The Tales of Beedle the Bard, Magical Realism and Children's Literature / Bajke barda Beedlea, magični realizam i dječja književnost

Zakić, Martina

Master's thesis / Diplomski rad

2020

Degree Grantor / Ustanova koja je dodijelila akademski / stručni stupanj: **Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences / Sveučilište Josipa Jurja Strossmayera u Osijeku, Filozofski fakultet**

Permanent link / Trajna poveznica: https://urn.nsk.hr/urn:nbn:hr:142:565898

Sveučilište Josipa Jurja Strossmayera u Osijeku

Filozofski fakultet

Dvopredmetni sveučilišni diplomski studij Engleskog jezika i književnosti nastavničkog usmjerenja i Pedagogije

Martina Zakić

Bajke barda Beedlea, magični realizam i dječja književnost

Diplomski rad

Mentorica: doc.dr.sc. Ljubica Matek

Osijek, 2020.

Sveučilište Josipa Jurja Strossmayera u Osijeku

Filozofski fakultet

Odsjek za engleski jezik i književnost

Dvopredmetni sveučilišni diplomski studij Engleskog jezika i književnosti nastavničkog usmjerenja i Pedagogije

Martina Zakić

Bajke barda Beedlea, magični realizam i dječja književnost

Diplomski rad

Znanstveno područje: humanističke znanosti

Znanstveno polje: filologija

Znanstvena grana: anglistika

Mentorica: doc.dr.sc. Ljubica Matek

Osijek, 2020.

University of Josip Juraj Strossmayer in Osijek

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

Double Major MA Programme in English Language and Literature (Education studies) and Pedagogy

Martina Zakić

The Tales of Beedle the Bard, Magical Realism and Children's Literature

Master's Thesis

Supervisor: Ljubica Matek, Ph.D., Assistant Professor

Osijek, 2020.

University of Josip Juraj Strossmayer in Osijek

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

Department of English Language and Literature

Double Major MA Programme in English Language and Literature (Education studies) and Pedagogy

Martina Zakić

The Tales of Beedle the Bard, Magical Realism and Children's Literature

Master's Thesis

Scientific area: humanities

Scientific field: philology

Scientific branch: English studies

Supervisor: Ljubica Matek, Ph.D., Assistant Professor

Osijek, 2020.

IZJAVA

Izjavljujem s punom materijalnom i moralnom odgovornošću da sam ovaj rad samostalno napravila te da u njemu nema kopiranih ili prepisanih dijelova teksta tuđih radova, a da nisu označeni kao citati s napisanim izvorom odakle su preneseni.

Svojim vlastoručnim potpisom potvrđujem da sam suglasna da Filozofski fakultet Osijek trajno pohrani i javno objavi ovaj moj rad u internetskoj bazi završnih i diplomskih radova knjižnice Filozofskog fakulteta Osijek, knjižnice Sveučilišta Josipa Jurja Strossmayera u Osijeku i Nacionalne i sveučilišne knjižnice u Zagrebu.

U Osijeku, 2. studenoga 2020.

Martina Zakić

Martina Zakić, 0122221482

Abstract

This paper analyses J. K. Rowling's *The Tales of Beedle the Bard* as an example of children's literature that incorporates elements of magical realism. Rowling, a British author, is most prominent for the coming-of-age *Harry Potter* series of seven novels, which began in 1997 with the publication of *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, her debut novel, lasted throughout the 2000s, and continues today with related works. After the release of the final book in 2007, Rowling released *The Tales of Beedle the Bard* in 2008 as a supplement to the series. This collection of tales was first mentioned in the last instalment of the series, *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, when it was presented to Hermione Granger as a part of Dumbledore's will. *The Tales of Beedle the Bard* are envisioned as fairy tales, and consist of five tales for witches and wizards' children, each of them centred around magic, but with a didactic purpose which is beyond the magic itself. Therefore, this paper aims to identify the characteristics of fairy tales and magical realism in each of the tales from *The Tales of Beedle the Bard*, and their joint contribution to the creation of their didactic purpose. The analysis shows that each of the tales carries a didactic purpose as a result of the above-mentioned characteristics.

Keywords: children's literature, magical realism, J. K. Rowling, *The Tales of Beedle the Bard*

Contents

Introduction

The Tales of Beedle the Bard by the British author J. K. Rowling is an autonomous collection of fairy tales that also stands as a supplement to the *Harry Potter* series. They generated the fans' interest after the publication of *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, as one of the tales, "The Tale of the Three Brothers," directly influenced the plot of the last book. Consisting of five tales, *The Tales of Beedle the Bard* follow the stories of different witches and wizards as they use their magic to achieve higher goals but find that magic is often not the tool to reach them. This gives the tales elements of magical realism, but also a didactic purpose.

This paper aims to identify the characteristics of fairy tales and magical realism in each of the tales from *The Tales of Beedle the Bard*, and how they jointly contribute to the creation of their didactic purpose. To do this, the first chapter will shortly present J. K. Rowling and her works, with the subchapter describing the *Harry Potter* phenomenon and the role of *The Tales of Beedle the Bard* within the *Harry Potter* series. The following two chapters will contextualize fairy tales within children's literature and define magical realism. Finally, the last chapter is dedicated to the analysis of each tale by means of identifying the characteristics of fairy tales and magical realism within them, thus establishing their joint contribution to the didactic purpose of the tales.

1. J. K. Rowling

Joanne Kathleen Rowling, known professionally as J. K. Rowling, or under the pen name of Robert Galbraith, is a British author, best known for the coming-of-age, seven-volume *Harry Potter* series. After graduation and a brief stint in Portugal, Rowling began writing what would become one of the best-selling series in history: "The unprecedented commercial success of the books, several big box-office films, and a great deal of merchandise and publicity have ensured that 'Harry Potter' continues to be one of the most recognizable brand names in the world – and J. K. Rowling herself is no doubt the best-known British author worldwide" (Smith). Because of the series' success, Rowling is sometimes credited with generating new interest in reading, as "the Harry Potter series sparked great enthusiasm among children" ("J. K. Rowling"). Due to this, and her services to children's literature, she has received an OBE, and is also the recipient of numerous accolades, such as *France's Legion d'Honneur* and the *Hans Christian Andersen* Award ("Biography"). Besides the Harry Potter-related content, under the pen name of Robert Galbraith, Rowling released critically acclaimed novels such as *The Casual Vacancy* (2012), *The Cuckoo's Calling* (2013), *The Silkworm* (2014), and *Career of Evil* (2015). *The Casual Vacancy* was also adapted for television by the BBC in 2015 ("Biography"). Today, in addition to being a writer, Rowling is the president of the international non-profit children's organization Lumos and runs the "digital entertainment and e-commerce company *Pottermore* [Wizarding World] . . . where fans can enjoy news, features and articles, as well as original content" ("Biography").

1.1. The *Harry Potter* Phenomenon and *The Tales of Beedle the Bard*

The *Harry Potter* series became a global phenomenon in the late 1990s. It is well-known that several publishers rejected Rowling before Bloomsbury accepted her work. Visser and Kai describe the success of the series as follows:

> *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* came out in June 1997 in London and reached the top of the prestigious New York Times Best Seller List in August 1999. The second and third books in the series, *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* and *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* were published in the next two years and by 2000 the three books had occupied the top three places of The New York Times Best Seller List in adult fiction. (196)

In "Harry Potter: A Magical Prescription for Just About Anyone," Sharon Black tackles factors which contributed to the series' success through the experiences of both children and adult

readers. She reckons that *Harry Potter* offers a place to escape from everyday life, but also carries value in tackling the themes of courage and, it being a coming-of-age series, situations where characters have no one else but self to confront. The popularity of the books can be seen in Black's observation: "Children all over the world are dressing up in wizards' hats and robes, wearing lightning-shaped stickers on their foreheads, and attending Harry Potter parties at local bookstores" (540). But the success did not come only commercially; critics praised Rowling for her creativity, inventiveness, and combining realism with fantasy by creating "a fully imagined and original fictional world" (Visser and Kaai 201). Special praise was given to the "inventiveness of form, which also extends to characterisation, setting and atmosphere" (Visser and Kaai 201). Furthermore, the development of the phenomenon can be attributed to several factors, which are:

> the supreme storytelling qualities of the books, crowded with quirky characters, developing year by school year towards a final climactic conflict between Good and Evil, the witty inventiveness and slyly satirical exchanges; all this, and much more, has vastly entertained readers of all ages and nations. (Smith)

Following the publication of the *Harry Potter* series, Rowling continued to release related content, including *Quidditch Through the Ages*, *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them*, and *The Tales of Beedle the Bard*, the proceeds of which were donated to several charities, one of them being her non-profit organisation Lumos. Rowling also collaborated on a Tony-winning play *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*.

