman (a late fifteenth-century English morality play): "*Pantalaimon* is my special and devoted friend! I don't know you Death, I know Pan and I

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[120] In *HDM*, the Clouded Mountain or the Chariot is not heaven, but the heart of the Authority's Kingdom.

[121] However, Pullman did not confirm my supposition that he had been inspired by nineteenth century art. Instead, he said, "I very much like the imagery of Voodoo. And a figure of death as Voodoo religion is a skeleton with a top hat, with a cigar, and dark glasses. And I think it's funny. It's a funny way of doing it. In Mexico they have this thing called 'The Day of the Dead' once a year. And they sell skeletons, little cakes made into the form of skeletons, and there're skeletons everywhere, skeletons all over the place, and it's a festival, and they're funny, and they smoke cigars, and they have a good time. I like all that" (qtd. in App.).

love Pan" (AS 238). For appearance, all death personifications are male and they are neither threatening, nor attractive, only "pale, unremarkable figures in shabby clothes, just drab and quiet and dull" (AS 233).

The Land of the Dead turns out to be a place of punishment. In *HDM*, after death, "the trinity of wholeness, body-ghost-dæmon, which was one being during life, was to be split up" (Pullman "HDM" n.p.). In other words, when the body dies, most of its particles rejoin the rest of the universe, and so do the particles of the daemon. Those particles which made up the ghost get to and remain in the underworld. The reason behind is the Authority's cruel punishment of conscious beings for having "attained the knowledge of themselves, in spite of his prohibition":

> The body, which had evolved by the power of nature, by matter loving itself, was to rejoin the rest of the material world, for nothing material can ever be destroyed. The particles that were the body circulate in a wider consciousness for ever, joyfully.
> The dæmon, which was the gift of the rebel angels, dissolved like the body into unity with the material world, its particles mingling with those of the body and the wide open universe.
> But the ghost, which had betrayed the Authority by falling in love with body and dæmon, was not allowed to join them. Instead it was condemned to spend eternity in the World of the Dead, where without the warmth and shelter of its body and the companionship of its dæmon it languished cold and unhappy for ever. However much it longs to join its material companions and dissolve into the world again, it is condemned to remain alone and apart. (Pullman "HDM" n.p.)

The ghosts are gathered in a holding area, then a boatman, reminiscent to Charon in classic mythology,[122] carries them in his boat on a lake to an island on which there is a gate to the Land of the Dead seemingly under the ground (AS 255-6). Further geographical location is not known. The Land of the Dead is a place of nothing (AS 286). Taking Pullman's intentional secularism into account, Hoffman's argument seems to be relevant that several modern images specifying the loss of belief in immortality emphasize a kind of space-congestion. Accordingly, furnished rooms, gutters, passageways and subways are forms of hell on earth, terrestrial hell-holes (Hoffman 11) – like the Bolvangar experimental station or the suburbs of the dead which Hartney compares to Nazi concentration camps (Hartney in Cusack 246, 256). Nevertheless, the double function is to separate man from time and to eliminate most associations with ordinary reality (Hoffman 14). Poor ghosts, as they still

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[122] The anonymous boatman recalls the Dance of Death tradition, a late-medieval allegory on the universality of death: "[e]veryone comes here, kings, queens, murderers, poets, children; everyone comes this way, and none come back" (AS 255-5). In other words, no matter what one's station has been in life, the Dance of Death unites all. However, in *HDM* there are two characters who managed to escape from the universal law of death: Enoch/Metatron and his brother, Baruch. They became angels.

remain material on the Land of the Dead, they are "desperate for the flowing blood of the living human beings" (Oram 425).[123]

Lyra's and Will's descend to the Underworld begins with a mysterious communication between the sleeping Lyra kidnapped by Mrs. Coulter and the ghost of Roger suffering on the Land of the Dead. The main motif to such a horrible visit is Lyra's compunction over Roger's death (AS 237) because "our business is [not with life, but] to keep promises" (AS 174), she says. Will's journey to hell to find and consult the ghost of his father is compared to that of Aeneas (Holderness 284). The journey to release the ghosts recalls both the Greco-Roman Orphic Journey and the Judeo-Christian Christ's Harrowing of Hell.[124] HDM involves a transition from the classical journey to the underworld, to the Christian Harrowing of Hell:

> [a]lthough Pullman's Land of the Dead clearly bears many similarities to the classical underworld, this vision of Hell being emptied was beyond the scope of the pagan imagination. Only Christianity with its revaluation of death could envisage an underworld from which the dead might hope to gain release. (Holderness 284)

According to this interpretation, this must be the meaning of the phrase, "Death is going to die" (AS 277). The two young protagonists' journey to the Land of the Dead partly causes all the sorrow at the end of the trilogy.

Just as the antique ferryman of Hades claimed a coin for passage, our protagonists' journey also has a fee. Literally speaking, it is the dæmons. Metaphorically speaking, it is the animalness of these creatures that represents life force and vitality seemingly depending on the integrity of an invisible, but material bond between a human being and his dæmon (Colás 52). This is the reason why one who still has a dæmon has no passage to the Land of the Dead. So Lyra, Will and the Gallivespians have to leave a part of themselves behind. By acquiring emotional strength, it seems as if "both children needed to let go of a part of themselves before each could make space for a new level of relationship to emerge between them" (Freitas and King 132).

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[123] In the light of these all, Pullman's representation of the soul is neither Platonic, nor Christian. There is an inherent difference between the Platonic notion of the immortality of the soul and the Christian theory of the resurrection of the body (Csejtei 21). On the one hand, Greek teaching about the soul's immortality assumes a part (the soul) in man that is immortal and uncreated. In Biblical thinking, these attributes are maintained solely to God (22). On the other hand, the Bible treats man as a single being consisting of body, soul, and spirit; in other words, "the New Testament Christians were heirs of a classical Hebrew view in which man does not *have* a body or *have* a soul; he *is* a soul-body unity" (MacGregor "Soul" in Eliade *ER*, Vol. 13, 457). Consequently, death's separation of body from soul, as well as the survival of the soul, is unknown to Biblical thinking. According to Biblical teaching, at his death man in his entirety becomes dust and ash, and the whole man can hope in "God's redeeming work" (Csejtei 22). In spite of these differences, however, the Church Fathers made great efforts to reconcile these two systems.

[124] Nevertheless, contrary to Christ, Orpheus has to return with empty-handed. In Plato's understanding, the gods did not let him take his wife, Eurydice, because as he lacked the courage to die, he chose instead to go into Hades' empire alive (Symposium 179 d).

Till the arrival of Lyra, every ghost is tormented by harpies. The residents of the Land of the Dead are reminded all the bad things they had ever committed in their earthly lives (AS 275-6). No-Name tells the children that "[t]housands of years ago, when the first ghosts came down here, the Authority gave us the power to see the worst in every one, and we have fed on the worst ever since, till our blood is rank with it and our very hearts are sickened" (AS 283). Here William A. Oram observes that "[t]raditionally harpies defile food but these harpies defile emotional food – one's sense of personal worth and the value of one's experience" (427). What Pullman's harpies do is to

> force the dead to relive their worst memories without the hope of doing anything to counter-balance them. Their lives remain, so to speak, frozen at the moment of death as they are cut off from the universe in which their atoms might once again participate. (Ibid)

As Oram emphasizes, "[f]rom the point of view of the dead, all that matters is how one has lived: that is why the vicious commentary of the harpies so torments of the ghosts" (429).

At the same time, Pullman's harpies represent the possibility of forgiveness and character-transformation. After her true stories turned out to feed the harpies, Lyra makes a bargain with No-Name: each and every ghost has to tell the harpies a story. Not just any story: the ghosts' life-story must be meaningful and true because if conscious beings live in the world, "they *should* see and touch and hear and learn things" (AS 285). The truthfulness in the ghosts' stories involves "their experience of sensorial ('seen and touched and heard'), affective ('loved'), and intellectual ('known') existence" (Colás 62).[125] The moral consequence of telling realistic stories to the harpies is, Pullman said, the "duty to live so as to have something to tell about in life" (qtd. in App.). Or, in other words, "[e]very one of us has to have a story: if you go through life without curiosity, it's a terrible sin" (qtd. Bertodano). All in all, to Pullman, it is true experience that saves us in the end (Weich n.p.). In exchange for a ghost's story – or "[a]t the *cost* of telling a story" (qtd. in App.) –, the harpies will lead that ghost out of the Land of the Dead to be released into the universe. Consequently, Lyra re-names the chief harpy from No-Name to Gracious Wings to signify the *sacredness* of her new task: she and her sisters (like Hermes, the leader of souls in or through the underworld) are to guide the ghosts out of the Land of the Dead.[126] In the light of this, the harpy shifts "from

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[125] Here Pullman's preference of realism over fantasy becomes evident: "[t]he kind of 'true stories' which are desirable are not merely factual reportage, but rather *evoke* the texture of the natural world" (Gray *Fantasy* 157).
[126] Pullman admits from where he stole this idea: "I stole that from the *Oresteia* — the bargain Aeschylus's characters make with the Furies that are following them about. 'You will be the guardians of this place, and we will worship you and we will give you honor,' they say. Then the Furies are satisfied, and they leave off their pursuit of Orestes. There's nothing new in stories. It goes round again and again and again" (qtd. in Mustich n.p.). Lyra successfully tames Pullman's "Furies" (Wrigley 86).

persecutor to friend, readying the individual for death" (Oram 430). The harpies are not only crucial in the execution of the Republic of Heaven, but they also play the traditional role of Catholic God by deciding on the final fate of an individual on the basis of his earthly deeds. The harpies led by No-Name/Gracious Wings see to death being "the entrance to a place of judgment" (Hoffmann 10). After Lyra's bargain with the harpies, "the food metaphor becomes positive: the sustenance of the dead is the particularized remembrance of life" (Oram 430); and "Lyra finds redemption, both for herself and for the dead" (Bradley and Tate 78); and Lyra turns "story-making into a religious act, rejecting fundamentalism" (Gruner 278).[127]

The obligation/recommendation of telling true stories inevitably changes a person's attitude to his/her own life. Squires notes that

> [t]he experiences accrued by the characters as their lives progress contribute to their character formation, to the decisions they make and, once more, to the ways in which they live their lives. This circular morality is articulated through the process of storytelling. (93)

According to Jane Craske, the point of the pact made with the harpies is that "every human being is a storyteller" (106). In the future, people are prepared by Will and Lyra in their own worlds "to be truthful storytellers" (105). In this light, *AS'* vision of human purpose is "responsive to a vision of human flourishing" (ibid). Oram notes that "Lyra's stories of the world feed a hunger for awareness of life lived in the body, and the satisfaction of this hunger reorients the spirit" (430). For this reason, the best preparation for dying is "a life lived in full awareness" (ibid). Nicholas Tucker points out that the strongly idealistic Pullman's trilogy searches for "an ultimate meaning to the age-old problem facing all readers of why exactly they are here and what they should then be doing about it" (183). Pullman meets the challenge of answering to these questions through the *imagination*: "[f]or it is in stories, and the way they can renew faith both in ourselves and in others, that he has always chosen to operate, and never more effectively than in this particular trilogy" (ibid).

After making a bargain with the harpies, Lyra becomes the new Moses. She leads an exodus, the ghosts out of the Land of the Dead through an opening into the world, as well as from the Authority's slavery into the freedom of participation in all creation. Only a rising from the dead, a resurrection, can be a sufficient remedy from the old fears of horror (Gooderham 161). The stay of Lyra and Will, and the two spies, at the Land of the Dead "ultimately reconfigures hell as a passage rather than a terminal destination" (Cantrell 307).

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[127] Contrary to Asriel and the Church in *HDM*, the harpies (along with the *mulefa* and the witches) embody Pullman's resistance to the secularizing impulse of explaining, understanding, objectifying: "[a]ll three groups lack a written culture, or anything that we would call science, but share an emphasis on storytelling and on the long view" (Gruner 285).

Without the dread of the Land of the Dead awaiting humans, the Church's power over them will be loosened (Squires 92). Tialys' offer of a new deal to the harpies is "[w]hat in effect turns a looming catastrophe into something resembling [to] Tolkien's *eucatastrophe*" (Gray *Fantasy* 155-156).

In the wide open space the ghosts can merge with/into the cosmos, without preserving their identity. As Lyra informs the ghosts, "[w]hen you go out of here, all the particles that make you up will loosen and float apart, […]. You'll drift apart, it's true, but you'll be out in the open, part of everything alive again" (*AS* 286). When the ghosts of the deceased leave the Land of the Dead, they get into the eternal cycle of nature: "[w]e'll be alive again in a thousand blades of grass, and a million leaves; we'll be falling in the raindrops and blowing in the fresh breeze; we'll be glittering in the dew under the stars and the moon out there in the physical world, which is our true home and always was" (AS 287). After Will manages to cut an opening from the Land of the Dead, the first ghost to leave this miserable place is Lyra's friend, Roger, who left behind "such a vivid little burst of *happiness* that Will was reminded of the bubbles in a glass of champagne [my emphasis]" (AS 325). This obliteration is portrayed as a sort of ecstasy and pleasure, on entering a true Heaven:

> They [the ghosts] took a few steps in the world of grass and air and silver light, and looked around, their faces transformed with *joy* (…) and held out their arms as if they were embracing the whole universe; and then, as if they were made of mist or smoke, they simply drifted away, becoming part of the earth and the dew and the night breeze. (AS 385-386) (My emphasis)

The molecules of both the human body and the soul become part of other living things (and Dust). In a peculiar way, this kind of annihilation of the self can provide a sense of completeness with the universe, which is a kind of afterlife. I call this process 'desired annihilation' which suggests as if death was better than life.[128] It is no wonder that the dead

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[128] On this basis, it is no wonder that the idea of euthanasia (meaning 'good death') turns up in *HDM*. A few characters present the suffering ones with relief intentionally or accidentally. When Mrs. Coulter depicts to Father MacPhail how miserable the aged Authority's present condition must be, she raises the question "wouldn't it be the most merciful thing, the truest proof of our love for God, to seek him out and give him the gift of death?" (AS 294). Bradley and Tate note that Mrs Coulter's "coolly delivered call for the mercy killing of a senescent and impotent God is framed as an act of religious adoration ('the truest proof of our love for God') and echoes the 'death of God' theologies of the 1960s. It also echoes nineteenth-century anxieties – indeed, anger – about the *deus absconditus* and, in particular, the philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche" (74). Besides, Lyra and Will incidentally cause the end of the senile Authority: before he completely vanishes, the children's last impression is of "those eyes, blinking in wonder, and a sight of the most profound and exhausted relief" (AS 367). With regards to the fact that for Pullman freedom is essential to human flourishing (Freitas and King 103), the right to life seems to include the right to die. The Roman Catholic Church is one of the most active organizations in opposing euthanasia because of their faith in the sanctity of life ("Euthanasia" n.p.). Therefore, it may not be a simple coincidence that Pullman is an advocate of 'good death.' And he actually is: "I think if someone's old and suffering, they're in great pain and they want to end their life, they should be helped to do that. (…) It seems to be senselessly *cruel* to insist that you must stay alive. (…) When people who reach the end of their life, and they want to go, but they can't die, we should be all to help them" (qtd. in App.). (However,

always choose death: while the afterlife is "mind numbingly dull and full of despair," death is "neutral, with some possibility of being a positive experience, since the dead ultimately become Dust, which is the basis for conscious experience" (Greene in Greene and Robison 171). Besides, "[t]he good things that life has to offer are well in the past" (172). While Pullman mythologises death, he also makes it banal.

It is in the world of the *mulefa* where the wide open space as the location of happy dissolution is found. The *mulefa* consider this opening a holy place and a "source of joy" (AS 450). In spite of his secularizing intentions, Pullman follows the traditional religious sceneries of eternal happiness: immortality in religious literature is often imagined in terms of the most expansive spatial senses, such as ocean, sky or desert places (Hoffman 11).

This 'desired annihilation' recalls atomist materialism. For the atomist philosophers, death is the innate condition of life itself: soul was a kind of fire made up of atoms suspended in the air. Lucretius insisted on the absence of an afterlife: "when we die, we die, and our atoms are redistributed to become the basis of new bodies. Pullman's epic develops its own version of a Lucretian account of death" (Oram 424). One of the deep sources of the moral attraction of immanence, even materialism, is something connected to Lucretius:

> [t]here is a strong attraction to the idea that we are in an order of 'nature,' in which we are part of this greater whole, arise from it, and don't escape or transcend it, even though we rise above everything else in it. One side of this attraction is the sense of belonging, being part of our native land; we are one with this nature. (Taylor 547).

Upon leaving the Land of the Dead, the soul made of Dust returns to Dust, "that substance from which everyone is formed in the first place" (Freitas and King 118). The atoms of the disintegrated individual go on in the death-rebirth cycle of nature over and over again (Lenz in Hunt and Lenz 160). Even though "true ecstasy is immanence, being fully part of the sensuous physical world" (Oram 423), the dissolving ghost of Roger may also exemplify the ecstasy – originally a sense of release, of joy and of freedom from self and sin and sorrow and desire (Ferguson 51) – of identifying with all living things (AS 325). With regards to these, Lyra comes to embody a new theology of inclusion, of cooperation, and of co-creation for a new world (Gruner 278).

The permanent cycle of substance (involving Dust) also corresponds to recycling, one of the guiding principles of environmentalism. The characters' obliteration is portrayed, for Millicent Lenz, "as a kind of joyous merging with the cosmos," which she compares to Jane Abramson's so-called "fertilizer theory of immortality": "the individual disintegrates, but his

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there is also a counter-argument to euthanasia in *AS*. It is when Will and Chevalier Tialys debate whether they should end the sufferings of a dying toad: AS 248-249.)

or her 'atoms' go on forever, in the death-rebirth cycle of nature" (Abramson qtd. in Lenz in Hunt and Lenz 160). As Katharine Cox notes, "Pullman supports the idea of a cycle of life which he terms an ecological 'feedback system'" (Cox in Barfield and Cox 137). Pullman's idea of atomist interconnectedness is identical with the so-called 'biophilia hypothesis,' an idea that "humans possess an innate tendency to seek connections with nature and other forms of life" (Rogers n.p.).

The phenomenon of desired annihilation in HDM is embedded into Pantheism. Union with Dust is the condition of ultimate happiness. Pullman's 'God' (Dust) is so intimately part of the world and of human beings that it is as if the universe and God were lovers (Freitas and King 135). The spirit, body and dæmon made of Dust can return to Dust in death, which thus nourishes the universe. For this reason, the act of Lyra releasing the ghosts means a shocking defeat of the Authority, "since by trapping the ghosts in this barren world, he has effectively prohibited the Dust that is their remains from returning to Dust again" (114). On the other hand, the individual in his formal relationship to his formal dæmon is secondary to the relationship with the universe itself (118-9). The relief of extinction Lyra and Will bring about – which William Gray calls "Pullman's 'Happy Hour' version of mystical release" – seems to be the fulfilment of Asriel's prophecy that "Death is going to die" (Gray *Fantasy* 169). And "[t]his is a Romantic re-interpretation of orthodox Christian teaching which [in] this case substitutes some kind of pantheistic mystical absorption for the resurrection of the body" (ibid).

From a philosophical point of view, the souls' joyful mergence with the cosmos in HDM is associated with a desire for material continuity after death. This desire has a long tradition in Western culture from the earliest times. What has been peculiar to the Western world is the growing alienation in the evolution of the self. Defence against the universal experience of loneliness and abandonment led to the association of death with Eros. According to not only classical philosophers like Plato, but also modern thinkers like Georges Bataille, continuity after death offers solution to this problem. Plato talks about the human race that had been divided into three: male, female and hermaphrodite, each of these beings globular in sphere. But due to their arrogance, Zeus punished them by cutting them all in half, which left each one with a desperate yearning for the other (Symposium 190 b-191 a). As Zeus felt sorry for them, he moved their members round to the front and made them propagate among themselves, so conception could take place and the race would be continued (Symposium 191 c). For the Greek philosopher, this is how love is always trying "to make two into one, and to bridge the gulf between one human being and another" (Symposium 191

d). Following this trace, Georges Bataille (1897-1962) suggests that "we are discontinuous beings, individuals who perish in isolation in the midst of an incomprehensible adventure, but we yearn for our lost continuity" (15), which is identified with death (13). From the earliest times death has held out the promise of release not just from desire but from the pain of being individuated (separate, differentiated, alone) and the form of self-consciousness, which has always been a part of Western individualism (Dollimore xx-xxi). Thus, "with that energetic, perverse hubris so characteristic of this individualism, there will be those who seek death not only as the release from desire, but also as its object" (xxi). In a religious aspect, "the desire for eternity would be expressed in life as a conflict between the need to struggle forward and the yearning to return, both path leading to a divine death – that peace that passes all understanding" (xx).

After all, the desired goal of a long and busy life as part of Pullman's propagation of *biophilia* (the love of life) is the sweet, peaceful death so as to become an integral part of the living cosmos animated with love. *Death wish* represents desire for material continuity and completeness, in other words, a kind of 'material reincarnation.' In the light of this, the aim of the second Fall is to maintain this cycle of matter; just as Lyra and Will sacrifice short-term earthly pleasures for the long-term 'celestial' happiness (see below). About death, Pullman said that "[i]t's inevitable. It comes to us all. I wanted to find a way of dramatizing the idea that it could be seen, noticed, tragic and hopeless and horrible… But there's a joyful culmination for the end of everything. That's all, I think" (qtd. in App.). He approved my interpretation of his representation of death as a positive event, as the acceptance of the inescapable cycle of life (we are born, we live, and then we die). His constant and incomprehensible association of 'cheerfulness' and 'joy' with dying invites us to question contemporary Western culture's unhealthy death-denying attitude.

In this light, the ghosts' story-telling to the harpies on the Land of the Dead turns out to be a fight against material discontinuity (eternal separation from Dust). As Will and Lyra have already discovered, the best way to survive the afterlife on the Land of the Dead is to take with them as many positive stories about their former life as possible. Besides, story-telling is basically identical with building the Republic of Heaven (Freitas and King 161). Millicent Lenz argues that

> [t]he co-protagonists' descent into the Land of the Dead, Lyra's freeing of the ghosts by the power of story, and their shared emergence into the sunlit land of the living draws on key elements of [nineteenth]-century Romanticism, specifically, the ideas of two poets: Percy Bysshe Shelley's concept of the creative imagination as 'the instrument of moral good,' and John Keats' notion of

She pursues Pullman's use of these concepts by Shelley and Keats to "dramatize the power of storytelling as a medium capable of facing and transcending the dark consciousness of personal mortality" (48). William A. Oram points out that insofar as there is a god in HDM, its name is matter, and if there is an afterlife, its name is story (431). However, Bradley and Tate condemn Pullman for selecting who can reach the desired annihilation:

> [f]or Pullman, it seems that no one is truly free from divine judgement: instead of the wrath of God – and his mercy – the dead will face the Harpies who will allow spirits to pass into blissful (pantheistic) oblivion only if they can give a good enough account of their lives.
>
> Such an afterlife sounds oddly reminiscent of Christian eschatology, though it is shorn of real redemption: mercy and grace are not part of this account. The Harpies and the dead are locked into an eternal economy of exchange: stories buy peaceful death. It is, ironically, rather less materialist an exchange than that promised by Christianity, since it emphatically does not subscribe to the hope of the resurrection of the body. Although the novel celebrates the tangible and the present, it offers a far more wispily ethereal vision of the future life than the supernatural creed of the Christian religion. (78-79)

After all, Bradley and Tate conclude that what Pullman's attitude to death suggests is that he does not transcend the desire for transcendence (79).

Eternal separation from Dust could not only be realized by being locked up on the Land of the Dead. The consciously malevolent Abyss embodies the venue of the undesired annihilation of the self. According to William A. Oram, Pullman retains Milton's sense of the goodness of matter to the point that "matter itself tends to occupy the position that God occupies in *Paradise Lost*. And if matter is the source of all the world's goodness, its ethical opposite is the void" (422). For this reason, matter and void in *HDM* become the contraries of good and evil: "[i]f the epitome of matter is Dust, the epitome of the void is what Pullman calls the *abyss*" (ibid). Because of Pullman's inclination to panpsychism, the Abyss must also be in some way conscious. Moreover, it is Randall E. Auxier's speculation that

> all of Pullman's worlds are conscious, and they all rest delicately above the Abyss, and the Abyss doesn't *like it*, which is why all those worlds are in danger of falling back into a sort of chaos. In the Abyss these tiny drops of awareness are powerless to connect, communicate, build, create, even though they still 'exist.' This is chaos for Pullman: a kind of awareness that is isolated and alone, which is to say, awareness trapped and powerless amid the complete absence of beauty. (Auxier in Greene and Robinson 110)

It is known that the abyss – itself situated between two universes – acts as a black hole sucking every material around it, especially Dust standing for conscious and informed interest in the world (SK 247-8).[129] With regards to these all does Lord Asriel enlighten Mrs. Coulter

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[129] Light has been used as the metaphor of consciousness for thousands of years, which is in contrast to the shadow-like entity of Specters and the blackness of the abyss.

about the fact that if they fall into the abyss together with Metatron, they will not survive like the ghosts (AS 362) – it highlights the real value of their sacrifice for saving Lyra, and for preserving Dust. In fact, being sucked in the Abyss is far worse than remaining on the Land of the Dead:

> [t]he abyss is not a world at all, but an infinite absence, and its void is more terrifying than the 'wasteland' (…) in the world of the dead. The abyss is horrendous precisely because it provides no exit. All of these negative spaces arrest and deny Dust, the 'memory and wakefulness' (…). Unlike Cittàgazze and Bolvangar, where resistance and action remain possible, the abyss signals the end of action, the negation of choice, and the absence of possibility. It represents the implosion and collapse of any 'space of possibles.' (Cantrell 318)

Dust, as the capacity for hope and renewal, as freedom and curiosity associated with consciousness, is negated by the world of the dead, the abyss, and Lord Asriel's republic.

