



**THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY
SOCIAL SCIENCES UNIVERSITY OF ANKARA
INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**

**BILDUNGSROMAN EXPERIENCE OF SECONDARY WORLDS OF NEIL GAIMAN
AND DIANA WYNNE JONES' FANTASY LITERATURE**

Master's Thesis

Özcan Kahraman

English Language and Literature

June 2022



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**Özcan Kahraman
195429001**

Prof. Dr. Mine Özyurt Kılıç

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THESIS APPROVAL

This is to certify that the thesis defense examination for the thesis titled “Bildungsroman Experience of Secondary Worlds of Neil Gaiman and Diana Wynne Jones’ Fantasy Literature” prepared by Özcan Kahraman with student number 194529001 studying in the field of English Language and Literature Department Master of Arts in Language and Literature Program has been conducted in accordance with the related clauses of the Graduate Studies and Examination Code of YÖK (Council of Higher Education) on/....../....(date) at(hour), and has been approved by majority of votes/by unanimous vote.

Chair :(acad.title-full name-sign.)

Advisor :(acad.title-full name-sign.)

Committee Member :(acad.title-full name-sign.)

Approval:

The thesis has been approved by the Institute Board with the decision dated/....../..... and numbered

...../...../.....

Prof. Dr.
Director

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ÖZET

NEIL GAIMAN VE DIANA WYNNE JONES'UN FANTASTİK EDEBİYATININ İKİNCİL DÜNYALARINDA BILDUNGSROMAN DENEYİMİ

Bu tez, Oluşum romanı türünün, yetişkinliğe geçiş hikayelerini doğa üstü bir ortamda tasvir etmesini sağlayan, fantastik edebiyatla buluşmasının sonucunda geçirdiği oluşumu göstermiştir. Geleneksel olarak bakıldığında Oluşum romanı gerçekçi bir tür olarak gözlemlenmiştir, fakat bu tez Oluşum romanının fantezi türünün günümüzdeki popülerliğinden faydalanarak çağdaş dünyadaki "Oluşum"u tasvir etmek ve eleştirmek için fanteziye başvurduğunun altını çizmiştir. Oluşum romanı ve fantezinin yakınlaştığı örneklerine bakıldığında, bu tez bu iki türün türsel bir birleşimini önermiştir ve bu birleşimi "Fantastik Oluşum romanı" adlandırmıştır. Bu amaç doğrultusunda, tezde hem Oluşum romanı hem de fantezi türlerini derinlemesine incelemiştir ve Diana Wynne Jones'un *Yürüyen Şato* ve Neil Gaiman'ın *Mezarlık Kitabı* romanları her iki türün kesişimini gösteren ana metinler olarak seçilmiştir. Bu romanların yardımıyla fantastik metinlerde birçok Oluşum romanı unsuru gözlemlenmiş ve bu unsurlar doğaüstünün yetişkinliğe geçiş hikayelerine katkısını göstermek için analiz edilmiştir. Yıkıcı edebiyat olarak tanımlanan fantezi, bir yapı söküm gücü olarak açıklanmıştır ve doğaüstü unsurlar aracılığıyla, Oluşum romanı türünden beklentilerin, türün fanteziyle birleşmesiyle değiştiği gözlemlenmiştir. Hem Gaiman hem de Jones'un, fanteziyi yetişkinliğe geçiş hikayeleri üzerine fikirlerini yansıtmak ve Oluşum romanının kurallarını yıkarak türün sınırlarını genişletmek için kullandıkları yansıtılmış ve böylelikle türün daha çeşitli gelişim hikayeleri tasvir edebilmesi sağlanmıştır. "Oluşum"un fantezinin "İkincil Dünyaları"nda da yaşandığından ve doğaüstü unsurların da karakter gelişimine oldukça katkı sağlayacak deneyimler sunabileceği belirtilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Çağdaş Kurgu, Oluşum romanı, Fantastik Oluşum romanı, Diana Wynne Jones, Neil Gaiman

15.06.2022

ABSTRACT

BILDUNGSROMAN EXPERIENCE OF SECONDARY WORLDS OF NEIL GAIMAN AND DIANA WYNNE JONES' FANTASY LITERATURE

This thesis has demonstrated the formation the Bildungsroman genre has gone through as a result of its convergence with the fantasy literature, which allowed the genre to portray the coming-of-age stories in a supernatural setting. Traditionally, Bildungsroman has been observed as a realistic genre however, with the contemporary popularity of the fantasy genre and as a means to comment on and depict “Bildung” in the contemporary world, this thesis has underlined Bildungsroman has resorted to fantasy. Looking at the examples of their convergence, the thesis has observed a generic mixture of the two genres, naming it “Fantastic Bildungsroman.” To this end, the thesis has studied both Bildungsroman and fantasy genres in-depth, and *The Graveyard Book* by Neil Gaiman and *Howl's Moving Castle* by Diana Wynne Jones have been chosen as the primary texts that portray the convergence of both genres. With the help of these novels many Bildungsroman elements have been observed in fantasy texts and these elements have been analysed to point out how the supernatural contributes to the coming-of-age stories. Fantasy, as the literature of subversion, is explained as a deconstructive force and through the supernatural elements, the expectations from the Bildungsroman genre have been observed to shift with its convergence to fantasy. It has been reflected that both Gaiman and Jones have used fantasy to comment upon coming-of-age stories and subvert the norms of Bildungsroman to broaden the boundaries of the genre so that it can portray a wider range of development stories. It has been stated that “Bildung” also occurs in the “Secondary Worlds” of fantasy and the supernatural elements can provide highly developing experiences.

Keywords: Contemporary Fiction, Bildungsroman, The Fantastic Bildungsroman, Diana Wynne Jones, Neil Gaiman

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. THE AIM OF THIS STUDY

This thesis focuses on the Bildungsroman genre and aims to demonstrate its convergence with the fantasy genre to portray coming-of-age stories in a fantastic setting. Throughout different literary movements, Bildungsroman went through many reformations with the aim of adapting itself to the necessities and concerns of different periods. As such, this thesis argues that Bildungsroman has experienced one of these reformations through its convergence with fantasy literature seeing that it resorts to fantasy during the contemporary period to accurately reflect the development of its protagonists. To this end, this thesis will study the rise and the origins of Bildungsroman before moving on to comment upon its reformation with each literary period, underlining the changes it went through to adapt. After commenting on the nature of Bildungsroman as a genre that is open to change, the thesis will shift its focus to fantasy and supernatural. With a study of the genre itself and its critical survey, the fantasy and the supernatural will be defined as the literature of subversion. With sufficient insight into both genres, this thesis will claim a “generic mixture” of the two, by taking a look at Alastair Fowler’s claim in *Kinds of Literature*, where he states that the convergence of two genres is a common occurrence that results in the emergence of new genres (181). Two contemporary fantasy novels have been chosen to demonstrate this claim, *Howl’s Moving Castle* by Diana Wynne Jones and *The Graveyard Book* by Neil Gaiman which will provide plentiful examples and insight throughout the thesis. With their help, this thesis will suggest that the subversive nature of the fantasy literature is needed for the Bildungsroman genre as during the contemporary period, the genre needs new ways to properly reflect “Bildung” and comment on the growth in the contemporary world, thus Bildungsroman converges with fantasy and the literature which emerges as a result of this can be called Fantastic Bildungsroman.

It will be discussed in detail that supernatural elements broaden the boundaries of the Bildungsroman genre with examples from the novels by Jones and Gaiman. As a

traditionally realistic genre, Bildungsroman gets more opportunities to express growth thanks to its convergence with fantasy. For instance, Gaiman's novel presents a coming-of-age story where the protagonist, Nobody, grows up with supernatural beings in a graveyard. His development story is not possible in the real world, but it offers valuable and necessary experiences for growth and Bildungsroman would not be able to tell his story without the fantasy genre. Similarly, fantasy also widens the range of coming-of-age stories through its subversive nature. Jones' novel presents the coming-of-age story of Sophie, who experiences development as an old woman at the age of ninety. Jones tries to reflect that "Bildung" does not need to be restricted by age and she does this by subverting the norms of Bildungsroman with the help of fantasy. Following these examples, the study will explain fantasy allows for a shift in perspective in the Bildungsroman genre, which creates opportunities for unique coming-of-age stories and supernatural growth experiences. These supernatural experiences will be explained as a crucial part of the development process as they allow not only the growth of the protagonist but also the growth of the reader, since reading these supernatural growth opportunities is the only way to experience their didactic nature as the reader has no chance of experiencing similar situations in the real world.

To sum up, the thesis will study the fiction that emerges at the convergence of fantasy and Bildungsroman, calling it the Fantastic Bildungsroman. It will suggest that it occurs as Bildungsroman resorts to fantasy to be able to portray the coming-of-age stories in the contemporary period. Fantasy as the literature of subversion broadens the boundaries of Bildungsroman, which is needed to shift the perspective and portray "Bildung," in the supernatural space. These claims will be crystallized with the examples from *Howl's Moving Castle* by Diana Wynne Jones and *The Graveyard Book* by Neil Gaiman.

1.2. WHAT IS BILDUNGSROMAN?

Bildungsroman is a literary genre dealing with the coming-of-age stories of its protagonist. It makes use of the popular tropes of coming-of-age and growing up and tells the universal topic of challenges and pains of growing up. Though in its origins it describes novels, Bildungsroman is not restricted to novels as movies like *Boyhood* (2014) depict the entire young life of its protagonist on the silver screen, carrying the

medium across multiple media. Nowadays, the genre is understood as the story of psychological, cultural, and moral growth and change. It usually depicts the development of a young person, who is starting to explore and understand the world, from his or her childhood to adulthood. Sarah Graham depicts the genre as “a novel about a young person facing the challenges of growing up” (1). These challenges, which propagate character growth and change, are the primary focus of Bildungsroman. The features of Bildungsroman are universally relatable, which makes the genre “one of the most popular and enduring genres in literary history” (Graham 1).

Though Bildungsroman, as a genre, endured and became a part of literary history, its origin and emergence are highly debated by critics and there is a general uncertainty related to the genre. Scholars find the roots of its origin in German literature. The term is first coined by Karl Morgenstern during his lectures in 1891 (Boes 647). Its name and origins suggest that Bildungsroman is a German genre, as it comes from the German words “Bildung” which means “education” and “roman” which means “novel.” Todd Kontje states that critics are divided as “Mikhail Bakhtin and Franco Moretti, each of whom links the genre to the emergence of modernism in general” while “German writers and critics who insist that the Bildungsroman has a special place within German literature” (15). To explain this “special place” within German literature, critics like Thomas Mann regard that the genre emerged from the psyche of German authors and philosophers, while Wilhelm Dilthey regards it as “the product of historical circumstances” (Kontje 16). The historical circumstances brought the need for the German Bildungsroman to explore “individual development and national identity in a politically fragmented state” (Kontje 18). Either way, *Wilhelm Meister’s Apprenticeship* by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe in 1795, which is an example of German Bildungsroman, is said to be the work that gave birth to this genre as it was “identified early on as the paradigmatic example of the German Bildungsroman and retained its reputation even when critics challenged the assumption that it provides an unambiguously successful model of personal development within an affirmed social order” (Kontje 18). Subsequently, its translation into different languages allowed it to gain popularity in European literature. Richard Salmon argues that Thomas Carlyle’s “role as the primary mediator of Wilhelm Meister and the German Bildungsroman within Victorian literary

culture has become an established truth of modern criticism” (60). With Carlyle’s translations, Bildungsroman became a popular genre across Victorian England.

Through translations to other languages, Bildungsroman went beyond being a “national literature” to become a part of the “world literature.” David Damrosch points out that Goethe coined the term “world literature” to point out its significance, suggesting that national literature is “a rather unmeaning term” (1). Literature becomes “world literature” thanks to its translations and later on it circulates through these translations as “All works cease to be the exclusive products of their original culture once they are translated; all become works that only “began” in their original language” (Damrosch 22). Goethe’s *Wilhelm Meister’s Apprenticeship* was the “paradigmatic example” of Bildungsroman that “began” the genre in Germany and with its translations, it became a part of the kind of literature Goethe desired and coined a term for. Thanks to these translations Bildungsroman also became a part of world literature as well as *Wilhelm Meister’s Apprenticeship*, which allowed the genre to spread throughout the world to become one of the most influential genres.

Ever since its emergence in German literature, many critics studied Bildungsroman with different aims. Even concerning its origins, many critics differ and propose different claims about its emergence. Though many critics like Esther Kleinbord Labovitz agree that Goethe’s *Wilhelm Meister’s Apprenticeship* is “the archetype of the genre” (1), while others like Martin Swales claim that *Geschichte des Agathon* (The History of Agathon, 1766–1767) by Christoph Martin Wieland is the text that gave birth to the genre. Yet others such as Susan Fraiman and Franco Moretti who study the female Bildungsroman trace a simultaneous emergence of the genre in English Literature. Either way, Johann Karl Simon Morgenstern is one of the most significant critics of the Bildungsroman as he coined the term in “Über das Wesen des Bildungsromans” (On the Nature of the Bildungsroman, 1820) and gave its name to the genre. Regarding the origins of the genre, there were many German critics like Thomas Mann claimed that Bildungsroman is a “legitimately national” genre of German Literature (Kontje 17). However, many critics like Sarah Graham, Todd Kontje, and Susan Fraiman contest this idea as they reflect upon the Bildungsroman in the literature of different countries and periods. Some of the most renowned studies of the genre are Franco Moretti’s *The Way of the World: The Bildungsroman in European Culture* (2000) and Mikhail Bakhtin’s

“The Bildungsroman and Its Significance in the History of Realism” (2007). Both works reflect upon the origins, emergence, and the generic presence of the genre in detail. Some of the most contemporary studies on the genre are *A History of the Bildungsroman: From Ancient Beginnings to Romanticism* (2018) by Petru Golban and *A History of the Bildungsroman* (2019) edited by Sarah Graham. Golban’s work focuses on the development history of Bildungsroman while reflecting upon the generic pattern of literary texts. On the other hand, Graham’s book is a collection of texts by different critics that reflect upon the Bildungsroman through multiple perspectives and literary periods. Graham’s book rejects Bildungsroman is “exclusively” German by pointing out several literary periods and it is one of the most comprehensive studies on the genre by the several acclaimed critics of the genre.

Through different eras, Bildungsroman kept being a significant and popular genre as “the significance of the journey to adulthood is recognised all over the world” (Graham 8). During each era, the genre changed and was shaped according to trends, styles, and the nature of the era. Bildungsroman did this thanks to the importance of its topic, youth, and growth. Starting from its origins in German Literature, Bildungsroman transformed into the novel of formation in England. It changed and formed again during the modernist era with the stream-of-consciousness technique. Along with postmodernism, the genre shifted its focus to female and marginalised characters, which were predominantly neglected until then. This era focused on neglected identities as it deconstructed the norms of previous eras to present a new female Bildungsroman. With postcolonialism, a surge of Anti-Bildungsroman works by African, African American, and Indian writers emerged in which the formation and growth ultimately fail. This era gave voice to neglected heroines or heroes of colonised countries to present how different “Bildung” for them is. However, their “Bildung” fail under the colonised rule to criticise the effects of colonialism on coming-of-age. All of these periods with their characteristics, changes, and examples will be explained below in detail.

Now, Bildungsroman still persists in its change and formation, through different studies such as ecocriticism, and post-human. These eras and changes reflect the universality of Bildungsroman’s primary concerns, which are children, youth, and growth. The continuous change and development of the genre also reflect that Bildungsroman will continue to reshape itself and persist in literature thanks to the

significance of its subject matter. Its progression is seen in its history; however, Franco Moretti reflects that this progression should not be thought of as a single straight line. He claims the different eras of Bildungsroman are like branches of a tree rather than a rigid line. The branches of the tree bifurcate from its “common starting point they proceed in opposite directions” (234). Each of these bifurcations and branches creates separate subgenres of Bildungsroman. Through each era, diverse kinds of Bildungsroman emerge, and these are the branches of its generic tree. Bildungsroman exists with and thanks to these branches, and subgenres, as they keep the genre fresh, open to change, evolving, and multifaceted. The Bildungsroman of the old eras do not disappear but continued to exist along with the other branches that emerged with each new era.