The Tales of Beedle the Bard was released with the aid of Lumos in 2008 as a supplement to the *Harry Potter* series. It consists of five tales, following the stories of witches and wizards as they use their magic to fulfil higher goals but find that the magic is often not the tool to reach them. They are "The Wizard and the Hopping Pot," The Fountain of Fair Fortune," "The Warlock's Hairy Heart," "Babbitty Rabbitty and her Cackling Stump," and "The Tale of the Three Brothers." Editions of this book also include Albus Dumbledore's commentary: "His [Dumbledore's] illuminating thoughts reveal the stories to be much more than just simple moral tales, and are sure to make Babbitty Rabbitty and the slug-belching Hopping Pot as familiar to Muggles as Snow White and Cinderella" ("The Tales of Beedle the Bard").

In the introduction to *The Tales of Beedle the Bard*, Rowling explains the difference between wizarding and "Muggle" fairy tales:

> In Muggle fairy tales, magic tends to lie at the root of the hero or heroine's troubles – the wicked witch has poisoned the apple, or put the princess into a hundred years' sleep, or turned the prince into a hideous beast. In *The Tales of Beedle the Bard*, on the other hand, we meet heroes and heroines who can perform magic themselves, and yet find it just as hard to solve their problems as we do. (*The Tales* xi-xiii)

In the *Harry Potter* series, this collection of tales has the role of fairy tales, which are narrated to the witches and wizards' children: "Full of magic and trickery, these classic tales both entertain and instruct, and remain as captivating to young wizards today as they were when Beedle first put quill to parchment in the fifteenth century" ("The Tales of Beedle the Bard"). It is first mentioned in *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, when it was presented to Hermione Granger as a part of Dumbledore's will. When she confesses to not being familiar with it, it leaves Ron Weasley in disbelief: "'You've never heard of *The Tales of Beedle the Bard*?' said Ron incredulously. 'You're kidding, right?'" (Rowling, *The Deathly Hallows* 124), and goes on to explain that "all these old stories came from Beedle" (Rowling, *The Deathly Hallows* 135), and are well-known throughout the wizarding world. This way, Beedle is presented as "the Charles Perrault or the Geoffrey Chaucer of Rowling's magical world, except that his fairy tales are told from the point of view of witches and wizards" (Llompart Pons 136). Even though his tales are famous, little is known about the life of Beedle the Bard himself, except that "the only surviving woodcut shows that he had an exceptionally luxuriant beard" (Rowling, *The Tales* xiii); he lived in the fifteenth century and was from Yorkshire. According to Rowling, his character remains a topic of speculation:

> If his stories accurately reflect his opinions, he rather liked Muggles, whom he regarded as ignorant rather than malevolent; he mistrusted Dark Magic, and he believed that the worst excesses of wizardkind sprang from the all-too-human traits of cruelty, apathy or arrogant misapplication of their own talents. The heroes and heroines who triumph in his stories are not those with the most powerful magic, but rather those who demonstrate the most kindness, common sense and ingenuity. (*The Tales* xiii)

Due to this, the didactic nature and purpose of the tales are almost immediately noticeable, even though, the "explicit didacticism is not delivered by the narrator in *Harry Potter*" (Llompart Pons 132), and it is likewise not explicit in *The Tales*, "for this is generally regarded as writing down, which has fallen out of favour in contemporary children's fiction" (Llompart Pons 132).

Still, besides the "magical" morals of the story concerning the misuse of magic and serious consequences of the involvement with Dark Magic, *The Tales of Beedle the Bard* carry messages of kindness, resourcefulness, positive attitudes towards the self and others, and the distinction between right and wrong, thus identifying themselves with "Muggle" fairy tales.

2. Children's Literature

In everyday conversation, children's literature is simply said to comprise books for children. For anyone who studies literature, the definition should be more precise. Clifton Fadiman defines children's literature as a "body of written works and accompanying illustration produced in order to entertain or instruct young people." Furthermore, he argues that children's literature, as a genre, incorporates "a wide range of works, including acknowledged classics of world literature, picture books and easy-to-read stories written exclusively for children, and fairy tales, lullabies, fables, folk songs, and other primarily orally transmitted materials" ("Children's Literature"). But it was not until 1865 that children's literature was seen in the way it is seen today. According to literary critics, the age of modern children's literature "began in 1865 when Charles Dodgson (under the pen name of Lewis Carroll) wrote *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. It was the first novel written especially for children that was purely entertaining, with no instructional purpose" (Anderson 4).

Nancy Anderson divides the genre according to the intended reader's age. She defines "literature for youth ages 13 to 18 as adolescent or **young adult literature**, and literature for youth from birth through age 13 as **children's literature**" (Anderson 3). Yet, Fadiman adds that "children's books are written, selected for publication, sold, bought, reviewed, and often read aloud by grown-ups" ("Children's Literature"), which is a fact well-established by Sandra L. Beckett, who terms this crossover fiction. Beckett explains that crossover fiction, texts written for children that adults can and do enjoy reading (or vice versa), is "the prominent genre of the new millennium" (1). Additionally, Fadiman, when categorizing children's literature, puts emphasis on what he calls high literature not originally intended for children, arguing that many works, which were created for adult readers, are now classified as children's literature: "from the past, Jean de La Fontaine's *Fables*, James Fenimore Cooper's *Leatherstocking tales*, Sir Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe*, Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*, Alexandre Dumas' *Three Musketeers*, Rudyard Kipling's *Kim*; from the modern period, Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings' *Yearling*, J.D. Salinger's *Catcher in the Rye*, *The Diary of Anne Frank*, Thor Heyerdahl's *Kon-*

Tiki, Enid Bagnold's *National Velvet*." This gives additional importance to Beckett's concept of crossover literature.

Even though authors tend to categorize children's literature in various ways, Anderson, in her book *Elementary Children's Literature: The Basics for Teachers and Parents* (2006), outlines a "common" (8) categorization of children's literature according to genres and subgenres, which she also defines. According to Anderson, genres of children's literature are divided into six major groups: early childhood books, traditional literature, fiction, biography and autobiography, informational books, and poetry and verse. Anderson classifies fairy tales as a subgenre of traditional literature, and describes them as traditional stories written for entertainment, with magic and fantastical characters (8).

Because Rowling envisioned *The Tales of Beedle the Bard* as a collection of fairy tales, even though some of them might overlap with legends as the inspiration for some of them comes from the lives of immensely skilled witches and wizards, it is necessary to take a closer look at that specific genre of children's literature.

2.1. Fairy Tales in Children's Literature

The importance of fairy tales in children's literature arises from their definition. In her lecture, Ljubica Matek paraphrases Jack Zipes, and defines fairy tale as a part of folklore; it is a type of story which involves magical, fantastic, or wonderful episodes, characters, and events, and its plot is set in a timeless setting, with one-dimensional characters who follow a pattern to solve their issues. As part of folklore, fairy tales are also a part of the oral tradition. Clarese A. James paraphrases Alexander Haggerty Krappe, stating that "there are two methods by which a story spreads, by land, and by sea. If a tale originated at a given centre and diffusion took place on land it spread like the circles caused by a stone thrown into water. Language barriers seem to have no power to stop it-even if rhymes and verses form part of the tale they are translated and carried" (341). However, when it travels by sea, a chance of exact transmission is much bigger than transmission by land. Referring to the phenomenon of the spreading of fairy tales, Maria Nikolajeva states that the plot may vary from fairy tale to fairy tale, but is still following the pattern similar to all fairy tales with little or no changes: "the hero leaves home, meets helpers and opponents, goes through trials, performs a task, and returns home having gained some form of wealth. It has inherited some fundamental conflicts and patterns, such as the quest or combat between good and evil" (Nikolajeva 140).