The cultural- and religious-historical antecedents of the Abyss are connected to the imaginable most awful end: the death of the soul. Saint Augustine teaches that it takes place when God forsakes it, as the death of the body when the soul forsakes it (*The City of God* 13.2). The human mind is terrified to imagine itself extinguished in the vast of time and space (Watson 19) – not only in the Renaissance era, but also in the modern period (Hoffman 19). The annihilationist fear has Calvinist antecedent because the inscrutable determinism and the systematic iconoclasm of Calvinist theology created a blank wall between the living and the dead (Watson 5). Since saints were deprived of any intercessory power, the fate of the living was beyond the control of the dead; as well as since worldly conduct was no longer a reliable guide to otherworldly destiny, the illusion of continuity was lost (ibid). Images of the Last Judgment enjoyed a surprising immunity from Protestant iconoclasm in general (42). These all led to the development of annihilationism, a minority Christian doctrine according to which sinners are destroyed rather than tormented forever.[130]

The Specters, the offspring of the Abyss, provide earthly terror or hell. They are also called as "orphans of the abyss" (Peters in Barfield and Cox 103), or "emissaries of the abyss" (Oram 422). It is either the subtle knife or the bombs that set free the Specters from the Abyss (AS 436): every entry of Lyra and Will into new worlds bring new Specters into existence. The Specters feast on Dust and dæmons to rob humans of all things that make life valuable (AS 436), and they leave their victims "indifferent to everything," namely dead-in-life (SK 258). In other words, the specters feed on "the capacity for attention and curiosity in

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[130] It includes the Seventh-day Adventists, Bible Students, Jehovah's Witnesses, Christadelphians and the various Advent Christian churches. The Bible speaks of two kinds of deaths: the First Death is experienced by the whole human race; the Second Death will be experienced only by the rejecters of God's mercy. While the First Death is compared in the Scriptures to a 'deep sleep;' the Second Death is the final, irreversible annihilation of the soul; the death from which there is no resurrection, no return ("Bible Course" n.p.).

individuals, just as the abyss itself swallows Dust wholesale" (Oram 422). If somebody gets out of the permanent circle of substance (because of the Specters or the abyss) or cannot enter it (because of an inability to leave the Land of the Dead), that means an irreversible, thus eternal Hell in Pullman's universe.

The subtle knife is also (self-)consciously malevolent. In Auxier's interpretation, the knife is obviously the center of Pullman's cosmology (Auxier in Greene and Robison 117). It is Iorek Byrnison's speech that brings together Pullman's panpsychism and cosmology all at once:

> I don't like that knife. I fear what it can do. I have never known anything so dangerous. (…) The harm it can do is unlimited. It would have been infinitely better if it had never been made. (…) With it you can do strange things. What you don't know is what the knife does on its own. Your intentions may be good. The knife has intentions too… The intentions of a tool are what it does. (…) But sometimes a tool may have other uses that you don't know. Sometimes in doing what you intend, you also do what the knife intends, without knowing. (AS 161)

Because of its own plans, the knife cannot be trusted. Just like Lyra's alethiometer, "the knife needs a human actor to carry out its intentions, and (…) only the *right sort* of human can use it" (Auxier in Greene and Robison 118). That human turns out to be Will Parry. The ultimate power of that knife is to sever "the delicate membrane that protects the many worlds from the Abyss" (119). In other words,

> Pullman is silent on the issue of whether there was a creator who first set the Abyss (Chaos) and the Cosmos in their separate domains. (…) All we can know is that the most powerful thing the knife can do is to rejoin Cosmos to Chaos, such that Chaos comes in (as specters) and Dust (the basis of conscious order) flows out. (…) [T]his is what the knife *intends*: to *undo* the work of the creator. (Ibid)

Both times that the knife is broken, it is the power of Will's love that does it: for his mother in the first time, and for Lyra in the second. However, Pullman's ideas about love are not Romantic, but rather cosmic and aesthetic (ibid), and these are summed up in this statement that "Matter loved Dust. It didn't want to see it go" (AS 404).

Most readers of Pullman's trilogy are not satisfied with the resolution of the story, that Will and Lyra have to part company with each other to save Dust and consciousness. In spite of Pullman's reliance on passages through parallel universes during the narration of his story, in the end he adamantly insists on a given person's attachment to or oneness with his/her world. The source of all sadness at the end of Pullman's story is "the existence of a time limit on the individual's survival in an alien world," and "the survival of human beings and their daemons is linked to [their] 'local universe'" (Lenz in Hunt and Lenz 132-133). The ghost of Will's father warns the children: "your daemon can only live its full life in the world it was

born in. Elsewhere it will eventually sicken and die. We can travel, if there are openings into other worlds, but we can only live in our own" (AS 325). For this reason, Lord Asriel's great enterprise in one world is doomed to failure: "we have to build the Republic of Heaven where we are, because for us there is no elsewhere" (AS 325). In this way, *HDM* trilogy propagates the needlessness of escapism and the celebration of material reality.

Love for and from Dust, as the intellectual and sensual consciousness, is above everything – not by obligation but by *free will*. As one of the main manifestations of religious cults, devotion is the symbol of self-sacrifice, with the function of implying *dependence on and love for* the deity (Pál and Újvári "Devotion/Sacrifice" n.p.). In a deeper sense, sacrifice can renew the world, the relationship of human and gods (ibid). This is exactly what happens to Pullman's protagonists, whose voluntary sacrifice of their own happiness of growing up together saves, restores, even renews the relationship between Dust and all conscious beings within the framework of the Republic of Heaven. Lyra's *moral insight* determines the ending of the trilogy: "Lyra *sees*, as Will initially does not, that the dead need the window-between-the-worlds even more than she and Will do" (Gray *Fantasy…* 182). Obligation and altruism are necessary because "no one could [be able to build the Republic of Heaven] if they put themselves first" (AS 464). Lyra and Will accept this, understanding that "there are fates that even the most powerful have to submit to" (AS 440). From a cosmic point of view, Lyra and Will made the right decision of not putting their new found happiness above the happiness of the dead:

> Lyra and Will choose to love in a way that sacrifices their own desire to be together on behalf of their larger love for all worlds. They sacrifice their own erotic love to save Erotic Love, to allow Love to flourish among others for all the future. This is, Pullman implies, the right choice, but it is no less difficult because it is right.[131] (Freitas and King 156)

The voluntary act of the two protagonists is a bodily sacrifice (the relational death of Lyra and Will) (158). After all, Pullman's final message seems to be that "love among human beings is less important than the love of consciousness itself" (ibid). What ultimately builds the Republic of Heaven is self-sacrifice to protect and care for others, "this willingness to give in the service of others" (83), the grand meanings in life made "through an individual's daily choices to help others" (165). Carole Scott finds "a religious, even puritanical streak in [Pullman's] sense of every person's ultimate responsibility to humankind, even at the expense of their own happiness" (Scott in Lenz and Scott 96). Due to everyone's responsibility for the

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[131] This is the reason why not only these new Adam and new Eve are the only clear touchstones of value, but also those characters who love them emerge as figures of worth defined by their capacity for love (Scott in Lenz and Scott 98).

others, all conscious beings constitute an 'us,' even though they are isolated from each other. The result is a 'trans-world togetherness,' unity.

Meanwhile, the Other is treated ambiguously in *HDM*.[132] On the one hand, it is respected and tolerated: Pullman have notions of anti-imperialism and tolerance toward other races, ethnicities and belief-systems. According to Cantrell, "shifts to *us*-oriented ways of thinking and behaving underscore Pullman's insistence that his readers come away from the text better prepared to meet those others with whom they share the world and without whom the republic of heaven cannot be built" (317). On the other hand, the Other is treated with distrust: there is neither mobility, nor cosmopolitanism between worlds. The consequence of human beings' travel through worlds is broken unity (only angels – non-humans – can travel through worlds without such harmful consequences). Laura Peters argues that the implicit message of the trilogy is that "one sticks to one's own kind" (Peters in Barfield and Cox 104). For example, the Gyptian Ma Costa was denied guardianship of the baby Lyra, and "the narrative's injunction to live in one's own world" (ibid).

As Pullman definitely closed the possibility of continuing the relationship between Lyra and Will,[133] the only thing that can console the desperate lovers is the hope of their final union after death. This solution faithfully follows the Christian narrative of the Fall which is characterized by the transition from unity to division, the experience of desire as loss and absence, and finally the *compulsion to reunite* (Dollimore 52). In accordance with this do Pullman's Adam and Eve comfort each other:

> I [Lyra]'ll be looking for you, Will, every moment, every single moment. And when we do find each other again, we'll cling together so tight that nothing and no one'll ever tear us apart. Every atom of me and every atom of you… We'll live in birds and flowers and dragonflies and pine trees and in clouds and in those little specks of light you see floating in sunbeams… And when they use our atoms to make new lives, they won't just be able to take one, they'll have to take two, one of you and one of me, we'll be joined so tight… (AS 445)

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[132] The process of othering is a way of defining and securing one's own positive identity through the stigmatization of an 'other': "[w]hat appear to be cultural units – human beings, words, meanings, ideas, philosophical systems, social organizations – are maintained in their apparent unity only through an active process of exclusion, opposition, and hierarchization. Other phenomena or units must be represented as foreign or 'other' through representing a hierarchical dualism in which the unit is 'privileged' or favoured, and the other is devalued in some way" (Cahoone 119).

[133] The other explanation to the sad ending of HDM is rooted in a seeming disapproval of the two protagonists' similarity: Pullman "distances his hero and heroine to the furthest possible extent from any hint of kinship. They come from different worlds, and for good measure they are physical opposites – dark and stocky, fair and wiry" (Wrigley 82-83). Continuing this train of thought, Pullman may protest too much: "[i]n mytho-logic, Claude Lévi-Strauss has told us, extreme exogamy is the equivalent of incest; and an unease about this matter may have been the fundamental reason for Will and Lyra being obliged to part before the story ends" (83). At the end of Pullman's story, "their separation ensures Lyra and Will a future in which they can become something more than the complement of the other" (Gamble in Barfield and Cox 199).

Pullman's version of death is "imbued with a romantic pantheism in which atoms disperse from a living body at the point of death, but then retain some form of human identity and even the capacity for human relationship" (Holderness 287). Accordingly, atoms are imagined to become part of "gravitating towards one another in a persistence of human desire, retaining human identity and relationship" (ibid). However, the romantic hope Lyra expresses to Will about their future union may be seen as her own "creation of a kind of myth of faithful love enduring forever, contrary to the harsh impersonal reality of indiscriminate final oblivion" (Pinsent in Lenz and Scott 204). This is how Pullman immortalizes William and Lyra's love.

Very simply, the ending of HDM had to be sad. Pullman claimed that "[a] happy ending would not have worked. (…) I tried to have them being together forever, but it didn't work. (…) It's a much stronger book because they have to part. It becomes tragic" (qtd. in App.). The necessity of every character going back to the place where he or she was born (because of his/her daemon) is in fact a pretext. He also made it clear that "I felt from the beginning that the ending would be a moment of great, great sadness. (…) There's nothing I could do about that" (qtd. in App.). Christopher Wrigley shares this opinion: to suggest that Lyra and Will would consummate their love at some future time, and then they live happily ever after, would have been "a banal conclusion to such a tale. Readers will probably prefer a bitter-sweet ending to a conventionally happy one" (89). In defence of Pullman, Wrigley claims that "[t]he more compelling the fantasy[,] the greater the need to bring the reader back to earth, saying 'Wake up now. This is a *story*, you know'" (108).

As we cannot afford being separated from our natural environment without self-destructive consequences, all of us are responsible for the deeds of each other. True, responsibility, and the importance of accepting responsibility, is a(nother) major theme of Pullman's three novels:

> Lord Asriel and Mrs. Coulter are both profoundly self-centered, competitive people until, at the last, they accept responsibility for their daughter and join to help her, even though they die in the effort and even though that effort is still tainted with their own selfishness and competitiveness. The sages of the Città world created a powerful weapon in the subtle knife, but lacked the responsibility to determine the consequences of that knife's use (unintended consequences are one of the banes of human existence). The results of this lack of responsibility threaten all of the worlds.
> (…)
> There must not be more than the one remaining window, because if Lyra and Will leave a window for their own personal use, they would be behaving as selfishly as Asriel or Marisa or Metatron or the other forces that caused the problems originally. If they don't sacrifice their desires, they will not be fully accepting the responsibility they have taken on themselves. (Randall n.p. qtd. in Yuan 85-86)

The concept of the Republic of Heaven points towards a growing importance of cosmic consciousness: "[i]t stands for a sense that humanity and the universe have a common

meaning, destiny and purpose and are profoundly interconnected" (Jobling in Barfield and Cox 159). Within Pullman's narrative, the interconnected nature of all being undermines distinctions between subject and object, knower and known (161). Even if we feel lonely in our responsibility, Judit Horgas insists that ecocriticism combining the possibility of (artistic) reconnection with scientific discoveries can at least alleviate this loneliness (202).

Pullman's belief in connectedness and unity with the Cosmos seemingly tends to ecocentrism in the sense that no part of the entirety can be more important than the entirety itself. In my opinion, however, his view – or rather what he suggests in HDM – shows more similarity with Greg Garrard's suggestion to environmentalism: a worthy aspiration is needed instead of self-abnegating humility and submission to the presumed natural order. In more details, what Garrard refers to is an Ancient Greek virtue called "megalopsuche" ("the greatness of soul"), the combination of "the proper pride of a clever, resourceful animal with reasonable acceptance of the human place in a world we can neither wholly predict nor control" (178-179). It may prove to be more easily acceptable for Pullman's target audience than deep ecology. And Pullman demands that his young protagonists are "ordinary children who come to realize that the world is a wonderful place whose destine is not their birthright" (qtd. in Vulliamy n.p.).

In *HDM*, after death, after passing through the Land of the Dead, the self is annihilated – either in the open air or in the Abyss. Dollimore says the complete annihilation of the individual is the condition of remaining part of the whole (6); similarly Pullman does not affirm individuality in the afterlife. According to Donna Freitas, neither does Pullman explicitly deny an enduring identity, nor "does he affirm individuality in the afterlife. Pullman seems happy to leave this matter in the form of a question, so people will focus not on their fate but on their connections to others and to the universe itself" (Freitas and King 117). To Christopher Wrigley, Pullman's suggestion that the scattered atoms of dead lovers will find one another is not really convincing: in reality, "he has no answer to our loss" (108).

Because of the rather insignificance of the self in the environmental context of Pullman's trilogy, HDM is in parallel with some New Age movements. In much New Age thought, there is a sense of something much greater than the individual self (Partridge *RW, Vol. I*, 73), a sense of the transcendent or "an absolute with which all humanity should seek to live in harmony" (74). The distinction between different understanding of the self's relation to the 'Divine' can be best understood as a distinction between pantheism, polytheism, and panentheism (75). The path to the wellbeing of the self in contemporary spiritualities is *not* selfish at all: "because the concern for personal wellbeing is often fundamentally holistic, the

sense of responsibility extends eclectically beyond the self" (*RW, Vol. II*, 43). Environmental concern, which is a key aspect of this responsibility, has "a strong sacralising bias" (ibid).

Paganism is a particularly recognizable occultural stream in HDM. Highlighting both the beauty of nature and the fact that it is "red in tooth and claw," Paganism puts an emphasis not only on the self, but also on the other, which is external to the self: namely, the planet, the deities and the community (Partridge *RW, Vol. 1*, 79). Accordingly, one is responsible towards other creatures (human and non-human) and the environment. Traditional Pagan communities are believed to have been "more holistic, more in tune with themselves, more in touch with Mother Earth, more aware of natural energies, and, as such, the originators of the most potent religious rites and rituals" (Partridge *RW, Vol. II*, 78-79).[134] The roots and practices of modern Paganism are thought to have been derived from ancient nature religions which were long suppressed in Christian Europe, and which were "violently persecuted in the witch trials of early modernity" (Greenwood-Harvey-Symes-Nye 186, qtd. in Partridge *RW, Vol. II*, 79).[135]

The increasing presence of (Neo-)Paganism in the contemporary West and in Pullman's trilogy is due to six reasons. First, it either attempts to seek balance (Paganism often teaches about the equal importance of the God and the Goddess), or emphasises the feminine (Partridge *RW, Vol. 1*, 83). Pullman puts a great emphasis on the equality and harmony between femininity and masculinity. Second, Pagans are either Pantheist or Panentheist because "Paganism is an ecological faith tradition, a nature-centric spirituality that seeks to break down hierarchies" (ibid).[136] HDM is imbued with Pantheism on the basis of Dust. Third, Paganism is not dogmatic (84). Neither is Pullman's trilogy. Fourth, Pagan worldview is consciously or unconsciously promoted by popular fantasy literature, contemporary rock and dance music, films, and computer games (ibid). As Tolkien's setting

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[134] Modern and primal cultures have been believed to be exemplars to contemporary spirituality. The ancients must have been "in touch with nature, themselves, each other and the sacred" (Partridge *RW, Vol. 1*, 77). The ancient wisdom of premodern and primal cultures is understood to be "the uncorrupted wisdom of a humanity unrepressed by the external dogma, rationalism and authority of later institutionalized religion and culture" (ibid). Contemporary indigenous cultures are believed to "still retain their ancient wisdom and live in a symbiotic relationship with the environment" (ibid). For this reason, a lot of ancient cultures and traditions are understood to be "spiritually and ecologically superior to contemporary secular and Christian-influenced cultures" (*RW, Vol. II*, 78). Nowadays, a quest for truth needs to take account of "the wisdom imparted by the 'sacred people' of ancient and indigenous cultures" (*RW, Vol. 1*, 77-78). Accordingly, one can talk about the so-called geographically filtered *eco-enchantment*, when "Aboriginal traditions are important in Australia; Celtic mythology and folklore is important in Britain; and Native American spirituality is prominent in the US" (*RW, Vol. II*, 73).

[135] Even though there are considerable similarities between Paganism and Satanism, they are not identical with each other. The Paganist-Satan confusion probably stretches back to "the Christian denunciation of Pagans as Devil worshippers" (Partridge *RW, Vol. 1*, 81).

[136] It is not surprising that "Paganism is at the heart of much contemporary eco-enchantment (Partridge *RW, Vol. II*, 80).

in *LOR* is a Pagan world in which nature is thoroughly sacralised, it is no wonder that "[f]antasy, folklore, deep ecology, and nature religion are entwined in an evocative and powerful narrative in which they emerge as eco-warriors facing dark forces of destruction" (Partridge *RW, Vol. II*, 67). The main (positive) characters of HDM are also fighting for ecological-cosmic balance. Fifth, the perennialism of both ancient and occult knowledge and power, and ritual is attractive (Partridge *RW, Vol. 1*, 84). Derived from the rebel angels, angelic knowledge (resulting in prophecies, the operation of the alethiometer) determines the decisions and the acts of Lyra. Sixth, it is the attraction of a small, closely knit group of people in Western societies which are so individualistic and essentially selfish that they "engender feelings of powerlessness and insignificance" (ibid).[137] To this, the sisterhood of the Lapland witches in HDM is a good example. To sum up, Paganism more or less corresponds to the principle of holism on which Pullman's humanism is based.

In this part of my dissertation, all of the characters (including personalized spaces) with mythic attributions who display the principle of holism were interpreted. The contexts of my analysis were provided by Pullman's belief in the philosophical doctrine of materialism; his dissatisfaction with and subversion of Christian androcentrism; and his propagation of the political and ethical movement of environmentalism (as the desirable restoration and respectful preservation of the meaningful entirety of the natural environment). In the cosmology of the trilogy's fictive world, while creatures' connectedness to each other depends on Dust (which also equals with Mother Nature), Xaphania is a benevolent divinity with a graceful campaign for opening human minds. Daemons guide and encourage people toward (sensual desire and) wisdom. Although the Republic of Heaven stands for the connectedness with each other, and forces us to be responsible for each other, its unbearable requirements and uncertain outcome make it contradict to the focus on individualism in alternative spiritualities (especially the New Age). By being reduced into minor characters helping the protagonists, Lord Asriel and Mrs Coulter together evoke some traits of (Romantic and) contemporary Satanism: opposition, the encouragement of self-interest and individualism (however, these traits turn out to be secondary in importance in terms of Pullman's story). As a wisdom-figure, the Serpent Mary Malone is both a source and a seeker of knowledge. The cosmic importance of the fulfilment of the love of Lyra and William saves Dust from annihilation. These two young protagonists imply that personal freedom which has

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[137] However, Paganism is so ritualistic (often with priesthood, particular rites and symbols, and a religious calendar of festival) that it sometimes reflects sectarianism (Partridge *RW, Vol. 1*, 79).

outstanding importance in occultural movements (such as Satanism) seems to be unimportant in HDM where predestination is predominant (and inescapable). The desired goal of a long and busy life – as part of Pullman's propagation of *biophilia* – is the sweet, peaceful death so as to become an integral part of the living cosmos animated with love, all of which is identical with the permanent cycle of substance (involving Dust). (Self-)Knowledge and Dust have turned out to be so dependent on each other that love for and from Dust, as the intellectual and sensual consciousness, is above everything by *free will*. Even self-sacrifice is sometimes required. The definite insignificance of the self in the environmental context of Pullman's trilogy shows parallel with Paganism.

Two assumptions are confirmed. Due to the holistic principle permeating its structure, the implicit theme of HDM is the ambition to re-unite. And with this ambition, HDM (indirectly) criticises alternative spiritualities.

Besides of these, attention also should be given to the consequence(s) of the holistic principles outside the fictive world of HDM. For this reason, the next part is devoted to prove that in the depth of its structure HDM is far from unconventionality: the re-enchanted principle of holism reduces HDM a (mere) repetition of the conventions of Tolkien's fantasy tradition.

IV. GENRE ANALYSIS: THE EMBEDDEDNESS OF HDM INTO RELIGIOUS FANTASY TRADITION

This part confirms the third hypothesis of my dissertation: the principle of holism prevented Pullman from innovating the conventions of religious fantasy genre. However, before I start to back up this hypothesis in the next three chapters below, I have to clarify my point. Although the principle of non-theistic holism with an ambition to re-unite seems to give a religious dimension to the secular humanism in HDM, Pullman's trilogy belongs to those contemporary fantasy works which purpose to exceed and to challenge the celebration of traditional religious faith. A popular artistic product has the chance of achieving a cult status in commodity culture, and HDM is increasingly adulated by an international fandom, yet it has never been interpreted as a founding text of a new (religious) worldview, a new occultural movement or secular fanaticism.

Cultural historians of the epistemological changes of the twentieth century boldly claimed that the process of secularization has made popular art the new venue of religiousness. Up to the Renaissance era, the content of most high visual art and literature was provided by Christian religion (Nelson vii). After the seventeenth century, transcendental forces have slowly been internalized into those areas of human perception which are labelled as the 'imagination' and the 'unconscious' realm of desires, anxieties, and fantasies (43). As a result, the 'low art' of secular entertainment could fill the vacuum left "by the expulsion of religious experience itself from the main currents of Western intellectual culture" (ibid). In the dominantly secular era since the twentieth century, art and entertainment have provided the content for new religious worldviews on the one hand, and the moral framework for those who practice no religion at all on the other hand (vii). Besides of Partridge, Erickson, Bradley and Tate, Victoria Nelson follows a "reversed migration of religious content from works of fantasy and science fiction into practicing cults" (Nelson x), for example in many New Age religions, especially in the United States. This is a strange crossover which marks "a profound reversal from earlier times in our culture, when religion fed art instead of the other way around, and in an odd way it puts us further back yet to the earliest of human times, when all stories were about the gods" (177). One should be aware, however, that "once the boundary between *believe* and *imagine* is breached, there is no controlling the direction the content is

going to travel" (ibid). L. Ron Hubbard's Church of Scientology, which derived from his sci-fi books, is one example of an organized UFO religion in the United States (178).

No religion is promoted in HDM. By definition, religion is basically "a particular form of discourse" that lays claims on authority based on principles of the "transcendence of human origins and limitations," timelessness, and truth that transcends cultural relativity and conditioning (Smith "Authority" 415). If a novel has to contain this kind of discourse to become the foundation of a new religion, then no way can this discourse be identified with Pullman's humanist, materialist, and stationary metaphor of the Republic of Heaven. According to a *functionalist* style definition, religion is defined in terms of the role belief plays in people's lives. Certain individual or social needs concerning those basic features of life and the world which threaten the human condition are specified as ultimate and transcendent, and religion is identified with "any system whose beliefs, practices or symbols serve to meet those needs" (Clarke, Byrne, Evans 7). As all religions aim the achievement of "states of being in which such basic facts as death, suffering, conflict can be overcome," their characteristic goal is salvation (8-9). In HDM, it is only up to the individual to build the Republic of Heaven, to join the eternal cycle of matter. Lyra (with Will) has only made anyone possible to be able to do so.[138] Consequently, neither the secular humanism nor the principle of non-theistic holism with an ambition to re-unite in HDM functions as a religion in the lives of the trilogy's characters and Pullman's readers.[139] The main characters (especially Lyra, William, Lord Asriel, and Mary Malone), who do not believe in any kind of transcendent being (and most of whom are disappointed in organized religion), are gradually becoming aware of the importance of preserving Dust, and, in this way, the cosmological balance of all worlds. In parallel with this, they are more and more compelled to rely on each other so much that cooperation turns out to be indispensable. Belief in the strength of the community becomes a kind of new religious worldview, which reinforces the principle of holism. Even though this worldview of Pullman's characters may function as an exemplary role model to the readers of HDM, the trilogy has no potential to satisfy the religious hunger of the Western re-enchanted man. (In spite of Pullman's constant emphasis on 'consciousness' and 'knowledge,' HDM is *not* a kind of esoteric text revealing 'the truth' to

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[138] At the same time, Pullman's awareness of the religious impulse is supported by two functionalist claims. Religion, which concerns with ultimate and inescapable human needs, is presupposed to be present in all societies (Clarke, Byrne, Evans 9). And as a universal phenomenon in human history and society, religion possibly represents "some primary instinct in or facet of human nature" (ibid).

[139] In addition, Claire Squires highlighted Pullman's deliverance/transmission of the required moral values and messages through the medium of the story (82): the narrative for the two young protagonists operates as "a brute force, a controlling agency and an authority more powerful than any of the other political or religious agencies within the trilogy" (89).

his readers.) Pullman himself refuses the idea that the genre of fantasy will finally subvert and substitute canonical sacred texts. He said that it replaces some aspects of a religion, but not all of them (App.). To him, it is a ridiculous supposition because "we know that fantasy is made-up" (quoted in App.). Yet, his readers can recognize parallels between the fiction of HDM and their lives (for example, abuse of power, anxieties over climate change), with guidance to solve them, too.

