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to everyone who didn't force me to grow up

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1. INTRODUCTION

This thesis is concerned with old chairs, brooms and rabbit holes – all of these items are part of the motif I am going to study. I have long been interested in stories where characters travel from a realistic world into a magical world, and in this thesis I shall investigate such transitions. My analysis will be concerned with all transitions that happen between a so-called Primary World (a realistic world) and a so-called Otherworld (a fantastic world). This means that I will not only investigate how the characters get to one place, but also how they return. Since I believe that such transitions are most frequent in fantasy for children and young adults, this is also the genre from which I have taken the novels to analyse in this thesis. These are: *Coraline*, *The Secret of Platform 13*, the *Harry Potter* series, *Alice in Wonderland*, *Through the Looking-Glass*, *The Wishing-Chair* series, the *Mary Poppins* series and *The Chronicles of Narnia*.

Before analysing the books, however, I am going to position my research in the field of literature. First of all I am going to discuss what the term fantasy means as a genre, how I understand it and how it will use it in this thesis. By doing so I will show that the motif of transitions between worlds relates to one of the core features of this genre, namely the existence of so called Otherworlds (i.e. worlds where non-realistic elements are considered the norm). Since fantasy, as many other genres, is difficult to pin down on exclusive elements, I will not only define fantasy as what it is, but also delimit it from its two closest neighbouring genres, namely the fairy tale and science fiction. I shall then further discuss the notion of Otherworld as it is the concept that forms the basis of transitions. As a final theoretical point, I will investigate what scholars have written on the subject of passages – the elements that allow the transitions to start – and the journeys that are undertaken, leading to the respective other world.

After having discussed the theoretical background for the motif, I will move on to explain my choice of books. Having already positioned myself in the discussion of the genre fantasy, I will then move on to stating what I consider to be children's and young adult literature (CYAL) and name the books I have

chosen to analyse. The second half of this thesis is dedicated to the analysis of the transitions – i.e. all instances where a character travels between the worlds¹ – I have found in the books. This will at times include some thoughts on the location and borders of the Otherworlds in the stories. Yet the main question is of course: how does it all work? In order to analyse these transitions, I will split the transition into two parts, the passage (the item, ability or character that enables the transition) and the journey (the actual time spent travelling). As far as the passages are concerned I will identify what kind of “thing” the passage is and how it can be categorised. Moreover, I will investigate how the passages work and who can use them. Further, I will study the journeys that the characters find themselves on as they travel between the worlds, showing how the characters experience the journeys and how narrated time and narrating time correlate.

In the conclusion I will summarise in how far the theoretical accounts and categorisations that were discussed previously concur with my findings. Doing so, I will suggest ways to expand the framework provided by Nikolajeva in order to account for all transitions in the novels studied. Moreover, I will show that there are some aspects to the transitions that are not reflected in the existing theory at all, but that seem central enough to consider them in further studies of this motif.

¹ For this thesis, the phrase “between the worlds” is to mean between a realistic (Primary World) and a fantastic world (Otherworld), as I will not deal with transitions between various Otherworlds.

THE THEORY

2. DEFINING FANTASY

As Perry Nodelman, an internationally acknowledged scholar of children's literature, aptly puts it: " '[f]antasy' [...] is so many different things that attempts to define it seem rather pointless" (*Defining* 187). Well, I shall try to do it anyway. Attebery, a scholar who specialises in science fiction and fantasy, suggests that the easiest way to define fantasy is to compile a stack of books and then say: "There. That is what I mean by fantasy" (1). Although this may be the easiest way, I believe that is possible and worth the effort to define fantasy properly. So instead of compiling books, I am going to compile and discuss the characteristics of the genre fantasy.

As stated briefly in the introduction, this thesis is concerned with entrances into and out of fantastic worlds, i.e. instances where a character who lives in a realistic world enters a fantastic world or the other way round. One of the genres that include such transitions is fantasy. Given, however, that in the discourse of children's literature this term "is frequently used to denote anything that is not straight realistic prose" (Nikolajeva "Fantasy" 58), I deem it necessary to explain what I mean by the term 'fantasy'. First and foremost it is important to be clear about the difference between fiction and fantasy. Although it has been argued that all fiction is fantasy, I believe that a more limited view is appropriate and commonplace. I agree with Matthew Grenby who states that there is a fundamental difference between the two; examples of fiction are texts about what did not happen, while fantasy deals with events that could not happen (Grenby 145). Furthermore, it should be noted that fantasy in this thesis refers to a genre, rather than to the human ability to imagine pleasant yet unlikely situations and places.

So what is fantasy then? Unfortunately there is no straight-forward answer to this, as every critic has made the term to mean whatever they have needed it to mean (Armitt 19). Therefore, the following section will rather show what it

means in this thesis, than giving a binding answer. In order to do so I have chosen to use two means: firstly, I will give a definition stating what fantasy is; secondly, I will delimit fantasy from other related genres by stating what it is not. To begin with I will discuss aspects of fantasy that have been put forward as defining by various scholars. In the course of this, I will also state which of these I consider important for defining fantasy and hence arrive at a working-definition of fantasy for this thesis.

2.1. What Fantasy is

Fantasy

As the first and most salient feature I want to name the necessity of having a non-realistic element in the story. This decision is informed by the observation that all definitions agree that fantasy has a non-realistic element to it (that is often called supernatural or unreal element) or that is characterised by the presence of magic (Nikolajeva "Fantasy" 58), the latter of which I would argue is essentially a non-realistic element as well. This notion is made all the more explicit by Nikolajeva, who is said to be the "current leading writer on children's fantasy" (Manlove 10). She states that Tolkien, who is accepted as having produced a seminal text on fairy-stories and fantasy, thought magic and the supernatural to be "the basic feature of fantasy" (Nikolajeva *Code* 9). What this means, is that some magic element is essential for a fantasy text. Moreover, within the stories these fantastic elements are made to appear familiar, and there are no attempts "to reconcile them with our intellectual understanding of the workings of the world" (Attebery 2-3). So not only are there such non-realistic elements, they are also treated as normal.

There are of course different views on to what extent the magic element needs to be present to constitute fantasy. Essentially, such a question can be traced back to the two impulses that produce literature: mimesis and fantasy. Mimesis is the desire to imitate reality, whereas fantasy is here understood as the desire to alter reality (Hume 21). Kathryn Hume, a researcher on contemporary fiction, argues that the genres and forms of literature that we perceive as units all exhibit "a characteristic blend or range of blends of the two impulses" (Hume

21). The question then is: how much or how little fantasy and how much or little mimesis is characteristic for the genre fantasy? Attebery demands for a fantasy narrative to “include as a significant part of its make-up some violation of [...] natural law” (Attebery 2). The major weakness of this centres on the word “significant”. When is such a violation a significant part of the story? Moreover: does this refer to the amount of the narrative attributed to the violation, or does this refer to how severe this violation is experienced – by the protagonist, or the reader?

In contrast to this, Grenby states that “the supernatural and the normal exist together in fantasy texts, in various proportions and combinations” (Grenby 150). This implies that already a very small amount of the non-realistic element is sufficient to judge a text as fantasy. A similar view concerning the ‘amount’ of the non-realistic element in a fantasy text is expressed by Tolkien when he states that fantasy is “the making or glimpsing of Other-worlds” (Tolkien 55). The ‘glimpsing’ here can only refer to moments where only a part of the Otherworld (and hence the non-realistic element) is seen only briefly. What Tolkien is saying here then, is that already a small amount of magic constitutes fantasy. Grenby and Tolkien both appear to accept all proportions, including very small amounts of the non-realistic, as fantasy. I too agree that an inclusive approach is called for in fantasy, as I do not see why texts with little non-realistic element should not be fantasy and indeed, what else should they be? This, however, undermines Hume’s claim altogether. If, and this is what I suggest, we assume the genre fantasy to have greatly varying amounts of non-realistic elements to it, including very small and large amounts, the genre fantasy already takes up almost all possible proportions of mimesis and fantasy, so that in fact barely any other genre could be characterised by giving its proportion, because the proportions would all be ‘spent’ already. Moreover, this would only essentially bring the discussion back to the question of amounts, which, as I have argued previously, does not help to define such a diverse genre. Therefore, as interesting as the basic idea of mimesis and fantasy for literature in general may be, Hume’s account does not help to define the genre fantasy.

Turning briefly away from the attempt to define fantasy, I want to raise a terminological issue: critics and scholars use the terms “supernatural”, “unreal” and “magical” to describe the core element of fantasy. However, it seems to me that these terms are misleading as they all express contrast to something natural, rather than something realistic. I have chosen to use the term non-realistic². The problem with all these terms, and in fact also with the word I am using, is that they can be defined in quite different ways. The reason for this, is that in order to call something unreal or unnatural, it must be done so in comparison to a given reference system that is considered natural or realistic. In the case of fantasy this reference system is the perception of our reality; the trouble of course being that there are numerous perspectives on what our world is like. Grenby somewhat escapes this dilemma by proposing to speak of fantasy as depicting “things which are contrary to prevailing ideas of reality” (146) – though of course whether something is prevailing or not is subjective as well.

Brian Attebery takes a different approach by talking about “violation[s] of what the author clearly believes to be natural law” (Attebery 2) which I, however, oppose to. I believe that a definition that centres on the author’s intentions cannot be accepted as valid. The first, very practical, reason for my rejection is that we often do not have any information about the author’s beliefs and because authors are under no obligation to be honest and to provide information. What is more, I believe that the reader is also a maker of the book and especially in the genre fantasy, where borders are blurred, the readers’ perception should be given greater attention. After all it is the readers who need to decide what they choose to believe and what not. Therefore, I would propose to define the non-realistic elements as elements that are contrary to what the reader perceives as realistic. Such an approach is also taken by Hume who defines fantasy as “any departure from consensus reality” (Hume 21), stressing that the expression “consensus reality” includes the author and the reader

² I have also decided against using the adjective “fantastic”, although it has recently been adopted by critics to refer to all non-realistic human expression (Westfahl 355). The reason is that I want to keep the concepts well separated, is because “fantastic” can also refer to a mode of narration as is outlined by Todorov in *The Fantastic*.

(Hume 21). Both of them need to have arrived at an idea of what is real and what is not. It is this understanding of reality that is also part of the text (Hume 23). Because, however, Hume counts amongst the departures also possible (but not yet achieved) technological and social innovations, such as the cloning of humans or the existence of a utopian reality, her definition is extremely inclusive (Hume 21). By doing so, Hume's definition leads too far away from the genre fantasy, so that her definition too cannot be fully accepted, as it would also include works of science fiction. Yet her suggestion regarding the consensus reality is certainly interesting.

Besides the question of who defines what reality looks like, there is also the issue of time. Grenby argues that the perception of what is real and what is not has changed through time. As an example, he claims that if *Harry Potter* had been read at the time of the Salem witch trials, it would not have been read as a work of fantasy (145). It is certainly interesting to consider time as factor in the definition of fantasy. Yet I do not see any benefit in reaching into the past in order to produce a valid definition for today. Furthermore, I should think it more useful to think about books that used to be considered fantasy, but are not experienced as such anymore. After all Grenby's example constructs an impossible reality: a book from the 20th century read in the 17th century. Obviously the other way round is more realistic. Nevertheless I believe it an important point to bear in mind that a definition of fantasy is only valid for its time. While the wording of a definition of fantasy may in fact not change at all, what will necessarily change is what will be understood as realistic.

In *The Encyclopedia of Fantasy* its editor John Clute adds another aspect to the definition of fantasy by stating that it can be set in a realistic world or an Otherworld. When set in our reality the elements we encounter as fantastic are those that are "impossible in the world as we perceive it" (Clute "Fantasy" 338). However, fantasy can also be set in an Otherworld, which will be impossible from our point of view, yet "the stories set there may be possible in its [the Otherworld's] terms" (Clute "Fantasy" 338). This means that a self-coherent story, as unbelievable as it may seem, is perfectly possible in that particular reality. As J.R.R. Tolkien puts it: "Inside it, what he [the author] relates is 'true':

it accords with the laws of that world” (Tolkien 49). According to Clute then, the existence of such Otherworlds can be a part of fantasy, yet it is not a necessity.

In contrast to this, Nikolajeva argues that “[f]airy tales take place in one magical world [...]. By contrast, the initial setting of fantasy literature is reality” (Nikolajeva “Fantasy” 58). This statement has two important implications: firstly, that transitions are a necessity in fantasy, because only the initial setting is reality. Secondly, it implies that no fantasy story can be set entirely in an Otherworld. Her account then leaves me to wonder into which genre books such as *The Lord of the Rings* should fall, especially as she does not give further explanations on how to deal with books that are set entirely in a fantastic world. Possibly she would count them as fairy tales, at least that is what her definition suggests. Yet I certainly do not wish to count stories such as *The Lord of the Rings* or *The Hobbit* as fairy tales. Further, I disagree with her view that fantasy stories necessarily begin in a realistic world, which would imply that all written fantasy could be the subject of this thesis. I prefer Clute’s opinion in this respect: “Many fantasy tales are set in more than one world” (Clute “Crosshatch” 237). The important point here is the use of the word “many”, as this implies that some works of fantasy may be set in just one world. My understanding of the genre fantasy is certainly one that includes both texts set in one world (be it an Otherworld, or a realistic world where non-realistic elements interfere) and texts set in more than one world. This of course implies that in fantasy, as I understand it, transitions are an element that occurs often, but it is not a defining element of fantasy.

Nikolajeva puts forward another claim, concerning the number of worlds present in fantasy, namely that “the two-world structure is unique to fantasy” (Nikolajeva *Code* 13). What this would mean, is that no other genre could exhibit stories set in two worlds, one of them realistic and one of them non-realistic. However, I do not believe this to be the case, or rather I believe there are stories with a two-world structure that I would not classify as fantasy. This is for instance the case with *The Hitch-Hiker’s guide to the Galaxy*. The story is set in more than one world (one of them a realistic presentation of the Earth and the other a non-realistic version of the universe), yet the pseudo-scientific instruments clearly

place this series in the genre of science fiction. I would therefore rather state that the two-world structure is typically found in fantasy, but it is not exclusive to fantasy.

The Fantastic

So far I have discussed various elements that are more or less defining for the genre fantasy. Now I would like to turn to a more overarching concept, namely that of the “fantastic” within which the genre fantasy is situated. To begin with, as Lucie Armitt and Rosemary Jackson both rightly stress, the terms “fantastic” and “fantasy” refer to two very different concepts and it is hence important to keep them apart (Armitt 6; Jackson 7). The basic distinction between the two terms is that ‘fantasy’ is a specific genre of fiction, while the ‘fantastic’ refers to a specific mode of narration (Jackson 7). According to Armitt, the first person to understand this and to use the terms accordingly was Tzvetan Todorov, who published a structuralistic account of the fantastic. By doing so, he finally opened up the full potential of this field to “the challenge of critical theory” (Armitt 6). The two concepts are of course related: fantasy is written in the fantastic mode and hence forms a subgroup of the fantastic. Therefore, I will now turn to explain what Todorov describes as the ‘fantastic’ in order to be able to place the genre fantasy within this mode.

Todorov asserts that the key element of the fantastic is essentially the hesitation that is produced when the readers are faced with a non-realistic element and need to decide whether to believe in a non-realistic or a realistic explanation (Todorov 33). The second requirement for a text to be judged fantastic, is for the readers to acquire a certain attitude towards the text: they must reject any allegorical or poetic interpretation (Todorov 33). Todorov’s account is especially appealing to me, because it is removed from searching for motifs and themes and because it centres on the reader experience. Moreover, I believe that it is precisely this moment of hesitation that makes fantasy so fascinating to read. Clearly, this definition is especially interesting for this thesis, as the entrance into a fantastic world often constitutes the initial confrontation with the non-realistic and can produce the described moment of hesitation.

In order to distinguish texts written in the fantastic mode, Todorov resorts to the explanation given for the non-realistic events and elements in the texts (Todorov 41). A text is only judged as belonging to the fantastic as long as the hesitation and insecurity consists. As soon as a decision is made about the non-realistic, the text will fall into either the marvellous or the uncanny (Todorov 41-42). The fantastic only exists at the touching borders of the two subgenres acting as “a frontier between the two realms” (Todorov 44) and would only be present in a story that would leave the reader uncertain throughout the entire text. The example Todorov gives for this rare specimen is *The Turn of the Screw* by Henry James (Todorov 43). In the uncanny the non-realistic elements receive a rational explanation, so that “the laws of reality remain intact” (Todorov 41). Either they are explained by having been mere illusion (e.g. caused by madness, or having been dreamt), so that really nothing unrealistic has occurred; or there is a straight-forward realistic explanation (i.e. it was a coincidence or illusion) (Todorov 44-45).

Contrasting Todorov’s notion with Tolkien’s account of fantasy, one can argue that Tolkien would most likely not have thought much of this subgenre, as he despised the use of dream in fairy-stories altogether. According to him this is cheating and positions the story “like a good picture in a disfigured frame” (Tolkien 35). This is also why he proposes to not count the *Alice* stories as fairy-stories³. He further asserts that fairy-stories speak of marvels, so that they “cannot tolerate any frame or machinery suggesting that the whole story in which they occur is a figment or illusion” (Tolkien 35). I believe it can therefore be argued that Tolkien’s idea of fairy-stories would exclude the fantastic-uncanny subgenre that Todorov suggests.

On the other hand, Tolkien’s idea of fairy-stories seems to coincide well with Todorov’s second sub-mode, the marvellous. In these cases no explanation is given for non-realistic events in the texts. The non-realistic events are simply accepted as they are (Todorov 52). Hence, fantasy seems to be situated on the marvellous side, as we would classify non-realistic elements with a realistic

³ Fairy-stories in this context is used by Tolkien to refer to fantasy as well as fairy-tales.

definition most likely as science fiction or horror (e.g. *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley). For the study of transitions between 'real' and fantastic world I have chosen books all of which I consider to be fantasy, yet some include dreams. I will argue in the analysis of the individual books why I have chosen to include them and why I do not seem dreams as an impossible element of fantasy.

“Fantasy” in this Thesis

Having discussed various aspects of what may constitute fantasy, it is now time to summarise which of these I deem necessary to define fantasy. First of all, there must by all means be a non-realistic element to the narrative. Non-realistic is to be understood as contradicting what the readers accept as reality and possible in their world. Most likely these beliefs will also be shared by the author. The reader is in the foreground here because, as has been argued, the perception of what is realistic will change over time and this change can only be reflected by the readers. Further, I want to stress that I consider even the smallest portion of non-realistic element enough to constitute a fantasy text. These non-realistic elements can either intrude into an otherwise realistic – but of course fictitious – world, or they may be realized in an Otherworld, a world where the non-realistic is the norm. From Todorov's account of the fantastic, there are two aspects that I want to add to this, both of which centre very much on the reader: firstly, there is no explanation given for the unrealistic element; secondly, the reader accepts, as Ursula LeGuin puts it, the lack of explanation as part of the game (84).

As a final note to this section dedicated to discussing the what fantasy is, I would like to add that fantasy can of course take a great number of forms such as graphic novels or comics (Clute “Fantasy” 338). However, it is usually a novel-length text (OCCL “Fantasy” 181). Since it is the most frequent form of fantasy, I have chosen to work solely with fantasy novels in this thesis.

So there. Here is my stack of characteristics. That is what I mean by fantasy.

2.2. What Fantasy Is Not

As stated in the introduction, after having defined what fantasy is, I will now aim to delimit fantasy from fairy tale and science fiction so as to make the boundaries clearer.

Not Fairy Tales

Before contrasting fairy tales and fantasy, it should be noted that fantasy developed out of the fairy tale (Bottingheimer 152, OCCL “Fantasy” 181). Possibly the most important text on fairy tales is J.R.R. Tolkien’s essay *On Fairy-stories*. The term “fairy stories” in this context is practically synonymous with the more frequent term “fairy tale”. In his essay he states that the name “fairy tale” is rather misleading, as such stories do not need to include fairies (Tolkien 32). Instead he states that fairy stories are “about the *adventures* of men in the Perilous Realm [the Otherworld present in fairy stories]” (Tolkien 32, emphasis in original), which is also a characteristic of the genre fantasy. Another shared feature of fantasy and fairy-tales is the double-address. Fairy-tales were originally invented for adults, however, simplified versions were often told to children (Bottigheimer 152).

One of the most straightforward claims that can be made about the difference between fantasy and fairy-tales centres on authorship. *The Oxford Companion to Children’s Literature* attests works of fantasy to be written “by a specific author (i.e. not traditional)” (OCCL “Fantasy” 181). This means that while in fantasy the author of the stories is known, for fairy tales we usually do not know who the author is (this of course only refers to the classic fairy tales and not the modern fairy tale). Another aspect concerning authorship is that fairy tales were originally part of the oral tradition and hence told by many different people (Zipes 45-47). It is therefore also characteristic for a fairy tale to have a number of variants that have developed over time. Moreover, the tales were altered according to changing circumstances of society, so that for instance the growing of towns was reflected in them. The fairy tales were only written down in the 15th, 16th and 17th century (Zipes 45-47). In contrast to this, fantasy was always written down right away.

Turning from authorship to audience, we find another particularity. Many perceive fairy tales straightforwardly as stories for children. Children were, however, not the originally intended audience. They only became the audience when the peasants worked for the higher classes as nurses and because fairy tales were the only stories they knew, they told them to the children (Zipes 45-46). Interestingly, the equation “fairy tale = for children” has in fact been passed on to fantasy. Hunt asserts that fantasy is often criticized for being childish (Hunt 3). Fortunately, critics such as Peter Hunt, as well as publishers challenge this view of fantasy frequently nowadays. Moreover, the great success of books such as *The Lord of the Rings* or *Harry Potter* across all ages has certainly proven the opposite (Gamble and Yates 119). For the fairy tale, however, this cannot be said, it is still often thought of as a genre exclusively for children.

Another distinction has already been alluded to in the section *Fantasy*. Nikolajeva states in *The Oxford Encyclopaedia of Children’s Literature* that “[f]airy tales take place in one magical world [...]. By contrast, the initial setting of fantasy literature is reality“ (“Fantasy” 58). While I disagree with the latter, the first part of the argument is worth noting. Generally speaking, fairy tales take place in one world only. Hence the motif I intend to study does, by definition, not surface in fairy tales. I do, however, not fully agree with the view that fairy tales take place in “magical worlds”. For some this may well be the case, but the majority of fairy tales I am familiar with work differently. What one can find rather often in fairy tales are stories of ordinary families, whose lives are interrupted and intruded by some magical element. While this magic is accepted (often with astonishment), the world as such is not a magic one, as is, for instance, the case in *The Frog King*, *The Wishing-Table*, *the Gold-Ass and the Cudgel in the Sack* or *Rapunzel*. I would argue that fairy tales can be set either entirely in an Otherworld, or they can be of the type where a non-realistic element intrudes a realistic Primary World and hence the Otherworld is only implied (for a more detailed discussion on the notion of Implied Otherworld, see the section *Different Categorisations of Otherworlds*).

Not Science Fiction

Delimiting science fiction from fantasy is also useful at this point in so far, as it has been suggested that fantasy is best defined by the relationships it has to other genres, and science fiction and fantasy seem to be close neighbours (Petzold 13). For my thesis I have chosen to stick entirely to the genre of fantasy and to not include works of science fiction. I believe that science fiction is rather different from fantasy so that a study of entrances into Otherworlds could not usefully be done if both genres were to be taken into consideration within the scope of this thesis, although the two genres of fantasy and science fiction of course overlap. In fact some novels are indeed hard to assign to one of the two, such as for instance *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*. I would argue that it is still fantasy, set in a realistic world in which Willy Wonker has built his factory – an enclave full of non-realistic elements. At the same time, however, there is a strong focus on (partly impossible) scientific innovations so that in fact there are quite a few science fiction elements in this story.

The major difference between fantasy and science fiction is that the impossibility of fantasy is contrasted with a plausibility that can at least be argued in science fiction (Clute “Science Fiction” 844). This is to say that science fiction stories are in one way or other “extrapolated from science or historic premises” (Clute “Science Fiction” 844). The first part of this argument is also supported by Ann Swinfen, an author of fiction and scholar, who states in her revised version of her PhD thesis that science fiction “treats essentially what does not exist now, but might exist in the future” (Swinfen 5). Brian Stableford argues for the latter of the two, saying that stories of science fiction depict “Earth as it might have become in consequence of some hypothetical alteration of a past event” (Stableford quoted in Clute “Alternate Worlds” 21). Maybe the term ‘Earth’ in this context is not the most suitable expression, as some works of science fiction, such as for instance *Star Wars*, no longer include the planet Earth. The alteration in this case then is one that removed Earth from the Universe. Hence I would argue that while the story needs to be set in a world that is based on our reality with an alternation, this world need not be on planet Earth.

Another differences that can be made out between science fiction and fantasy, concerns how the Otherworlds are reached. Nikolajeva argues that Otherworlds in science fiction are made to seem reachable, whereas Otherworlds in fantasy could never be reached without magic, “even if you travelled through space for ever and ever” (Nikolajeva *Code* 35). However, I do not see what she is referring to here, the Otherworlds in science fiction are just as fictitious as those in fantasy. What is more interesting though, is Nikolajeva’s claim that when there is a transition between a Primary World and an Otherworld, it is reached by the means of a fictional technical device, rather than by magic (Nikolajeva *Code* 35). A similar case is made by Pamela Gates et al. who state that “[i]f the mode [of transition] is scientifically rationalized, then the story is likely to be science fiction” (Gates et al. 61). Hence in science fiction there is no magical power involved in the transitions, the transition is enable by technical instruments and scientific achievements. What has been said here about the transitions, can, I believe, be generalised for the entire genre. Where in fantasy some magical force seems to be the cause of the non-realistic elements, in science fiction it is the fictitious progress of science that causes them.

The most fundamental difference to fantasy, though, is clearly the aim to offer an explanation. Stories and worlds of science fiction need not be plausible by definition, but they “can at least be argued” (Clute “Science Fiction” 844). This third characteristic is also concerned with the natural laws of the world. In fantasy, Swinfen observes, that the physical laws of nature are similar in terms of structure to those of our reality and that there is a “reasonable cause-and-effect relationship” (Swinfen 77). While in fantasy gravity, light, darkness, heat and cold function as they do in real life, this need not be the case in science fiction. Yet whichever way these things function, the reason why those aspects function differently can and often is argued (Swinfen 77).