Psychologist Carl-Heinz Mallet defines fairy tales as "popular poetry, for they originated and developed among the people" (qtd. in Haase 390). Furthermore, he emphasizes people as a "focal point of fairy tales, and people are pretty much alike no matter when or where they have lived" (qtd. in Haase 390). Also, he directs attention to the development of fairy tales, stating that they are independent of historical epochs, politics, and ideologies:

> [They have] developed outside the great world, beyond the centres of political and cultural power. They absorbed nothing from these areas, no historical events, no political facts, no cultural trends. They remained free of the moral views, behavio[u]ral standards, and manners of the various epochs… (qtd. in Haase 390).

Donald Haase, on the other hand, finds these premises utopian but does not deny that upon these very premises "very influential and popular theories of the fairy tale have been built" (390). Nevertheless, he states that "Like the Bible, fairy tales – especially the classic tales of Charles Perrault and the Brothers Grimm – hold a revered if not sacred place in modern Western culture" (383). Namely, fairy tales, as they are known today, date from the seventeenth century, and were written down in *Tales and Stories of the Past with Morals, or Tales of Mother Goose* by Charles Perrault, who is credited for the establishment of fairy tales as a literary genre.

Fairy tales have numerous functions: firstly, they are formative tales of childhood, stating their role in the development of an individual, and secondly, fairy tales contribute to the process of socialisation. Besides, Dickens also considered fairy tales as a powerful instrument of constructive socialisation. The aim of fairy tales is spiritual development, as they are to inspire or enlighten the reader. Lastly, they provoke wonder and hope for change (Matek). Gudrun Thorne-Thomsen states that a fairy tale fulfils its functions when "the emotions are aroused - such as courage, kindliness, pity, self-sacrifice - the child must find something to act upon, something to do that requires these qualities" (165). Furthermore, she emphasises *the modus operandi* of writers of modern fairy-tales. According to her, they "look at the virtues which ought to be sought and the vices which must be shunned" (165). She concludes that, when one or more of the virtues are selected as a theme of a tale, then the tale may be considered as a cleverly written tale, meaning that it fulfils its task.

3. Magical realism

Upon its release, Rowling envisioned *The Tales of Beedle the Bard* as fairy tales. However, some find that even though every fairy tale, in its core, contains magic, *The Tales of Beedle the Bard* also display other elements of magical realism. In the article "JK Rowling's *The Tales of Beedle the Bard*: A Magical Realism Analysis", Agung Wiranata Kusuma argues that "magical object describing the magical realism aspects is depicted as a part of human life" (99) and that is "how it brings affects [sic] for the child readers" (99). Due to this, one may conclude that, as such, magical realism plays a significant role in the conveyance of the didactic purpose.

Magical realism (sometimes called magic realism) is a trend in literature, which may be defined in different ways. Although it is usually used to describe "the softening of the boundaries between realism and imagination found in selected examples of postmodern artistic production that appear in popular culture, such as film, television programs, photography and the world of computer gaming" (Bodtorf Clark 75), the difficulty of defining magical realism stems from how it appears in literature:

> the world-view of the narrator and all characters accords with a world-view that is significantly different from Western primary-world reality – one that accepts the existence of at least certain types of supernatural events. The reader is thus presented with only one set of rules to govern the world of the story and accepts that these are the rules that apply. (Watson 170)

Gloria Jeanne Bodtorf Clark states that "with its seamless interfacing of realistic human experience and the imaginative, [magical realism] has found a place in many of the arts, including literature, painting, photography, and film" (87). Moreover, the term itself is also associated with art criticism. In fact, it was "German art critic Franz Roh [who] used the term in 1925 to describe the change in art form from expressionism to new realism" (Bodtorf Clark 76).

Numerous scholars define magic realism in different ways: Lois Parkinson Zamora and Wendy B. Faris state that "it is concerned with phenomenal and spiritual regions where transformation, metamorphosis, dissolution are common, where magic is a branch of naturalism, or pragmatism" (qtd. in Kusuma 99). Kusuma states that magic realism is "the appearance of the supernatural in everyday life" (99). Lee A. Daniel states that, in its core, magical realism is realism, "but with the aid of magic additional planes of reality are possible" (129), although they always remain realistic. Stephen Hart specifies that magical realism aims to "integrate

various kinds of otherness such as culture and metaphysic, without reconciling their contradiction toward the current attraction about postcolonial writers in worldwide" (qtd. in Kusuma 104), and to "return our focus to the backdrop of textual reality, its production and function, by defamiliarizing it" (Simpkins 147).

Scott Simpkins, following Roh's example, offers a better differentiation between magical realism and realism, noting that "true" realism is based on history, is often mimetic and also closure-ridden/reductive; it is characterised by familiarization, use of empiricism/logic, narration, naturalism, and rationalisation by developing a cause-effect relationship in a story. Magic realism, on the other hand, is associated with myths and legends, is focused on fantastic/supplementation elements, and also open-ended/expansive; it is also characterised by defamiliarization, mysticism and/or magic, meta-narration, elements of romanticism, and imagination/negative effect capability (141).

The appearance of magical realism in arts, and therefore literature, is associated with the aftermath of the First World War:

> Magical realism appears right on the heels of the First World War, the first modern historical event that ushers in the era of technologized and highly efficient mass slaughter. The widespread use and persistence of magical realism throughout the last century are linked to the horrifying events that have marred history and have raised questions about our humanity. (Arva 76)

As shown above, magical realism can be comprehended as a reaction to the pain experienced during the war. Eugene L. Arva also adds that never "before in the history of literature (or of representation in general) has the nature of the message (represented reality) come so close to the form of the medium (text); as do most forms of postmodernist fiction, magical realist writing makes of its metafictionality and self-reflectivity a pervasive *modus operandi*" (78). This is also why it holds the status of a literary trend; Kusuma presumes that "magical realism constitutes the most important trend in international contemporary fiction. Moreover, it is a wide-spread distribution, particularly among novelists like Gabriel García Márquez, Salman Rushdie, and Ben Okri" (101). Novels such as "*One Hundred Years of Solitude*, *A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings*, *Midnight's Children*, *The House of the Spirits*, *The Governess or Little Female Academy* and so forth, are strongly linked into magical realism concept" (Kusuma 103). These authors are mostly from Latin America, where magical realism first became popular in the middle of the twentieth century, due to a history of "colonial inheritance, brutal military

regimes, failed revolutions, and economic disasters" (Arva 77), even before the beginning of the First World War.

Based on Roh's work, Tamás Bényei calls for two interpretations of magical realism, based on how one approaches reality and magic: ontological and phenomenological. The ontological interpretation is based on "a Platonic idea of the 'magic,' the miracle of existence or the metaphysical Idea, as an inner property of the world; in this case the artist's task is to achieve the kind of spiritual intensity necessary to experience and divine the mystery of the world" (151). On the other hand, according to the phenomenological approach, "magic is brought to the world through the contemplating gaze of the artist, or is sparked by a miraculous encounter between the creative gaze and the world that is full of mystery" (152), meaning that magic is brought into reality by an artist; it is an artist's work. As a result, Bényei concludes that the approaches create "ambiguity as to whether the source of the magic should be sought in the world or in the perceiving subject . . . creating two well-defined strands in the history of the term" (152). For Arva, the interpretation of magical realism comes down to "an attitude toward and a way of approaching reality – a reality that is rarely what it seems and is seldom perceived in the same way by subjects in different places or different times" (68).

In *Ordinary Enchantments Magical Realism and the Remystifiction of Narrative*, Faris denotes five primary characteristics of magical realism:

1. the text holds a complex element of magic;
2. the descriptions denote a powerful existence of "the phenomenal world" (7), i.e. realistic descriptions "create a fictional world that resembles the one we live in, often by extensive use of detail" (14)
3. when it comes to the reader, one "may experience some unsettling doubts in the effort to reconcile two contradictory understandings of events"
4. "the narrative merges different realms"
5. The established ideas about time, space, and identity are disturbed by magical realism. (7)

All of these characteristics may be found in works classified as children's literature, but are often mislabelled as belonging to fantasy instead of magical realism:

> As for magical realism in children's literature, it becomes all too easy to lump these stories into the fantasy category, regardless of whether there are actually any wand-wielding wizards or dragons involved. Children, it seems, are often

> not expected to process magic as anything but an extravagant, otherworldly phenomenon, even though what most of these novels show are children whose daily lives are filled with the simple, everyday magic of reality. (Wills 67)

Furthermore, Ashley Carol Wills does not deny the link between children's literature and magical realism, but states that some texts are rather a part of magical realism, and some belong to fantasy. She suggests that the reasons for mislabelling also come from works of children's literature, stating that some "children's literature boasts magical realism from start to finish, while others present us with magical real borderlands, spaces into which children cross to finally experience the blending of their real world with a type of magical existence" (71).

