

The Role of Magical Objects in J.K. Rowling's "Harry Potter and Goblet of Fire"

S. Jegatheeswari

Ph.D Scholar, Vellalar College for Women, Erode (Tamil Nadu) India

Y.L. Sountharya

Associate Professor, Vellalar College for Women, Erode (Tamil Nadu) India

Abstract

Fantasy is a genre used to create pleasure among readers. Every author has been using fantasy as his/her choice in the form adventure, magic, myths, supernatural beings and manifestation of animals with legends. The principle of fantasy is abided by J.K. Rowling with her incredible passion for the fantasy world. Harry potter series are intertwined with the elements of fairy tale and classical fantasy fiction. Rowling skillfully uses child psychology to attract the young minds. She makes use of threads of wit, humor, magic and imagination mixed with reality to weave the plot of romance. She creates the world of magic in which Harry struggles a lot to come out of the bonds of his cruel relatives and enters the Hogwarts, the school of Wizardry and Witchcraft. In the beginning of the fourth year of the Hogwarts, Harry gets shocked at the news of Hogwarts hosting the Triwizard Tournament. The names of the representatives of the schools are selected by the Goblet of Fire. It is a great shock to everyone that Harry is chosen for the tournament. The participants of the tournament have to face many challenges. All the challenges are encountered by Harry with the help of magical creatures and objects. The optimum use of magical elements enhances romantic effect to the plot of the story. Magical objects and creatures play an inevitable role in this story. Rowling uses magic as the predominant element in the novel. She conceives the plot as a thrilling one with the use of magical elements. Harry Potter series is the mixture of magical creatures and objects. The author's use of powerful magical elements makes "Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire" a grand success.

Key Words: adventure, myth, magic, fantasy, supernatural, witchcraft.

INTRODUCTION

The term 'Fantasy' has a long history from classical period to till date. Classical mythology is brimming with magical characters and stories, and rich with the elements of fantasy. India also has a lengthy history of writing fantastic stories like the Panchatantra, composed around 3rd century BC. Boccaccio's Decamerone (1353), The Book of One Thousand and One Nights (Arabian Nights) and Beowulf, an epic

poem from the Anglo-Saxon have a profound influence on the fantasy genre. Harry potter series is intertwined with the elements of fairy tale and classical fantasy fiction.

Rowling has a skill to incorporate reality and fantasy. This unique quality paves a way to achieve success. Fantasy makes the readers spellbound and it creates a grip between the author and the readers. The amalgamation of the elements of

supernatural, magic, legends and fairy tales used by Rowling gives an elegant touch to her character, theme, setting and plot. She satisfies the readers' desire by enlivening the old mythology through the use of fantastic and surprising twists. Her style of narration is awesome, which makes the readers a part and parcel of Harry Potter series. In literature, it ever happens that a series of novel have got such a numerous fans. Her narrative technique is a charming one and worthwhile.

Imagination is magnetic and a productive faculty which plays a prominent role in artistic creation. It takes up upraised position and facilitates the innovative approach of mind. The innovative writers lead to determine and exhibit imagination as the utmost power to achieve probable counterfeit-conquest of its own formula, which tends to be fantastic or fanciful. Northrop Frye explains his idea of imagination as:

“In the course of struggling with a world which is separated from it, the imagination has to adapt its formulaic units to the demands of that world, to produce what Aristotle calls the probable impossibility. The fundamental technique used is what I call displacement, the adjusting of formulaic structures to a roughly credible context”. (The Secular Scripture 36)

Magic is the essential constituent of Harry Potter novels. Romantic writers have the license to invent magical devices that befit the setting of romance. Rowling employs magical objects as a vital part of the narration. The magical objects create not

only fantasy but also romantic effect in the novel. They help the protagonist in his quest for defeating Voldemort. Inventiveness of Rowling helps her to use varied magical objects which do not appear in any other fantasy novel. To make the magical world a captivating one, the author coins a number of magical items. Even Hogwarts students use quills to write on parchments. All the characters in the magical world possess wand which is used to cast spells and charms. Wand is the basic instrument for the wizards. Wizards use charms and spells for cleaning the Great Hall, serving the dishes and washing the plates. Wizards use spells for controlling one's mind, dueling and killing. They also use portkeys, broomsticks and Floo powder network for transportation.