Working along the lines of Todorov’s approach I would argue that science fiction falls under the uncanny although the narrator does not always give an explicit explanation of the non-realistic elements (consider for instance Primary World characters moving through the Universe without any breathing difficulties). The explanation is rather implicit in the readers and their

knowledge. In a way then science fiction becomes science fiction in the process of reading. While it is written in a way to make it plausible, the question, which of course remains, is whether the readers will perceive it that way: read, for instance, *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* series to small children who are not aware of Mars-expeditions and they will hear a fantasy story. Have students of Physics read it and they will identify all notions possible. Moreover, I feel that science fiction is much more dependent on the time factor than fantasy. With the advancement of science some ideas that used to be mere fantasies have become possible. This is of course not to say everything has (I still have not seen Han Solo casually flying space ships, though astronauts do on a regular basis) but considering the development of new ideas and technologies, most certainly many of the themes and topics written about in science fiction have already lost their fascination and will lose their fascination in decades to come. They need not necessarily have become real, but knowing that they are theoretically possible, will change the kind of fascination.

As stated above, *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* series could be read as fantasy and I was considering including it myself due to the initial escape of Arthur Dent from the real world into the wide universe and its planets, which themselves represent a number of Otherworlds. Yet the fact remains that throughout the book pseudo-scientific explanations are given by his friend and presented most explicitly through the italicised entries from the hitchhiker's guide. Hence I judge it to be science fiction and have thus excluded it from my corpus. Moreover, whether this is a series for children and young adults, or for grown-ups is highly debatable. I would argue though that there are a number of characteristics that very clearly position this series in science fiction.

Interestingly, science fiction for children is extremely rare. The reason Jessica Yates gives, is that since children are willing to believe in magic, there is "no need for pseudo-scientific explanation for supernatural events" (Yates 316). She further asserts that this is also the reason why there is so little science fiction for children compared to the large corpus of fantasy (Yates 316) and adult science fiction, which is clearly more frequent than science fiction for children and young adults (Yates 314).

In summary it can be said that the main differences are that in science fiction everything can be (and is) argued; that scientific and technical achievements are the basis for the non-realistic elements and that when Otherworlds are reached this is done by means of fictional technical devices (Nikolajeva *Code* 35).

3. OTHERWORLDS

In the course of the previous chapter I have repeatedly used the expressions 'Otherworld', 'Primary World' and have only explained them very briefly. Therefore I deem it necessary to now clarify what these expressions mean and how they relate to each other. In the course of this discussion I will also introduce the notion of 'alternate reality' and 'alternate world' showing how these in turn relate to the afore mentioned. Since I have defined my subject of study as transitions where one of the two worlds between which the transitions takes place is a fantastic world (an Otherworld), it is necessary to introduce these notions because they lie at the heart of the transitions. I will begin with the more inclusive concepts and work down to the terms that are narrower in definition and will be used throughout this thesis, namely Otherworld, Secondary World and Primary World. After having established these terms, I will then turn towards different ways of classifying Otherworlds, showing if and how the categorisations that have been suggested by various scholars help my research.

3.1. Various Kinds of Worlds

Alternate Reality and Alternate World

The most inclusive term in this context is that of 'alternate realities', which includes the notion of 'alternate worlds', the difference being that alternate realities are often a product of science fiction, rather than fantasy. Alternate realities may be set in a realistic territory (i.e. the world as we know it), rather than an altogether fantastic world. Moreover, alternate realities also include alternatives to our reality, such as the Aboriginal Dreamtime, which does not lie in the past, but continues to be and is similar to mundane reality (Grant "Alternate Realities" 20-21). Alternate worlds on the other hand are by definition not set in a realistic world, but in a place where the basic rules are different from those of our world. Depending on what the cause of this alteration is, the story is either science fiction or fantasy. As stated in the section *Not Science Fiction*, alterations caused by a hypothetical change in the course of history constitute

science fiction stories. If the alteration, however, is for instance caused by the interference of gods, or by the existence of magic and is not argued, the story at hand is most likely a piece of fantasy (Clute "Alternate Worlds" 21).

Secondary World and Otherworld

The most important conceptualisation for this thesis though is 'Otherworld. The term 'Otherworld' can be traced back to the beginning of the 13th century, when it was used to describe worlds inhabited by spirits and the world of the dead, and was often spelt "other world" rather than Otherworld. It was not until the early 19th century that Otherworld was used to refer to fantastic worlds (OED *other world*). 'Secondary World' on the other hand is a relatively recent term and was coined by J.R.R. Tolkien in *Tree and Leaf* in 1964 (Hunt 13-14). The two terms 'Otherworld' and 'Secondary World' are, in the secondary literature I have read, the most common expressions used to refer to what I have called 'fantastic worlds' in the title of this thesis. Both concepts represent alternate worlds and are again not restricted to the genre fantasy.

The two terms Otherworld and Secondary World are often used interchangeably and, according to Clute, many critics see little to no difference between the two. Both terms refer to worlds that are not bound to mundane reality. Therefore, they cannot be used to describe the world of the dead, as death is connected to reality (Clute "Otherworld" 738). Another reason for excluding the world of the dead them from this thesis, is that such worlds can only be reached by means of dying, which I believe to be a particular and very different kind of transition – above all a one-way transition. The second communality of the terms Secondary World and Otherworld is that both are "*impossible* in terms of our normal understanding of the science and of history" (Clute *Otherworld* 738, emphasis in original) yet within themselves what happens is perfectly acceptable (Clute "Otherworld" 738).

Although I too see the terms as near synonyms, Clute does provide two aspects that can be used to distinguish between Otherworld and Secondary World. The first point Clute puts forward is that the term Otherworld refers to any kind of autonomous impossible world and that such a world may be governed by

arbitrary rules (Clute "Otherworld" 738). Secondary Worlds, however, are "not normally thought of as being governed by arbitrary rules" (Clute "Otherworld" 738). The problem to me though is that I do not see what else Secondary Worlds should be governed by. After all they are still impossible worlds and if they are consistent then they must be governed by some kind of rules and I do not see how these would or even could be not arbitrary. Also I do not see how one would objectively judge whether the rules are in fact arbitrary or not. Moreover, already the phrase 'normally not thought of' expresses some vagueness, so that it appears that really there is no clear distinction to be made along these lines. In contrast to this, the second point Clute suggests to distinguish between Otherworld and Secondary World is not only much clearer, but also relies on a contrast that is more useful for this thesis: Otherworlds always have a connection to a realistic Primary World. Secondary worlds can have such a link, but do not need to have one (Clute "Otherworld" 738). Hence the notion of 'Otherworld' can be subsumed under the term Secondary World.

So what does this mean for worlds as are created for instance in *The Hobbit* or in *The Lord of the Rings*? Since these worlds do not have a connection to a realistic world, they should only be referred to as Secondary Worlds, but not as Otherworlds, as there does not seem to be a term to refer exclusively to worlds that do not have a connection to a realistic world. In any case, the important question is what this means for this thesis. As I will only be looking at books that take place both in a Primary World and an Otherworld, the link or connection is of course a necessity. Hence, both terms (Otherworld and Secondary World) can be used in all cases. To me, however, the term Secondary World has a negative ring to it, as the word "Secondary" seems to suggest some sort of inferiority. I consider this problematic because it is this additional world that is typical and so very important for the genre of fantasy. I therefore prefer to talk of Otherworlds. It is nevertheless necessary to point out that the term Secondary World is meant in contrast to the so-called Primary World, a realistic world in a fantasy text (Nikolajeva *Code* 13).

In addition to the linguistic issue, there is also a terminological problem with the expression Secondary World. Everything I have described so far mirrors the

general perception and opinion of scholars. Hunt, however, presents a point of view that I believe cannot be disregarded. He argues that when Tolkien coined the term Secondary World he did not mean to refer just to fantastic worlds, but to all fictional realities (Hunt 13-14). He quotes Tolkien:

What really happens, is that the story-maker proves a successful 'sub-creator'. He makes a Secondary World which your mind can enter. Inside it what he relates is 'true': it accords with the laws of that world. You therefore believe it, while you are, as it were, inside. The moment disbelief arises, the spell is broken; the magic, or rather art, has failed. You are then out in the Primary World again, looking at the little abortive Secondary World from outside. (Tolkien *Tree and Leaf* 36, qtd. in Hunt 13-14)

Hunt has taken this quote from *Tree and Leaf*, yet I am familiar with it in the context of *On Fairy-Stories* (Tolkien 52). What Hunt is arguing here may well be true, however, given the context of *On Fairy-Stories*, we need to acknowledge that throughout the essay Tolkien has only been referring to literature that includes non-realistic elements and not fiction that is set in a realistic world. Therefore, I am doubtful as to whether Peter Hunt is entirely right. Moreover, given this view to be the only one I have come across, I am inclined to go by the majority understanding of it. Not only in order to follow the canon, but also because given the context of the quote, I do think it makes more sense for Secondary Worlds to refer to products of fantasy only.

What captures my attention much more though, is the last part of the quote that includes the term 'Primary World'. Because of the way Tolkien puts it: "You are then out in the Primary World again, looking at the little abortive Secondary World from outside" (Tolkien 52), Primary World seems to be synonymous with the reality in which a text is read. This is a point that is clearly not reflected by other literary critics and theorists. Nikolajeva, for instance, states that "[i]n fantasy two worlds, a real one (*primary*) and a magic one (*secondary*), are involved" (Nikolajeva *Code* 13, emphasis in original). Both of these worlds are fictitious because they both appear in a work of fiction. However, this does not seem to be what Tolkien meant when using this term. Yet if we were to use Primary World in the way Tolkien uses it, we would still be short a term to properly describe what happens in many examples of fantasy. How else were we to call the realistic world in which the story sets out before the character(s)

march off into an Otherworld? I will therefore go with the conventional and use it to refer to a fictional but realistic world within a work of fantasy, because it has become to be general consensus to use it as such and because it is needed.

Returning to the terms Otherworld and Secondary World, the way I have decided to use them in this thesis is as follows: Otherworld and Secondary World are near synonymous and within the books I intend to study, both terms can be used interchangeably. However, given the second-class-feel the latter expresses, I prefer to use Otherworld. Primary World will refer to a fictional realistic reality, which is very similar to our day-to-day experience of the world. Having established these distinctions, it is necessary to state that of course the borders between Primary World and Secondary World / Otherworld can be blurred. Gamble and Yates state that the increasing blurring of the borders between realism and fantasy in books increases the complexity and makes them more sophisticated and more attractive to the adult reader (Gamble and Yates 119-120). Hence this phenomenon should be especially noticeable in pieces of fantasy with a cross-generation readership. This is, as I will show, the case in the *Harry Potter* series, however, a blurring of borders is also noticeable in the *Mary Poppins* collection, which to me does not seem to have as much of a cross-generation audience.

What is an Otherworld?

In the discussion of the genre fantasy I have already stated that there are elements which differ from consensus reality. These elements can be realised in various ways and can of course also be realised in an Otherworld. The possible differences between an Otherworld and a realistic world are essentially endless, as they are the “products of creative imagination and as such a matter of belief” (Nikolajeva *Code* 35). This is to say that as long as the readers are inclined to believe it for the course of the story, it is possible. However, here have been made claims by, for instance, Sullivan that Otherworlds cannot be entirely fantastic, as then the reader would not understand them (304).

However, I do not see how this would prove any limitations. First of all, the authors themselves are human beings, so that in principle we can assume that

whatever they can imagine the reader should be able to comprehend. Moreover, when we return to Hume's assumption that all literature has some element of both mimesis and fantastic, we must of course deduce that this is the case for fantasy too. Therefore, Sullivan's argument rests on a hypothetical, entirely fictional world that as such could never exist, as mimesis will always be part of literature (Hume 8). Even if such an entirely fantastic world would be described, it would still not pose a problem for understanding. Ryan argues in her article *The principle of minimal departure* that when we are confronted with an alternate world, we interpret it in the way that is closest to our reality (Ryan 403). Or to put it differently: When we are confronted with a situation that does not make sense in our reality, we refer back to our knowledge of the world as much as possible in order to make sense of it. Hence, if this hypothetical all fantastic world were to be read about, the readers would find ways of understanding the world by referring back to what they are familiar with. Moreover, Ryan argues that in Otherworlds the only things that differ from reality are those that are explicitly stated as being different (cf. Ryan 416-417). This is to say that we know that animals in Narnia are different (some can talk), because we are told so. Equally, we can rightly assume that pineapples look and taste the same as they do in our world, because we have not been informed about a change concerning pineapples. Hence I do not see how any Otherworld could be not understandable.

Consistency

What I consider more important for the creation of believable Otherworld is consistency. As Tolkien has pointed out, the authors create another universe which the reader's mind can enter. In order for the reader to believe it, though, the author needs to be consistent in the realisation of the rules that have been laid down for the Otherworld: "The moment disbelief arises, the spell is broken; the magic or rather the art has failed" (Tolkien 52). Yolen even states that the absolute consistency is what makes fantasy amazing and further that the rules laid down for that world cannot be set aside by anyone: "No one – not the characters, or the author" (Yolen 77).

Nikolajeva too discusses the rules that govern Secondary Worlds at length and emphasises the need for consistency in her chapter *The Magic Law*. She even argues that everything that happens in an Otherworld must be explainable, as everything needs to operate according to some kind of magic law – and this of course includes any transitions. Nikolajeva further demands that that all phenomena that seem to contradict an existing rule need to be explained in the narration (Nikolajeva *Code* 25-35). The example she gives is that of the magic carpet in Nesbit's *The Phoenix and the Carpet*, that at times does not grant the wishes as they are made. As the reader finds out though, the magic of the carpet wears out after some time. However, when used by another person the magic seems to have renewed itself. This means that what may appear as an inconsistency at first sight, is really a feature of the magic in this book (Nikolajeva *Code* 28-30). The question of constancy is also one I shall be concerned with when discussing the transitions in the books I have chosen to analyse: if a passage is used more than once, do the transitions always function the same?

Location in Relation to Primary World

There are of course various possibilities of where Otherworlds can be located, such as another planet or an island (Nikolajeva *Code* 43-50). Clearly, this is a very interesting thought to pursue, but beyond the scope of this thesis. Moreover, for this study I deem it more fruitful to consider how the Primary World and the Otherworld are placed in relation to each other. After all, the passages must in one way or other bridge the gap between the two worlds. *The Encyclopedia of Fantasy* suggests that there are two possible kinds of connection: thresholds and crosshatches. A crosshatch refers to areas where Primary World and Otherworld overlap, so that a journey will at least begin in an area that is both Primary World and Otherworld. In cases of crosshatches the border between the two worlds is not clear (Clute "Crosshatch" 237). Hence these areas are also frequently referred to as Borderland, the area between two worlds, where both worlds are present (Clute "Borderland" 126). Thresholds, on the other hand, describe the opposite of crosshatches; they mark a clear border between two worlds. Another defining feature of a threshold is that it is a physical border between the two worlds (Clute "Threshold" 945). When

discussing the Otherworlds present in the books of my analysis, I will also point out whether they are separated from the Primary World by thresholds or crosshatches, because this will influence whether there is any journey in the transition or not.

3.2. Categorising Fantasy and Otherworlds

High Fantasy and Low Fantasy

As stated earlier, the general consensus about fantasy is that it can be set in a realistic world, an Otherworld or in both of them. Because of the various settings of fantasy, many attempts have been made to split the genre into groups according to their setting. One of these distinctions is that between High Fantasy and Low Fantasy, which was first made in 1977 by Robert H. Boyer and Kenneth J. Zahorski (Clute “High Fantasy” 466). The difference between High and Low Fantasy is constituted by the kind of world the stories are set in: Stories set in Otherworlds have been categorised as High Fantasy, those not set in Otherworlds as Low Fantasy (Clute “High Fantasy” 466; Langford “Low Fantasy” 597). First and foremost it must be said that the terms ‘high’ and ‘low’ are rather unfortunate, as they automatically attract the idea of evaluation: high is generally understood as better and low as worse. As unfortunate as the terms may be, it is an old distinction and seems to split the fantasy literature conveniently and logically into two parts – at first sight that is.

Turning towards my research topic, the question that arises is into which category the books chosen for this thesis would fall. A transition between Primary World and Otherworld implies that parts of the story takes place in both worlds, so that they neither fit into High nor Low Fantasy as defined by Clute. Gamble and Yates offer a little help by stating that in Low Fantasy “non-rational happenings occur in the rational world” (Gamble and Yates 120), which can essentially be translated as non-realistic event occurring in a realistic world, as I would argue that anything that can be explained rationally, is in fact realistic. Essentially this is also Clute’s point of view when he states that Low Fantasy is anything not set in an Otherworld (“Low Fantasy” 597). Because Clute says this in the context of fantasy, where non-realistic elements essentially exist, Clute

implicitly states the same as Gamble and Yates. This definition of Low Fantasy is also shared by Wolfe who says that High Fantasy stories take place in a Secondary World “as opposed to Low Fantasy which contains supernatural intrusion into the realistic world” (Wolfe 52).

Of course one must ask then, what an ‘intrusion’ in this case means, and once more we are confronted with a term that has a rather negative connotation. Nevertheless, I understand this to merely mean that the story will be set in a realistic world where no non-realistic elements are expected, yet such non-realistic elements are encountered. Therefore, this definition classifies books such as *Mary Poppins*, where the Otherworld is mostly⁴ only implied, as Lower Fantasy. Low Fantasy then, is postulated by the majority of the plot being set in a realistic world. Essentially this means, that the High and Low Fantasy categorisation is based on the amount of plot set in an Otherworld.

Clute’s account still leaves to wonder how to deal with other stories that include transitions between a realistic and a fantastic world, if they are not principally set in a realistic world (*High Fantasy* 466). According to Gamble and Yates, however, all of these should be called High Fantasy. This is because Gamble and Yates define High Fantasy as narratives in which part of the story takes place in an Otherworld and even explicitly include stories that feature transitions (121-122). I believe that the point of view expressed by Gamble and Yates is certainly more useful than Clute’s account, whose definition is simply not precise enough. For this thesis, however, the distinction between High and Low Fantasy does not seem to be too useful, as books with transitions between worlds would be split between the two categories, no matter whose definition I were to accept. As an alternative I would like to introduce the concept of “mixed fantasy” which seems to be more useful for this thesis.

⁴ The qualifier “mostly” is used here, because I believe that in *Mary Poppins* the Banks children actually enter Mary Poppin’s Otherworld on a few occasions. I shall discuss this issue in greater detail when analysing the *Mary Poppins* series.

Mixed Fantasy

In *Fantasy Literature for Children and Young Adults* Gates et al. propose the sub-category of 'mixed fantasy' which refers to "children's fiction that combines fantasy and realism in various ways and proportions" (Gates et al. 49) and includes "journeys (time travel), transformation, talking animals or toys, and magic" (Gates et al. 49). Realism in this context is not meant in the way Hume talks about mimesis. In this context it refers to some part of the story being set in a Primary World before a non-realistic element interferes (e.g. a talking animal) or a journey to an Otherworld takes place (Gates et al. 49-50). This notion of mixed fantasy then forms a subgroup within fantasy that would include precisely the kind of books I intend to study. Mixed fantasy can therefore also be seen as the counterpart to fantasy that is set entirely in a Secondary World. It must be noted though that the books I intend to study are not synonymous with mixed fantasy, as mixed fantasy also includes books without transitions.

While I consider the notion of mixed fantasy as opposed to fantasy set entirely in a Secondary World extremely interesting and useful, I am not happy with the further subdivision Gates et al. suggest. They would place most of the books I intend to study in this thesis into the sub-category journey fantasy which would also include travels to real places (Gates et al. 61). Moreover, it would also comprise time travels (Gates et al. 49), which I do not think my journeys to be and which, I consider to be a motif of science fiction. Most importantly though, I believe that the plots of the novels I am going to study do not centre on the journey. What is in the foreground in the books I have studied, are the adventures the characters experience in the Otherworld. The transition will take them there, yet it is not the most salient part of the story. Finally, many of the books are also stories of quests, so why not group them according to this element? Some, like *The Chronicles of Narnia*, also have talking animals and beasts, so why not put them under this heading? So while I think it useful to talk about mixed fantasy as an opposition to texts set entirely in a Secondary World, I do not think it is beneficial to further subdivide this into the exclusive categories suggested by Gates et al. A further distinction into groups will only be useful if multiple membership is possible for a text, as I am not sure that the journey is central enough to justify a classification along its lines. This is also

why I consider the transition between Primary World and Otherworld to be a motif and no more. There is certainly much more to the stories than the transitions.

In summary it can be said that mixed fantasy and the High and Low Fantasy distinction are very similar concepts, as they both split the genre fantasy into two parts and because they resort to the kind of Otherworld they exhibit for the distinction. From my point of view, mixed fantasy is more useful, because all of the books I have chosen can be put into this one group. What is more important though, is that I believe the transitions and hence the interaction between Primary World and Otherworld to be a much more meaningful feature to classify stories, as opposed to the amount-approach that is taken by the High and Low Fantasy distinction.

Therefore, I prefer the mixed fantasy approach, as it keeps stories that do not have any influence from a realistic world separate from those that do. Although I have stated previously that the transitions are not a defining aspect of the genre fantasy but a motif within fantasy, I nevertheless believe the motif of transition to be an important device that influences the plot and the narration that to ignore it in such a distinction seems wrong to me. Hence, I believe mixed fantasy to be more appropriate and useful. It needs to be noted though that mixed fantasy does not split the corpus of fantasy, but only describes a part of it, so that it does not fully cover all fantasy, as is the case with High and Low Fantasy. A further advantage, though, is that the terminology is non-evaluative and does not suggest superiority as is the case in the High and Low Fantasy distinction. What lies at the heart of both of these concepts though, is the fact that there seem to be different 'kinds' of Otherworlds. In the following section I will show what conceptualisations of Otherworlds have been proposed how these relates to my object of study.

Different Categorisations of Otherworlds

In *The Magic Code* Nikolajeva distinguishes between three types of Secondary Worlds according to their degree of closure: the 'Closed World', the 'Open World' and the 'Implied World' (Nikolajeva *Code* 36). The Open World will be

least interesting one for this thesis, as it represents the type of Otherworld present in High Fantasy as defined by Clute (“High Fantasy” 466): an Otherworld that does not have any connection to a Primary World (Nikolajeva *Code* 36). The two worlds that will be of interest to this thesis are the Open World and the Implied World. Both of them do not only open the possibility of transitions, in fact transitions are part of their defining characteristics. This is especially true for the Open World, where the Otherworld has some sort of link to a Primary World and where the story is set in both Primary World and Otherworld. The Implied World is the kind of worlds that is present in what is described as Low Fantasy by Gamble and Yates, Wolfe and Clute. In this case the story is set in the Primary World and the existence of the Otherworld is only implied by the intrusion of a non-realistic element from the Otherworld (Nikolajeva *Code* 36). The Implied Otherworld as such, however, is never actually visited. At first sight this kind of world may not seem to offer the chance of studying the motif in question, however, it does. Of course this depends on the point of view, yet I intend to study are all cases where a character from one world turns up in the other, including those where an otherworldly character enters the Primary World – whether that character’s Otherworld is visited or not.

A fourth category of Otherworlds is suggested by Gamble and Yates in *Fantasy literature for children and young adults*, namely the world-within-a-world.

Enumerating their understanding of High Fantasy, they list three kinds of worlds that are part of High Fantasy, because at least a part of the story is set in an Otherworld:

- stories where no Primary World exists
- stories where an Otherworld is entered through a portal in the Primary World⁵
- a world-within-a-world that is part of the Primary World, but “marked off by physical boundaries” (Gamble and Yates 122).

The first on the list is synonymous with what Nikolajeva describes as a Closed World. The second and third both comply with the notion of Open World, as both describe an Otherworld that can be reached from the Primary World (cf.

⁵ Note that, in contrast to my understanding, Gable and Yate do not consider the possibility that characters from the Otherworld may reach the Primary World.

Nikolajeva *Code* 36). The difference between the two is, as I understand it, constituted by the location of the Otherworld. In the second category they suggest the world is placed in an undefined area, yet it is clearly not within the same territory as the Primary World as is. However, precisely this is the case with the world-within-a-world-situation: the Otherworld and the Primary World occupy the same physical territory. Because I believe that the physical proximity – and I will show this in the analysis of the *Harry Potter* series – influences the plot and the transitions I feel it is necessary to accept this as the fourth category of world, besides the Closed World, the Open World and the Implied World. As will become evident in the course of my analysis, however, that the proposed “physical boundaries” (Gamble and Yates 122) are not always present.

4. CHOICE OF BOOKS – THE RATIONALE

After having discussed what I mean by fantasy, I will use this section to briefly explain my understanding of children's and young adult literature (CYAL). I do not deem it helpful for this thesis to defining exactly what CYAL is for a number of reasons. The first of them being that CYAL "defines an audience rather than a subject or an author" (Sale 78), so that I would have to include all genres in the discussion and not just fantasy. Secondly, and this may be the more central reason, this is such a complex task, that an extensive discussion would be beyond the scope of this thesis. After all, entire books have been written on this issue. I have therefore decided to only focus on a few aspects of the discussion that seem relevant for this thesis.

CYA Fantasy vs. Adult Fantasy

One of the open questions I need to answer at this point is what CYA fantasy is and how it is distinguished from fantasy for adults. In the past there have been some critics who claimed that works of fantasy were ultimately for adults (Lynn⁶ xx). This opinion, however, is not shared by the majority of critics and neither by me. Numerous fantasy stories for children date back a number of decades and have proven to be successful and loved by the readers, such as for instance the *Alice* stories. Fantasy is certainly not an adult-only genre. Other critics have identified the fantasy for non-adults to be simpler in plot and more light-hearted in tone (Lynn xx). Lynn believes this to be a wrong conclusion and I very much agree with her on that matter. One of the most potent, if also most frequently used, arguments I will bring forward here is the example of the *Harry Potter* series, because its success proves two points: firstly that fantasy-stories may be read and enjoyed by both adults as well as by children and young adults; and secondly that darkness, danger and twisted plots are also read by children and young adults. Interestingly O'Keefe even argues that fantasy for young

⁶ Despite her book being entitled *Fantasy Literature for Children and Young Adults*, Lynn only refers to children in her opening chapter. I believe it reasonable to assume that she means to subsume young adults under the word 'children' in this case.

adults nowadays is often more pessimistic, more dense and more complex than fantasy for adults (O'Keefe 232).

My approach to the question whether a text is a children's and young adult or an adult novel is simple. I have chosen and called the books I will study children's and young adult literature, because I know children and young adults who have enjoyed them and because they are treated as such by the majority of the critics. This is not to say that these books are not enjoyed by adults likewise. In fact, fantasy is a genre with great cross-generational readership. Moreover, it has been claimed by Myles McDowell, a scholar in the area of CYAL, that fantasy stories which are enjoyed when a child, will still be read decades later by the same individuals (McDowell 141). I would argue that the important distinction between adult and CYA fantasy, is that CYA fantasy may and often is also be read by adults (O'Keefe 232), while adult fantasy is most exclusively read by grown-ups. It has been claimed by C.S. Lewis that a book is a poor book, if it can only be read by a child (C.S. Lewis qtd. in McDowell 141). However, I cannot see what would be wrong about a book that is enjoyed only by its intended audience. Therefore, I chose to say that CYA fantasy "may" also be enjoyed by adults, rather than to make it a precondition. McDowell further argues that for adults to only read children's literature would make them feel they lack something, so that we must not assume adult and children's literature to be the same (141).