Daniel differentiates magical realism and fantasy, stating that "everything that happens in the story remains within the realm of reality" (129). According to him, magical realism is "not marvel[l]ous or fantastic in the sense of fantasy" (129). In fantasy, Bényei states, the supernatural element "descends or erupts into reality from an ontologically different (transcendent) realm" (152), but, in magical realism, it is its inherent characteristic: "it can be a hidden property of reality, belong to the human psyche, or be created by the encounter between the two, but it always grows organically out of the (represented) world" (152). He also states that such "texts explore the act of narration, and the concomitant narrative understanding and ordering of the world" (170). Bodtorf Clark adds that "magical occurrences in magical realist fiction enter the narration from within the story elements" (76). Due to the magical part of magical realism, one may say that the two terms overlap. Therefore, Luis Leal offers a more assertive approach when it comes to distinguishing between magical realism and the fantastic:

> magic realism cannot be identified with either fantastic literature or with psychological literature, neither with surrealism nor the hermetic literature that Ortega describes. Magic realism does not use, like superrealism, dream motifs; nor does it distort reality or create imaginary worlds, as do fantastic literature or science fiction; nor does it place importance on a psychological analysis of the characters, since there is no attempt to explain the motivations behind their actions or which prevent them from expressing themselves. (qtd. in Simpkins 142)

For this reason, the *Harry Potter series* are classified as fantasy, but *The Tales of Beedle the Bard* may be classified as magical realism. In *The Tales*, Rowling approaches the reader from the wizarding children's perspective, who see magic as a part of their everyday lives, whereas

in *Harry Potter*, magic is introduced to the reader in a newly created imaginary world with its own population, political and banking system, culture, sports, where characters and their actions are thoroughly described in seven volumes.

Nevertheless, by understanding the concepts of both magical realism and children's literature, one may see how one can be incorporated with the other, which is the case in *The Tales of Beedle the Bard*. Therefore, the analysis in the chapter that follows will include the elements of magical realism and how they contribute to the tales' purpose.

4. *The Tales of Beedle the Bard*: the Analysis

4.1. "The Wizard and the Hopping Pot"

"The Wizard and the Hopping Pot" is a tale about two wizards (a father and a son) with contrasting views and attitudes towards Muggles. The father used magic to help the Muggles around him by brewing magical potions in his cauldron "generously and wisely" (Rowling 3). When he had attained a great age, he died and left his cauldron to his only son. The son never agreed with his father when it came to Muggles because "those who could not work magic were, to the son's mind, worthless" (Rowling, *The Tales* 4). After his father's death, he found in the cauldron "a soft, thick slipper, much too small to wear, and with no pair" (Rowling, *The Tales* 4), much to his disappointment. There was also a message from his father which read his father's hope that he would never need it. Agitated that his father had left him an old cooking pot, the son refused to help any Muggle who would knock on his door. Every time he would do it, the pot would begin to imitate peasants' woes, "not only braying and groaning and slopping and hopping and sprouting warts, it was also choking and retching, crying like a baby, whining like a dog, and spewing out bad cheese and sour milk and a plague of hungry slugs" (Rowling, *The Tales* 8-9), following him around with a brass foot. No matter which magic the son used, he could not silence the pot or make it vanish. Driven out of his mind, the son finally helped the Muggles, screaming into the night "Come! Let me cure you, mend you and comfort you! I have my father's cooking pot, and I shall make you well!" (Rowling, *The Tales* 10). As a result, the pot "became quiet, shiny and clean" (Rowling, *The Tales* 10), and "burped out the single slipper he had thrown into it, and permitted him to fit it on to the brass foot" (Rowling, *The Tales* 11). The tale finishes with the wizard and the pot going back to the wizard's house, and

"the wizard helped the villagers like his father before him, lest the pot cast off its slipper, and begin to hop once more" (Rowling, *The Tales* 11).

This tale thematises the consequences prejudice may have in the development of one's character. In the example of the old wizard's son, he had, due to his prejudice about the Muggles and partly because his father had not left him money, shown a dose of cruelty and a lack of empathy towards other people's troubles. In the tale, Rowling (or Beedle) incorporated the traits people may develop due to prejudice, and those traits are by no means solely attributed to the wizarding world; as it is mentioned in the introduction to *The Tales of Beedle the Bard*, "the worst excesses of wizardkind sprang from the all-too-human traits of cruelty, apathy or arrogant misapplication of their own talents" (Rowling, *The Tales* xiii). Furthermore, the tale deals with the application of one's talent. The old wizard believes that magic, which here symbolises a talent, should be used to help the Muggles in need, and not against them, and that possessing the magical gift is not a sign of one's importance or worth.

This theme is also omnipresent throughout the *Harry Potter* series, and due to this, one may comprehend the importance of this tale; the ideology of magical community's supremacy is what started both Wizarding Wars and it deepened the conflicts between Gryffindor and Slytherin houses, most notably Harry's, Ron's, and Hermione's rivalry with Draco Malfoy and his comrades. "Although the narrator in *Harry Potter* never moralises explicitly nor tells children how to behave, the novel is by no means devoid of both covert and overt adult moral commentary" (Llompart Pons 132), as Draco and Ron represent the ways the pure-blood families raise their children according to their views from generation to generation; the Malfoys and the Weasleys, both pure-blood families, carry animosity for one another due to their polar opposite opinions:

> "Dear me, what's the use of being a disgrace to the name of wizard if they don't even pay you well for it?" Mr. Weasley flushed darker than either Ron or Ginny. "We have a very different idea of what disgraces the name of wizard, Malfoy," he said. "Clearly," said Mr. Malfoy, his pale eyes straying to Mr. and Mrs. Granger, who were watching apprehensively. "The company you keep, Weasley . . . and I thought your family could sink no lower —" (Rowling, *The Chamber of Secrets* 62)

This tale's didactic purpose is to instruct children to have a clear and unbiased sense of judgment, for prejudice does not benefit anyone who wants to live peacefully in their

community, neighbourhood, or the world. Also, the tale carries general messages of kindness, compassion, and use of one's talents for benefits of all, as a tale should according to Thorne-Thomsen's "The Educational Value of Fairy-Stories and Myths" (165). Dumbledore's notes suggest that one can never know what is going on behind someone's closed door. Rowling (or Dumbledore) describes the tale as the one where the "old wizard decides to teach his hard-hearted son a lesson by giving him a taste of the local Muggles' misery. The young wizard's conscience awakes, and he agrees to use his magic for the benefit of his non-magical neighbours" (Rowling, *The Tales* 12).

Furthermore, this tale showcases several characteristics of magical realism. Rowling uses symbols for "clarifying the emergence of magic both verbally and visually" (Kusuma 103), therefore the elements of magic are preserved in the form of a symbol. In "The Wizard and the Hopping Pot", the element of magic is portrayed in the form of an old cauldron, which holds magic stronger than the one wizard's son can conjure; it displays woes which are common to both the "magical" and "Muggle" world, and therefore it cannot be suppressed. Only when the son learns his lesson, he and the pot fulfil their purpose. In other words, "the pot plays a role as fabulous creature that has great power to resolve every problem that society and the son have" (Kusuma 103).

Also, Rowling's realistic and detailed descriptions of the events in the tale, such as the pot's behaviour, create a strong co-existence of the phenomenal world, or in this case, a world of magic, alongside the Muggle world. One such example is the first incident with the pot:

> At once there came a loud clanging and banging from his kitchen. The wizard lit his wand and opened the door, and there, to his amazement, he saw his father's old cooking pot: it had sprouted a single foot of brass, and was hopping on the spot, in the middle of the floor, making a fearful noise upon the flagstones. (Rowling, *The Tales* 5)

Lastly, both father and son live in a Muggle community, but the presence of the world of magic, and the merging of these two realms is maybe best illustrated in the final image at the end of the tale, where the pot and the wizard's son "set off back to the wizard's house" (Rowling, *The Tales* 11) together.

It is important to note that the element of magic in this tale is an example of a struggle with one's identity. The old wizard's son probably developed the animosity towards Muggles due to the Muggles' harassment of wizards, which ultimately led to the passing of the International

Statute of Wizarding Secrecy in 1689, when the global wizarding community went underground. This is known to anyone familiar with the *Harry Potter* series, and knows the "historical background" of this prejudice. The magical pot is fighting against the son's prejudice, possibly to show him that the reason for the harassment was the fear of the unknown, more precisely the fear of the power magic may have, and not the Muggles' desire to fully erase the wizarding community.

