

Anna Mik (University of Warsaw, Faculty of “Artes Liberales”)

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Mythical Sanctuaries of the Wizarding World:

The Ancient Classical Concepts of “Animal Protection” in J. K. Rowling’s Harry Potter Universe

In two works titled *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them*, J. K. Rowling ‘collected’ various magical creatures, firstly – in the form of a bestiary (the book from 2001), then – in her *Wunderkammer*, as we can interpret the Newt Scamander’s case from the 2016 movie. The main idea that I would like to explore is the one concerning collecting and protecting mythical creatures by gathering them in isolated spaces, where they could not be harmed by, as Scamander calls them, ‘the most vicious creatures on the planet. Humans’ (Rowling, 2016: 113–114). I would like to compare the diegetic world of *Fantastic Beasts...* and the one known from the *Harry Potter* series in order to analyse the motif of the animal isolation and to juxtapose it with the one known from Greek mythology.

Just like in ancient times, when various extraordinary creatures (Pegasus, Sphinx, Cerberus, etc.) were supposed to be isolated from humans (either because of they were dangerous or too valuable), Rowling also created safe spaces for magical beasts. In the *Harry Potter* series there are – inter alia – the Forbidden Forest, the Great Lake, Romanian Dragon Sanctuary, etc., where many creatures, though not prisoned, are isolated from the wizarding society, and paradoxically used by this community as subordinate objects (like in the Triwizard Tournament). In the book *Fantastic Beasts...*, Rowling collected and categorized numerous beasts and, at the same time, in a way, ‘caged them’ into the human concept of the bestiary, allowing us to see and understand, and preserve (the book itself as a ‘safe place/a sanctuary’) the world of magical fauna. In the movie of the same title, animals are contained in the magical suitcase of Newt Scamander, Rowling’s *Wunderkammer*, that plays not a role of a menagerie, but rather a sanctuary, where those creature awaits they come back to their natural habitat.

After examining these various spaces and comparing them to the ‘safe places/places of isolation’ for mythical creatures known from the Greek mythology, I would like to show the evolution of the mythical sanctuaries for the *Fantastic Beasts*, as well as the way these ‘habitats’ were presented – in both the ancient and wizarding world. By analysing this case of the classical reception, I would also like to show how we can relate Rowling’s concepts to the current animal protection strategies.

- J. K. Rowling (2016), *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them. The Original Screenplay*, London: Little, Brown.



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