The only characteristic beyond this that I am willing to accept, with little reservations, is that children's books feature children (as opposed to adult literature which features adults). Personally, and in order to make this a more general statement, I would put it that way: The protagonists and readers of CYAL are usually of similar age. I am also willing to agree with McDowell's observation that "[a]dults are [...] often conveniently absent from the world of the children's story" (McDowell 150). Yet I deem it important to stress two things here. Firstly, 'often' is clearly the key word. There are a large number of texts where parents and adults appear, yet it can be argued that they are frequently in the background of the story. Moreover, it need not be the parents who are not there. Nikolajeva states that it is absence of the known and usual that is "an

essential narrative pattern in almost all children's books" (*Code 76*). Hence this absence of the usual is also embodied in situations, where the protagonist has just moved into a new house, is on holiday or when one's parents have died (*Code 76*). Secondly, I agree that parents are as a rule absent for children's books, but not so much for young adult literature. My experience is that adults, especially parents, and the conflicts the protagonists have with them can play a rather important role in young adult literature.

We may ask ourselves now what it is that makes children and young adults pick up those books and not others (the adult-only fantasy books). Now besides all the searching for characteristics of CYA fantasy, we must acknowledge one fact: most of these books are bought by adults for children and young adults. The adults will buy them because of the way they are marketed, what the cover looks like and under which section they are shelved in a bookshop. John Townsend, who is both an author of children's literature and an academic in this field, even argues that a book is a children's book just because it has been put on a list of children's books (Townsend qtd. in McDowell 140). While this seems a little too simplistic to me, there is certainly a kernel of truth in it, as it reflects the way most books are bought for children and young adults: adults go to the relevant section or list and pick one. I would further argue that if a book which is perfectly suitable for children or young adults were to be placed and listed amongst adult literature, it would have but little chance to be ever recognised as CYAL.

In terms of reader response, Philip argues that adults and children react to what they read on different levels: While the adults take an analytical approach to reading, looking for underlying meaning and messages, children react on an emotional level to what they read (Neil Philip qtd. in Lynn xxi). I would add to this, though, that while adults may read more analytically, they do not have to, adults too might read a book for pleasure and respond just as emotionally. What I find even more interesting in this context is Susan Cooper's claim that in comparison to adults, children are more willing to accept the fantastic (Susan Cooper qtd. in Lynn xxi). The reason why I find this so interesting, is because I could not find any examples of transitions between Primary World and

Otherworld in any adult-only fantasy novels and have been wondering why this is the case. Susan Cooper's claim may partly account for this, but of course it mainly attributes to the fact that fantasy is largely read by non-adults. I have come to think that it may not be because of the actual capability and willingness, but much more so because of cultural and social norms. To put it in the most general terms: Fantasy seems to be acceptable for children, but not so much for adults.

As a society, we have an expectation as to what an adult should be like; above all down-to-earth and responsible. I would argue that reading stories about Otherworlds where magic is the rule does not really fit into this picture. I would suggest that this is also the reason why the motif I intend to study is rarely found in adult literature. It is not as acceptable for adults to enjoy fantasy, because it means that the readers enter a non-realistic world. As a result, those readers are accused of not wanting to deal with day-to-day issues and tensions (Gates et al. 3). It has even been suggested that fantasy is "a kind of moral and psychological cowardice" (Gates et al. 3). The only way to top this then and to make it even more inappropriate, is to also show the transition into this inappropriate land explicitly in the story.

Escapism

One aspect that certainly plays a role in how fantasy is perceived and valued is the assumed escapist nature of fantasy. Fantasy has been described as having no literary value, but as being an unhealthy escape from reality (Lynn xxvi). Both authors and critics, including for instance Peter Hunt (7-9), have challenged this view in the past decades. However, Ursula Le Guin, author of *CYAL*, states that people still claim fantasy to be escapist and says about them: "They confuse fantasy, which in the psychological sense is a universal and essential faculty of the human mind, with infantilism and pathological regression" (Le Guin 69), or to put it in MacCann's words people who claim fantasy to be escapist confuse "fantasy when it refers to a literary form with fantasy as a psychological illness" (MacCann qtd. in Lynn xxvi). Le Guin further asserts that it is wrong to think of fantasy as escapist, when really a large share of problem literature is escapist. She argues that portraying 'the evil' as a

problem that can be solved, is much more escapist and much further removed from reality than any fantasy story. After all we will need to cope with unpleasant events in our lives and for books to pretend that even the worst of problems are solvable and that they will then disappear is escapist to her (Le Guin 69).

I do agree with Le Guin and Hunt (7) that fantasy does not equal escapism. However, I do think that one of the functions of literature – and a very legitimate one – is for the reader to be able to let their mind wander and escape their reality. Escapist reading in this sense refers much more to the purpose for which a book is picked up and read, rather than to the content being escapist. In any case, like Peter Hunt (7), I cannot see what is so dramatically bad about escapism in the first place. Why should we not escape from reality in our minds from time to time? Besides this, however, there are other functions of fantasy that have been identified by various critics.

Egoff, for instance, says that “the purpose of fantasy is not to escape reality but to illuminate it: to transport us to a world different from the real world, demonstrating certain immutable truths that persist even there – and in every possible world” (Egoff *Republic* 67). Hunt argues similarly by saying that “fantasy has an inevitable role as a commentary on, or counter part to, reality and realism” (8). Karin Westman, for instance, argues that the *Harry Potter* series reflects current British society and deals with the social and racial class system of Britain. This becomes evident in the notion of ‘Mudbloods’ versus ‘Purebloods’, but is also reflected in how many wizards are willing to blindly follow the Minister of Magic (Westman 101). Deborah O’Keefe too attributes another important function to fantasy: “Reading fantasy offers an example of making sense of a confusing, perhaps threatening world” (O’Keefe 232). Basically this means that reading fantasy can help the readers to understand and deal with their own life and reality. Read as such, fantasy is certainly not escapism, but rather social and societal criticism.

Egoff asserts that fantasy can be read on two levels which correspond to those suggested by Philip (Neil Philip qtd. in Lynn xxi): a pure adventure-level and a

level that goes beyond the explicit to the implicit. She states that children and young adults may not initially read fantasy texts in the latter way. However, they may do so later, or upon reading the story again, and gain an understanding of the story on another level (Egoff *Republic* 68). Peter Hunt has commented in a discussion about escapism that “[f]antasy literature is either taken seriously (and enthusiastically), or seriously rejected” (Hunt 2). I think I have made it quite clear that the first applies to me.

Books Studied in this Thesis

The choice of books I will study in this thesis was influenced by a number of considerations, and to some extent also by chance. First of all, they needed to, of course, be works of CYA fantasy and had to exhibit at least one instance of a character crossing the border between Primary World and Otherworld.

Secondly, I deemed it useful to investigate rather well known books, for the simple reason that it would make my analysis more accessible to others.

Thirdly, I wanted to investigate fantasy novels, however, I made sure to not only use series of books, but to also have texts without prequel or sequel. Finally, since I could of course only work on a selection of fantasy novels, the final choice of which to use was influenced by personal taste: many of the books that I have chosen to work on in this thesis are amongst my favourite books while the others have been recommended to me.

The two series I have chosen are *The Chronicles of Narnia* and the *Harry Potter* series. Both present a storyline that is continued throughout the books, so that reading them in a different order or not beginning with the first book would impair understanding.

***The Chronicles of Narnia* by C. S. Lewis⁷:**

⁷ I have decided to present, read and understand *The Chronicles of Narnia* in this reading order, despite C.S. Lewis’s recommendation (Langford “Lewis” 578) and despite having been published in a different order. I believe this to be the most logical way to read the books, as it follows the chronology of the events described in the series. Further note that *The Horse and His Boy* is excluded, because it does not present a journey between worlds. As can be seen on the map at the beginning of the volume, it is only a journey within the Otherworld. It is true that Shasta has never heard a horse talk until he meets

The Magician's Nephew
The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe
Prince Caspian
The Voyage of the Dawn Treader
The Silver Chair
The Last Battle

Harry Potter series by J. K. Rowling⁸

Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone
Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets
Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban
Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire
Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix
Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince
Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows

The following books are of a different nature than series. While they do present the same characters and make reference to earlier events from time to time, the stories are constructed in such a way that it is not necessary to start by reading the first book and to read the books in the here-stated order:

Mary Poppins books by P.L. Travers⁹

Mary Poppins
Mary Poppins Comes Back
Mary Poppins Opens the Door
Mary Poppins in the Park

Bree, however, he lives during the reign of High King Peter and manages to reach Narnia in that time on land-way, so that we can postulate with certainty that Shasta lives in the Otherworld (cf. Egoff *Worlds* 155).

Further I would like say that I will refer to the author as C. S. Lewis, rather than as Clive Staples Lewis, because he is best know under this abbreviation.

⁸ I am aware that the author's real name is Joanne Rowling, yet her pen name J.K. Rowling is always used when referring to her *Harry Potter* series as it is the name under which the author is known best.

⁹ Again I have decided to use the most common form of the author's penname, instead of the full penname Pamela Lyndon Travers and instead of using the author's real name: Helen Lyndon Goff.

Mary Poppins From A to Z
Mary Poppins in the Kitchen
Mary Poppins in Cherry Tree Lane
Mary Poppins and the House Next Door

The Wishing-Chair books by Enid Blyton

Adventures of the Wishing-Chair
The Wishing-Chair Again
*More Wishing-Chair Stories*¹⁰

Alice books by Lewis Carroll¹¹

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland
Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There

Finally there are two books that stand entirely on their own and that do as of present neither have a prequel nor sequel:

Coraline by Neil Gaiman
The Secret of Platform 13 by Eva Ibbotson

¹⁰ *More Wishing-Chair Stories* was first published in 2000, many years after Enid Blyton's death. It comprises stories previously published in *Adventures of the Wishing-Chair*, *Sunny Stories* and *Enid Blyton's Omnibus*.

¹¹ Here I have again chosen to go by the pseudonym by which the author is best known. I am of course aware that the real name of the author who wrote the Alice books is Lutwidge Dodgson (Ashley 169).

5. HOW TO GET THERE

5.1. Preliminary Aspects

Transitions that Count

As I have stated above, when choosing the texts to study in this thesis, the main criterion was of course for them to be works of fantasy and to exhibit at least one transition. Some critics, such as Lynn, seem to take a different approach to transitions, counting only the first instance. In *Fantasy Literature for children and young adults*, for example, Lynn has a category entitled “Travel to Other Worlds”, yet of the *Harry Potter* series, she only mentions the first volume, despite the book having been published in 2005 (cf. Lynn 510-556). The only conclusion that can be drawn from this is that for Lynn transitions only the first entering of the Otherworld counts.

I, however, take a different approach to this matter. The way I see it is that in the books I have chosen there are two worlds and I am interested in every single time and way the border between the two worlds is crossed by character(s) from either of the two worlds, no matter whether the Otherworld is an Open World, an Implied World or a world-within-a-world. Of course the first crossing is in a way special, because it usually represents the first encounter of the other world (and hence very often the first encounter of the Otherworld) for both the travelling characters and the reader. I would argue that this is especially significant for the reader, as this is the moment in which the Otherworld is usually introduced as an essential part of the novel’s setting. Subsequent travels, however, may well be very different, so that the moment of surprise need not be lost. Moreover, I am much more interested in how transitions happen than in the character’s reactions. The reason why I have previously referred to the motif as an ‘entrance into a fantastic world’, is mainly because this tends to be the direction of the first transition. I have only found one example, where the story begins in an Otherworld so that the first transition takes characters from the Otherworld into the Primary World, namely in *The Secret of Platform 13*.

Passages and Transitions

In the little literature I have found on the motif I am studying in this thesis, the transitions are referred to as journeys, voyages (Booker 87-106), transitions and crossovers (Gates et al. 12). I would like to draw attention to one fact here: to me this motif is not only about the journey, as in what happens while getting there. I am not only interested in seeing the world spinning round, as it is often the case in films, but also in the places and items that trigger the journey or that are necessary to undertake it. As far as terminology is concerned, I clearly favour the term 'transition' for the reason that it embodies both directions of travel between Primary World and Otherworld.

As for the material aspect that triggers the transition, I will dismiss the term 'portal' that is suggested by John Clute in *The Encyclopedia of Fantasy* ('Clute "Portal" 776) and instead use 'passage'. The reason is that the term portal is strongly connected to science fiction stories, where portals are technical innovations made by characters from the story and are used to travel through space – above all through the universe – as well as through time. Moreover, the term 'portal' would immediately be associated with some form of door. While in fact many passages are of the door-kind, there are also passages which are not, most notably those where a character acts as the passage and where the passage is realised as an item which will be transported along with the character, such as is for instance the case with rings (Clute "Portal" 776). Hence I would argue to dismiss the term 'portal', as it would be rather misleading in this context. Thirdly, I like the term 'passage' because – although it may be an old meaning – it embodies the notion of journey as well. Hence the key terms in this thesis are: 'passage' for the item/place/person that is needed to begin travelling, 'journey' for the actual moving of the character from one world to the other and finally 'transition' for the entire phenomenon including passage and journey.

5.2. Passages

Possible Passages

In her book *The Magic Code* Maria Nikolajeva lists nine categories of passages that she has observed in fantasy that can lead from one world to another. While I will very much follow Nikolajeva's framework in the analysis, at this point there are a few items on the list that appear I will not use in this thesis. I shall first discuss those categories that I will dismiss for my study and then briefly explain what is meant by the others. The nine passages Nikolajeva lists are (*Code 75-94*):

1. the door,
2. death and dream,
3. the messenger,
4. messengers from an Implied Secondary World,
5. the magic object,
6. time machines,
7. technical gadgets
8. magic objects in the Primary World
9. magic qualities

The first item I want to discuss is 'death and dream'. The issue with death is that worlds reached by dying are as a rule different kinds of Otherworlds. As I have argued earlier (see section *Secondary World and Otherworld*) those kinds of worlds are excluded because the land of the dead is bound to mundane reality and therefore contradicts my definition of fantasy (Clute "Otherworld" 738). As far as dreams are concerned, it needs to be noted that the Otherworlds in those cases are not physically entered, hence being different from the other transitions. While this is how dreams are generally thought of as working in reality, I would argue that it is feasible to assume that in fantasy dreaming or at least sleeping can also be seen as instances where a character enters an other world. I have therefore included transitions that are connected to falling asleep in my analysis and am going to show how this element can be used in transitions.

Time machines will also be excluded, because I believe them to be to some extent a deception package. I would argue that there are basically two kinds of time machines. There are those that really take characters into the actual past (not into an Otherworld, as there will be no non-realistic elements), such as in the film *Back to the Future*, in which case they are constitute science fiction, not fantasy. If, however, the time machines take the characters to unfamiliarly pasts that contradict our understanding of both human and natural history, then really they have “just” been transported into an Otherworld, not into the past. The point about these parts of the plot being set in a distant past (note that journeys to the future are by definition science fiction) is not true then, because the past contradicts our ideas of what the past looks like. Moreover, one needs to consider that time machines are generally though of as technical instruments and are hence the stuff of science fiction. So if the story shows real time machines, it means that it is a science fiction story and hence beyond the scope of this paper. If there are time machines travelling to Otherworlds, we can decide to either include them because essentially they are just travelling to an Otherworld or exclude them because the Otherworld is reached by means of a technical instrument. I have decided to do the latter, as I have previously used the technical instrument and the fictional technical innovation to distinguish fantasy from science fiction.

As for the last point on Nikolajeva’s list, the magic quality, I have decided to exclude this as well. The reason is not that it contradicts my definition of the genre fantasy, but because it is itself a rather weakly argued element. As Nikolajeva states herself, the magic quality is connected to the magic object and refers to a manifestation of the object’s powers within a Primary World character. A magic quality is hence acquired when a magical object gives some form of power (such as being able to fly) to a character, where this quality is the only fantastic element in the story. Since, however, as she argues herself, the power must come from a magical object (Nikolajeva *Code* 92-94) it is clearly not the only non-realistic element present in the story. Moreover, given the qualities’ dependency on the object, I would consider it more useful and also logical to subsume it under the magic object as a possible effect of it.

The other kinds of passages all fit my definition of fantasy and will be used to classify the passages in the books studied. There is, however, one more point in which I differ with Nikolajeva. While she only talks about the protagonist using these items, I am interested in all characters that use the passages. I do not see any major reason to not to apply this categorisation to all passages. The only shortcoming that results from Nikolajeva only considering protagonists, is that there is no category that can be used to account for otherworldly characters who have it in their power to cross the border between Primary World and Otherworld. Nevertheless I will use Nikolajeva's framework in the discussion of all passages and will suggest an additional category to account for passages that do not fit into the framework.

Because I will discuss the workings of the passages in greater detail in the analysis, I will only very briefly explain what Nikolajeva means by the categories she introduces, starting at the top of the list. The 'door' refers to door-like physical items through which a character must pass. The 'messenger' and the 'messengers from an Implied Secondary World' are very similar to each other: it is a character or other element from the Otherworld that comes into the Primary World to establish contact with characters in the Primary World. In the case of 'the messenger' a journey into the Otherworld follows, which is not the case for the 'messenger from an Implied Secondary World'. The 'magic object' may, while triggering the transition, either remain in the Primary World, or come along to the Otherworld with the travelling characters and can essentially be any item. 'Magic objects in the Primary World', however, are items which represent an Implied Otherworld, but since they remain in the Primary World, the only transition is the one that took the objects into the Primary World. (Nikolajeva *Code 76-94*).

As has become obvious, depending on the kind of passage the passages must be either be entirely or at least partly otherworldly. By means of logics all of these need to be at least partly otherworldly, as otherwise they could not trigger transitions. Another question that is interesting to pursue in this context, is who creates and controls the passages. I would argue that there are only two basic answers to this, either they are made and controlled by a member of the

Otherworld, or they are accepted as having been there all along, so that the producer is not known. It will also be interesting to see whether these passages always work the same way, raising the question of consistency and rules that govern the transitions. Moreover, I will pursue the question whether everyone can use them, or whether they indeed “represent acts of selection and election” (Clute “Portal” 776) by only allowing certain characters use them.

Maps – a Curiosity

While working on this thesis, I noticed one rather curious point about the maps that are usually included in works of fantasy. In *The Tough Guide to Fantasyland* Diana Wynne Jones, an author of fantasy novels, suggests that the first thing a reader should do, is to study those maps: “**What to do first / 1 Find a MAP.** No Tour of Fantasyland is complete without one. It will be found in the front part of your brochure¹²” (Wynne Jones 9, emphasis in original). These maps often include a great number of details, showing exactly where the rivers flow and every place that is visited in the course of the story. Every place? It is one of the curiosities that have come to my mind since doing research for this thesis: Why are the entrances and exits into and out of the Otherworld never indicated? After all, every single other important place is foreshadowed on these maps. Following Diane Wynne Jones’s advice, I began my journey exactly like she suggests to find that surprisingly only three out of the books studied have such maps, namely: *Prince Caspian*, *The Silver Chair* and *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*. Why only these three out of *The Chronicles of Narnia* have such maps and why in fact none of the other novels have such maps is not obvious to me. Yet out of the ones that do have a map, none of them indicate passages and places of arrival.

5.3. Journeys

A Central Element in Literature

The travelling of characters to an other world is identified by the English author Christopher Booker as one of the seven basic plots of literature. He calls the

¹² The assumption of the book is for the reader to be a tourist to fantasyland.

matter 'voyage and return', though I feel that voyage implies a rather dramatic and eventful journey by ship, which does not seem to be the rule in fantasy. In any case it is interesting to see that transitions are such an important plot-device. While it is interesting to see the significance of transitions I feel that he has failed to acknowledge that the voyage in fantasy only leads to a place where the adventure then takes place. It is not the voyage itself that is the adventure. It would of course be interesting to see whether his stereotypical plot structure of a voyage and return story would be also reflected in the books I use for this paper, it is beyond the scope of this thesis to do so. Therefore, let me turn to what Booker says about the entrances and exits of such journeys.

In principle he states that the places that are reached are either (is)lands that have not been civilized or some "obviously imaginary and magical realm" (Booker 88), of which the latter of the two is relevant for fantasy. It needs to be noted that Booker assumes the realistic world to always be the start of such journeys. As far as the entrance into the Otherworld is concerned, Booker asserts that the characters which undergo the transitions "are very much in a state of mind which lays them open for such a thing to happen" (Booker 96). He does, however, not specify what sort of state of mind this is supposed to be. Nevertheless, I think this is an interesting idea that is worth pursuing as it may be argued that in fact this state of mind foregrounds the transition. As far as the leaving of Otherworlds is described by Booker, I believe that I shall also find some diverging evidence in the novels I will study; he states that the escape from the Otherworld happens just as danger becomes too much to bear for the characters (Booker 106).

Types of Journey¹³

I have established earlier what an Otherworld is like and how it may differ from reality. Further, we have seen that Otherworlds may appear in a work of literature together with a Primary World and that the transition between the two worlds is the motif I intend to study. What has not yet been mentioned is that of course numerous Otherworlds may exist in a story. It is necessary to note – for

¹³ Note that Nikolajeva uses the term 'journey' in order to refer to what I would call transition.

the sake of not misquoting – that all transitions mentioned by Nikolajeva can also occur between Otherworlds. The focus of this thesis, however, is clearly on passages between a Primary World and an Otherworld. Concerning the transitions, Nikolajeva suggests that there are essentially three patterns such journeys can take: linear, circular and loop (Nikolajeva 42).

The first of the three describes a one-way journey. She argues that such journeys are very rare in CYAL, as in those cases the protagonists need to leave their home world forever (Nikolajeva 42). Whether such goodbyes would really be too hard to handle for a child reader and whether this is the reason why they are so infrequent is of course debatable. The two examples Nikolajeva gives for such stories are *Mio, My Son* and *The Brothers Lionheart* both by Astrid Lindgren (Nikolajeva 42). The latter of the two, however, tells the story of two brothers who only get to an Otherworld once they are dead. Although linear journeys would certainly be interesting to analyse, I found no books that exhibited a linear journey and fit my definition of fantasy.

The second kind of journey Nikolajeva proposes is the circular journey. In these cases the characters move from their own world to the other world and then back again. Usually the time in the other world is spent fulfilling some sort of quest and the return is only possible after its completion and marks the end of the non-realistic elements (Nikolajeva 42); such is for instance the case in *The Chronicles of Narnia*. As the third option Nikolajeva introduces the idea of the loop journey. This is a circular journey repeated an infinite number of times, which is typically found in fantasy-series. It needs to be noted that such loops can, but do not have to, end in a linear journey, with the characters never returning their home world (Nikolajeva 42). This is, for instance, the case in *The Secret of Platform 13*, where Ben decides to stay in the Otherworld. A case where the character returns home after a loop journey is *Coraline*.

While the types of journeys and their description by Nikolajeva seem to really capture the entire picture, there is one problematic aspect to me: the definitions of the journeys all centre on the protagonist undertaking the journey(s) (Nikolajeva 42). I feel that this is problematic because there are novels in which

many characters travel between the worlds, for instance the *Harry Potter* series, and I do not see why these should not be taken into consideration at all. What is more, this definition of journeys poses a problem when applied to *The Secret of Platform 13*, because in this novel there is no clear protagonist.

I would argue that the terms 'linear journey', 'circular journey' and 'loop journey', should really refer to the structure of a plot. The logical reason to talk about a protagonist in this context is that usually the narration follows the protagonist, so that the protagonist's transitions will automatically reflect the plot-structure. In the case of *The Secret of Platform 13*, where it is highly debatable who the protagonist is, it would however be rather pointless to focus on character; the two rescue teams each undertake in a circular journey, travelling once into each direction; the same can be said about Ben, although we only find out about this later; the three nannies have undertaken three journeys, so there is a loop journey with a linear end. Certainly such an enumeration does not fulfil any useful purpose. Therefore, when using these terms in the analysis I will use them to comment on the plot structure and not on the transitions of individual characters.

Rite of Passage

Many of the books I have chosen to study tell the story of a quest. Clute asserts that there are two kinds of quests which dominate fantasy. The first is called the 'external quest' which is received from an external force, like in the *Odyssey*. The second kind is much more interesting for this thesis and rather typical of young adult literature: The rite of passage quest (or internal quest) forms a story in which the protagonist grows up by completing the quest (Clute "Rite" 813). The protagonist is challenged "with a dilemma, during the solving of which s/he matures" (Clute "Rite" 813). Nikolajeva further states that "[t]he passage from primary to secondary chronotope [world] in fantasy reflects the archaic pattern of the mythical passage" (*Code* 75). These in turn can be traced back to tribal initiation rituals where young people were sent on a journey into the unknown. Upon returning they were often given new names to highlight their new personality and personal growth (Nikolajeva *Code* 75).

The way in which this links up with my study of transitions, is that many of these quest or dilemmas are presented to the protagonists upon entering the Otherworld, or they are summoned to the otherworld in order to complete the quest. Moreover, the story pattern Clute points out has three parts: departure, absence and return (Clute "Rite" 813). This means that in a rite of passage quest story, the study of transitions would show the beginning and the end of it. One could therefore argue that one of the purposes of transitions is to tell a rite of passage quest story.

Omitted Journeys and Narrative Point of View

I have argued earlier that I will account for all transitions that take place between the Primary World and Otherworld. There are, however, transitions where either the place of departure or the place of arrival is not spelt out. Such incomplete transitions are not discussed in this thesis, as the lack of information means that I cannot be sure that there is a transition between Primary World and Otherworld. There are even some cases where no part of the transition, but only its effect is given in the narration; we only see the character, who was previously in one world, suddenly stands in the other world. While I have chosen to not account for incomplete and omitted journeys, it is nevertheless interesting to consider the fact that they exist, because they require the reader to undertake this transition in their mind so that they can follow the narration.

The omitting as well as the incompleteness of transitions is, however, not always a stylistic device, but is greatly dependent on the narrative technique. Many of these transitions are incomplete, because the narration no longer follows this character. This means that since usually the protagonist is followed in narrations, transitions of minor characters are very often incomplete or omitted.

THE ANALYSIS

6. CORALINE

6.1. The Transitions

The novel *Coraline* by Neil Gaiman represents an example of a loop journey, as Coraline goes back and forth between Primary World and Otherworld more than once. Interestingly this Otherworld is not a classic example of an Otherworld, as it has most obviously been designed for Coraline: it replicates the major aspects of Coraline's home (such as the layout of the flat) with a few alterations, all of which are improvements to what Coraline dislikes. Between this Otherworld and the Primary World there are a total of four clear transitions in this novel.