Therefore, the son's character serves as a metaphor for common people who may find themselves in a situation where their established attitudes collide with the events in their lives. This tale carries the message of the importance of having a clear and unbiased sense of judgment; only when one uses their magic and talents properly, they will not turn against them.

4.2. "The Fountain of Fair Fortune"

"The Fountain of Fair Fortune" follows three witches and a Muggle knight as they seek to bathe in a fountain that is said to relinquish one of all their woes. This event takes place annually, "between the hours of sunrise and sunset on the longest day" (Rowling, *The Tales* 21). The first witch, Asha, "was sick of a malady no Healer could cure" (Rowling, *The Tales* 22), and wanted the fountain to help her gain back her health. The second witch, Altheda, was homeless and poor, "robbed of her home, her gold and her wand" (Rowling, *The Tales* 23), and the fountain would enable her to escape poverty. The third witch, Amata, suffered from heartache, as she "had been deserted by a man whom she loved dearly, and she thought her heart would never mend" (Rowling, *The Tales* 23). She wanted the fountain to enable her to stop grieving. The knight, by the name of Sir Luckless, however, was of Muggle origin and had no magical power whatsoever, but wanted the fountain to bring him luck. The four of them made it past the garden walls, meaning that they were the chosen ones to get to the fountain, although only one could bathe in it.

They encountered the first obstacle when they reached the foot of the hill, and it was "a monstrous white Worm, bloated and blind" (Rowling, *The Tales* 27). To pass, the Worm asked for proof of their pain. The knight and the witches tried to overpower it, but it only vanished after it drank the tears from Asha's cheeks when she fell into despair. Halfway up the hill, they were to pay the fruit of their labours. The knight tossed his only coin, but it did not help as they seemed to be on the same spot even though they tried to climb up. When Altheda wiped the sweat off her brow, and it hit the ground, "the inscription blocking their path vanished, and they found that they were able to move upwards once more" (Rowling, *The Tales* 29). They

continued towards the top of the hill but encountered a stream. In clear water, there was a stone that bore the task for them to give the treasure of their past. Regardless, they tried to leap the brook but failed. Then, Amata understood what needed to be done, took her wand, and "drew from her mind all the memories of happy times she had spent with her vanished lover, and dropped them into the rushing waters" (Rowling, *The Tales* 31). With that, they came before the fountain, and Asha fell to the ground from exhaustion. Seeing that, Altheda picked the herbs around the fountain, and with the addition of water made a potion, which she gave to Asha, and it helped her instantly. They concluded that due to this, none of them needs the fountain and encouraged Amata to bathe, but she refused because she let go of her grief at the stream. This led to Sir Luckless bathing in the fountain, realising that he was the lucky one, chosen to bathe, which gave him the courage to ask Amata for her hand in marriage. The four of them came back from the mountain and lived happily ever after, but "none of them ever knew or suspected that the Fountain's waters carried no enchantment at all" (Rowling, *The Tales* 35).

"The Fountain of Fair Fortune" is, according to Dumbledore, "probably the most popular of Beedle's tales" (Rowling, *The Tales* 39). It follows the pattern of fairy tales described by Nikolajeva; the four heroes, who are each other's helpers, leave their homes with the goal of reaching the fountain to rid themselves of their troubles and to do so, they go through trials in the form of three sacrifices. By performing those sacrifices and overcoming both physical and psychological obstacles, they come back having gained some sort of wealth. For Asha, her wealth is gaining her health back. She proved her sincerity and dedication to the goal from the first to the last obstacle. "Exhausted by their struggle to the summit, she was close to death" (Rowling, *The Tales* 31) when Altheda poured the potion in her mouth; her revival showed that she did not need the fountain. At that moment, Altheda came to the realisation that her wealth is her dedication (solving the second obstacle) and knowledge of potion-making, and that she has the means to come out of poverty. Amata and Sir Luckless both found their wealth with each other, as she let go of her grief at the third obstacle, and he believed he finally got some luck as he bathed in the fountain. Therefore, it can be argued that the purpose of this tale is to represent that, if one really tries, one is able to handle all the struggles one may encounter during their life. If one looks closely, even before the tale's ending, none of the characters used the fountain's "magic." Each of the characters came to terms with their specific struggle and overcame it during the encounters with the three obstacles, which symbolize that everyone who works hard for their goals, ultimately reaches them. Moreover, the story symbolizes that obstacles are a natural part of the journey towards the goal.

The first obstacle, “Pay me the proof of your pain” (27), symbolizes the struggle of the characters. Asha expressed her pain crying out of despair, the proof of which was her tears. The second obstacle, “Pay me the fruit of your labours” (28), is related to the will power the characters have to reach their goal. Altheda managed to do so by wiping the sweat off her brow. Metaphorically speaking, the purpose of the second obstacle is to carry the message of perseverance to the reader. The final obstacle, “Pay me the treasure of your past” (30), asks for letting go of the burdens which prevent one from reaching their goal. Amata found happiness when she let the memories of her ex-lover flow away in the stream. Moreover, the fountain had a psychological, not magical, effect on the knight, who finally believed that he was worthy of happiness.

The presence of magical realism is evident in this tale. It is centred around the fountain, which is said to have such power that even witches and wizards want to bathe in it. The fountain, as a symbol of magic, Kusuma states, “symbolizes their happiness. As the greatest power, it brings a particular belief that the fountain could be a single thing that would resolve all of their pains. Consequently, the characters experience the magical moment [sic] closure of pursuing the fountain” (103). Furthermore, the symbolism in the tale, and in children’s literature in general, “also brings a particular effect for children [sic] psychological development. It brings the power of imagination for children” (Kusuma 104). It is also important to note the significance of the obstacles, which serve as metaphors in the narrative, but may also be perceived as symbols of magic along with the fountain. Furthermore, there is also proof of the phenomenal world; the description of the garden, which contains the path towards the fountain, along with the three obstacles, denotes its existence. This is visible in the following: “The Fountain shimmered before them, set amidst herbs and flowers rarer and more beautiful than any they had yet seen. The sky burned ruby, and it was time to decide which of them would bathe” (Rowling, *The Tales* 31). Also, the real and the magical realm are merged in the narrative from the very beginning; on the given day, people of all ages, magical or non-magical, rich or poor, gather once a year “on a hill in an enchanted garden, enclosed by tall walls and protected by strong magic, flowed the Fountain of Fair Fortune” (Rowling, *The Tales* 21).

Consequently, the analysis of the characteristics of magical realism in this tale indicates that Rowling turned to magical realism to express its didactic purpose; to denote to young witches and wizards that every person is the creator of their own happiness.

4.3. The Warlock's Hairy Heart

"The Warlock's Hairy Heart" is a tale about a young warlock who, upon seeing the effects his friends experienced when they fell in love, decided that he would never "fall prey to such weakness, and employed Dark Arts to ensure his immunity" (Rowling, *The Tales* 45). Years passed, and no maiden managed to capture his heart. His parents died, and his friends started to marry and have children, while he pridefully remained in his castle. Then, he grew angry when he overheard his servants discussing this matter, concluding that he, "with all his wealth and power, was yet beloved by nobody" (Rowling, *The Tales* 47). This hurt his pride immensely, and he decided to marry, but he wanted his bride to be as unique as he was. Therefore, he found a suitable candidate – a rich, beautiful witch of immense skill, who, despite her family's approval, remained wary of the warlock. One night, during a feast in the castle, he led her to the dungeons and showed her what he had done with his heart. It was kept in an enchanted crystal casket, still beating, but "shrunken and covered in long black hair" (Rowling, *The Tales* 51), which left the witch shocked and caused her great lament. To put her at ease, the warlock put the heart back in his chest. However, the heart rejected the love the warlock received from the witch due to its long absence. In the meantime, the guests noticed that their host and his bride were gone, so they went looking for them, and in the end, found them. The witch lay dead, and the warlock held her heart in his hand. He tried to get his heart out with a wand, but it refused "to return to the coffin in which it had been locked for so long" (Rowling, *The Tales* 53), so he hacked it with a silver dagger wowing to never be mastered by it. Then, after a mere moment of triumph, the warlock fell across his bride's body and died with both hearts in his hands.