The Sorting Hat is one of the incredible inventions of Rowling. It has a significant role in the Hogwarts school. It is a Sagacious tool which has magical power to read one's mind. It identifies the students' inherent traits and honesty on the basis of their characteristics. It also allots the students to particular houses like Gryffindor, Ravenclaw, Slytherin and Hufflepuff. The Sorting Hat ceremony is performed every year when the new students arrive at the Hogwarts. No one has the authority to change the decision of the Hat. Once they are sorted, the students have to stick to their respective houses till they complete their studies in the Hogwarts School. The students are not permitted even to sit with other houses. The strict rules that the students have to play, eat, sleep and study with their own house are observed. Every year, the Sorting Hat sings different songs.

Rowling invents another interesting magical element 'The Invisibility Cloak' which increases romance in the plot. It is an enchanting cloth that has the magical power to conceal the wearer fully from the eyesight of the other people. "Twelve Dancing Princess" is a fairy tale where there is an appearance of the term 'Invisibility Cloak'. In this tale, twelve princesses disappear regularly at night. A soldier in the tale has an interest to smell out the mystery behind the disappearance. He gets the invisibility cloak from the old woman who advises him not to drink or eat before he wears the magic cloak. Using the cloak, the soldier runs after the princesses to the canal, lagoon and castle. He unveils the occult to the king and gets the kingdom as the gift. He also has been given the eldest daughter of the king as his bride. The invisibility cloak used by Harry is the property of his family. After his father's demise, Dumbledore sends the invisibility cloak to Harry as a Christmas gift. Rowling's use of the invisibility cloak has an important role throughout the Harry Potter series. In "Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire", Harry uses the invisibility cloak to avoid meeting Ron and Slytherin's sarcasm when he visits the village of Hogsmeade. Then Harry wears the cloak when he follows Hagrid to the forest where he gets the clues of the first task "encountering the dragon". He straightaway returns to the castle to meet his god-father Sirius. "Harry pulled off the Invisibility Cloak and threw himself into an armchair in front of the fire. The room was in semi-darkness; the flames were the only source of light. Harry looked back into the flames, and jumped." (290). Harry wants to know the secret of the egg which is given to him after the first task. He covers himself with the

invisibility cloak and enters the secret bathroom. "The door creaked open. Harry slipped inside bolted the door behind him, and pulled off the Invisibility cloak looking around" (399) At last, the cloak is mischievously used by Barty Crouch to hide his father's dead body. Harry never uses the invisibility cloak for selfish reasons but Barty Crouch misuses it for the misdeed. Using the invisibility cloak for wrong deeds is considered as the act of horror. "You killed your father", Dumbledore said, in the same soft voice, 'What did you do with the body?' carried it into the forest. Covered it with the Invisibility cloak. I transfigured my father's body. He became a bone... I buried it, while wearing the Invisibility cloak, in the freshly dug earth in front of Hagrid's cabin" (599) The author makes use of the invisibility cloak both good as well as evil purposes.

Apart from the Invisibility cloak, the author portrays Wand as a notable object. She bestows different qualities to every Wand. It is used to perform magic by repeating spells with correct actions and words. The wizards need not only innate power to perform magic but also the apt unification of superficial elements like curses, charms and wands. Throughout the novel, the author makes use of wand as the prominent tool to discharge the magic. To carry out spells and curses, wand is a compulsory tool. Nevertheless, experts like Dumbledore can execute magic without a Wand though performing magic without wand is a tough one. Using a wand requires sincere effort and expertise in magic. The characteristics of a wand also determine the kind of magic to be performed.

