The Exercise of Biopower through Race and Class in the *Harry Potter* Series

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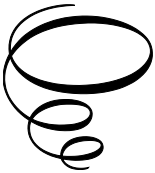
By

Nilay Erdem Ayyıldız

Cambridge Scholars Publishing



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PREFACE

This book argues that modern children's fantasy school stories both perpetuate power inequalities as an effective dispositif of bioengineering, and simultaneously provide a political dissident perspective to power relations through an impossible fantasy world parallel to the real one. Therefore, as examples of the modern children's fantasy school story, the book intends to supply a biopolitical analysis of J. K. Rowling's globally-known *Harry Potter* series, including Jack Thorne and John Tiffany's production for stage relying on Rowling's story, *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* (2016).

The focus of this book is on dynamic power relationships in the *Harry Potter* series that reveal race and class being used interactively as an agent for the exercise of biopower. To this end, the book applies Michel Foucault's biopolitical analytics, referring to his key works. The biopolitical scrutiny of the books displays the human body as constrained within a cultural matrix of ideologies, perceived as natural, throughout different epistemes. However, a critical reading of the Foucauldian conceptualisation of biopower in terms of race and class is revealed to be contradictory and insufficient for discussing the concept of resistance. Therefore, this book includes Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri's rereading of Foucauldian biopolitics and biopower, introducing the concepts of "multitude," "the common," and "the Empire" to decipher the relationship between power and resistance besides the types and results of resistance in relation to biopolitics and biopower. The study concludes that the genealogical analysis of the *Harry Potter* series reveals it to be representative of modern children's fantasy books both as an influential representation of prevailing ideologies, exercised through race and class, and in dissent of them, neutralising binaries that cross each other on the same plane in power relations.

Considering its contribution to a literature that is discussed all too infrequently in studies analysing such a widely-read series from the biopolitical aspect in regards to racial and class discrimination, the book presents a new critical perspective on the books, appealing to undergraduates, academics, and all readers interested in modern fantasy works and school stories—categorised as children's literature but also read by adults—as well as critical theories, including those of Foucault and Hardt and Negri, particularly biopolitical analytics.

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INTRODUCTION

> I have never written anything but fictions. I do not mean to say, however, that truth is therefore absent. It seems to me that the possibility exists for fiction to function in truth, for a fictional discourse to induce effect of truth, and for bringing it about that a true discourse engenders or "manufactures" something that does not as yet exist, that is, "fictions" it. One "fictions" history on the basis of a political reality that makes it true, one "fictions" a politics not yet in existence on the basis of a historical truth.[1]

Let us begin with mimesis, referring to the imitation or rather representation of life in art or literature: there has always been a connection between human life and art or literature despite the decline of the mimetic approach to art in the Romantic period, which continued to some degree to the present day. Michel Foucault is one of the most prominent philosophers and scholars of the post-World War II period to illuminate literary criticism concerned with the relationship between human life and fiction within the historical cycle of power, knowledge, and truth through the broad perspective in his oeuvre. From the Foucauldian perspective, as stated in the quotation above, encompassing the core of the present study, fictitious works are factual representations because authors "fiction" history through the characters they create out of "truth" or for the sake of "truth," the association of their works with actual lives, and the opportunities to progress offered through the plots in their works. In this regard, fiction both operates as "truth" and is the function of the "truth" in question. Therefore, fiction is not an abstract discourse; rather, it is active in the creation of "truths" in multiple forms. Thus, regardless of the literary genre it is produced in, fiction both represents already existing political and historical contexts and generates any possible histories as well.

Literary works of fantasy written for children appear as convenient agents of bio-engineering to create and recreate subjectivities around

[1] Michel Foucault, *Michel Foucault: Power/Knowledge*, ed. Colin Gordon (New York: Pantheon Press, 1980a), 193 (emphases are mine).

dominant prevailing ideologies. Fredric Jameson argues that the narratives we read, indeed, "come before us as the always-already-read."[2] As he mentions, every literary text more or less creates criticism of its period while narrating and historicising the happenings in the real world through the imaginary spheres of literature and cinema. While doing that, every writer intervenes in the narrated happenings through their transdiscursive positions, referring to, as Foucault explicates, "the possibilities and the rules for the formation of other texts."[3] Thus, the present study asserts that children's fantasy works, especially the ones since the late twentieth century, present, whether intentionally or not, imaginary resolutions to the contradictory power relationships, which are shaped within a sort of biopolitical web, characterised by power, knowledge, and discourse. Furthermore, this study argues that J. K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* series exemplifies the aforementioned claim in terms of race, class, and gender. In other words, despite being written within the genres of fantasy and school stories, it both portrays "always-already-read" ideologies in race, class, and gender and indicates a transdiscursive approach through a variety of possibilities and the multidirectional nature of power relations.

Humankind has been a finely graded grid in regards to race, class, and gender throughout history. This hierarchal process assigns particular group/s superiority to other/s through power that has unarguably permeated everyday life ever since human beings entered the world. Thus, the powerful people have taken precedence over the powerless group or groups of people in diverse contexts such as race, class, and gender: the white over the black, the rich over the poor, and men over women; and these are the three main components of this book to be interrogated through the *Harry Potter* series.[4]

Foucault is concerned with the concept of power and its practice and impact on relations between people regarding class, race, sexuality, and even space throughout history. As Lemke states, considering life as an object of politics along with its effects on "the foundations, tools, and

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[2] Fredric Jameson, *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1981), ix–x.

[3] Michel Foucault, *The Essential Foucault: Selections from Essential Works of Foucault, 1954–1984*, ed. Paul Rabinow, Nikolas S. Rose, and James D. Faubion (New York: New Press, 2003c), 387.