1.2.1. Literary “Branches” of Bildungsroman throughout Multiple Eras

After the traditional Bildungsroman began in Germany with *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship* by Goethe the genre flourished under German authors. Many authors were influenced by Goethe and that arose “those Bildungsromane of the Romantic era that expose the difficulties of life in the German territories” (Kontje 21). Early Bildungsroman such as *Titan* (1800-1803) by Jean Paul, *Premonition and Present* (1819) by Joseph Freiherr von Eichendorff focuses primarily on German youth and the difficulties of growing up in “the German territories” (Kontje 21) *Titan* deals with the education and transformation of Albano de Cesara, which presents his encounter with “the unpleasant realities of life in provincial Germany” (21). In a similar vein, *Premonition and Present* portrays the episodic journeys of its protagonist to present the struggle of living in Germany during Napoleon's occupation. Thus, the traditional Bildungsroman begins in Germany with “a series of German novels that depict a young protagonist's development towards personal maturity and social integration” (Kontje 10).

Following the Bildungsroman translations of the early nineteenth century (Salmon 59-60) the genre experienced a widespread circulation outside of its national borders and became a part of the “world literature” throughout Europe. *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship* and its translation were influential in the circulation of this naturally German genre. Inevitably, it became a significant part of French, Russian, and American literature as well as English literature. Especially, in English literature, it was particularly popular during the Victorian Era. Richard Salmon finds the reason for the genre's

popularisation in “the emergence of a wider discourse of ‘self-culture’ and ‘self-help’” (64). Bildungsroman of the period is intricately linked with the idea of self-cultivation and social mobility. The authors of the period not only used Bildungsroman as a tool to express and produce social change through self-mobility and self-development but also to make a social critique of the era. Translation of Goethe’s novel by Thomas Carlyle caused the birth of the genre in England as Richard Salmon reflects “Carlyle’s role as the primary mediator of Wilhelm Meister and the German Bildungsroman within Victorian literary culture has become an established truth of modern criticism” (60). This claim that Bildungsroman emerged in England through translations indicates a direct cultural transmission of the genre. However, Susan Fraiman and other critics argue against this widespread assumption (Salmon 57). Some critics claim that Victorian Bildungsroman, sometimes called Novel of Formation or Novel of Development, emerged alongside German tradition as “Fraiman traces an alternative tradition of English ‘novels of development’ produced by women writers back to Frances Burney in the 1770s” (Salmon 57). Moretti supports Fraiman’s claim as he “proposes a parallel cross-cultural generic formation” by declaring Jane Austen and her *Pride and Prejudice* (1813) a co-founder of the genre (Salmon 58). This claim is strengthened by the fact that Goethe’s *Wilhelm Meister’s Apprenticeship* was not translated until after Austen’s death and her novels contain many Bildungsroman elements, as a result, Austen was not influenced by Goethe’s text. Either way, the claim of Fraiman or the proposal of Moretti does not dispute the fact that Bildungsroman became one of the most prominent and influential genres in England during the Victorian Era, the golden age of the novel. *Jane Eyre* (1847) by Charlotte Brontë, *Wuthering Heights* (1847) by Emily Brontë, *David Copperfield* (1849-1850), and *Great Expectations* (1860-1861) by Charles Dickens are all very influential novels of formation during the period.

Nineteenth century German and Victorian English examples are similar in nature as they deal with their protagonist’s journey to adulthood as the novels explore the mental, social, and bodily growth of the hero or heroine. During this era, however, three subgenres emerged depending on the changes in the growth of the protagonist. These are Entwicklungsroman, Erziehungsroman, and Künstlerroman. Entwicklungsroman comes from two German words “Entwicklungs” which means development, and “roman” which means novel. As it speaks for itself, it is called the novel of development and it focuses

on the general growth that occurs during childhood but not self-cultivation (Buckley 192). Considering that *The Secret Garden* (1911) by Frances Hodgson Burnett merely focuses on the daily activities and growth of three children Mary, Dickon, and Colin, it is a notable example of Entwicklungsroman. Erziehungsroman is another subgenre and its root “Erziehungs” means education or upbringing. It is translated as the novel of education, and it deals with school, education, and intellectual growth. *The Mill on the Floss* (1860) by George Eliot is a typical example of Erziehungsroman as it reflects the upbringing and school life of Tom and Maggie Tulliver. Künstlerroman is translated as the artist novel as “Künstler” means artist and “roman” means novel. It deals with the psychological, physical, moral, and most importantly artistic growth of the protagonist who is an artist in the making as they master their craft and became an adult. *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1916) by James Joyce, which tells the story of the development of its Irish protagonist, Stephen Dedalus, is one of the most popular examples of Künstlerroman.

Bildungsroman of the modernist era experienced a transformation in its thematic and structural features. Gregory Castle calls the Bildungsroman of this period “a genre in crisis,” as it was “under the pressure of modernist experimentation and innovation” (143). As the literature of the modernist period tried to represent an era of crisis stuck between two of the biggest wars, it was under the pressure of not being able to express properly the crisis the world was experiencing. Virginia Woolf verbalizes this concern to express in her essay titled “Modern Fiction” by saying “But sometimes, more and more often as time goes by, we suspect a momentary doubt, a spasm of rebellion, as the pages fill themselves in the customary way. Is life like this? Must novels be like this? / Look within and life, it seems, is very far from being ‘like this’” (160). This question of Woolf shows that the literature of this period was also in crisis as authors found the techniques and tools of old eras insufficient to express “the life” as it was. As a result, authors of the period were under a representation crisis, which was marked by trials to find new techniques and tools. This search for ways to express is called modernism and the modernist literature is marked by its experimentations and innovations.

The experimentation and innovation in the modernist period necessitated a shift in the Bildungsroman’s focus, which inevitably resulted in a change in its common denominators. Since the modernist period focused on the individual and the psychology of the individual, both in its theme and structure, Bildungsroman also shifted its focus.

The stream-of-consciousness technique was a staple literary device of the modernist era and it affected Bildungsroman as it shifted the perspective of narrative to the individual. This technique allowed the reader to perceive the interior world of the protagonist better, which meant that Bildungsroman could present mental and intellectual growth better. As the era values the individual, intellect, and self-formation, Bildungsroman shifted the focus of its thematic features as mentioned before. A significant example of this was *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* by James Joyce, as it not only presents the inner world of an artist but also reflects the change Bildungsroman underwent during the modernist era (Castle 143-145). Thus, during the modernist era, the “Bildung,” or the self-formation, happens or fails in the inner world of the protagonist (Castle 154), which differs significantly from the previous iterations of Bildungsroman. This reflects that Bildungsroman has been open to change and reform its common generic denominators.

Bildungsroman continues to evolve and develop with the influence of different movements and one of these developments occurred with the emergence of postmodernism. Postmodernism brought the deconstruction of the grand narratives and the traditional system as Fiona McCulloch reflects “Postmodernism as a system which questions power structures, including the Romantic notion of the self, a concept of growth which Bildungsromane are preoccupied with” (192). This means that Bildungsroman and its paradigm are subject to deconstruction. The postmodern era looked at Bildungsroman through a new perspective and presented “a postmodernist view of the individual as being, self, subject that is subjected, ordered, dominated, determined, constructed” (Golban, “An Attempt to Establish a Bildungsroman Development History: Nurturing the Rise of a Subgenre from Ancient Beginnings to Romanticism” 138). Through this fresh look at the individual self and growth as subjected and constructed, postmodern Bildungsroman became less about depicting growth and more about how individuals existed within society (Trites 18, 19). Focusing on the existence of individuals meant shifting the focus to many different and often marginalized identities. Along with individual and self, these marginalized identities and “gender” were major concerns of postmodernism. With a protofeminist perspective, the postmodern era saw the rise of the female and marginalized Bildungsroman, challenging the male domination on the genre. Even though the marginalized female identity was one of the main concerns of postmodern Bildungsroman, it is important to note that female Bildungsroman did not emerge during

the postmodern era, it already existed, *Jane Eyre* (1847), and *Wuthering Heights* (1847) are some examples of it. However, postmodern Bildungsroman gave these female Bildungsroman a critical voice along with other marginalized identities. The female Bildungsroman displays a significant and necessary shift in perspective for Bildungsroman as they reflect “Bildung” through different, marginalised points of view.

With postmodernism, the reflections of minority stories and identity politics are seen in the contemporary novel as Paulina Palmer displays by saying that “Postmodern texts tend not only to inscribe a proliferation and interplay of ‘small’ minority storylines, but also, influenced by psychoanalysis, frequently depict other concepts such as memory and identity in terms of narrative” (189). Naturally, the marginalized identities that were the concern and subject of the postmodern novel found their expression in Bildungsroman as well. This necessary shift in perspective contributed to the evolution of the genre by portraying the coming-of-age stories of many marginalized groups of people and in turn giving these people, who have found scarce expression until now, a voice. Joannou studies female Bildungsroman and female writers to reflect upon how they have contributed to Bildungsroman by saying:

While the woman writer and reader alike may experience her life’s journey as very different to a man’s (a psychological ‘voyage in’ rather than a physical ‘voyage out’) the authors with whom I am concerned have inflected the Bildungsroman to present sophisticated models of individual, interiorised personal development, bringing marginal voices, ... black as well as white, to the centre and have consistently accentuated individuality rather than normalcy. (216)

The women writers Joannou concerns herself with are mostly postmodernist writers that focused on individuality and marginalized voices. Thanks to these women writers, the postmodernist era of Bildungsroman is marked by the deconstruction of “normalcy,” as it shifts its protagonist to a marginalised population presenting the stories that were neglected until then. As a result, Bildungsroman diverges from its traditional plot structure that portrays how its protagonist finds a place in the society, in order to tell the coming-of-age story of a protagonist at the margins of the society.

With the decolonization during the late twentieth century, which gave rise to the post-colonial writers and the post-colonial movement Bildungsroman reshaped itself to

tell the stories of colonized people. With postcolonialism, the perspective shifted once again to marginalised, similar to the postmodernist Bildungsroman, and the troubles they went through by colonisation. Up until now, the genre was heavily dominated by white, male, and western voices, however, post-colonial voice stripped the Eurocentric dominion on the genre, and similar to postmodern examples, it allowed it to reach a wider culture and a wider audience. Demirtaş reflects that “the genre up to post-colonial era has been written by the ‘white’ writer, for the ‘white’ society and on a ‘white’ hero/ine. In other words, the genre has been colonized by the European writers” (6). As the “black” experience is drastically different from the “white” one, the postcolonial period needed to transform the literature in order to properly carry the experiences of the postcolonial subject into writing. Postcolonial writers aimed to reflect the postcolonial struggle and experience as close to reality as possible, to achieve that “tracing the efforts of their characters, these writers twist literary form into the shape of a world, produce an experimental realism on the periphery of capitalism and, ultimately, goad language toward a more perfect realism” (Robinette 8,9).

As the postcolonial writers goaded the language and shifted the perspective, Bildungsroman evolved with the same concerns, and the generic features of the genre transformed as well. Erica Hoagland describes the characteristics of postcolonial Bildungsroman as “the ongoing remediation of colonialism’s traumatic legacy throughout the self-maturation process” (219). She continues to reflect that closure, is not assured or forthcoming for the protagonist of post-colonial Bildungsroman, which is a significant shift from the accustomed way of European Bildungsroman (219). The “Bildung” of the colonised people is in the foreground; however, this time “closure,” or growing up, is not assured and the development fails. Looking at the wider postcolonial literature reveals that the protagonists of the postcolonial literature struggle with the world and uncertainty, as Nicholas Robinette reflects “Protagonists struggle to get their bearings in the concourse of modern life” (8), and unfortunately this struggle does not always have a happy end, as Robinette states that “they will not achieve a total map of the world-system” (8), which means that these protagonists are destined to struggle, not achieve, in the current system of the world that is unwelcoming to them. The aim of “a more perfect realism” (Robinette 9) means that the happy end is not assured and it offers a new perspective as Sara Upstone states that “the postcolonial narrative is often a new kind of journey: one with no final

arrival or departure, without the desire for settlement but instead filled with the potential of constant, chaotic movement” (59). Naturally portraying the maturation of the colonised hero or heroine carries the same concerns, and Bildungsroman, in order to portray it truthfully, needed to reform itself once again. This time generic features of the genre are reshaped to show a coming-of-age story that is left unaccomplished or failed due to the hardships of life in colonised territories. As a result of this shift in perspective, critics like Gerhart Mayer called the Bildungsroman of the period Anti-Bildungsroman to reflect this change in the genre’s generic features (Kontje 25).

Bildungsroman adapts itself to innovations of changing eras, conditions, and social processes. The genre evolves and transforms itself as a tool to portray these changes and innovations. Thus, as an umbrella term and genre that is constantly evolving, finding the generic features of the genre is quite challenging. Its common denominators, formal and thematic features, have been open to debate for as long as Bildungsroman existed, and many critics studied the genre to determine its generic features. Some critics even discarded the works that are written outside Germany, claiming that Bildungsroman is an exclusively German genre. Thus, finding a common ground amongst critics is challenging. Still, a survey of the Bildungsroman throughout the ages identifies a certain pattern of common denominators. Primarily, the character’s growth and coming-of-age, along with the plot and events concerning character development, are the subjects of the Bildungsroman. This growth and character development can be through numerous ways, such as through a physical or spiritual journey, as this is the case in more traditional examples. But the development of Bildungsroman shows the journey is not the only way to grow, the characters can also reach maturity through education, self-realisation, self-education, a journey into the inner world, alienation, love, or the failure of a journey. The development and coming-of-age can even fail, thus presenting characters struggling to exist in society. Either way, Bildungsroman finds the starting point of its stories in childhood, continues through adolescence, and ends when the character reaches adulthood. Fiona McCulloch reflects that “childhood itself is prone to socio-historical shifts and geopolitical discourses that shape concepts of identity” (176), and this significant period of childhood, where concepts of identity are shaped, is the primary subject of Bildungsroman as they are the formative years that reflect the development in a character’s life. Kamalini Govender supports this by pointing out that “Traditionally,

children's texts follow a bildungsroman or coming-of-age narrative pattern which reflects the transitional nature of physical and emotional development a young person engages with, in order to mature as an individual" (16). Considering this, the common denominators of Bildungsroman can be considered challenges, struggles, and journeys of the childhood, along with the representation of the formation, coming-of-age, and growth of their young characters.

As stated before, Franco Moretti suggests that the development of Bildungsroman is "not a straight line but a tree, with plenty of bifurcations for genres to branch off from each other" (234). Ultimately, this idea is one of the best ways to understand and describe Bildungsroman as throughout different periods and movements the genre follows different paths. Its common denominators and generic features are constantly re-shaped by the influence of each era. With these changes, the genre endured as a popular and significant part of the literature. Bildungsroman is still a significant genre in contemporary fiction as it is widely used and relevant in critical studies. Sarah Graham regarding the critical significance of the genre reflects that "Like its protagonists, the Bildungsroman has places to go: relatively new research in the fields of disability, the post-human, critical animal studies and ecocriticism are beginning to explore the genre in fascinating and productive ways" (9). Considering the popularity of fantasy in contemporary fiction and the subverting force of the supernatural, it can be suggested that one of the significant research fields Graham mentions for Bildungsroman is fantasy literature. The significance of the convergence of fantasy and Bildungsroman is perhaps first recognized by Susanne Tschirner in her *Der Fantasy-Bildungsroman* (1989) (Schnitzler 12). Following Tschirner two decades later, Laura-Marie Schnitzler studies Fantasy Bildungsroman in regard to trauma therapy demonstrating that "Fantastic Bildungsroman" is a valuable and interdisciplinary research field. In this sense, exploring the "Fantastic Bildungsroman" as a genre would reveal the possibilities of this mixture by observing the "Bildung" in a supernatural setting, as such the study would broaden the scope of the Bildungsroman.

1.3. WHAT IS FANTASY LITERATURE?

Fantasy is one of the most influential genres of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. In 2009 Farah Mendlesohn and Edward James in their book titled *A Short History of Fantasy* reflect upon the popularity of the genre by saying:

AT the time of writing, thirty-nine out of the forty top-grossing movies worldwide are fantasy or science fiction. J.K. Rowling is one of the world's best-selling authors. Terry Pratchett's books go straight into the hardback best-seller lists. ... J.R.R. Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings*, which has never been out of print, topped almost every poll of favourite books taken in the UK at the end of the twentieth century. (1)

Now in 2022, the situation is hardly any different, fantasy movies are still the top-grossing movies worldwide, while J.K. Rowling and J.R.R. Tolkien are still the best-selling authors. Compared to its popularity, critical studies on the field are still scarce though now the genre is better appreciated as Lucie Armitt reflects in her book that was published in 2020 "E.T.A. Hoffmann, Edgar Allan Poe and J.R.R. Tolkien are now not only deemed 'reputable' but perhaps even 'canonical'" (2).