Rowling explains that the wizard has no right to choose the Wand. Instead, the Wand chooses its master on the basis of one's skill to use magic. The Wand signifies its master's destiny. There is an interesting reason behind the selection of Wand of Harry which has a Kernel association

“Harry had waved what felt like every Wand In the shop, until at last he had found the one that suited him-this one, which was made of holly, eleven inches long, and contained a single feather from the tail of a phoenix. Mr. Ollivander had been very surprised that Harry had been so compatible with this wand. ‘Curious’, he had said,’... ‘curious’, and not until Harry asked what was curious had Mr. Ollivander explained that the phoenix feather in Harry’s wand had come from the same bird which had supplied the core of Lord Voldemort’s”. (272)

Both Harry and Voldemort’s wands have the same core of Dumbledore’s pet Fawkes’ feather. When they cast spells against each other, brother wands never fight against each other. The unusual feature of the wand effects malfunction. With the help of the appearance of the ghost from the rays of the wands, Harry escapes from the Dark Lord. As Harry has strong will power and considerable amount of enchanting power, he overcomes Voldemort. Rowling states in her first book: “Wands are quasi-sentiment, meaning that while they cannot think or communicate like a human, they can perform certain actions through their own will” (The Philosopher’s stone) (147). The author exposes how the wands select their masters. The wands work on the basis of

between the Wand of Harry and Voldemort’s. Being a wizard and the selection of the Wand are not his choice but they are decided by the fate. Rowling cleverly scripts the plot by giving the same core of Wand to both the protagonist and the antagonist.

their masters’ skill. The aid of the wand makes Harry win in his quest.

Rowling’s inherent writing skill makes her to create the magical object like “The Marauder’s map”. It is Rowling’s exemplary artistic skill that brings many new fangled notions among the wizards using the Marauder’s Map. It is a magical tool which shows not only the location of complete castle of Hogwarts but also renders hints about secret places and enigma in the Hogwarts. The map has the ability to trace out the movement of any person with in the boundary of the castle that appears as a sign of a dot. It is proficient to detect even a person who uses polyjuice potion and is outwitted by the invisibility cloak. This map is invented by the four Gryffindor students when they are studying at Hogwarts. To use this map, one would recite the correct spell with one’s wand. If one does not know the right spell, the map will irritate the user by asserting “Mind your business”.

“Harry thought he would take the Marauder’s Map, which, next to the cloak, was the most useful aid to rule breaking Harry owned. The map showed the whole of Hogwarts, including its many shortcuts and secret passageways and, most importantly of all, it revealed the people inside the castle as minuscule, labelled dots, moving around the corridors, so that Harry would be forewarned if

somebody was approaching the bathroom". (398)

Harry checks the Marauder's Map whether the coast is clear or not when he comes out the bathroom. The dot in the map induces Harry's curiosity. "A Single dot was flitting around a room in the bottom left-hand corner- Snape's office. But the dot wasn't labelled 'Severus Snape...' it was Bartemius Crouch" (405). The Map does not have the ability to distinguish between Barty Crouch Sr. and Barty Crouch Jr. Harry assumes that the dot is Barty Crouch sr. The advancement of science and technology imbibes both progression and destruction. The map is used for both good and evil. Here, Harry uses the map for the benefit of his house and friends. The map helps Harry to visit the prohibited area and Hogsmeade, but Barty Crouch Jr. uses the map for finding out his father and to murder him.