Primary World -> Otherworld

- When Coraline's mother has gone out to do some grocery shopping, Coraline wanders through the door (Gaiman 33-34)
- Coraline sets out to the Otherworld to rescue her parents after discovering them in the mirror (Gaiman 65-67)

Otherworld -> Primary World

- Coraline decides to leave after spending some hours (this stretch of story covers roughly an afternoon) in the Otherworld. The other mother¹⁴ is reluctant to let her go, yet she does (Gaiman 53-54)
- final escape: Coraline tricks the other mother into unlocking the door, throws the cat at her face, gets the key and escapes through the corridor and door. (Gaiman 141-145)

6.2. The Passages

The transitions always take Coraline through a door that links the real and the other drawing room. As is the case with the Floo Network in *Harry Potter*, the

¹⁴ Note that the expression "other mother" is used in the book by the character and the narrator. In fact the qualifier "other" precedes all persons and items in the Otherworld to distinguish them from the Primary World versions and I will also use the term 'other' to distinguish between Primary World and Otherworld

passages at both ends of the journey look and work identically. Due to its physical appearance this would take the category “door” in Nikolajeva’s classification. This door is visibly to Coraline and her parents. When Coraline and her mother unlock and open it, however, it opens to a brick wall: “When they turned the house into flats they simply bricked it up. The other side is the empty flat on the other side of the house, the one that’s still for sale” (Gaiman 16), her mother explains. Hence, it is rather clear that the passage into the Otherworld, which is tailored to Coraline, can only be entered by the girl and not her parents.

There is one other point where the two worlds meet, however, it does not function as a passage: the mirror in the real family flat. When Coraline is woken up in the night by the cat, Coraline discovers her parents inside the mirror, asking her for help (Gaiman 59-60). Yet it seems that this is only a sort of peephole into the Otherworld, there is no mention of Coraline being able to access this space. Given that there are no transitions with the mirror’s help mentioned in the novel, I will not discuss this item further.

Rules that Govern the Passages

The passage is reused repeatedly and allows Coraline to go both from Primary World to Otherworld and back again at her free will. As long as she can reach the door, open it and cross the threshold, she can move between the worlds. This is also possible for creatures from the Otherworld: After her mother has shown Coraline the brick wall, she does not lock the door and at night the girl hears strange sounds and finds the door – that her mother had shut – slightly ajar. However, she still only sees a brick wall. It is not until later that the door opens to a corridor. No Primary World character ever gets through the wall, yet it seems to be the case that characters from the Otherworld can do this. I would argue that the scratching sound Coraline hears before she first finds the door slightly ajar is one of the rats, which are accused by the black cat of being the other mother’s spies. Therefore, the brick wall can block the entrance, if not for both directions then certainly for the direction Primary World to Otherworld.

The other 'rule' that governs the possibility of transition is whether the door is locked or not. Coraline realises the power the key has over this passage. When the door is locked, no one can use the passage. This means that Coraline can literally lock out the Otherworld. Realising how the key allows her to control the passage, she keeps the key on her at all times. The importance of the key to keep Coraline from going back to the Primary World is also recognised by the other mother, who orders a rat to go into the Primary World and get the key for her (Gaiman 71). At the end of the story Coraline even uses the key as a bait to get the other mother's right hand (the only bit that is left of her at that point) to drop it into the well in the garden. This way she can ensure by having previously locked the door that the Otherworld is shut out for good.

Always Consistent?

The transitions are in principle consistent with the rules that we see established throughout the story. However, there are a few aspects in the story which do not seem to fit in quite so neatly. As all of these are concerned with the Otherworld reaching out into the Primary World, it seems reasonable to assume that these slight inconsistencies are meant to convey the picture of a somewhat unpredictable and dangerous Otherworld. One of the open questions is: why does Coraline see a wall upon the first two occasions she opens the door? If the door had opened to a brick wall for Coraline's mother, but to a corridor for Coraline, one could have argued that, as Clute suggests, this is one of the passages that "represent[s] acts of selection and election" (Clute "Portals" 776). Since the door, however, opens to a brick wall when Coraline tries it alone for the first time, this assumption cannot hold true. It would be feasible to assume that because the other mother just wants Coraline, she would make sure to show a brick wall when her real mother is present, but there is no obvious reason why Coraline faces a brick wall the first time she opens the door on her own.

Moreover, after Coraline's first return from the Otherworld she again finds a brick wall instead of an opening. Hence, there is no overall rule as to who will see a wall / a corridor to walk through and when. Wherever the wall comes from and goes to, it does not seem to be controlled by the other mother. Firstly,

because her closing the passage when Coraline has left the other mother's home contradicts her plans. Secondly, if she had the power to do so, the easiest thing would be to trap Coraline inside the corridor and hence force her to stay in her world. Therefore, I would suggest interpret this not so much as an example of inconsistency or an element that is used randomly, but as a device that is used very deliberately to create an unpredictable Otherworld.

6.2. The Journeys

On the third day of the narrated time, when Coraline is alone during the day, she opens the door and sees a corridor beyond it (Gaiman 33). I would argue that this corridor is not part of the passage, but the area where the journey takes place. Since characters from both worlds can be found here, but it is neither Primary World nor Otherworld, the corridor is the borderland between the two worlds. This corridor and hence the journey between the worlds changes throughout the book, becoming increasingly unpleasant and dangerous.

The first journey that Coraline takes is presented in some four sentences without any great excitement, it is only Coraline's confused reaction that makes the reader understand that she has landed in a flat that is very much like the one she has left. Already here the journey is described as somewhat unpleasant: "There was a cold, musty smell coming through the open doorway" (Gaiman 33). As the story develops to be increasingly dangerous, the corridor and hence the journey too become bleaker. Moreover, the passing through the corridor becomes more difficult due to decreasing light, wind blowing at her and the corridor appearing to grow longer.

During the second journey voices seem to be following Coraline as she marches through. She keeps her eyes closed so as to forget about the sounds and the darkness (Gaiman 54). The third time there is even a moment of hesitation and waiting before Coraline embarks on the journey during which she has a conversation with the cat. This time the corridor is shown as being only darkness in which a cold wind is blowing (Gaiman 65). As Coraline walks

through she thinks there is something walking close by and eventually feels “something wispy, like a spider’s web, brush her hands and face” (Gaiman 67). Moreover the growing length of the corridor is not only expressed by Coraline’s impression: “Coraline was going to say something, like *sorry* or *wasn’t it a lot shorter walk last time?*” (Gaiman 66) but also by the fact that the narrating time is expanded to last an entire page, including some conversation with the cat – which gives the impression that the corridor is of considerable length.

In the final transition that takes Coraline back to the Primary World, the corridor has changed once more and appears hostile now. Not only has the length of the corridor increased once more, this time it is also a run uphill. To enhance the feeling of the long escape, the narrating time has increased in comparison to the previous transitions to over four pages now. As a final aspect of the journey it is worth noting that the walls of the corridor, which have previously not been addressed, are warm and seem to be breathing. When putting her hand on the wall it feels to Coraline “as if she had put her hand into somebody’s mouth” (Gaiman 144). So not only is this journey becoming increasingly dangerous and longer the more often it is undertaken, a new aspect of this borderland is unveiled: the corridor between the worlds is itself somehow alive.

6.4. Characters that Can Use the Passages

Throughout the novel, Coraline is the only human character we actually see travelling. This is the case because the story is told by a third person narrator, with Coraline being the focaliser. As a result the reader also sees Coraline’s parents and the other mother’s hand at the respective other end (cf. Gaiman 59-60; 156), but does not know how they got from one world to the other. The cat is only shown undertaking the transitions one, but is found repeatedly in both worlds. Concerning Coraline’s parents it seems indisputable that it was the other mother who trapped them in the mirror, however, the reader never finds out how this happened. The other peculiar transition concerns the other mother’s hand. Although not clearly spelt out in the story, it is suggested that her hand is torn off from her body in the fight upon Coraline’s leaving her

forever (cf. Gaiman 143). Yet how it manages to enter the Primary World remains unclear.

In contrast to these characters, the cat seems to be able to travel freely between the two worlds, it claims to know exits out of the other mother's world that not even the other mother knows (Gaiman 73). So while the alteration in the transitions with regard to the cat is explained in the story, the disappearance of the parents and the appearance of the other mother's right hand are rather illogical. One could argue along Nikolajeva's lines that this is an inconsistency in the story. I would, however, prefer to think of them as elements that depict the Otherworld as dangerous and to some extent as unpredictable, marking these two events as narrative devices rather than inconsistencies.

6.5. State of Mind

I have previously quoted Booker's claim that characters who undertake a transition "are very much in a state of mind which lays them open for such a thing to happen" (Booker 96). The question of course is what sort of special state of mind Booker was referring to? In any case he must have meant a state of mind that would deviate from the everyday. So in what state of mind is Coraline? What is significant to note is clearly that the story takes place during the summer holidays, when Coraline is not at school and has a great deal of time at hand. This kind of temporal setting is also to be found in *The Wishing-Chair* series and in some of the books in *The Chronicles of Narnia*. I would argue that the reason for this is that during school time pupils are expected to be too busy to go on adventures. Furthermore, it fashions the summer holidays as a perfect, almost magical time, where great things can happen. The second significant context is that Coraline is rather bored. She continuously asks her parents to spend time with her and looks for things to do. While at the beginning one may assume that her parents are not caring for her properly, realistically speaking we find a typical summer situation depicting two working parents and a girl in her summer holidays, who does not seem to have any friends. The final characteristic about Coraline's state of mind is that she finds herself in an entirely new surrounding: a new flat in a house that she has only just moved

into. I would suggest that at least the last of the three must be accepted as a special state of mind, so that Coraline is depicted as 'ready' for an adventure.

Moreover, the novel *Coraline* supports Booker's assumption that the escape from the Otherworld happens just as danger becomes too much to bear for the characters (Booker 106). Before Coraline leaves the other mother, she can already see signs of the world collapsing and going flat (Gaiman 134-136). We can therefore see that her escape comes only just at the right time, as a minute later may have made her disappear into where or whatever the other mother's world disappears into.

7. THE SECRET OF PLATFORM 13

7.1. The Transitions

The Secret of Platform 13 is the only novel out the books I will deal with this thesis in which the story begins in the Otherworld. Therefore, the direction of travel is in some way reversed: the entrances take characters into the Primary World, and the return journeys take them back to the Otherworld. Yet the characters that travel are both characters from the Primary World and the Otherworld: the Primary World characters are the three Nannies and Raymond. There are a total of six transitions that are described in *The Secret of Platform 13*, which show characters travelling back and forth, so that the structure of the plot is that of a loop journey (cf. Nikolajeva *Code 42*).

Otherworld -> Primary World

- the three nannies go up with the baby prince to get fish'n'chips (Ibbotson 16)
- the first party of rescuers enters the Primary World and is greeted by some ghosts through the eyes of which we see the transition taking place (Ibbotson 36)

There is one further entrance, but as no part of the transition is described at all, I have chosen not to add it to the list: The second group of rescuers is sent to bring back Raymond (Ibbotson 150). Besides them flying through the air, the third person narrator only states that “[i]n an hour they would be through the gump” (Ibbotson 150). A few scenes later they are seen again, this time in the Primary World.

Primary World-> Otherworld

- The three nannies embark on the journey back home and while in the tunnel find the baby prince missing (Ibbotson 18)
- The rescuers (apart from Odge) return to the Island without Raymond (Ibbotson 175)
- The second group of rescuers arrives back on the Island with Raymond in a bag (Ibbotson 176)

- Orge and Ben arrive on the Island just before the gump closes (Ibbotson 178)

7.2. The Passages

The passage used in this novel has its own name that all characters know and use: “the gump”. This term is introduced and defined at the very beginning, hence, I would argue that readers will know what to expect from the novel right away. Interestingly, the gump is described on the first page of the book as being a “hidden door” to an Otherworld (Ibbotson 1), which is, however, only meant metaphorically. The characters really arrive in the Primary World through a hole that forms anew every nine years in the wall of the gentlemen’s cloakroom in King’s Cross on platform 13 (Ibbotson 36). The point of departure is again a passage: a cave in the cliffs of the “Secret Cove”. However, there is no mention of it being really secret.

What is interesting about the passage in the Primary World is how detailed the description of the outer appearance of the platform and the place where the gump will form is. Moreover, and this is not the case for any of the other passage, there is some effort made to ensure that the place where the gump will form will always look the same. While many of the passages in the *Harry Potter* series are disguised by looking exactly like Primary World items, the gump has remained the same throughout the last decades and hence must be rather old-fashioned – attempts to modernise the platform have been sabotaged by the Otherworld population.

As has become clear from the enumeration above, the passage can be used repeatedly and offers a journey into both directions. What is interesting to note, though, is that this London-gump is the only one used in the book, although we are told at the very beginning that every country has its own gump (Ibbotson 1). Yet how a travelling character could decide which gump they wanted to reach remains an unanswered question. It therefore seems that this initial statement about gumps existing in every country was only a means of making the reader

familiar with concept of the gump and to make the readers dive into a story in which they will accept this as normal.

In a way the passages in *The Secret of Platform 13* are rather similar to those in *Coraline*. First of all, the passages both represent examples of what Nikolajeva has classified as a 'door' (Code 76): a door-like opening that the character needs to step through. Secondly, in both books the entrance of one world functions as the exit of the other. This is to say that the two worlds are apparently directly linked to each other. However, while in the case of *Coraline* the two passages are optically identical, the passages in *The Secret of Platform 13* are different. In the Primary World a wall moves aside to reveal a hole. In the Otherworld it is a cave at the bottom of a cliff which appears to be rather uninviting being "surrounded by thorn bushes and overhung by a ledge of rock" (Ibbotson 173). This cave exists throughout, yet only leads to the Primary World once every nine years, while the wall is otherwise closed. After and before this stretch of time the gump is not active and a transition not possible.

7.3. The Journeys

On the very first pages of the book there is slight inconsistency when we are told that such a gump would show a door and that it would open to a "long, misty and mysterious tunnel" (Ibbotson 3), when the journeys are described as being very fast and comfortable. What is more, the tunnel does not need to be walked through physically. During the nine-year wait the winds in this tunnel are said to form wind baskets into which the passengers step to be taken up within a moment (Ibbotson 14-15). Moreover, the speed is enhanced by the fact that the time spent narrating the journeys is rather short. When the entrance of the rescue party is shown, there is only a little mist coming along with the characters out of the opening. I believe that it would be reasonable to assume that due to all the foregrounding that has been done, as well as the story beginning in the Otherworld, it is little surprising that the journeys are not given greater attention in the narration and that they never change at all. Finally, I would like to add that I believe it is not necessary to speculate about the state of

mind of the characters, as neither of them happened to find the passage – all transitions are entirely deliberate and based on previous decisions.

7.4. Special Aspects of *The Secret of Platform 13*

The *Secret of Platform 13* differs quite notably from the other novels discussed in terms of how the transitions are used in the narration and how the transitions happen. One of the aspects is of course the fact that the action begins in the Otherworld rather than the Primary World. The second important point to note concerns the narrative technique: first of all the narrator goes to explain what a gump is, how it works and above all what it looks like before it is used by a character. Hence the existence of an Otherworld as well as the possibility to travel between Primary World and Otherworld is already foregrounded on the very first pages. In contrast to this, the other books discussed use the transitions – at least the first one – as a moment of surprise to produce an unexpected twist. In *The Secret of Platform 13* the opposite is the case: With all the explanations I would argue that the reader is just waiting for characters to use the passage.

It is also worth noting that in contrast to all other books studied, in this book there are two plots – one in each world. As a result the narration switches between Otherworld and Primary World repeatedly, which is as a rule not the case in any of the other novels analysed in this thesis. Although the plots in the two worlds are not equally important and prominent, they nevertheless contribute towards a more complex story. What is more, as I have argued above, there is no protagonist as such and above all no one focaliser. This is also reflected in the fact that the narration may switch to the other world although there has been no transition of characters.

The final point that is worth noting concerns the passage itself. In contrast to most other examples it is placed in a public space and is accessible to everyone. There is no secrecy about it. On the contrary, the story poses a reality in which every inhabitant of the Otherworld knows the gump and could hence use it. Further, there are no restrictions as to who can travel – the reader

even learns of suitcases that are taken along. Hence this passage contradicts Clute's claim that the passages "represent acts of selection and election" (Clute "Portals" 776). The only restriction is that the gump will only open once every nine years for nine days. Once it is open, though, anybody and anything can use it. This time-restriction seems to be best compared to the barrier that leads to platform 9 $\frac{3}{4}$, which also only ever opens for a fixed stretch of time. However, there is one major difference: In *Harry Potter* this passage is ruled by deliberately executed magic, while in *The Secret of Platform 13* it is a regularity that appears to come from some other non-definable power. What is more, the gump is described as "having always been there", as opposed to the many passages that are made by various characters in the other novels studied. As a result it is not surprising that its way of working cannot be altered by any of the Otherworld characters.

8. THE HARRY POTTER SERIES

8.1. The Otherworld in the *Harry Potter* series

The Otherworld that is presented in the Harry Potter series is rather different to the ones shown in *Coraline* and *The Secret of Platform 13*. While in those cases there is a clearly distinct and physically distant Open Otherworld, the magical world of the *Harry Potter* series is often not as clearly distinct from the Primary World. Moreover, it is not territorially removed from it. The Otherworld here is probably best described as a world-within-a-world, though the physical boundaries Gambel and Yates mention are not always present (Gamble and Yates 122). While the wizarding world – especially at the beginning of the story – aims at total secrecy, there is territorial overlap. Given that Harry, who is as the protagonist also the focaliser of the narration, normally lives in the Primary World, but goes to school in the Otherworld, it is not surprising that the series presents an example of a loop journey. However, it needs to be noted that Harry is by no means the only character who travels between the two worlds. Nevertheless, as the narration follows Harry for the greatest part, the plot too is structured as a loop. Another consequence of Harry being the focaliser is that his experience is the only resource for the description of the journeys.

In terms of what is Otherworld and what is not, it is necessary to draw attention to the fact that the boundaries between Primary World and Otherworld become increasingly blurred in the course of the series. At the beginning there is a clear distinction between magical and non-magical places and people, which is even enforced by the Ministry of Magic. There are no enchantments on places such as the Burrow, which suggests that Muggles could enter them by simply walking there. As the story evolves, though, the borders between the two worlds become less clear, especially as characters from the Otherworld move more often in the Primary World.

8.2. The Transitions

First of all it needs to be said that in this series there are a great number of different passages that link the Primary World and the Otherworld. Moreover, just as is the case in *The Secret of Platform 13*, the journeys are not only undertaken by the protagonist, but there are numerous characters that travel between the worlds. In fact there is somewhat frequent commotion between the two worlds. Because, however, Harry is the focaliser of the narration, many of the other characters' journeys are omitted (for instance we only see Dobby sitting in Harry's room and do not know how Dobby got there (Rowling *Chamber* 14) or incomplete (Dobby disappears, but the readers do not know where to (Rowling *Chamber* 20)). I was initially inclined to account for these incomplete transitions as well. However, I have decided to stick rather strictly to the description of the motif I made previously and to only account for observable transitions. This means that the place of departure as well as the place of arrival of a transition needs to be known in order to be discussed in this thesis.

I believe that the important point to be made about this series is that there is an incredible number of passages and that they differ greatly. I will therefore list the transitions according to the passages that are used. For the sake of completion, let me add that in the *Harry Potter* series there is extensive travelling altogether and that passages that link the two worlds are also used to travel within one world, although those examples will of course not be accounted for.

8.3. The Passages

Apparating and Disapparating

Otherworld -> Primary World

- a street in Hogsmead -> outside the cave in the cliffs: Dumbledore takes Harry along to find a Horcrux, Harry side-along apparates¹⁵ with him to a cave at the foot of a cliff (Rowling *Half-Blood* 517-518)
- the garden of the Burrow -> Tottenham Court Road: immediately after hearing about the fall of the Ministry, Hermione, Ron and Harry escape by apparating (the latter of the two apparating side-along) to London (Rowling *Deathly Hallows* 134)
- on the doorstep of 12 Grimmauld Place¹⁶ -> street outside the Ministry of Magic: the three friends set out to search for the locket in the Ministry of Magic; the apparation is done by Hermione, who takes along the boys in turns (Rowling *Deathly Hallows* 194)
- the Lovegood's house -> unknown woods: Closely escaping the Death Eaters Mr. Lovegood has called, Harry and Ron perform side-along apparation with Hermione (Rowling *Deathly Hallows* 343-344)

Primary World -> Otherworld

- outside the cave in the cliffs -> a street in Hogsmead: after having found the locket, Harry apparates back to Hogsmead taking the weak Dumbledore with him (Rowling *Half-Blood* 540-541)

One could assume that apparation and disappearance would fall under Nikolajeva's category of 'magical quality', however, it does not really fit her description. The reason is that these actions are carried out by persons who are otherworldly characters, while Nikolajeva's definition clearly speaks of characters from the Primary World. Moreover, it does not fit into this category because the ability to perform apparation is not given to the characters in *Harry*

¹⁵ I have decided to not spell this word with a capital letter, as J.K. Rowling does, because I find it illogical to do so especially as it is usually used as a verb.

¹⁶ The doorstep is still part of the house and hence of the Otherworld, which is also why the watching Death Eaters cannot see them.

Potter by means of a magical object, as required by Nikolajeva (Nikolajeva *Code* 92). Yet there is clearly a magic quality at work. Apparation is described as a magic that can be performed by any wizard (and house-elves for that matter), so that it appears that this ability was given at birth¹⁷. I propose to introduce a new category for this: “the abilities of otherworldly characters”. Under this category I would subsume any form of non-realistic ability of a character from the Otherworld that is used to make a transitions happen. I will show in the course of the analysis for which of the other novels such a category would be useful too.

There are a few rules and characteristics worth noting about apparation. Overall, apparation is described as a rather difficult and dangerous matter, so that every wizard and witch needs to take a test, just like we would need to take a driving test, although – and this is an analogy to the reader’s world – wizards and witches may be able to apparate, but not have a licence as is the case with Harry (Rowling *Half-Blood* 517). I would argue that the aim of adding this licence to the passage is used for the reader to be able to relate to the Otherworld more easily. Further, it emphasises the danger involved in using this passage.

Since the passage is essentially within the wizard or witch themself, the passage is not visible as such. Moreover, it is almost inaudible, as the noise ranges between a crack that is mistaken by Muggles as a backfiring car and a faint pop (Rowling *Goblet* 213). Apparation can be used at all times and in both directions, from almost anywhere to almost anywhere. There are only a few places that are protected from apparating into, such as Hogwarts (Rowling *Goblet* 213), so that there is some restriction to the use of this passage. Apparation is also a kind of passage with which more than one character can travel, the act of taking along other character is referred to as side-along apparation. This passage is therefore presented as selective on two levels:

¹⁷ In fact there is no explanation given in the books as to how magic is passed on. Muggle parents can have a witch as daughter/wizard as son (as is the case with Lilly and Hermione) and people like Flinch prove that also magicians may have a child who does not possess any magical abilities (Squibs). The expression ‘given at birth’ is therefore to be understood along the lines of ‘always having been there’ and as ‘being part of that character’.

firstly because some official authority that organises the apparation-exams decides who is allowed to use apparation. Secondly, the able wizards and witches can decide who of the non-able wizards and witches they will take along. What is particularly interesting with regard to who can use this passage, is that it is suggested that side-along apparation is possible for Muggles too: In *The Deathly Hallows* Harry's aunt, uncle and cousin are taken away by car first and said to be then side-apparated to a safe place (Rowling *Deathly Hallows* 36).

Journeys

As far as the journeys are concerned, there is only very limited information available and in fact there is none on apparation as such. As I have mentioned above, Harry is the focaliser of the narration, so we only see how he experiences it. The problem is that he rarely performs apparation himself, so the accounts are really about the experiences of side-along apparition. Nevertheless, since there is no difference in the description of the journeys and because it seems that the sensation is the same for Hermione, I believe these accounts can be accepted as valid. What is interesting about the journey of apparation is that it never has any visual aspects to it, it is almost exclusively described as an experience of physical discomfort. There is a sense of turning on the spot (Rowling *Half-Blood* 134) and a feeling as if one were squashed together and is hence unable to breathe: "sight and sound were extinguished as darkness pressed in upon them" (Rowling *Half-Blood* 134), "there was this horrible feeling of being squeezed through a rubber tube; he could not draw breath" (Rowling *Half-Blood* 518). The description of the journey does become shorter as the story develops, yet the sensation remains the same, so that there is no sense of getting used to this journey. Moreover, I would like to add that apparition seems to be the fastest way of travelling between the two worlds and within a world. It appears to be almost instant, with the journey only lasting a few seconds at the most.

Special Vehicles

The Flying Car

- Dursley's house -> the Burrow: Ron, Fred, George fly with the car to get Harry after not receiving answers to their letters (Rowling *Chamber* 24-29)
- King's Cross -> Hogwarts: Harry and Ron fly to Hogwarts by car after the barrier to platform 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ has closed prematurely (Rowling *Chamber* 56-59)

The Flying Motorbike

- the Potter's house -> Private Drive: Hagrid has picked up baby Harry by flying motorbike from the destroyed house of his parents and arrives in Private Drive to leave Harry with his aunt and uncle (Rowling *Philosopher's* 16)
- Private Drive -> house of Tonks's parents: Harry is escorted by altogether 13 wizards in order to return to Hogwarts; Harry flies with Hagrid on the motorbike (Rowling *Deathly Hallows* 51-58)

What we can infer from these passages is that in the *Harry Potter* series it is possible for wizards to produce passages that function according to their wishes. While wizards can choose how they function, the use of them is restricted, so that the transitions undertaken with the flying car are penalised first by the Weasley parents (Rowling *Chamber* 30-32) and in the second case by the teachers at Hogwarts (Rowling *Chamber* 62-65). Therefore, this is an example of a passage that is not accepted and in fact forbidden by the society of the Otherworld – the only one in my entire analysis. It is also interesting to note that while there may be quite some magic involved in making the objects able to fly, it seems that the 'drivers' do not need to perform any magic while using them. The journey with these objects is a literal flying through the air, so that the length of the journey depends on the distance that is to be overcome. As a result this kind of passage allows the author to use the time in order to develop the plot further.

The Knight Bus

- outside 12 Grimmauld Place¹⁸ -> gates of Hogwarts: after spending Christmas at 12 Grimmauld Place Harry, Hermione, Ron, Fred, George, Ginny, Tonks and Remus go back to Hogwarts on the bus (Rowling *Order* 463)

The Knight Bus is similar to the flying motorbike and car, yet it is not owned privately, but represents what one could consider wizard's public transport. It is shown taking wizards from the Primary World to the Otherworld, yet given the stories of other passengers, it is clear that this bus can go both ways and is also used to travel within the Otherworld. One of the interesting aspects about this passage is that it is not restricted to one location (as is for instance the case with the door in *Coraline*), but can move around, so that journeys with it could begin and end at supposedly any point. Moreover, this is a passage on request. It will appear to, or rather reach anybody who hails it down by holding out their wand (Rowling *Prisoner* 30). Hence it is a passage that is only accessible by means of specific knowledge. Because the passage can stop anywhere, I would argue that the requesting of this passage is essential like activating it: it requires a certain action before the passages appears. The first time Harry uses the bus, he discovers its existence and how to call it by accident¹⁹ (Rowling *Prisoner* 30). Only on the second occasion it is used deliberately (Rowling *Order* 463).