And most scholars of HDM doubt that Pullman's trilogy could mean a real threat to the gradually weakening Christian institutions in today's Western cultures.[140] It is because Pullman wages war against "what is arguably a spent force" (Squires 102); because of the common practice of "[l]iterary representations of institutional belief as antiquated, authoritarian and arrogant" (Bradley and Tate 71). Besides, most people in the increasingly secularized Western societies do not receive formal religious education to recognize biblical allusions in HDM (Bradley and Tate 64, Lenz in Hunt and Lenz 159).[141]

IV.1. Revival of Romanticism's Nostalgia for a Lost Harmony

Textual Analysis implies that, to write HDM, Pullman was largely inspired by the nineteenth-century Romantic Movement which is known for its glorification of the past (Middle Ages), nature (as a place of encounter with the divine, of spiritual revelations, as pantheism), and the East. It was expounded in Chapter II.2. that medievalism and fairy tales inspired Tolkien to establish the Post-Modern genre of fantasy. This chapter highlights the indirect way the principle of holism in HDM revives the Romantic (as well as re-enchanted) yearning to a desired harmony in the past, on the basis of Romanticism's peculiar approach to belief relying on unification and synthetization.

As a forerunner of Romanticism, there have always been aspirations of restoring the broken completeness, the lost Unity of the individual human soul with the Godhead in Western culture. Dollimore depicts the Christian narrative of the Fall as a transition from unity to division, and as "the experience of desire as loss and absence and the compulsion to reunite" (52). The ancient, negative experience of mankind with the Fall has always been counter-balanced by "the age-old ambition of man to regain the lost harmony, eventually to

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[140] Among the Pullman-scholars, Andrew Leet seems to be the only one who approves Pullman's fear of "a potential future scenario where organized religion may someday regain its former powerful standing as the unopposed moral regulator of society" (Leet in Lenz and Scott 176).

[141] What the trilogy's popularity signifies in the early years of the twenty-first century is "a more widely accepted antagonism to the Church" (Bradley and Tate 13).

deify himself and regain his position at the side of God" (Szőnyi *John Dee's* 20). The deification of man was a program corroborated by the biblical doctrine according to which "man was created after the image of God and shared all God's characteristics" (23). As a wide range of loosely related heterodox ideas and movements, Western esotericism[142] has always revolved around Man's re-connection and re-union with God:

> Underlying all of these Western esoteric traditions is also a universalism in the myth of the fall and of restoration. This myth—although it appears in numerous variants—is always tied to the *Ur-Mensch*, Adam, and his fall from paradise. In brief, what transpired before history goes something like this: Primordial humanity, often seen as androgynous, was tempted to look outside itself for knowledge, and in this externalization was the separation or fall from paradise into the increasing objectivization of history. The aim of the esoteric practitioner, whether a Kabbalist, an alchemist, a theosopher, or a pansoph, is nothing less than the restoration of paradise, which is to say, the restoration of unity between humanity and nature by way of the divine. (Versluis 137-138)

The inclusion of the restoration of paradise (or a golden age) in Western esoteric traditions is to realize "the ending of objectification, or division into self and other" (Versluis 150). Besides of Platonism (with the interconnectedness of all living things due to the so-called demiurge, with the superiority of the soul to the body), Gnosticism (with its strong ontological dualism between good spirit and evil matter based on the split in oneness, with Man's necessity to recognize his divine origins), and Neo-Platonism (with its pursuit to reach absolute oneness, with its endeavour to the purification and ascent of the soul), the aspiration for restoring oneness reached its peak in the late fifteenth- and the sixteenth centuries when Renaissance Humanists were desperate to *recover* man's primordial place next to God, thanks to man's changed place from fixed to movable on the Great Chain of Being (see Szőnyi *John Dee's* 20-21, 23, 87).

The nineteenth-century Romantic period in England is considered a (or the first) re-enchanted era. According to Richard Jenkins, the definitely modern movement of (re)enchantment is "the diverse portfolio of perspectives and practices that developed as a response to the rationalism of the Enlightenment, and which shelters – or lurks – under the broad umbrella of Romanticism" (19). Romanticism was in some respect "a religious interpretation of the universe, not only in terms of pantheism and nature-mysticism, but in those often enough of the received Christian teaching, Catholic or Protestant. Converts from unbelief were plentiful" (Reardon in Reardon 26-27). However, traditional orthodoxy was apt to look with suspicion upon this Romanticist (re-)interpretation of Christian belief, when it did not openly censure it (16). Meanwhile, the late eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries

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[142] The term, 'esotericism,' was constructed as a scholarly label in Jacques Matter's work, entitled *Histoire critique du gnosticisme et de son influence* (1828), and ever since it had been applied "a posteriori to certain religious developments in the context of early Christianity" (Hanegraaff "Esotericism" in idem *DG* 337).

were characterized with a binary of "having a theistic belief" and maintaining an anti-organizational and anti-ecclesiastical outlook that is rooted in a private, 'spiritual' experience (Roberts *Blake* 81). In parallel with this, the Romantic period is also responsible for a split between 'inner' religion/spirituality and 'outer' religion/ritual worship (85).

The general Romantic aims were (Western esotericism's) *unification* and *recovery*. Among others, the First Generation poets did elaborate "a comprehensive programme for reconstruction: of the self, of ideals, of man's relationship with nature, but also of history and society" (Bonnecase in Procházka *After History* 99).[143] The Romantic quest is "to create or restore a lost harmony through poetic vision, the restoration of language, initiation, the study of myths and religions, the restructuring of society, and contemplation of nature" (McCalla in Hanegraaff *DG* 1001). The promising means of recovering the primordial harmony before the Fall of Man were the esoteric understandings of poetry as "symbolic knowledge and the key to an analogical world," the poet as "the recipient and transmitter of revelation," and language as recoverable and universal (1002). Moreover, since Romanticism believes in the sameness of the essential content of myths and religions everywhere and at all times (the so-called "unfolding of Spirit"), it follows that differences among myths and religions are only superficial, and that the absolute distinction between Christianity and the other religions does not exist at all (1003).

Due to the lasting effects of Romanticism, nostalgia for harmony or completeness in a distant past is an integral part of contemporary re-enchantment. Jenkins argues that "[a]cross a wide range of cultural and intellectual fields, Romanticism's imagining of, and yearning for, a mythical premodern, un-rationalized past perfect remains influential" (19). Indeed, the re-enchanted interest in ancient religious and mythical figures, texts and civilizations refers to occulture's "strong sentimental attachment" to the often mystical past and the often idealized premodern and primal cultures for their "the uncorrupted wisdom of a humanity unrepressed by the external dogma, rationalism and authority of later institutionalized religion and culture" (Partridge, *RW, Vol. I*, 77). The increasing homogeneity of the modern world (because of the progress of globalization) is also giving birth to "the (re)invention, valorization, and assertion of locality and distinctiveness" (Jenkins 16).

The mythopoeia of HDM is essentially and recognizably (Neo-)Romantic. Pullman is openly fascinated by Romanticism: "I revel[l]ed in and loved the Romantic poets – Keats,

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[143] Even though these poets were aware of the sheer impossibility of craving a new beginning, they still "decided to embark on an extensive syncretism of myths, philosophical doctrines, aesthetic theories…" (Bonnecase in Procházka *After History* 99).

Shelley, Coleridge – and Romantic music, too. The music of Beethoven, Wagner. All of the cultural poets of that time are very close to me. So I suppose I could be a Romantic poet: post-Romantic or imitation-Romantic, if you like" (qtd. in Waldman n.p.). In accordance with this, the trilogy's inter-textuality is professedly Romantic. At the end of *The Amber Spyglass*, in the "Acknowledgements" section, Pullman confesses that the three debts that need acknowledgment above all the rest are "On the Marionette Theater," an essay by Heinrich von Kleist; John Milton's *Paradise Lost*; and the works of William Blake ("Acknowledgements" AS 467). Among them, to my analysis of religious completeness in *HDM*, William Blake is the most significant. In 2004, Pullman was elected President of the Blake Society. At an exhibition on Blake's painting in Oxford in 2014, he talked about Blake's influence on him throughout his life:

> My mind and my body reacted to certain lines from the *Songs of Innocence and of Experience*, from *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, from "Auguries of Innocence," from *Europe*, from *America* with the joyful immediacy of a flame leaping to meet a gas jet. (…) I had stumbled into a country in which I was not a stranger, whose language I spoke by instinct, whose habits and customs fitted me like my own skin. (Pullman "William Blake and me" n.p.)

In the following paragraphs, I pay close attention to those characteristics of Blake's biography and oeuvre that are relevant to my research, and prove the embeddedness of HDM into the Romantic tradition of fantasy as the imaginative agency.

On two conditions could Blake realise his (below detailed) synthetizing lifegoal. First, in the restorative intentions of Romanticism, (individual) imagination was considered to be the only means to gain (ontological, metaphysical) knowledge. Based on a tradition derived from Aristotle, the imagination is "a faculty of knowledge intermediary between the senses and the intellect or rational intelligence" (Doel in Hanegraaff *DG* 606). During the Romantic era, the role of *imagination* was to counterbalance, even overcome *reason*: individuals could "intuitively or by the use of imagination access the infinite through the finite, discover the metaphysical within the physical, see the spiritual flowing through the material" (Partridge *RW, Vol. I*, 72). The point was a great confidence in the individual's ability to know the truth about the nature of reality, "*without* recourse to divinely revealed or sanctioned authorities" (ibid, my emphasis). In his *Biographia Literaria*, Coleridge made a distinction between the primary imagination (what we all share), secondary imagination (the faculty of the poet), and fancy (an inferior faculty to imagination).

The Romantic concept of Imagination as faith is recognizable in the trilogy's advocating *imagination* to grab metaphysical dimensions. In the light of what Lyra tells the ghosts (and the harpies clustering in the background) on the Land of the Dead (AS 281-2),

namely her material experiences and sensorial memories of the great battle between the Oxford townies and the clayburners, such an evocation of the physical world is not only factual but also *imaginative*, which offers the antithesis of the fantasizing of which the harpies accuse Lyra – being a liar – (Gray *Fantasy* 157). Moreover, this opposition (between fantasy in a negative sense and the imaginative intuition of reality) in *HDM* seems to "echo the distinction made by Coleridge in his *Biographia Literaria* between fancy and the imagination" (ibid). Accordingly, Pullman seems to adopt "high Romantic view of the imagination as the antithesis of fantasy (or fancy) in the negative sense" (158). This kind of view emerges explicitly towards the end of *AS* when the angel Xaphania tells Lyra and Will of another way of 'travelling' into other worlds, which has already been known to Will's shamanistic father: "[i]t uses the faculty of what you call imagination. But that does not mean *making things up*. It is a form of seeing" (AS 443). And "[t]his connection of the cult of the imagination to shamanism does not seem too far away from the Romantic exaltation of the poet as seer and prophet, above all in a figure such as Blake" (Gray *Fantasy* 158).

As for the second condition to Blake, the 'exaltation' of imagination was made possible by Romanticism's glorification of the self or the individual through experience and knowledge. If Romanticism is identified with "a fervent reaffirmation of human values on the strength of what was seen as the immense potential variety, vividness and depth of experience" (Reardon in idem 21); the 'sentiment du moi' [feeling of the self] (as the ultimate self) was the "necessary clue to the understanding of all things" (14); and knowledge could be attained through the power and penetration of feeling (9). When the Romantic man thought through the nature of experience, object and subject were apprehended as "ultimately one" (16). Because true knowledge (subjective in its nature) was thought to transform its possessor (just as Lyra is transformed by her sensual and intellectual knowledge at the end of HDM), Romantic knowledge was believed to be salvific (McCalla in Hanegraaff *DG* 1002).

As the establishment of the Republic of Heaven rather commits to the number two, HDM also implies the dark side of the Romantic self-centredness, namely anxiousness. Lyra and Will become the victims of cosmic interests: the cosmic need for Dust created by the everyday joys and wonders of human life under the great enterprise of the Republic of Heaven requires the oneness of Eve and Adam becoming two, in other words the sacrifice of Lyra and Will's love. Hoffman's observation is valid to the drama of salvation for Dust and for the Republic of Heaven in Pullman's secularized context: by transcending their persons and by acting impersonally, both Lyra and Will are becoming martyrs for a perfect future (Hoffman 100). While the Romantic spirit's longing for ultimate reconciliation and peace is "won only

out of ceaseless striving and struggle," for Romantic art effort and conflict embodied "the very stuff of life," and reality was seen as dynamic, "ever in movement and always aspiring" (Reardon in idem 5-6). As I wrote in the Introduction, to Pullman, his story is about growing up: "'[l]ive fast, die young [together, in a foreign world]' is exactly what responsibility and wisdom set their faces against. These two children are setting out on a far more difficult and more valuable journey, which is the journey towards wisdom" (qtd. in Spanner n.p.). Eventually, compassion – meaning to suffer with – lies at the heart of the ethics of Pullman's trilogy (Freitas and King 93).

The nineteenth-century glorification of the self contributed to a Romantic project of naturalizing the supernatural and humanizing the divine. Through the Renaissance via the Enlightenment to Romanticism, there was a general shift "from a God-centred to a much more man-oriented Christian view of the universe" (Manlove *Christian Fantasy* 157). By coming down to man democratically, the humanised God becomes immanent during Romanticism. God's immanence was probably conditioned by the Romantic need of giving "spiritual meaning to a world which might otherwise be seen in, at best, coldly scientific terms, and become nothing to man" (157-158).[144] Furthermore, this process of "immanentizing religious reality" led to the thought of "*two* worlds worrying": "eternal life has to be seen to be lived here and now, eternity itself to be a dimension of the present order of things, the basic Christian values rooted in this world, Jesus Christ to be the man in whom all men may see their own idealized reflection" (Reardon in idem 10-11). According to the concept of God's descent to the bottom of the human psyche (where he resides as an immanent being),

> God's creative power expressed itself 'through man as a conscious being,' and this creative power became, in turn, the artist's creative power working as his imagination.[145] In this way, God became immanent and, as imagination is boundless, God's presence could be discerned outside the biblical texts as well. (Kenyeres 46)

And the circle closes: imagination is here again. Pullman's metaphor of the Republic of Heaven incorporates this valorization of immanence (without, of course, God).

The motive of Romantic artists to interiorize God was to escape from institutional surveillance.[146] While the Romantics were characterized by a resistance "to any kind of

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[144] While this world had been felt to be inadequate to God in more religiously 'certain' centuries, to Manlove the risk, that God may be found inadequate to the world, seems to be real (*Christian Fantasy* 158).

[145] In William Blake's poetry, "God is at the bottom of creation, inside man, trying to recreate the world through man" (Kenyeres 98).

[146] At the same time, the so-called 'visionary company' of such Romantics as William Blake, William Wordsworth, François-René de Chateaubriand, Friedrich Hölderlin, and Friedrich Schiller successfully preserved their Christian literary inheritance by adapting biblical forms and categories (Scott in Eliade *ER* Vol. 8, 570). In this way, while they submitted their religious heritage to a process of revision and secularization, the themes and

institutional constraint or 'system,' whether religious or secular" (Gray *Fantasy* 3), Romantic religion was identified with "the spiritual life of the individual, whatever the form its activity [took]: art, philosophy, or religion in the narrow sense" (McCalla in Hanegraaff *DG* 1004). To liberate and dissociate themselves from the bonds of institutional Christianity (especially from its Old Testament inheritance), several Romantic poets – P. B. Shelley in *Prometheus Unbound* (1818-1819), Lord Byron in *Cain* (1821), Giacomo Leopardi in *Ad Arimane* (1833), Alphonse de Lamartine in *La chute d'un ange* (1837), Victor Hugo in *La fin de Satan* (1854-1857), and Mihail Eminescu in *Muresanu* and *Demonism* (1872) – arrived at the Marcionite idea that the god of the Old Testament, also the creator of this world, is an evil god who must be opposed (Culianu in Eliade *ER* Vol. 5, 577.). These Romantics found the world and man "worthy of salvation from the clutches of the religious tyrant, and a sort of active nihilism was the way to reach that goal" (ibid). Briefly, while the Gnostic position expressed "a metaphysical denial of the world on behalf of transcendence," the above depicted position of the Romantics expressed "a nihilistic denial of transcendence on behalf of this world" (ibid).

Because of its placement of God 'inside,' Tolkien's fantasy tradition has also been essentially Romantic. Most of the nature of the Christian fantasy written in the twentieth century celebrates, in some way, this world: "even if 'this world' means the unconscious level of the human mind, as in the work of MacDonald, or the wider universe, as in C. S. Lewis and his followers" (Manlove *Christian Fantasy* 158-159). Consequently, Christian fantasy writers follow the Romantic tradition of God 'within': nowadays, "when there is an increasing feeling that the world has no connection at all with a Christian God or a heaven, modern Christian fantasy tries to put divine presence into the universe" (159). This modern fantasy finds God in nature or in certain images.

In Pullman's trilogy, while there is a large-scale cosmic-social restoration to wholeness (as going back to the original state), there is also a particular 'spiritual' improvement (as going ahead to a new state) exemplified by Lyra's physical, emotional and moral growth (her character development). She goes through a transition: from a savage barbarian eleven-year-old girl at the beginning of *GC* to a sober, wise twelve-year-old adolescent at the end of *AS*.[147] In the Romantic Movement's heritage, the end of the quest leads to the discovery of the self-knowledge of the divine inside: "[t]o know oneself (as

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issues of that heritage (alienation and reunion, death and rebirth, hell and heaven, paradise lost and paradise regained as central realities) retained a powerful underground life (ibid).

[147] To me, it seems as if Pullman follows a view about child rearing according to which all children are barbarians who need to be civilized. He agreed: "I used to teach them for many years. I know children, I have children of my own. They are barbarous. They need to be civilized. But they have the possibility of being civilized. Children are fascinating and wonderful creatures, but they don't know how to behave" (qtd. in App.).

Socrates recommended) is to recognize an image of God, therefore to know God" (Duchesne-Guillemin in Eliade *ER*, Vol. 8, 347). Besides, spiritual self-improvement is often identified with regaining Paradise:

> the lost Paradise or the Fall is the road from primeval perfection, oneness to dualism, diversity. The regained Paradise/Eden means return to oneness, to the spiritual centre; man's victory over himself, the restoration of original innocence. Its reconquering comes up against great difficulties, with ordeal, which means a difficult spiritual journey to the centre. (Pál and Újvári "Paradise" no page)

In addition, every quest tale is characterized by a so-called "consciousness of linear time" which means that "[t]o see a beginning, a middle, and an end is to see a 'road of life,' and to see such a road is to see a potential quest" (Leeming in Eliade *ER*, Vol. 12, 147). And the ultimate spiritual question of each quest tale is "who am I?" Pullman agreed that *HDM* is a quest story for wisdom (App.). There is a phrase: Lyra and Will became "the true image of what human beings always could be, once they have come into their inheritance" (AS 421). According to Pullman, it means "a true understanding of things. You can call it wisdom, or you can call it understanding, or you can call it a realization, something. It's a state of full consciousness, instead of partial consciousness" (qtd. in App.). Pullman explained this saying, "[t]he truest way for the creatures to become what they could truly be (qtd. in Watkins "Interview" n.p.)" with the example of a baby bird:

> [w]hen a baby bird is very young, it's just hatched, it can't see, it can't fly, hasn't got any feathers. Little by little, as the mother feeds the bird, it grows, it becomes stronger, it's got wings. (…) And the little swallows sit at the edge of the nest, (…) and they're very frightened, and one day they just jump and they can fly. It's becoming what it could be. (Qtd. in App.)

He concludes that "it's the difference between childhood and adulthood. Or, in William Blake's terms, it's the difference between innocence and experience" (ibid). For Pullman, the Fall narrative is nothing else but "a necessary precursor to consciousness, knowledge and experience" (Squires 83). For him, the myth – still named 'fall' but meaning 'ascent' – symbolises the necessary road toward maturation and self-knowledge. While the trilogy offers a humanistic religion of Eros which celebrates the dignity and the sanctity of human life, the (slightly spiritual) quest for self-awareness is in the centre of HDM's mythopoesis (indeed, here the parallel with building the Republic of Heaven *and* New Age spirituality is undeniable). Pullman's trilogy is a twentieth-twenty-first century revival of nineteenth-

century *Bildungsroman*.[148] The acquisition of self-awareness is an inevitable plot-organizing device of Philip Pullman's fantasy trilogy.

After these digressions, let me turn to William Blake to explain why he had a particularly powerful effect on Pullman and HDM. Throughout his life, Blake attempted to renew Christianity by unifying it. He was "a religious seeker but not a joiner" (Bentley n.p.); who declared himself "a Christian without reservation" (Raine 32). In his endeavour to get back to the pure form of Christianity before its corruption by organized religion, he developed "the idea of a fundamental and universal religion" (Damon 342), but he did not wish to found a new religion (xi). In this way, Blake embodies "the characteristically modern sensibility of believing in God/spiritual experience, but being alienated from institutional religious settings" (Roberts *Blake* 87). His ideas of divinity, connectedness, and wholeness are inseparable from the Romantic interpretation of Imagination which he recognized as "the only source of divine knowledge" (Fisch 216), as art encompassing the totality (Gleckner 363). Because of its origins within the human Imagination, the authority of the Bible meant to be "a source of true knowledge" for Blake (Fisch 216). Blake actively contributed to the Romantic tradition of 'placing' God within Man. He believed in the inseparability of God and Man: "God is Man & exists in us & we in him" (…) (Damon 159), and both heavens and hells are is within (Raine 30).[149] The religious positions he anticipates are "individualistic, anti-institutional, anti-ecclesiastical, with a grounding in personal spirituality" (Roberts *Blake* 94).

Blake's mythopoetic system aims to undo the consequences of God's Creation and the Fall of Man. It was his belief that "Man had already lost the divine vision before the first chapter of *Genesis*. What follows is a series of splittings of the original unity" (Damon 151). He identified the process of Creation with one of the dividing up the original Unity:

> Beginning with the separation of light from darkness, it proceeds through the six Days of Creation, culminating in the separation of man from God. After that, the sexes are divided, in the creation of Eve; Good and Evil, in the eating of the fruit; man and happiness, in the expulsion from the Garden; soul and body, in the first murder; man from his brother, in the confusion of tongues at Babel. (94)

The re-attainment of Eternity requires the re-union of all these divisions: Blake attempted to a homogeneous state (monism) by the abolition of boundaries separating subject and object,

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[148] Adults' and children's preoccupation with questions of coming of age, education and self-fulfilment may be one of the factors which have contributed to the enormous popularity of HDM (Falconer in Barfield and Cox 11).

[149] With regards to his sources and his pursuits (Emmanuel Swedenborg, Paracelsus, and Jacob Boehme; esoteric philosophers such as Cornelius Agrippa and Robert Fludd; and Thomas Taylor), Blake has been considered a prominent member of Western esotericism. Blake-scholars view him either as a Gnostic or a (Neo-)Platonist poet. However, opinions vary whether Blake was a mystic. Northrop Frye, who denied Blake's mysticism, proposed the term 'visionary' (Kenyeres 120-121). Jonathan Roberts, who uncompromisingly refuses the possibility of Blake's mysticism, consider the poet as a seer living in a (re-)enchanted world (74).

male and female, outer and inner, earlier and later" (Fisch vii). His complex system focuses on a journey through states, which involves "the fall from unity to division and the rise to reunity, from innocence to experience to a higher innocence" (Gleckner 367). Of course, "unity to division to unity conforms to the pattern of the child's growth to wise maturity, or more universally, conforms to the eternal cycle of birth, life, decay, and death" (368). Two synthesizing works stand out from Blake's literary oeuvre. A small tractate entitled "All Religions Are One" (*ca.* 1788) is an early embodiment of his unifying vision. Of his later works, *Jerusalem* (1808) embodies the most complete union, synchronizing the Creator and the Saviour, the Old Testament and the New Testament.

Blake's endeavour to restore/redeem his poetic model, John Milton, becomes complete with the writing of his epic poem, *Milton, a Poem in 2 Books*, a purposeful re-interpretation of the seventeenth-century poet. It is about a visionary encounter in Blake's garden at Felpham in the course of which Milton enters Blake through his left foot to become one with him. Blake wanted to cure Milton's attachment to law and morality, and save Milton from his Puritanism (Fisch 250).

HDM testifies Pullman's Blakean alignment with the Neo-Romantic or 'subversive' reading of Milton's *PL*. Their play with the possibilities and variations of the Christian myth endeared both Milton and Blake to Pullman (Rayment-Pickard 18). However, Pullman is aware of Milton's inability to totally identify himself with God and His Son in *PL*:

> [Milton's] imagination, although perhaps not his conscious mind, pretty passionately disliked God, because everything he gives God to say, every action God takes, is whining, carping, moaning, criticising, boasting. It's a very unattractive figure, the God of Milton. The son, Messiah, is slightly more attractive, and Satan utterly compelling. (Qtd. in Simms n.p.)

In connection with this, he likes quoting Blake: "[t]he reason Milton wrote in fetters when he wrote of Angels and God, and at liberty when of Devils and Hell, is because he was a true poet and of the Devil's party without knowing it" (n.p.). In the past two centuries, there has been "a lively and ongoing debate" between the 'orthodox' and the 'Romantic' readings of *PL* (Hatlen in Lenz and Scott 85). The principal spokesperson of the orthodox viewpoint was C.S. Lewis.[150] In the eyes of Romantic poets such as Blake, Shelley and Byron, Milton's God was an unjust and arbitrary tyrant, and Satan was the 'true hero' of PL, "a gallant Promethean rebel fighting on in a cause that he knows is doomed but still insists is just" (86). Many recent commentators, who interiorized this Romantic reading of Milton's epic poem, have offered us

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[150] C.S. Lewis assumed "that the Fall was an unmitigated disaster, and that on this earth our one goal should be to recover the state of innocence that we lost when our 'first parents' committed the original sin that still taints us all" (Hatlen in Lenz and Scott 85-86).