"Map?" said Dumbledore quickly. "What map is this?" "Potter's map of Hogwarts, Potter saw me on it. Potter saw me stealing more ingredients for the Polyjuice potion from Snape's office one night. He thought I was my father as we have the same first name. I took the map from Potter that night. I told him my father hated Dark Wizards. Potter believed my father was after Snape. 'For a week I waited for my father to arrive at Hogwarts. At last, one evening, the map showed my father entering the grounds. I pulled on my Invisibility cloak, and went down to meet him. He was walking around the edge of the Forest. Then potter came, and Krum. I waited I could not hurt potter, my master

needed him. Potter ran to get Dumbledore. I stunned Krum. I killed my father". (599)

Rowling's imaginary power has no boundary. Her commitment to create the romantic plot is awesome. The pensieve is another object created by her to revive the plot of romance. It is possessed by the headmasters of the Hogwarts. It is the magical tool which is used to store the past memories and anyone can view the memories of the owner. In this novel, Dumbledore is the owner of the pensieve. Harry unexpectedly enters the memory of Dumbledore. He visualises the trial scene of Karkaroff, Ludo Bagman and Barty Crouch Jr. with the help of pensieve, Harry is able to identify characters and know the past incidents of Hogwarts. In this novel, Dumbledore, the mentor of Harry, explains about pensieve as:

"What is it?" Harry asked shakily. "This?' It is called a pensieve", said Dumbledore. "I sometimes find, and I am sure you know the feeling, that I simply have too many thoughts and memories crammed into my mind'. 'Er', said Harry, who couldn't truthfully say that he had ever felt anything of the sort. "At these times", said Dumbledore, indicating the stone basin, "I use the pensieve. One simply siphons the excess thoughts from one's mind, pours them into the basin, and examines them at one's leisure. It becomes easier to sport patterns and links, you understand, when they are in this form." "You mean... that stuff's your thought?" Harry said,

staring at the swirling white substance in the basin". (518-519)

This magical device is created by the author for the motive to help the Protagonist winning his quest. It plays a prominent role throughout the series. Rowling indirectly depicts the memories to the readers through the pensieve. It is like a Time Machine, one can go to the past whenever one wants to recall the past memories. The description of its working thrills the readers. The effective use of this device facilitates the flow of the plot.

Apart from the magical device Pensieve, Rowling introduces Portkey which is the blended words of French 'porter' and English 'key' which means that it can carry a person by the use of a secret of magic. It is an enchanting tool for transportation. The creation of portkeys without getting permission is punishable in Hogwarts. Travelling by portkeys causes nausea and vomiting to some students. It is felt to be uncomfortable. Broom, An old host, an old rubber tyre and the Triwizard cup are used as portkeys in this novel. Only wizards and witches can use portkeys to travel by casting spell. Any bewitched object can be turned into a portkey. Before the invention of the Hogwarts Express, portkeys are used as a mode of transportation. Wizards and witches apparate if they wish to travel from one place to another. It is the fastest means of transportation. It is a popular way of travelling mode in the wizardry world. Harry potter feels that apparition is "being forced through a very tight rubber tube". There are no restrictions for House Elves to apparate inside the Hogwarts. While apparating, a loud crack sound is produced.

Floo powder effect is also used by the wizards and witches for conveyance. To create the enchanting environment, Rowling employs as many as magical devices as possible.

Portkey is introduced for the first time in the novel "Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire". The department of Magic facilitates the viewers for the comfortable arrival at Quidditch Trillanium Stadium where the Quidditch World Cup takes place. They make arrangement of portkeys for travelling Harry, Hermione, Ron and his father Aurthur Weasley, Fred and George, Ginny, Cedric and his father Amos Diggory. They use an old boot as Portkey to reach the quidditch stadium. There is a type of portkey which is preset to reach their target at a particular time. They start from Stoatshead Hill. All the nine of them touch the Portkey and it starts whirling.

"Harry felt as though a hook just behind his navel had been suddenly jerked irresistibility forwards. His feet had left the ground; he could feel Ron and Hermione on either side of him, their shoulders banging into his; they were all speeding forwards in a howl of wind and swirling colour; his forefingers was struck to the boot as though it was pulling him magnetically onwards and then his feet slammed into the ground; Ron Staggered into him and he fell over; the Portkey hit the ground near his head with a heavy thud". (69) After the Quidditch World Cup is over, Weasley Family has returned to Stoatshead Hill using an old rubber tyre as portkey.