[4] *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* (1997), *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* (1998), *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* (1999), *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire* (2000), *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix* (2003), *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince* (2005), *Harry Potter and the Deadly Hallows* (2007), and *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* (2016).

goals of political action. No one saw this shift in the nature of politics more clearly than Michel Foucault."[5] The discussion of the works in question will be rooted in Michel Foucault's analysis of biopolitics and political philosophers and literary theorists Antonio Negri's (1933) and Michael Hardt's (1960) elaborated thoughts on it.

There are a considerable number of texts about biopolitics in interdisciplinary subjects, and there are a number of theoretical considerations in regards to human bodies and lives that may be called "biopolitical," which will be the basis for this book. Furthermore, there are varieties of studies concerning the Foucauldian approach to literature in different contexts. However, the relationship between biopolitics and literature appears to be largely undiscovered. Through an analysis of J. K. Rowling's children's/young adult fantasy, the *Harry Potter* series, within the contexts of race and class, the book aims to fill the void in the literature. Moreover, it derives its force from the fact that the series has escaped literary critics' attention in the scope of Foucauldian biopolitical criticism even though it has been translated into over sixty languages, and it presents plenty of representations to be analysed in the context of Foucault's discourse analytics of power relations. The book argues that Rowling strives to establish equilibrium among power-holders in the mentioned contexts. Following the Foucauldian notion of multiple power relations instead of a singular authoritarian form of power taking its force from the wellness and development of the human population, the present study argues that the series juxtaposes binary oppositions and challenges them both by representing and questioning them. Throughout the novels, the power gap between purebloods and the other groups, including half-bloods, and Squibs (non-magical wizard-borns) and Muggles (non-wizards), the ruling, middle, and working classes, respectively, is represented and compensated for by putting the ideology of biopolitics behind the forces into question. Thus, the book deals with the series as a bioart, representing biopolitics and resistance within the fantasy school story genre.

To these ends, the present book is divided into five main chapters with separate subtitles. The first chapter entitled "Fantasy School Stories and the *Harry Potter* Series" is divided into two sections. The first section, "Children's Literature from the Nineteenth Century onwards: School Stories and Fantasy Novels," provides an inquiry into post-nineteenth-century British children's literature, which is the turning point for children's literature through a growing production of and interest in

[5] Thomas Lemke, *Biopolitics: An Advanced Introduction*, trans. Eric Frederick Trump (New York: New York University Press, 2011), 32.

children's works. The chapter is mainly concerned with the development and features of late nineteenth- and twentieth-century school stories and fantasy as literary genres in children's literature, as the *Harry Potter* series is categorised as a school story and a fantasy work. The chapter explores how the books operate as an efficient fictional apparatus constructing children or young adults as products and producers of the engineering of society.

The second section of the introductory chapter is entitled "Rowling's *Harry Potter* Series as a Fantasy School Story in Children's/Young Adult Literature." It sheds light on J. K. Rowling's noteworthy success with the *Harry Potter* series in addition to brief information about the content of the series and its contribution to children's and young adult literature and the features that make it a fantasy school story. In addition to the seven novels in the series, this section also discusses the play *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* by Jack Thorne. Thorne collaborated with J. K. Rowling and director John Tiffany to develop an original story by Rowling set after the plot of the last novel in the series but based on possible changing timelines in *The Goblet of Fire*. It is of utmost significance for the present book to include this additional work in the series, which some readers may not be familiar with and which has widely escaped the attention of most critics. Through the analysis of *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*, in terms of overturning power relations within different epistemes in comparison to the preceding novels in the series, the present book contributes to the critical literature on the series. Thus, the section illuminates a variety of power relations in the series to facilitate the reader grasping the biopolitical analyses of the novels in race and class contexts.

The second chapter focuses on the theoretical framework of the study with the main title "The Analytics of Biopolitics and Resistance." This part is concerned, first of all, with the Foucauldian conceptualisation of biopolitics and its role in shaping the subject and life through discipline over the body. It outlines the main pillars of Foucauldian biopolitics, inquiring into the concept of "biopolitics" under the subtitle "The Trio of (Bio)Power–Knowledge–Dispositifs in Foucauldian Biopolitics." In addition to the interrelated and inevitable relations between power, knowledge, and discourse, biopower is shown to be the bioengineering mechanism of subjectivities and lives through dispositifs. As well as the comprehensive inquiry into biopolitical theory in relation to race and class, under the headings "Race as an Agent for the Exercise of Biopower" and "Class as an Agent for the Exercise of Biopower," respectively, the chapter also reveals the change in Foucault's viewpoint regarding the nature, form, and features of power in history. Particularly, while dealing

with biopower regarding class, the chapter introduces Marxist and anti-Marxist aspects of Foucauldian biopower. It also indicates problematic and contradictory aspects of the Foucauldian conceptualisation of power and the deficiency of the Foucauldian approach to any potential resistance and its ways. Therefore, the chapter supplies additional information about Negri and Hardt's contribution to the Foucauldian reconceptualisation of biopolitics, biopower, and resistance through their works *Empire* (2000), *Multitude: War and Democracy in the Age of Empire* (2004), and *Commonwealth* (2009). Their concepts of "Empire," "multitude," and "the common" are explicated to strengthen the discussion of the *Potter* series later in the study. Such a theoretical framework draws a path for the biopolitical reading of the series, revealing how the body is commodified and produced through power, knowledge, and dispositifs and how biopolitics operates as a bioengineer in the subject's life, subjecting the subject to a variety of inequalities in different fields of life including social life, work, and school. In this regard, the chapter asserts that race and class are used to foreground inequalities among individuals. Therefore, the following chapter problematises the race and class issues within this biopolitical context. All in all, chapter 2 constructs the boundaries of the ground that the following chapters are built upon: it presents the preliminary work necessary for further discussion that can be given in relation to the details of the series.