A critical survey of fantasy literature displays influential names such as Tzvetan Todorov, Rosemary Jackson, and Brian Attebery. These are early names in the critical history of fantasy and their studies are significant as they opened up the genre to academia and scholarly criticism. Todorov in his book titled *The Fantastic: A Structural Approach to a Literary Genre* (1973) presents a structural approach to the genre where he defined the fantastic as a "hesitation experienced by a person who knows only the laws of nature, confronting an apparently supernatural event" (25). Many critics like Farah Mendlesohn, Edward James, Rosemary Jackson, and Brian Attebery agree that his study limits the fantasy to an exceedingly small number of texts. However, his study was significant as Rosemary Jackson reflects that "The value of Todorov's work in encouraging serious critical engagement with a form of literature which had been dismissed as being rather frivolous or foolish cannot be overestimated" (3). Jackson reflects that the purpose of fantasy is subversion and deconstruction by calling the fantasy literature "The Literature

of Subversion” which is also the subtitle of her book. According to her “Literary fantasies have appeared to be ‘free’ from many of the conventions and restraints of more realistic texts: they have refused to observe unities of time, space and character” (1). As opposed to Todorov, she continues to define fantasy as a genre that subverts and challenges the status quo by reflecting the fantastic “lies inside closed systems, infiltrating, opening spaces where unity had been assumed” (14). The impossibilities of fantastic narratives make it possible to find “latent ‘other’ meanings or realities behind the possible or the known” (14). These early critics like Todorov, Jackson, and Attebery were concerned with defining and defending the genre as the literary research field was new and many critics accused the genre of being escapist.

Now there is a significant rise in the fantastic texts and as more and more fantasy fiction is continued to be produced, many critics started doing comprehensive studies on the field. Farah Mendlesohn is one of the most prominent contemporary researchers. She focuses her studies on the rhetorics of fantasy and fantasy in children's literature. She also worked on substantial surveys of the genre with Edward James, such as *A Short History of Fantasy* (2009), and *The Cambridge Companion to Fantasy Literature* (2012). Brian Attebery is also a significant researcher in the field both early on and contemporary. His book titled *Strategies of Fantasy* (1992) helped with defining fantasy by proposing that “fantasy as a group of texts that share, to a greater degree or other, a cluster of common tropes which may be objects, but which may also be narrative techniques” (James and Mendlesohn 1). While his most recent work *Stories about Stories: Fantasy and the Remaking of Myth* focuses on the “interaction between written fantasy and traditional oral narratives of magic and the sacred” (Attebery 8). One of the most recent studies of the genre is *Fantasy* (2020) by Lucie Armitt in the Routledge New Critical Idiom series in which she makes a comprehensive study regarding the critical history of the fantasy genre.

Some of the most intimate and extensive criticisms of the genre come from the authors of fantasy such as J.R.R. Tolkien, Ursula Le Guin, and Diana Wynne Jones as they had no doubt that fantasy was a valuable field of research. Moreover, since they themselves produced fantasy fiction they had a deeper understanding of the genre. These authors and critics provide valuable insight into the definition and generic features of the genre. Tolkien reflects that to tell fantasy, the story-maker needs to be 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” (132). This “Secondary World” makes impossible images of the real world such as “the green sun” possible. Tolkien also expresses that these impossible and supernatural images of things that cannot be seen in the primary world are a virtue for fantasy. He claims “Fantasy (in this sense) is, I think, not a lower but a higher form of Art, indeed the most, nearly pure form, and so (when achieved) the most potent” (139).

Fantasy literature is marked by its ability to make the impossible a possibility and later on talk about it with the aim to discuss, comment, and criticise. The supernatural is one of the genre’s conventions and it is impossible to imagine fantasy literature without the supernatural. The supernatural often presents itself in the form of magic, but it does not have to be limited to that. Creatures, monsters, faeries, curses, blessings, and unnatural occurrences can also be the supernatural factors in the fantastic works. Magic is such an integral part of the fantasy works that Tolkien reflects “Faerie itself may perhaps most nearly be translated by Magic” (114). This magic exists within a “Secondary World” of fantasy and “fantasy narratives ... immerse the reader into an alternative world with its own logic, landscape and temporality” (Armitt 4). As Lucie Armitt also reflects the “alternative world” has its own law, order, system, and logic which immerses the reader and makes the secondary world believable despite the supernatural. The “Secondary World” can contain anything and everything as the borders of belief inside the fantasy are limitless. One of the significant aspects of fantasy is transportation into this “Secondary World.” Transportation can be through many different elements such as portals, teleportation, journey, and hidden entrances (Armitt 6). In some other works, the fantasy can find the protagonist and as a result the reader. The supernatural can already exist in the seemingly realistic world or supernatural events can occur to a character that was living an ordinary life otherwise.

As a result of the encounter with the fantasy, protagonists of the fantasy narratives often need to go on a journey or a quest. This quest allows the protagonists to experience, and explore their world and as a result, develop themselves in various fields. This gives the reader and protagonist a chance to encounter the supernatural and magic in the world. Armitt reflects that this journey is a chance for growth by saying that “At its simplest, a quest is a journey, but fundamentally one searching for knowledge or understanding”

(85). This journey is often of epic proportions as it is not uncommon for the protagonists of fantasy literature to kill the great evil and save the country, the world, and the universe as a result of their epic, glorious and heroic quest. On the journey, the protagonist encounters many challenges. These challenges take on many forms such as: spiritual, psychological, or physical. The protagonist may have a tough time understanding his/her environment, learning, and educating himself/herself, may have problems with royalty or society, and in a more direct form, they can encounter monsters that block their path and progress. Armitt reflects that “en route we may expect our epic heroes to encounter one or more monsters whose role it is to prevent him/her reaching that destination” (107). These monsters can take on many shapes, but the dragon is a common trope in fantasy. The emergence of monsters provides a chance to develop and grow in these narratives in order to progress.

1.4. FANTASTIC BILDUNGSROMAN

The generic conventions of fantasy narratives reflect that the genre is ripe for portraying the “Bildung” and coming-of-age stories of their protagonist. As a result, the highly realistic Bildungsroman genre has mingled with fantasy narratives. Through this intermingle, “Bildung” or the growth of the protagonists can be seen in a supernatural setting. This allows supernatural character developing moments to occur with the help of the fantastic elements, and this kind of Bildung can be seen neither in real life nor in any other realistic Bildungsroman. Fiona McCulloch reflects that “the Bildungsroman is transported from traditional realism to the experimental site of fantasy” (187). In this experimental site, fantasy literature makes use of its experimental nature and brings a new perspective to Bildungsroman through the supernatural and extraordinary. This experimentation means that challenges of growing up, journeys of the hero or heroines to adulthood, experiences of childhood, and thus the self-discovery and coming-of-age of the protagonist, are all marked and affected by supernatural elements. By presenting a “Secondary World” of fantasy in the words of J. R. R. Tolkien, fantasy literature presents new possibilities for Bildungsroman and contributes to the genre with stories that explore the growth of characters in a supernatural environment.

Critics like Peter Hunt, Millicent Lenz, Pamela S. Gates, and Farah Mendlesohn study fantasy as an inseparable part of children’s and young adult literature. Another

critic, Fiona McCulloch in her study of Bildungsroman for children and young adult encounter fantasy works. On the other hand, Sarah Gilead in her study of children's fantasy literature encounters Bildungsroman. Fantasy works like *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* (1900), *Peter Pan* (1911), *The Wizard of Earthsea* (1968), and *Harry Potter* (1997-2007) become the main subjects of these studies that explore the convergence of fantasy, Bildungsroman, and literature for children and young adult. The abundance of studies that explore these genres together suggests that the intermingling of fantasy literature with Bildungsroman is prominent in young adult fiction and literature for children. Both kinds of literature are written for younger readers as the target audience of children's literature is children and the target audience of young adult fiction is teen readers. While children's literature is a widely familiar term, young adult fiction is not so and a short definition of the genre is needed, as it is a comparatively new research field. It is the kind of literature that appeals to teen readers, it usually has a teen protagonist, and it commonly focuses on the themes of friendship, love, relationships, identity, school, and puberty (Wells 4). It is the kind of literature where "Bildung" happens. Alice Trupe reflects that "The genre of YA literature has thrived since the 1960s, though critical recognition and scholarly interest has lagged a bit behind the inventiveness of authors in the field" (vii). Even though young adult fiction is a booming field of good literature, it is a comparatively new research field. A look into young adult fiction with a scholarly eye displays the importance of this new research field, as it is a significant gateway into the consciousness of teens and their teenage lives. Fiona McCulloch reflects "Literature for children often concerns itself with a journey or quest which the young hero or heroine must undertake in order to advance themselves and, often simultaneously, their society" (174). In young adult fiction and children's literature, it is common to see this journey have supernatural and fantastic elements, as fantasy literature is popular amongst their audience. McCulloch continues to describe "the journey" as "a symbolic manifestation of the child's Bildung process of maturation, encouraging them to shift beyond their comfort zone and step into the unfamiliar or hitherto unknown" (174). With the "unknown" comes the unfamiliar "Secondary Worlds" of fantasy and allow new expressions for depicting the "Bildung" process or the symbolic journey of children. With this kind of fresh voice and expression, fantasy literature expands the boundaries of Bildungsroman to reflect the growth in a supernatural environment.

Fantastic elements are pretty common in literature for children and young adult fiction, as fantasy has been attractive for child and teen readers. Pamela S. Gates, Susan B. Steffel, and Francis J. Molson find the reason for the popularity of fantasy in children's literature in trying to find a "good read". They explain a good read as "enjoying a story that quickly catches a reader's attention, retains it throughout the reading, and all the time entertains," and claim that this good read experience "best explains why children over the years have been and continue to be attracted to fantasy" (135). As fantasy provides "rich imaginative experiences" child and teenage readers are attracted to fantasy as it "is an experience that cannot be found elsewhere-at least in the same degree of intensity" (135), which is why many children's literature and young adult fiction make use of fantasy.

This intermingling of fantasy and children's literature is not a recent emergence, as the convergence of fantasy and children's texts did exist for many years according to Farah Mendlesohn and Michael Levy. They claim that "much of what has become the matter (the themes or substance) particularly in the British tradition, is drawn from a core of texts never intended for children. One such text is the beast fable. The beast fable was intended for all" (11-12). These beast fables such as "The Tortoise and the Hare," "The Shepherd and the Wolf," "The Fox and the Stork" and "The Tale of the Ugly Duckling" became prominent examples of children's literature and they are highly fantastic works. These works became a part of children's literature due to their educative purposes and moral lessons. The primary supernatural elements of these works are the anthropomorphized animal characters which allow "the poor to laugh at their superiors and the child at adults without threatening the social order while gaining a moral perspective on irrational behaviour" (Mendlesohn and Levy 12), which reflects that fantasy is used as a tool. Mendlesohn and Levy reflect that "by the late sixteenth century, and well into the eighteenth century, virtually all the important works of literature available to adults were also being read to or by children of a surprisingly young age" (13). They list texts such as Edmund Spenser's epic poem *The Faerie Queene* (1590), *The Seven Champions of Christendom* (1596) by Richard Johnson, John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress* (1678), and the first English-language translation of *The Arabian Nights* (1705) as the works that quickly adapted to children's literature (14). They claim that the fantasy in these works was intended to be read as an allegory, but the epic quests of knights, dragons, and adventures were what appealed to the children. The fantasy, and

the imagination the supernatural texts provided, were sought by children and thus it became a notable part of the literature for children and young adult fiction.

Just as it is common for children and young adult literature to have fantastic elements, it is common for fantasy works to have a young protagonist who is just starting to explore her or his environment. Since fantasy worlds are foreign to readers, this trope of the young protagonist is useful for fantasy works, as the reader also explores the supernatural secondary world of fantasy along with the protagonist. However, what might just be a useful tactic of fantasy fiction to ease in the world to the reader reveals an interesting side to Bildungsroman. As a side effect, this trope reflects the coming-of-age stories of young people in different fantasy universes, and these coming-of-age stories reflect many Bildungsroman elements. Some of these characters grow up as “the chosen ones,” or “the secret heirs,” while the others are just getting to know how magic works, or they are suddenly transported into a supernatural fantasy world. Either way, these diverse situations of fantasy protagonists reveal interesting coming-of-age stories and growth moments. Seeing the growth of a protagonist, from a mere child to a ruler, a hero, a heroine, or just someone who knows themselves better, is a precious part of fantasy works. Readers of fantasy enjoy looking back and reflecting upon the growth of a character along with the journey that resulted in this character growth. This is one of the primary appeals of fantasy literature and this makes Bildungsroman inseparable from fantasy literature. Many fantasy works present young children finding their way in a supernatural environment and their growth as a result of their encounter with fantasy. This encounter of Bildungsroman and fantasy, along with their inevitable mixture, is significant for both genres as it gave birth to many popular and influential works, such as *The Earthsea* series (1968-2001) by Ursula Le Guin and the *Harry Potter* series (1997-2007) by J. K. Rowling. Both series are significant as they have a noteworthy influence on literature. *Harry Potter* series is one of the best-selling book series ever, with over 120 million copies sold just for its first book, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone* (1997) (Chalton and Macardle 129). Even though it is still popular, *The Earthsea* series is not as popular as *Harry Potter* but it is highly critically acclaimed with many awards such as Boston Globe-Horn Book Award (1969), Nebula Award for Best Novel (1990), Locus Award for Best Fantasy Novel (1991), World Fantasy Award for Best Novel (2002) and

a few more (Bernardo and Murphy 4-5). BBC News listed both *The Earthsea* and *Harry Potter* series on its list of “100 Novels That Shaped Our World” (BBC).

Both *Harry Potter* and *The Earthsea* series are widely popular fantasy series that depict the coming-of-age stories of their characters. Both series contain the many common denominators of the Bildungsroman genre. Both of their protagonists, Harry, and Ged, are children that are trying to explore their world and themselves. They leave their home to go on a journey, and eventually, because of this journey, they both learn, grow, and discover themselves. They are both orphaned, and they experience many pains, struggles, and challenges of growing up. Both of them also offer insights into their education as Harry goes to a school while Ged becomes an apprentice of a powerful mage. Both of their journeys eventually result in them confronting their fears and a part of themselves. In Harry’s case Voldemort, and in Ged’s case the shadow. Thus, both series reflect the “Bildung” of their characters using the many generic features of Bildungsroman, such as self-discovery, education, and journey.

However, in the case of these supernatural works, the generic features of Bildungsroman shift and evolve as a result of their encounter with fantasy, just like their characters. Fiona McCulloch reflects when talking about Ged and *A Wizard of Earthsea*, “this Bildungsroman charts his progress, maturation, and development from childhood to adolescence, pushing the frontiers of the genre given that ... it exists within a fantasy rather than realist dimension” (188). This existence inside a fantasy world not only “pushes the frontiers of the genre” but it also directly affects the “Bildung” as Ged’s “quest for identity – a journey towards maturity and wisdom and, eventually, adulthood – is bound up with the power of naming in Le Guin’s text” (McCulloch 188). “Power of naming” is one of the supernatural elements in Le Guin’s work, and it is the primary element that affects the journey towards adulthood. This reflects how the supernatural is necessary for the “Bildung” of the character. As a result of this necessity, the supernatural coming-of-age stories emerge, which makes fantasy and Bildungsroman inseparable.

This thesis will focus on two fantasy novels by two different authors that provide valuable insight into the mixture of fantasy literature and Bildungsroman. One of them is *Howl’s Moving Castle* (1986) by Diana Wynne Jones and the other is *The Graveyard Book* (2008) by Neil Gaiman. Both works reflect character growth and coming-of-age in

a supernatural setting along with reflecting how this supernatural setting and encounter with fantasy affects the “Bildung.” Fantasy’s relation with Bildungsroman has been studied through the books of Neil Gaiman by scholars like Derek Lee in his article titled “The Politics of Fairyland: Neil Gaiman and the Enchantments of Anti-Bildungsroman,” Laura-Marie Schnitzler in her doctoral dissertation titled “Fantasy’s Traumatic Take on the Bildungsroman: Reading Neil Gaiman,” and Michaela Vondráčková in her master’s thesis titled “*The Graveyard Book* as a Bildungsroman.” Due to the similarities between this thesis and these studies, their valuable input guided this thesis. However, the focus of this thesis shifted with Diana Wynne Jones’ *Howl’s Moving Castle*, through which the cultural and social elements are studied to analyze how Gaiman and Jones use fantasy as a subversive, and criticizing force. Unlike other contemporary studies on the topic, this thesis focuses on the way fantasy comments on Bildungsroman and cultural practices.