The difference to the flying car and motorbike is first and foremost that it is a legitimate form of transportation, although the reader is not told who 'made' the bus. Moreover, in comparison to the Primary World version, its outer appearance is altered, whereas the motorbike and the car actually are and hence look like objects from the Primary World. The bus, however, is described as a triple-decker bus in violent purple. The Knight Bus's interior seems to change according to the time of day – in the evening there are beds, while during the day there are chairs (Rowling *Order* 463) – so that in fact there is

¹⁸ I consider this a Primary World place, because only 12 Grimmauld Place is otherworldly. The street as such is situated in the middle of London.

¹⁹ This journey is not counted here, because it takes place between Private Drive and the street outside the Leaky Cauldron, both of which are Primary World places.

also magic at work in it. Another difference to the flying motorbike and car is, that while the flying car and motorbike can be seen by Muggles, the Knight Bus apparently is invisible to Muggles. Whether, however, the noise the bus makes when stopping – it is spelt out as “BANG” (Rowling *Chamber* 36) which indicates a somewhat loud noise – is audible to the character of the Primary World remains an open question.

Further, the mode of journey is not flying. The Knight Bus’s way of moving is basically driving, but at very high speed. Obstacles just move out of the bus’s way (Rowling *Order* 463). However, it makes for a rather unpleasant journey. When the bus stops, this happens so abruptly that the chairs and shopping bags go slitting through the bus and fall over. When the bus departs, Ron almost falls off his seat (Rowling *Order* 463-464). The journey so unpleasant that towards the end of the journey Ron, who had previously been eager to try the bus (Rowling *Order* 463), states that he “never want[s] to ride on this thing again.” (Rowling *Order* 465). So while there is no obvious danger, the journey is clearly uncomfortable.

In terms of how to classify these special vehicles within Nikolajeva’s suggested framework, there are two categories into which it may fit. One of them is the ‘technical gadget’, however, as I have stated previously (see section *Possible Passages*), the technical gadget is what is used in science fiction and not fantasy. Moreover, the important point to bear in mind about these vehicles, is that they are not altered or improved technically to make them move in unusual ways, which is what would be the case in science fiction. Here it is the magic and not some fictional science that gives the object the ability to fly and makes obstacles move out of its way – and this is certainly characteristic of fantasy. Hence I would suggest to subsume the Knight Bus as well as the flying motorbike and car under ‘magic object’, because they are items that trigger a transition and because they will also come along into the Otherworld. The difference to the prototypical magic item is just that the travellers literally get on and stay on it for the course of the journey.

The Leaky Cauldron (and the Brick Wall to Diagon Alley)

Primary World -> Otherworld

- Hagrid takes Harry to go shopping for his first year at Hogwarts (Rowling *Philosopher's* 53-65)
- Mr. Weasley, Mrs. Weasley, Harry, Ron, Ginny, Hermione and Hagrid enter Diagon Alley to shop for school supplies for year five (Rowling *Half-Blood* 107-108)
- Hermione, disguised as Beatrix Lestrangle, Ron, bewitched to look different, and Harry with Griphook on his back under the Invisibility Cloak get into Diagon Alley in order to break into the Lestrangle's vault at Gringot's (Rowling *Deathly Hallows* 423)

Otherworld -> Primary World

- Hagrid and Harry exit after shopping for Harry's first year at Hogwarts (Rowling *Philosopher's* 65-66)

The passage(s) involved in getting to Diagon Alley on foot are particularly interesting, because it is not clear where the passage begins and where it ends. First of all I would argue that the beginning of the passage is really the entrance into the Leaky Cauldron. The pub is located in the middle of London, yet it appears that Muggles cannot see it: "The people who hurried past, didn't look at it. Their eyes slid from the large book shop on the one side to the record shop on the other, as if they couldn't see the Leaky Cauldron at all. In fact Harry had the most peculiar feeling that only he and Hagrid could see it" (Rowling *Philosopher's* 54). This would of course mean that only members of the Otherworld could enter the Leaky Cauldron, as it would not show itself to Muggles. However, the not-looking of the by-passers may also be explained by the pub being rather shabby. In any case there is something about the Leaky Caldron that keeps Muggles from entering. If only the Leak Cauldron as such is to be reached, walking through the entrance door is all there is to the transition. The pub can also be exited liked any other house and there seem to be no further restrictions to this door-passage. Because the two worlds touch each other at a threshold, there is no journey as such.

While I would argue that the Leaky Cauldron is already part of the Otherworld, it seems to me that it is also part of an extended passage, where the entrance into the pub is only the first step. Of course the pub may also be visited as such, however, it appears that the main function of it is to protect and hide the entrance into Diagon Alley. One could of course argue that this would qualify as a journey within the Otherworld, yet I suggest to see it as an extended passage, where the recognition of the pub is the first step that selects who is allowed to enter. The second part of the passage then is situated in the courtyard behind the Leaky Cauldron: the brick wall. The wall will open to a kind of arch beyond which Diagon Alley unfolds. So again there is no real journey, but the mere crossing of a threshold. In order for this passage to be activated, a specific brick needs to be touched with the wand three times (Rowling *Philosopher's* 55). This of course means that only people who have a wand and the knowledge can open this second part of the passage. Again this passage, which as an archway falls under Nikolajeva's category of 'door' (Nikolajeva *Code* 76), works both ways. What is interesting to note, is that the way back into the Primary World is usually omitted. Moreover, there is no description of anything that needs to be done in order to get back into the courtyard. This of course puts a focus on the Otherworld in so far as moving from the Primary World to the Otherworld is the special and the return is the less important transition.

The Floo Network

- the Burrow -> the Dursley's house: Ron, Fred, George and their parents come to pick up Harry to take him to the Quidditch World Cup (Rowling *Goblet* 42)
- the Dursley's house -> the Burrow: Harry and the five Weasleys return to the Burrow to stay there until they leave for the Quidditch World Cup (Rowling *Goblet* 46)

The Floo Network transports wizards from one fireplace to another, so that the point of departure and the point of arrival are both passages. Moreover, all fireplaces that are connected to the floo network can be reached by any of the fireplaces. What is even more interesting, is that Muggle fireplaces can be connected to the Floo Network as well (Rowling *Goblet* 44), making transitions

between the worlds possible. This needs to be done by a specific department in the series (Rowling *Goblet* 44), so that this too is a passage that is controlled and restricted by the wizarding government. In order to travel by Floo Network, the fireplace needs to be alight and the passenger is required to throw a handful of floo powder into the fireplace, to then step into its green flames and name the place they want to reach (Rowling *Chamber* 41). There does not seem to be any magic on the passenger's side required, yet there are two elements that are essential: floo powder and knowledge about how to use the passage; a material and a piece of knowledge. The fireplaces are again a door-kind of passage (*Code* 76). Similarly to the wall into Diagon Alley, the fireplace needs to be activated – by lighting a fire and throwing in floo powder – in order to function as a passage.

The journey that is triggered by the use of the Floo Network is described as being somewhat unpleasant and possibly dangerous. Complications included here are that by not speaking clearly the wizard will not arrive at the desired destination (Rowling *Chamber* 41-45). Moreover, this is a passage with a journey that is described to be as uncomfortable as apparition and involves a similar experience. Upon his first experience Harry hurts his elbows and feels as though being slapped. Unprepared for the exit, he also falls face-flat onto the floor (Rowling *Chamber* 41). As is the case with apparition, there is a sensation of spinning around and being “sucked into a giant plug hole” (Rowling *Chamber* 41) though in contrast to apparition there is incredibly loud roaring and instead of blackness there are green flames all around, which blur the vision. However, the traveller can still see glimpses of the places they are passing by. In *The Goblet of Fire* another aspect of the Floo Network surfaces, which shows the limitations of the magic of this passage. The Dursley's fireplace has been added to the Floo Network, yet it has been physically blocked off by the Muggles (Rowling *Goblet* 42), so that the travelling wizards are stuck. This draws attention to the physical side of the journey: the body actually travels through space and hence needs an actual opening to exit. The journey's duration is difficult to judge as also the amount of narrating time spent on the journeys decreases. Since, however, there is no indication of having to take the time of

the journey into consideration when planning the visit to Diagon Alley, I assume that it is a very fast way of travel.

Barrier between Platform 9 and 10

Primary World -> Otherworld

- normal platform -> platform 9 $\frac{3}{4}$: Harry first watches Percy, Fred and George walk through the barrier, then asks Mrs. Weasley how to get to platform 9 $\frac{3}{4}$, who explains; then Harry goes through (Rowling *Philosopher's* 70-73)
- normal platform -> platform 9 $\frac{3}{4}$: Harry and Mr. Weasley lean against the barrier to land on platform 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ to get Harry to his third year at school (Rowling *Prisoner* 57)
- normal platform -> platform 9 $\frac{3}{4}$: Harry, Ron and Hermione lean against the barrier to attend their fourth year at Hogwarts (Rowling *Goblet* 145)
- normal platform -> platform 9 $\frac{3}{4}$: Tonks, Mrs. Weasley, and Sirius (as a black dog) take Harry through the barrier to attend his fifth year at Hogwarts (Rowling *Order* 165).
- normal platform -> platform 9 $\frac{3}{4}$: Harry is lead through the barrier by an Auror from the Ministry (Rowling *Half-Blood* 127)

Otherworld -> Primary World²⁰

- platform 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ -> normal platform: Ron, Hermione and Harry walk through the barrier after their first year at Hogwarts (Rowling *Philosopher's* 223)
- platform 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ -> normal platform: Ron, Hermione and Harry walk through the barrier after their third year at Hogwarts (Rowling *Prisoner* 317)
- platform 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ -> normal platform: at the end of year five Harry, Hermione and Ron once more use to barrier to get home (Rowling *Order* 763)

The barrier that leads to platform 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ is interesting on different levels. Firstly, the technicality of it is worth noting: it is a passage into the Otherworld that is controlled by wizards: they determine when it is opened and when it closes. In

²⁰ It is interesting to note the words J.K. Rowling uses in *The Chamber of Secrets* here: „And together they walked back through the **gateway** to the Muggle world“ (*The Chamber* 251, emphasis added).

The Chamber of Secrets, for instance, it is closed prematurely probably by someone from the Malfoy family (Rowling *Chamber* 55). The fact that it is perceived as closing too early means that there are set times during which it is supposed to work. While the readers do not know when it opens, it seems to close just at the time when the Hogwarts Express is due to leave. Hence the barrier is a rule-governed passage that can be and is (de-)activated by characters from the Otherworld.

In Nikolajeva's categories, this would be listed under the category of 'door' (Nikolajeva *Code* 76), as it is used by walking through it. But precisely this to me is the interesting point: it is not a door. It is a solid wall. Looking at the first volume in the series, the first two transitions that Harry makes into the Otherworld are into Diagon Alley and onto platform 9¾ and in both cases there are walls. While the first one (the wall in the courtyard of the Leaky Cauldron) changes to an archway when activated (Rowling *Philosopher's* 55-56), the barrier remains solid until Harry touches it: the opening seems to only form right around his body. Moreover, a wall as such is already an object that clearly signals separation. This second wall is even more separating and scarier than the one behind the Leaky Cauldron, because it requires Harry to trust the magic and run into what looks like solid bricks. I would therefore propose to see this entrance through the barrier (also note the word: barrier, another clear boundary on a lexical level) to some extent as a test: does Harry really believe in and trust magic?

Because it is a solid item and hence a scary passage for Harry, the description of entering the passage is rather elaborate the first time he uses it. However, the accounts become increasingly shorter as the story develops. Especially the transitions back into the Primary World are not given much room in the narration, though they work the same way. In terms of the secrecy the wizards try to ensure, there is one point that is worth noting. While to enter the Otherworld it is the wizards' responsibility to not attract attention on the platform, on the return journey, it is twice mentioned that an old wizard guards the barrier and only allows students out in pairs or groups of three so as not to make the Muggles suspicious (Rowling *Order* 763; Rowling *Philosopher's* 222-

223). So while the entrance is open for all wizards, the exit through the barrier is guarded.

Since there is no journey described in any of the transitions, we can assume that there is not much physical distance to overcome. This of course would raise the question where platform 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ is situated if we assume a world-within-a-world-situation in *Harry Potter*. While this is certainly a very interesting question, it is unfortunately beyond the scope of this thesis to address this issue. What is clear, however, is that the barrier has a direct link to platform 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ so that this passage cannot carry out transitions to any other place. Moreover, it is depicted as an ordinary event by most of the transitions not being shown in detail and numerous transitions being incomplete, such as those of the Weasley family. The desired effect by this kind of narration is of course to make this appear as an ordinary everyday event and to reinforce the idea of the Otherworld's ways as being perfectly normal.

Portkeys

Primary World -> Otherworld

- Stoatshead Hill -> Quidditch World Cup venue: Mr. Weasley, Fred, George, Ron, Harry and Hermione together with Amos and Cedric Diggory hold onto an old boot to get to the Quidditch World Cup venue (Rowling *Goblet* 69-70)
- graveyard in Little Hangleton -> edge of the maze on Hogwarts grounds: With the help of his dead relatives Harry manages to shake off Voldemort, runs for the Triwizard Cup and travels back while holding onto and bringing with him Cedric's dead body (Rowling *Goblet* 580-582)

Otherworld -> Primary World

- Quidditch World Cup venue -> Stoatshead Hill: Mr. Weasley, Fred, George, Ron, Harry and Hermione hold onto a rubber tyre to get back to the hill close to the Burrow (Rowling *Goblet* 130)
- maze of Triwizard Tournament on Hogwarts grounds-> graveyard in Little Hangleton: thinking they have successfully completed the final task of the tournament, Harry and Cedric reach for the Triwizard Cup, which is

a portkey and transports them into the arms of Lord Voldemort (Rowling *Goblet* 551-552)

Portkeys are clearly magic objects as described by Nikolajeva's (*Code* 86-88). One of the characteristics of portkeys is that any random object can be enchanted as a portkey. It is therefore possible to hide them rather well – though hiding in this context can also mean to blend in. The boot that is hidden in the field to reach the Quidditch World Cup is not hidden as such, but it fits into the area because to a Muggle it will only look like a piece of rubbish in a field (Rowling *Goblet* 66). What I consider much more interesting though, is that portkeys can take wizards to other places and in fact other worlds without their consent, as is done by Lord Voldemort (Rowling *Goblet* 551-552). This stands in sharp contrast to all the other passages in the Harry Potter series (and in fact to all novels studied in this thesis), which require some determination or at least conscious action on the traveller's side for the transition to take place.

Another particularity of portkeys is that they can be produced in advance so that they will only become active at a specific point in time, as is the case for the passage to the Quidditch World Cup (Rowling *Order* 67; 69). This "timeability" is also graspable in the barrier to platform 9 $\frac{3}{4}$, which is programmed to be only active during a specific stretch of time. Portkeys can, however, also be active, waiting to be touched, as is the case for Voldemort's portkey (Rowling *Goblet* 551). How wizards know whether an item is a portkey is not clear. Given that Harry fails to notice the Triwizard Cup as a portkey and because they are disguised as pieces of rubbish, it seems reasonable to assume that there is no way to tell, but that the wizards would have to know what they are looking for.

While the passages in the *Harry Potter* series I have discussed previously usually allowed only two or three characters at most to travel at a time, the portkey is the only passage in the series that allows a larger number of characters to travel at once. Anyone touching the item will be transported; in the case of the Quidditch World Cup there are eight wizards travelling together (Rowling *Goblet* 69-70). Moreover, Harry holding onto the portkey can also take along the dead Cedric, so that touching someone who is touching the portkey is

enough to be taken to another place (Rowling *Goblet* 580-582). Another characteristic of the portkey is that it will work into both directions: the portkey Lord Voldemort produced is used by Harry to escape the graveyard (Rowling *Goblet* 551-552; 580-582). Also the portkeys for the Quidditch World Cup are used to travel back: they have been collected in a specific area to which witches and wizards come after the Dark Mark has been produced in order to go back home (Rowling *Goblet* 130). In terms of where this passage will take the traveller, there is some restriction: it will only carry out transitions between two specific places, so that portkeys are rather inflexible to use. They do, however, seem to work rather precisely taking characters back to almost the same spot they came from. While this cannot be seen all that clearly in the first transitions in *The Goblet of Fire* due to the area being a field (Rowling *Goblet* 69; 130), there is only little deviation between point of departure and arrival when Harry uses the Triwizard Cup: the starting point is inside the maze (Rowling *Goblet* 552), but Harry arrives just outside the maze when travelling back (Rowling *Goblet* 581).

The journey by portkey is again described as very fast and unpleasant, though it does not appear to be dangerous. Harry feels as if “a hook just behind his navel had been suddenly jerked irresistibly forwards” (Rowling *Goblet* 69). As has been the case with apparition, the journey by portkey is described without any visible aspects to it. I have already mentioned above that the portkey is a kind of magic object that comes along on the journey. What is particularly interesting, is that the traveller and the portkey seem to be inseparable during that journey. When Harry is transported to the graveyard the narrator tells us that “he [Harry] could not unclench the hand holding the Triwizard Cup” (Rowling *Order* 551). This clearly conveys a sense of not being able to suspend the journey – once it has started it will follow through.

Flying by Broom

- Dursley’s house -> outside 12 Grimmauld Place: Mad-Eye Moody, Lupin, Remus, Tonks, Kingsley Shacklebolt, Elphias Doge, Dedalus Diggle, Emmeline Vance, Sturgis Podmore and Hestia Jones come to take Harry

into the magical world before Mr. Weasley escorts him to his hearing about underage wizardry (Rowling *Order* 54-58)

The broomstick is used in the Harry Potter series only once to travel between the two worlds, while it is frequently used to play Quidditch and to travel within the Otherworld. Just like the flying motorbike and the flying car this fulfils the criterion of the magic object. Broomsticks are only ridden by wizards and witches in the series, although no charm is used to make them fly. Considering the first lesson the students have on this matter, though, there does seem to be some talent and above all practice required so as to steer a broom (Rowling *Philosopher's* 108-111). The broomstick is therefore a passage that needs to be mastered, just like apparition. This of course limits its use. There are, however, no restrictions as to where the broom will take the traveller; wherever the broom and its passenger will fit through, they may go. What restricts the availability of this passage though, is that broomsticks are usually owned by individual wizards, so that the availability is dependent on the location of these privately owned magic objects. What is more, broomsticks cannot be made by any ordinary wizard, the need to buy the brooms. This stands in contrast to for instance the portkey that can be produced by any wizard. Finally, the journey, just as is the case with the flying motorbike and car, takes the traveller literally through the air, so that the journey may vary according to the distance that is to be overcome. Hence the journey also offers the opportunity to develop the plot, which Rowling for instance does with the Battle of the Seven Potters (Rowling *Order* 51-57).

Into and out of the Ministry of Magic

The Telephone Box

- a street in London -> Ministry of Magic: in order to attend the hearing about Harry's underage wizardry, Mr. Weasley and Harry squeeze into the box, dial 6-2-4-4-2 upon which the box sinks into the ground and into the Ministry (Rowling *Order* 115-117)
- a street in London -> Ministry of Magic: Harry, Hermione, Ron, Neville and Luna use the phone box to enter the Ministry of Magic in order to get into the Department of Mysteries (Rowling *Order* 677-678)

The Public Toilets

- a street in London -> Ministry of Magic: in order to search for the locket, Hermione, Harry and Ron enter the Ministry of Magic, which is now done by flushing oneself down a public toilet to arrive through a fireplace in the Ministry (Rowling *Deathly Hallows* 197-198)

The Fire Place

- Ministry of Magic -> public toilet: Having found the locket in the Ministry, the three friends return by entering a fireplace to find themselves arriving in the public toilets (Rowling *Deathly Hallows* 219)

The telephone box and the public toilets connect the Primary World with the Ministry of Magic directly. Both of these passages function rather similarly. First of all they are both passages look as if they were part of the Primary World. In contrast to, for example the Leaky Cauldron, which is described as looking rather unpleasant, there is no sign of either of the two being anything other than public toilets or a phone box respectively. It is therefore not surprising that in both cases there are some activating actions that need to be taken before the passage will begin to carry out the transition. In the case of the phone box, the travellers need to dial 6-2-4-4-2 (the numbers correspond to the word 'magic'), state their name and purpose of visit and attach a badge to their clothes in order for the floor to sink down into the underground and into the Ministry of Magic (Rowling *Order* 115-117; 677-678). As for the toilets the travellers need to first insert a token into the toilet door for it to open, then step into the toilet and flush themselves down (Rowling *Deathly Hallows* 197-198). The major difference between the two passages lies in their selective nature. The phone box can be used by anyone aware of how it works. In contrast to this, the access to the toilet is much more restricted due to the tokens that are necessary; the distribution of the tokens defines who will be able to use the passage.

The two passages I have discussed here work like doors, yet the openings appear underneath rather than in front of the traveller. These passages appear to have a somewhat direct link – the point of departure as well as the point of arrival are both passages, the later of the two are fireplaces that are reminiscent

of the Floo Network, there are, however, a great number of fireplaces, all of which seem to be part of the direct link. In order to return to the starting point of the journey, there is no more involved than stepping into one of the fireplaces (Rowling *Deathly Hallows* 219). It seems that the passengers do not even need to state where they want to go, so that we can assume there is a direct connection between the toilets/telephone box on the one side and the fireplaces on the other side. Moreover, there seems to be no temporal restriction as to when these entrances into the Ministry of Magic can be used.

Otherworldly Animals

Thestrals

- Hogwarts -> London: after Harry has a vision of Sirius being attacked in the Department of Mysteries, Harry, Hermione, Ron, Neville and Luna fly on Thestrals to London to get into the Ministry of Magic (Rowling *Order* 672-677)

Dragon

- Gringot's -> area of open land: after having stolen Helga Hufflepuff's cup from Gringots, they escape by flying on the dragon that was meant to protect the vaults (Rowling *Deathly Hallows* 437-440)

The thestrals and the dragon are the only animals that aid wizards in the *Harry Potter* series in the transition between the worlds, and are only used to get from the Otherworld into the Primary World. The method used in both cases is flying, so that the journeys undertaken are rather long and described in great detail. Although the thestrals are said to move very quickly through the air, there is quite some description of the landscape beyond. The narration of the journey is stretched out to cover almost two pages, making it the journey with the longest narrating time in the series. Within this journey there is even scope for some self-reflective thoughts on Harry's side (Rowling *Order* 675-676). In contrast to some other passages in the Harry Potter series, these animals are not at the ready to be used whenever needed. What is more, thestrals are only visible for those who have seen death, so that finding them is only possible for some characters in the series (Rowling *Order* 394). The main difference between the

two animals, is that the thestrals allow the students to ride on them and that the thestrals take them to where they want to go to (Rowling *Order* 675), while the dragon does not seem to be aware of its passengers at all and is merely trying to escape its imprisonment at Gringot's.

Considering Nikolajeva's categories (cf. *Code* 75-94), the animals do not seem to fit into any of them. In terms of how they work as passages, they are very similar to the special vehicles, yet they are animals. Hence one of the options would be to subsume them under 'magic object', stating specifically that these will include animals. By doing so, all the flying elements would be grouped together. I would, however, prefer to add the animals to the category I suggested when discussing apparition: the 'abilities of otherworldly characters'. The reason is that in contrast to the vehicles, the animals were not enchanted in order to fly, flying is simply one of the abilities they possess – and this is exactly what I am aiming to grasp with the category 'abilities of otherworldly characters'. A non-realistic ability bound to a character from the Otherworld by which these characters can enable a transition into the other world for themselves or for other characters and hence act as the passage. This of course means that the term "characters" needs to be understood in the broader sense to include animals. I am convinced that this is certainly the most appropriate group to add them to.

8.4. Characters that Can Use the Passages

The interesting point about the 'who?' in the *Harry Potter* series is that only characters from the Otherworld are shown using the passages mentioned above. There are certain passages where it is obvious that only wizards would be able to use them, because they include the use of magic: apparation, flying by broom and using the passage to get through the Leaky Cauldron into Diagon Alley. Hence these are clearly selective passages. However, it is alluded to that side-along apparation is possible for Muggles: In *The Deathly Hallows* Harry's aunt, uncle and cousin are taken away by car first and said to be then side-apparated to a safe place (Rowling *Deathly Hallows* 36), yet the reader never sees this happening, nor are the Dursleys ever met in the Otherworld. For all

the other passages no command of magic is necessary, so that theoretically Muggles could undertake those transitions too. Interestingly, however, this never happens, nor is it ever explicitly stated that they could or could not. There is in fact only one example where Muggles are seen in the Otherworld: In *The Chamber of Secrets* the Weasleys meet Hermione's parents in Diagon Alley (Rowling *Chamber* 47), yet there is no mentioning of how they got there and how they left again.

So while the use of the passages by Muggles appears to be feasible, there is no mention of it taking place. Most likely there is a practical reason rather than a programmatic one: the plot around Harry Potter clearly evolves in the Otherworld, so that the main characters involved in the story are wizards and witches – not characters from the Primary World. Moreover, the wizards and witches put considerable effort into keeping their existence a secret, so it is little surprising that Muggles are not found in the Otherworld more often.

8.5. Special Aspects of the *Harry Potter* Series

The great number of passages in the *Harry Potter* series and their complexity give rise to a number of issues. First of all, I have shown that for apparition and flying animals a new category is needed and have suggested a category including 'abilities of otherworldly characters'. All other passages in the *Harry Potter* series can be accounted for in Nikolajeva's framework (cf. *Code* 75-94). Yet there are two additional aspects I would like to address, which are not directly reflected in secondary literature.

The first concerns the notion of activation. For many passages in the *Harry Potter* series is it necessary to take some action for the passage to appear or to work as a passage, as is the case for: the Knight Bus (to hail it), the wall behind the Leaky Cauldron (to tap a specific stone), the Floo Network (to put floo power into a burning fire), the telephone box (to dial 'magic') and the public toilets (to have and insert a token). This aspect of activation is only alluded to by Clute who talks about passages "represent[ing] acts of selection and election" (Clute "Portal" 776), which can be argued to be one of the functions

that activations have. Yet the fact that the characters themselves need to do something is not reflected at all. Because this activation is so frequent and fulfils the function of selection and of course a guarding function by keeping the entrances into the Otherworld a secret, I believe it should be considered as a common characteristic of passages.