Chapter 3, "The Exercise of Biopower through Race in the *Harry Potter* Series," is devoted to a Foucauldian biopolitical analysis of race throughout the series, as racial discrimination derives its force from the human body, more specifically, in the wizarding world, from blood-purity. Firstly, the chapter introduces the reader to race as a biopolitical agent of power in the real world, reflected in the series in fictional terms. Then, the chapter states the function of dispositifs in producing and perpetuating racial discrimination through the cycle of power, knowledge, and discourse in the wizarding and non-wizarding worlds throughout the series. Thus, the chapter indicates that race is employed to fortify the bioengineering influence of power relations in the subjects' lives in the series while "supposedly" being concerned with the improvement and sustenance of human life in the centre.

Chapter 4 is entitled "The Exercise of Biopower through Class in the *Harry Potter* Series." As may be inferred from its title, the chapter focuses on a biopolitical analysis of the series, handling the issue of class, in Foucault's terms, as "social-racism"—the subject's power struggle is considered within the context of social status, and, thus, in a broader sense than just its economic aspects. The chapter reveals how the series portrays

modern capital societies in both the magical and the non-magical worlds, focusing on people's relationships on the basis of class differences deriving from their familial lineage, poverty or wealth, and occupation, as portrayed through master–servant relationships in private homes and in institutions including the Ministry of Magic, Hogwarts School, and Gringotts Wizarding Bank. Thus, the chapter asserts that biopolitics is exercised through class discrimination, fostering power inequality and struggle among the people.

The final chapter, Chapter 5, "Resistance against Racial and Class Discrimination in the *Harry Potter* Series," intends to reveal the "field of possibilities" and how some characters in the series evaluate it to resist their oppression both in racial and class terms, asserting that power emerges along with resistance in every episteme. The chapter examines the biopolitical motive behind the characters' resistance. It maintains its analysis of resistances and their types besides their outcomes through Hardt and Negri's concepts of "biopolitics," "biopower," "Empire," "multitude," and "the common." The chapter distinguishes between the resistance of Voldemort and his followers, such as Death Eaters and Delphi, and the Order(s) of the Phoenix and Dumbledore's Army, with their origins and consequences in terms of biopolitics and biopower. It reveals that the series depicts the resistance of the multitude against Empire through the conflict between the members of the Order(s) of the Phoenix and Dumbledore's Army and the members of the Dark Arts.

Finally, the study concludes that racial and class discrimination is the companion of the biopolitics executed throughout the series, witnessing resistance regardless of time and space. It also points out the reproductive and endless nature of biopolitical relations for subjects. The analyses of the series also confirm that it neutralises the binaries, letting them counteract one another.

To sum up, the study begins by providing the necessary background information about children's literature from the nineteenth century onwards, specifying the details of fantasy and school stories, then proceeds to the *Harry Potter* series as an example of a fantasy school story. Afterwards, noting the key concepts of Foucault and Hardt and Negri's theory of biopolitics, the book deciphers the discourse of racial and class discrimination operating in interrelation with resistance throughout the series. Thus, the book will indicate through the analyses of the selected works that modern children's fantasy school stories both represent the asserted ideologies and neutralise power over the suppressed with their resistance.

CHAPTER 1

FANTASY SCHOOL STORIES AND THE *HARRY POTTER* SERIES

This introductory chapter will provide background information on British children's literature, especially since the nineteenth century, which is regarded as the golden age of children's literature due to a growing interest in children's works and the innumerable books written for child readers. It focuses on the development of the school story and fantasy genres.[1] Thus, the section will present the features of school stories and fantasy books as an efficient fictional pattern in constructing children or young adults as the main social engineers of society. Furthermore, it will facilitate deciphering the *Harry Potter* series, categorised as a school story and fantasy work, depicting various power relations and paving the way for an alternative path of resistance even though the series is also described as a *Bildungsroman*, epic, or comedy incorporating mythology and folklore.

1.1 Children's Literature from the Nineteenth Century onwards: School Stories and Fantasy Novels

As in many societies, the current interests, concerns, and values of British society influence literature. There is a reciprocal relationship between fiction and the dominant ideologies of the period in which it is produced. As Richards notes, producers "dramatize what they perceive to be the dominant issues and ideas of the day."[2] Brown also notes that every literary work "has political import, for all texts draw upon a larger cultural context that they help to maintain and transform."[3] In this context, fiction

[1] For further information about children's literature prior to the twentieth century, consult the author's PhD dissertation, published as *British Children's Adventure Novels in the Web of Colonialism* (2018) by Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
[2] Jeffrey Richards, "The School Story," in *Stories and Society: Children's Literature in Its Social Context*, ed. Dennis Butts (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 1992), 1.
[3] Richard Harvey Brown, *Society as Text* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1987), 146.

may function as a product and producer of prevailing ideologies. To quote Rockwell, fiction "plays a large part in the socialization of infants, in the conduct of politics and in general gives symbols and models of life to the population, particularly in those less-easily defined areas such as norms, values and personal and inter-personal behaviour."[4] This also applies to the emergence and development of children's literature.