In the notes by Professor Dumbledore, "The Warlock and His Hairy Heart" is said to be "by far the most gruesome of Beedle's offerings, and many parents do not share it with their children until they think they are old enough not to suffer nightmares" (Rowling, *The Tales* 55-56). As such, it represents an opposite to "The Wizard and the Hopping Pot" and "The Fountain of Fair Fortune." This is because the educational value of this tale can be embraced only when children acquire a certain age, at which they, to some extent, comprehend their environment, and (un)written norms. "The Warlock and His Hairy Heart" appeals directly to Beedle's mistrust towards the Dark Arts and his concern for the misapplication of one's talents. It showcases the consequences of trying to erase one's weakness with the dark side of magic. The warlock used his magical power to evade love, which he found a weakness, rather than understanding its true power.

Metaphorically speaking, the tale calls for the reader's sense of good judgment, and when things go dark, one should not go dark as well. As Dumbledore states, "it speaks to the dark depths in all of us. It addresses one of the greatest, and least acknowledged, temptations of magic: the quest for invulnerability" (Rowling, *The Tales* 56). Also, the warlock went against the laws of nature, locking away his heart, which is often misconstrued as a creation of a Horcrux; simply speaking, he "is not seeking to avoid death, [but rather] he is dividing what was clearly not meant to be divided – body and heart, rather than soul –" (Rowling, *The Tales* 58-59). Moreover, the placement of a heart in a casket is, according to Dumbledore, a breach of what is called the *Fundamental Laws of Magic*; its first law states that one should "Tamper with the deepest mysteries – the source of life, the essence of self – only if prepared for consequences of the most extreme and dangerous kind" (Rowling, *The Tales* 59), therefore foreshadowing what might happen if one misuses their talent, which is in this case magic. As a consequence of dark magic, the heart grew distant and descended to nothing more than animal instincts, which serves as a metaphor for people who grow distant from their loved ones when their sense of good judgment is lost, and who act on animal instincts. Consequently, and somewhat ironically, the tale carries the message of fighting against what Beedle saw as humankind's greatest weaknesses, namely "cruelty, apathy or arrogant misapplication of their own talents" (Rowling, *The Tales* xiii).

The magical realism in this tale is centred around the warlock's heart, which acts as a complex element of magic. It is extracted purposefully for the warlock not to fall under what he perceived as a weakness, because falling in love could potentially make him vulnerable. Over time, even though enchanted and still beating, it grew hair as a consequence of its misplacement out of one's body. Yet, it fulfilled its purpose, as it was, through dark magic, "disconnected from eyes, ears and fingers, it had never fallen prey to beauty, or to a musical voice, to the feel of silken skin" (Rowling, *The Tales* 51). Such misuse of magic showcases how it overpowers the warlock's sense of judgment; essentially, the element of magic controls the warlock and not the other way around. This is also the reason why he could not return the heart to the casket, as it was "stronger than he was, and refused to relinquish its hold upon his senses or to return to the coffin in which it had been locked for so long" (Rowling, *The Tales* 53). This scene also symbolizes "the great power of magic, but it also represents the human's [sic] nature" (Kusuma 104), characterizing human nature as fickle and unpredictable – the heart developed human-like traits on its own, and began to act as a separate living being; it rejected to go back to the warlock's chest due to its free will. Kusuma also speculates that possible reasons for this were

"loneliness, sadness, illness and so forth" (104), feelings which are a part of and a representation of human nature in the tale. This left the warlock "reduced to a violent animal who takes what he wants by force, and he dies in a futile attempt to regain what is now for ever beyond his reach – a human heart" (Rowling, *The Tales* 59). A deeper understanding of human nature is what also brought Harry Potter an advantage in fighting Voldemort, as this tale and *The Tales* in general are embedded with "the deep truths about human nature" (Todres and Higinbotham 179), which Voldemort did not understand.

This tale conveys a message of human nature's fickleness, and depicts the serious consequences that may follow one's cold-blooded quest for power, especially by meddling with the Dark Arts. Jonathan Todres and Sarah Higinbotham also argue that, hypothetically, if "the great villain of the *Harry Potter* series had read fairy tales, he might have succeeded in his dark plans. Instead he ignored *The Tales of Beedle the Bard* as a trivial, childish book" (179). Similarly to the warlock's quest for invulnerability, Voldemort created Horcruxes in order to secure his immortality; he put parts of his soul in different objects because he feared death and perceived it as one's greatest weakness. Also, these objects did not fulfil their purpose, as their destruction ultimately led to Voldemort's demise, just as the warlock's heart refused to fulfil his orders. Still, it is far-fetched to argue that, due to multiple factors which influenced the development of his dark mindset and rather complex character, Voldemort would have not gone down the dark route he did if he had read *The Tales of Beedle the Bard*. Instead, one may argue that, upon reading "The Warlock's Hairy Heart", he would have probably sought other dark ways to immortality, as a collection of children's stories would not discourage him from further wrongdoings, because for him "there is no good and evil, there is only power, and those too weak to seek it" (Rowling, *The Philosopher's Stone* 313).

Therefore, the purpose of this tale is to instruct not only young witches and wizards but also the reader to stay within the light, as going down the path of darkness might be a journey with no return, which is seen in the examples of both Voldemort and warlock. It is due to its slightly darker nature than the ones of "The Wizard and the Hopping Pot," and "The Fountain of Fair Fortune" that this tale may "provide reassurance and consolation to its readers to a certain extent, thus conforming to the conventions of children's literature" (Llompart Pons 127).

4.4.“Babbitty Rabbitty and her Cackling Stump”

“Babbitty Rabbitty and her Cackling Stump” follows a foolish king as he attempts to claim magic as his own by banishing wizards and witches around his kingdom with his Brigade of Witch-Hunters, unaware that one of his servants, Babbitty Rabbitty, is a witch. To do so, the foolish king proclaimed that a teacher of magic was needed in court. None of the witches or wizards applied due to the hunt, but a cunning charlatan did, intending to become rich as a king’s employee. He “performed a few simple tricks, which convinced the foolish King of his magical powers, and was immediately appointed Grand Sorcerer in Chief, the King’s Private Magic Master” (Rowling, *The Tales* 64). He persuaded the King to give him gold to buy everything they would need for their “classes,” but instead of buying the supplies, he hid away all the gold in his house.

He was watched all along by Babbitty Rabbitty, the King’s washerwoman. She also witnessed the charlatan snapping two twigs of a tree and giving one to the King, presenting it to him as a wand. So, the charlatan and the King would “practice,” which made Babbitty cackle, and the king grew impatient, organizing an assembly at the court to demonstrate his magical abilities. At this point, the charlatan wanted to leave, but the King had threatened him with death if he did so; moreover, the charlatan discovered that Babbitty was a witch and blackmailed her into helping him, which she did by making a woman’s hat disappear, and a horse fly, but she could not (a did not try to) awake a dog from the dead, “for no magic can raise the dead” (Rowling, *The Tales* 72). This resulted in the King’s humiliation, with his subjects suspecting that his feats were only tricks and not true magic. To save himself, the charlatan accused Babbitty of blocking the magic, and she fled from the King’s Brigade. The charlatan proclaimed that she had transfigured herself into a tree, and ordered the tree to be cut down. Whilst returning to the palace, they heard Babbitty’s cackle coming from the stump, and she proposed that they cut down the charlatan as well, as no witch or wizard can be killed by being cut in half. This scared the charlatan, who confessed his wrongful doings and begged for mercy. The stump continued to explain that by cutting a witch in half, a curse was unleashed and that the King must stop the hunt of witches in wizards for them to have peace. The King agreed, and also erected a monument to Babbitty to remind him of his foolishness. After all this, a rabbit jumped out of the stump with a wand between her teeth; it was Babbitty, who “hopped out of the grounds and far away, and ever after a golden statue of the washerwoman stood upon the tree stump, and no witch or wizard was ever persecuted in the kingdom again” *(Rowling, The Tales 77).*

"Babbitty Rabbitty," in contrast to "The Warlock and his Hairy Heart," represents a witch who obeys the laws of magic, which ultimately helps her escape prosecution. It is believed that "Beedle modelled Babbitty on the famous French sorceress Lisette de Lapin, who was convicted of witchcraft in Paris in 1422" (Rowling, *The Tales* 81), and escaped execution, speculatively, in the form of an Animagus. Therefore, this tale carries messages of the importance of using magic for good instead of for inflicting harm, and is also focused on the effects one's ignorance may cause. It is due to his ignorance that the King is harassing the wizarding community in his kingdom; he "both covets and fears magic" (Rowling, *The Tales* 81), and therefore lays claim on it, believing it can be learned with the possession of a wand and knowledge of spells. It is this ignorance that caused prosecution of wizardkind: "During the Medieval period, wizards were persecuted brutally by Muggles, who were afraid of magic but not very good at recognising it" ("How Do Wizards Keep Themselves So Secret from Muggles?").