"a Milton much more radical, much more engaged with the new social and intellectual possibilities opening up in the seventeenth century, than the proponents of the 'orthodox' Milton have recognized" (ibid). With full awareness of this quarrel between the neo-Christian and the Romantic view of Milton, Pullman developed "a Blakean redaction of the Miltonic mythos, directed against the neo-Christian readings of Lewis and others" in HDM (ibid). Besides, Blake's legacy is also evidently found in a rebellious stance in HDM because of the perception of corruption and a destructive use of power for the sake of seducing and bullying people from the truth (Scott in Lenz and Scott 97, 102).

Due to his focus on Blake's Romantic re-interpretation of Milton, Pullman belongs to the English (literary) Dissenters. The *HDM* series can be interpreted as the culmination of a Romantic literary tradition which was "shaped and informed by various dissident interpretations of Christian, Jewish and Platonic writings" (Gray *Fantasy* 1). Consequently, the trilogy is Pullman's 'high argument' which addresses central religious issues, such as a highly negative image (even a caricature) of institutional religion, and a quasi-theological argument about the nature of the Fall (ibid). HDM is associated with "what Valentine Cunningham has named the great tradition of English literary heresy" (Bradley and Tate 63-64). Pullman himself said that "[i]n aligning the rebellious angels with good and freedom, rather than authority, repression, and cruelty, I'm in a long tradition. William Blake consciously and Milton unconsciously wrote about this, so I'm in a line with the English dissenters" (qtd. in Cooper 355, qtd. in Lenz in Hunt and Lenz 124).

As the Textual Analysis revealed, HDM is full of references to nostalgia for past oneness or harmony. Because of the desire for oneness, Pullman's trilogy seemingly deals with an ancient form of religiousness similar to Pantheism (as Dust). The Republic of Heaven belongs to the tradition of immanentizating the divine (finding God's presence *within* rather than *beyond* creation). There are the animalness of daemons, the *mulefa*'s co-existence with nature, and the materialist understanding of eternal continuity. Due to the principle of holism, the Neo-Romantic HDM is both an anti- and a pre-Christian religious fantasy which embodies re-enchantment's longing for harmony and wholeness.

IV.2. Moral Guide to the Youth

This chapter attempts to show that, following Christian fantasy traditions, HDM serves as a moral guide in the lives of its readers on the basis of the principle of non-theistic holism with

an ambition to re-unite. These moral values are, of course, humanist. Fantasy literature, which always relies on a moral universe, is "a sermon on the way things should be, a belief that the universe should yield to moral precepts" (Mendlesohn 5). This chapter also explains how and why HDM as an artistic product can effectuate more social changes by shaping the consciousness/influencing the way of thinking of its consumers than a scientific report.

Similarly to mythology, (mythopoetic) fantasy literature also gives answers to its readers to existential and ethical dilemmas. Nowadays an author is often seen to be able to "integrate the original mythological values (or some of them) with a modern network to get quite different resonances than would be available in a story without the mythological component" (Hume 191). And unlike religion, literature helps us to "develop our sense of meaning whether we agree with the author's values or not" (194). In the light of the Post-Modernism of fantasy genre, Post-Modernist authors sanctify the quest for meaning by trying out "various possible answers and positive assertions of value" without falling back on old answers or on faith (49). During and after the twentieth century, fantasy (and speculative fiction in general) has functioned as a major explanatory tool which has provided "meaning and insight to millions of readers, often about vital issues such as the origins of war and the nature of humanity, and often to readers who have been failed by all older and more traditional forms of writing (such as history and mainstream fiction)" (Kellegham 12).

Due to the failure of Biblical mythology to provide either popular or official myths for modern industrial society, any individual mythopoeia of a fantasy work has the chance of becoming a part of a powerful mythology. Contemporary society lacks of "a strong central mythology capable of integrating mythological fragments into a coherent whole" (Hexham and Poewe 83). Because of the increasing tendencies to de-supernaturalise and re-mythologize the Bible, Biblical narratives are predominantly considered as parts of inventions (Manlove *Christian Fantasy* 2). What replaces the more and more insignificant Biblical mythology is "a large number of fragmented myths circulating among different subgroups without the benefit of an integrative central mythology" (Hexham and Poewe 83). As a consequence, most people hold "a mishmash of beliefs," described as mythological fragments without cohesion (ibid).[151] While the significance of Christian mythology is decreasing, any originally individual myth in Western occulture becomes valid when it is "incorporated into

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[151] The currently popular major mythological fragments can be identified as three major types of personal mythological fragments and three forms of fragmented cosmic myths: "pseudoscientific myths, myths of fate and prophecy, healing myths, myths of decline, other civilizations myths, and myths of transformation" (Hexham and Poewe 84).

larger or related myths" (82). The reason is pragmatical: in many societies, myths are "officially sanctioned through public recognition" (ibid).

My Textual Analysis has shown that, in spite of Lyra's central importance (as the second Eve), the mythopoeia of HDM is more characterized by cosmological mythic patterns than heroic mythic patterns.[152] This mythopoeia can be characterized with Kathryn Hume's cosmological cycle: "[i]f we turn from the I to the not-I and look beyond man toward the universe, we find this other system of patent fantasy images embodied in what I am calling the cosmological cycle, consisting of creation, the world of time and history, and apocalypse" (181). In the cosmological mythic pattern, there is "a strong drive to view the world as object, analytically and descriptively" – consequently, the protagonist becomes just a phenomenon to be observed (ibid). One of the relatively few works portraying "the whole of the cosmological cycle" is the Bible operating on a grand scale (ibid). From its cosmogony to its eschatology, Pullman's mythopoeia embodies, I claim, an organic metaphor of "the life-pattern of birth, growth, and death" (182). Accordingly, HDM lays out "patterns to tie loose ends into symmetries," gives us "the sense of fitting into a design," and invites "an observer's stance" (183).

Fantasy literature in general, HDM in particular, conveys didactic messages by giving moral guidance. With an ethical dimension, there is a moral philosophical message that Pullman's trilogy aims to communicate about looking for a framework of interpretation through which one can make sense of his/her life. Being both a Post-Modern and didactic text, however, HDM embodies a sort of a paradox: while Post-Modernism challenges established value systems, didacticism reinforces them. According to Kathryn Hume, one basic approach to reality that a literary work can offer to readers is the *literature of revision* (both sacred writing and fictional writing) which "lays out plans for revisiting reality, for shaping futures" (56), and which is virtually didactic literature presenting "a coherent set of values and an implicit or explicit sense of meaning" (194). Yet, while didacticism is close to a propaganda text with ready-made truths and value systems it wants to communicate, an invitation for revision – in theory at least – allows the reader more space to think, and come up with his/her own critical (self-)reflections. And Pullman's trilogy fulfils a pedagogical, didactic, and moralising function on the one hand, and also provides multiple interpretations without factual reports on the other. In the light of these, HDM is such an unconventional didactic text

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[152] As for heroic mythic patterns, "[i]f Lyra can be read as the female hero questing for knowledge, then Will is much more Campbell's 'Hero as Warrior'" (Gray *Fantasy* 182).

that it dissolves the contradiction between didactic literature and Post-Modernism by embodying a so-called Post-Modern didacticism.

To prove the didactic nature of Pullman's trilogy, I rely on Claire Squires' demonstration of an explicit didacticism in HDM. The fictive universe of Pullman's trilogy is characterized by "a strong sense of purpose, value and responsibility" (Squires 83). Instead of espousing an amoral universe, Pullman attempts to construct an alternate morality deeply grounded in the Christian narrative. This alternate morality, which is based on *responsibility* and *the consequences of choice* (both of which determine the shape of the story) (83), is "anti-religion, anti-repression, pro-sexuality and pro-knowledge" (98). This morality of responsibility and choice is "actually dictated by the way in which the author has constructed character and the consequent logic of the narrative" (105-106). Those characters who represent Pullman's values of anti-religion, anti-repression, pro-sexuality and pro-knowledge (namely Lyra, Will, Mary Malone) are not only portrayed attractively, but also "allowed to voice explicitly didactic opinions" (98). For this reason, storytelling so central to the thematics of the trilogy must be "a didactic strategy, one through which Pullman can communicate a range of opinions" (89).

With regards to the trilogy's cosmogony, cosmology, and eschatology, I identify its mythopoeia with the so-called *cosmological didacticism*. Mythological texts (as "sacred accounts of creation and apocalypse") and mythopoeic texts (as "modern attempts to reinterpret the universe"[153]) are usually cosmologically didactic (Hume 115). The most known examples of cosmological didacticism are probably the first three chapters of Genesis. The subject of this kind of didactic literature is the cosmic plane of reality, which makes pronouncements upon the nature of the universe, life after death, and man's place in the cosmos (56). The aim of this kind of didactic literature is "to offer the eventual comfort of order, of a program, of decisions made and rules laid down" (ibid). The job of didactic authors is, with the help of imagination,[154] "to impart this truth and make it so compelling that the

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[153] Most modern fantasists (such as C.S. Lewis and David Lindsay), who have found "an *ex nihilo* creation unimaginable," do not intend to "clash with science on its own grounds" (Hume 116). For this reason, they avoid "the issue of creation and deal mythically with a universe already in existence" (ibid). With the 'deus otiosus' in HDM, Pullman applied the same technique.

[154] When cosmological explanations appear as sacred writ, "the framework for experience is imposed on the audience as an absolute" (Hume 122). However, when questions about the nature of the cosmos are approached in a non-scriptural context, the author must rely heavily on persuasion: "[t]o propagate a sense of meaning, the author must use the vivid power to make images which fantasy provides. These help keep the audience from rejecting the didactic message at the outset. Once well ensnared in the story and its values, readers will then proceed even if they disbelieve the author's premises, for the reward cosmic didacticism offers is a sense of man's significance" (ibid). In other words, the fantasy itself *is* the message because no one has verifiable knowledge about the ultimate source or beginning of the universe and its end (103).

reader will reshape his life or beliefs to fit its dictates, or at least consider doing so" (122). Because man longs for assurance about his place, the truth that the author of cosmological literature considers to state is naturally welcome (114-115). As didactic literature works with assertions and affirms absolutes, "[w]e are given the grounds for saying that one action is good while another is bad – or effective and ineffective, or proper and improper" (103). Hume argues that cosmological didacticism, which needs to be neither positive nor negative, allows people "to escape from their culture's imperfect systems of authority supposedly based on reason, and lets them experience other possibilities for ordering experience, whether religious or utopian" (123). However, if didactic literature is designed to teach a specific knowledge in a determined and uncompromising way, when the reader is urged to consider further possibilities, to think for himself/herself, then two questions arise. Is a literary work didactic in an interactive and unconventional way? Does it teach the reader that he/she can question previous teachings?

The overwhelming dominance of fate/predestination so typical of fantasy genre confirms the presence of cosmological didacticism in Pullman's trilogy. In connection with this, the problem of interpreting didactic literature as "bad" arises. As didactic literature cannot afford serious ambiguity in its message "without undercutting its own aims," it seems over-simplified with often thin characters: "were they complex, they would reintroduce ambiguity and might distract us from the ideas" (Hume 123). According to Hugh Rayment-Pickard, this is exactly the problem with the main characters of HDM in Pullman's moral space: "[t]he whole story has the feeling of a tableau" (74).

In theory, the Post-Modern cosmological didacticism of HDM (realised in connectedness, unities and re-unions consisting of a framework to one's critical self-reflections), which gives a sense of meaning and shapes values through offering a goal, is closest to the so-called *cosmological mysticism*. It has been present in the history of Western philosophy since the Middle Ages. Its great representatives (Baruch Spinoza, William Blake and Johann Wolfgang von Goethe) disseminated the view that "by identifying the structures and the aims of the cosmos, man can find meaning in the often seemingly meaningless and threatening universe, in case he does not forget the connection of humility and ethical commitment toward the others" ("Misztika [Mysticism]" *Britannica Hungarica…*, n.p.).

Although readers of HDM are unlikely to take its answers about the 'big' questions of life serious (because of the willing suspension of disbelief), HDM still has the chance of giving meaning and values to its readers by functioning as the *literature of hope*. Hope means "what is possible but not yet fully realized" (Slater in Eliade *ER*, Vol. 6, 461), "the essence of

religion" (459). To be religious, religious thought "must be characterized by the hope that present vicissitudes will be overcome, that faith will be vindicated, and that the group, if not the individual, will realize a joy or bliss of which we now experience only passing intimations" (459-460). The hope of ultimate transformation (whose subject is the self) gives religious significance to each story (460). Virtually, Christianity attempts to be a religion of redemption and hope: "Christianity presents itself as the message of how, through Christ, reconciliation has been achieved between the holiness of God and the sin of a fallen humanity" (Pelikan "Christianity" in Eliade *ER* Vol. 3, 356). In Christian thought, hope is a theological virtue, along with faith and love: "[i]t is theological, since the gift of the possibility comes from God, and a virtue, since the gift may be refused" (Slater in Eliade *ER*, Vol. 6, 461). Of Faith (as present), Hope (as future), and Charity (a liaison between present and future, as if beyond time), Hope seems to be the most intensive of the three theological virtues in Pullman's trilogy. For this reason, *HDM* shines as the literature of humanistic Hope in ourselves alone, Hope as self-confidence that the reader can find his/her own way, without transcendence (we can only rely on each other), in a better future based on the duty of building the Republic of Heaven. This is the didactic way HDM shows to its readers in a prescriptive way, without much place for free will, own choice, consideration of possibilities.

The cosmological didacticism of HDM primarily speaks to adolescents and young adults. The literary works by Pullman (and Tolkien and Rowling) appeal to adolescents, as all three of them begin with childhood, and they move on to adulthood (Wrigley 3). Pullman had the intention of reaching *everyone*: the best way to do that was "to write for children, and hope that they'd tell their parents… which is what happened" (qtd. in Bertodano n.p.). In the end, however, he has created "a cross-age classic trilogy" (Lenz in Lenz and Scott 1). Adolescents and young adults who are likely to experience the gradual loss of a sense of security either on an individual or a communal level need hope the most. Besides of religious fundamentalism, the most threatening dangers at the beginning of the third millennium are "the degradation of the environment, the increasing undemocratic power of the great corporations, the continuing threats to peace in regions full of decaying nuclear weapons" (qtd. in Tucker 124). At the dawn of the twenty-first century, Man has to face with the consequences of his hubris, and re-learn humility to be able to find his proper place in the Cosmos (and to survive an approaching climate change).

Young audience is more receptive to an artwork than a scientific report. Due to the growing public awareness of issues like global warming, pollution, overdevelopment, deforestation and endangered species, children are increasingly involved in actively taking

responsibility for the future of the Earth. Those adolescents and young adults, who are watching the world around themselves with increasing concern, feel to be capable of changing their future. Accordingly, a growing number of young people (students) in and outside Europe are protesting against the indifference of governments and politicians towards climate change and the survival of mankind on the Earth.[155] Some of them are even involved in international movements fighting for a future on a liveable Earth.[156] Because the reception of the so-called "environmentally themed literature" for young people is rather problematic,[157] literary fictions furtively or even indirectly implying environmentalism are supposed to be more successful for child and adult readers alike.

Fantasy fiction seems to be an appropriate literary genre for passing on *green* messages because of its high popularity among the youth and its dependence on reality.[158] Dr. Seuss's children's book, *The Lorax* (1971), is the best known example of environmental fantasy fiction (Abate 54). Tolkien successfully included some environmental ethos into the LOTR, which is identified with the essence of Neo-Paganism (Partridge *RW*, *Vol. II*, 67). *HDM* renders the intention of calling its readers' attention to how things should *not* be in reality (even what should be done instead, for example the *mulefa*'s life-style) without the usual tropes, stereotypes and fetishes of mothering, otherness and escapism associated with Nature. Pullman firmly believes that "our main duty, if we have a duty, is to increase the amount of consciousness in the universe, which means by teaching, by writing, thinking, talking, by being good, by being kind, there're all ways of increasing the amount of consciousness in the universe" (App.). This is what HDM does. According to Millicent Lenz, this trilogy does not only have the potential to change people's consciousness, but it also gives people "the possibility to transform themselves and the world they inhabit" (in Lenz and Scott 1).

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[155] For more, see Milan Schreuer, Elian Peltier, and Christopher F. Schuetze, "Teenagers Emerge as a Force in Climate Protests across Europe," *The New York Times*, 31 January 2019, https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/31/world/europe/climate-change-protests-students.html.

[156] A notable example is Greta Thunberg from Sweden, see David Crouch, "The Swedish 15-year-old who's cutting class to fight the climate crisis," *The Guardian*, 1 September 2018, https://www.theguardian.com/science/2018/sep/01/swedish-15-year-old-cutting-class-to-fight-the-climate-crisis.

[157] Michelle Ann Abate finds that its messages on nature as a repository of the problems of the adult world contribute to the controversial status and often resistant readership of these books (57).

[158] According to Peter Hunt, fantasy identified with "things as they cannot be" often manifests "a very direct critique of things as they are, even if not directly intended to be so" (Hunt in Hunt and Lenz 8).

IV.3. Preference of the Community to the Individual

This chapter argues that because of the principle of holism, Pullman cannot avoid repeating the conventions of Tolkien's fantasy traditions about the importance of the community to the detriment of the individual.

The forced parting of Will and Lyra demonstrates Pullman's implicit message that the individual should always sacrifice him/herself for the sake of his community. In extreme cases, however, this message may question, even subvert, the attractiveness or trustworthiness of Pullman's life-loving propaganda. The execution of the Republic of Heaven means untenable requirements. The old myth of the Fall cannot be secularised without problems: the effect of retaining the sequence of the elements during the transformation of their contents destabilizes the narrative of *HDM* (Gooderham 171-172). The binary intensification of the headier the felicities, the more awful the alienation in the rewriting exposes a deep strain of personal alienation in the text as a whole, which faithfully reflects the contemporary focus on the individual's career (ibid). At the end of Pullman's story, the situations of Lyra and Will are "certainly very far from the promise of libidinal social transformation implied by the *felix culpa* as type and model for all personal relationships" (172). Furthermore, the discovery of Lyra and Will on their return to their respective worlds that they do not have a home is also very ironical in a narrative emphasizing the importance of living in one's place: Lyra has to leave Jordan College, and Will's ill mother needs to be taken into care. As the two protagonists experience their fate as "an extreme physical force that cannot be resisted,"[159] it is paradoxical that the acts of growing up and gaining experience seem to "enforce pain and renunciation" (Squires 89). It is the narrative logic and the lesson about sacrifice in adulthood that separate Lyra and Will (112-113). By depicting how hard life can be Pullman's trilogy is cruelly realistic to an idealist reader who might be a typical adolescent prone to daydream.

As the Republic of Heaven is in fact expected to be realized in a distant future, this metaphor implies a desire for utopia.[160] And the seemingly utopian Republic of Heaven, as a religious concept, requires an ideal society in which there is no place for either the self or the individual. As the plot develops, individual interests in Pullman's mythopoeia gradually

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[159] It is Claire Squires' interpretation that for both Will and Lyra, "the narrative is a brutal force, a controlling agency and an authority more powerful than any of the other political or religious agencies within the trilogy" (89). Essentially, the choices Lyra and Will make are "always and inevitably ones external to themselves" (106).
[160] Meanwhile, the genre of HDM is less a utopian fiction than fantasy. The reason is utopian fiction "usually sticks closer to the realistic 'rules,' for the ideal society must be seen in relationship to the realistic present" (Mathews 5).

become insignificant, even undesirable: "[n]o one could [be able to build the Republic of Heaven] if they put themselves first" (AS 464). According to Károly Pintér, the fundamentals of religion are the subordination of the individual self to the collective interests of the community, and the follow-up of common goals. Religion as a force and tool for social creation is identical with an artificial civil religion for a desired international community. Pullman's descriptions of the Republic of Heaven suggest that it should be understood as an artificial civil religion. While religion is characterized by "I believe," artificial civil religion is characterized by "I give myself" which is desire for service, subordination, an escape from mortality.[161] In case of the Republic of Heaven, however, it is not (inner) desire but (extrinsic) obligation (remember Squires' identification of Pullman's narrative with a brutal force). The philosophy of *HDM* promulgates "an ethic of care and responsibility, where the communal good is favoured over individual gratification" (Jobling in Barfield and Cox 168). Although the sense of being unique seems naturally important to twentieth-twenty-first-century Westerners, this belief is exceptional: "[a]nthropologists suggest that in many primitive societies, life is communal and members achieve their fulfilment not by individuating themselves but by identifying with the traditions of their culture" (Hume 32). However, the concept of the Republic of Heaven, with its requirements of the individual to subordinate her/himself to the requisitions and standards of society, is rather universal in its structure. There has always been an ageless and universal political imperative to manage power, with contemporary examples such as fascism and communism. In the light of this, the dream of individualism and liberalism is also utopistic, even more than the formal social utopias.

The principle of holism seems to subvert the trilogy's raison d'être as the literature of hope in oneself. My Textual Analysis unfolds that the 'greatest' or 'biggest' unit is always more important than the smaller unit: the individual is less important than the family; the family is less important than society; society is less important than the nation (state); the nation (state) is less important than our planet. The trilogy's holistic principle seems to be identical with propaganda of self-sacrifice for the sake of the community, which totally disregards the individual (Lyra and Will are the most outstanding examples).[162] This principle

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[161] Károly Pintér's conference talk, entitled "Utopias as Civil Religious Communities," on the 12th Biennial Conference of the Hungarian Society for the Study of English, at the University of Debrecen (Hungary), on 30th January 2015.
[162] By giving priority to the community over the individual in HDM, Pullman contradicts himself in opposing totalitarianism, a "form of government that theoretically permits no individual freedom and that seeks to subordinate all aspects of the individual's life to the authority of the government" ("totalitarianism" n.p.). This kind of governmental regulations of every aspect of public and private life is, as Pullman lists, "the problem with Saudi Arabia, as it was with the Taliban's Afghanistan, with Calvin's Geneva, with the Inquisition's Spain…"

is close to an (increasingly global) ecologically conscious approach opposing further population growth and consumption, which probably came from the Judeo-Christian God's command: "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it" (Genesis 1:28). According to István Bart, "in the age of climate change, from the viewpoint of survival, the most important 'whole community' is neither a family, nor a village, nor a country; instead, it is the whole humanity" (n.p.). Since the formation of the modern capitalist economic system, this ecologically conscious approach has probably been unprecedented. However, from a cultural-historical viewpoint, we are witnessing the revival of an old worldview characteristic of premodern Europe (discussed by outstanding thinkers from Aristotle to Thomas Aquinas), indigenous peoples outside Europe, and contemporary alternative spiritualities in the West (for example Neo-Paganism) which the trilogy involves. In other words, HDM, which was written by a left-wing author and is mostly read in Western culture valorising individualism, seems to convey a disturbingly old-fashioned message about the inferiority/insignificance of the individual and the superiority of the community for the sake of survival. And this message may be discouraging to young/adolescent readers who are trying to find their self-esteem, (social and even cosmic) place and significance.

On the other hand, if institutional religion in HDM stands for the corruption of community, then consumerism may stand for the corruption of the individual. And in this case, the emphasis on the community in HDM may be a reminder to young readers of the unnecessity, even dangers of overconsumption. In fact, it has always been a corner stone of environmentalism.

The structural similarity of HDM to the Inklings' Christian fantasy tradition is based on the historical and political situation in Tolkien's life. The fictive worlds of Tolkien and Lewis bore witness to a general Post-War displacement of emphasis from the individual to the community. Kathryn Hume notes that while the function of traditional literature was the presentation of mythic patterns (in the first stage), while the function of realistic literature was observation (in the second stage); the third stage is characterized by "a quest for ways of giving a sense of meaning" (Hume 44). Writers and readers of the first half of the twentieth century had to face "the implicit void of meaninglessness" (43). By ignoring the void and its implications, some writers tried to write in essentially conventional, realistic veins (45). Tolkien, who was one of these writers, offers us a paradox:

(qtd. in Chattaway n.p.). Interestingly, Pullman accepts the fact that totalitarian regimes are not necessarily religious, but can also be atheist (for more, see Spanner).

the individual's private and personal life is insignificant, but he can achieve significance through commitment and dedication to a cause. As an answer to the problem of meaning in life, this has served well in the past. It is dangerous – causes vary in their worth and morality – but it has proven effective. (47)

With regards to Lyra's fate, this seems to be a (universal) solution Pullman also turns to in *HDM*. Besides of these, Colin Manlove argues that the structured fictional universe in the fantasies of Tolkien contains a desire for "a coherent, ordered and stable universe" (*Christian Fantasy* 210). In the period of the creation of the LOTR, "power-lust, the megalomaniac desire to subdue others or whole worlds to one's will" has been a recurrent feature in politics (212). And this epic and social aspect tends to make modern Christian fantasy "a total vision of a Christ-based world rather than the more provincial form of an individual experience" (ibid). Consequently, twentieth-century fantasy was more ecological than moral, it was concerned with "the preservation of a world at least as much as the transformation of an individual" (ibid). The reason for the fullness of twentieth-century Christian and other fantasy with a sense of crisis is "[w]here there is continual struggle to preserve and protect, where there is the recurrent sense that one individual (…) can ruin a whole world, the feeling of frailty becomes marked" (212-213). Even though individualism (and consumerism) has significantly grown since Tolkien's life time, there is still a remarkable parallel between the time when Tolkien wrote LOTR and the time when Pullman wrote HDM (it is detailed in the previous subchapter).

After all, it seems as if Pullman's trilogy was unable to break out of the restrictions of its genre. The persisting preference of the community at the expense of the individual remains one characteristic of fantasy genre, even if this genre is not wholly Christian any more. In spite of Pullman's efforts, and in the ligh of the implicit theme of the trilogy (restoration and re-union), HDM arguably follows the majority of Tolkien's and John Clute's narrative patterns of quest-fantasy genre (presence of happy ending at the communal level, absence of happy ending at the individual level).