The second factor that is brought up in this series is that transitions can happen without the character's consent, as we can see in the use of the Triwizard Cup portkey. Another involuntary, in this case accidental, transition could happen with the barrier between platforms 9 and 10 (leaning against barriers on a railway station is not exactly uncommon) – however this never happens. Every other passage has mechanisms that will only let determined travellers use it. It is nevertheless worth noting that the triggering of an involuntary transition is an interesting plot device, which can be used to create a sudden twist, as is done by J.K. Rowling with the Triwizard Cup (*Goblet* 551-582). Hence I would argue that the question of voluntary, involuntary and accidental transition should be taken into consideration in future studies of transition (unfortunately the transitions studied in this thesis do not provide much evidence of involuntary and accidentally used passages).

Finally, I would like to add that one of the points where the *Harry Potter* series differs greatly from the other books discussed in this thesis, is that the great majority of the passages are produced and controlled by wizards. This stands in sharp contrast to the gump in *The Secret of Platform 13* for instance, where the only passage is described as having always been there; and to many transitions in *The Chronicles of Narnia* which are controlled by only one character: Aslan.

9. THE ALICE STORIES AND THE QUESTION OF DREAMS

9.1. Children's and Young Adult Literature?

Out of the books I have chosen to analyse in this thesis, the two *Alice* novels are the oldest ones that exhibit the motif of transition. I believe it is very interesting to note transitions are an integral part books which have even been referred to as “the greatest English children’s book[s] of all times” (Townsend “British” 680). From today’s point of view the categorisation of the *Alice* stories as children’s and young adult literature could, however, be challenged. It has been claimed, and I would not disagree with this, that many children find them frightening (OCCL “Alice’s” 18). Yet I would argue that experiencing a story as frightening does not automatically make it unsuitable for children and young adults. Further, Townsend states that the *Alice* stories were not always successful with children, but were also not always rejected by them (Townsend *British* 681). So while they may not be favourites with children and young adults anymore, the *Alice* novels certainly were when they were first published. Hence, I believe it legitimate to refer to them as children’s and young adult literature and have therefore included them in this thesis.

What is even more interesting to me, though, is the fact that *Alice in Wonderland* as well as *Through the Looking-Glass* show how far back the use of transitions go. Given that the novels marked the true beginning of fantasy which was suitable for children (Townsend *Written* 101), it can be argued that in fact one of the first works of children’s and young adult fantasy already exhibited the motif of transitions. Hence a discussion of these traces one of the earliest uses of this motif.

9.2. The Transitions

Although I have chosen to discuss the two novels under one heading, I feel it is necessary to point out that to me the two novels are only loosely connected and do not form a series in the traditional sense. The only common feature is the main character. The plots of the two adventures, however, are not connected at

all. What is more, the Otherworlds that are visited also seem to be different ones. The reason why will discuss them together nevertheless, is that both of them provide an insight into the use of dream and sleeping as passages into and out of an Otherworld.

Each of the books on its own is a proto-typical example of a circular journey, as only the protagonist travels once into the Otherworld and then back. All together there are therefore four transitions in the two books – two in each of them.

Primary World -> Otherworld (entrances)

- Alice follows the white rabbit into the rabbit hole (Carroll *Wonderland* 9-11)
- Alice finds herself lifted onto the chimney sill and goes through the Looking-Glass (Carroll *Looking-Glass* 127)

Otherworld -> Primary World (exit)

- Alice wakes up in her sister's lap (Carroll *Wonderland* 109)
- Alice wakes up holding a kitten in her hands (Carroll *Looking-Glass* 234-238)

9.3. Passages and Journeys

Entrances

The rabbit hole and the mirror are clearly manifestations of the door-passage as described by Nikolajeva (*Code* 76). While the rabbit hole is already open, the Looking-Glass is interesting in so far as it melts away, so that it appears that the opening happens just around Alice's body as she touches it, which seems to be exactly what happens with the barrier between platform 9 and 10 in the *Harry Potter* series. This also means that there is no journey, as the Otherworld is situated right beyond the mirror, only separated by a threshold. There is a little more to this passage though; the narration suggests there is some magic involved in Alice's coming to sit on the chimney-piece (cf. Carroll *Looking-Glass* 127). I would therefore argue that Alice is (magically) drawn to the passage, so that in fact there is some kind of force that extends its powers out into the Primary World in order to lift her onto the chimney-piece.

Turning to the entrance in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, it is almost needless to say that it is most likely the passage on which most research and interpretation has been done. The rabbit hole has been compared to "Dante's passage through the gate of Hell" (Carpenter 66), but also been interpreted on a psycho-analytical level as "perhaps the best known symbol of coitus" (Goldschmidt qtd. in Brooker xvi), resorting to Lewis Carroll's supposed paedophilia. However one may wish to interpret this entrance, for this thesis it is merely important to note that this passage is most obviously a kind of door; it is even an entrance into a home, namely into a rabbit burrow. Just as is the case in *Through the Looking-Glass*, there is something drawing Alice to the passage. In this case, however, it is not some invisible force, but the rabbit, which acts as a messenger from the Otherworld.

In contrast to other passages involving a messenger, it is not the messenger here that takes the protagonist along, it merely functions as the bait – the rabbit is not needed for the transition. Therefore, I would argue that the entrance in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* is an extended passage that combines the door and the messenger element. The journey is rather short: after entering the rabbit hole, Alice only creeps through a straight tunnel for a while (Carroll *Adventures* 10), before this suddenly changes into the tube. Since we find that Alice's falling down through the tube happens at a speed that does not coincide with normal gravity, the tube is certainly already part of the Otherworld, so that the various other 'tests', the shrinking and growing, are not part of the transition.

Exists

One of the differences between the two exits lies in how Alice wakes up. While in *Through the Looking-Glass* Alice wakes up without any interference from the Primary World (Carroll *Looking-Glass* 234-238), in *Alice's Adventure in Wonderland* it is suggested that her sister may have woken her up (Carroll *Wonderland* 109). However, when looking at the text closely, it does seem as if Alice is already waking up before her sister calls her. Unfortunately this in clarity makes it impossible to clearly judge what is happening here. The more obvious difference between the two examples of waking up concerns the narrating time.

On the one hand there is *Alice's Adventure in Wonderland* where the process of waking up is a rather fast one that is only mentioned tangentially (Carroll *Adventures* 109). On the other hand the transition in *Through the Looking-Glass* is not only narrated in great detail, the phases of awakening are even given their own chapters, so that this transition also stands out from a formal point of view (Carroll *Looking-Glass* 234-238). Out of the books I have studied this is the only example where such explicit measures are taken to show a transition.

9.4. Exits and Dreams

While the entrances into the Otherworld are all somewhat normal passages, the exits back into the Primary World are interesting because they give insight into how sleeping can be incorporated into the passages and the transitions. Before I move on to discussing this though, I would just like to briefly state that the return transitions happen, as Booker observes, at the point where the danger becomes too much to bear for the character (Booker 106).

In the discussion of what fantasy is, I have referred to J.R.R. Tolkien's position on dreams. He states that "since the fairy-story deals with 'marvels', it cannot tolerate any frame or machinery suggesting that the whole story in which they occur is a figment or illusion" (Tolkien 35). This means that he opposes to counting stories with a dream-frame as fairy-stories and hence as fantasy. Tolkien even explicitly excludes the *Alice* stories for this reason (Tolkien 36). However, I believe that it is wrong to brush them aside like this. Instead I interpret the notion of dream as an apologetic move to say afterwards: This never happened, it was all just a dream. The use of dreams as "devices of justifying" (Stableford 297) can be traced back as far as to the middle ages and are commonplace in fantastic literature (Stableford 297). This is exactly what happens in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and in *Through the Looking-Glass*; the notion of dream is only brought up after the adventure is over, before the adventure Alice is never actually shown as falling asleep – which is the generally accepted prerequisite for dreaming. At the beginning of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* Alice the narrator merely described her as being tired, when suddenly she sees the white rabbit mumbling "Oh dear! Oh dear! I

shall be too late!” (Carroll *Wonderland* 10). In *Through the Looking-Glass* there is not the slightest hint to Alice falling asleep or to the beginning of dreaming. Due to this omission, it cannot be assumed that the adventures would in fact be understood by the reader as dreams. Therefore, I believe that the later waking up in the Primary World and the claim that it was all just a dream can only be seen as an apologetic move.

Hence I interpret the waking up at the end of the two *Alice* stories as the passages out of the Otherworld. At the end of *Through the Looking-Glass* Alice falls asleep in the Otherworld and then wakes up again in the Primary World. What is more, is that the waking up is already foregrounded, when Alice is holding the Red Queen, saying: “I’ll shake you into a kitten” (Carroll *Looking-Glass* 234), and soon after wakes up with a kitten in her hands. The major difference to *Alice in Wonderland* is that in the first *Alice* story the protagonist is not shown as fall asleep in the Otherworld and is accompanied by a second character in the Primary World, namely her sister. This means that in retrospect – and only in retrospect – the story does appear to have been a dream. However, I would argue that this does not really matter: the reader has read a story about a girl who gets from the Primary World to the Otherworld. True, the way in which she gets back is a little confusing, yet a lack of clarity is no reason to exclude the story from fantasy or this discussion. Having previously established the central role a reader takes in literature, I also want to argue along the lines of reader experience here: what the reader sees is *Alice* waking up, whether it makes sense or not is an entirely different matter. Therefore, I would argue that the waking up in *Alice in Wonderland* is also the passage used to exit the Otherworld.

One of the remaining questions about the two *Alice* stories is how exactly the return journeys work: What sort of passage are they? Are they, or in fact could they, be a human ability? Who controls them? As far as I can see, none of these questions can be answered with any degree of certainty. Therefore, I would propose to accept that with the exits back out of the Otherworld Lewis Carroll has created a complex situation, which may well keep the reader wondering about what has really happened for ever.

10. THE WISHING CHAIR

The edition I am using for this analysis is a collection of the otherwise individually published books: *The Adventures of the Wishing Chair*, *The Wishing Chair Again* and *More Wishing Chair Tales*. As I have stated previously (see section *Books Studied in this Thesis*) these stories are connected with each other only in so far as they feature the same core characters and the Wishing Chair. However, there is no necessity to read the books in this order so as to comprehend the stories. They all present adventures which are essentially interchangeable. Therefore I will not differentiate between the three volumes when discussing the transitions, especially as this does not seem to be useful or necessary for the analysis.

10.1. The Transitions

Because the transitions are so frequent (roughly 129) in this series, I have chosen not to list them all. Rather I would like to point out that the typical and most usual transition is for Mollie, Peter and Chinky to fly off with the Wishing Chair together and to return on the Chair. Usually this happens at the respective beginning and end of each chapter, though towards the end of the series there are a number of adventures that stretch over some chapters. What is more, throughout all of the adventures there are practically no omitted transitions. I would argue that the frequent telling of the transitions aids a clear distinction between Primary and Otherworld, which may arguably be beneficial for a young reader's understanding. It may also be argued that the frequent transitions are only a side effect of the shortness of the adventures, which again may be seen as a step taken to aid young readers, though I would not assume this necessary. Nevertheless it is interesting that despite the recurrent transitions, there is practically no plot that takes place in the Primary World. So despite the frequent transitions this is by no means an example of a plot that is set in two worlds, as is to some extent the case in *The Secret of Platform 13*.

Further, it needs to be said that the most frequently used passage is the Wishing Chair, which at first seems to be the only otherworldly element in the

close proximity of the children. As the story continues, however, the reader increasingly discovers that the Primary World is in fact full of magic folk (for example fairies living at the bottom of the garden (Blyton *Adventures* 166-167)), who lives along side without anyone noticing, so that there appears to be a world-within-a-world situation. However, all of these non-realistic elements only begin to appear once the children are in possession of the Wishing Chair. I would therefore argue that the Otherworld is in some way attached to the Wishing Chair. Wherever the Wishing Chair is, otherworldly characters will turn up. Moreover, it can fly off into various non-realistic lands. I would argue that all the lands that are visited throughout the adventures are essentially one Otherworld, as the non-realistic elements appearing there are not exclusive to the individual lands.

Besides the Wishing Chair, the pixie Chinky too provides passages for the children. He is a messenger from the Otherworld, who for most of the time guards the Wishing Chair and hence comes to live in the Primary World playroom. In connection to the other passages in this series Chinky takes an interesting position in so far as he introduces most of them to the children, so that he, as a messenger from the Otherworld, gives them the knowledge necessary to access the passages. In a way then Chinky is part of these passages himself.

10.2. The Passages: The Wishing Chair

As I have mentioned above the majority of the transitions are undertaken with the Wishing Chair which is best categorised as a 'magical object' (Nikolajeva Code 92-94)). It is in fact very similar to the broomsticks in the *Harry Potter* series. The chair too is used as a kind of vehicle that travels along to the Otherworld. Moreover, as has also been the case for the broomsticks, the travellers literally sit on it during the journey, which is done by flying through the air.

Rules that govern the passage

As the name suggests, the person(s) sitting in the chair need to wish for a place to go to. Initially, however, the children are not aware of how the chair works and only make it move by accident. Sitting on it as a way to keep them safe from the escaped foxes Peter says: “ ‘I do wish we were safely at home!’ ” (Blyton *Adventures* 9), upon which the chair rises into the air. The explicit clue as to how it works is given by the wizard whom they escape from, when he shouts “ ‘How dare you use our wishing-chair! Wish it back, wish it back!’ ” (Blyton *Adventures* 10). So in fact he enables them to obtain and use his magic object against his will. One of the very interesting questions concerning this passage is: Who rules the Wishing Chair?

For the most part the children and Chinky ask it to go to lands that Chinky has suggested. Sometimes, though, the chair just flies off and the children wait to see where it will take them. At other times the chair flies off without anybody sitting on it (cf. Blyton *Adventures* 85-86). What is also interesting is that there are repeated attempts by various otherworldly characters to obtain the Wishing Chair. Overall there does not seem to be any restriction as to who the passengers are; besides the typical party of three (Molly, Peter and Chinky), there are gnomes (Blyton *Adventures* 54), elves (Blyton *Adventures* 76) and a fairy (Blyton *More* 373) riding on it. It seems that whoever will be sitting on it may order the Wishing Chair about. When Molly, Peter and Chinky sit in the chair it accept their wishes, yet it does not like the course to be altered, although it is possible (Blyton *Adventures* 81). Once it even alters the course by itself and flies towards the moon, upon which Chinky corrects the course (Blyton *Adventures* 197), which gives the impression that the characters sitting in the chair do rule it. It is also worth remembering that this is a passage that can transport more than one individual at a time; the maximum capacity that is shown are two children, one pixie and eight elves (Blyton *Adventures* 76).

The main restriction to the use of this device, however, is that it needs to grow wings which seems to happen randomly, so that it only sometimes coincides with the children's wishes and needs: the chair just happens to have its wings when they, for instance, want to go to the Magician Greatheart's party (Blyton

Adventures 77), yet they need to take the train to reach witch Kiri-Kiri's house, when they are looking for their cat Whiskers (Blyton *Adventures 62*). One aspect that is certain though, is that the children do not have the power to make the wings grow by asking for it (Blyton *Adventures 193-194*). In fact they seem to be solely dependent on the chair's mercy, though the Wishing Chair does adapt to their lives and never grows wings while the children are at boarding school. The only other way to make it grow wings and hence activate the passage, is by rubbing on Growing Ointment, as is done once in the course of the stories after the wings have been cut off by Slipperies. This ointment, however, is provided by Chinky's aunt, who is a character from the Otherworld (Blyton *Again 244; 247*), so that in fact the children themselves cannot do anything. As a sign of the interference, from then on the wings on are no longer red, but green and yellow, yet they function as they did previously.

The one unique factor about this passage – in contrast to those that I have studied in this thesis – is that although it seems to be an inanimate object, it seems to have its own character and mind, which is expressed in various ways. One of the chair's ways of expression is that the chair can creak and alter this creaking to express itself (Blyton *Adventures 194*). Another way of expression is to alter the position of its wings when it is told off (Blyton *Adventures 88*). Besides these communicative attempts there are many more scenes that establish it as somewhat independent. This includes its decision to change the destination (Blyton *Adventures 197*), to fly off without waiting for others (Blyton *More 370*) and to pull characters along against their will (Blyton *Again 309*). What is also interesting is that the chair can get scared, upon which it flies away immediately (Blyton *Again 310; Blyton More 405*). It even has a sense of memory or logic, as it flies to Chinky's mother for the school time without being requested to do so after having spent time there during the children's previous absence. I would therefore argue that the Wishing Chair is more than just an inanimate object. Instead I propose to accept it as an object which, because it is otherworldly, has some character to it and is not merely a thing that can be used as one wishes. Hence the Wishing Chair can be counted as a 'magic object' as Nikolajeva describes it, if we accept that the objects can obviously have some character to them (Nikolajeva *Code 92*).

The Journeys

The journeys undertaken with the Wishing Chair are exclusively done by flying through the air. Despite this, the journey is not described as dangerous. Within the three books there are only two moments that suggest some unsafety: During one journey Chinky falls off the chair when they almost collide with an aeroplane. While the children “watched with the greatest dismay” (Blyton *Adventures* 36), there is no worry about him dying or any of such thoughts. Here we see the gentleness of this book: Chinky has turned himself into a snowflake so as to land safely. The second occasion where the children are worried, is when the Wishing Chair is in a silly mood, and flies rather enthusiastically (Blyton *Adventures* 81). Yet all there is, is one remark and then the journey is over so that there is no real danger involved in the journey.

The various lands that are visited are suggested to exist at varying distances from the Primary World, so that the journeys’ durations should vary accordingly. When they for instance aim at the Land of Goodness Knows Where (Blyton *Again* 236) the journey appears to be very long and in fact needs to be discontinued because the chair with only three wings can no longer carry them. In this case the narrated time and the narrating time seem to be in proportion with the incomplete journey taking up three pages, yet this is not the case for the other journeys. The actual time that passes between getting on the chair and off it again is neither commented on by any of the characters, nor is it reflected in the narrating time. The journeys hence seem to be largely a repetitive conventionality, rather than actually contributing to the plot.

10.3. Other Passages in the *Wishing-Chair* Series

In situations where the chair has disappeared, been stolen or not grown its wings, the children and Chinky use other passages to enter the Otherworld or return to the Primary World. All together there are seven alternative passages to the Wishing Chair.

Primary World -> Otherworld

- through a door in a tree at the bottom of the garden the three of them reach the Otherworld train station (Blyton *Adventures* 62) – passage provided by Chinky
- Peter, Mollie and an elf use the fairy ring to get into Pin Village (Blyton *Again* 210-211)
- Peter and Mollie use the fairy ring to find Chinky (Blyton *Again* 221)
- Peter, Mollie and the brownie Winks use the fairy ring to find Mr. Spells (Blyton *Again* 311-312)
- Chinky walks with the two children through a wood that leads them into the Otherworld (Blyton *More* 398) – passage provided by Chinky
- Chinky and Mollie fly on the geese from the garden into a land of clouds (Blyton *More* 412-413) – passage provided by Chinky

Otherworld -> Primary World

- Peter falls asleep (with Chinky and Mollie in his pockets) in the Land of Dreams and wakes up in the playroom (Blyton *Adventures* 48)
- after getting off at the bus stop in the Otherworld, they walk up some stairs and then emerge through a door in a tree that grows in a wood near the children's home (Blyton *Adventures* 86) – passage provided by Chinky
- On their way home by bus Mollie and Peter go through the Land of Dreams and then find themselves waking up in their beds (Blyton *Again* 206)
- Peter, Mollie and Winks walk through the silver door in Mr. Spells's home to arrive at a hillside close to their garden (Blyton *Again* 321)
- The children and the brownie Winks walk back through the silver door into Mr. Spells's house (Blyton *Again* 322)
- Chinky and Mollie fly with the geese from Topsy-Turvy Land to the playroom door (Blyton *More* 408-409) – passage provided by Chinky

A Door in a Tree

When the Wishing Chair has failed to grow its wings, the children and Chinky use the train to get to the Otherworld. However, the train station is already all too clearly in the Otherworld. Therefore, the passage in this case is just the

door what leads to it. As it is a literal door, it of course also fall under Nikolajeva's category of 'door' (*Code 76*). The door is located in one of the trees at the bottom of the garden, but only appears when Chinky twists a piece of bark on a tree (Blyton *Adventures* 62). Beyond the door the children find a staircase that leads them to the train. Since the Otherworld unfolds right beyond the threshold, there is no proper journey. As a result the narration of this passage is very short, taking up only a few sentences.

There is no indication as to whether the children could use the passage without Chinky. So that it remains unclear whether the knowledge about how to activate the passage is enough, or whether it is necessary to have a member of the Otherworld for Primary World characters to use this passage. In any case it is interesting to note that the door is closed again by Chinky (Blyton *Adventures* 62) after they have entered, so that we can assume that an open door could be used by anyone. When the three use the train a second time we do not see them step out of the door, but are only told that they walk through the woods to their home (Blyton *More* 444), so that the use of the passage is omitted.

There is a very similar passage that is used later in the book, when the children and Chinky return by bus. After getting off at their stop in the Otherworld, they walk into a cave and then up some stairs which lead them to a door in a tree. This tree, however, is located in a wood near the children's home and not in a tree at the bottom of the garden (Blyton *Adventures* 86), so we must assume that these are in fact two different passages. Again the transition is not told in great detail. What is more, there is no journey as the transition happens as they cross the threshold.

The Silver Door

After the chair has been stolen, the children go to see a wizard to help them. When the children need to go home, he points out the little silver door. Interestingly, the children do not recall seeing it before. This seeing and not seeing of the passage is similar to that of the Leaky Cauldron in the *Harry Potter* series. It is not clear whether this is an indication to it suddenly appearing, or merely to the children not having paid attention to it before.

Therefore, it is not clear whether the passage has just been created by the wizard, or has been there all along. As the door represents a threshold, there is again no journey as such. What is more, it needs to be said that strictly speaking, we do not see the children step through the door, but it is implied that they use it. We only see the door being opened for them and then find them walk down a hillside. How they reached the Primary World, is not exactly stated, they just seem to suddenly be there (Blyton *Again* 321). There is a hint towards this though, when the children use this passage into the other direction.

Besides the Wishing Chair, this is the only passage in the *Wishing-Chair* series that is used into both directions. After a night's sleep the children and the brownie Winks return to the Otherworld. What is interesting in this case, is that this time the passage is not only constituted by the door, but the way to it is already part of the passage. The children cannot make out the way to the silver door – which they had just walked through a few hours earlier – but Winks can. He remarks that he has better eyes for spotting “strange things” (Blyton *Again* 322). He sees a shining path that the two children cannot make out. Therefore, it seems appropriate to argue that in fact only a member of the Otherworld can find the way and hence use the passage. For this reason I would argue to count it towards the passage, making it an extended passage. The silver door is again seen and entered by all three of them (Blyton *Again* 322).

Geese

In *More Wishing-Chair Tales* the children fly on geese twice. The first journey with them is, however, omitted. Chinky finds Mollie in Topsy-Turvy Land, which he has reached with the help of Farmer Straw's geese. The passage – the geese – seems at first sight to be very similar to the animals used in the *Harry Potter* series. There is, however, one major difference, which also makes it harder to classify them: it is not clear whether the geese are Primary World or the Otherworld characters. Although they do seem to live in the Primary World: “[t]he geese took them to the playroom door [...] and flew off down to the farm.” (Blyton *More* 409). Also when the geese are used a second time, Chinky again goes “down to the farm” to catch the two geese (Blyton *More* 411). It needs to be noted though that in both cases Chinky is a member of the travelling party,

so that we may assume that his help is necessary to get and guide the geese. Further, we find that the animals do not come voluntarily, but only in return to Chinky's promise to keep their farmer from taking them to the market the next week. Since this indicates that the geese can talk, it could be assumed that these animals are in fact characters from the Otherworld. Moreover, unless we assume the children to have shrunk, for which there is no indication, the geese must be unnaturally large. Therefore, I would argue that the geese are otherworldly character. Although flying as such is not a non-realistic ability, the taking along of children certainly is non-realistic. Hence I would classify the geese under 'abilities of otherworldly character' along with the flying animal from the *Harry Potter* series. As far as the journeys are concerned, it is worth pointing out that despite the fact that the journeys with the geese should take some time as it requires them to physically fly through the air, the journeys are narrated so very quickly, so that we do not actually experience much of a journey.

Fairy Ring

In the course of the adventures we find this passage used three times (Blyton *Again* 210-211; 221; 311-312), in each case for transitions from the Primary World into the Otherworld. The location and functionality of the passage is confined to them by an otherworldly creature, namely by a fairy. After this has been done the children can use the passage without an otherworldly character. It is worth noting that all aspects of this passage are given in great detail. The fact that the way the children need to walk in order to reach the fairy ring is repeated all three times indicates that this is always the same passage. The fairy ring is clearly situated in the Primary World, yet the passage is hidden quite well – it is described as a patch of dark grass, within which there is a button that, once pressed, lets the journey begin. Hence this is another example of a passage that first needs to be activated by the travellers. The travellers remain seated, while the piece of grass carries them down into the Otherworld. In each case they arrive in a corridor, from where they can enter the houses of various characters from the Otherworld. I would argue that this corridor is already part of the Otherworld, as it seems to be a physical connection of a large number of houses in the Otherworld. Therefore, I propose to see the fairy-

ring merely as a kind of 'door' passage which opens into the ground (Nikolajeva *Code 76*), as is also the case with the phone box in the *Harry Potter* series.

Dream

The Wishing-Chair series also has an interesting contribution to make towards the dream-discussion I have pursued previously for the *Alice* books. One of the lands the three visit is the 'land of dreams' from which they return to their home twice: once when they go to visit it (Blyton *Adventures* 48) and once when they are on their way back home on the 'dawnbus' and pass through the land of dreams (Blyton *Again* 206). What happens is that in both cases is that they are shown to fall asleep and the next thing they know is that they are in their home in the Primary World. Here the sleeping – despite the name of the land, there is no mention of them dreaming – is clearly the passage. In both cases it seems that the act of falling asleep and hence the transition cannot be influenced or evoked by the characters. In the first case we find that once asleep, the rocking-horse, on which Peter has fallen asleep, flies up into the air and next Peter wakes up in the play room. Therefore, the act of sleeping here acts as the element that activates the passage. In the second case, however, the narration jumps straight from inside the bus to the children's beds. One could therefore assume that the bus flew them back home, yet there is no way of being certain. In any case it is worth noting that here the sleeping of the passengers seems to be a prerequisite for the transition.

The Wood

This is a particularly interesting passage, because it seems to answer the question of who can see and use the passages. Here Chinky takes Mollie and Peter through a little wood on foot. The children remark that they have never seen the wood before. The transition happens as they walk through the wood, which appears to be a crosshatch or borderland between the two worlds – there is no clear-cut border. In this case Chinky provides an answer as to why both children do not recall ever having seen the wood before. Chinky says that "fairyland" is not as easy to reach as it seems: " 'You couldn't possibly find it unless you had me with you' " (Blyton *More* 398). What this means – at least for this passage – is that characters from the Primary World can only enter the

Otherworld when they are with a person from the Otherworld. Therefore, it is clear that this passage is selective as to who can use it. Because there is no physical notable object that embodies the border between the two worlds, I would argue that in fact Chinky is the passage, so that I would categorise this passage under 'abilities of otherworldly characters'.