Howl’s Moving Castle is a young adult fantasy book by Diana Wynne Jones that was published in 1986. The novel tells the story of Sophie as she is cursed by old age and prematurely becomes an old woman. By transforming an eighteen-year-old girl into an old woman, the novel offers a new perspective on aging and presents a unique “Bildung” experience thanks to its fantasy setting. The experience Sophie goes through is unique to a fantastic setting and fantasy allows a coming-of-age story where the young protagonist physically experiences the life of an older person. This experience is quite liberating for Sophie, and it is a significant “Bildung” moment in her life as the untimely old age she is experiencing does not affect her negatively as she expected. Even though society considers aging as a negative experience, Sophie experiences it positively and this presents a new reality in which aging can indeed liberate. Thus, the novel presents a supernatural tale of coming-of-age as an old person and reflects the significance of supernatural “Bildung” experiences that are not possible in a realistic storytelling convention.

The Graveyard Book by Neil Gaiman is a young adult fantasy novel that was published in 2008. It has won several literary awards, such as Locus Award for the Best Young Adult Novel (2008) and Hugo Award for Best Novel (2009). The novel tells the story of a boy called Nobody Owens as he grows up in a graveyard along with his ghost parents. This supernatural life of Nobody is episodic as the novel reflects certain parts of Nobody’s life from the age of one and a half years old to about fifteen years old. As he

grows up, he encounters multiple supernatural beings such as ghosts, a vampire, a werewolf, a ghost of a witch, and the death herself. The novel reflects how each encounter with the supernatural and the supernatural environment changes and develops his character as he grows up. It presents the experience of growing up as a nobody in a graveyard, as a character at the margins of society. Through his experiences, it is possible to observe the unique character growth and the coming-of-age story of Nobody Owens and learn from it at the same time.

Both Gaiman's and Jones's works are valuable for this research as they display distinct aspects of the Fantastic Bildungsroman. *Howl's Moving Castle* reflects how a supernatural event, the curse of old age, affects and develops the character of an 18-year-old young adult woman, Sophie. On the other hand, *The Graveyard Book* presents the entire young life of the character and shows how Nobody grows and develops as he grows up with the supernatural. In this sense, they present two different angles on character development and Bildungsroman. They also complement each other as they both present orphan characters that are at the margins of society. The characters in the novels find and develop themselves through the supernatural events they experience, thus they present original examples of the character-developing nature of the fantasy. Both novels also have strong slice-of-life elements, which are interesting and significant for fantasy novels and Bildungsroman narratives.

In real life, no one will grow up with ghosts, vampires, or werewolves. No one will have fateful encounters with walking castles or will suddenly grow old. These are supernatural events the audience of these books has no chance to experience and, as a result, learn from them. However, these are possible and likely for the characters of fantasy novels and often they are highly educating occurrences. By reading through these stories, the audience can also encounter character-developing moments they would not experience otherwise. Moreover, by putting the supernatural into a highly realistic genre such as Bildungsroman, fantasy extends the borders of the genre and provides the production of fresh and unique stories in this established genre. Thus, the audience can experience the familiar stories of development with supernatural twists and, as a result, develop themselves through these supernatural experiences.

Alastair Fowler in his *Kinds of Literature* (1982) talks about a few ways a genre can change and develop and he claims that “generic mixture” offers a wide field of possibilities for genres to evolve (181). The term “generic mixture” claims that a new genre emerges as a hybrid of two separate genres. It has been one of the most common ways for new genres to emerge. In fact, one of the earliest genres is a product of “generic mixture,” which is tragicomedy. After a look at the history of Bildungsroman, it is clear that the genre has been a subject of “generic mixture” throughout different literary periods. Modernist, postmodernist, and postcolonial Bildungsroman reflect the genre is open to change and has changed with the effect of different literary trends. Bildungsroman is going through another of these changes thanks to its encounter with fantasy literature. “Fantastic Bildungsroman” can be suggested as a term to describe the “generic mixture” of Bildungsroman and fantasy. Bildungsroman resorts to fantasy literature as a result of multiple possibilities with its supernatural material and a new period where fantasy literature is highly prominent and popular. As previously mentioned with the studies of Moretti, Bildungsroman inevitably changes as it adapts and evolves itself with each literary period. The same happens as it encounters the experimental characteristics of fantasy literature. In return, fantasy literature opens up new possibilities for Bildungsroman by expanding the boundaries of Bildungsroman. As a result, the supernatural works of “Bildung” that are produced with this expansion are significant research subjects.

CHAPTER II

BILDUNGSROMAN ELEMENTS AMONGST THE SUPERNATURAL

Published in 2008, *The Graveyard Book* by Neil Gaiman is a young adult fantasy novel that reflects an interesting perspective on growth and coming-of-age. The novel is critically acclaimed, and it has won several literary awards. Along with Locus Award for the Best Young Adult Novel (2008) and Hugo Award for Best Novel (2009), the novel won both the Newberry Medal (2009) and Carnegie Medal (2010) recognizing the novel as the best children's book of the year. Following its success, the novel was adapted into a two-volume graphic novel in 2014.

Gaiman states that his son inspired the book, saying that “He was only two years old, riding his little tricycle between gravestones in the summer, and I had a book in my head” (311). This inspiration reflects that the roots of the novel lay in a boy who is growing up, which sheds a light on the origins of the novel not only as a children's book but also as a Bildungsroman. Following that inspiration, the novel portrays the story of a boy who grows up in a graveyard. After a murderer called the man Jack kills his entire family, the protagonist of the novel is orphaned while he is just a baby. With the help of supernatural beings such as ghosts and a vampire, he finds a chance to live and grow in the graveyard with the influence and protection of supernatural beings. He is named Nobody Owens and as a living being, he experiences coming-of-age in an unlikely and supernatural environment. The rest of the novel follows an episodic format as it portrays an array of stories from Nobody's life through the age of one and a half years old to about fifteen years old. Each chapter presents how life in a graveyard is for a living person, which in turn reflects how Nobody grows up in such an environment. In this sense, the novel follows a traditional Bildungsroman format by reflecting the early years of its protagonist and his moral, intellectual and social development, but with a twist as this “Bildung” is like no other because of the supernatural elements of the fantasy genre.

Howl's Moving Castle by Diana Wynne Jones is a young adult fantasy novel that is published in 1986. It is the first of a trilogy called the Howl series. Following it are two

novels called *Castle in the Air*, published in 1990, and *House of Many Ways*, published in 2008. The novel has become better known after the success of its 2004 animated adaptation of the same name produced by Studio Ghibli and directed by the critically acclaimed Hayao Miyazaki. Following this adaptation, the novel won Phoenix Award (2008) for the best children's book that was published 20 years ago.

The novel's dedication reflects that the idea for this book came from a boy in a school Diana Wynne Jones was visiting. Jones states that the boy asked her to write a novel called *The Moving Castle*. Following this idea and inspiration, Jones produced a book that not only deconstructs the generic conventions of fantasy, along with the grand narratives of age, home, and curses but also brings a new perspective to the Bildungsroman genre. Similar to *The Graveyard Book*, the origin of the novel lies in the ideas of a child who is in the process of growth, setting the scene for a children's book and a Bildungsroman. The novel portrays how its protagonist, Sophie, develops and grows up as an old person. After an encounter with the Witch of the Waste, Sophie is cursed by old age and finds herself aged prematurely. As a result, Sophie decides to leave her home behind and go on a journey in order to find a solution to her "curse." It turns out that this journey and the curse are necessary for the "Bildung" of Sophie, as the life she led before the curse was miserable. Due to social pressures and expectations, Sophie felt herself pressured to fit into a role and life she was unhappy with. Even though she "came of age" at the beginning of the novel, she didn't properly grow up and experienced "Bildung." But her supernatural environment allowed her to go through character-developing experiences as an old woman which was the push she needed in order to come of age as a content person. Her actual "coming-of-age" story begins with her "curse," as before she had no opportunity to grow due to society. She experiences "Bildung" as an old woman, which twists the common conventions of traditional Bildungsroman.

2.1. ORPHAN TRADITION

Studying these two novels as Fantastic Bildungsroman not only reveals some similarities between each other but also portrays generic conventions of Bildungsroman that exist in these fantastic texts. One of these similarities observed in this study is the fact that the protagonists of both novels are orphans. A commentary on the orphan tradition is needed to better understand these works. Both Diana Wynne Jones and Neil

Gaiman decide to portray an orphan character for their novel as it is a convenient trope that prepares the stage for a coming-of-age story. Since an orphan character brings with himself or herself the many literary and cultural connotations, seeing that Sophie and Nobody are orphans the reader gets into the story with certain expectations. To understand what these expectations are, a brief study of orphan tradition is necessary.

Looking at the wider fiction reveals that orphan characters are one of the most common tropes in literature, especially in the novel. John Mullan reflects that “Orphans have a special place in the history of the novel, especially in the nineteenth century. There is a real social history behind these fictional orphans” (Mullan). The Victorian era saw a substantial number of orphans and the rise of orphanages. This social reality became a concern of the Victorian era as the Victorian society felt anxiety “when trying to cope with the large number of orphans and street children in their own time” (Reynolds 278). This large number of orphans during the period became a subject impossible to ignore and it inevitably became the subject of the novels of the period. As the novel of the Victorian era was marked by social realism that tried to reflect the reality of the troubles and the ills of the society. Since “Political discourses in the Victorian period even identified the orphans themselves as a social problem” (Gymnich et al. 3), it was inevitable for orphans to be the subject of the many novels of the period. Most well-known novels and novels that are significant to the canon of English literature portray orphan characters. *Emma* (1815) by Jane Austen, *Oliver Twist* (1838) by Charles Dickens, *Jane Eyre* (1847) by Charlotte Bronte, *Silas Marner* (1861) by George Eliot, and *Jude the Obscure* (1894) by Thomas Hardy just scrap the top of the list.

However, orphan characters reflect more than the social reality of the Victorian era, they also symbolize endless possibilities and opportunities of growing up. Mullan states that

The orphan is above all a character out of place, forced to make his or her own home in the world. The novel itself grew up as a genre representing the efforts of an ordinary individual to navigate his or her way through the trials of life. The orphan is therefore an essentially novelistic character, set loose from established conventions to face a world of endless possibilities (and dangers). (Mullan)

The orphan has many characteristics, but the fact that they “face a world of endless possibilities” (Mullan) as Mullan states makes them perfect protagonists for the subjects of Bildungsroman. These characters need to make their own path in the harsh Victorian society and survive to “make their own home in the world” (Mullan) An orphan character has little choice but to grow up to survive thus many of these novels concern themselves with the coming-of-age stories of these orphans. Supporting this claim Barbara Puschmann-Nalenz states that “The parentless individual, deprived of origins with the concomitant certainties and obligations, enjoys greater freedom than other characters and is supposed to be in a position—precarious though it often seems—to invent him-/herself” (83). It is true that these characters are based on a social reality of the Victorian era and became a convenient literary trope but they are also “fictionally useful” as they prepared the foreground of the literary text with a character “made to find their way in the world” (Mullan), and “invent him-/herself” (Nalenz 83). Since orphan characters are “fictionally useful,” even now, during a period in which orphans are not as common as in the Victorian era, this literary trope is commonly encountered. Orphan characters still heavily populate the novels, screens, and texts, Harry Potter being the most popular example. Thus, it is no coincidence that the two novels that are the subject of this thesis *Howl’s Moving Castle*, and *The Graveyard Book* also portray orphan characters as their protagonists. Both Nobody and Sophie are orphans, and this allows these novels to portray their growth and how they face the world.

In *Howl’s Moving Castle* Sophie loses her mother at a very young age “her own mother died when Sophie was just two years old and her sister Lettie was one year old” (Jones 9), and she lost her father just before she went on a journey to grow up, and find herself, “Mr. Hatter had died suddenly just as Sophie was old enough to leave school for good” (Jones 12). The death of her mother influenced her character and the person she became at the beginning of the novel, but it was the death of her father that drastically changed the coming-of-age story of Sophie. The event shifted the dynamic in the house and resulted in her leaving the school prematurely, only to start working in the hat shop even though she is dissatisfied with that kind of lifestyle. The loss of both parents propelled her search for a fortune as being an orphan meant that “endless possibilities” presented themselves in front of Sophie.

On the other hand, in *The Graveyard Book*, Nobody loses his parents at the very beginning of the novel as the man Jack murders his entire family.

With his left hand he pulled a large white handkerchief from the pocket of his black coat, and with it he wiped off the knife and his gloved right hand which had been holding it; then he put the handkerchief away. The hunt was almost over. He had left the woman in her bed, the man on the bedroom floor, the older child in her brightly coloured bedroom, surrounded by toys and half-finished models. That only left the little one, a baby barely a toddler, to take care of. One more and his task would be done. (Gaiman 7)

The novel very early establishes that its protagonist is an orphan, and Nobody is forced to face the dangers of the world while he is just a baby. In this case “the dangers of the world” are symbolized by the character of the man Jack. However, after managing the escape from the dangers of the world, many opportunities present themselves for Nobody. He gets the chance to grow up with the guidance of supernatural beings such as a vampire, Silas, a werewolf, Miss Lupescu, and the many residents of the graveyard, the ghosts. Moreover, his primary guardian, Silas, takes his name from Silas Marner, who is also a character at the margins of the society that gets to chance to look after an orphan as a primary guardian. Silas, as an uncommon name, references and parallels the status of Eliot’s protagonist, but being a vampire, he transforms the marginalized status to the extreme, as fantasy often does. As such, this supernatural extreme gives Nobody a chance to grow up under the protection of a supernatural being at the margins of society. Being orphaned also gave him the chance to experience his formative years in a supernatural environment, which is a graveyard. However, as an orphan he still needed to face the dangers of the world as the murderer of his entire family was alive and after him. Only after emerging victorious against the dangers of the world, the man Jack, he can complete his “Bildung” and make his own home in the world.

The fact that both of these novels present an orphan character as their protagonists set the stage for a potential coming-of-age story. This trope primes the reader to the fact that they are reading a Bildungsroman. Moreover, this trope presents many opportunities for the growth of their protagonists. Both Sophie and Nobody are forced to experience

the world and grow up after the loss of their parents. Their story and “Bildung” only start after they lose their parents. The orphan tradition is a plot device both Gaiman and Jones use in order to make use of the cultural and literary connotations this trope and these characters carry. It is a convenient tool that guides the reader through the familiar literary conventions of Bildungsroman while presenting its protagonists with many opportunities for growth.

2.2. WHAT IS IN A NAME?: ONOMASTIC STUDY OF SOPHIE AND NOBODY

Another observation concerning these novels is the smart and careful choice of the names. Both Jones and Gaiman name their characters with care to signify and reveal vital facts about them and their story. A person’s or a character’s name reflects and reveals a lot about his or her identity. In many cases, the name leads to the very first impressions about a character and authors may make use of this fact when naming their characters. Naming is a crucial part of the literary process as a name carries many symbols, expectations, and purposes. Alleen Pace Nilsen and Don L. F. Nilsen in their book called *Names and Naming in Young Adult Literature* list multiple reasons in regards to the purpose of naming, including names for fun, names to establish the time period, setting, tone, or mode, names to reveal ethnic values, names to build a dual audience, and names as memory hooks (vii-viii). Just a look at the many purposes of naming reflects the weight of meaning a name carries within itself. As an important signifier, the names of the characters in a literary text reveal a lot about themselves and their environment. This does not mean that every single name in every text is a symbol full of meaning, but a skilful author through their manipulation of names can hide a lot of meaning behind just a single name. Either way, an onomastic look into the names of Sophie and Nobody allows a deeper understanding in regards to characters and their story.

Alleen and Don Nilsen talk about naming young adult literature and state that teenagers’ “names are an important part of their identities” (ix). Building identities are a significant part of the “Bildung” process. Names are deeply connected to the life of characters as change, escape, and starting a new life usually go hand in hand with finding a new name (Nilsen x). As such a crucial part of the identity, having a name means having a life, and the protagonists of Bildungsroman who are in search of a life and home need

to find a name for themselves. This name can be new to build a new life and identity, or they can accept the name they already have as a part of the coming-of-age process. The connection of names with coming-of-age reflects that a deeper understanding of the names may present noteworthy findings in regards to both novels' nature as Bildungsroman.

Before talking about the names of Sophie and Nobody, a perspective on Ursula K. Le Guin's ideas regarding names and naming will provide valuable insight and guide the study as an accomplished fantasy author and critic, her input is valuable for this thesis. Le Guin concerns herself with names and naming a lot in her literature and a survey of her texts reveals a lot about the power of names and naming. Moreover, Gaiman follows in her footsteps, thus an analysis of Le Guin's perspective would be necessary for the deeper study of Gaiman's novel.