Despite the presence of various works read by children as much as by adults, the foundation of children's literature as an independent form of literature was laid out in the eighteenth century thanks to the revolutionary ideas of John Locke (1632–1704) and Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778), in addition to the Romantic writers' glorification of the nature of childhood and the power of imagination and their view of the child "as a creature of wayward tendencies to be carefully educated towards adulthood."[5] William Blake's underlining of the significance of childhood innocence in *Songs of Innocence* (1789) and William Wordsworth's celebration of the strength of imagination in *Ode on the Intimations of Immortality* (1807) exemplify the impacts of Romanticism. Thus, notions of Romanticism privileging the creativity of imagination, the purity of a child's nature, and the longing for innocence lost because of the Industrial Revolution "colored the very fabric of children's literary culture in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries."[6] In addition to John Newberry's *A Little Pretty Pocket Book*, published as a children's book in London in 1744, initiatives in state education for children such as the Forster Education Act (1870), which established free elementary schools in Britain and paved the way for compulsory universal education as well as the spread of the printing press, enabled an increasing number of books to be produced and read by children. As noted by Bratton, the purpose was to entertain, teach, and impose the approved values of the current society on children.[7]

In the 1960s and 1970s, children's literature increasingly highlighted gender, racial, and class prejudice following the foundation of organisations to deal with racism, sexism, and classicism in children's literature, such as the Council on Interracial Books for Children (CIBC) in 1965 and the

[4] Joan Rockwell, *Fact in Fiction: The Use of Literature in the Systematic Study of Society* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1974), 4.
[5] Colin Manlove, *From Alice to Harry Potter: Children's Fantasy in England* (Christchurch: Cybereditions Corporation, 2003), 12.
[6] Anna Lundin, *Constructing the Canon of Children's Literature: Beyond Library Walls and Ivory Towers* (New York and London: Routledge, 2004), 5.
[7] J. S. Bratton, *The Impact of Victorian Children's Fiction* (London: Croom Helm, 1981), 23.

British National Committee on Racism in Children's Books in 1976.[8] Children's literature, thus, became an academic discipline in the 1970s with the foundation of various academic journals such as *Children's Literature* by Yale University Press and *The Lion and the Unicorn* by Johns Hopkins University Press.[9] Studying children's literature, like all other products of literature, may indeed serve to criticise the culture, politics, and socio-history of society, which the present study also reveals through the analysis of the *Harry Potter* series.

Even the development of various subgenres within children's literature emerged as a response to certain historical and political developments, because, as noted by Hunt, children's literature represents "society as it wishes to be, as it wishes to be seen [or] as it unconsciously reveals itself to be."[10] By way of illustration, children's adventure stories reflected the British imperial ideology of the nineteenth century, for example in *The Coral Island* (1858) by Robert Michael Ballantyne (1825–1894), *King Solomon's Mines* (1885) by Henry Rider Haggard (1856–1925), and *Among Malay Pirates: A Tale of Adventure and Peril* (1900) by George Alfred Henty (1832–1902).[11] Butts notes that the adventure story remained popular in the twentieth century; however, it came to focus on identity and survival in the face of the ecological and cultural dangers that emerged as threats in the late part of the century.[12]

Family stories were also good at reflecting the patriarchal values of the time, as in *The Parent's Assistant* (1796) by Maria Edgeworth (1768–1849) and *The History of the Fairchild Family* (1818) by Mary Martha Sherwood (1775–1851). Such stories are highly didactic and well represent changing cultural differences in family relationships; in the twentieth century they are exemplified by *The Pinballs* (1980) by Betsy Byars and *The Nature of the Beast* (1985) by Janni Howker.

The school story, which is one of the main concerns of the present book, is another genre that reflects changing values and concerns in the

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[8] Emer O'Sullivan, *Historical Dictionary of Children's Literature* (Lanham, Toronto, Plymouth: Scarecrow Press, 2010), 93.

[9] Seth Lerer, *Children's Literature: A Reader's History from Aesop to Harry Potter* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 8–9.

[10] Peter Hunt, *Criticism, Theory and Children's Literature* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991), 2.

[11] See the author's above-mentioned book for further details about the association of nineteenth-century British adventure novels and imperialist ideology from a postcolonial perspective.

[12] Dennis Butts, introduction to *Stories and Society: Children's Literature in Its Social Context*, ed. Dennis Butts (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 1992), xi.

education system and of an industrial society, discussing the breakdown of family or other relationships since the advent of the genre with Thomas Hughes's *Tom Brown's Schooldays* (1857), the first boys' school story. While Hughes is regarded as the founding father of the genre, which is "the most famous school story ever written, an autobiographical account of schooldays whose influence lay in its reflection, mythification and propagation of what was to become the dominant image of the public school, a place to train character and produce Christian gentlemen,"[13] *Tom Brown's Schooldays* was followed by Dean Farrar's *Eric* (1858), which was just as widely read. However, it is *Tom Brown's Schooldays* that reflected the general conventions of the genre best by tracing the moral, social, and emotional developments, instead of the academic one, of the male protagonist, Tom Brown, who is at a boarding school away from his family.

School stories comprise a genre centred on school as a setting and school life as content. Indeed, the genre emerged because of educational developments surrounding private schools for boys of the middle and upper classes in the Victorian period. Richards even associates the emergence of the school stories with headmaster Thomas Arnold's Rugby School in the nineteenth century. Richards notes that Arnold's school popularised the sport of rugby among boys at boarding schools and this fact was projected in school stories, as in the *Harry Potter* series in which the Hogwarts students play another similar sport, "Quidditch." Richards also adds that these stories appealed especially to working-class readers.[14] Thus, most nineteenth-century school stories are set in boarding schools because of the background and ideals of the early school-story authors and publishers, though only about 3 per cent of school pupils went to public schools in those years.[15] Thus, the context of public schools was common throughout the century.