Interestingly, Post-Modernism does not support the trilogy's functioning as the literature of hope, either. In Post-Modern thought, there are no metanarratives, "only local narratives or perspectives held by individuals and small groups, and these narratives are all equally valid and true" (Ryan and Ryan n.p.). The problem is Post-Modernism is "a self-refuting worldview" (ibid). Pullman claims to be against the certainty of having 'the truth' which is "far too large and complex. Nobody has [it]" (qtd. in Weinberg n.p.). Accordingly, one point of HDM is the denial of "the existence of God, objective truth, and the validity of metanarratives" (Ryan and Ryan n.p.). However, Pullman creates his own metanarrative in

HDM because, he said, "we all need some sort of myth… some sort of overarching narrative to live by. For hundreds of years in the West, this need was fulfilled by the Christian story, but that is now either dead or dying" (qtd. in Ezard n.p.). He also requires us to believe in the truth of "his own assertions about the nature of reality" (Ryan and Ryan n.p.). In other words, Pullman's own desire to create a new mythology is in tension with any Post-Modern scepticism to grand narratives. What one can only do is to become conscious of the unavoidable grand narratives. (This unavoidability has been proven by New Historicism.)

Even though the principle of holism in HDM seems to be (disturbingly) close to religiousness, despite the anti-clerical and seemingly atheist nature of HDM, Philip Pullman did not innovate the genre of fantasy because of the principle of non-theistic holism with an ambition to re-unite. This principle revives the Romantic as well as re-enchanted yearning to a desired harmony in the past; enables HDM to serve as a (humanist) moral guide to its mainly young readers; and forces Pullman to repeat the conventions of Tolkien's fantasy traditions about the importance of the community to the detriment of the individual. Consequently, the principle of holism inseparably embeds HDM into Tolkien's religious fantasy tradition. Even if HDM does not innovate on the level of genre, it still innovates on the level of idea: by displacing romance into the direction of epic, Pullman gives the reader greater totality than Tolkien.

Moreover, Pullman also seems to be unsuccessful in subverting the Christian metanarrative by re-telling the myth of the Fall of Man. Questioning the existence of God is often advantageous to Christian religion. The word 'doubt' is not the opposite of the word 'belief,' but it rather signifies irresolution, perplexity (MacGregor "Doubt…" in Eliade *ER*, Vol. 4, 424), and also "a vascillation between the two opposites: unbelief and belief" (425). In other words, "[d]oubt is the attitude of mind proper to the sceptic, who is by no means necessarily an unbeliever any more than a believer" (ibid). Consequently, doubt is identified with "a profound expression of humility" (429). Moreover, religious tolerance is impossible without a willingness to doubt:

> a faith that is fundamentally intolerant of any expressions of religion other than its own merely reveals its lack of confidence and the trivial nature of its thrust. (…) Genuine religion is always full of wonder and therefore full of doubt, while irreligion is wonderless. (…) Such religion, shorn of doubt, lacking humility, and therefore loveless, surely reveals its own ignorance and depravity, for it expresses a mere narcissistic looking at oneself in a mirror rather than an outpouring of love to the source and ground of being, apart from which religion is indeed vain. (430)

This is exactly the attitude that Pullman has promoted (see Chapter II.1.). His retelling of the myth of the Fall is particularly beneficial to Christian faith itself: paradigm-shattering stories,

such as *HDM*, are "both a challenge to religious faith and, paradoxically, constitutive of it" (Gruner 279). The revitalization of Christian story serves to "uncover what may still be of value within" (ibid). In a like manner, by attacking Christianity through its own story in the Garden of Eden, Pullman gives at least this part of the Bible "an increased visibility that may otherwise have been lost on generations of younger readers" (Tucker 162). As it is detailed in the Introduction of my dissertation, Rayment-Pickard interprets HDM as a legitimate criticism of contemporary religious institutions.

In the light of these, it is not so surprising that HDM has also had a welcoming reception by some Christians. Pullman has given "new heat to debates about the place of religion in contemporary society" (Squires 101). His belief "in questioning faith rather than blindly following the leaders of any church" has been supported (Yuan 88). Christopher Hitchens, who is the leftist brother of Peter Hitchens, wrote a review, entitled "Oxford's Rebel Angel," in praise of Pullman's religious radicalism. One of the most unlikely advocates of Pullman's series is Rowan Williams, the former Archbishop of Canterbury (the spiritual head of the Anglican Church). He welcomes "purification by atheism," that faith needs to be "reminded regularly of the gods in which it should not believe" (Williams n.p.). Moreover, he recommended that all three books of HDM should be taught in schools as part of religious education ("Profile: The Devil" n.p.). In conclusion, virtually Pullman has made a great favour to Christianity itself with writing HDM so anti-Christian.

V. CONCLUSION

The objective of my dissertation was to prove that HDM is both a (re-)enchanted and a (re-)enchanting literary work of art. It fulfils our desire for enchantment by calling attention to the importance of imagination and belief in a secularised material reality because (either religious or irreligious) fantasizing helps us to seek and to find the meaning of existence. My research was backed up by the enchanted attitude of the trilogy's humanist author (Nietzschean, materialist, agnostic, and egalitarian) and the enchanted roots of Post-Modern fantasy genre (medievalism, Roman Catholicism, German fairy tales, quest myths).

The Textual Analysis demonstrated the first hypothesis of my dissertation: as the holistic principle permeates the mythopoetic structure of *HDM*, the primeval ambition to re-unite is the implicit theme of Pullman's trilogy. Because the mythopoeia of HDM functions according to a holistic principle in which each and every part is subordinated to the whole, the reader recognizes in Pullman's trilogy endeavours for balance; the ultimate unity of all things; the abolition of any distinction between subject and object, animate and inanimate, the self and the universe. It turned out that while HDM as a Post-Modern novel builds on gaps, ambiguities, open endings, and ruptures, (re-)connection (represented by Dust, daemons, Republic of Heaven, couples of Lyra and William, Mrs. Coulter and Lord Asriel) predominantly supports the outcome/implicit message of the plot; disconnection (made by churches, the subtle knife, the Abyss and Specters) does not. Disconnection, which offers catharsis for the reader by the combination of fear/pity/fascination, does not fit the trilogy's basic plot pattern focusing on reconnection and union. The temporariness of disconnection means that in the end all disconnection is subordinated to the holistic principle of re-connection (for example, in the spirit of re-union, it is left to the reader's imagination whether after their death the atoms of Lyra and William will re-join, as a possibility of a happy ending realized in the future). As the disconnection of what belong to each other causes all problems, what have always belonged to each other need to be re-connected sooner or later.

The Textual Analysis also proved the second hypothesis of my dissertation: HDM unintentionally criticises alternative spiritual movements (occulture) with its ambition to re-unite. While holistic thinking is the common point between HDM and alternative spiritualities, there are ambivalent interfaces. The principle of holism prevailing in HDM is incompatible with the ideology of New Age and Satanist movements which centre on the self

as separated/isolated from the dogmatic expectations of the community. For example, the Satan-characters of Mrs. Coulter and Lord Asriel, who are represented as self-centred rebellious figures above society, sacrifice themselves in their fight with Metatron for the sake of (cosmic and trans-world) community in the end. At the same time, the principle of holism prevailing in HDM is compatible with Neo-Paganism because of the common similarities based on a criticism of institutional religion, a linkage to nature, and a preference to the community. HDM presents itself not only as an anti-Christian religious fantasy (because of Pullman's negative portrayal of a false god, the hypocrite clergy and their believers), but also as a pre-Christian one (because of the parallel between HDM and Pre-Modern Paganism's interpretation of nature, because of the identity of Dust with Pantheism teaching about the omnipresence of God in all living and non-living entities, and the absence of a dividing line between creator and creatures). By pursuing unity/oneness on every thematic and structural level, Pullman's trilogy is a social critical statement on the fashionable self-centred occultural trends formulated in fictional terms. As a religious fantasy, HDM problematizes the questions of belief/faith by reflecting and commenting on re-enchantment itself. My interpretation of HDM as a criticism of alternative religious movements enters into a dialogue with the seminal research findings of Donna Freitas, Hugh Rayment-Pickard, Arthur Bradley and Andrew Tate, and enriches the scope of Pullman-studies. Both the ecocritical and the thanatological analyses of Pullman's texts in my dissertation strive to fill in a gap in the Pullman-studies, and call attention to the contemporary relevance of the HDM on the basis of the observations made by Rosemary Jackson and Peter Hunt about fantasy literature's reflection on current issues and problems in reality.

The Genre Analysis confirmed the third hypothesis of my dissertation: HDM repeats the conventions of the genre of religious fantasy due to the principle of holism. Although an undeniably eternal longing for wholeness, fullness, completeness, and totality is implicit in HDM, it is undeniably lurking there as a leitmotif. Among the trilogy's characters, there is no exception to the principle of holism according to which under no circumstances can a smaller unit be as important as the greater unit. (Even the most individualistic Satanic figures will eventually submit themselves to the interest of the community that is identical with the principle of holism. However, the prime example of self-sacrifice is the pair of Lyra and William.) In other words, unity is always strength, the interests of the individual should always be subordinated to the interests of the community – or rather, the individual and the community cannot succeed without each other (soul and body/immanence and transcendence/man and the divine, man and woman, man and nature). As a matter of fact,

HDM's attitude to Unity has an ambiguous nature: Unity is both desired (due to the motivation of holistic universalism, especially after death) and feared (due to the motivation of ruthless power politics and the manipulation of people represented by the Church). Accordingly, the principle of holism manifests Pullman's pedagogical model: unity and oneness are not based on fellowship with particular institutions, but on cosmological interconnections. As the trilogy's didactic, moralizing, pedagogical suggestion for the communal empowerment by unity is turning out to be more and more desirable in the shadow of an impending climate disaster in the readers' reality (a climate crisis is foreshadowed in HDM because of the catastrophic consequences of disrupting the detachment of different worlds), it becomes necessary that Pullman's readership, which mainly consists of adolescents and young adults, respond particularly sensitively to this message of the novels. By embodying Romantic and re-enchanted longing for an idealised past (primarily in the representation of the *mulefa* people), by providing moral guidance with Post-Modern cosmological didacticism, by advertising the strength of the community, HDM did not simply recycle former fantasy traditions; it is a deeply conventional fantasy fiction in a Tolkienesque sense (significance of comradeship, co-operation for the sake of community). In this way, my research contradicts to the interpretation of Millicent Lenz, Burton Hatlen, and Karen Patricia Smith about Pullman as a kind of innovator of fantasy genre with HDM. In spite of these results, HDM is still an outstanding piece of religious fantasy tradition with a bricolage/patchwork of different belief systems invested with updated meaning. The both re-enchanting and re-enchanted HDM has the potential of functioning as the literature of hope by arguing for beneficial potential of belief, for capacity to change your world by recognising your connection with community, and by encouraging empowerment by altruism, empathy, connectivity. However, it is not like L. Ron Hubbard's science fiction novels which have successfully contributed to the birth of a cult or a new religious worldview/a new form of religiousness (namely, sci-fi based scientology).

The third hypothesis of my dissertation suggests that despite the revolutionary intent (atheism/agnosticism, anti-clericalism, and alternative spiritualities) commonly attributed to the trilogy, HDM is eventually repeating the traditionalist formula of high fantasy. However, this does not decrease the literary values of HDM – especially not its multi-layered meaning. It is truly doubtful whether a literary work is able to reform the fantasy genre without ceasing to be a fantasy. The point is, despite Pullman's failed efforts to distance HDM from Tolkien's fantasy tradition (because of his harsh criticism of Tolkien for lacking psychological depth, and of C. S. Lewis' programmatic religious propaganda and thanatological obsession), the

humanism Pullman intended to offer in place of Christianity is convincing enough both to build a fictional reality upon and to exercise impact on readers by reinforcing humanistic value. In the (Post-)Nietzschean Godless universe of HDM, where Man is the beginning and the end, he has the chance of aspiring high: yet, instead of self-centredness, it is his self-sacrifice for the sake of others that elevates him to the place left empty by God. This desirable, even required, aspiration for (self-)sacrifice – as the result of becoming one with the community/universe – is far from hubris. Besides of these, the reader is invited to think of a paradox in connection with HDM as the humanistic literature of hope. No one can get rid of the idea of the self for the sake of the community: while you should ameliorate community by forgetting about yourself, you have to believe in yourself to be able to ameliorate community.

APPENDIX: AN INTERVIEW WITH PHILIP PULLMAN

The following, slightly edited tape script is the result of Zsuzsanna Tóth's nearly 140-minutes long interview with Philip Pullman. After an exchange of a few emails since July 2014, the conversation took place from 3 p.m. to almost 6 p.m., on a rainy Monday (1st June 2015), in The Eagle & Child Pub (49 St. Giles, Oxford, Oxfordshire, United Kingdom). Daniel Nyikos (at the University of Szeged) checked the accuracy of the written text.

Tóth: I'll put it [the dictaphone] closer to you…
Pullman: Yeah, that's fine.
T: … because what you will say…
P: Yeah.
T: … is more important than what I'll ask. Okay. I have my notes.
P: Yeah.
T: Well, I should have typed my questions but I didn't have enough time but I'm not wasting water because…
P: [Laughing]
T: Not water, *paper*. I mean I prefer hand-writing when it's possible, and I usually use the other side [of any piece of paper, too].
P: That's good. I do, I always write by hand.
T: I have [collected] [as many] quotations from you [as possible] because I didn't want to raise the same questions…
P: Sure.
T: … that have been asked several times.
P: I'll try [to] answer everything that you ask.
T: Okay. So, altogether I have almost eighty questions, and… Do you have enough time…?
P: I'll try. Let's see.
T: And some of these questions are not really questions, but… I have some impressions on your work, and I just would like to ask your opinion…
P: Sure.
T: … about these questions.
P: Okay, that's fine.
T: Just some words about me. I'm a third-year Ph.D. student…
P: Mmhmm.
T: … and I'm majoring in English Literature and Culture, and not Religious Studies, so… And also I'm not a believer, but I am interested in religions, and that's why I'm here. And I've divided my questions into two groups:…
P: Mmhmm.
T: … discourses about *His Dark Materials*, and writing in general. And the second group is about the fictional world of *His Dark Materials*.
P: Okay.
T: Can we start with the first group?
P: Yes. By all means. I would like to.
T: First question… Reading through most of the interviews made with you, I would like to ask you that do you have a consciously built self-representation? That, I mean, do you plan in advance what you will answer to some issues?
P: No, I try *not to* plan. Because I found over many-many years of writing that I write *better*, it's more *fun*, it's more *interesting*, when I don't know what's gonna happen next, when I don't know what's gonna come up in the course of writing a story. So I prefer just to start right here, as if I'm beginning walking to the dark.
T: Mmhmm.
P: And I find always that something interesting there or I see something where I wouldn't expect it. And if it's interesting, I follow it and see where it takes me. When I first began to write novels in my very early twenties, I did make the mistake of making a plan. I thought one had to make a plan. It's obvious. You're doing a big thing, you have to make a plan. So I spent six months making a very long, careful plan of a novel I was going to write. In the end I was so bored I just threw away and wrote another novel, a different novel altogether. Ever since that I have never had a … never written… never had a plan.
T: I meant the question that when you are *asked*, like in this situation…

P: Yeah.

T: … about any issues, political issues, or about literature, or education, and in these cases, do you have to or should you plan in advance what to answer to these questions?

P: Again no.

T: Mmhmm.

P: Because I prefer to be spontaneous, and I hope if I can answer spontaneously, I will probably tell the truth, more likely to tell the truth, than if I prepared a series of answers beforehand. Besides, a conversation, the interview, the discussion can develop in different directions…

T: Hmmm.

P: …and I don't want to shut those all before we begin.

T: I see. Have you ever said anything that you later minded?

P: [Laughing]

T: That 'Oh, I shouldn't have said it'?

P: [Laugh.] Yeah, once I said, in answer to a question about belief in God, I think I said there is no evidence; there is no evidence to the existence of God. And the interviewer said, "Well, what sort of evidence would satisfy you?" And I said, "Scientific evidence is the only thing that makes any difference. It's the only one that matters." I wish I haven't said that, now. 'Cause I don't believe it is the only one that matters. There are other kinds of evidence as well.

T: Mmhmm.

P: I mean there's evidence of, of experience, spontaneous experience, there's evidence from one's emotions and feelings, from the testimony of people who are not one's self but who seem to be reliable. There's all sorts of evidence of things not just purely scientific evidence.

T: I see, thank you. Can I have the next question?

P: Mmhmm.

T: The following question is that… In *His Dark Materials* you have a very strong criticism of organized religion, and… While you were working on *His Dark Materials*, while you were writing it, did you have a thought that you yourself censored or omitted later, because you found it too rude or too harsh?

P: Excellent and interesting question. No, I don't think I did. As I went through the book, as the story developed, and I saw what Lyra was fighting, I became more and more determined to criticize it as strongly as I could.

T: Mmhmm.

P: And I don't think there's anything I was holding back or… No, no.

T: Okay. There are many similarities between you and William Blake. One of them is both of you see Jesus as the embodiment of every virtue, and both of you define God, the Father as a tyrant and the oppressor. And my next question is concerned with this statement as I read on the Wikipedia that in 2010 you along with others signed an open letter against the visit of Pope Benedict XVI.

P: That's right. Yeah.

T: And now there is another pope, since 2013, Pope Francis, who has become famous for his humility, his concern for the poor, and yet, he says that, let me quote him, "It is absurd to say you follow Jesus Christ but reject the Church." And what is your opinion about this pope?

P: Well, I was critical of the visit of Benedict, not because it was Benedict, not because it was a pope, I don't mind popes coming to this country. But I don't think we should pay for it.

T: I see.

P: If they want to come, they should pay their own way. But he was a guest of this country and I thought, well, we don't need to do that.

T: I didn't think of that.

P: No, that's all right, it wasn't very clear in the articles that came out. As far as Pope Francis is concerned, he seems to be a different kind of man altogether. As you say, a much more humble man, a much more…erm… much less interested in the splendour and the grandeur and the wealth of the Church, and more concerned with the poor. And this is a good thing.

T: Mmhmm. Do you think…?

P: I'm sure he has several points on which I would disagree with him, but he seems to me like a good man.

T: Do you think that he will bring or establish new reforms inside the Church, the clerical hierarchy, for instance?

P: Well, he has, I think he says he'd like to, but the clerical hierarchy of the Church has had two thousand years to become extremely strong…

T: Mmhmm.

P: …extremely resistant to any change that diminishes their power and their wealth and their glory. So I think he's got a struggle on his hands. It won't be easy for him.

T: Well, the context of my thesis, I mean my researches, would be two social processes, disenchantment and re-enchantment.

P: [Expressing approval]

T: I don't know whether you heard about these two ones?

P: Mm-mm.

T: Disenchantment is connected to Max Weber, he was a sociologist, and re-enchantment is rather connected to Christopher Partridge, he is an English or an American scholar, I'm not sure.

P: Hmmm.

T: And he claimed that religious decline is only temporary because when a religious organization, large religious institution becomes stronger and stronger, and they fail to meet the spiritual needs of their followers…

P: Mmhmm.

T: …and for this reason people will be disappointed, and they turn to other religious organization[s], I mean religious sects or cults, and these cults and sects later gradually become institutionalized, stronger, and then people turn away from them, again.

P: Right.

T: And, in this way, any apparent disappearance of religion is just illusory. So…

P: Do you say Christopher Partridge? [Writing.]

T: Yes, Christopher Partridge.

P: Okay. That's very interesting.

T: He has very interesting theories, yes. And my next question would be, well, that now in contemporary England, in the United Kingdom, [would] you say that Christian organized religion, I mean the Anglican Church, or the Catholic Church, becomes less and less significant?

P: I think the influence of the Catholic Church is becoming less powerful than it was. Not only in Britain, but also in Ireland. Particularly because of the issue of child abuse, by… sexual abuse by Catholic priests, which has caused a great scandal, a *huge* scandal, and the Church is much less respected than it was. A sign of it you see in a recent vote that Ireland had in favour of same-sex marriage, which would have been *impossible* to imagine only ten years ago. But things have changed so much that the influence of the Catholic Church has become less and less important.

T: But, well… the Catholic Church and the Anglican Church will *never* disappear. Don't you think?

P: I don't think they will ever disappear. One reason is that they do, at their best, what religion has always done; I suppose they provide comfort and consolation for people in times of trouble, they provide a sort of series of rites of passage, you know, staging posts in life: baptism, marriage, death, funeral, and so on. And the Church will always do that sort of thing. Nothing has replaced it yet and I can't see it being replaced for a long time.

T: Okay. Thank you.

P: The problem, I mean you might have a question about something, the problem with the Church is not what it believes, the problem with the Church when it gets its hands on political power.

T: Hmmm.

P: That's the problem.

T: Yes. Very early Dante had the same problem with the Catholic Church.

P: Dante. [Laughing]

T: Yeah. Okay. You emphasize the importance of the religious impulse, many-many times, that a sense of awe and mystery, and the urge to find the meaning and the purpose in your [our] life. And the sense of moral kinship with other human beings.

P: Hmmm.

T: And, do you say it's a universal human feeling [that] everyone has?

P: Well, not everyone but in every society. In every human society we know throughout history there has been a sense of wondering at these big questions: where do we come from, who created us, why are there stars in the sky, what happen when we die, things like that. I think that these are all religious questions that they'll always been there. The prob—the difficulty comes when somebody, some organization, like the Catholic Church, or like Islam, says, "We know what the answer is and we'll tell you the answer. If you don't believe the answer, we'll kill you." That's a problem.

T: Yes. That's totalitarianism and fundamentalism.

P: Totalitarianism, exactly.

T: Yeah. Well, there is a literary term, the so-called 'sublime,' and would you identify this religious impulse with [the] sublime?

P: To a certain extent, yes. The presence of the sublime is very important in the work of William Blake, whom you've mentioned before, and also in the English Romantic poets, such as William Wordsworth, and, indeed, Coleridge and Keats, other English poets. It's a sense of wonder that can find its expression in organized religion, or it can find its expression in the so-called 'Pantheism,' so the belief that nature itself is divine. So the two things have similar origins, but they don't necessarily end up in the same place.

T: Okay. So there is a view, a sort of statement that this religious energy may intensify as physical power declines…

P: Yeah.

T: … for instance in illness or when one grows old. Do you agree with this view?

P: Many-many things of human origin end up by becoming organized… and you mentioned Max Weber. It's rather a sociological understanding that something can begin as an impulse of somebody's mind or heart or brain or something and end up being an organization with hierarchy, authority… and all apparatus of punishment, and criminal… all that sort of stuff. So, whether it takes that turn or not, depends, I don't know, depends on chance as much as anything else, I suppose… If the individual who feels it… is a great poet or a great painter or a great musician, it will probably find expression in those forms. If they're not especially gifted in the arts, but they are in social organization, like Saint Paul…

T: Mmhmm.

P: A superb manager and administrator of organization, Saint Paul. So once he was writing his letters to the new churches in the Middle East, he described how they should be run, and how they should be organized, and who should belong and who should not belong and all that sort of stuff. So… It was thanks to the administrative genius of Saint Paul that the Christian Church is as it is. If Saint Paul instead had been a musician or a poet, it would be very different.

T: Right. Do you think that people need a little every-day magic in the form of superstition?

P: Yes. I do. I am very superstitious in spite of being very rational about things, yes, I am superstitious. I know it's absurd but I think it's… it is something that helps us with things that aren't entirely predictable. People who have *risky* occupations, sailors, actors, are very superstitious quite often. You don't know what storms the ocean is gonna bring so you don't whistle on a ship because it's very bad luck.

T: Mmhmm.

P: You don't know how the audience is gonna behave tonight so you wish your fellow actors "Good luck!" before you go on the stage, but you mustn't say "Good luck!" you say "Break a leg!"

T: [Laughing] Yeah.

P: Things like that. I see it in myself, I see it in other people, and I think there's absolutely nothing wrong with it.

T: Is there any particular superstition that you believe in?

P: Yeah. I have one superstition about my books (…) while I'm using this pen. When I write my books.

T: Mmhmm.

P: Why? Because it's a *lucky* pen.

T: I see.

P: Why is it a lucky pen? I don't know. It's worked before, it must work again.

T: Do you know that superstition or that habit that when you would like to do something, and you are talking about *it* to someone, and you know before this something has done, and you do this? [Knocking under the table]

P: I see.

T: This is my superstition… [Laughing] Yes.

P: Well, a lot of people have superstitions. Do you know the story about the physicist… What was the name? Niels Bohr?

T: No, sorry.

P: One of the great figures of quantum physics in the early twentieth century. He had a horseshoe nailed up over outside his laboratory. And somebody said, "Surely you don't believe in that?," and he said "No, I don't believe in it, but they tell me it works whether you believe in it or not." So, I think that's right.

T: Okay. You have been asked several times about writing a story and inspiration. Once you said a very-very interesting definition of how you are inspired, and in a completely mystical terms. And can I read it aloud?

P: Yes, please.

T: "As I write, I find myself drifting into a sort of *Platonism*, as if the story is there already like a pure form in some gaseous elsewhere." So, someone has the impression that there is this sense of obligation, a 'should' that you cannot escape from…

P: Hmmm. Yeah.

T: … and the author's task seems to bring the story into the world, into the surface, and to give it flesh, and so the teller is subordinate to the tale. So, given that you are a materialist, it seems to be a little bit strange.

P: Well, yeah, I'm a materialist, but matter is more mysterious than we think.

T: Mmhmm.

P: And matter is *conscious*, for example.

T: Yes.

P: We know that matter is conscious because I'm made of matter and I'm conscious. And the same is true of you. And that being the case, why should we think that my pen is not conscious, for example? My pen has done a lot of work, and it has been in my hand while I've been writing lots of things.

T: Yeah. [Laughing]

P: Now this is maybe, this is where it becomes a little fanciful. But… I am superstitious, I do accept things like that, you know, the word 'enchantment' came up earlier on, didn't that?

T: Yeah.

P: To me the world, I don't think the world was ever disenchanted. It still is enchanted. So I'm quite happy with that sort of thing. I'm quite happy to be thought a mystic or whatever it is.

T: Hmmm. Yes, so… in this Platonic concept, there is a kind of phenomena called 'illumination' or 'epiphany,' and would you define this sort of Platonism, while you are writing, as epiphany?

P: An epiphany is a sudden realization of something…

T: Mmhmm.

P: Yeah. Well, the Platonism that I am conscious of when I write is a little slower than that. Sometimes, though, after you've been thinking about a problem for a long time: "How does she get from here to there? What is it, why does she go there? What's it making her go there? I want her to be there, but I can't… she doesn't seem to want it. What is it?" I mean, you think about it and you write down various suggestions and you go for a walk and you come to the pub and you have a drink and everything…. And *eventually*, when you're sitting in your chair, and you suddenly: "Oh, yes, that's the reason, of course, she has to go there to find him! Why didn't I think of that before?" That feels like an epiphany.