Her famous Earthsea series put a lot of importance on not just people's names but the name of everything in the world. *A Wizard of Earthsea* reflects that characters have many names, as its protagonist, Ged has three names. He has a birth name, Duny, a use name, Sparrowhawk, and a true name, Ged. As he grows up, his name changes which portrays his "Bildung," Alleen and Don Nilsen support this by saying "In Le Guin's books the name changes serve as symbols of significant differences in the progression and the maturity of her characters" (99). Aside from being a symbol of growth names are a source of power in Le Guin's books as knowing the true name of anything means having power over them. This power allows the one who knows the true name to have control over the owner of the name, once again supporting that name, identity and life are closely attached to each other. Le Guin further supports this idea in her short story titled "She Unnames Them," in which Eve "unnames" every creature on Earth and as a result frees them from the "prison" that is their name.

Names can be symbols, a source of power, life, identity, or a prison and their significance is undeniable. Considering the weight a name carries, it would be beneficial to take a look at the names of the protagonist in *Howl's Moving Castle* and *The Graveyard Book* to see what their names reveal, if they reveal anything, about these characters.

Sophie Hatter's name reveals not only her character traits but also her fate. A look at the etymology of her given name, Sophie, reveals that it comes from the Greek word

Sophia which means wisdom. The novel reflects that compared to her sisters “Sophie was the most studious” (Jones 10). She was an intelligent character, but she manages to gain wisdom through her “curse.” After she is cursed to turn into an old woman she goes on a journey of growth. During this journey, she achieves wisdom and realizes the harm the lack of self-confidence has on her character. Through her “Bildung” she achieves wisdom and becomes a character worthy of her name. Her last name on the other hand is Hatter which reflects the fate she had. She was a daughter of a hat shop owner and ever since her birth as the firstborn she was fated to take over the shop and be a hat maker herself. However, when she became a hat maker this made her miserable, the hat shop and her last name became her prison. She constantly expresses her dissatisfaction with the profession and her fate throughout the novel through her words, “Sophie found she had had enough of hats to last a lifetime. ‘Not hats,’ she said” (Jones 204). Even though she feels confined in her fate as a “Hatter” she manages to escape the prison that is her last name thanks to the wisdom she gains as an old woman.

Nobody Owens, Bod for short, is an unusual and interesting choice for a name. It is important to note that this is not the birth name of the protagonist as it is not revealed throughout the book, but it is the name given to him by his ghost parents in the graveyard. As a name, Nobody stands as the antithesis of Everyman which reflects that the protagonist of this novel is unlike everybody else. The novel supports this idea with these words: “‘He looks like nobody but himself,’ said Mrs. Owens, firmly. ‘He looks like nobody’” (Gaiman 25). After this declaration he is named Nobody, he leaves his unknown birth name behind to start a new life inside the graveyard away from the dangers of the outside world. His name by giving him anonymity and protects him. As a result, it suggests a new alternative to everybody, which gives him the opportunity to grow up freer than everybody else. Jutta Turunen supports this by reflecting that “Being Nobody by name gives him the possibility to be no one and thus unbound by definition” (48). As Nobody is unbound by definition, he is free to define himself as he wishes, so Gaiman presents a clean page for his protagonist to grow up and build his character as he wishes.

In *The Graveyard Book* names are directly related to the “Bildung” process as seen through a nursery rhyme in the novel.

Sleep my little babby-oh

Sleep until you waken

When you're grown you'll see the world

If I'm not mistaken.

Kiss a lover,

Dance a measure,

Find your name

and buried treasure... (Gaiman 26)

Growing old and finding a name are interconnected which reflects that growing up means finding an identity, thus a name, for yourself. The nursery almost works as advice and guidance aimed toward younger children. These lines are lessons children should learn and possibly act upon when they grow up. "When you're grown you'll see the world," and "Find your name" lines are pointing toward the idea that growing up means that one will see the world and eventually find a name, which is a symbol for development and identity building.

This idea that growing up and finding a name are connected is further supported towards the end of the novel, where the "Bildung" process of its protagonist is close to completion, as a powerful being called Sleer asks him to find his name. "Bod felt the Sleer writhing through his mind. It said, THEN FIND YOUR NAME. And his mind was empty, and the room was empty, and Bod was alone" (Gaiman 251). This interaction confuses Bod as he seeks his birth name afterward with questions like "What was my real name? What did my family call me" (Gaiman 280). The book questions the reality of a name. Bod becomes anxious as he perceives the name he grew up with as not real and not worthy. He thinks the name his biological parents gave him is more important than the name he has now. But this changes with a sudden realization "Bod understood. Everything slowed. Everything came into focus. 'I know my name,' he said. 'I'm Nobody Owens. That's who I am.' And, kneeling on the cold altar stone, it all seemed very simple" (Gaiman 282). This realization reflects that the name Nobody is just as real as his birth name. He has grown up with the name Nobody and that name became a part of his identity. Instead of searching for a long-lost name, Bod decides to accept his name as it

is and “Finds his name,” symbolizing his growth. Michaela Vondráčková reflects that by the end of his story, Nobody “is fully aware of his identity and a long-forgotten name cannot change it” (62). By pointing out the significance of the identity Nobody build throughout the novel, it reflects that who you grow up to be is more important than the name that is given at birth.

Names and identity are undeniably interconnected in both of the novels this thesis is concerned with. Finding a name parallels growing up and coming-of-age both in *Howl's Moving Castle* and *The Graveyard Book*. Both Sophie and Nobody grow up and find their identities along with names. In the case of Sophie, this means going against her fate while in Nobody's case it is reflected as leaving his past behind to accept himself. Names not only serve as symbols for their character but also reflect growth by portraying how these characters build their identities.

2.3. HOME IS WHERE THE HEART IS: A DEEPER LOOK INTO THE SUPERNATURAL DOMESTIC ENVIRONMENTS AND THEIR EFFECTS ON BILDUNG

Looking at both novels, the home appears as a significant motif that is present in both of them and that has a great influence on the coming-of-age story of Sophie and Nobody. Home appears in parallel to identity as it is a space that not only shapes the identity but is also shaped by it. So undoubtedly the home becomes a significant study point for Bildungsroman. Simply a home is an intimate space considering how many hours are spent inside performing daily domestic necessities and leisure. But a more complex perspective presents the home as a window into the inner and private world of its inhabitants. As they spend a lot of their time in their homes, people try to make the place they live in comfortable for themselves by decorating the house according to their aesthetics and creating relaxing spaces for themselves. They furnish the home as they like, and they keep objects that reflect their own interest. Thus, the domestic space of the house becomes an intimate part of the identity and the individual. A simple look into this intimate domestic space opens a window into the life of characters in Bildungsroman. Home is also where the “Bildung” happens as it is where a big part of life and childhood is spent. It directly affects the growth and identity of the residents inside and many traditional Bildungsroman characters are shaped by their home and their environment as

can be seen in the case of Stephen Dedalus in the *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. However, fantasy literature twists these traditional homes of Bildungsroman to present unlikely environments for growth. As is typical for fantasy, it shifts the perspective to present the home and domestic environment in a new light which can be seen in *The Graveyard Book* and *Howl's Moving Castle*.

The discussion on what home is as a concept and what it means for human life is a significant one as it is an inseparable part of humans. Finding a place that can be called “home” is a life goal for many and not having a home, thus being homeless, is something that is feared and shunned. At its simplest, a home is a building with many rooms where people settle and live their lives. However, when the home is studied as an idea it raises many questions regarding the nature of identity, family, domesticity, society, and psychology. Witold Rybczynski in his book called *Home: A Short History of an Idea* researches comfort and home from an architectural point of view and ultimately reaches the conclusion that comfort is directly related to the individual (231-232). This reflects that the individuals shape “home” according to their own ideas of comfort, making each home unique and intimate. Rybczynski instead of an expert definition gives importance to the individual expression while defining domestic well-being and comfort as these concepts are incredibly subjective according to him. He reflects “Domestic well-being is too important to be left to experts; it is, as it has always been, the business of the family and the individual” (232). The subjectivity of house and home is further supported by Gaston Bachelard in his book titled *The Poetics of Space*. “For our house is our corner of the world. As has often been said, it is our first universe, a real cosmos in every sense of the word” (4). As a “corner of the world” that is specific to a person, home distinguishes itself from the rest of the world as a “space” that belongs to a person. Then, it is only natural that this corner of the world people can claim as their own will be shaped by them. On the other side of the coin, this space will inevitably have an influence during the “Bildung” process as it is a constant in life, it will shape the person just as the person will shape it. Bachelard’s research also supports that the house is the “first universe” in the life of a person which reflects that the house is some of the earliest interactions with the universe (4-5).

The childhood home becomes a significant setting for Bildungsroman as it has a major influence on the “Bildung” process. As such, Bildungsroman tends to portray the

childhood home where the protagonist experiences the world for the first time. To explain this connection Bachelard focuses on the house as a space and the poetic expression that is concerned with this intimate, personal “corner of the world.” His research situates home as a source of imagination and how it creates poetry with the help of daydreaming (26). House itself shapes the imagination of its inhabitants. The house is such an influential part of human life that according to Bachelard the childhood home is the entity that is most firmly fixed in our memories (30). The childhood home itself influences a person so much that it becomes a constant part of the imagination and dreams. “For instance, in the house itself, in the family sitting-room, a dreamer of refuges dreams of a hut, of a nest, or of nooks and corners in which he would like to hide away, like an animal in its hole. In this way, he lives in a region that is beyond human images” (Bachelard 30). As it stands at such a crucial point in the growth of a person a look at the home would reveal not only the environment of growth but also the way it may shape the individual. In this case, both “houses” in *The Graveyard Book* and *Howl’s Moving Castle* reveal interesting perspectives related to coming-of-age and growth. Making use of the fantastic elements both novels present a subverted and deconstructed version of a “house” portraying how “Bildung” would occur in such a supernatural environment.

Howl’s Moving Castle subverts the expectations of a traditional house by presenting a domestic environment that can move around. Supernatural elements, namely magic, make it possible for the Secondary Universe of Jones to have a castle that can walk. The first encounter of Sophie with the moving castle describes the possibilities of change supernatural elements bring to the domestic environment. “Wizard Howl’s castle was rumbling and bumping toward her across the moorland. Black smoke was blowing up in clouds from behind its black battlements. It looked tall and thin and heavy and ugly and very sinister indeed” (Jones 39). Howl’s castle is described as a rumbling, moving, tall, heavy, and ugly house. It is beyond the expectations of what a house is as most of the time a house is described as stagnant and stationary. However, Howl’s castle takes the traditionally stationary house and transforms it into a dynamic environment. As a result, it is also described as sinister since a moving domestic environment is against the idea of a house.

This subversion of the domestic environment in *Howl’s Moving Castle* allows the protagonist, Sophie, to experience her “Bildung” in a supernatural environment. Her

encounter with the moving castle parallels her growth. Her old home was a spiritual prison for her, it was not only her house but also her workplace. She lived very close by to the hat shop and she brought work, which she was dissatisfied with, to her home. “But such was the demand that she was hard at trimming hats in between customers, and every evening she took them next door to the house, where she worked by lamplight far into the night in order to have hats to sell the next day” (Jones 18). Her home was also her work, and this made her feel trapped in the place she was supposed to be comfortable. Sophie’s leaving her old home and work behind and finding the moving castle marks the beginning of her growth. A moving and dynamic domestic environment is a freeing experience for Sophie as she no longer feels bound by social norms, expectations, and fate. The dynamic house allows her to explore the world around her along with her inner world, which in turn allows her to experience coming-of-age not just in a supernatural environment, but thanks to the supernatural environment.

Just like *Howl’s Moving Castle*, *The Graveyard Book* presents an unlikely and supernatural domestic environment. In Gaiman’s novel, a graveyard is presented as a home for its protagonist Nobody. A graveyard is not a traditional or natural home, it is a place for the dead to rest and for the living to visit. It is not a place for a baby or a child to grow up as it is the place humans go after they are done with life. These facts are stated in the novel a couple of times as well. “‘If there was a baby,’ said the stranger, without looking back, ‘it wouldn’t have been here in the graveyard. Perhaps you were mistaken. It’s unlikely that a child would have come in here, after all’” (Gaiman 19). As the man Jack searches for Nobody to kill him, Silas stops him with these words. The fact that a baby “wouldn’t” be in a graveyard is a compelling enough argument for the murderer that is trying to kill the baby that he disregards the graveyard as a possible place for a baby to be. It is also emphasized that a graveyard is not a natural home for a baby, which means that it is not a natural place to grow up. “‘Your duty, ma’am, is to the graveyard, and to the commonality of those who form this population of discarnate spirits, revenants and suchlike wights, and your duty thus is to return the creature as soon as possible to its natural home—which is not here’” (Gaiman 22). Gaiman uses the graveyard as a setting and a home to subvert the expectations of natural home and to portray the growth of Nobody in an “unnatural” environment.

Making use of the supernatural elements of fantasy, *The Graveyard Book* fills its unnatural home of the graveyard with supernatural beings such as ghosts, ghouls, a vampire, and a werewolf. This supernatural and unnatural home allows for the portrayal of a coming-of-age story unlike any other as this kind of home is not possible in a realistic Bildungsroman. With the help of this environment, Nobody gets the chance to experience, learn and grow with the supernatural as a part of his life. This affects not only his coming-of-age story but also the person he grows up to be as the experiences he goes through and the lessons he learns are specific to this supernatural home. Graveyard as a home is beyond the expectations of a traditional home, but it provides opportunities for growth no traditional home offers. Nobody becomes the person he is at the end of the novel thanks to this unnatural home as it becomes a part of his identity. However, this graveyard, this home is only a passage of time in his life as growing old means leaving it behind for the natural world. Even though this kind of home is only temporary in his life, the childhood he spent there along with the lessons he learned and experiences that build his character has an undeniable impact on his identity. This makes the graveyard a unique but needed setting for a coming-of-age story as it provides substantial chances for “Bildung.”

Sophie’s and Nobody’s homes are significant for their identity as their supernatural homes directly influence the person they become at the end of their coming-of-age story. Kimberly Dovey in his article called “Home and Homelessness” supports this idea about home as identity. He discusses how a home can represent and build identity. “Home suggests a certain dynamic adaptability. It allows for both the *representation* and the *growth* of identity” (Dovey 43). Both novels concern themselves with the growth Dovey talks about as they portray how their supernatural environment allows for character growth. Sophie is able to grow with the freedom the moving castle supplies, while Nobody uses the opportunities a graveyard presents to develop his character with valuable lessons. Both instances of unnatural homes allow for the coming-of-age stories of their characters to have a supernatural twist in order to reflect the possibilities of character development in fantasy universes. Dovey states that “We not only give a sense of identity to the place we call home, but we also draw our identity from that of the place” (41). A supernatural home allows for the characters to draw their identity from a supernatural place, which fantasy novels allow to present supernatural Bildungsroman.

2.4. BELONGING

Finding a place to belong to is one of the ultimate goals of the characters in Bildungsroman. It is a typical trope for Bildungsroman to have protagonists that are looking to settle down and belong. Growing up is a process where people discover themselves and during this process, it is only natural for the protagonists of Bildungsroman to not be able to belong to their environment. For these characters, self-discovery and growth mean discovering a place to settle, belong and feel comfortable in. As previously mentioned, comfort and home are closely related to the “Bildung” process, and creating this safe comfortable space is a struggle to achieve a place to belong. In addition, this search for belonging may be the trigger for the growth as a character uncomfortable with their environment may be compelled for a character developing journey to find himself or herself. Either way, the “Bildung” of a character concerns itself with belonging. McCulloch also points out that in the process of becoming “one does not strive for the trappings of individualist dominance and power, but the communitarian solidarity of home and belonging” (199). As growth is closely related to the strive for home and belonging, the situation of estrangement means there is a place for “Bildung” and a coming-of-age story. It is not surprising that both *Howl’s Moving Castle* and *The Graveyard Book* present characters that greatly struggle with belonging and feel out of place in their environments. Thus, for a better understanding of these works as Bildungsroman, a search for the answers to questions such as how these novels treat the subject of belonging and how these characters deal with not being able to belong to would provide helpful insight.

Sophie lives in a world and society, to which she does not belong. The novel clearly states that it is a rule of her fairy tale world that being the eldest of the three means being unfortunate. As the eldest child, she is fated to fail if she decides to seek out her fortune. This fairy tale belief is originated as a way to allow the eldest to inherit the family fortune and business (Somkid 26), but this has a huge negative impact on Sophie, as being a hat maker is not something she desires but the world she lives in does not present her any other options. Somkid points out that “living a lifestyle that contrasts Sophie’s true self leads her to lose confidence” and as a result “Sophie suffers from being an obedient child, and she unconsciously expresses her suffering through a lack of confidence” (26).