Richards points out the features of the pattern that many school stories commonly weave. They include "the atmosphere of timelessness, of comforting familiarity, of reassuring order, of innocence . . . a world of unchanging patterns and eternal verities."[16] The characters are role models remaining the same age throughout the works and prioritising friendship constituting group dynamics among schoolchildren. The stories are often set in public schools and the idealised features of school life and the school year, such as study teas, Christmas, and the athleticism of soccer or

[13] Richards, "The School Story," 3.
[14] Ibid., 1–12.
[15] Ibid., 2.
[16] Ibid., 10.

cricket, have been relevant to school stories emerging out of the concepts of the gentlemen and sportsman in the revival of chivalry in the nineteenth century.[17] As noted by Webb, in school stories, the protagonist becomes a lifelong friend of the first people he meets.[18] For instance, at the beginning of the *Harry Potter* septology, Harry meets Ron and Hermione on the train to Hogwarts for the first time and they become best friends; he also meets Hagrid, who arrives at the Dursleys' to take him to Hogwarts. Furthermore, students are expected to obey certain rules at the school; for example, it is forbidden to enter the third-floor corridor under threat of death. Boarding school stories in particular construct an organised community alongside the routine of school life, which portrays the relationships between children and adults, students and teachers, and managers and workers, and between classes.[19] The school in such stories stands out as a closed community on the basis of its particular unique norms, traditions, and games that feature among the rivalries of the schoolboys; the *Harry Potter* novels, which will be analysed in detail later, portray Hogwarts, a boarding school for training witches and wizards, as a simulacrum of multicultural British society. Therefore, the plot is composed of "midnight feasts and breaking rules, the punishment of individuals or groups, and visits to the local town."[20] In particular, virtues such as decency, national pride, bravery, loyalty, justice, and team spirit are celebrated in school stories. Indeed, schools in school stories serve as an ideological state apparatus, which will be elaborated upon later. Moreover, schools are the places where power relations function by extracting knowledge from people and moulding it. Surveillance of the students or reward-punishment systems embody a system of obedience and hierarchies as in society itself, as will be discussed in the following chapters in relation to race, class, and gender.

Indeed, school stories portray how people react to and deal with certain situations and people. Ray states that the school story is a genre that presents "an entertaining story, [through which] children can 'test the water,' learn how people may react in specific situations and see what lies ahead."[21]

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[17] Ibid., 6.
[18] Caroline Webb, *Fantasy and the Real World in British Children's Literature: The Power of Story* (Florence: Taylor & Francis, 2014), 50–54.
[19] Julia Eccleshare, *Contemporary Classics of Literature: A Guide to the Harry Potter Novels* (New York: Cromwell Press, 2002), 49.
[20] O'Sullivan, *Historical Dictionary*, 223.
[21] Sheila Ray, "School Stories," *International Companion Encyclopaedia of Children's Literature*, ed. Peter Hunt (London: Routledge, 2004), 467.

School stories began to revolve around girls' boarding school life first in *A World of Girls* (1886) by Elizabeth Thomasina Meade Smith (1844–1914), who wrote around forty girls' school stories. Later, various successful works, including Angela Brazil's *The Luckiest Girl in the School* (1916) and Elinor M. Brent-Dyer's *School at the Chalet* (1925), contributed to the development of the genre even though they maintained the single-sex education tradition in school stories. Afterwards, the popularity of school stories began to decline. Later school stories—those published since World War II—illustrated the ordeal of living in a post-industrial society, as the dissolution of the British Empire and reduced need for the armed forces after the world wars altered the content of school stories, focusing more on academic degrees, industry, city life, and finance in accordance with changing middle-class needs. Some authors responded to the new situation, including Geoffrey Trease who dramatised grammar schools through his *Bannermere* series (1949).[22]

Post-World War II school stories underlined colonial values besides morals, including friendship and loyalty from the students' perspective, while offering a sense of resistance in their social context as well.[23]

Although the death of school stories as a genre was often associated with the introduction of free secondary education for children in Britain in 1944, leading to the view that education was not assumed to be only for the privileged, children's literature authors continued writing school stories set in private schools. In addition to William Wayne's *A Swarm in May* (1955), followed by three more novels, the sprawling X-Men series, initially developed by Marvel in 1963, also has its origins in fantasy, featuring a boarding school story not unlike *Harry Potter* on steroids, complete with racial and class prejudice and a special training school set on an estate in upstate New York.

In the second half of the twentieth century, traditional school stories were often criticised as they were about and appealed to mostly middle- and upper-class white children. Therefore, the school stories produced later changed in terms of content, beginning to depict the hostile relationship between students and teachers and corruption and abuse of power in addition to the corruption of both students and teachers themselves. The school stories of the 1970s and 1980s also differed considerably from the earlier boarding school stories as they portrayed boys and girls in the same school dealing with boy–girl relationships, which were absent in the

[22] Richards, "The School Story," 14–15.

[23] Siobhan McEvoy-Levy, *Peace and Resistance in Youth Cultures: Reading the Politics of Peacebuilding from Harry Potter to the Hunger Games* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 149.

earlier works. Robert Cormier's *The Chocolate War* (1974) and Tom Perrota's *Election* (1998) are novels representing the change in question. Some school story authors have also written about hotly debated topics such as gender, disability, ethnicity, and race. More concretely, Alma Flor Ada's *My Name Is María Isabel* (1993) and Anne Fine's *Bill's New Frock* (1989) deal with gender issues, while Virginia Hamilton's *Bluish* (1999) problematises disability, illness, and children's fears.[24]

As for J. K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* series, set at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry, it may be categorised as a traditional boarding school story integrated with fantasy and modern life because, for instance, the sports in traditional school stories such as rugby or hockey are replaced with Quidditch, which is similar to such sports but played on broomsticks. Moreover, the novels combine the familiar with the unfamiliar; for instance, they combine pre-school activities such as buying items like books and uniforms with purchasing a pet for magical use at school.