According to Dumbledore, the tale displays the non-magical community's attitude towards magic; the King is "ignorant of the true nature of magic and wizards, and therefore swallows the preposterous suggestions of both the charlatan and Babbitty" (Rowling, *The Tales* 82). He is also "prepared to accept all sorts of impossibilities about magic, including the proposition that Babbitty has turned herself into a tree that can still think and talk" (Rowling, *The Tales* 82). This ignorance causes him to employ the charlatan as a Grand Sorcerer in Chief, and ultimately, brings about his humiliation in front of his subjects. Contrary to this, Babbitty offers an understanding of the laws of magic, and acts wisely. It is speculated that she is in the possession the Elder wand, which Rowling uses "as the symbol of magical power and brings magic to life" (Kusuma 104), thus indicating the first appearance of the wand in *The Tales of Beedle the Bard*. The display of its conscientious use showcases how magic and its power should be handled, therefore enabling the children an easier understanding of "what and how magic is used and works" (Kusuma 104). Conversely, the King receives punishment for his ignorance, is forced to admit his foolishness, and vows to stop all prosecution of wizardkind. This way the tale warns about the consequences of ignorance, and that it is not always a bliss, and emphasizes the importance of using magic properly, that is, in accordance with the International Statute of Wizarding Secrecy, which "kept wizards safe; it also required them to be vigilant and responsible" ("How Do Wizards Keep Themselves So Secret from Muggles?").

The magical realism in this tale is centred around the narrative, which merges the two realms – the plot portrays the complexity of magic, and the storytelling portrays the presence of the phenomenal world. The plot revolves around the King's desire to learn magic through knowledge of incantations and possession of a wand, which leaves Babbitty cackling, as magic cannot be learned that way; magic has its laws. After "The Warlock and his Hairy Heart", Rowling introduces more laws of magic – in addition to the consequences of tampering with the essence of one's existence, death cannot be reversed magically. This way, Rowling presents the readers with a more complex understanding of the element of magic and the *Harry Potter* world. Furthermore, although he is aware of the presence of the magical, phenomenal world, the King does not understand the laws of magic due to his ignorance – this is achieved through storytelling, and by connecting the magic to the plot, and visible in a scene when "the King fell to his knees too, and told the stump that he would issue a proclamation at once, protecting all the witches and wizards of the kingdom, and allowing them to practise their magic in peace" (Rowling, *The Tales* 76). Consequently, it may be argued that, after "The Fountain of Fair Fortune," Rowling once again turned to magical realism in order to express the didactic purpose, which, in this case, denotes the importance of respecting and obeying the laws, and possible consequences as a result of one's ignorance.

4.5."The Tale of the Three Brothers"

"The Tale of the Three Brothers" follows three brothers who were learned in magical arts. Upon reaching a dangerous river, they made a bridge with one wave of their wands. As they were crossing the bridge, they encountered Death, who "was angry that he had been cheated out of three new victims, for travellers usually drowned in the river" (Rowling, *The Tales* 89). So, Death, cunning in nature, congratulated the brothers for their achievement and offered them a prize for their magic. The first brother, combative in nature, asked for a powerful wand that would win any duel, and even had the power equal to Death; and Death fashioned him one from the elder tree nearby. The second brother, an arrogant man, wanted to further humiliate Death, so he asked for the power to recall the dead from the grave. Then, Death gave him a stone from the riverbank, which, from that moment on, would have the requested power. However, the third and the youngest brother, "was the humblest and also the wisest of the brothers, and he did not trust Death" (Rowling, *The Tales* 90), so he asked Death for something that would allow him to leave without being followed, so Death gave him his Cloak of Invisibility. After that, the brothers each went their separate ways. The first brother tracked down the wizard with whom he had quarrelled and killed him with the Elder wand. Upon his victory, he bragged about

the invincible wand, and that same night, a "thief took the wand and, for good measure, slit the oldest brother's throat" (Rowling, *The Tales* 91). The second brother returned to his home and used the stone to bring back the girl he was going to marry before she died. Unfortunately, the girl was silent and cold because she did not belong to the mortal world. Therefore, "driven mad with hopeless longing, [the second brother] killed himself so as truly to join her" (Rowling, *The Tales* 92), and Death took two brothers. The third brother remained hidden from Death for many years; it was "only when he had attained a great age that the youngest brother finally took off the Cloak of Invisibility and gave it to his son" (Rowling, *The Tales* 93). Then, he met with Death, and departed the mortal world with him, as equals.

"The Tale of the Three Brothers" is a tale which, perhaps, has the most influence on the culmination of the *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*. It is a subject of disagreement whether the Deathly Hallows (the Elder Wand, the Resurrection Stone, the Cloak of Invisibility) exist at all. Hermione notes that "Beedle probably took the idea from the Sorcerer's Stone; you know, instead of a stone to make you immortal, a stone to reverse death" (Rowling, *The Deathly Hallows* 416). The tale also presents the basis for one of the most famous legends; namely, some wizards, such as Xenophilius Lovegood, believe that the Peverell brothers were the original owners of the Deathly Hallows, and that when one has the ownership of all the Hallows, they make him the "Master of Death." This is confirmed in *The Deathly Hallows*:

> "So it's true?" asked Harry. "All of it? The Peverell brothers —"
>
> "— were the three brothers of the tale," said Dumbledore, nodding. "Oh yes, I think so. Whether they met Death on a lonely road . . . I think it more likely that the Peverell brothers were simply gifted, dangerous wizards who succeeded in creating those powerful objects. The story of them being Death's own Hallows seems to me the sort of legend that might have sprung up around such creations." (Rowling, *The Deathly Hallows* 714)

The nature of the legend is, certainly, opposite of the tale's purpose. It is "a cautionary tale" (Llompart Pons 137), and as Dumbledore states, its moral "could not be any clearer: human efforts to evade or overcome death are always doomed to disappointment" (Rowling, *The Tales* 94), along with quests for power and invulnerability. Dumbledore also states that "Wizards and Muggles alike are imbued with a lust for power" (Rowling, *The Tales* 105). The first and the second brother died because of arrogance and the desire to overcome death. It is important to note Dumbledore's comment that the "story is quite explicit about the fact that the second

brother's lost love has not really returned from the dead. She has been sent by Death to lure the second brother into Death's clutches" (Rowling, *The Tales* 98). The tale praises the third brother's wisdom, who knew, or at least suspected, that tempering with Death is as dangerous as passing the river without the bridge. Hereby Rowling completes the tales with the message against misapplication of one's talents, and the importance of kindness, modesty, and a good sense of judgement.

Magical realism in "The Tale of the Three Brothers" is in the function of conveying the message to the reader, and is centred around three symbols of magic – the Elder Wand, the Resurrection Stone, and the Cloak of Invisibility, jointly called the Deathly Hallows. Kusuma states that, as the symbols of magical power, they "would help children finding belief that magic is real" (104). The Elder Wand represents a slight advantage in combat, but it is not a contributing factor to a wizard's victory, which is visible in the example of the duel between Dumbledore and Grindelwald, who was the master of the wand but still lost. Furthermore, it may be noted that, in *The Deathly Hallows*, Dumbledore warns of the burden and the responsibility the Elder Wand brings to each new master, as "the rules of wandlore are more important to the defeat of Voldemort than any magical quality in the Elder Wand" (Webb 15):

> Maybe a man in a million could unite the Hallows, Harry. I was fit only to possess the meanest of them, the least extraordinary. I was fit to own the Elder Wand, and not to boast of it, and not to kill with it. I was permitted to tame and to use it, because I took it, not for gain, but to save others from it. (Rowling, *The Deathly Hallows* 720)

This also represents an important moral besides the inevitability of death: one should fight against the destructiveness of misapplied power, and learn the importance of humility. The thirst for power is what caused the first brother to, metaphorically, dig his own grave. Therefore, the message for young witches and wizards (and the reader) is that, if they are one day to strive towards jobs or positions which yield great power, they ought to remain humble and wield that power befittingly, and not let the power consume them.