Her lack of self-confidence emerged because of the world she does not belong in, and this lack of self-confidence is the reason she needs to go on a coming-of-age journey, as she will not live the life she desires without overcoming this obstacle.

Sophie's estrangement is later on personified by the curse the Witch of the Waste lays on her. The curse turns Sophie into an old woman, and as a young person, she becomes trapped in a body in which she does not belong. However, she is so used to not belonging that she accepts this body quite readily with the words "'Don't worry, old thing, ... You look quite healthy. Besides, this is much more like you really are'" (Jones 33), and she uses her curse as a part of her empowerment. As she uses her old body as an excuse to leave the house she does not belong in, she encounters a house that does not belong. The moving castle she spends most of the novel in can be interpreted as a parallel to Sophie's situation, just like Sophie the house she lives in does not belong as well since it is constantly moving without settling anywhere. Not surprisingly, she feels at home inside the moving castle and strives to be a part of the house by doing household chores such as cleaning, and mending. She has quite an impact on the moving castle as with each change Sophie strengthens her presence in the castle, ultimately causing the castle to merge with her old home. As such, the moving castle is the perfect place for Sophie to discover herself and create a place she can belong. In this house that does not belong anywhere, she realizes that there are people that would accept her as she is, and she can belong somewhere. "Sophie's sisters take charge of their own lives and decide to change their destinies refusing to assume their pre-established roles as they are being set by their mother" (Yavaş 32), and the moving castle makes Sophie realize that she can do the same. Sophie realizes that she does not need to follow the rules of the world or the society, just like her sisters, as she gains self-confidence and learns to accept herself. She feels this self-discovery and empowerment in a place and a body that does not belong in the ordinary society, but the moving castle still offers a place Sophie can belong to. As the novel nears its conclusion Sophie accepts herself and decides that the moving castle is indeed the place she belongs which causes her to lift the curse. Throughout the novel "Sophie Hatter might be in disguise as an old woman for most of the action of *Howl's Moving Castle*, but knows all along that she is a young woman" (Kaplan 198), she is aware that she does not belong to the body of an old woman. Only when she accepts herself and finds a place to belong where she can be true to herself, Sophie manages to

lift the curse and become young again. She returns to the body she belongs in a place that she accepted as home with the people that accept her as she is.

Bod is a character that does not truly belong to any place throughout the novel. As a character at the margins of society Bod is an othered queer character, in between a ghost and a human. The graveyard he lives in is no place for a living human boy, but still, he grows up there which results in him being a human and ghost hybrid. This hybrid nature of him makes him unable to truly belong. The world outside the graveyard does not accept Bod, and they consider him weird. For instance, whenever Bod leaves the graveyard he gets into trouble with other humans, he is either caught by adults (Gaiman 124, 200) or bullied in the school (Gaiman 186-187). He only feels safe and at home inside the graveyard. However, as a living being, he invades the space of the dead and he cannot sustain himself in the graveyard, which is why his guardian Silas constantly needs to bring him sustenance. Moreover, the space of death as a still space is an unwelcoming environment for a living, thus a dynamic being. Bod cannot experience ordinary relationships like childhood friendship due to his othered status, which the novel clearly states as “In the graveyard, no one ever changed. The little children Bod had played with when he was small were still little children; Fortinbras Bartleby, who had once been his best friend, was now four or five years younger than Bod was, and they had less to talk about each time they saw each other” (Gaiman 229). The graveyard stays the same but Bod, as a living being, changes constantly which makes it a struggle to belong.

Considering Bod’s situation concerning the two spaces, the living world, and the graveyard Trunen states that “it can be questioned whether Bod ever had a space where he would belong and to which he would return” (45), saying that Bod as a living child inhabits the space of the dead, but the living world “is the world that is for the duration of the book a life-threatening space for him and considers him strange” (45). As such, Bod is stuck between two worlds, at the margins of both the living and death. This is demonstrated in the novel during Danse Macabre, a social event where death and the living mingle to dance. To the Danse Macabre, Bod comes from the graveyard as a part of the graveyard folk but he only dances as the part of the living. Even though he danced as a part of the living beings he returns to the graveyard after the dance ends and the ghosts refuse to talk about the Danse Macabre because he is living. He is in between two worlds, and he opposes this situation by saying, ““But I’m one of you”” implying he is a

part of the graveyard, which graveyard folk refuses simply by saying, “Not yet, boy. Not for a lifetime” (Gaiman 163).

The novel portrays Bod’s struggle to find a place to belong to as he tries to explore different environments inside and outside the graveyard. He tries to understand the world and the situation he is in to find a place for himself. Millet suggests that “Gaiman presents Bod as a queer character who subverts the typical norms of belonging” (54) since Bod “is able to develop an individual identity while having no desire to fit in anywhere” (54). However, saying that Bod does not have a desire to fit in would be ignoring all the times he tries to belong in his marginal state. As Silas reflects that there is still a murderer in the outside world, Bod responds with “So? It’s only death. I mean, all of my best friends are dead” (Gaiman 179). Not quite understanding the situation he is in, Bod tries to accept the graveyard as his home, ignoring the outside world. Still realizing that he would not be able to belong to the graveyard as a living child, he tries to learn as much about the outside world to see whether he could find a place to belong. Bod clearly states that he does not want to go to school just for learning but for other experiences as well by saying “Do you know how nice it is to be in a room filled with people and for all of them to be breathing” (Gaiman 193). Breathing, as subtle as it is, is a commonality Bod never had the chance to experience in the graveyard and it is this small connection he makes with the outside world to struggle a place to fit in. Bod tries to belong as the in-between state he exists in means solidarity for him. The way Gaiman subverts typical norms of belonging makes it possible for Bod to grow up in this state where he cannot belong anywhere as he exists between two worlds, and the solution to that is leaving one of these worlds behind to seek a place to belong. Bod’s growth and “Bildung” mean that he needs to leave behind the graveyard to find a place to belong in the world, which he does at the end of the novel. Gaiman still does not presents a place Bod belongs to at the end of the novel, but he presents many opportunities for Bod, as he has the freedom to seek the place he can truly belong in the living world. He may leave the graveyard behind, but his coming-of-age story and the experience of growing up in the fantastic space of a graveyard will stay with him as he steps into maturity.

Finding a place to belong is one of the challenges the Bildungsroman protagonists need to overcome. *Oliver Twist* does not belong until he goes to the countryside, or *Jane Eyre* cannot find a place to belong until she marries Mr. Rochester. Sophie’s situation is

similar, she needs to get out of her home and discover the world and eventually get married to Howl to find a place she truly belongs. On the other hand, Bod's situation is more akin to Stephen Dedalus's. Stephen leaves Ireland behind once he reaches maturity and completes his coming-of-age story. He self-exiles himself from Ireland to go to Paris and Italy, to find a place where he can truly belong as his experience until then shows him that he has no place to belong in Ireland. Similarly, Bod needs to leave the graveyard as the graveyard is not a place for the living, and his experiences show that to him clearly. As a result, Bod leaves the graveyard, the place he called home and tried to belong, to go on a journey to find a place where he can belong. The challenge of finding a place is a part of growing and thus it is a part of the Bildungsroman narrative, which both Sophie and Bod need to go through to complete their "Bildung."

2.5. THE SETTING

2.5.1. Coming-of-Age in a Fantastic Environment

Howl's Moving Castle and *The Graveyard Book* through their supernatural "Secondary World" provide a magical space where their protagonists can experience their coming-of-age stories. Considering that an environment presents a wide range of possibilities for development and the setting can greatly affect the coming-of-age stories in Bildungsroman, the supernatural settings in these novels carry a significant weight regarding the "Bildung" of their protagonists. Their setting can provide opportunities for growth, or shape the personalities of a character, either as a positive or a negative influence. Whether the influence of the environment is positive or negative, the setting provides many possibilities for growth. Novels like *Emma* (1815) by Jane Austen and *Jane Eyre* (1847) by Charlotte Brontë set their stories in rural and high-class environments such as manors to reflect how rural England along with the manor and abbey lifestyle affects the coming-of-age of these characters. While Charles Dickens concerns himself with the influence of the urban industrial setting of London to reflect growth in the dirty industrial era as seen in the *David Copperfield* (1849) and *Great Expectations* (1861). Kontje also reflects that by setting the Bildungsroman close to a warzone, the novel can depict the most dramatic events of war and how they can affect the ideology (30). Similarly, Graham reflects that "In Carson McCullers's *The Member of the Wedding* (1946), the wartime setting reflects the conflict over gender identity experienced by a boyish girl, Frankie, as she develops" (139), which portrays another

possibility for growth the negative wartime setting presents. Another example by Kontje points out that *Life Is a Carawanserai* (1992) by Emine Sevgi Özdamar “the semi-autobiographical novel of a girl who grows up in Turkey and emigrates to Germany, could be hailed as the prototypical Bildungsroman of a new era marked by border crossings and cultural mixtures” (31-32). To reflect the cultural mixture and the coming-of-age as an immigrant Özdamar’s Bildungsroman makes use of the setting by portraying an immigrant family and telling the coming-of-age story both in Turkey and Germany. It is clear that the setting as an inseparable part of the growth provides valuable insight into the nature of Bildungsroman and the coming-of-age of their characters.

Considering the significance of the setting on growth, the influence of supernatural settings on Bildungsroman should be studied to understand the possibilities the generic mixture of fantasy and Bildungsroman presents. As fantasy literature allows the unlikely and impossible to happen, the supernatural setting allows breaking the limitations of reality to create chances of development that are typically not possible. This claim is supported by Fiona McCulloch as she reflects on the coming-of-age story of Harry Potter she states that “Rowling transports Harry to a fantasy Scottish realm, where its wildness allows for spatial possibilities of development beyond the confines of stifling suburbia” (192). McCulloch reflects that the same can be said for “Le Guin’s northern setting” in *A Wizard of Earthsea* and the coming-of-age story of Ged (192). This transportation into the magical and supernatural world widens the possibilities for growth. It allows for an escape from “stifling” urban life to oftentimes natural places to allow for a coming-of-age story more in line with nature as the setting in supernatural fiction is often filled with trees, mountains, rivers, and seas. Reyyan Bal reflects that “the realm of nature has apparently been consigned to the supernatural mode of fiction” (1295). She further states that this fact serves to “remind humans of the essentiality of the non-human and the lost connection between humanity and nature” (1295). This means that a supernatural setting also allows for the possibilities of growth that are natural but oftentimes unreachable due to the current state of the world. Along with presenting impossible opportunities for growth, Fantastic Bildungsroman also presents possibilities for growth that are natural but largely lost in the current world. Both *The Graveyard Book* and *Howl’s Moving Castle* are set in places that are full of nature and magic which portray the possibilities of growth Fantastic Bildungsroman allows.

In *Howl's Moving Castle*, Jones establishes at the beginning of the novel the setting is a fairy tale land with these words "In the land of Ingary, where such things as seven-league boots and cloaks of invisibility really exist, it is quite a misfortune to be born the eldest of three" (Jones 9). From the very first sentence of the novel, it is clear that this is a world of magic and miracle that follows the rules of fairy tales. Along with a fairy tale setting, the clichés of fairy tales are also expected to be true, such as the misfortune that comes with being the "eldest" sibling. By establishing a fairy tale setting, Jones makes it possible for the readers to see the coming-of-age story in a fairy tale world. This means that a character growing up in Ingary, would experience magic such as a cloak of invisibility and seven-league boots, but they would also be subjected to unfortunate rules of the fairy tale world. The coming-of-age story of its protagonist, Sophie, is directly affected by all these elements, in fact, the misfortune of being the eldest sibling is the main source of conflict and obstacle she has to overcome to achieve her "Bildung." This kind of "Bildung" only becomes possible thanks to the fairy tale setting Jones establishes and decides to tell the story of a growing child in such an environment.

Contrary to Jones' novel, Gaiman sets *The Graveyard Book* in the Primary World, just in an unexpected location for coming-of-age, in a graveyard. Even though supernatural creatures such as vampires, and supernatural elements such as magic exist, it is still our world because the graveyard is located in England. It is important to note that this graveyard is also a nature reserve as Silas in the novel states "They declared this place an official nature reserve, you know, thirty years ago, around the time of the last funeral" (Jones 19). As the last funeral was thirty years ago this place serves more as a nature reserve rather than a graveyard. In Gaiman's novel just as Reyyan Bal mentions the realm of nature resides in fantasy and fantasy resides in nature. It is this nature reserve that houses ghosts, a vampire, and a werewolf in an otherwise completely "normal" world. But this oddity in a normal world makes it possible for Bod to experience his coming-of-age story in nature along with the supernatural. Nature is expected to have a positive effect on the growth of a child, and this is supported by the comments of another kid in the novel called Scarlett. Scarlett as a "normal" friend of Bod lives close to the graveyard and visits it to play. She also has the chance to grow close to the positive effects of nature as her parents state that "they were fortunate to have a nature reserve so near" (Jones 42). However, this attitude changes when Scarlett gets lost in the cemetery, her

parents got worried and “told each other that it was the other one’s fault for letting their little girl play in a cemetery, even if it was a nature reserve, and that the world was a very dangerous place these days” (Jones 58). This reflects that the realm of supernatural and nature are intermixed, thus dangerous. These days the world is a dangerous place for kids to wander into nature and experience growth there, as such it becomes the job of fantasy literature to depict these coming-of-age stories more in line with nature. As Bal argues humans lost connection with nature and the realm of nature is told in fantasy fiction, which reflects that the possibilities of growth both in a supernatural and natural setting fall under the realm of fantasy fiction.

In *The Graveyard Book*, all the supernatural elements are dismissed by the ordinary people in the novel by regarding them as imaginary. In the novel, Scarlett “had already been told firmly by her parents that Bod was imaginary and that there was nothing at all wrong with that” (Jones 43). Fantasy is considered imaginary and the same is true for Jones’s novel, as for Howl the world of Ingary is a secondary imaginary world for him since he travelled there from Wales. Even though fantasy can be dismissed as imaginary both by the characters in novels and readers in our world, it still sheds light on some genuine issues. These imaginary worlds make it possible to tell stories that are impossible to tell in the real world, and they offer the opportunities of “Bildung” that are only possible in these settings to their readers. Both novels portray imaginary settings and depict the effects these settings would have on the coming-of-age of characters while revealing the possibilities these settings present for Bildungsroman and coming-of-age stories.

2.5.2. The Stages of Development Signified Through Multiple Places: A Pattern in Bildungsroman development stages and the journey motif

It is typical for traditional Bildungsroman to change the setting in parallel to the growth of their characters. The development of the protagonist is signified by the change in his or her environment which reflects that he or she has progressed and moved beyond the previous circumstances. A change of setting is a literal and convenient tool to reflect that change and many traditional Bildungsroman use this to their advantage. One influential example is *Jane Eyre*, in which, each place Jane lives represents a stage in her development and life. Throughout the novel, Jane moves through several places and

houses which coincide with the certain stages in her coming-of-age story. She starts her journey at Gateshead, where she experiences her childhood, and it serves as a gate for the rest of the world. For her education, she moves to Lowood Institute, which she eventually leaves for the world and to seek out her fortune. Thornfield and Moor House are the places she develops her characters in the real world with hardships and challenges. Eventually, she ends up in Ferndean where she completes her coming-of-age story. All of these places are significant settings for the “Bildung” of Jane and each symbolizes a certain place in her life from her childhood and education to her maturation in the real world. Similarly, Stephen Dedalus in *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* goes through a coming-of-age story where each place signifies a certain moment in his life and contributes to his character development. However, Stephen’s Bildung reaches its peak as he decides to leave Ireland for good to find his place in the world. A look at the fantasy works this thesis concerns itself with presents similar patterns which supports the claim that these novels are the result of a generic mixture between fantasy and Bildungsroman.