Rowling exposes her artistic tendency to manipulate the setting of the novel. She skillfully carves the magical objects to effectuate the romantic effect in the plot. Broomstick is one of the most brilliant creations for transportation by Rowling. Witches and Wizards use this tool not only for transportation but also for playing Quidditch game. Broomsticks react to the wizards' command 'up'. Harry's broomstick Nimbus 2000 is replaced by Firebolt which is the most advanced one. The quidditch players who play for the Irish National team use Firebolts. Harry uses Firebolt only once in this novel. He employs Firebolt while encountering the Hungarian Horntail in the First task.

"Accio Firebolt!" he shouted. He waited, every fibre of him hoping, Praying... if it hadn't worked... if it wasn't coming... he seemed to be looking at everything around him through some sort of shimmering, transparent barrier, like a heat haze, which made the enclosure and the hundred of faces around him swim strangely... and then he heard it, speeding through the air behind him; he turned and saw his Firebolt hurtling towards him around the edge of the woods, soaring into the enclosure, and stopping dead in mid-air beside him, waiting for him to mount". (309)

Rowling conceives the magical world that is completely contrasted to the muggle world so that she manipulates many magical objects which deepen the fantasy in the plot. The Floo powder is another magical invention by her. It is used to travel from one place to another place by heaving the

powder into hearth attached to the floo network. The floo powder turns the flames inoffensive. The desired place is reached by the witches and wizards by using this effect. Weasley Family uses this effect for taking Harry from the Dursleys.

"Wait a moment!" he bellowed at the fire. "What exactly are you going to-?" BANG. The electric fire shot across the room as the boarded-up fire-place burst outwards, expelling Mr. Weasley, Fred, George and Ron in a cloud of rubble and loose chippings. Aunt Petunia shrieked and fell backwards over the coffee table; Uncle Vernon caught her before she hit the floor and gaped, speechless, at the Weasleys, all of whom had bright red hair, including Fred and George, who were identical to the last freckle." (43)

Quill is an interesting instrument used in Hogwarts. It is a magical object which is used to write on the parchment. The students of Hogwarts use this tool to script anything. The author wants to show the total difference between Muggle World and Wizard World. So she invents quills instead of normal pen. It is made of feather. Harry's quill is bought by his best friend, Hermione. His quill is made of eagle Feather. In this novel, Harry uses the same quill to write letters to his godfather, Sirius Black and his friend, Ron. "Harry seized his eagle-feather quill once more, grabbed a fresh piece of parchment, and wrote: Ron, it's all OK, the Muggles say I can come. See you five O'clock tomorrow. Can't wait. Harry" (37-38). Reta Skeeter's acid green quill plays a great role in this novel. It takes notes on

what she dictates and sometimes it exaggerates its owner's words. Many times, it spoils Harry's name and gives wrong information about him. While Rita Skeeter interviews Harry on the day of the Wand Weighing Ceremony, she enquires Harry about his parents' feel if they come to know that he is participating in the Triwizard Tournament. Harry is annoyed by such a question. He barely says anything regarding this, but the quill writes different answer. "Tears fill those startlingly green eyes as our conversation turns to the parents he can barely remember." (268)

The students of Hogwarts' school have to board Hogwarts' express. The author makes a railway station itself a magical one. The magical railway station is at platform nine and three quarters in King's Cross Station. There is no separate place for the station. It is located within the muggle world. The barrier between the muggle world and the station is the solid wall. If the students want to enter the station, they have to cross the wall. It is hidden within the real world. Though the journey in Hogwarts Express is interesting, Malfoy's interruption disturbs Harry and his friends.