The Resurrection Stone metaphorically represents the everlasting wish of humankind to beat death, or at least, postpone its occurrence. But, as the plot of the tale conveys, death is inevitable with or without the Stone. Lastly, the Cloak represents wisdom and humility of the third brother, who, more than anything else, wished a long, peaceful and happy life, which was made possible by his wish. The Hallows are also, according to Kusuma, "described in a new way so that [their]

presence can be felt through the human senses" (104), merging thus the realms of magic with reality, which are accompanied with the descriptions of the existence of the phenomenal world. This is exemplified by the river, "too deep to wade through and too dangerous to swim across" (Rowling, *The Tales* 87), and the scene of the brothers making a bridge above it. Consequently, the "narrator herself is captive between two worlds—the human and the witches [sic]—not really belong [sic] to one or the other" (Kusuma 101).

Conclusion

This paper analyses the characteristics of fairy tales and magical realism in each of the tales from *The Tales of Beedle the Bard*, and how these features jointly contribute to the creation of their didactic purpose. The didactic purposes of the tales are mostly related to the possible consequences of ignorance, such as frequent wrongdoings, falling prey to the dangers of the Dark Arts and quests for power, and not realizing the inevitability of death. Even though their initial purpose is to entertain and instruct the wizardkind in *Harry Potter*, *The Tales* are read by real children, who perceive and interpret them the same way as they interpret "Cinderella," "Puss in Boots," and many other well-known fairy tales. As such, *The Tales of Beedle the Bard* carry messages of kindness, resourcefulness, positive attitudes towards the self and others, and the distinction between right and wrong, thus identifying themselves with "Muggle" fairy tales.

Even though J. K. Rowling, one of the best known British authors worldwide, incorporated this collection of children's stories into the *Harry Potter* series, *The Tales of Beedle the Bard* can stand as a separate work as well. The analysis shows that the so-called "Muggle" fairy-tales and *The Tales of Beedle the Bard* are, in essence, the same, and may be considered equal. This is due to the fact that each of the Beedle's tales carries a didactic purpose similar to the so-called "Muggle" fairy tales.

Works Cited

Anderson, Nancy A. *Elementary Children's Literature: The Basics for Teachers and Parents*. Pearson/Allyn and Bacon, 2006.

Arva, Eugene L. "Writing the Vanishing Real: Hyperreality and Magical Realism." *Journal of Narrative Theory*, vol. 38, no. 1, 2008, pp. 60-85. JSTOR: www.jstor.org/stable/41304877 . Accessed 30 Aug. 2020.

Beckett, Sandra L. *Crossover Fiction*. Routledge, 2009.

Bényei, Tamás. "Rereading 'Magic Realism.'" *Hungarian Journal of English and American Studies (HJEAS)*, vol. 3, no. 1, 1997, pp. 149-179. JSTOR: www.jstor.com/stable/41261604. Accessed 24 Aug.2020.

"Biography." *J. K. Rowling*, www.jkrowling.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/J. K. -Rowling-Biography.pdf. Accessed 18 Sept. 2020.

Black, Sharon. "Harry Potter: A Magical Prescription for Just about Anyone." *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, vol. 46, no. 7, 2003, pp. 540-544. JSTOR: www.jstor.org/stable/40015455. Accessed 24 Aug. 2020.

Bodtorf Clark, Gloria Jeanne. "Big Mama in Postmodern Society: Tracing Magical Realism in Popular Culture." *Interdisciplinary Literary Studies*, vol. 8, no. 2, 2007, pp. 75-91. JSTOR: www.jstor.org/stable/41210285. Accessed 29 Aug. 2020.

Daniel, Lee A. "Realismo Mágico: True Realism with a Pinch of Magic." *The South Central Bulletin*, vol. 42, no. 4, 1982, pp. 129-130. JSTOR: www.jstor.com/stable/3188273. Accessed 24 Aug. 2020.

Fadiman, Clifton. "Children's Literature." *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 2 August 2017, www.britannica.com/art/childrens-literature. Accessed 22 August 2020.

Faris, Wendy B. *Ordinary Enchantments: Magical Realism and the Remystification of Narrative*. Vanderbilt UP, 2004.

Haase, Donald. "Yours, Mine, or Ours? Perrault, the Brothers Grimm, and the Ownership of Fairy Tale." *Merveilles & Contes*, vol. 7, no. 2, 1993, pp. 383-402. JSTOR: www.jstor.com/stable/41390373. Accessed 24 Aug. 2020.

"How Do Wizards Keep Themselves So Secret from Muggles?" *Wizarding World*, www.wizardingworld.com/features/how-do-wizards-keep-themselves-so-secret-from-muggles. Accessed 20 Oct. 2020.

James, Clarese A. "Folklore and Fairy Tales." *Folklore*, vol. 56, no. 4, 1945, pp. 336-341. JSTOR: www.jstor.com/stable/1256727. Accessed 28 Aug. 2020.

"J. K. Rowling." *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 16 Sept. 2020, www.britannica.com/biography/J-K-Rowling. Accessed 18 Sept. 2020.

Kusuma, Agung Wiranata. "JK Rowling's *The Tales of Beedle the Bard*: a Magical Realism Analysis." *Journal of Language and Literary Studies*, vol. 2, no. 2, 2019, pp. 99-107. www.dx.doi.org/10.18860/prdg.v2i2.6841. Accessed 29 Aug. 2020.

Llompart Pons, Auba. "Escape and Consolation: Narrative Voice and Metafiction in the *Harry Potter* Series." *Journal of the Spanish Association of Anglo-American Studies*, vol. 41, no. 1, 2019, pp.125-141. www.doi.org/10.28914/Atlantis-2019-41.1.07. Accessed 19 Oct. 2020.

Matek, Ljubica. "Fairy Tales." The Fantastic in American/English Literature, 20 Oct 2016, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Osijek. Lecture.

Nikolajeva, Maria. "Fairy Tale and Fantasy: From Archaic to Postmodern." *Marvels & Tales*, vol. 17, no. 1, 2003, pp. 138-156. JSTOR: www.jstor.com/stable/41389904. Accessed 24 Aug. 2020.

Rowling, J. K. *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*. Scholastic Press, 1999.

---. *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows.* Scholastic Press, 2007.

---. *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*. 20th Anniversary ed., Bloomsbury, 2017.

---. *The Tales of Beedle the Bard*. Bloomsbury, 2008.

Simpkins, Scott. "Magical Strategies: The Supplement of Realism." *Twentieth Century Literature*, vol. 34, no. 2, 1988, pp. 140-154. JSTOR: www.jstor.org/stable/441074. Accessed 29 Aug. 2020.

Smith, Jules. "J. K. Rowling: Critical Perspective." *British Council*, www.literature.britishcouncil.org/writer/j-k-rowling. Accessed 18 Sept. 2020.

"The Tales of Beedle the Bard." *Wizarding World*, www.wizardingworld.com/discover/books/tales-of-beedle-the-bard. Accessed 23 Aug. 2020.

Thorne-Thomsen, Gudrun. "The Educational Value of Fairy-Stories and Myths." *The Elementary School Teacher*, vol. 4, no. 3, 1903, pp. 161-167. JSTOR: www.jstor.com/stable/993304. Accessed 24 Aug. 2020.

Todres, Jonathan and Sarah Higinbotham. *Human Rights in Children's Literature: Imagination and the Narrative of Law*. Oxford UP, 2016.

Visser, Irene and Laura Kaai. "The Books that Lived: J. K. Rowling and the Magic of Storytelling." *Brno Studies in English*, vol. 41, no. 1, 2015, pp. 195-212.

Watson, Greer. "Assumptions of Reality: Low Fantasy, Magical Realism, and the Fantastic." *Journal of the Fantastic in the Arts*, vol. 11, no. 2, 2000, pp. 164-172. JSTOR: www.jstor.org/stable/43308437. Accessed 24 Aug.2020.

Webb, Caroline. *Fantasy and the Real World in British Children's Literature: The Power of Story*. Routledge, 2014.

Wills, Ashley Carol. "Borderlands of Magical Realism: Defining Magical Realism Found in Popular and Children's Literature." 2006. Texas State University-San Marcos, MA Thesis. https://digital.library.txstate.edu/handle/10877/2633.