T: Mmhmm.

P: But it's also the result of a lot of thinking and a lot of wondering, a lot of trying things out. But it often does come suddenly.

T: So the key to this epiphany is divine creative power.

P: Yeah. Things can come very soon, very easily, very quickly, or they can come after a lot—a long period of effort.

T: Mmhmm.

P: But the recognition when they do come is identical, I think. For example, the question of daemons in *His Dark Materials*. I couldn't get the story started until I realized that Lyra had a daemon. Whom she could talk to, and they could argue, and discuss things, and it was… It makes telling the story a lot easier.

T: Mmhmm.

P: But when I thought… and first all the daemons changed shape, adults' as well as children's. And then I wrote a chapter or so, I thought, "Well, what's the purpose of this? What are these daemons doing in the story? How they're helping?" And: "I don't know. They helped *me* write it, but they don't help the story at all." And suddenly, I realized, yes, they do, because children's daemons can change and adults' demons don't. That's… that was a real epiphany.

T: Mmhmm.

P: Of that sort.

T: I see.

P: But it had come because I'd been thinking about it and thinking about it and thinking about it.

T: Hmmm. I would like to ask some questions about daemons later…

P: Yeah.

T: … but now it came to my mind that did you know immediately that daemons have animal shape?

P: It had to have some short of shape because she could see him and talk to him. An animal shape seemed a good one. It seemed to fit. Well, there are a lot of ideas from shamanistic religions, you know, about the spirit animal…

T: Mmhmm.

P: … or totem animal, or that short of thing. It was very expressive, it expressed something about a person to know that their daemon was a snake. It didn't mean they were evil, I think, it just meant their nature was subtle and serpentine and…. So it was a very helpful idea in terms of (…) to stumble on.

T: Yes. Yeah, once you said in an interview that the shape of the daemon doesn't determine what kind of person you are, and…

P: Yeah.

T: … you can be a good snake-person or a bad-snake person…

P: Yeah, that's right.

T: … because what you did matter and not what your nature is.

P: Exactly. Yeah.

T: Okay. You mentioned earlier that it takes for you a long time to realize how the events comes one after the other…

P: Hmmm.

T: … and so do you have some kind of mental images that you have to work out? I mean you as an author work with words, but what is primary for you, the images or the words?

P: I would say it's the images. I have to say it's the images. I do see things clearly in my mind. I make little drawings sometimes, I draw on the back of the previous page, or I make a plan of the room of where the chairs

are or I draw a map of the city that they're in. And I try to answer a number of questions as I'm writing each scene in a story. For example, I ask myself, "Where are we?" How would anybody think where… know where… For example, if somebody came into this room, they'd see bottles, glasses on the table, they'd see a lot of stools, they'd see a lot of bottles…

T: Hmmm.

P: So they'd know that they were in a pub. So these are the things you have in a pub. How do they see these things, where is the light coming from, is it dark outside or is it just one little light, well, is there candle on the table?

T: Mmhmm.

P: And who is present, how many people are here, who would we see if we looked around, what do they look like? Questions like that are very important to me, and I try to…. That's what I like to find when I'm reading a story: a clear idea of what the scene looks like. So that's what I try and write into a story when I'm writing it.

T: Anyway, I love the imagery of *His Dark Materials*, and I mean there are so many descriptions and details, and when I'm reading the scenes, I see vivid colours… So it's beautiful.

P: You can do too much of it.

T: Yeah.

P: I can… you can put in too much. But I try and put the important details in, the ones that you wouldn't miss if you were there.

T: Mmhmm.

P: Ones that really make a difference.

T: Yeah, and have you ever been to Asia, to the Himalaya Mountains? I mean the beginning of the third book, *The Amber Spyglass*, starts with the description of...

P: Of the Himalayas, yeah.

T: Yes, and I can imagine that one [being] there, and I see…

P: Well…

T: It is as if you have been there.

P: Well, I'm glad it comes off like that because I've never been there. I don't like travelling very much, I'd much rather stay here at home. But there are kinds of books you can read, there are libraries that one can go to, these days, with Google, you know, one can see maps of everything. Pictures are already [available]. It's not hard to find out what places look like.

T: Hmmm. Okay. A lot of Greco-Roman and Judeo-Christian elements are recognizable in the trilogy. And I would like to ask the question [that] is there any other element, from other religious traditions? And I'm particularly interested in whether there is any Celtic influence in the trilogy. And…

P: Any of which?

T: Celtic. This. [Showing him the written word in my notes] Sorry, my pronunciation is also…

P: Oh, Celtic, yeah, Celtic. Not so much Celtic, but certainly Nordic.

T: Mmhmm.

P: When I was writing up the witches, for example, I read a lot of poetry from Siberia, from Northern Siberia. Hunting songs, magic spells, that sort of thing. And that was a great help to me. Celtic religion, I don't think so. But certainly the shamanistic religions of Northern Siberia.

T: Mmhmm. Because I had the impression that… how should I pronounce it? The Gallivespians…

P: Gallivespians, that's a French word.

T: Yeah, they seem to be, like faeries, who…

P: Well, sort of. But the word is: The word 'Galli,' from French 'Galli.'

T: Hmmm. Yes.

P: 'Vesp' because it's French for the word, 'wasp.' I think it's Italian, 'vespa,' too. So it's a French word, they're like French wasps. Not so much Celtic. [Laughing]

T: [Laughing] Okay, thank you. And also the daemons are… Do I pronounce it right?

P: It's daemons, yeah.

T: Daemons. So there is nothing Celtic.

P: No. If anything, probably Classical Greek…

T: Yeah.

P: … because Socrates refers to 'daimon.'

T: Hmmm. As a writer of children's and adolescents' literature, have you ever sensed a kind of division between high literature and popular literature?

P: There is that division. Nowadays we tend to think of it as a division between literary fiction and genre fiction. But it's less marked in books for children. Because that way I was lucky in writing this book, or having published as a children's book, first of all. Because children aren't bothered by whether it's a genre book or a literary book, they don't feel that this one is something that they ought to read and something else which is *beneath* their consideration. Adults do. So I was lucky to find an audience first among children, and then later

among adults, I said, and you've probably heard it in your literary quotations, because *His Dark Materials* has had far more readers, more adult readers, by being published as a children's book, than it would if it had been published as an adult book.

T: Mmhmm.

P: Because if it would have been published as an adult book, it would have been called a fantasy from the start, and most adults wouldn't read it because they're not interested in fantasy.

T: Yeah. So most critics and scholars claim that, you know, *His Dark Materials* is fantasy, and fantasy usually has been regarded as low literature or popular literature. Have you sensed it, or was it a kind of problem, ever?

P: It's come up, it's been mentioned. It doesn't worry me because after all, much great literature has been a fantasy. Dante, you mentioned Dante?

T: Yeah.

P: That's a fantasy. *Paradise Lost…*

T: Mmhmm.

P: … is a fantasy. And much of Shakespeare is fantastical. The great Social Realist novels of the eighteenth and nineteenth century, the English novels, the Russians, the French, were of course (…) Social Realist. Fantasy was not regarded as interesting or important then. But in 1865, I think it was, along came *Alice in Wonderland*, obviously a fantasy.

T: Mmhmm.

P: And clearly, obviously for children, too. So I think fantasy is a sort of drifted towards the children… the world of children's books. And, you know, people like him [pointing to a painting, probably representing Tolkien, hanging on the wall], and C.S. Lewis, found themselves writing the sort of books they wanted to write, which were fantasy stories, because they both loved fantasy; and found themselves, whether they wanted to or not, being read by children.

T: Okay. And what do you think, what will be your future place in literary history?

P: [Laughing] That's not for me.

T: [Laughing] Okay.

P: I haven't a clue. I don't have the faintest idea. I'm very happy to have published the first of these books twenty years ago, and to find that it's still in print, and still selling, and still being talked about. That's wonderful, I couldn't ask for any more than that. If I'm still being read in a hundred-years' time, wonderful, but I won't be around, I won't know.

T: You often emphasize the importance of stories and story-telling, and you seem to have a strong sense of mission. And, on the other hand, you say that you write for yourself. So, you are a story-teller, and would you define yourself as a prophet? In any sense of the word?

P: No, I don't think so. It's an interesting word there, an interesting idea because I write like J. G. Ballard. Do you know J. G. Ballard's work?

T: No.

P: English writer of what used to be called science fiction. I can think he died about ten years ago. He wrote a number of extraordinary books, and he is what I would call a prophet, not only in the sense that he wrote about things that were gonna happen in the future, may-come-true, but also in the sense of being a great… moralist. The Hebrew prophets, after all, criticised and denounced the societies of their day, from a moral point of view. "This is wrong, it's wrong to behave like that, you should worship God, you should not worship money," all that sort of thing. So there was a strong sense of a moral message coming through in his prophecy. I suppose I do feel that there's a moral strain in what I write…

T: Yeah.

P: But I would prefer to think of it in terms of a tombstone in a church, in the city where I was born, in Norwich. There's a little church yard there and a tombstone from 1801. And it says this, I remember it, word for word, "This stone is dedicated to the talents and virtues of Sophia Ann Goddard, who died in 1801, aged 25 years." She was evidently an actress. "The former"—that is, her talents—her talents "illuminated the"… wait a minute… that's right. Her talents "shone with lustre, in the great school of morals, the theatre, while the latter"—that is, her virtues—"illuminated the private circle of life with sentiment and so on." But the idea of the theatre as a school of morals, there's something that interested me a great deal. I love that little tombstone, and every time I go to Norwich, I buy a bunch of flowers and I put it on the tombstone for Sophia Ann Goddard, who was evidently a very good actress as well as a lovely person. Now a school is somewhere where you learn to do things, somewhere where you can try things out in safety. And if you're learning to make… if you're learning to be a carpenter, you learn how to manage your tools…

T: Mmhmm.

P: You learn how to lift safely, you know, the instructors is saying, "Don't hold the chisel like that, because you'll cut yourself. Hold it like this." Or, you know, "If you saw too hard, you'll damage the saw, go gently, take it easy." It's where you learn to do things like that. So a school of morals is somewhere where we can learn the importance of other people. Learn the importance of other people's feelings, learn how to empathize with them,

how to enter into their… enter imaginatively into their lives, and their sorrows, and their problems, and their joys, and their happiness and so on. So fiction in general, and theatre as well, does function, for me, as a school of morals. And in that sense, if that's what prophets talk about, then, in that sense, [laughing] I'm a prophet.

T: Mmhmm.

P: I am, actually.

T: I formed this question because there are very strong moral messages in the trilogy, and…

P: I hope they arise from the story, rather than from …

T: Hmmm.

P: … being put on outside.

T: Okay. The next question is connected to the previous one, that if I'm right that *His Dark Materials* belongs to didactic literature, would you refuse this idea?

P: I'm not so sure it's didactic. I'm trying to think of an example of a literature that is didactic.

T: Given that your story seems to teach, to entertain, and to delight the reader.

P: Yeah, well, I hope so.

T: All three are present.

P: That's like the slogan of the BBC. The BBC was first set up in about 1925. They said its mission is to educate… to inform, to educate, and to explain. That seems like quite a good thing to do.

T: Yeah. [Laughing]

P: I hope I can do that, anyway.

T: Okay. Anyway, reading a story in which the moral values are included is much more fun, than reading a sermon or, you know, anything that…

P: Oh, well, yeah. I agree with that. And it's....

T: Maybe children are more capable of understanding…

P: Well, what made Jesus a great moral teacher was not what he said we must always help other people, but that he told a story.

T: Yeah.

P: That's what we remember.

T: Hmmm. There is an English priest, Hugh Rayment-Pickard… Do you know him?

P: Hugh Rayment-Pickard, yes, he wrote a book about… Yeah.

T: Yes, yes. And he claimed that the ethics… I mean in your trilogy, if only human acts matter, and only human projects matter, then there is a kind of 'consequentialist ethics'…

P: Consequentialist ethics, I'm not sure what he means by that.

T: He claimed that there is a risk that human life can become an instrument of the higher purpose, and he objects Lord Asriel's act of sacrificing Roger, you know, in order to open a window…

P: Yeah.

T: … into another world.

P: Yeah.

T: And for me, it seems that Mr. Rayment-Pickard is not really… he doesn't like this act.

P: Well, it was a wicked thing to do. It was an evil act. But what makes characters interesting, for me, is very much they're evil and good.

T: Yes.

P: Mrs. Coulter is about as evil as I could make her, and yet, I found, on the way through, I was also having to write about her love for Lyra, which is tiny at the beginning but it grows and it grows and it grows… Finally, it consumes her completely, and I found that very interesting.

T: Hmmm.

P: It is not pure good and pure evil in any one, we hope. People aren't like that, it's a mixture of these things.

T: Yes, in the first book, Mrs. Coulter seems that, you know, she is… we know nothing about her.

P: Hmmm.

T: And she seems to be so mysterious, and even she has a kind of supernatural atmosphere, but later, throughout the second book, and later in the third book, she becomes human. And, at the same time, she loses her supernatural-ness.

P: Yeah.

T: And also she becomes almost predictable, but in this way human, and she became a likeable, sympathetic character…

P: Hmmm.

T: … in this way. Right. And if I remember well, you said, and also I have the impression from the trilogy, that you prefer predestination to free will, you know, (…). Is that that illusion of mine?

P: We all have to live as we're free.

T: Hmmm.

P: We have to live as if we have free will. If we started to believe that everything is predestined, life would become horrible.

T: Oh, yeah.

P: Unbearable. So whether or not, you know there have been various… psychological experiment carried out to decide whether we have free will or not, and a famous one is… They ask somebody to decide at particular moment, for example, that they will pick that up [Lifting up his glass], and immediately you go like this. Just sit there. And when you decide to pick it up… [Me reaching for the glass, he picking it up] and they have, you know, electrodes all over your brain, and they discovered that actually your arm begins to move *before* the thought comes into your head.

T: Wow! It's interesting.

P: So that you, really, we think we've got free will, but actually, your arm has already decided to do that before you thought of it. Now, that's a bit disturbing, to those of us who believe that free will is important.

T: Hmmm.

P: But it seems to be the case, and we've had to find an explanation for it. But these things for free will or predestination are big, important things, and I think they certainly belong to the class of things that can be examined in fictions.

T: Okay. Let's talk about the relationship between the artist and the critics. So it's definitely the critics who need the artists, I know you write criticism, and what I wonder whether artists need critics – or not.

P: I don't think I've ever learnt anything from a critic that helped me write.

T: Mmhmm.

P: Even great critics, like Harold Bloom, like… English critics like F. R. Leavis, even great critics have told me interesting things about other people's books. But nothing of that remains when I sit down to write. So I have learned nothing from critics.

T: Hmmm.

P: Nothing useful anyway. What purpose do they serve socially I don't… well… I suppose critics and newspaper-reviewers, which aren't quite the same thing, that reviewers read newspapers, write about new books that they come up, they bring into the attention of the public and the booksellers, so they serve a sort of purpose in the entire economic structure of book selling and publishing. But even that's changing now, with Internet book-selling, and the great change, the great revolution in publishing that's been brought about in the last what?... ten-fifteen years, we're living through the… a fourth huge revolution in story-telling. First was when we learnt to talk.

T: Hmmm.

P: …uncountable tens of thousands of years ago. When someone'd say, "Ugh."

T: [Laughing]

P: They could say 'lion,' or 'horse,' or something. That was the first one, we needed to talk. The second one was when we learnt to write things down. Making marks on anything: clay, or wax, or the walls on the cave when we learnt to make marks, to preserve the story, to be read later on. The third revolution was, of course, Gutenberg, printing, in the fifteenth century. And now, we're in the middle of the fourth, which is the digital revolution.

T: Mmhmm.

P: And it's allowing readers to respond immediately to a story in the same way by putting words onto a screen, by writing their own fiction in response to it, by talking to each other about it, you know, all the things that the Internet can do. And it's so big, it's so huge, that we don't know what the effect will be in the end. But that's the fourth revolution we are in the middle of now.

T: Mmhmm.

P: So maybe critics would become more important because immediately a book is out, instantly a hundred, two hundred thousand reviews can be placed on the line with (…). Maybe they will become less important because people will think "What, they're all online, so what? I don't agree. I'll read the books I want to read." We just don't know. It's too soon.

T: Okay. Next one… I think that the answer to my next question has already been answered that what do you think about the ways your works are analysed, or interpreted, or do you read such works?

P: No.

T: That's all? No.

P: No.

T: Mmhmm.

P: They send me the books. I've got about twenty books on the shelf, that are all about my work.

T: Aha.

P: It's no helpful.

T: Mmhmm.

P: It doesn't tell me anything that will help me to write another book. I think usually, well, "You haven't got that right," you know, "it's not what I was trying to do at all." Or else something, "Oh, yeah, that's good. Oh, yeah.

Oh, I'll take the credit for that. Yes, I was clever to say that, because it sounds good." But really I don't take much notice of them.

T: Okay. So you don't read them. Then the next question is useless, I mean that was there any study that pointed out what you had wanted to say as a message, or was there any interpretation that turned out to be a misinterpretation for you?

P: Well, there are those, yeah. Plenty of misinterpretations.

T: Mmhmm.

P: But I don't argue with them.

T: Mmhmm.

P: There's no point. If I wrote to everyone who I thought had read my book in the wrong way…. Well, what am I trying to do? Am I trying to change their mind? What for? It's much better to have a discussion going on among other people that can talk about it, let them say what they like, I don't mind. The greatest advice about reviewing and critics in general was "don't read it, measure it." So don't read it. "How long is it? Oh, it's a long one, that's good."

T: [Laughing] Ah, okay. And could you tell me an example of misinterpretation of *His Dark Materials*?

P: Yeah, there was a critic, a Catholic critic, who thought, that said that I was… giving a bad example because I was writing about children who scorned and abused their parents. They rejected everything, all of the wisdom of the old, they rejected it, and they didn't like old people, and they wanted to make a new world, and so on. Well, nothing could be further from the truth. I did feel like writing to that critic and pointing out the passage in… towards the end of *The Amber Spyglass*, when Will notices the old Gyptian, Father John Faa and Farder Coram, notices how they behave towards each other, and to Lyra, with courtesy, with generosity, and Will thinks "That would be a good way...

T: Hmmm.

P: … for me to behave when I'm an old man."

T: Yes.

P: I could have pointed that out to the critic. She got it completely wrong. Well, I said, "Bollocks." Stupid woman, she wouldn't have understood.

(…)

T: (…) [S]ome of [the Christian critics] claim that in reality you're Christian because you're writing about Christian values, so that… If I remember well, you said, your answer to these suppositions was that "No, values are human values, and Christians shouldn't say that these are mine or our values."

P: That's what I say. I still say that. Yeah.

T: Hmmm. Well, I think that I know your answer to this question that whether there is any study about *His Dark Materials* that changed your opinion. I think no.

P: No. Very simply.

T: Mmhmm. Okay. When I wrote my Master's thesis also about *His Dark Materials*, when I started searching for secondary literature for my study, I was surprised how many guide-like books were written about *His Dark Materials*. I wonder what the reason is for that. Do you agree that it might be that for some readers this trilogy is so complex theologically or philosophically that an average reader needs some guides?

P: Well, I've got two answers to that. One is that yes, it is quite a complex story, and it was thought to be helpful to provide a sort of guide for it. And the cynical answer would be publishers thought they could make money by selling it. So.

T: Mmhmm. Yes.

P: So that's a mission described because they could see the numbers of copies of my books being sold and thought, "Well. You know, we could make… we can sell…

T: Hmmm.

P: … two thousand, maybe three thousand copies of a book about it."

T: Yeah.

P: A lot of publishing decisions are financial ones.

T: Hmmm. I mean, studies are, for me, studies are those books that *interpret* a literary work of art. But guide-like books, in my definition, are those books that simply explain or re-tell the story.

P: Yeah.

T: And it makes no sense to write such books.

P: I don't know why they do. Would you excuse me just for just a moment? I must go. So, can I…? Through there.

T: Okay.

P: Just give me a moment. Sorry. [Leaving]

[Break]

[Arriving]

T: Next question. There are different belief-systems, and different religions. All religions have their key figures, key respected figures, and I would like to know your opinion about how much an artist or an author should respect or should take responsibility for how he or she represents the key figures of other belief-systems, for instance God, or Jesus, or Moses, for instance…

P: Hmmm.

T: … and now I'm thinking of, you know, the tragic consequences of the caricatures of *Charlie Hebdo* in Paris, in January [2015]. Probably you know…

P: Yeah.

T: …what happened. Because the freedom of speech and the freedom of religion sometimes clash.

P: Yes. Freedom of speech is something very important and we should treasure it, because we have not had it for very long in human history, and it's quite *rare* in the world. Most human societies have always tried to forbid certain ways of talking, especially certain ways of talking about the divine, and in some parts of the world today you can be put to death if you say something that the priests or the imams don't like. But it's something that's very important, this freedom of speech. It's very rare and very precious, and we should use it responsibly, and make sure that we look after it.

T: And do you think that you as an artist should respect the old taboos of other religions?

P: [Whispering] Erm… yeah….

T: Or how much should you respect it?

P: How much… Well, one of the questions that one has to ask and answer is, "What do I need to say at this point?" If I need, for the sake of the story, if I need to say that Mohammed used to steal sheep and was a rapist, then I say it. Do I really need to say that? *Charlie Hebdo*, of course, they have freedom to draw whatever cartoons they liked, but of these cartoons weren't very *good*, they weren't very *funny*, and weren't very *interesting*. Was it worth dying for that? Well, probably it was, but it's a very difficult one. It's a very difficult one.

T: But it might not be their fault, I mean the drawers of *Charlie Hebdo*…

P: Hmmm.

T: … but, you know, the religious fundamentalists who…

P: Well, the fundamentalists are *always* wrong.

T: Yeah.

P: Always wrong. Very-very wrong. Religious fundamentalists, scientific fundamentalists, or any sort of fundamentalists. Always wrong. They're wrong because they think there is one answer, whereas, in fact, there are five answers, there are ten answers. There are a thousand answers. There are a thousand ways of thinking, and a thousand ways of representing people, and a thousand opinions, and… and… While we live in a society that allows all those different opinions to be expressed, we must protect that, and we must look after it, and we must realize how valuable and how rare it is.

T: Mmhmm. Okay. So, the main Christian protest against your *His Dark Materials* trilogy was that, like Socrates, you might corrupt the young, with your story on religious issues. So, I mean, I found it funny that some Christian parents and teachers claim that if children watch the film, they would read the novels, and anyway, your novels might raise doubt…

P: That's…

T: … in the children…

P: Hmmm.

T: But, in my view, doubt is good, I mean…

P: Yeah.

T: … if one considers or re-considers the basis of his belief…

P: Yeah.

T: … for instance. In this way, it's a ridiculous objection to *His Dark Materials* trilogy.

P: I completely agree, that is the case. It was ridiculous. But these people don't mind being ridiculous. They're very stupid, some of them. And I don't mind upsetting stupid people.

T: Hmmm. Yes. I think they have something to think about. [Laughing]

P: [Laughing] Yeah. Yeah.

T: Okay. And the next question is that considering the freedom of speech and the freedom of religion, and the religious tolerance in general, have you seen any sign that the liberal democracy is in danger now in Europe?

P: I think it's always in danger. Because the temptation to be sure about something is a very strong temptation; a temptation to listen to people with one single answer: "God is great, you must obey God." And it's tempting to do that, because it means people don't have to think any more. And people don't like thinking generally; it's difficult, and it's painful, and it's contradictory, and you don't let… And you end up by being puzzled and worried. It's much easier to be *told* what to think and what to feel. So it's always a danger, and we must always be wary, we must always look out for it.

T: Hmmm. Right. So it's well-known, if someone is familiar with your thoughts, that you are against the label of fantasy of *His Dark Materials*, and, however, I have some arguments or I found some evidences that it is a fantasy basically. For instance, Rosemary Jackson, an expert of fantasy literature, she claims that fantasy is related to, and comments on, and criticizes real world, and also fantasy seeks that which is experienced as absence and non-sense. For instance, religiosity, the absence of connectedness…

P: Hmmm.

T: … the absence of purpose and meaning, these [lacks in] contemporary life (…) [are] present very much in the trilogy. Among others, Mary Malone feels it. And also, fantasy is to make visible the unseen, and to articulate the unsaid, and maybe in this way… for instance, the daemons are there to highlight certain psychological aspects of the human nature. And also John Clute claims that there is a basic pattern of fantasy: there is wrongness, thinning, recognition, and then healing or return. Yes, so in the third book, we can recognize this pattern…

P: Yeah. Yeah.

T: And the most important one is the subversive function of fantasy, to arouse thoughts, to raise doubts, and to raise questions…

P: Yeah. Yeah.

T: … in the reader about the big issues of life, like where are we from, or why are we here, or what will happen to us when we die. Once you said that the only place where one can discuss these metaphysical issues is in children's literature. Do you [still] think the same now? And it was ten years ago maybe.

P: Yeah, but maybe twenty years ago. It was… I meant it. I did think that then. And I think it still is possible. Probably easier, yeah, to discuss them in a children's book than in a novel for adults… But I mean you can, of course, discuss them in a novel for adults, but then it gets called fantasy. And it gets put on the fantasy shelves in the bookstore, and in the library, and the general reader never picks them up because the general reader, the ordinary person knows 'Oh, I don't like fantasy.'

T: Hmmm.

P: And they'll never touch it. But children don't – as I was saying before – children don't have that feeling of… being certain about what they don't like. Say… they are much more willing to look at it. Yeah, I think I still do believe that.

T: Okay. There is one reason for, a supposed reason why fantasy fiction is so popular among young people. And several people say, one of them is Christopher Partridge himself, that the reason is *our* secularized world. And the loss of religious feeling…

P: Yeah.

T: … the religious sense, [why] people turn to fantasy.

P: Hmmm.

T: And some scholar[s] claim that the fantasy and science-fiction literature and film have a function that they gradually subvert and replace the canonical religious metanarrative[s]. What do you think about this statement?