As for fantasy as a genre, it is handled as the other main genre in the present study as the *Harry Potter* stories are categorised as both school stories and fantasy; thus, they may be regarded as a hybrid form of the two genres in question. Fantasy has also been regarded as middle-class literature, produced with "a strong sense of family and educational values" for most of its history.[25] It emerged as a response to realistic fiction as well as non-fiction prose as sampled by journalism, history, and biography in the seventeenth century. In contrast to realistic fiction, which is metonymic because of its straight allusions to social practice, fantasy is metaphorical; thus, it both gives pleasure and delight and enables the reader to question and criticise approved truths as the experimentation with alternatives reveals that reality is indeed a social construct.[26]

Indeed, all literary works are partially fantastic as they arise from "the desire to change givens and alter reality—out of boredom, play, vision, longing for something lacking, or the need for metaphoric images that will bypass the audience's verbal defences," and mimesis and fantasy exist together in a literary work.[27] In this aspect, fantasy works both represent a society, with its probable events, people, and objects, and contradict approved realities; thus, they also represent what is impossible and contain what is unreal or supernatural. Sullivan argues that the word "impossible"

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[24] O'Sullivan, *Historical Dictionary*, 223–25.
[25] Manlove, *From Alice to Harry Potter*, 11.
[26] John Stephens, *Language and Ideology in Children's Fiction* (London: Longman Group, 1992), 242–43.
[27] Kathryn Hume, *Fantasy and Mimesis: Responses to Reality in Western Literature* (New York: Methuen, 1984), 20.

"appears in a good many twentieth-century definitions of fantasy."[28] Therefore, fantasy literature may be defined as fiction set in an impossible world where fantastic things happen in probable ways. Accordingly, it is imaginative fiction enabling the reader to explore far-fetched mysteries without any limitations in terms of time, space, or characterisation. It may take place in a non-existent universe with its own history, geography, and characters—that is, in a self-contained secondary world such as Neverland in J. M. Barrie's *Peter Pan* (1904) and the world of magic in the *Harry Potter* novels.

Regardless of how improbable they might be in terms of characterisation, plot, and setting, fantasy novels manifest different aspects related to gender roles, social class, ethnicity, and control in society. Alexander states that fantasy is the product of adults inhabiting an adult world, responding to all kinds of issues.[29] This is what Rowling does in the series. Gates et al. explicate the nature of fantasy literature, and their statement also underlines the main point of the analyses of the *Harry Potter* series throughout the present book. They note: "Fantasy literature, like all other forms of myth, springs from the human need to understand the struggle of good versus evil."[30] Thus, fantasy literature became a vehicle to maintain people's need for heroes and faith that good will overcome evil sooner or later. In this context, the analyses will reveal the potential dimension of the "good" and the "evil" beyond all kinds of restrictions through the struggle between Lord Voldemort and Harry Potter in the series.

Literary fantasy feeds on traditional folk and fairy tales that were spread orally but were later collected, most famously in *Histories or Tales of Past Times* (1729) by Charles Perrault (1628–1703), *Grimms' Fairy Tales* (1812) by the Brothers Grimm,[31] and *Fairy Tales and Stories* (1872) by Hans Christian Andersen (1805–1875), with some alterations—more specifically, with didacticism removed, at least to some extent. Therefore, it may be claimed that the seeds of fantasy literature as a genre of children's literature in written form were sown in the eighteenth century, when the Romantic movement underlined the imagination, innocence, and naturalness of children; even though such works at the time were regarded as horror stories, they became a widespread genre of children's literature

[28] C. W. Sullivan, "Fantasy," in *Stories and Society: Children's Literature in Its Social Context*, ed. Dennis Butts (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 1992), 98.
[29] Quoted in Sullivan, "Fantasy," 109.
[30] Pamela S. Gates, Susan B. Steffel, and Francis J. Molson, *Fantasy Literature for Children and Young Adults* (Lanham, Maryland, and Oxford: Scarecrow Press, 2003), 2.
[31] Jacob Grimm (1785–1863) and Wilhelm Grimm (1786–1859)

in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In particular, the turn of the eighteenth century witnessed the growing concern of many reformers, moralists, and educators, mostly women such as Sarah Trimmer (1741–1810), Mary Sherwood (1775–1851), and Maria Edgeworth (1768–1849), in relation to promoting morality and socially acceptable behaviours in children. Authors such as Charles Dickens (1812–70), Charles Kingsley (1819–75), George MacDonald (1824–1905), Lewis Carroll (1832–98), Edith Nesbit (1858–1924), and Rudyard Kipling (1865–1936) contributed to the development of fantasy while writing "adult" fiction as well. Among them, it was Nesbit who was respected as the first children's fantasy author, thus successfully showing that integrating magic into the real world was possible in the framework of plausibility.[32]

Children's fantasy floated between two distinct attitudes, morality and imagination, until the 1860s when, as Reynolds asserts, the Victorian idea of the "beautiful child" began to take hold.[33] It was also at this time that imagination became more dominant than morality in children's fantasy, due to the growing influence of country life that came with the Industrial Revolution. Children's fantasy witnessed a golden age in Britain from the second half of the nineteenth century until World War I. Sullivan takes Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818) as the first "fantasy" work. He sees it as also representing science fiction as a subgenre of fantasy literature as it is also, "if not primarily, a scientific fantasy or, more accurately, a scientific extrapolation."[34] Following that work, Kingsley's *The Water Babies* (1863), MacDonald's *The Princess and the Goblin* (1872), and William Morris's *The Wood beyond the World* (1894) are influential in setting the standards of at least two subgenres of fantasy[35] in the twentieth century: science fiction and high fantasy.[36] According to Sullivan, "The science fiction of Robert Heinlein, Isaac Asimov, and Arthur C. Clarke is descended directly from Mary Shelley's novel [*Frankenstein*]; and the fantasies of Lord Dunsany, T. H. White, C. S. Lewis, and J. R. R. Tolkien are descended from the novels of Kingsley, MacDonald and Morris."[37] L.

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[32] Gates et al., *Fantasy Literature*, 88.

[33] Kimberley Reynolds, *Children's Literature in the 1890s and the 1990s* (Plymouth: Northcote House, 1994), 13–16.

[34] Sullivan, "Fantasy," 101.