10.4. State of Mind

Returning once more to Booker's claim about the state of mind (96), we find – as was already the case in *Coraline* – that most of the transitions happen during the summer holidays: *The Wishing-Chair Again* and *More Wishing-Chair Tales* are set entirely during school holidays. Whether the holidays are supposed to be understood as a time where the children are in a special state of mind, or whether it is a practicality that liberates the author from having to consider how school would fit in between the adventures, remains open to debate. Moreover, what this series clearly does not support is the claim that the escape from the Otherworld happens just as the situation becomes too dangerous (Booker 106). While the chair does save them from some situations in the Otherworld, it needs to be said that none of these situations are really dangerous, they are uncomfortable if anything. As a rule though, the adventures are lovely, if crazy.

11. MARY POPPINS

The edition I am using for this analysis comprises all *Mary Poppins* books by P.L. Travers: *Mary Poppins*, *Mary Poppins Comes Back*, *Mary Poppins Opens the Door*, *Mary Poppins in the Park*, *Mary Poppins From A to Z*, *Mary Poppins in the Kitchen*, *Mary Poppins in Cherry Tree Lane*, *Mary Poppins and the House Next Door*. As is the case in the *Wishing Chair* collection, the plot of the individual books are only loosely linked to one another. They do employ a reoccurring cast of characters, most importantly Mary Poppins and the Banks children: Jane, Michael, John and Barbara, of which only Jane and Michael take an active role; the twins John and Barbara are usually only taken along. Despite the reoccurring cast, previous adventures rarely influence later stories, so that there is no continuous plot development as is, for instance, the case in the *Harry Potter* series. For reasons of clarity I will discuss all *Mary Poppins* books in one section.

As for a general note I would like to address Mary Poppins's constant denial of any non-realistic experiences. I consider this to be merely one of her character traits and certainly do not believe that the non-realistic adventures are dreamt or made up by the children. Moreover, there is evidential proof for some adventures. For instance: during Mary Poppins's birthday party at the zoo, she receives a golden snakeskin as a present, the next morning she is depicted wearing a "belt made of golden scaly snakeskin" (Travers *Back* 119). Equally there is the ginger-bread that the Banks children receive from Mrs. Corry (Travers *Poppins* 89), as well as the absence of the paper stars from the nursery the next morning after the children have seen Mary Poppins stick them to the night sky (Travers *Poppins* 92).

11.1. An Implied Otherworld?

Before discussing the transitions in the *Mary Poppins* collection, I feel it is necessary to discuss the kind of Otherworld that is present in them. The reason is that the Otherworld in this collection cannot be classified as easily as in the other books studied. At first sight the *Mary Poppins* collection seems to depict

an Implied Otherworld; Mary Poppins, who is clearly a character from the Otherworld (for instance she can slide up the banister (Travers *Poppins* 17), pour medicine in different flavours from one bottle of medicine (Travers *Poppins* 18-19) and talk to animals), comes into the Primary World. Unfortunately, none of Mary Poppins's transitions into the Primary World are witnessed by the reader because Jane and Michael function as the focalisers for the third person narrator, so that the story follows the family rather than Mary Poppins. Looking at the texts more closely it becomes evident that the Banks children at times enter the Otherworld themselves. This is for instance the case when a talking star flies into the nursery and urges Jane and Michael to come outside, where they are to step onto stars that form a stairway for them to climb (Travers *Back* 256-257).

Because characters from the Primary World can enter the Otherworld, this must be a case of an Open World. However, this Otherworld is not defined by territory, as is the case in *The Chronicles of Narnia* – for instance we see all sorts of non-realistic characters gather in the Primary World zoo. The one thing all otherworldly places that are visited have in common is Mary Poppins. Yet the Otherworld does not stick to her, as is the case in the *Wishing Chair* collection: Mary Poppins is able to control it. She can take the children into the Otherworld, introduce them to otherworldly characters or just show them around the Primary World. It appears that she can control how much Otherworld will be experienced when and where by the children. Hence, I would suggest that she is almost always part of the passage, as without her presence the Banks children would not see any Otherworld at all and because the nurse often literally takes the children by the hand and walks into the Otherworld with them. Thus, even when she does not act as the messenger, she is nevertheless always connected to the Otherworld and therefore to every transition.

11.2. The Transitions

One of the complications of the Otherworld-situation in the *Mary Poppins* collection is that the children often meet characters who are clearly from the Otherworld, yet it is often not clear whether they are met in the Primary World or

the Otherworld. In fact there are numerous cases when the border between the two worlds is extremely fuzzy. As I have argued above, the Otherworld present in these stories does not seem to be confined to a certain territory. Therefore, it is somewhat difficult to decide when the Otherworld is entered and when not. I have only listed transitions below where either the visited area seems to be ruled by the laws of the Otherworld, or where there is some special way of getting there, though of course many of my decisions could be challenged. Above all, though, I believe the important point to note about the *Mary Poppins* collection is how intriguingly interwoven the two worlds are and how this makes it – even for the adult reader – almost impossible to always keep Primary World and Otherworld apart.

11.3. Passages and Journeys

In order to provide some structure to the discussion of the passages used in the *Mary Poppins* stories, I have decided to divide the transitions into the entrances into the Otherworld and the exits back into the Primary World, the reason being that many of the return transitions are very similar. Within those two groups I will then discuss the transitions according to the passages that are used. First of all though I want to address one transition entirely on its own, because it is the only transition in this collection where only otherworldly characters travel from the Primary World to the Otherworld, in all the other cases at least one Primary World character is a member of the travelling part.

Into a Picture

Primary World -> Otherworld

- Bert and Mary Poppins jump into the pavement picture and immediately find themselves in an Otherworld dressed differently where they then have tea (Travers *Poppins* 25)

Without the Banks children Mary Poppins is only shown in one complete transition in all of the *Mary Poppins* collection. In this case she does so with Bert, who is also a member of the Otherworld – we know this because he is not at all surprised about being able to jump onto a picture and to then land in it.

The passage to enter in this case is Bert's picture, which makes this a passage that can be produced whenever needed. The two of them only need to jump onto it, and instantly find themselves in the environment that has previously been drawn by Bert. Concerning the category into which this passage, there is so little description that it is difficult to make a clear decision. I would argue that it is a magic object rather than a door, because there is no way of stepping through the object.

Otherworld -> Primary World

- Bert and Mary Poppins are shown through a white doorframe by the waiter and find themselves on the pavement again (Travers *Poppins* 28)

The return-journey is equally short, yet the passage is a different one. Mary and Bert are asked to leave the Otherworld through a white doorframe, through which they simply need to step to arrive in the Primary World again. This transition is, however, not entirely a voluntary one, as they are ushered out by the waiter, who as such acts as the keeper of this door-like passage.

Entrances

Uncle Arthur, Cousin Arthur and Cousin Fred Twigley and Mrs. Corry

Throughout the Mary Poppins stories the Banks children repeatedly meet otherworldly characters in the Primary World, which at first sight may also seem to be the case in the following examples. However, I believe that the places where these encounters happen are part of the Otherworld. Firstly, because in those places the non-realistic abilities are accepted as the rule, as is the case with Mrs. Corrie's shop. Secondly, because in some of the areas the non-realistic powers also have an effect on the children, as for instance at Uncle Albert's, Cousin Arthur's and Cousin Fred's flat. Moreover, the fact that Mrs. Corrie's shop disappears once they have left it, certainly points towards it not being a Primary World place.

Primary World -> Otherworld

- Jane and Michael visit Mr. Wigg (Uncle Albert) with Mary Poppins, where they laugh until they soar up into the air to have tea with Mr. Wigg (Travers *Poppins* 32-34) until Mary Poppins makes them come down again (Travers *Poppins* 39).
- Mary takes the Banks children to Mrs. Corry's ginger-bread shop, the owners of which are made of sweets (Travers *Poppins* 83)
- Jane, Michael and Mary Poppins visit Mary's Cousin Arthur, for whom everything goes wrong every second Monday (Travers *Back* 204-205); in the course of this Jane and Michael begin to hover upside down in the air – apparently because they catch “it” from Cousin Arthur (Travers *Back* 208-209)
- Jane, Michael and Mary Poppins visit Mary's Cousin Fred Twigley, who has seven wishes that will come true no matter what he wishes for (Travers *Door* 359)

Because the two worlds in the *Mary Poppins* collection are not separated clearly, the passages used to enter the Otherworld are often rather unspectacular, and the borders almost invisible. This is particularly the case with many of Mary Poppins's relatives (Uncle Albert, Cousin Arthur and Cousin Fred Twigley) and her friend Mrs. Corry, who appear to live in the middle of the Primary World. In those cases the party simply walks into the flat or shop and later walks out of it, making the doors the borders. The passage I would argue is in this case much more Mary Poppins than the doors, because it is her who shows the children into a place they would not have entered without her. As I have argued earlier, it is within Mary Poppins's powers to control how much of, where and when the children see the Otherworld. Out of these cases it is interesting to note that Mrs. Corry's shop disappears after they have left it (Travers *Poppins* 89). I believe that this implies that it is not a place that can be entered whenever desired, but that it may only be possible when approaching it with an otherworldly character, as it may otherwise not show itself.

The Compass

- While walking Mary Poppins, Jane and Michael find a compass that allows them (and the twins) to travel around the world²¹; they travel from the park to the North (Travers *Poppins* 66) and then are then suddenly back in the park (Travers *Poppins* 71)

First of all I would like to emphasize that the compass is a magic object and not a technical gadget, because its non-realistic powers do not seem to be not a result of fictional scientific advancement, though of course the origin of this magic object is never revealed. While going for a walk Mary Poppins notices the compass lying on the ground and orders Michael to pick it up. The way the compass works as a passage is rather straight-forward: while holding the compass in their hands, the character only needs to name the cardinal point for the journey to begin. One of the little plot-holes here is that there is no indication about how the other characters are taken along. In all of the other novels studied it is necessary for anyone who wants to travel along to hold onto the person holding the magic object, yet there is no mention of this in *Mary Poppins*. What is more, neither of the two journeys is described. For the entrance journey the children close their eyes and next thing they know they are on the North Pole, so that while we cannot see the journey, it nevertheless happens. The return-journey, on the other hand, is non-existent. While Michael is still shouting for the participants in a race, he finds Mary Poppins telling him off and himself in the park again. There is no indication as to how this happened, so that we can only assume that it was Mary Poppins's doing, especially since the compass is still in her hand (Travers *Poppins* 70-71). After returning Mary Poppins claims the compass for herself, so that no further transitions can be done with it and we do not know if the compass would work without the nurse's presence.

²¹ The places that are visited are all non-realistic and have talking animals. Therefore, out of the five journeys only two count, because the other journeys happen within the Otherworld.

The Stairway in the Clouds

- Mary Poppins walks Jane and Michael through the misty park and then has them follow her up into the clouds, which seem to form a stairway, arriving at a cloud-field where they meet Mary Poppins's uncle (Travers *House* 746);

The first aspect that can be said about this passage is that it certainly requires the presence of Mary Poppins. Yet it is not clear whether she has made it, or whether it has been there before. I would further argue that this is essentially a door-passage, although the physical appearance is different. However, it is still an object that needs to be “overcome” and does not trigger a journey, but is in fact the way into the Otherworld. The mist-made stairway that leads into the clouds must of course be otherworldly, yet the area they pass through seems to be neither one nor the other, so that it forms a kind of borderland, though of course it is high up in the air so that no other characters from the Primary World can be met there. What is interesting, though, is that the Park Keeper can see and address them. The journey is described as rather long which is expressed by the words “[o]n they went, ever upwards [...] Till at last” (Travers *House* 746). However, it does not seem to be dangerous or uncomfortable at all.

Messenger and Door

All of the above discussed transitions and passages have one thing in common: Mary Poppins. While in some cases it is obvious that she is necessary to enter the Otherworld, it does not always seem to be the case. What is interesting about the following transitions, is that these are undertaken without Mary Poppins, yet she is still always – in one way or other – present. In the first four transitions Mary Poppins is met by the children once they are in the Otherworld.

Primary World -> Otherworld

- Jane and Michael are woken up and lead to the zoo by a voice, where Mary Poppins is holding her birthday party with her otherworldly friends amongst talking animals, of which the snake is her cousin (Travers *Poppins* 104-106)

- a talking star flies into the nursery and urges Jane and Michael to come outside, where they are to step onto stars that form a stairway for them to climb (Travers *Back* 256-257)
- On Mary Poppins's day off Michael and Jane hear a voice calling them from the Cowrie Shell asking them to dive in, upon which they find themselves in the sea (Travers *Door* 441-442)
- On the evening of Halloween Jane and Michael each find a leaf on their pillow, then they see their shadows running away and chase after them (Travers *Park* 651), when they catch up with them they need to show their leaves to be allowed to enter the party of the shadows (Travers *Park* 652)

What all of these transitions into the Otherworld have in common, is that there is always some form of messenger that woos the children into entering the Otherworld. I would argue that these messengers are always part of an extended passage, because they contact the Banks children and then lead them to an object that embodies the border between the two worlds. Once it is only a voice (Travers *Poppins* 104-106), which I believe can be classified as a messenger too, despite the lack of a physical figure. Another kind of messenger, namely an actual message, is present in the Halloween episode. The leaves too employ the function of bringing the children to the passage, although it is not entirely clear who left them and hence who wants them to come (Travers *Park* 651). Messengers with a physical, yet not human appearance, are the star that flies into the nursery (Travers *Back* 256-257) and the Cowrie Shell that calls the children (Travers *Door* 441-442). In all of these cases, the messengers are, however, not the only part of the passage, but really only lead them to the passages, which in all cases is realised with a door-like passage.

In comparison to the other messengers, the voice that calls Jane and Michael into the zoo to Mary Poppins's birthday party is in some way more pronounced because it literally leads the children all the way through town. The actual transition into the Otherworld though happens as they enter the zoo, whose entrance gate is guarded by a Brown Bear. The entrance procedure is a

reversal of the usual scheme; they do not have to pay and instead of presenting a ticket to the ticket collector, he gives them a ticket. Considering the question of where the Otherworld is, the zoo is a particularly interesting example as it is actually a Primary World place which for the night is inhabited only by otherworldly characters and thereby becomes a place in the Otherworld (Travers *Poppins* 104-106).

As for the star and the stairway, they are most obviously a variation of the mist-stairway, so that I would again propose to see these as version of the door-passage, which leads through a borderland into the Otherworld. What is different though, is who shows the children the way: instead of Mary Poppins we here see a star doing so, yet in both cases it is a character from the Otherworld (Travers *Back* 256-257).

The voice from Cowrie Shell too only leads Jane and Michael to the threshold, namely to the shell, into which they need to dive. I would argue though that the dive as such in this case does not count as a journey, as the children are all too clearly already in the Otherworld – they are immediately in the sea in which they can breath normally. The Cowrie Shell, which has also provided the voice as a messenger, is also a door-passage, although it too lacks the normal physical appearance of a door. Diving into it seems to be the true moment at which the threshold is crossed. Realistically speaking this is of course not possible – how could a human dive into a shell – so that it would be reasonable to assume that already as they decide to do so, the Otherworld begins to act upon them and enables them to dive in (most likely altering their size), though this is not described (Travers *Door* 441-442).

The leaves are a slightly different matter. While they too express where the children need to go to, they also function as the entrance tickets into the Otherworld and are required to enter the Otherworld. The threshold is protected by a policeman who checks the tickets before he lets anyone enter. Although the entrance is not visible as such, I would argue that the policeman checking the entering guests acts as the protector of a door. This means that this passage is most obviously a selective passage, where the decision about who

is to be allowed in is based on the possession of a leaf-invitation and hence has been made previously (Travers *Park* 651-652).

Jane and Peter alone

There are two further transitions where the passages are very similar to the ones above. However, in these cases Jane and Peter each enter the Otherworld entirely on their own.

- When Jane breaks a bowl, the boy painted on it begins to talk to her and as he reaches out his hand, Jane takes it and is hence into the drawing on the bowl, which turns out to be a world on its own (Travers *Back* 190)

Jane's transition into the world on the bowl works just like the Cowrie Shell passage: The voice, which urges her to enter the Otherworld, comes from the item that embodies the passage. The difference, though, is that the voice belongs to the boy on the bowl, so that in this case a drawing has come alive. Furthermore, the passage is more compelling as the boy reaches out his hand physically and does not only persuade.

- Michael is urged by a cat to hold onto its collar and it jumps into the air, upon which he finds himself on the steps of a palace that is according to the cat not on earth (Travers *Park* 563-564)

When Michael undergoes his transition, he too is summoned by a messenger from the Otherworld, the difference here being that the messenger is also the means of transport used for the journey: he rides on the cat's back through the air into the Otherworld. Michael, however, is not entirely passive here, while holding onto the cat's collar he needs to jump into the mist for the journey to begin. As a passage, I would propose to categorise this cat, who because she can talk is clearly an otherworldly character, under abilities of otherworldly character. The time spent travelling seems to be rather short, yet the journey fast. In very little narrating time we find the wind rushing against Michael's ear, and the sun rushing past. It seems though as if they are not flying through the air, but through some place that is entirely empty. Hence this again seems to be a borderland.

Return Transitions

Omitted Transitions

So far I have only – with the exception of the Bert and Mary Poppins transitions – analysed the entrances into the Otherworld. The reason is quite simply that the return transitions back into the Primary World are noticeably similar to each other. To begin with, many of the return journeys are omitted: we find the characters in the Otherworld and next the scene switches to the Primary World (Mrs. Corry, Cousin Arthur and Mr. Twigley). This does not only require the reader to pay close attention, but adds towards the blurring of the borders between Primary World and Otherworld:

- As Mrs. Corry's voice becomes fainter Jane and Michael find they are suddenly on the pavement without knowing how they got there and upon turning around the shop has disappeared (Travers *Poppins* 89).
- As the clock strikes six, the party at cousin Arthur's place comes down again to stand on their feet, Mary and the children get ready to leave; next they are out on the street (Travers *Back* 218).
- Jane, Michael and Mary Poppins are instantly transported from Mr. Twigley's house to Cherry Tree Lane (Travers *Door* 371)

Sleeping

The most common way by far, though, is for the children to sleep through the return transition. In some cases they fall asleep while still in the Otherworld and in two of these cases the journey is also briefly mentioned: after the astronomical part Venus carries them home, after the party of shadows their own shadows do so. The shadows and Venus as characters that literally transport the children into the Primary World do not fit into Nikolajeva's framework (cf. *Code* 75-94). I would propose to think of them in abstract terms as characters from the Otherworld who use their abilities to transport the characters.

In contrast to these transitions, there are other cases where the story switches from the Otherworld to the Primary World showing the children as they wake up in their beds the next day. The children may feel a little sleepy beforehand in

the Otherworld, yet neither the falling asleep, nor the transition is spelled out. How they then get back to their home is omitted. The reason why I want to discuss them nevertheless, is because they seem to work similarly to the return journeys in the two *Alice* novels and those in the *Wishing Chair* collection. So it can be argued that while sleeping appears to be a relevant passage, it is often depicted as incomplete and hence seems illogical.

- After Mary Poppins's birthday celebrations Jane and Michael feel that they are falling asleep and wake up the next day in their beds (Travers *Poppins* 118)
- After the astronomical party has ended, Jane and Michael are shown falling asleep and Venus offers to carry them home. Next they wake up in the nursery (Travers *Back* 274)
- While dancing in the sea, Jean and Michael see Mary Poppins swimming towards them and hold onto her, while Michael becomes drowsy. As Michael keeps on calling for his nanny, the children wake up in their beds again (Travers *Door* 456-457)
- When the party of the shadows is over, their own shadows take Jane and Michael away (Travers *Park* 667); the children are next shown getting up to have breakfast (Travers *Park* 668)

Same Way Back

One of the points in which the passages in the *Mary Poppins* collection differs greatly from the other novels I have studied, is that the passages that are used to exit the Otherworld, are often not the ones that have been used to enter the Otherworld. As I have shown above, most of the adventures in the Otherworld end with the falling asleep of the children or a sudden change of scene from the Otherworld to a waking-up scene in the Primary World. Cases where the same passage is used to enter and return are Uncle Albert's flat, Cousin Arthur's flat and Mrs. Corry's shop. There is one other example where the passage into the Otherworld is the same as the passage that leads out of the Otherworld, namely the the stairs in the mist.

- after visiting Mary's uncle, the Man-in-the-moon, Mary leads them down the clouds, which seem to be less stairs, but rather a slide down into the mist in the park (Travers *House* 751)

One of the implications of not exiting through the passage that was used to enter is that the passages are rarely re-used. The only ones that are used twice are the above-mentioned transitions into and out of Mrs. Corry's shop, Uncle Albert's flat, Cousin Arthur's flat and the mist-stairs to Mary's uncle – all of which work absolutely the same way in both directions. Besides these the only other passage that is used repeatedly is the sleeping-exit, which essentially always functions the same way, although it is not clear who or what rules these returns. The only thing that can be said with certainty, and this links up with the assumption that the children cannot leave the Otherworld as it pleases them, is that the children cannot control it.

Mary Poppins

On the occasions when Jane and Michael enter the Otherworld on their own, they both find themselves stuck in the Otherworld, so that Mary Poppins comes and saves them.

- When Jane is told she will have to stay in the bowl-world forever, she shouts for Mary Poppins who pulls her outside again – though the process is not described at all, as Jane continues to cry (Travers *Back* 197-198).
- When Michael is told he has to stay in the cat world, he reaches for Mary Poppins's whistle and blows into it, after feeling as if he is falling, he finds himself standing in the park holding Mary Poppins's hand (Travers *Park* 575-577)

What we can infer from all of the transitions discussed above and these two, is that the children cannot travel freely between Primary World and Otherworld. Usually Mary Poppins travels with them to the Otherworld, in the other cases that I have entitled "Messenger and Door", I would argue that Mary Poppins is also part of the transition. At least in so far, as she has arranged or allowed the

transition to happen (for instance when the children they attend her birthday party). She is the character who controls how much of the Otherworld the children get to see. We can also see that when the children enter an Otherworld without her consent, this does not go well and both are trapped in the Otherworld, from which Mary Poppins needs to rescue them. So even in those two cases, Mary Poppins is part of the passage.

12. THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA

The Chronicles of Narnia comprise seven books, out of which only six are relevant for this thesis, since there is no transition in *The Horse and His Boy*. Therefore the following books will be taken into consideration in this section: *The Magician's Nephew*, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, *Prince Caspian*, *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*, *The Silver Chair* and *The Last Battle*. The Otherworld that is presented in this series is an Open Otherworld. It is strictly separated from the Primary World occupying a different territory and its passages, as I will show later, only rarely open and are very selective. It needs to be noted though that throughout the series the Otherworld looks and is different every time. The reason for this is that the time in the Otherworld passes faster, so that the children enter the Otherworld at very different stages of its existence. It is, nevertheless, always the same Otherworld.

12.1. The Transitions

The individual novels in *The Chronicles of Narnia*, with the exception of *The Horse and His Boy*, follow essentially the same structure: the story begins in the Primary World, from which sooner or later some children, all of whom are related to the Pevensie family, enter the Otherworld where they perform some important act or fulfil a quest and then leave the Otherworld on the last pages of the book²². Due to the structure of the stories, there are chiefly two transitions in each of the books; one that takes the children into Narnia and another one that brings them home. The return journey, after the adventure is over, is in the majority of cases enabled entirely by Aslan, so that I shall discuss all of these together at the end. The only exceptions to this are *The Lion, the Witch and Wardrobe* where the wardrobe is used again and *The Last Battle* in which the children do not return to the Primary World at all. Hence the series as a whole represent an example of a loop journey with a linear end.

²² This is a little different in *The Lion, the Witch and Wardrobe* and *The Magician's Nephew* as in both cases the entrance into the Otherworld are only being discovered by the travelling characters and hence the passages are used repeatedly.

12.2. The Passages and Journeys

Rings – The Magician’s Nephew

- Digory decides to rescue Polly and as he touches a yellow ring, Uncle Andrew and his study vanish (Lewis *Magician’s* 29-30) and he finds himself rushing up through water and suddenly standing completely dry besides a small pool (Lewis *Magician’s* 30)
- Wearing their green rings, Digory and Polly jump into the pool they came from when entering the Otherworld; as they are jumping Digory feels the Queen Jadis holding onto him, so that she too arrives in the Primary World (Lewis *Magician’s* 66-67)
- In order to get rid of Queen Jadis, Digory touches her while holding onto Jane who puts on the yellow ring at that moment; by accident they also take Uncle Andrew, a horse and the cabby along into the Otherworld (Lewis *Magician’s* 89-90)

The Magician’s Nephew is told from a 3rd person narrative point of view, with Digory as the focaliser, so that only the transitions he is part of are told entirely. This means that Polly’s first transition is incomplete and hence not accounted for here; she is only seen disappearing suddenly from the Primary World (Lewis *Magician’s* 20), and is later met by Digory in the Otherworld. All of the transitions in this volume, besides the last one, are undertaken by the use of magic rings; yellow ones to get into the Otherworld and green ones to go back to the Primary World. These fall under the category of ‘magic object’ in Nikolajeva’s framework (*Code* 91-92). The interesting aspect about them is that they are man-made and do not come from the Otherworld. This means that the rings are a passage that is not only made, but also controlled by a character from the Primary World.

The rings can take the travellers into both directions, however, the characters need to choose the right colour, so that in fact each passage only works in one direction. In order to reach the Otherworld, it is already enough to touch a yellow ring to be transported to the edge of a pool. In order to go back, besides wearing a green ring, the children also need to jump into this pool. As I have alluded to above, it is not necessary to own or even wear a ring. As can be

seen in the examples where Jadis comes to the Primary World and later on when Jadis, a horse a cabby and Uncle Andrew are taken along to the Otherworld, it is merely necessary to hold onto a person who is putting on a ring. Hence, these rings work very much like the portkeys in the *Harry Potter* series. As is also the case with portkeys, numerous characters can be transported by this passage, in *The Magician's Nephew* we once find six characters transported by just one ring (Lewis *Magician's* 89-90).

What is particularly interesting about the narration in *The Magician's Nephew* is that the way the rings work is described in great detail. There are comments on how the rings should be used, why they transport the children where, and above all, about how they function as opposed to how Uncle Andrew thought they would. This amount of explicit explaining is not matched by any of the other books I have studied. Only the *Harry Potter* series may be argued to live up to this, however, in that case the explaining is done by a character for Harry, so that he can use the passages. In Contrast to this, in *The Magician's Nephew*, the explanation is given for the reader.