"But Hogwarts is hidden", said Hermione, in surprise, 'everyone knows that... Well, everyone who's read Hogwarts. A History, anyway.' 'Just you, then,' said Ron. 'So go on-how d'you hide a place like Hogwarts?'. 'It's bewitched', said Hermione. 'If a Muggle looks at it, all they see is a mouldering old ruin with a sign over the entrance saying DANGER, DO NOT ENTER, UNSAFE'. 'so Drumstrang'll just look

like a ruin to an outside, too?' 'May be', said Hermione, shrugging, 'or it might have Muggle-Repelling charms on it, like the World Cup Stadium. And to keep foreign Wizards from finding it, they'll have made it Unplottable-'. (148)

Rowling depicts the background of the magical world with the help of the extraordinary magical features. The author engraves the majestic Great hall at the school of Hogwarts. The Great Hall is remarkably spacious to lodge all the teachers and students of not only Hogwarts but also other schools. In this novel, The Hall accommodates the teachers and the students of Drumstrang and Beauxbatons who have come for participating in the Triwizard Tournament. It is an excellent building with sky-high walls. The hall is decorated with floating candles, gleaming golden plates, goblets and enchanting mirror dome reflecting sky with shimmering stars. The enchanting features of the background are heightened by the magical atmosphere. It is the part and parcel of the Hogwarts School. All the important events like Christmas celebration, Halloween feast and the sorting Hat ceremony take place here. The hall is decorated magically to fulfill the needs of the ceremony. The Halloween related things like bats, Orange Steamers, Sweet filled Pumpkins and Water snakes are used to decorate the Hall on Halloween day. As the sign of merry making, the ghosts of Hogwarts jump out of the high walls and perform configuration gliding.

Rowling manipulates her artistic geniusness in creating romantic elements even in minute things. Usually muggles use cello

tape to adhere to the torn books. To enhance the romantic sense, she employs the term spellotape instead of cello tape, “Why are they all sending Howlers?” asked Ginny, who was mending her copy of One Thousand Magical Herbs and Fungi with spello tape on the rug in front of the living-room fire”. (135)

The romantic writers like Rowling have the freedom to device magical apparatus that befits the background of the story. The strange and unusual apparatus increases the influence of romance on the plot. The author invents many devices to draw the setting of the romantic novel. The magic clock in Weasley’s house possesses nine magic hands which show the whereabouts of the family members.

“It was completely useless if you wanted to know the time, but otherwise very informative. It had nine golden hands, and each of them was engraved with one of the Weasley family’s names. There were no numerals around the face, but descriptions of where each family member might be. ‘Home’, ‘School’, and ‘Work’ were there, but there was also ‘lost’, ‘hospital’, ‘prism’ and, in the position where the number twelve would be on a normal clock, ‘mortal peril’” (135)

References:

- Frye, N. *The Secular Scripture: A Study of the Structure of Romance*. England: Harvard University Press, 1978.
- Rowling, J.K. “*Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*”. Great Britain: Bloomsbury Publication. (2000). Print.

Magic plays an important role in promoting the plot of the story. Rowling sketches the plot by introducing many interesting magical techniques. Apparating is the technique which is used by the wizards by disappearing from one place and reappearing in another. The author frames the rules for apparating like the rules for taking driving license in the ordinary world. Rowling’s wizardly world and muggle world coincide many times. If one wants to use apparition, one must have certain age and pass the test conducted by the Department of Magical Transportation.

CONCLUSION

The author’s use of numerous magical objects facilitates all the characters to expose their magical talents. The magical world is decorated with the magical objects. They create thrilling effect among the minds of the readers. Especially, the hero, Harry faces the challenges with the help of magical objects. The magical things are not made for the hero or villain. Anyone in the wizardry world can use magical things. The use of numerous magical objects is the hallmark of the author’s imagination. They play an inevitable role in this story. The author continues to surprise and delight the readers with the help of the magical objects. The role of magical objects plays a vital role in making the novel “*Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*” a grand success.