[35] There is no consensus among critics, bibliographers, and historians regarding the exact number of types of fantasy in children's literature.

[36] "A subgenre of fantasy, which is usually epic in form and serious in tone, creates a secondary world of mythic proportion, with the story often spread over a number of volumes" (O'Sullivan, *Historical Dictionary*, 98).

[37] Sullivan, "Fantasy," 103–4.

Frank Baum's *The Wizard of Oz* (1900), which is seen as one of the founding masterpieces of the American fantasy tradition, Lewis Carroll's *Alice* series,[38] J. M. Barrie's *Peter Pan* (1904), and J. R. R. Tolkien's *The Hobbit* (1937) and *The Lord of the Rings* (1954) are categorised as works of high fantasy. In particular, Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1865) is "a touchstone for later works" of fantasy.[39] It mixes parody and satire by indicating the limitless possibilities and liberating impact of fantasy on both children and adults. Roald Dahl's children's fantasy novels, deriving from his boarding school experience, have also been adopted into films, such as *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* (1964) in 2005.

Children's fantasy literature currently enjoys a high level of popularity. Its successful film adaptations have increased not only its market popularity but also interest in the genre. For instance, *The Lord of the Rings* (2001–3) and the *Harry Potter* films (2001–11) promoted adaptations of other fantasy works such as *Alice in Wonderland* (2009–15), *The Chronicles of Narnia* (2005–10) adapted from Lewis's three novels *The Lion, The Witch, and the Wardrobe*, *Prince Caspian*, and *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*, and the film version of Susan Cooper's *The Dark is Rising* (2007). The award-winning children's fantasy novelist Philip Pullman's trilogy *His Dark Materials* was adapted as a TV series by the BBC, broadcast in 2019.

Indeed, regardless of the centuries they were written in, children's fantasy works share common features. Gates et al. infer two essential criteria for fantasy from widely known fantasies in children's and young adult literature throughout the centuries, even though they are not universally agreed upon. The first is that the story will contain strangeness through bizarre, awesome, and horrible elements; the second is that these elements will be made to seem reasonable regardless of the physical laws or principles of human behaviour violated.[40] For instance, characters move from a realistic setting to a magical one employing a mirror in Carroll's *Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There* or a wardrobe in C. S. Lewis's *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* (1950).

Despite their definite common features, the sub-categories of fantasy works comprise a controversial issue for critics. However, Gates et al.

[38] *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1865), *Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There* (1871), *The Wasp in a Wig* (1877), *The Nursery Alice* (1889), and *Alice's Adventures Under Ground* (1965).
[39] O'Sullivan, *Historical Dictionary*, 97.
[40] Gates et al., *Fantasy Literature*, 7.

divide it into three main sub-categories, comprising fairy or folk tales, heroic-ethical fantasy, and mixed fantasy. Gates et al. mention fantasy types as follows:

> Combining realism and fantasy, mixed fantasy is of several types. Journey fantasy covers travel in both space and time. . . . In transformation fantasy, the main character or characters undergo some kind of basic change. . . . Talking animal fantasy concerns animals gifted with speech. Within magic fantasy exists a catchall subcategory involving power of mysterious origin. . . . The final category is heroic-ethical fantasy. Featuring heroic adventures and deeds, this category often involves the protagonist arriving at moral decisions that may have unexpected and far-reaching consequences.[41]

Of the mentioned types of fantasy, the *Harry Potter* series may be claimed to exist in the mixed type, as it gathers real and unreal elements within the same context of magic fantasy combining the magical world and the real one while reflecting the prevailing real society. More concretely, in the *Harry Potter* books, the magical fantasy world of Hogwarts coexists with the real-life outside even though the unreal is not totally independent of the real one because, as Kocher notes, the secondary world in the novel should be familiar to the reader to such an extent that s/he can keep sympathy and interest for characters and events by associating them with their everyday experience.[42] To illustrate, the way to become a wizard is similar to the process of becoming a professional in the real world, including various regular school exams and certificates such as NEWTS and OWLs. Moreover, the sport called Quidditch that the wizard students play is a team sport. The children in the school do what their peers might do in a boarding school: playing games, doing sports, learning, eating, sleeping, making friends or enemies. However, what is unreal is that they are educated to be professional wizards through courses such as Defence against the Dark Arts and Care of Magical Creatures, instead of maths. In addition, they grow magical herbs such as mandrakes rather than fruit or vegetables, which sound familiar and reasonable. It indicates how the author blends real and unreal, believable and unbelievable. Furthermore, as a school story blending fantasy with real life, the *Harry Potter* series also presents inventiveness and humour simultaneously through messaging owls, shrieking books, speaking ghosts, flying keys, and so on.

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[41] Ibid., 8.

[42] Paul Kocher, *Master of Middle-Earth: The Achievement of J. R. R. Tolkien* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1972), 1.

Despite certain common features to works of fantasy, there have been changes in the genre between the English Victorian period and the twenty-first century. First of all, since the nineteenth century, children's fantasy works have mostly been written by women, among them "Mrs. J. H. Ewing, Mrs. M. L. Molesworth, Christina Rossetti, Dinah Mulock, Mary De Morgan, Lucy Lane Clifford, Alice Corkran."[43] Another change is observed in narration. In the twentieth century, the first-person narrative voice of a child or a teenage character along with an inside view of the contemporary nature of children was used to hide the fact that the work in question had not been written by an adult. Children's fantasy authors created plausible worlds mixed with enchantment in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, thus, portraying alternative realities beyond the limits of time, space, and size for different purposes: for instance, Oscar Wilde (1854–1900) did so for social criticism, as in *The Happy Prince and Other Tales* (1888); A. A. Milne (1882–1956), for humour, as in *Winnie-the-Pooh* (1926); and W. J. Corbett (1938–2003), for political allegory, as in *The Song of Pentecost* (1982).