The journeys on which the characters are taken are not instant and are described as a feeling as if they were under water and being sucked up into the air to land next to the pool. The journey does not appear to take particularly long, yet it is long enough for Digory to reflect on how he is moving and to respond to it emotionally: with fear (30). During the second transition the journey again is not particularly long, but there is time for Digory to understand that the queen has managed to hold onto him and is regaining strength as he tries to shake her off (Lewis *Magician's* 66-67). Hence in this case there is even some action taking place during the journey. The third journey then includes, while covering roughly the same amount of narrating time, much more conversation, with Uncle Andrew expressing his fear and Digory and Polly commenting on not having wanted to take the uncle along (Lewis *Magician's* 89-90). While there is more talking, it nevertheless seems to be the case that all these journeys are of equal length. The new aspect that is contributed by this transition is that the journey takes the travellers through some restricted space, so that when there are so many of them, Polly asks Digory to stop shoving.

Overall the journeys do not appear to be overtly dangerous, but only a little frightening when first undertaken.

A Wardrobe – The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe

As in the prequel, there are more transitions than is usual for this series. The reason is that the passage is first discovered only by the youngest of the Pevensie-siblings, so that there is some going back and forth until all four siblings are convinced and enter the Otherworld. The passage that is used remains the same throughout the book.

Primary World -> Otherworld

- When exploring the house of the Professor, Lucy opens the doors of the wardrobe and enters it, finding herself running right into snowy Narnia (Lewis *Lion* 12-14)
- A few days later, when playing hide-and-seek, Lucy climbs into the wardrobe and Edmund follows her running right into Narnia (Lewis *Lion* 30-31)
- Hiding from the tourists in the house the four siblings get into the wardrobe and after a while find that Susan is leaning against a tree, it being very cold and the light of Narnia coming through, revealing the snowy landscape which they then walk into (Lewis *Lion* 52-54)

Otherworld -> Primary World

- After finding out that she needs to bring all her siblings to rescue Narnia, Lucy runs back to the lamppost and finds her way into the wardrobe, the door of which she had left open, and is soon back in the room (Lewis *Lion* 26)
- Edmund and Lucy walk out of Narnia together, feeling the trees turn into coats and then arriving in the house (Lewis *Lion* 43)
- After their adventure has ended in Narnia, they find the lamp post again and although not being able to remember what this is and what it signifies, they feel the urge to walk into the thicket there; on the way the children begin to remember, they feel the coats and are soon stumbling out of the wardrobe (Lewis *Lion* 169-170)

Throughout this novel the passage that is used to enter Narnia is always the same. The wardrobe full of coats acts as a door-passage, although in this case I would argue that there is a crosshatch rather than a clear-cut threshold, as the two worlds overlap and seem to only gradually change into the other, with the coats becoming twigs and the snow only appearing after a while beyond the children's feet. This passage is rather simple to use, it merely requires for the door to be opened and to walk through. However, there is one instance where Lucy wants to show Narnia to her siblings, but the wardrobe has a normal back wall (Lewis *Lion* 26). This is the only alteration to this passage: it is once closed. Why this is the case is never explained within the story. The only function I can see in this, is to create suspense and possibly to make the readers doubt whether Lucy had really been to an Otherworld.

What is interesting about the journeys is that they do not seem to always last equally long and in fact it appears that the crosshatch's length varies. This is also, but not only, reflected in the amount of narration attributed to describing these journeys. The journey from Primary World to Otherworld is described in greatest detail and also appears to be longest when Lucy first enters the Otherworld. The journey spreads out over more than one page and includes quite a few remarks of wonder and reflection from Lucy. It seems, however, that this slow introduction is not done because it is the first time Lucy is experiencing it, but is done in such detail for the reader. The reason for this is that when the other siblings first enter Narnia the journey is much shorter, although it happens to them for the first time too. The shortest version of the journey occurs when all four siblings enter the Otherworld; in fact there is not much of a journey at all, they merely spread themselves out in the wardrobe, and then realise that the Otherworld has come to them (Lewis *Lion* 52-54). The journeys which take the children back to the Primary World are always extremely short and almost abrupt. However, there is one phrase that appears every single time, functioning as a cue; there is always some mentioning of feeling coats instead of trees and twigs brushing against them.

A Horn – Prince Caspian

- The children are sitting at a train station waiting for their trains to take them to boarding school, when they suddenly feel pulled away; Edmund recognises the feeling as magic and urges his siblings to hold hand so as not be separated; the train station vanishes suddenly and they immediately find themselves in Narnia (Lewis *Caspian* 12)

This transition is, as the reader finds out later, enforced by Prince Caspian by blowing into Susan's horn (Lewis *Caspian* 89). This horn had already previously brought help for a fight and the situation in which the Pevensie-children are summoned here is very similar. The interesting question is whether it fits into any of the categories suggested by Nikolajeva (cf. *Code* 75-94). It could for instance be seen as a magic object, yet it functions very differently: it is in the Otherworld summoning characters from the Primary World, while magic objects are always in the world that the characters depart from. Another option would be to interpret this as a messenger. However, I would argue that what is clearly missing here is for the messenger to contact the travellers. Since the horn does not seem to properly fit into any category, I believe the best way to describe this passage is to refer to it as an otherworldly object whose non-realistic ability includes the power to draw characters from the Primary World into the Otherworld. Therefore, I would propose to include those into the new category I suggested previously, adding the term 'object' to account for this inanimate item: 'abilities of otherworldly characters and objects'.

The journey that is triggered by the blowing of the horn is rather swift, which is also reflected in the narration. I would argue that the journey begins as soon as the children feel pulled away, although they are not immediately aware of what is happening. There is, however, no sensation of flying or any other sort of movement. The change is said to happen so quickly that and it seems as if the environment has suddenly been swapped rather than for the children to have moved at all. An interesting point to be made about this transition, is the order in which the events are given in the narration. As opposed to the previous transitions in *The Chronicles of Narnia* (and the majority of transitions discussed in this thesis) C.S. Lewis lets the readers see the journey, before the use of the

passage is shown. Since the passage is missing for the reader for a rather long time, I would argue that his way of narrating a transition creates surprise and hence is an interesting variant.

A Picture – The Voyage of the Dawn Treader

- Edmund, Lucy and Eustace are looking at a picture of a ship and find the things in the picture are moving; as Eustace jumps up to try and rip the picture off the wall, all three children find themselves standing on the frame and then fall into the sea (Lewis *Voyage* 16-19)

Despite the passage being a picture, the passage to enter the Otherworld here functions like a kind of 'door' (Nikolajeva *Code 76*), as has already been the case in many other examples. However, in this case the two worlds are not so much separated by a clear-cut threshold. The Otherworld already reaches out into the Primary World by blowing wind into the faces of the children, by spraying them with water and by releasing its smell. What is more, some kind of non-realistic force seems to be at work too, when the size of the picture and the children are altered so that the children fit onto the frame of the picture. Therefore this transition is similar to that in *Through the Looking-Glass* and to the Cowrie Shell in the *Mary Poppins* series. Despite the Otherworld reaching into the Primary World, I would still argue that there is a somewhat clear-cut border, which is crossed when the children fall from the frame into the sea. the border between Primary World and Otherworld

What is particularly interesting about this passage is that the transition is spelt out in great detail so that it slows down the speed of the narration and creates suspense. There is repeated reference to one of the children disbelieving and not being sure they are smelling and seeing right. In fact, the setting of the scene until the three children fall into the sea takes up more than two pages within the book.

The Silver Chair – a Door

- Being chased by bullies at school, Eustace and Jill run towards the wall separating the school grounds from the moor. To their surprise they find the door there to be unlocked and the Otherworld lying before them and walk right into it (Lewis *Chair* 15-16)

Before the Otherworld opens its doors, the two children have wished for an entrance into the Otherworld and called to Aslan for it. As is the case with most transitions in the series, though, the children were in fact requested and brought into the Otherworld by Aslan in order to fulfil a quest (Lewis *Chair* 186). Hence it appears that the transition after the act of wishing is more of a coincidence than anything else. As has been the case with many other transitions, the passage is a literal door. What is interesting here is that the door was part of their plan to escape anyway. This means that the Otherworld was in fact brought to an area that the children were very likely to use. As is the case with most door passages, the border between the two worlds is literally at the threshold.

Aslan as the Passage(-Creator)

The Return Transitions

As I have briefly stated above, Aslan plays a part in the majority of the return transitions after the children's adventure in the Otherworld is over. Below is a list of all the return journeys Aslan enables.

The Magician's Nephew

- While talking to Aslan, Digory and Polly find the lion's face blurring; a minute later they and the previously sleeping Uncle Andrew are back in the Primary World, exactly where they had left it (Lewis *Magician's* 165).

Prince Caspian

- When everything is over, Aslan builds a doorway out of three pieces of wood (Lewis *Caspian* 182), through which the four children step (Lewis *Caspian* 189) to arrive back on the platform within a moment

The Voyage of the Dawn Treader

- Standing at the edge of the Otherworld, where the sky meets the ground, the “blue wall” suddenly opens into a doorway and the children find themselves back in the bedroom (Lewis *Voyage* 272)

The Silver Chair

- Aslan meets the children to tell them he has come to take them home (Lewis *Chair* 186); after resurrecting Prince Caspian, Aslan produces a hole in the wall of the school yard through which they go home (Lewis *Chair* 189).

In *Prince Caspian*, *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* and *The Silver Chair* Aslan produces a passage for the children to use in order to get home. However, the doorway in the “blue wall” (in *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*) does not seem to be used by the children. The narration merely says that there is a terrible light, that they feel Aslan’s mane and his kiss and suddenly they are back in Cambridge. While it is not entirely clear how the children come home, what is certain, is that the children are not shown to walk through the door. Therefore, I would argue that in this case, as well as in *The Magician’s Nephew*, it is Aslan’s power that acts as the passage and that brings the children back to into the Primary World. This means that in *Prince Caspian* and *The Silver Chair* Aslan only makes the passage, while in *The Magician’s Nephew* and *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* Aslan’s otherworldly abilities are the passage so that these too should fall into the category I suggest to add to Nikolajeva’s list, namely the ‘abilities of otherworldly characters and objects’.

As for the two cases in which the passages produced by Aslan are used, the journeys are very different. On the one hand there is the doorframe into the Otherworld, which sends the children on a brief journey. As soon as they are through the door there is a moment in which they seem to see three things at once: the Telmarine island, Narnia and the platform, the latter of which quickly displaces the other two and instantly they find themselves on the platform again (Lewis *Caspian* 190). The hole in the wall, on the other hand, does not lead to any journey at all, as here the two worlds meet at a threshold. What is interesting about this transition, though, is that a character from the Otherworld,

namely Prince Caspian, is allowed to step into the Primary World briefly to fight the bullies (Lewis *Chair* 189).

While in these transitions it is fairly clear what happens, the transitions undertaken on Aslan's abilities are somewhat more mysterious, though notably very comfortable. What both examples (from *The Magician's Nephew* and *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*) have in common is that the beginning of the transition is somewhat blurry. In *The Magician's Nephew*, for instance, we see the children in the Otherworld, the next moment they feel as if they are floating, feeling very joyful and happy – as opposed to when using the rings – and a minute later, so the narration tells us, they are back on the pavement where they had come from (Lewis *Magician's* 165). In *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* there is a confusing element: the door-like passage that is produced, but not used. I would argue that this blurriness and in clarity is used to add to the fashioning of Aslan as a mysterious character, whose plans and working cannot always be made sense of.

The Last Battle

In the final volume of *The Chronicles of Narnia* Aslan's abilities are used as a passage twice. In these cases, however, Aslan summons children from the Primary World into the Otherworld, all of whom do not recall any kind of departure or journey to have taken place.

- Eustace and Jill suddenly arrive in front of King Tirian (Lewis *Battle* 47), who has previously cried to Aslan to send him help (Lewis *Battle* 45)
- Peter, Edmund, Lucy, Polly and Digory appear in Narnia and chase away the Tash (Lewis *Battle* 125-126)

The transition of Eustace and Jill as well as that of Peter, Edmund, Lucy, Polly and Digory into the Otherworld are different to all the other transitions before, because in fact they take place as they die. I have previously excluded the lands of the dead as well as transitions that happen due to the death of the character when defining fantasy. However, the fact that the characters are dead is not revealed until the very end of the novel. Now, since I attribute great importance to the reader as part of any story, I have decided to discuss these

transitions nevertheless, because the reader will most likely read these entrances as normal transitions, especially since the characters do not enter a world of the dead right away, but merely get into the usual Otherworld.

The reader only gets a few hints that this might not be an ordinary transition. First there is the absence of the departure from the Primary World and the fact that the children do not know how they got to the Otherworld themselves. However, given the past transitions in the series, I would suppose that Eustace's assumption that Aslan enabled the transition (Lewis *Battle* 52) would be accepted by the reader. I would argue that only a reader well aware of how previous transitions in the series have worked would notice this as an inconsistency, though not necessarily as a hint towards their death. The final clue that something is different here is the fact that characters who have previously been told they will not be able to return to Narnia arrive in the Otherworld. In contrast to the two previously mentioned points I would assume that the reader would notice this as an inconsistency, however, since they arrive at a point where an important fight is taking place, I would argue again that it is unlikely the reader would deduce the characters' death from the transition and rather count these as exceptions to the rule. Hence, the reader will most likely not make any mental connection to death, until the very end of the books, when Aslan tells the children the truth and shows them into "Shadowland".

12.3. Special Aspects of *The Chronicles of Narnia*

For most of *The Chronicles of Narnia* there are only Primary World characters travelling into the other world. There are, however, two exceptions: Queen Jarivis and, very briefly, Prince Caspian (Lewis *Caspian* 190). The latter can do so because Aslan allows it; Queen Jarivis, however, can only do so by holding on to Digory (Lewis *Magician's* 66-67). This allows the assumption that in *The Chronicles of Narnia*, characters from the Otherworld cannot travel to the Primary World as they wish. Moreover, it seems that as a rule only children can enter the Otherworld. Aslan even tells some of the older children at the end of various volumes that they will not be coming back because they are too old. Now, whether it would in fact not be possible for adults to do so, or if it is simply

Aslan's decision to keep it that way, it remains a fact that only those children not previously excluded by Aslan get back into Narnia. As far as the passages are concerned what is especially remarkable in this series is that the passages work with great precision: when returning to the Primary World, the characters are always brought right back to the very spot from which they have previously left.

Another aspect I have not yet addressed in the discussion of *The Chronicles of Narnia* are Booker's claims concerning the state of mind when entering the Otherworld (96) and the moments of exit happening just as the situation becomes too dangerous (106). As far as the latter claim is concerned, *The Chronicles of Narnia* are a counter-example. While there are dangerous situations in the novels, the children always stay until the problems have been resolved and leave the Otherworld when peace is restored. Turning to the state of mind the respective children are in when they enter the Otherworld, I would argue that there is some evidence for this assumption. The situations from which the children enter the Otherworld vary, however, what they all have in common is some notion of 'novelty'; there is always something new to their lives: In *The Magician's Nephew* Dogory and Polly are investigating a way that links their houses which they have never tried before; in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* the Pevensie siblings have just moved to a new house without their parents; in *Prince Caspian*, however, the Pevensie children are about to leave for boarding school which is a new experience only for Lucy; in *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* Lucy and Edmund have to stay at Eustace's parents' house for the summer, which they have never done before. Only in *The Silver Chair* we find Eustace and Jill in a usual setting and situation: they are at school (and have been for a while) and are hiding from the school bullies. Overall though, I would argue that *The Chronicles of Narnia* supports Booker's claim in so far as the special state of mind is constituted by the children finding themselves in unknown situations.

13. CONCLUSION

In the course of this thesis, and above all in the analysis of the transitions, I believe there is one point I have been able to show very clearly: transitions between the Primary World and the Otherworld can be a rather complex matter and the literature that has been written on this motif is far from extensive. Reviewing the literature that has been written on fantasy I have established that the existence of both a Primary World and an Otherworld is often, though not necessarily, a feature of fantasy. Hence transitions between the two worlds are a motif of fantasy, but not a defining factor. As a result the novels I have chosen to study in this thesis are a selection out of a sub-group of fantasy literature that is most adequately described as mixed fantasy.

Focusing more directly on my object of study I then discussed the different categorisations of Otherworlds that have been suggested, all of which essentially draw on the worlds' degree of closure as the defining aspect. One of the greatest challenges for the analysis was in fact concerned with the Otherworlds; it was often difficult to judge where each world begins and ends. While I have discussed particular difficulties in the individual sections dealing with the novels, there is one overarching observation I feel is necessary to take note of. In all novels and series studied which depict a world-within-a-world situation, the "physical boundaries" Gamble and Yates (122) describe were either only marginally graspable or in fact not present at all.

My analysis was primarily based on Nikolajeva's account for the simple reason that Maria Nikolajeva seems to be the only scholar who has studied this motif somewhat exhaustively. Although her book *The Magic Code* has been helpful, I suggest to expand her accounts and categorisations, because they seem to be unnecessarily restrictive. Having studied transitions of Primary World and Otherworld characters, it has become obvious that her framework, although only intended for Primary World protagonists, can easily be applied to transitions of all characters; major ones as well as minor ones and to characters from Primary Worlds and Otherworlds. Hence I suggest to use both the classification of passages and the kinds of journeys as suggested by Nikolajeva

for all instances of transition. As far as the concepts linear, circular and loop journey are concerned, I have argued that this would be more usefully applied to stories as a whole, considering all transitions that contribute to the structure of the plot. What was much more interesting for my analysis, though, was the categorisation of passages that Nikolajeva proposes.

Almost all categories that are possible within my definition of fantasy proved to be useful and were reflected in the novels I studied. However, I found some transitions employing passages that could not be classified into any of the suggested categories, so that it was necessary to expand this framework. I have proposed to call the additional category that is necessary in order to classify all passages in the novels I have studied “abilities of otherworldly characters and objects”. The fact that even in my very limited corpus of novels a number of such passages were found, implies that this is a relevant category for passages in fantasy. Hence, I would suggest to incorporate this category in further studies on transitions.

Moreover, I have found that there are some features which are shared by many of the passages but that are not reflected in secondary literature. One of these very common aspects is what I have referred to as the activation of a passage. Especially in the *Harry Potter* series it is often necessary to take some action for a passage to appear, or for it to start working as a passage. Besides the examples taken out of J.K. Rowling's series, there is also evidence for this in *The Wishing Chair* collection. A similar function is fulfilled by guards of passages, as is the case in *Mary Poppins* and in *Harry Potter*. Since such elements aid the secrecy of an Otherworld, it is not surprising to find these used rather frequently and I would expect that more examples for activation or guards could be found in other works of fantasy – especially in texts which construct a secret Otherworld. Further, I have introduced the idea of ‘extended passage’ by which I mean passages that are made up of two or more parts, all of which could be passages on their own, but are used in combination to form a passage. I believe that this is an adequate term to describe more complex passages, especially those where characters are wooed into entering the Otherworld by messengers.

Besides studying the passages, I have also analysed the journeys, the stretch of time that elapses between leaving the Primary World and arriving in the Otherworld. These differ so greatly, especially in the amount of narrated time they occupy, that a distinction along the lines of duration seems feasible. While clear-cut distinction appear impossible to me, I would suggest that the two extremes are an instant journey and a rather lengthy journey which resembles our (realistic) idea of transportation – characters physically moving through some space. The reason I suggest this, is because the choice of the kind of journey can be used by the author to structure the plot: while an instant journey may add to the speed of a narration or create a surprising twist, a longer journey that shows characters physically moving (as is for instance the case with flying) creates the opportunity to further develop the plot, by using the time spent travelling.

In the course of my analysis I have also tested Booker's claims regarding the state of mind of the characters before they enter the Otherworld and the claim that characters return to the Primary World just as the danger gets too much for them to bear. Concerning the latter of the two claims, the novels I have studied overall contradict this. First of all, in many examples the characters are never in danger in the Otherworld, so that the return journey could not be an escape. Moreover, in the cases in which there is danger, the characters usually stay (and at times even fight) to rectify the situation before they leave, as is for instance the case in *The Chronicles of Narnia* and also in the *Harry Potter* series. Of course there are some examples where the children and young adults featured in the novels are rescued. However, in these cases the situations never really dangerous, but merely uncomfortable. As far as the question about the state of mind is concerned, the main problem is that since Booker never explicates what exactly he means by the 'state of mind', it is difficult to give an answer. Personally I would interpret being faced with new and unusual situations as putting characters into a special state of mind and in fact there are a number of situations where the characters are faced with some form of novelty in their lives. However, the novels studied still do not provide clear evidence for Booker's claim. While there is special state of mind *The*

Chronicles of Narnia, if we turn to the *Wishing Chair* collection for instance, the transitions are so frequent and the frame so thin that despite the adventure taking place in the summer holiday, no clear case can be made for or against Booker's argument. Hence the 'special state of mind' appears to be an option for the narration, rather than a rule and above all a very subjective matter. What is certainly not the case, is that the special state of mind is so pronounced that it foregrounds the transitions.

On a more general level I would like to draw attention to how the plots of the novels develop in the two worlds. Out of the novels I have analysed, there is only one example where the plot develops – though not equally – in both worlds: *The Secret of Platform 13*. Otherwise it seems to be the case that the scenes set in the Primary World only act as a frame for the action that takes place in the Otherworld. In some cases I feel it would be justified to talk of a proper frame story, as for instance in *Coraline* and possibly also in *Alice in Wonderland*. However, there are also examples where the plot in the Primary World comprises practically no action at all, so that it is clear that its only function is to set the scene and to provide a contrast to the adventure in the Otherworld that is to come.

In the course of this thesis I have been able to show that there are many aspects to a transition: the items or characters that act as the passage and their protection by a guard or the need of activation; the possibility to reuse a passage; the characters that can use the passage and those that cannot; the journeys that can be used to shape the narration and develop the plot; the direction the journeys can take – all of these are aspects that shape a transition and hence make transitions a very variable motif. I have also pointed out that the function of transitions ranges from the creation of a surprising twist or a test to rather formulaic clarifications of where the story takes place. Considering that his motif is so versatile and also somewhat frequent in fantasy, it is surprising that so little research has been done in this field. Given the scope of this thesis, I was of course only able to give an insight into the various aspects of transitions, rather than draw generally valid conclusions.

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15. APPENDIX

Abstract

This thesis investigates a specific motif in the fields of children's and young adult fantasy, namely that of transitions between worlds. The term "transition" in this context refers to all instances where a character crosses the border between the Primary World (a realistic but fictional reality) and the Otherworld (a world where non-realistic elements are the rule). Each transition is triggered by a so-called passage, an object or character that enables the transition to the other world. The time and action between the use of the passage and the arrival, is referred to as the journey.

The first theoretical chapter attempts to define what fantasy is by pointing out its characteristics, stating that the existence of an Otherworld is a common feature, yet it is not a defining element. Because they are central to the motif, the notion of Otherworlds – how they can be realised and categorised – is then further elaborated on. As a next move, the thesis states that only complete transitions will be accounted for and presents existing categorisations and ways of describing such transitions, focusing on the only comprehensive account by Maria Nikolajeva. As a final point before the analysis, the choice of books is explained, in the course of which the issues of what children's and young adult literature is and the notion of escapism is discussed.

The analysis deals with the transitions that take place in *Coraline* (Neil Gaiman), *The Secret of Platform 13* (Eva Ibbotson), the *Harry Potter* series (J.K. Rowling), *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There* (Lewis Carroll), *The Wishing-Chair* books (Enid Blyton), the *Mary Poppins* books (P.L. Travers) and *The Chronicles of Narnia* (C.S.Lewis). Besides listing the transitions, the passages and journeys are analysed to show their functions and how they may be categorised.

The thesis arrives at the conclusion that Nikolajeva's account concerning passages needs to be expanded by introducing the category of "the abilities of

otherworldly characters". Further it is suggested to add the notion of activation and the idea of an extended passage to the theoretical framework. Regarding the journeys it is found that these can be used to develop the plot further, whereas the functions of transitions are various. Overall it becomes clear that given the complexity of transitions more work needs to be done in this area.

Zusammenfassung

Die vorliegende Diplomarbeit beschäftigt sich mit einem spezifischen Motiv in der Fantasy-Literatur für Kinder und Jugendliche, nämlich den Übergängen zwischen den Welten. Der Begriff "Übergang" meint in diesem Kontext all jene Fälle in denen eine Figur die Grenze zwischen der realistischen Welt und der Anderswelt überschreitet. Jede dieser Übergänge wird von einer "passage" ausgelöst, die ein Objekt oder eine Figur sein kann. Die Zeit welche zwischen dem Benutzen der 'passage' und der Ankunft in der Anderwelt liegt, wird als "journey" bezeichnet.

In dem ersten theoretischen Kapitel wird versucht das Genre "Fantasy" zu definieren, indem Charakteristika gesammelt werden, wobei festzuhalten ist, dass die Existenz von Anderswelten in Fantasy typisch, aber nicht notwendig ist. Da diese Anderswelten dem Motiv der Übergängen zu Grunde liegen, wird diesem Konzept – wie es realisiert und kategorisiert werden kann – weiter besprochen. Im Zuge einer Eingrenzung des Forschungsobjekts wird festgehalten, dass diese Diplomarbeit sich nur mit vollständigen Übergängen beschäftigen wird. Im Zuge dessen werden existierende Beschreibungs- und Kategorisierungsmöglichkeiten präsentiert, wobei der Fokus auf der einzigen verbindlichen Arbeit in diesen Bereich von Maria Nikolajeva liegt. Als letzten Punkt vor der Analyse wird die Auswahl der Bücher erklärt, wobei die Frage danach was Kinder- und Jugendliteratur ist, sowie die Frage nach der eskapistischen Natur dieser diskutiert wird.

Die Analyse beschäftigt sich mit den Übergängen in den folgenden Romanen: *Coraline* (Neil Gaiman), *The Secret of Platform 13* (Eva Ibbotson), die *Harry Potter* Serie (J.K. Rowling), *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* und *Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There* (Lewis Carroll), *The Wishing-Chair* Bücher (Enid Blyton), die *Mary Poppins* Bücher (P.L. Travers) und *The Chronicles of Narnia* (C.S.Lewis), Neben einer Auflistung der Übergänge, werden die 'passages' und 'journeys' analysiert und zu zeigen welche Funktion sie haben können und wie sie kategorisiert werden können.

Die Diplomarbeit kommt zu dem Schluss, dass Niklajevas Beschreibung der 'passages' um die Kategorie "Fähigkeiten von andersweltlichen Figuren" ausgedehnt werden muss um allen Übergängen Rechnung zu tragen. Des Weiteren wird vorgeschlagen den Aspekt der Aktivierung von 'passages', so wie die Idee der 'extended passage' zu inkludieren. Die 'journey' betreffend, wird festgestellt, dass sie dazu dienen können die Handlung voranzutreiben. Insgesamt bleibt festzustellen, dass die Übergänge ein sehr komplexes Motiv sind und weitere Arbeit in diesem Bereich geleistet werden sollte.

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