The setting of *Howl’s Moving Castle* shifts through the novel to parallel the growth of Sophie. She lives at her childhood home at the beginning of the novel, this first initial setting reflects her childhood and is a point of frustration for Sophie. The beginning of her growth starts with the departure from her childhood home. Leaving the childhood home and hat shop behind is a sign of growth as it allows Sophie to finally find the courage to seek her fortune. The second significant setting is the moving castle. Here she gets a chance to explore the world to experience growth. The moving castle is a convenient tool for Sophie to explore the world as it can take Sophie to wherever she wants not only by walking but also by the magical door in the house that opens to different parts of the Ingary. At the moving castle she spends most of her time and significant “Bildung” moments happen at this dynamic point in her life. Another stage in her life is signified by the mixture of the moving castle and Sophie’s old home. The moving castle mixes with Sophie’s childhood home which symbolizes the new person she turned into after her journey to seek out her fortune. At this point in her life, Sophie is an amalgamation of her old and new self. This mixture also indicates a reconstruction of Sophie’s old home, which Jack Zipes addresses as a typical pattern of fairy tales by stating that “The pattern in most fairy tales involves the reconstitution of home on a new plane” (175). Considering that Ingary is a typical fairy tale land, this reconstruction of the home

reveals a certain pattern for Sophie where she returns to the place she began her story, her old home. Zipes explains this return as “the real return home ... is a move forward to what has been repressed and never fulfilled” (175), which portrays that she has developed to come to this point. She returns to her old house as she is still troubled by her old life and fate as a hat maker, where her feelings were repressed, and dreams were not fulfilled. However, she is a different person now thanks to the moving castle, and the mixture of these two settings completes her as a person and allows her to move past the repression of her old life. The last part of her coming-of-age story parallels Sophie’s settlement in the moving castle, not as a guest or an invader but as a part of the permanent family this time, which reflects that she completed her “Bildung.” As she builds up her confidence, she gets rid of her curse and decides to stay at the moving castle of her own free will. She grows up and chooses the place she wishes to be and settles down which marks the end of the novel and the completion of her growth.

Unlike *Howl’s Moving Castle*, in *The Graveyard Book*, the setting hardly changes. As the outside world is extremely dangerous for Nobody, he does not leave the graveyard for the majority of the book. As he grows up, he desires to go outside of the graveyard, and a few times he manages to see the outside world. This reflects his desire to grow up and discover the outside world, but each trip the outside of the graveyard ends with a problem or trouble. However, each of these trips outside of the graveyard is the experience he needs to grow into the person he is. Every time, he leaves the graveyard and encounters problems or dangers he learns valuable lessons and experiences precious “Bildung” moments. As such, Gaiman’s novel changes its setting multiple times to propel character growth, as Nobody visits the underworld, school, a market, a smaller graveyard, and a town festival. In this sense, this novel is very much like *Emma*, which also does not change the setting but creates character-developing moments inside the small and rural English town. Graveyard in this sense is very much like a small and rural English town as it is separated from the world, filled with nature, and all of its inhabitants, which are ghosts, are from the past as they died many years ago. This means that Nobody practically lives in a rural English town from the past, with characters that are from the 1800s. This fact is also pointed out by a few teachers by pointing out that Nobody “Handwrites everything” (Gaiman 181), “He says they don’t have a computer” (Gaiman 181), and “He doesn’t have a phone” (Gaiman 182). This reflects that Nobody experiences growth

detached from the rest of the world and as if he lives in the past. Even though Nobody spends most of his childhood in the graveyard there is a significant moment of departure from it at the end of the novel. Coming-of-age and completing his “Bildung” means that Nobody has to leave the graveyard. Just like Stephen Dedalus leaves Ireland for good as he grows up, Nobody will also leave his childhood home behind to see the rest of the world and find himself a place he belongs. The novel reflects that “the world is a bigger place than a little graveyard on a hill; and there would be dangers in it and mysteries, new friends to make, old friends to rediscover, mistakes to be made and many paths to be walked” (Gaiman 307), and to properly grow up he needs to go beyond the little graveyard to experience the bigger world. After all, a graveyard is not a place to live but rest after death.

2.6. EDUCATION

Bildungsroman is sometimes referred to as the “novel of education” (Kontje 15), as education is an inseparable part of growth and coming-of-age. Even though the specific subgenre that focuses on the school experience is called Erziehungsroman, many traditional Bildungsroman also depicts the educational experience of their characters, either as schooling, apprenticeship, tutelage, or self-education. The quintessential Bildungsroman *Jane Eyre* depicts Jane’s school life and education at Lowood institute, which allows for Jane to develop and find a place for herself in the society as a governess. Similarly, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* portrays Stephen’s school life heavily to show the effect of education on his character development and growth. In various forms education exists in the coming-of-age periods of the protagonists and the effect of education on character is a significant part of Bildungsroman. A teacher, tutor, or the school environment has a certain impact on the “Bildung” of the characters, and education has a noteworthy influence on the development of both Nobody and Sophie.

The education life of Sophie is cut short in *Howl’s Moving Castle*, as with the death of her father the family can no longer find enough money to continue the education of Sophie and her sisters. Before her school life was cut short, Sophie had excellent education as the novel states that “Mr. Hatter was proud of his three daughters and sent them all to the best school in town” (Jones 10). This quote also reflects the importance of education as Mr. Hatter was dedicated to sending his daughters to the best schools, as

getting a good education provides new opportunities. However, good education also means money, and he was quite in debt since he tried to give a great education to his daughters, which meant that with his death his daughters could not continue their education. Even though the girls want to continue learning they cannot, instead, they are sent to various apprenticeships (Jones 12). Still, their education continues in the form of apprenticeship as education prepares the girls for life, in the case of Sophie, she becomes the apprentice of her late father's hat shop. Both apprenticeship and school prepare Sophie for life, however, she is not satisfied with her life as a hat maker which reflects that leaving school prematurely harmed her life. Mia Annisa Utami states that "Sophie who has been pampered with a proper life and has an excellent educational background faces an unexpected turn when she becomes the cursed eldest of three" (80). Sophie thinks that being the unlucky sibling in the fairy tale cliches is her fate, and education cannot save her from this fate. In fact, it was her education that thought her this "rule" of the fairy tale world she lives in, "Sophie was the most studious. She read a great deal, and very soon realized how little chance she had of an interesting future" (Jones 10). Sophie loses her father at the beginning of the novel and along with her father she loses her education, however, the impact of this education on her character is felt throughout the novel. Her formal education provided her wisdom, wit, and her good judgment, while her apprenticeship provided the skill she needed to take care of herself and the people around her. However, her education also caused her to have a lack of self-confidence as it was reading that made her realize she had little chance of success in her life as the eldest of three. Ultimately, Sophie is the creation of her education, and the novel reflects this by saying that a child is the joint creation of a mother and a teacher as Mrs. Pentstemmon in the novel points out "We are two old ladies who both had a hand in forming you. You are, one might say, our joint creation" (Jones 165). Sophie is no different, she is also a joint creation of education and her family. Her education both with its good and bad influences forms her identity which is a substantial part of her coming-of-age story.

As Nobody is a character outside of the margins of society, his school and education experiences are outside the expectations of the ordinary. As a kid growing up in a graveyard, he does not get the chance to go to school like regular kids, instead, he studies under various tutors and teachers in the graveyard. All of these teachers are supernatural beings such as ghosts, a vampire, and a werewolf and they teach Nobody the

supernatural world along with the ordinary world that resides outside the graveyard. With the lessons from ghosts, Nobody learns supernatural abilities that typically belong to ghosts such as “Fade” and “Haunt.” Bod himself points out that his ability to learn, as childhood is a time to learn “I can learn. I can learn everything I need to know, all I can. I learned about ghouls-gates. I learned to Dreamwalk. Miss Lupescu taught me how to watch the stars. Silas taught me silence. I can Haunt. I can Fade. I know every inch of this graveyard” (Gaiman 217). He may know every inch of the graveyard but what he lacks is the knowledge about the world outside the graveyard. As such, Nobody becomes a queer hybrid of a monster and a human. Even though he is a human being he grows up with monsters and this changes his perception of the outside world. Millet points out that Nobody develops “as a queer individual separate from any “normal” society” (9). As he is separate from the normal of society, Nobody does not get the chance to experience an ordinary school life until he is twelve. However, until he experiences the outside world, he stays in between two worlds, closer to a supernatural being than a human because of his upbringing.

In order to experience the ordinary world and school life, Bod wants to leave the protection of the graveyard and go to school. “‘Then,’ said Bod, and said the unsayable, ‘I want to go to school’” (Gaiman 180). The idea of going to school is “unsayable” due to his identity. As a monster human hybrid that is outside the norms of society, the world is a dangerous place for Bod. Still, the desire to learn about the outside world and cross over to the ordinary is powerful enough for his guardian, Silas, to accept his proposal. This educational escapade is a great chance for him to experience an ordinary life, but as a character outside the norms of normal, he does not quite belong to the school. Millet reflects that “When Bod is in school, he continues to challenge societal norms” (64). He challenges societal norms due to his perspective, as his education until then was done by monsters which shaped his identity and perspective. School bullies realize this strange situation and confront Bod. Bod states that he is in school not for friends but to learn with the words “‘I didn’t come here for friends,’” and “‘I came here to learn’” (Gaiman 192). Hearing these words, the school bully Mo states that is weird and says “‘Nobody comes to school to learn. I mean, you come because you have to’” (Gaiman 192). This pun on Nobody’s name portrays that he is outside of the societal norms as a monster human hybrid. The ordinary kids go to school because it is a necessity but for Bod, it is a desire,

he really wants to learn and experience school life. This interaction also points out the school life Bod experiences as a person outside the ordinary and the norms, he is bullied and not accepted. Even though he goes to school like an ordinary kid, he is anything but ordinary and the school environment is not ready to accept that, everybody, even the teachers, thinks he is a weird kid. Even though he really wants, he could not find a place to belong in the school and his school escapade ends in a failure as he decides the best would be to return to the graveyard. Still, the school escapade is an important character developing moment for him as it shapes his character and contributes to his coming-of-age story.

Education and learning are inseparable from coming-of-age stories as anyone growing up needs to learn about their environment and the world around them to form their identities and find a place where they can belong. As this experience is a significant part of coming-of-age stories, it is common for Bildungsroman to portray them and show how these affect the character growth of their protagonists. A look into the education and the impact it had on Sophie and Bod gives insight into the identity formed by their education life. Either as a formal school life or as an educational experience outside the borders of school, both Bod and Sophie are hugely influenced by the things they learn themselves and the things that are taught by their teachers. Considering the coming-of-age stories of both these characters are influenced by the education they received, a look into its impact reveals details regarding how education contributed to their “Bildung.” However, this “Bildung” experience is not ordinary as their educational background is hugely shaped by the supernatural environment around them. These novels not only present the education life but also point out how the supernatural affect and change it. Taking into account the fact that Bildungsroman usually portrays educational experience to reflect its influence on character growth, these novels subvert the conventions with supernatural to offer an alternative in the form of Fantastic Bildungsroman.

CHAPTER III

FANTASY AND ITS DOUBLE: THE PROCESS AND THE END IN FANTASTIC BILDUNGSROMAN

Endings are significant parts of Bildungsroman as they reflect that the coming-of-age story of the protagonist has concluded. This means that the character is physically, mentally, and intellectually different and developed compared to his or her initial state. For Bildungsroman, it also means that the novel can no longer reflect the story of the protagonist as the genre's definition states that it is the novel of development, and once the development ends it is no longer the duty of these works to tell what happens next. The protagonist has completed his or her coming-of-age and a mature character stands in the place of the inexperienced one. The protagonist goes through many experiences to reach that point in his or her life and the ending signifies the point that all these experiences give fruit. However, the ending does not necessarily need to be a happy one, as the "Bildung" may conclude with unhappy or unsatisfactory results. In this case, "a protagonist's inability to resolve all problems into a happy ending may open a window onto the irresolvable conflicts of a given society or reveal the sacrifices required for social integration" (Kontje 15). The "Bildung" does not need to achieve proper integration of citizens into the society, a failure of a happy ending may reveal problems in the society itself. Either way, the conclusion of the Bildungsroman portrays maturation and a general understanding of the world around them. Whether it is a happy ending or a failure of it, the protagonist has come to a point in their life to understand whether society will accept him or her. After all, the aim of the coming-of-age story is not to raise proper citizens, Bildungsroman aims to portray the development of a young individual in the circumstances he or she lives in. Thus, the process is the main subject of the Bildungsroman, but this does not mean the conclusion should be discarded.

A study of the "Bildung" process and the eventual conclusion of the "Bildung" reveal the complete aim of the Bildungsroman in telling the story of that particular character. The development process shows the challenges and hardships of growing up while the ending reflects the ultimate results of this process whether negative or positive. *The Graveyard Book* and *Howl's Moving Castle* ending also depict this with their

endings. Their only difference from a typical Bildungsroman is the supernatural elements in their story. With the supernatural elements of the fantasy genre, this Bildung process shifts slightly. Considering that Bildungsroman aims to tell the development process, a fantastic setting may mean the inevitability of growth in a realistic setting. Seeing that both in *Howl's Moving Castle* and *The Graveyard Book*, Bildungsroman resorts to fantasy to properly tell the story of Sophie and Bod, it can be declared that fantasy is a proper and necessary medium for the narration of certain coming-of-age stories. This means that supernatural experiences were the necessary experiences both for Sophie and Bod to discover themselves and grow up. It is the "Secondary World" of fantasy that makes their coming-of-age story possible which means that the Primary World lacks these experiences of growth. Just as the endings of Bildungsroman question the norms within the society, the fantastic setting may ask why the realistic setting and the society restrict the growth.

Even though there is a shift in the "Bildung" process with supernatural elements in Fantastic Bildungsroman, endings serve the purpose of a typical Bildungsroman. In both novels, the ending presents a protagonist who has developed and matured. Both Bod's and Sophie's coming-of-age stories concluded, and they step into maturity ready thanks to all the didactic experiences of their youth. Following a traditional Bildungsroman fashion, Sophie accepted herself and found a place she is happy while Bod left his childhood behind to discover the rest of the world and find a place he can belong. Similarly, all the typical Bildungsroman elements such as orphan tradition, setting, home, belonging, and education in both *The Graveyard Book* and *Howl's Moving Castle*, made it safe to say that these novels can be called Bildungsroman. Up until now, the aim of this study was to prove that these fantastic works could be called Bildungsroman. However, this part of the thesis will focus on how the supernatural additions to Bildungsroman affect the genre and why the supernatural is necessary, by drawing parallels to their ending which reveals not only the result of these supernatural twists but also the Bildungsroman nature of both novels.

3.1. THE GRAVEYARD BOOK

Plotwise, *The Graveyard Book* is remarkably similar to a typical Bildungsroman. It depicts the early years of Bod, at the beginning of the novel Bod is merely one and a half years old, and at the end, he is around fifteen years old. The novel presents different points of time in Bod's life, each chapter depicting a different age. It allows the reader to see Bod grow up and mature with each chapter, as in each chapter Bod comes with different points of view and ideas about the world around him. The novel clearly displays Bod's growth and age in each chapter with remarks like "He was about eight years old, wide-eyed and inquisitive, and he was not stupid" (Gaiman 104), "He was fourteen, now, and taller than his mother" (Gaiman 215). As he grows up, his perception of the world around him changes, and as he learns he develops. The novel makes it possible to see the formation of Bod's character through many character-developing experiences. The only twist is the fact that the novel does this in a supernatural setting. As mentioned previously Bod grows up in the supernatural realm of the graveyard and this means he will grow up in a unique setting unlike any of his peers. This affects not only the person he becomes at the end of the novel but also the coming-of-age story. By preferring to use the fantasy genre to tell a coming-of-age story Gaiman subverts expectations to reflect the necessity of such a narrative.

The supernatural elements affect Bod's coming-of-age story, essentially in two ways. Primarily, they separate Bod from the outside world by making him a monster-human hybrid, which in turn shifts Bod's education and development experience by making him learn in an unusual way than his peers.

3.1.1. Separating Bod from the Outside World

By separating Bod from the living world, Gaiman places him in the world of death, the place people go after they are done with life. This means Bod starts his life at the graveyard, the place that is the endpoint for everybody else. This separation allows Bod to experience Bildung, outside the norms of the current society. Instead, he grows up in a nature reserve, with ghosts from hundreds of years ago, with a vampire and a werewolf as mentors. It has been reflected many times throughout the novel that the outside world is dangerous, especially for children, "the world was a very dangerous place these days, and if you didn't keep your eyes on your children every second you could not imagine

what awful things they would be plunged into” (Gaiman 58). Silas also constantly says, ““it’s only in the graveyard that we can keep you safe. This is where you live and this is where those who love you can be found. Outside would not be safe for you. Not yet”” (Gaiman 37). It is constantly reflected that currently, the outside world is not safe for Bod, which symbolizes the danger of growing up in the outside world. Considering the outside world mentioned in the book is the modern world, the novel criticizes the current state of the world and the society and does not accept it as a place children can grow up, instead, it offers an alternative in the graveyard which is full of “monsters,” nature and past.