P: Well, I haven't noticed yet. I'm looking out of the window because I…

T: Is it raining?

P: It's not quite rain[ing], though it must be because I didn't bring my umbrella. There is not yet a Church of Tolkien.

T: [Laughing] Yeah. Yeah.

P: There is not yet a Church of Narnia. If I replace some aspects of a religion, but it doesn't replace all of them.

T: Yes, so you agree with me that fantasy fiction will never substitute sacred texts, like the Bible.

P: No.

T: So it's a kind of ridiculous supposition.

P: It's kind of ridiculous because we know that fantasy is made-up.

T: Yeah.

P: Part of the reason that people believe all that they read in the Bible is because they think it's true.

T: Hmmm.

P: But we know that *The Lord of the Rings* is not true. It's a novel, it's a story, it's made-up.

T: Yes, there is the willing suspension of disbelief…

P: Yes, that's right.

T: … while one is reading a fantasy fiction.

P: Exactly.

T: But you know, it depends on whether the reader decides that it's pure fiction or not, so based on real facts.

P: Well, I can't think of an example of any thing that started as a fantasy and became reality. Except maybe Scientology.

T: Hmmm. Yes.

P: Maybe Scientology which is plainly a lot of *nonsense* invented by… what was his name, L. Ron Hubbard?

T: Yes.

P: Invented to make money because he was a science-fiction writer.

T: Mmhmm.

P: And he invented these ridiculous things which people are stupid enough to have believed. So maybe that's true in the case of Scientology. But I can't think of any work of fiction that has ever become worshipped.

T: Mmhmm.

P: … or…

T: Okay. I mean I can imagine that these critics wanted to express or want to express that the sense of religiosity that people don't feel in every-day life they can feel it or find it…

P: Yeah.

T: … in these fictional works.

P: Yeah. Could be. Fantasy has touched on that sort of thing. There's a very good science-fiction novel by Arthur C. Clark, called *Childhood's End* [1953]. Have you heard that?

T: Not yet.

P: He talks about… It's about ultimate destiny and what our purpose is, and what human beings are here for. And he takes it seriously, and he answers it seriously. *Childhood's End*, it's a good work, it's really worth reading.

T: Okay. Now, the first group of questions are over, so let's talk about *His Dark Materials*. It's the second group. In *His Dark Materials* there is a complete fictional world, like William Blake's, and at the same time, some say that you are not interested in working out a complete cosmology in your imaginary world. And as for me, in my opinion, there is a cosmology, the structure of the world is explained more or less, but there is no cosmogony, if you know, the creation of the world.

P: Yeah. I did write a cosmogony in that way but I didn't put in the book.

T: Mmhmm. Oh, is there any companion novel in which…

P: No.

T: No?

P: But if you like I can email you what I did.

T: Oh, that would be nice!

P: Yeah. I'll do that when I get home.

T: Okay.

P: It's a sort of creation story.

T: Hmmm. Is it that idea, I read once, that as one know[s], matter started loving matter, and then the first conscious beings, the angels…

P: That's the sort of thing. That's it.

T: … formed, and, you know, the first one was the angel called the Authority, who lied to all the others…

P: Well, you've seen it already, that's it.

T: Oh, and so, you know, one of the angels realized that the first angel lied to them…

P: Yeah.

T: So she was chased away, and, for this reason, matter slipped… slipped up or… and, for this reason, all the parallel worlds were born.

P: Yeah.

T: Or something like that?

P: Yes. That's it. What I'll do is I'll email you the whole thing.

T: Oh, that would be nice. Then I can refer to it.

P: Yeah. Sure.

T: What really…

P: (…) [Trying to write a reminder, but his pen was out of ink]

T: I have a pen, I can borrow you it.

P: It's alright. This is… good… [Changing the cartridge] I knew [it] would run out soon, so I brought a refill. Okay.

T: So the next question is connected to the fictional world of *His Dark Materials*. For me, I'll have to decide whether it is a kind of theological or mythological fictional world. Because, you know, theology is a systematic and rational study of the nature and concept of God, and the structure of the world, and religious truth, while mythology is a collection of stories about…

P: About…

T: … answering the basic human questions, and… Well, for me it seems that *His Dark Materials* is a rather mythological world. Do you agree with this?

P: It's more mythological than theological.

T: Hmmm. Okay. Then my impression was correct. [Laughing] Yeah, so the emphasis is not on explanation, but rather on telling how everything was born, for instance…

P: That's right, it's got some… mythology tries to explain…

T: Hmmm.

P: … the big, big things. So that's why it's true…

T: But there is no dogma, if I know well.

P: No, no, no. No, no. Not at all.

T: Yes. And you mentioned that concepts, like God, Republic of Heaven, and Dust, should be understood as metaphoric, these are metaphors, on the one hand. And on the other hand, you insist that a reader should read *His Dark Materials* as a realist story about, you know, human beings who have real problems.

P: Yeah.

T: And what kind of reading do you prefer? The realist one or the metaphoric one?

P: I… I say nothing about it.

T: Ah, okay. [Laughing]

P: About how my books are to be read.

T: Mmhmm.

P: There are some writers who insist that there is a right way to read their books. "No, you've got it all wrong, you're not good, that's not right at all. Now this means this, and that means that, and you know, you've got it wrong, this is the right way to read it." I don't do *anything* like that.

T: Yes.

P: *Anybody* who wants to read my books is very welcome.

T: This is "the democracy of reading."

P: And… "The democracy of reading," thank you. That's how I put it.

T: Okay. So God as a metaphor who has a kind of fictional existence.

P: Yeah.

T: Yes. Here is a quotation from you, that I found very interesting and it might be a kind of key sentences about how to interpret your work. So, let me quote [it to] you, once you answered to a question about the end of the third book, [why] it's so sad, you know, [about] Lyra and Will.

P: Yeah.

T: "If you look at the book carefully you will see a lot of little patterns throughout (…), all of which have to do with two things or two people or a person and a place that were very close to each other are split apart. (…) I had to be true to that pattern because this is the basic pattern of the whole story."

P: Yeah. Yeah.

T: So, could you tell me any other examples, besides of William and Lyra, that finally split apart in the story?

P: Lyra and her daemon.

T: Yeah, but later they were united.

P: Yes. But the whole idea of splitting children from their daemons.

T: Hmmm.

P: What they were trying to do in Bolvangar.

T: Yes.

P: You know, to cut them away from their daemons.

T: Okay, but…

P: Lyra and her mother were split about.

T: Mmhmm.

P: At the very beginning of the story, before we enter the story. Lyra and Jordan College which is her home, and then at the start she leaves home.

T: In the end, some of these pairs are connected again.

P: Yeah.

T: Or united.

P: They can be. They can be united again.

T: So it's a kind of temporary…

P: In some cases it's temporary but… They can have… a temporary separation can have permanent consequences.

T: Mmhmm. Well, it means that I will have to refresh one of my theses. [Laughing]

P: [Laughing]

T: Yeah. And…

P: But don't. Don't listen to me.

T: Oh, yes, you're right. [Laughing] But it's what [is] so interesting because I… This splitting apart, this pattern, doesn't make the obligation of building the Republic of Heaven…

P: No.

T: … very attractive…

P: No.

T: …to an average reader. I would say.

P: This is at a very abstract level.

T: Hmmm. Yes. Yes.

P: It's something that I've been interested in… for some time. I did a… I wrote a whole lecture about one simple little movement and how it can become metaphorical, how it can become symbolic, all those things. Take a simple movement of pouring something…

T: Mmhmm.

P: … from one container into another. I found numerous examples of a painting, throughout painting with somebody's pouring something out. "What does this mean, how does that work?" Here is something poured—somebody knocks something over. "What does that mean?" I suppose… [Increasing background noise]

T: [Laughing]

P: I'll try and come closer. [Pulling the dictaphone closer to himself]

T: Oh, thank you.

P: These little patterns and there are several of them [that] can serve as a sort of invisible matrix for events. Another pattern is this. I take something and I hand it to you. [Handing his pen to me]

T: Mmhmm.

P: Okay?

T: Yes.

P: Anther one is: in a space we've got… Or we, obviously, you've got influence more in a small space than in a big space.

T: Hmmm.

P: This [the increasing background noise] is becoming very difficult.

T: Do you think we can change our place? Go to another table?

P: Yeah, let's try it. Let's try it.

T: Okay.

[Searching for and finding another table at the other end of the pub for a few minutes]

(…)

[Sitting down to another table and putting aside the glasses and bottles left there by the previous guests of the pub]

P: You['re] all right?

T: It's a little bit strange that they don't clear tables.

P: It's a little bit strange, but they haven't got enough staff, perhaps. Okay, let's try and… yeah…

T: We were talking about… The patterns, basic patterns of the story.

P: Oh yeah, yeah.

T: Don't you mind if I sit here?

P: That's fine.

T: [Sitting next to him] I will be able to hear my questions, too.

P: Hmm.

T: Okay. So, you must have heard about Deconstruction, and the binary oppositions…

P: Yes.

T: … and the so-called 'violent hierarchies,' I mean the preference of hierarchies in one binary opposition. I mean the man-woman, right-left…

P: Yeah.

T: … and so on. And are you for this dissolving or putting apart these binary oppositions? In your work?

P: No, it's not so much that. The splitting apart is just something I noticed happened a lot in the story. I didn't set out to do it. I didn't. And, as I said, it's not the only basic pattern, there's the pouring one, there's the handing one, there's the entering and the leaving one, there's the gathering one… All sorts of things in there. I got that idea from… Just trying to remember the name of the critic. No, it's wrong. Can't remember. American critic. [Maybe Mark Johnson's *The Body in the Mind: The Bodily Basis of Meaning, Imagination, and Reason* (1987)]

T: Mmhmm.

P: Who wrote what I thought was a very interesting book about what he called image schemas. Image scheme being an abstract representation of little patterns like that. And I found myself very interested in the pouring one, and, if I have time, I'm going to write about the handing one…

T: Yeah.

P: Because I think that's very interesting. You can give someone a responsibility.

T: Mmhmm.

P: Or you can give them a memory.

T: Yeah.

P: Or you can give them a gift. Or you can give--all sort of things. And they can all serve a story in a certain way. So it underlies a lot of storytelling.

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T: Okay. Here is a quotation from *The Amber Spyglass*, when William and Lyra realize that they love each other and the Fall happens, somehow.

P: Yeah.

T: And they… You wrote that they became "the true image of what human beings always could be, once they have come into their inheritance" [AS 421].

P: Mmhmm.

T: What kind of inheritance? With wisdom, or…

P: Yeah.

T: The present of the rebel angels?

P: It's a true understanding of things. You can call it wisdom, or you can call it understanding, or you can call it a realization, something. It's a state of full consciousness, instead of partial consciousness.

T: Hmmm. There is an American iconologist, William J. Thomas Mitchell, and he wrote about John Milton and *Paradise Lost*, and he writes that God makes man of his own image out of desire not to be alone, and…

P: Yeah.

T: … man has desires of his own, and for this reason, he asks for a mate to love him in turn, and in this way, desire generates image, and image generates desire. Somehow in parallel with matter lov[ing] matter.

P: Okay.

T: And God knows that he is producing a creature who will be able to produce other things, he will be able to produce other images. And this is why eating from the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge was forbidden. And for this image-like thing, there is another quotation. Sorry, I don't remember from where, that "The truest way for the creatures to become what they could truly be." "What they could truly be," well, I think it is not a reference to any kind of God in this way. I mean to resemblance, or image of any…

P: Well, it's like a baby bird. When a baby bird is very young, it's just hatched, it can't see, it can't fly, hasn't got any feathers. Little by little, as the mother feeds the bird, it grows, it becomes stronger, it's got wings. I see this happening in my barn at home with the swallows.

T: Mmhmm.

P: I love watching it. And the little swallows sit at the edge of the nest, and they're very (…), and they're very frightened, and one day they just jump and they can fly. It's becoming what it could be.

T: Mmhmm.

P: So it's the difference between childhood and adulthood.

T: Yeah.

P: Or, in William Blake's terms, it's the difference between innocence and experience.

T: Yes. I mean you prefer the word wisdom, because we mean experience to… continue the… [Laughing]

P: Yeah, I wouldn't necessarily insist on it being called wisdom.

T: Hmmm.

P: Experience will do.

T: Okay. Going back to the history of religion, you know, there are organized religions, and there have always been religious movements against these kinds of organized forms. I mean these religious movements were considered heterodox or alternative movements, and they promise[d] completeness, they were practiced privately, and they distanced themselves from organized religion. And, according to Christopher Partridge, now there are also such alternative religious movements, but [we] call them 'alternative spiritualities,' like New Ages spirituality, pagan occultism, or, you know, Unidentified…

P: Yeah.

T: … Foreign Object kind of religion, or Gaia…

P: Hmmm.

T: … and environmental spirituality, or goddess worship or Neo-Gnosticism. And he claims that they are characterized by a focus on the self, the divine nature, of the divinity of the self…

P: Yeah.

T: And…

P: I think that's true.

T: … personal experience. Yes. And there is an emphasis on holism or connectedness. But he claims that the problem is that there is no central authority. So it lacks commitment, it lacks cohesion, and there is very little social impact of these movements. So in conclusion, they function as the insubstantial substitution for dying religious organizations. And… [Laughing at the increasing background noise again]

P: [Laughing] Certainly (…)

T: Oh, my God. I hope I will be able to hear you.

P: I hope so, too.

T: Okay. Let's talk about the Republic of Heaven. There are three main characteristic feature[s] of this metaphor: the appreciation of the here and now, this material world; the connectedness with each other, with other people, with the Nature and the whole Universe; and also taking responsibility for each other. Yes. And in

this way, I might be wrong but I see some parallel features between these alternative spiritualities and the Republic of Heaven, concerning the fact that the self is important in both of them, or…

P: Yeah.

T: … not?

P: But that's not something I talked about. If that's what you see there, in the book…

T: Mmhmm.

P: … then that's fine, but I didn't put it there.

T: Okay. Yes, I mean holism and connectedness [are] also important…

P: That's important…

T: … for the Republic of Heaven, and also another feature, the so-called perennism, that… or perennial philosophy?

P: Oh yes, I know. Yeah.

T: A kind of syncretic spirituality…

P: Yeah. Yes.

T: … and monism, I mean the rejection of all dualism, and self-spirituality and a quest for spiritual knowledge. I mean I see these similarities, but, you know, I might be wrong. [Laughing] And…

P: No, you're no wrong. If you see them there, then you're right to talk about them.

T: Mmhmm. Yes, but I mean I know that the Republic of Heaven is a kind of metaphor, but…

P: Yeah.

T: … it's… There are good reasons why it should be useful if every people would…

P: Yeah.

T: … try to establish it.

P: I used that phrase, first of all, as a deliberate contrast. What, what…? [Looking up to the roof window and seeing it raining]

T: Oh, never mind, I don't have an umbrella[, either]. [Laughing]

P: A contrast with either a kingdom or a king.

T: Hmmm.

P: Or if there's no king, what happens? Do we have [to] elect another king, or do we have a republic? Well, I prefer a republic. But all the implications which you say you choose… you read into it there, it may be there. I don't know. But I didn't willingly put them there.

T: Hmmm. Okay. I was suggested to ask, to highlight a kind of aspect of the Republic of Heaven. So let's say that for a religious person, the social ethics, the sense of social community, and the sense of wonder, awe and mystery…

P: Yeah.

T: … are a kind of complete package, which is provided by religious organizations, for instance, by the Church. And for a non-religious person, there's a distinction between social ethics and a sense of social community, and also a sense of wonder and awe. So these are two different things. But, however, for me, it seems that… [Loud cheers from one of the neighbouring tables] We're not lucky. [Laughing] So…

P: Not lucky. Look. What we could do… We could go and get in my car which is not really far away. They'll be quiet.

[Finally deciding to staying in the pub]

T: That's okay. [Laughing]

P: Would you require something?

T: No. Thank you.

P: Continue?

T: Continue. Okay, so for me it seems that the Republic of Heaven rather embodies this kind of complete package.

P: I hope it does. Yeah.

T: So it seems that it's a kind of religious concept. Altogether.

P: Yeah. Yeah. The only difference being that I don't feel that God is necessary.

T: Hmmm.

P: In every other respect, you should say this is a religious idea.

T: Okay. And would you separate morality from religiosity? From religious institutions?

P: No, I wouldn't separate morality from anything. Morality is *inherent* in every human interaction.

T: Mmhmm.

P: There's a good way of doing things, which involves a consideration for the other person, for the other person's well-being, or happiness, or whatever, and that's different from an interaction which doesn't take any account of those things. We could treat each other well, or we can treat each other badly.

T: Mmhmm.

P: I couldn't… There's… Morality is all over the place. It's the school of morals.

T: Yes, so…

P: That we learn to empathize.

T: Hmmm. Yes, so I can say that the religious impulse is something inherent us but we have to learn moral values.

P: We do have to learn morality, yes.

T: Hmmm.

P: We learn it in all sorts of ways. We learn by example, by seeing someone, a parent or grandparent, who is kind and good. We learn it from fiction. You see examples of people behaving cruelly, and certainly other people suffer for it. We empathize with the hero, who is moral. There are all sorts of ways of learning morality, but a lot of them involve stories of one sort or another.

T: Hmmm.

P: So when I mentioned this before: Jesus, a great moral teacher, his most successful method of teaching morality was stories, was parables.

T: Hmmm. Okay. Well, I have thought a lot about whether *His Dark Materials* is characterized by religious tolerance or solidarity. If we say that tolerance is a kind of permitted attitude toward other people who think differently. But solidarity is a kind of union or fellowship arising from common responsibilities. And in this way, solidarity seems to be [a] more appropriate [term] to the Republic of Heaven. Do you agree with me?

P: Well, tolerance.. See, they are different slightly, because we can tolerate people we don't have much in common with.

T: Hmmm.

P: And we can have a lot in common with people whom we don't find it easy to tolerate. I suppose… I suppose that the stories are saying that... empathy is the important thing. We should feel a bond with other people, which will lead us to be tolerant of them. I don't know. I don't know.

T: Hmmm.

P: I'm not very helpful to you.

T: Ah. [Laughing]. You know, it is going to be my dissertation and…

P: Yeah.

T: … I need my own thoughts and impressions.

P: Yes, it is. Yeah. Yeah.

T: I [haven't] mention[ed] that I'm planning this dissertation, I mean the structure, in a way that, you know, my arguments will be based on my impressions and my thoughts, and what you say to me in this interview, it will be one voice… your voice will be one among the many secondary literature. So…

P: Okay, that's fine.

T: [Laughing] Yeah. In the Judeo-Christian narratives, the myth of grace is the story of [the] movement of an imperfect spirit toward the perfect God. In other words, the imperfect Man needs the perfect God to become perfect again. Yes, you know that there is no God in *His Dark Materials* trilogy. And do you agree with the view that we are all perfect inside, or do we bring in ourselves the possibility of becoming perfect?

P: It's a possibility…

T: Mmhmm.

P: … but in many people it remains a possibility, and it's not realized.

T: Yes.

P: I don't think… Well, it's like childhood and adulthood again. The possibilities are there, but it might never happen, it might never come back. It has a lot to do with circumstances. If you're born into a poor family, in a slum, and if you're the wrong–or a different colour than everybody else, you can have a difficult time.

T: Hmmm.

P: Circumstances might make it impossible for you to become tolerant, wise, and these things. So it depend on circumstances, I suppose.

T: Hmmm.

P: As well as other things.

T: And what do you think about the strength of the psyche or will-power? Or inner virtues of a person? That I mean…

P: Well…

T: ... any kind… to become…

P: I'll answer this… with… by… I think in one of my other books, *The Firework-Maker's Daughter* [1995]. Have you read *The Firework-Maker's Daughter*?

T: Not, I read the Sally Lockhart[-series].

P: It's a little fairy story about a girl who wants to be a firework-maker. She learnt that she can, but she needs two [other] qualities. She needs talent, and hard work, and luck. And if you have two of those, no good.

T: Mmhmm.

P: You need all three.

T: Mmhmm.

P: But the only one you can do *anything* about is the hard work. You can't decide to be talented. You can't say I'm going upstairs now and I'm going to be lucky.

T: Yeah.

P: You've got to have all three. So I would say, I think that it's true, throughout life, in all circumstances, you need three things. You need an information field. You need the basic intellectual, emotional ability, you need the talent.

T: Mmhmm.

P: You need luck. And you need to work at it. You need to work hard.

T: Mmhmm.

P: Those are the three things that you need.

T: Yeah.

P: I think it's true. In real life, as well as in *The Firework-Maker's Daughter* and in [*His*] *Dark Materials*.

T: Mmhmm. And do you agree with me that *His Dark Materials* is a quest story? For wisdom?

P: Yeah.

T: Hmmm.

P: Yes. That would be a good way of putting it.

T: Yeah. In the third book, Lyra will be a student of Saint Sophia College. And is it an accident that this college is named 'Saint Sophia'?

P: Not at all. Not an accident at all.

T: [Laughing] Mmhmm.

P: Quite deliberate.

T: Yeah, and is it a fictional college?

P: Yeah. It doesn't exist.

T: Uh-huh.

P: It's based on a college that does exist. It's a college called Lady Margaret Hall.

T: Mmhmm.

P: It looks like that, it's where it is, but it's… there's no Saint Sophia's college in Oxford.

T: Okay. Okay. Yes, two days ago I asked a tourist guide and she said, "Oh, it exists." Really. She was wrong. Okay. One of the conditions of the Republic of Heaven is the enjoyment of our material life.

P: Yeah.

T: And it occurred to me that if we have only one world to live in, does it mean that we have only one body to live in, and we have to be careful… I mean we have to look after this body, [by] lead[ing] a healthy life-style, for instance…

P: Yeah.

T: So it's not at all the...

P: Yes. But I was… I wouldn't say it's an inevitable consequence from reading *His Dark Materials* that you will stop smoking.

T: [Laughing] Yes.

P: It's fine: if you want to stop smoking, you'll stop. But I would never say you won't go to heaven unless you stop smoking.

T: Mmhmm.

P: It's not simple. No, that's too simple.

T: Yes, it's obvious. I mean… So okay, our bodies [are] also material and…

P: Yeah, yeah.

T: Yeah, but [we can] say enjoying material pleasures are sometimes opposed to the…

P: Yes.

T: … preserv[ation of] the health…

P: That's right. Well, I think that's wrong.

T: … of our body.

P: Completely disagree with the renunciation of the body, the *hatred* of the body which you find in various Christians, especially Christian saints.

T: Mmhmm.

P: They left the world and they went to live in a cave, or they lived on [the] top of a pillar or something and they had a miserable life. No, I don't agree with that. The world is a good place. Drinking's good. [Sound of beer glass being set down]

T: Yeah, but…

P: Even smoking can be good.

T: Hedonism is not the better option.

P: Well, hedonism is just looking one aspect of everything and making that one thing the world.

T: Hmmm.

P: The world is too interesting and too important to be hedonistic. That would be like if you only wanted to eat cheese or something. And many other (…) too.

T: Okay. In building the Republic of Heaven, Lyra says at the very end of the story that no one can build the Republic of Heaven if he or she considers himself or herself first. So one has to subordinate himself or herself to this grand project. And…

P: Yeah.

T: … [before] that, when the ghosts get into the Underworld, and then, thanks to William and Lyra, they can go through a window into the wide, open space where he or she…

P: At the *cost* of telling a story.

T: Yes, I know. But the main point is that in the wide, open space [a] ghost is annihilated in the air. So…

P: Yeah.

T: … both of these examples suggest that the self, the individual self is not so important in the story.

P: It's possible to be too clever looking for answers.

T: Mmhmm. Yeah.

P: Some of these things act by suggestion rather than by direct statement. If you looked for a precise equivalent of everything that I say in the story, rather than what the story says. Sorry. If you look for the precise equivalent of in everything the story says, you may well find lots of contradictions or things that don't make sense. You have to read imaginatively as well as…

T: Hmmm.

P: … literally.

T: Okay. You know it is also an impression of mine that… well, the self is not important. It might mean that to be ourselves for an eternity, it might not be good, for instance.

P: It'd be terrible!

T: Yeah. Okay, and what about those people who, metaphorically, who refuse to be a citizen of the Republic of Heaven? Is there any punishment for them or…

P: Their punishment, I suppose, to remain where they are, to remain what they are.

T: Huh?

P: To remain where they are and what they are.

T: Oh, I see.

P: Yeah. Yeah. Good, it's… You know, I don't know…

T: You know, free will is important, so it has to be their decision to do good to other people.

P: Yeah.

T: But if he [or she] simply refuses this request…?

P: Well, there's no punishment, there's no authority and system of crime and punishment, and renunciation, and charge lists and trials, and so on. No authority. If somebody doesn't want it, they don't want it.

T: Hmmm.

P: If somebody wants to be… wants not to believe in the Republic of Heaven, they don't have to believe in it.

T: Okay, theoretically, but if someone kills other people for pleasure, what would you…?

P: Well, they're very bad people. They're very bad. But there's no one to punish them, except other human beings.

T: Mmhmm.

P: If you murder people, you're generally caught by the police, taken to court, and sent to prison. That's fine, that's the way society works, that's the way human beings work. "[Christians are] saying oh, that's very bad, God will punish him." Well, that doesn't happen.

T: Hmmm. Yeah. So humans are responsible for the others, it means that they have to prevent these kind of criminals.

P: We have to act as human societies have always acted.

T: Yeah.

P: We have to act to protect one another, to make it possible for other people to live in freedom and peace and security, to educate the children, so that they can take part in the intellectual and emotional life of the world all around them. We have to make it possible for people who are sick to be taken to hospital and made better. All these things. We have to do what a decent human society does.

T: Okay.

P: There's nothing unusual about it.

T: Yes, I see. You mentioned already Blake, and Keats, and Shelley, and the Romantic poets, and do you have a particular vision or opinion about them? Or, I mean, [this] nineteenth-century Romantic poetry had any influence on you, or on your work?

P: Yeah, enormously, it must have done. I've read those poets since… I was fourteen-fifteen-sixteen… I know a lot of their poems by heart, I think about them a lot.

T: Mmhmm.

P: It's been of huge importance to me. A huge influence. Of very great importance.