Another point that draws attention to the changes observed in twentieth-century children's fantasy is that the reader had begun to be taken back to rural life in the nineteenth century; for instance, Kingsley's *The Water Babies* is set in the beautiful landscapes of Yorkshire and Hampshire. In the twentieth century, the change in setting showed itself not only in place but also in time. Children's fantasy began to combine different times together. To illustrate this, Clive King's *Stig of the Dump* (1963) tells the story of a modern boy encountering a stone-age boy hunting in the modern day. Twentieth-century children's fantasy improves the interplay of the natural and the supernatural.[44] For instance, in Richard Parker's *M for Mischief* (1965), three boys make magic eggs with a magic cookbook and become invisible, moving from a magic stove to different spaces. Thus, towards the end of the twentieth century, the content of children's books began increasingly to take the reader (both the child reader and the adult) from childhood into the adult world of problems and pains. The protagonist might not be a child but a wooden puppet, a factory-made boy, a wizard, or an animal such as an elephant or a pig. Just like many children's stories in the nineteenth century, most stories start with the central character leaving home and discovering another world outside with various problems and conflicts reflecting the adult world. Thus, particularly since the 1950s, children's fantasy has indicated its similarity to Victorian children's fantasy concerning improving morality

[43] Manlove, *From Alice to Harry Potter*, 34.
[44] Ibid., 193–95.

and the consciousness of responsibility in children, who are regarded as "proto-adults." Thus, the emphasis is on the idea of growth and becoming not through child characters acting childishly, but rather through them being undifferentiated from adults in manner. Therefore, in this period, the child characters are teenagers, even almost school leavers, whereas in children's fantasy prior to the world wars they are around ten to twelve. Accordingly, it is noteworthy that although children's fantasy appealed to younger age groups in the 1920s and 1930s, since the second half of the twentieth century it has had something to offer all ages, just as Victorian children's fantasy did. Thus, the period contains crossover[45] fantasy works read by people of all ages. It may be claimed that fantasy stands out as a genre floating between child and adult readers; indeed, it does not exactly belong to either group. As O'Sullivan notes, the *Harry Potter* books by J. K. Rowling are "[t]he most prominent example of this recent but increasingly widespread 'all-ages literature' category."[46]

Regardless of the passing of time, another intersection where children's fantasy since the 1950s and of the Victorian era meet is in the use of magic, which was seen "as an anarchic force" until the 1950s. In children's fantasy, magic has often acted for moral or comic justice under a system of control,[47] just as does the Ministry of Magic in the *Harry Potter* series. According to Manlove, the tension between the purposes of morality and education in Victorian children's fantasy is reflected by the "struggle in the 1960s and 1970s to keep children's fantasy connected to old values in the face of growing rebellious imaginative forces."[48] Children's fantasy of the 1970s, avoiding any sense of threat or insecurity, is concretised by menacing figures such as predatory ghosts, monstrous adults, child-vampires, devils, witches, and wizards in children's fantasy of the 1990s. The scenes are filled with horror, darkness, and mysteries waiting to be solved. Indeed, the years between 1950 and 2000 witnessed the loss of fixed values and a sense of social identity, urging young people to compensate for their losses through fantasies of school stories founded on a social structure. The *Harry Potter* series exemplifies the mentioned

[45] The term "crossover books" is used to refer to books transcending the boundaries between children's and adult's literature (O'Sullivan, *Historical Dictionary*, 76) as they are read by both children and adults. Many works such as Carlo Collodi's *The Adventures of Pinocchio* (1891), Lewis Carroll's *Alice* books, and Antoine de Saint-Exupéry's *The Little Prince* (1943) are often categorised in children's literature but widely read by adults as well.
[46] O'Sullivan, *Historical Dictionary*, 77.
[47] Manlove, *From Alice to Harry Potter*, 200–201.
[48] Ibid., 199.

features in terms of its content, characters, and narration. The novels also confront the reader with social problems shaped around unequal approaches to Mudbloods, the working class, slaves, and women, as will be later discussed in detail from a Foucauldian perspective.

1.2 Rowling's *Harry Potter* series as a Fantasy School Story in Children's/Young Adult Literature

This section provides information about J. K. Rowling, her remarkable success story with the *Harry Potter* series, which was produced after considerable meticulous plotting and outlining for a decade, in addition to the most recent work, intended for the stage. It will also discuss the place of the books in children's literature and their contribution to children's and young adult literature as fantasy school stories. As it is difficult to encompass the huge series of novels, spanning thousands of pages, within one or two pages, this section focuses on power relations in the series to make their biopolitical analyses in race and class contexts more understandable, especially for readers who have not read the books or are not familiar with their content.

Joanne Kathleen Rowling, better known by her pen name J. K. Rowling, was born in England in 1965. After graduating from the University of Exeter, in 1990 she moved to Portugal to teach children English, her favoured vocation. Portugal brought her both love and a daughter, Jessica, born after her marriage to a Portuguese journalist, Jorge Arantes. However, she left the country after divorcing her husband and moved with Jessica to Scotland. She struggled to get by as a single mother with her little daughter until her first novel *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* (1997) was published.

Despite rejections by several publishers, Rowling never gave up and consented to her book being published by a small publishing house. In contrast to her expectations, her book brought her fame and wealth. She remembers that after signing the contract for the publication of her first book, the agent said to her: "I don't want you going away from this meeting thinking you're going to make a fortune." She replied: "I know I'm not going to make any money out of it. I know I'm not going to be famous."[49] However, she quickly obtained success and has become a celebrity. All she had dreamt of was becoming a writer, not becoming famous. She said in an interview: "I . . . wanted to be a writer, though I

[49] Quoted in Bradley Steffens, *People in the News: J. K. Rowling* (San Diego: Lucent Books, 2002), 6.