T: Their view of faith, as connected to imagination, seems to be present also in the trilogy, especially in the example of the bargain with the harpies, you know, that you have to tell a story to them…

P: Yeah.

T: … to pass through…

P: Yeah.

T: … the Underworld. So, if you go through life without imagination…

P: That's right.

T: … or experience that's a terrible sin.

P: That's right.

T: So…

P: That's my idea.

T: Yeah.

P: I think that's a good idea and I believe in it.

T: Hmmm.

P: We all have duty to live so as to have something to tell about in life.

T: Yeah. Okay. And not only the harpies, but, you know, human experience, and human intuition somehow feed Dust. As Dust somehow generates these ideas…

P: Yeah.

T: … so it's a kind of symbiotic system in the fictional world of the trilogy.

P: Yeah.

T: And there is an American theologian, Donna Freitas…

P: Donna Freitas, yes.

T: Yes, and she…

P: I've read Donna.

T: … identifies the Dust with the Holy Spirit. And a kind of feminine entity, so…

P: [Rolling his eyes in disapproval]

T: Well, you don't really agree with her.

P: No. Donna, she's a Catholic, and she's very nice, I know Donna, we've had several discussions. I'm writing about Dust in the book I'm writing right now…

T: Hmmm.

P: … which is called *The Book of Dust*. And without giving away anything of the plot, I can just emphasize what I've said before about Dust, it is a way of picturing consciousness. Especially the self-consciousness that human beings have, which is what makes us different from animals. I think it's a very important characteristic and a very interested thing. And nobody knows how it works.

T: Mmhmm.

P: But I think our main duty, if we have a duty, is to increase the amount of consciousness in the universe, which means by teaching, by writing, thinking, talking, by being good, by being kind, there're all ways of increasing the amount of consciousness in the universe. That's the absolute basic foundation of my morality.

T: Mmhmm. And considering that matter loves matter and in this way, conscious beings are born, maybe in the Greco-Roman tradition, Eros, the god of [love], might be more appropriate idea for Dust.

P: Yes. Could be.

T: I would say. Rather than the Holy Spirit.

P: And also Aphrodite, yes.

T: Okay, so I shouldn't ask you about *The Book of Dust*. [Laughing]

P: It's two hundred and … no, wait a minute, it's longer than that. It's about six hundred pages long. And it's going to be longer. So it's a big long book.

T: Yeah, I was wondering whether I will be able to involve *The Book of Dust* into my analysis.

P: No, I can't tell you anything about it. I can't tell you anything about it.

T: Hmmm. Okay. That's a question about angels. So the Authority has a regent, called Metatron. Metatron?

P: Metatron.

T: And…

P: That's a … Metatron is a figure in Jewish…

T: Yes…

P: … angelic mythology.

T: I know…

P: Yeah.

T: … and I mean he is also called Enoch, and…

P: That's right.

T: … he was the favourite of God who…

P: That's right.

T: … raised him up, and for this reason, that the Biblical Enoch was the favourite of God, is it the reason why Metatron is such a negative character in the trilogy?

P: Yeah.

T: Yes, okay. [Laughing] It was obvious. And daemons, oh, okay. So it is the nature of the child that…

P: The daemons change shape.

T: The daemons change shape, yeah, and I thought that there is a huge difference between whether I have a daemon as a dolphin, or, as a monkey, for instance. I mean the difference is in the physical ability or physical disability, I mean, if I have a dolphin as a daemon, then I will not be able to…

P: You won't be able to come to Oxford.

T: Yes, exactly, and…

P: That's quite rare. Most daemons are… the sort of animals that can get around.

T: Hmmm. Yes, and so maybe there isn't any daemon that is so big as an elephant, or so small as an ant. So I wouldn't…

P: That would be very inconvenient.

T: Yeah.

P: It would make life impossible. No.

T: Mmhmm. Okay. And can it happen that a daemon turn[s] against its human counterpart?

P: That's… Yes. Occasionally, you might find a person and their daemon who just don't like each other. That's a terrible situation.

T: Mmhmm.

P: It's a way of describing depression, I suppose. The psychological state, in which one feels self-hatred. Mmhmm?

T: Yeah.

P: It's one way in which this metaphor of daemons is very rich.

T: Mmhmm.

P: Because I'm writing actually about a character in *The Book of Dust* whose daemon... They're at war, they hate each other, so it's impossible to live. Very difficult to live. And there are some people like that.

T: Mmhmm.

P: We all know someone who is struggling with something like that. Perhaps we are ourself. But it's distant from the puzzle.

T: Hmmm. Okay. There are these characters, the *mulefa*?

P: Yeah.

T: And do you think now that, if you looked back to the writing of *His Dark Materials*, that you idealized them, in any way?

P: Yes. They live in a world without self-division.

T: Mmhmm.

P: They are at ease with themselves, they're happy in their surroundings, they're comfortable with the way they live and with each other… Their mythology doesn't have any place for sin.

T: Mmhmm.

P: There are things that are unfortunate. If a tree falls on you and kills you, that's unfortunate, but it's not evil. So I see you wrote Noble Savage there, that's exactly…

T: Yeah.

P: … what they are. Yes.

T: Yeah. For they are idealized as Rousseau idealized…

P: Right. Yeah, that sort of thing.

T: … the Noble Savage.

P: Yeah.

T: Yeah, and I think that you… It was a conscious decision to choose thirty-thousand years when the Dust began approaching to human beings, and Dust start[ed] leaking around the time of the eighteenth century when the Enlightenment happened, and in this sense, are you against the irresponsible use of science? For instance?

P: Erm…

T: Or why around the time of the eighteenth century?

P: Yeah. Well, the scientific method and science as a whole is a wonderful, extraordinary, magnificent human invention. But it does carry enormous power with it. It's invented nuclear power, the atom bomb.

T: Mmhmm.

P: It's invented the wholly useless and (…) applications of energy which have resulted in oil, gas, coal, which have resulted in the change of the climate and all those things. It's a phenomenon of enormous human… enormous power, which human beings must use, must learn to use responsibly.

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T: Mmhmm.

P: And I don't think we'd be better off if we hadn't had science. No. We'd be much worse off. We're much better off because we have science. But above all things, it's something that we must use *responsibly*.

T: Mmhmm. Yes. It's a great responsibility…

P: Yeah.

T: … for not only ourselves, but also for other human beings.

P: Exactly. For the whole world.

T: Yes. Max Weber, the sociologist, once wrote that "the more developed and the more rationalized the religion, the stronger is its agony of sex and of women." And my question is that have you ever sensed a lack of women in Christianity and in Christian mythology?

P: Oh, yes. Yes. Not only in Christianity. In Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings*, for example.

T: Yeah, yeah.

P: Terrible that you can't find any books with… women. In C.S. Lewis's Narnia there are women, but they're all evil.

T: Yeah.

P: She can't well spend…

T: And even poor Lucy… No, Susan…

P: Susan.

T: … is not allowed to…

P: That's right.

T: … Heaven. Yeah.

P: It's appalling. Yes. Christianity has been very-very uneasy about women.

T: Mmhmm.

P: And remains so.

T: So is it one of the reasons that, you know, once you said that Eve, the Biblical Eve is your great heroine…

P: Yeah.

T: … and that's why the heroine of the trilogy is also a little girl…

P: Yeah.

T: Lyra.

P: Yeah. Because Eve was the one who was curious enough to…

T: Mmhmm.

P: … to be interested in the difference between good and evil. So she took the fruit and she ate it.

T: Mmhmm.

P: Good for her.

T: Yeah. Okay. Lyra is the favourite character of many of the readers, and for me, too, and… It seems as if you follow also a view about child rearing that all children are barbarians who need to be civilized, also… So I mean if I compare…

P: I used to teach them for many years.

T: Yeah.

P: I know children, I have children of my own.

T: Yes.

P: They are barbarous.

T: Yeah.

P: They need to be civilized. But they have the possibility of being civilized. Children are fascinating and wonderful creatures, but they don't know how to behave. They spread their food all over the place, they make a mess, they make a noise. [Laughing] They… yeah, they have to be civilized.

T: Hmmm. I mean Lyra at the beginning of *The Golden Compass*, and Lyra at the end of *The Amber Spyglass*, they seem to be two different characters. She changes too much.

P: She's growing up.

T: Yeah.

P: Yeah.

T: Oh, it's an important question, and I hope I will hear your answer.

P: Okay.

T: In folk tales and fairy tales, the protagonist usually has noble roots or noble parents, for instance a princess or a prince, and Lyra is an aristocrat. And also Iorek, the bear is also a kind of, you know, he is a…

P: He's a king.

T: And in the third book, there's a reference to William Parry's grandparents, who are rich people or something like that. And why do they have these noble origins? I mean if…

P: I don't know. The character who's very-very important in *The Book of Dust* comes from a very poor family, growing (…). I'm not telling more any about it but… He—it's a he—it's evident that the background is not important. It's who you are, how you live your life.

T: Yeah, (…) Lyra, it seems that it is her aristocratic behaviour, or aristocratic aura or atmosphere that sometimes give her strength to go ahead and be so brave.

P: I think she'd be brave if she came from another background entirely.

T: Mmhmm.

P: It's not her parents who give her that, it's not her ancestry, it's her character.

T: Mmhmm. So you would say that it is rather the… In education and pedagogy there is a[n opposition] between what is more important: the genetics or the education. And…

P: They're both important.

T: Mmhmm.

P: But your character is not determined by your past.

T: Yeah.

P: It's determined by your ancestry. Ancestry gives you certain qualities.

T: Mmhmm.

P: You might be born with musical talent, for example. But if you don't work at it, it's no good.

T: Yeah.

P: And if you're talented and you work at it, and you haven't any luck, that's no good, either. It's just back to what actually--

T: Both of them are needed.

P: Yeah.

T: Yeah. Well, it seems to me, and it's my favourite expression that you have, that you follow John Milton in one particular aspect in writing your story, that you don't identify the Serpent with Satan. I mean there are different characters who can be Satan…

P: Yeah.

T: … who can be Serpent, and this ambiguity is an important value of the trilogy.

P: Yes. Ambiguity is important because it keeps possibilities open.

T: Mmhmm.

P: At least it's stopped raining. It's a difference between allegory and, I suppose, what Milton was doing. In allegory, this always means that. These characters are always standing for patience or other characters are always standing for evil or whatever.

T: Hmmm.

P: But I'm not writing allegory, I'm writing something else.

T: Yeah. Complete characters…

P: Yes.

T: So… their deeds are more important than [their] nature.

P: Yes.

T: And people are too complicated to have simple labels like 'bad' and 'good.'

P: That's right, yeah. Yeah.

T: Okay. Let's talk about (…). Was it your conscious decision not to give a name to Mrs. Coulter's daemon? In the trilogy.

P: I just couldn't think of one.

T: Mmhmm.

P: I just couldn't think of a name. So I just called him… Mrs. Coulter's daemon. He also rarely speaks, very seldom I think.

T: Yeah. We can hear… I mean we can hear to the lines…

P: Yeah.

T: … his voice in the last book.

P: Yeah.

T: You know when Mrs. Coulter changes…

P: Yeah.

T: …into a mother.

P: Yeah.

T: And… Yes! And in the third book, you know, when Lyra lives in Mrs. Coulter['s] flat in London, once or twice it happens that Mrs. Coulter becomes very angry and Lyra can feel a kind of metallic smell…

P: Yeah.

T: … from her body. And why does it happen?

P: I don't know.

T: Or does it have anything, [a] symbolic reference…?

P: I don't know. It was just something that occurred to me. I don't know why.

T: Hmmm. It sounds…

P: My answers are very unsatisfactory, I'm sure. And so many of my answers are "I don't know."

T: [Laughing] That's no problem.

P: It just happened.

T: Yeah. I mean it's a different Satanic character.

P: Yeah.

T: A Satanic characteristic feature.

P: But there's nothing… I didn't intend it to mean this or that…

T: Mmhmm.

P: … I just was.

T: And in connection with her, I find it interesting that in the book she has black hair. And when the film was adapted, you know, Nicole Kidman has …

P: My fault, my fault. She should've have been blonde from the beginning.

T: I disagree with you. I think Mrs. Coulter as…

P: Yeah.

T: … a black-haired woman is perfect because, at least in my eyes… I mean she's a *femme fatale*, and a *femme fatale* [traditionally?] has black hair, and not blond. But it's a kind of difference of opinions.

P: Yeah.

T: Okay. Yes. And at the end of the story it is not only Mrs. Coulter, but also Lord Asriel [who] changes his attitude towards Lyra. And some say that it is parental love that he feels for her but I disagree with them because… I mean maybe it is Lyra's cosmic importance that makes her so important in Lord Asriel's eyes. So I wouldn't say that he becomes a father in a traditional way.

P: No. Not really. He sees her importance, he understands that, but he's not cut out to be a father. It's not his major weakness.

T: Mmhmm.

P: Look. Her father, in the book… she has many fathers in the book.

T: Yes, yeah.

P: The Gypsians. Farder Coram is a father. Iorek Byrnison is a kind of father.

T: Yes.

P: Lee Scoresby is a kind of father. That's all right. We can go on.

T: Hmmm. Okay. The key impression of mine for writing my Master's thesis was the fact or innovation that death is represented as a joyful event, and…

P: Yeah.

T: … for instance, like Yambe-Akka, the witches' goddess…

P: Yeah.

T: … and, you know, the happy annihilation of the souls in the wide open space.

P: That's right.

T: And why is it so happy? Why is it so positive, possibly?

P: It's inevitable. It comes to us all. I wanted to find a way of dramatizing the idea that it could be seen, noticed, tragic and hopeless and horrible… But there's a joyful culmination for the end of everything. That's all, I think.

T: Hmmm. So maybe I can say that representing death as a kind of joy or positive event, it's a kind of acceptance of the cycle of life…

P: Yeah.

T: … that we are born, we live, and then we die. And we can do nothing to prevent it.

P: That's right.

T: Mmhmm.

P: Yeah.

T: Good. Oh, and another significant character or figure I like so much is the figure of the own death. You know, everyone has a kind of…

P: Death, yeah.

T: Yes. Yes. And even there is a strong and intimate relationship between a human being and his or her death, and what inspired you for creating these figures?

P: I don't know. I just… I don't know. The idea was surprising to me, when I came to it… wanted something that I planned before.

T: Hmmm.

P: I came to that point of the story and it seems to me this would be an interesting way of looking at death, so I went with it.

T: Because, well, I had the idea that death has been personified from the very beginning of human history, and in the Middle Ages it was represented as, you know, a skeleton, or as a cruel person, and in the Renaissance era, it

was represented as a lover, for instance. And in the nineteenth century, in Romanticism, death was represented as an intimate friend, very close to how you represent…

P: Hmmm.

T: … these death figures. So it was my idea that you might have [got] this image from nineteenth century art.

P: Not especially, no.

T: Hmmm.

P: I very much like the imagery of Voodoo. And a figure of death as Voodoo religion is a skeleton with a top hat…

T: Yeah.

P: … with a cigar, and dark glasses.

T: Oh, I didn't know.

P: And I think it's funny. It's a funny way of doing it.

T: Hmmm.

P: In Mexico they have this thing called 'The Day of the Dead' once a year. And they sell skeletons, little cakes made into the form of skeletons, and there're skeletons everywhere, skeletons all over the place, and it's a festival, and they're funny, and they smoke cigars, and they have a good time. I like all that.

T: Hmmm. And are all these death figures male? Because it doesn't turn out in the story. Lyra has a male death figure, and also an old woman, who talks…

P: Yeah.

T: … to Lyra and William, she also has a male death figure.

P: I don't know why.

T: Umm.

P: It just seemed appropriate. I don't know why.

T: Hmm. So maybe men also have…

P: Female?

T: Female figures. We don't know. Okay, okay. The idea of euthanasia…

P: Euthanasia.

T: … euthanasia turns up in connection with the Authority…

P: Yeah.

T: … and Mrs. Coulter mentions it to a one of the priests that it would be our present or… it would be a good thing to give the… This god is very old, and if he's suffering, then we should give him a death…

P: The gift of death, yes, that's right.

T: Yeah. And I would like to ask you what is your view about euthanasia?

P: Well, like many people these days, I think if someone's old and suffering, they're in great pain…

T: Mmhmm.

P: … and they want to end their life, they should be helped to do that.

T: Mmhmm.

P: They should not insist on keeping someone alive just because they're alive. It seems to be senselessly *cruel* to insist that you must stay alive. "You're alive! We're going to fill you full of drugs, we're going to fill you full of oxygen, we're going to keep you alive, come what may." Seems to me a terrible idea.

T: Mmhmm.

P: When people who reach the end of their life, and they want to go, but they can't die, we should be all to help them.

T: Mmhmm. Yeah. I agree with you…

P: Okay.

T: … very much. As far as I know, only in one or two countries of Western Europe is this euthanasia accepted…

P: Yeah.

T: … legally.

P: In Switzerland, I think it is, yeah.

T: At the end of my life, maybe I wouldn't like to suffer and be alone.

P: Hm. Interesting.

T: Okay. Oxford. [Laughing] Are you a so-called local patriot who insist[s] on his or her town or the place where…

P: I like Oxford very much. I live here, I live here because I like Oxford, because it's got everything I want here, because I've got friends here, because the city is beautiful, because… Well, for all those reasons. So you can call me a local patriot, yeah.

T: Mmhmm. So… yes?

P: Yes.

T: Okay. The next question concerns the North.

P: Yeah.

T: It turns up as a mysterious place, full of secrets and a place where secrets are revealed.

P: Yes.

T: And why did you choose the North as such a place, and why not [the South]?

P: I didn't choose it, it just happened to me. I always felt an attraction towards the ice and the snow, and the…

T: Mmhmm.

P: … six month of darkness. They're mysterious and they're exciting, and the idea of the Northern Aurora is thrilling to me. I've never seen the Aurora. I don't know if you can see it in Hungary, which is obviously…

T: No, not at all. [Laughing]

P: Anyway, it is because I love all that, all that list of associations, that list of things that are summed up for me by the idea of the North.

T: Mmhmm.

P: I'm just attracted to that, that's all.

T: Mmhmm. And would you like to go to the North once to experience…?

P: I don't like travelling.

T: Oh.

P: I'd rather go to the library.

T: [Laughing] Okay. Some questions about the parallel worlds. Is there any hierarchy or structure of the parallel worlds in the fictional world of *His Dark Materials*?

P: No. There're many-many millions of worlds. But there's no hierarchy.

T: Mmhmm.

P: They all exist simultaneously. But… they're all more or less equal, I suppose you could say.

T: Hmmm. But the world where Cittàgazze…

P: Cittàgazze.

T: Cittàgazze is… It appears to be a kind of cross world where, at least at the beginning of the second book… So that is the result of a kind of accident because of the use of the subtle knife?

P: They've discovered the knife…

T: Mmhmm.

P: …so they can cut their way into different worlds.

T: Oh, I see.

P: So it is a kind of a crossroads.

T: Yeah. That's an unnatural condition.

P: Yeah. Yes, it is.

T: I see. And is there a common frame of all parallel worlds?

P: No. There are as many different worlds as there are grains of sand in the universe. There're uncountable numbers of different world.

T: Mmhmm.

P: But we can't reach them.

T: Mmhmm.

P: That's what the stories (…). That's what I believe.

T: Mmhmm.

P: But whether it's true or not, I don't know.

T: Okay. Did you intend to elaborate the idea that in every world there's a Lyra, there's a William, there's a Mary Malone? [Laughing]

P: No. No. No, it would be too elaborate to think of…

T: Mmhmm.

P: …you could go on forever doing that.

T: Mmhmm. And in the second book, when Lyra first goes with William to Oxford, and she's travelling on the bus, going to the city centre, and she's very surprised to see that some buildings are identical with her own world, but there're other buildings and other places, for instance, and she is playing with the idea whether there is another Lyra…

P: Yeah.

T: … and she… Wow, she is shocked, and she turns away from speculating…

P: Yes.

T: … it anymore. So this is the only…

P: You could go mad speculating on that sort of thing.

T: Hmmm.

P: Yeah, I think she was wise not to think about it.

T: Yes. And that would make the story more complicated.

P: Oh, yes. [Laughing]

T: Yeah. [Laughing]

P: Immensely more complicated.

T: Yes.

P: Yeah.

T: And, okay, the ending of the trilogy is sad. I mean, you know, William and Lyra have to…

P: Yeah.

T: … return to their own world, where they were born, because of their daemons, and does it somehow… No. Is it somehow related to current political situations about immigration and…

P: No.

T: … cosmopolitanism?

P: I don't think so. I don't think so. It had to, the ending had to be sad.

T: Hmmm.

P: A happy ending would not have worked. I tried to come up with one. I tried to have them being together forever, but it didn't work. It wasn't strong enough. It's a much stronger book because they have to part.

T: Mmhmm.

P: It becomes tragic.

T: So the aim was not to have a happy ending. And the idea that every character has to go back to the place where…

P: Yeah.

T: … he or she was born, it means that it was just a pretext for this ending?

P: Probably.

T: Uh-huh.

P: Probably. It's not that I wanted the end to be sad. It's I felt that the ending had to be sad.

T: Mmhmm.

P: I felt from the beginning that the ending would be a moment of great, great sadness. Great *love*… but of great sadness as well. There's nothing I could do about that.

T: Mmhmm.

P: That's where the book had to go.

T: Okay. But, I mean, anyway, apart from *His Dark Materials*…

P: Yeah.

T: … I suppose you have no problem with migration, or someone moving into another country to live there.

P: None at all. None at all. We should welcome… We should welcome people who are…

T: Uh-huh.

P: … in trouble, who are seeking asylum or something like that. Of course we should.

T: Hmmm. It's our duty to help others who are [in trouble].

P: Yeah.

T: Oh. *Almost* we're at the end.

P: Almost at the end, okay.

T: Yeah. What is your opinion about globalization, and the fact that most cultures are losing their particular characteristic features?

P: Yes. In some ways, it's regrettable, but there's *nothing* we can do about it. We can't even put a stop to all this. We can't say "Right, well, stop, go back, go back to where you come from. Stop playing the American music, play Hungarian music."

T: Mmhmm.

P: We can't do that. It doesn't work.

T: Mmhmm. Yeah. And, you know, English language is becoming a kind of *lingua franca*, everyone speaks it as a kind of communication…

P: Yeah.

T: … a way of communication and…

P: Very lucky for us.

T: Yeah, lucky for us, but I…

P: I mean it's lucky for the English, it's not lucky for you, you have to learn English. But your English is very good.

T: Oh, thank you. I wanted to apologise for my pronunciation.

P: No, it's marvellous. You're speaking really brilliantly well.

T: Thank you. Okay. Last questions… What do you think about fandom fiction written about *His Dark Materials*? You know, fans who read it but they continue the story.

P: Yeah.

T: How, for instance, William and Lyra meet in their adulthood somehow.

P: I don't take any notice of them. I don't read it.

T: Mmhmm.

P: I don't mind it being there, but it's got nothing to do with me.

T: I've read some of the stories, but most of them are very bizarre somehow.

P: Yeah.

T: And I didn't like them at all.

P: Yeah. No. I wouldn't dream of stopping people, I wouldn't dream of saying, "You're not allowed to do that." I think they may. But I'm not interested in them.

T: Mmhmm.

P: The Will and the Lyra that I write about are my characters, and I'm still writing about them, that I'm still interested in them. But I'm interested in my story, not in somebody else's story.

T: Mmhmm.

P: Very selfish.

T: Yeah. Okay, just (…). So is there anything that you would change now in *His Dark Materials*, apart from Mrs. Coulter's hair colour?

P: If I could go back, I would take a little more time. I'd take another six months to write *The Amber Spyglass*. I felt in a hurry, there were readers pressuring me, publishers pressuring me, I felt in a hurry when I wrote *The Amber Spyglass*. I'd like to go back and re-write it, I'd try to tighten the structure a little.[163]

T: Mmhmm.

P: But I wouldn't change anything.

T: Mmhmm. Were there some details?

P: Just one or a few details.

T: Mmhmm.

P: But nothing major in the story. I think the story is the way I wanted it to go.

T: Hmmm. And would you give me some examples of what you would change if you could go back in time?

P: Oh, I can't, it's too long ago.

T: Okay. And do you think that *His Dark Materials* is your best work? You have ever written? Or do you have a favourite one?

P: Well, I'm very fond of a story called *Clockwork* [1995]. And I'm fond of a story called *The Scarecrow and His Servant* [2004]. And I like *The Book of Dust* that I'm writing now. But I suppose *His Dark Materials* would probably be the one. One I… it's inevitable.

T: It may not be so surprising that *His Dark Materials* made you world famous. And last question, really. Do you still get letters or emails that scold or threaten you…

P: No.

T: … because of *His Dark Materials* trilogy and *The Good Man Jesus and the Scoundrel Christ*?

P: No, they stopped writing about the Jesus-book. Actually, I don't get many letters about it. Well, I still do, occasionally, but mostly the letters are from the people who read the book and liked it…

T: Hmmm.

P: … and they wanted to write and tell me so, which is very nice of them. And I always reply. In fact, I've got a big pile of letters at home waiting to be answered right now. It takes a lot of my time, answering letters.

T: Mmhmm. And really, thank you for answering my emails.

P: I hope this has been useful and I help you it's all recorded.

T: Yeah. Thank you.

Having signed three copies of the first book of *HDM* trilogy (belonging to me and my two supervisors), and let me take a few photos of him, Philip Pullman gladly accepted my gift, a bottle of home-made Hungarian brandy, 'pálinka.' He wrote me later that he found it delicious. He also admitted later in email that, to my pleasure (and relief), he enjoyed the long conversation, too.

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[163] The last clause of this sentence is an addition which is from an email by Philip Pullman on 22 February 2016.

ABBREVIATIONS

Primary Literature

AM   *The Amber Spyglass*

GC   *The Golden Compass*

HDM   *His Dark Materials*

LOR   *The Lord of the Rings*

PL   *Paradise Lost*

SK   *The Subtle Knife*

Secondary Literature

DG   *Dictionary of Gnosis & Western Esotericism*
            (Edited by Wouter J. Hanegraaff)

ER   *The Encyclopedia of Religion*
            (Edited by Mircea Eliade in chief)

RW   *The Re-Enchantment of the West*
            (Written by Christopher Partridge)

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