In the novel, the danger of the world is symbolized through the man Jack, the murderer of Bod’s entire family. Even though this villain of the novel is a supernatural monster, he looks like a normal human, and he has a common and ordinary name, Jack. He also comes from a society of individuals called Jacks. This is a society that represents the dangers of the world as they are the main force that forces Bod to hide. Looking at the names of each individual Jack, Jutta Turunen reflects that these individuals have managed to be deeply integrated into society. As a result, “The Jacks, being everyone, can also be analysed to be everywhere” (58). As a being that is everyone and everywhere, the man Jack is not merely a monstrous villain, it is the personification of the dangers of the modern world. It is not a single murderer that is threatening the life of Bod, it is the modern world itself that is a threat to the coming-of-age of Bod. For this reason, the fantastic realm of the graveyard is necessary, as it offers a proper place to grow up.

3.1.2. The Shift in Bod’s Education and Development Experience

The supernatural alternative offered in the novel is a community in a nature reserve with ghosts that died hundreds of years ago as its inhabitants. The supernatural alternative stands as the antithesis of the modern world. Compared to the individualistic way the children are raised in the modern world, in the graveyard it is a communal effort as the novel also points out ““It is going to take more than just a couple of good-hearted souls to raise this child. It will,” said Silas, ‘take a graveyard”” (Gaiman 23). This community presents opportunities for Bod to grow up in a natural environment with many teachers in the form of ghosts that teach him all kinds of subjects, ranging from writing to haunting. Bod’s teachers are individuals in this community as he states ““I have teachers. Letitia Borrowes teaches me writing and words, and Mr. Pennyworth teaches me

his Compleat Educational System for Younger Gentlemen with Additional Material for Those Post Mortem. I do geography and everything” (Gaiman 70).

Aside from the formal education, he has the chance to learn numerous subjects through the individuals in the community. For instance, when he wants to learn history, he can listen to the real-life stories of ghosts. This provides valuable opportunities for many different lessons. For instance, at one point Bod talks with an old Roman to learn about the history of the land he lives in. He also befriends a witch that burned around five hundred years ago called Liza Hempstock which according to Kamalini Govender has a great impact on Bod as she points out that “Bod becomes aware of the historical progression of prejudice against women, the poor and the exiled, from his interaction with Liza, and this leads to an understanding of his Jungian shadow” (33). According to her Bod’s encounter with Liza and her uncanny nature pushes him forward, toward a self-discovery, as according to Govender this encounter is “the beginning of his quest toward individuation, and greater self-awareness – a continuous, lifelong process” (35). This opportunity only becomes possible in the realm of fantasy as the history taught in schools or read in books cannot provide a personal connection, which the novel also points out by making one of the teachers say ““There’s just stuff he doesn’t know. And in History he’ll throw in little made-up details, stuff not in the books”” (Gaiman 182). The made-up details and the stuff that is not in the books are the invaluable lessons and experiences that he cannot find anywhere other than the realm of fantasy. His difference is further pointed out by the same teacher as he states Bod handwrites everything and has lovely handwriting, but he doesn’t have a computer or a phone (Gaiman 181, 182). This clearly displays how different Bod’s life is from his peers. Living separately from the outside world causes him to not be able to access a computer or a phone but instead, it provides an opportunity to grow in a well-knit community in the middle of nature with supernatural beings. Seeing the person Bod grows up to be, this is an ideal realm to grow up and experience coming-of-age but unfortunately, it is only possible in the realm of fantasy. “Stories may well be lies, but they are good lies that say true things” (Gaiman, “Politics, Portugal and No Gumbo-Limbo Trees”), and even though Bod’s experience belongs to the world of fantasy, reading its story may allow true experiences, and the growth opportunities may extend beyond Bod to the readers as well.

3.1.3. Ending

The novel ends when Bod is ready to leave the graveyard for the living world. He manages to defeat the Jacks to ensure a safe space for himself in the living world. In order to defeat the Jacks, he uses all the supernatural knowledge he learned in the graveyard, from ghoul gates to the nature of a supernatural monster called Sleer, and the most basic ghost abilities such as fading and haunting. The fact that Bod defeats the Jacks, the personified dangers of the modern world, with his supernatural knowledge implies that the power gained through the supernatural environment is useful against the dangers of the living world. This symbolizes that the developing experiences of the supernatural realm provide valuable skills towards the dangers of the living world. Bod gains these skills through growing up in a supernatural environment but for the readers, this experience is gained through reading.

Bod is aware that by defeating the Jacks he makes the living world a safe place for himself to live in, a place where he can belong. Throughout the novel, he struggles with defining himself and finding a place to belong. As he is stuck between two worlds, Bod struggles with his marginalized and in-between state. He has a tough time understanding why he cannot continue the rest of his life in the graveyard, and he discusses this many times with Silas. Even in the end, he questions why he cannot stay in the graveyard.

“Why can’t I just stay here? In the graveyard?”

“You must not,” said Silas, more gently than Bod could remember him ever saying anything. “All the people here have had their lives, Bod, even if they were short ones. Now it’s your turn. You need to live.”
(Gaiman 302)

At this point, Bod already knows the answer but wants to confirm it one last time. His experience in the graveyard taught him more than enough times that he only stays there temporarily. He is finally aware of the situation he is in, and he is excited about the possibilities the living world offers.

Bod said, “I went to see Alonso Jones today but he wasn’t there, or if he was I couldn’t see him. I wanted him to tell me about distant places

he'd visited. Islands and porpoises and glaciers and mountains. Places where people dress and eat in the strangest ways." Bod hesitated. Then, "Those places. They're still there. I mean, there's a whole world out there. Can I see it? Can I go there?" (Gaiman 304)

This awareness and excitement point out the end of Bod's "Bildung." He finally accepted himself, defeated the dangers of the living world and he is ready to leave the graveyard, his childhood behind to discover the possibilities of the living world. As Michaela Vondráčková reflects that "Even Bod realizes that defeating the man Jack will ensure him a safe place in the world of the living and by defeating the threat, his reward is the infinite number of possibilities that human life, unlike from the life at the graveyard, offers" (55). He is excited about his reward, the infinite possibilities of human life, which is why he can gather the courage to defeat the Jacks knowing very well that it will result in his departure from the graveyard.

Even though he accepted this as his fate, the partings and farewell are still sad. Bod slowly starts to not being able to see the ghosts and to lose his ghostlike abilities. According to Jutta Turunen "Moving permanently from the graveyard makes the protagonist a human and the inability to perceive any other realm takes away his monstrosity" (45). This means instead of being in between two states, he lets his monstrous nature behind to truly belong to one side. The last chapter of the book focuses on this departure as Bod says goodbye to all the things and places that are familiar to him to step into the unknown living world. This time not as an escapade but as the next part of his life. As he leaves, he has been bid farewell with the last lines of the song, the lullaby his ghost mother, Mrs. Owens sang to him when he was little.

"Face your life

Its pain, its pleasure,

Leave no path untaken" (Gaiman 306)

Up until now, this song was about growing up and discovering oneself, but the final lines reflect the infinite possibilities of life. As Bod completes his "Bildung," he is faced with many opportunities the world offers, and the song that has pushed him forward to discover

himself now tells him to “face his life.” Now his journey continues beyond his coming-of-age, he matured, and he needs to leave behind his childhood to step into life.

Final lines of the novel bid farewell to Bod as he leaves the graveyard.

There was a passport in his bag, money in his pocket. There was a smile dancing on his lips, although it was a wary smile, for the world is a bigger place than a little graveyard on a hill; and there would be dangers in it and mysteries, new friends to make, old friends to rediscover, mistakes to be made and many paths to be walked before he would, finally, return to the graveyard or ride with the Lady on the broad back of her great grey stallion.

But between now and then, there was Life; and Bod walked into it with his eyes and his heart wide open. (Gaiman 307)

With a passport, enough money to start his life and the threat endangering his life defeated he has no obstacles stopping him from starting his life. In classic Bildungsroman fashion, once again confirming this novel’s status as Bildungsroman, the novel ends with the protagonist leaving his past behind for the world. Like Stephen Dedalus, Bod leaves behind his home, family, friends, and community, all of which are contained in a little graveyard on a hill, for the bigger world and the infinite possibilities. Bod walking into Life “his eyes and his heart wide open,” reflects the growth he experienced, lessons he learned, and the person he has become. He has matured and this Bildungsroman has no more coming-of-age story to tell as its protagonist has completed his. Bod leaves the graveyard this time with permission and as a different person, as a person who discovered himself and the novel concludes as the rest of his story is beyond the realm of the Bildungsroman.

3.2. *HOWL’S MOVING CASTLE*

Unlike *The Graveyard Book*, *Howl’s Moving Castle* subverts certain expectations regarding a traditional Bildungsroman such as the plotline, age, and setting. The novel starts when Sophie is at the age to leave school for good, and her childhood is only briefly mentioned in a few pages. Instead of portraying her whole childhood, the novel decides

to focus on a certain string of events that are the main experiences behind her development. Moreover, Sophie experiences her “Bildung” as an old woman as she is cursed by a Witch to grow old prematurely. This subversion from traditional Bildungsroman convention raises some interesting questions, and it is typical for Jones to deconstruct the expectations to question the norms. Even the title of the novel is a clear deconstruction of the norms of established settlement as a castle should not be able to move. Through these deconstructions, Jones is able to comment on the nature of growth, development, and Bildungsroman. Fantasy is a convenient genre for subversion and deconstruction and Jones makes use of the supernatural elements to raise questions and present new perspectives.

Even though it is uncommon, it is possible to see a Bildungsroman with a protagonist around 18 years old just like Sophie. *Emma* by Jane Austen portrays the story of Emma as she starts to discover herself and form her identity, thus she starts her “Bildung” journey towards maturation, only at the age where she would be considered almost an adult. But she is not an adult and her actions and mannerism clearly reflect that, which means she still needs a Bildungsroman to depict her growth. Sophie’s situation is similar, as at the age of eighteen, she is lost, depressed, has low self-esteem, and is not ready for life in her current state. As a result, she needs character-developing experiences and a coming-of-age story to properly experience growth and get ready for adult life. An additional factor to Sophie’s age during her coming-of-age story is her curse, as due to her curse she becomes an old woman at the age of ninety. This creates an unlikely situation where a character experiences coming-of-age as an old person. Jones, by making an old woman the protagonist of her Bildungsroman, is trying to say that age does not define growth and an old person can also experience a coming-of-age story. Once again Jones subverts expectations and brings a new perspective to Bildungsroman thanks to the supernatural elements of the fantasy genre. Thus, *Howl’s Moving Castle* becomes a Bildungsroman that is not restricted by age and the typical patterns of Bildungsroman.

The supernatural elements affect Sophie’s coming-of-age story, essentially in two ways. Primarily, Sophie’s old age curse allows her to see the world from a new perspective which allows her to seek her fortune and as a result grow up. Additionally, the supernatural presents Sophie with an unusual place to experience growth which becomes a crucial factor in her coming-of-age story.

3.2.1. Curse of Old Age

In the novel, Sophie gets cursed by a character called the Witch of the Waste. The curse turns her into an old woman and suddenly she finds herself at the age of ninety. This changes her whole perspective as she is no longer pressured by the society's expectations from the youth. By turning her into an old woman, Jones manages to tell a coming-of-age story from the perspective of an old character. Being old, allows Sophie to get rid of the pressure of society. She no longer needs to be the perfect but unfortunate older sister, now she gets the opportunity to be herself. This allows Sophie for the first time in her life to go out and seek her fortune as until now the norms of the society firmly told her that she was doomed to failure if she seeks out her fortune. As the novel also states "It was odd. As a girl, Sophie would have shrivelled with embarrassment at the way she was behaving. As an old woman, she did not mind what she did or said. She found that a great relief" (Jones 66). In this sense, the Witch of the Waste, even though she is depicted as a villainous character, is the saviour of Sophie as it was her curse that allowed her to go on the journey that resulted in Sophie growing up and accepting herself. Similarly, it is the fantasy genre and the supernatural element, of the curse, which perpetuates the Bildungsroman as without the "Secondary World" of fantasy Sophie would not get this chance.

This curse works as a deconstruction of not only traditional Bildungsroman but also fantasy. Though there are exceptions, the plots of both Bildungsroman and fantasy are typically patriarchal. They value young male characters and often tell their stories. Bildungsroman focuses on the youth as it tries to depict the valuable early ages of its protagonist to tell the coming-of-age story at those times. Similarly, the fantasy genre tends to focus on young characters and tells their grand adventure stories where they explore the world around them and most often save a kingdom, princess, or the world itself. However, *Howl's Moving Castle* deconstructs these norms by portraying not only the domestic story but also the coming-of-age story of an old woman. David Rudd states that "it is precisely because Sophie is prematurely aged that she is free from the standard patriarchal plot that enslaves most young females" (258). He points out that *Howl's Moving Castle* subverts "the standard patriarchal plot" thanks to the supernatural elements. In doing so, Jones manages to create a plotline that is more suitable for the coming-of-age story for a young female, which reflects the liberating aspect of the fantasy

genre. Rudd continues by stating that “We are thus made to rethink the traditional Bildungsroman in which we follow a character (male, usually) from their young days to a coming-of-age in marriage and good fortune” (258). He strengthens this claim by pointing out that “Sophie moves the other way,” since she spends a huge portion of the novel as an old woman, but only feels rejuvenated and young in the closing pages of the book (258). The curse, and thus the fantasy genre, allows Jones to subvert the plot and shape it as she wants, in this case, Jones creates a plot that is upside down to reflect how traditional Bildungsroman plot “enslaves” young female characters. To properly be able to tell the coming-of-age story of Sophie, Jones needs to go outside the established boundaries of Bildungsroman, which she does thanks to fantasy so that she can present a story where Sophie can experience “Bildung.”

The curse that turns Sophie into a ninety-year-old woman also works as an exaggeration of the fairy tale myth that enslaves her. At the beginning of the novel Sophie already felt like an old person as the rules of her fairy tale world told her being the eldest sister was an unfortunate thing and the eldest sisters were doomed to failure. This kind of narrative already situates her on the same side as the other unfortunate, bitter, and villainous older fairy tale sisters such as Beauty's and Cinderella's stepsisters. As she is stigmatized with this kind of negative narrative, being eighteen years old or ninety years old does not make much difference as the world she lives in already marginalized her. However, Jones deconstructs this fairy tale convention as well by empowering Sophie with her curse. Janet Elizabeth Robbins Eastwood states that “This understanding of fairy tale convention, *Howl's Moving Castle* suggests, is a form of tyranny to be rebelled against, which Jones does by using its patterns and expectations in surprising ways, revealing the limitations this form of tradition enforces, as Sophie illustrates” (48). If Sophie's narrative did not rebel against this fairy tale convention, Sophie would fail to develop and her story would be neglected as a result she would be a character that is ostracized, without a voice of her own. However, as Jones rebels against this “tyranny,” she gives a voice to the older sister in a fairy tale world. Eastwood continues by saying that “For there is every proof that Sophie, like Cinderella, Beauty, and Dorothy, will achieve her goals, if only she will allow herself to believe that she is not like Miss Gulch or Cinderella and Beauty's step-sisters, destined to anything” (48). The subversion of convention and rebellion against tyranny allows Sophie to experience character-

developing events that finally result in her believing in herself. Thus, Sophie's Bildungsroman needs fantasy to give a voice to a neglected character as without subversion of fantasy she would fail to have a coming-of-age story.

3.2.2. Growth in a Moving Castle

Another supernatural element that the "Secondary World" of fantasy makes possible is the existence of a moving castle. The moving castle is a huge part of the novel, and it has a major influence on the growth and coming-of-age story of Sophie. The moving castle basically turns the domestic space, which is usually considered still and static, into a living, mobile, and dynamic space. Considering that the traditional Bildungsroman and fantasy stories enslave female characters in a domestic environment, by making that domestic space mobile, Jones manages to free Sophie from the norms and expectations of society thanks to the subversion of supernatural and fantasy. Fantasy allows Sophie to experience a domestic environment that contributes to her growth instead of enslaving her. This subversion allows her to experience "Bildung" as her journey to the moving castle marks the beginning of her coming-of-age story. Subversion of the traditional domestic space destroys the established norms about the domestic environment that prevents the growth of young female characters and provides a setting that makes Sophie's coming-of-age story possible.

As a setting, the castle presents a domestic environment for the entirety of the novel, but that is only possible thanks to the deconstruction of the norm regarding the castle, as Jones not only subverts expectations about the domestic environment but also about the traditional castle. Castles are typically masculine, military, and patriarchal places as their "conventional" and "primary" functions are to protect people and provide an advantage in the warzone. In fantasy specifically, castles are valuable environments either for warfare or for connections with important people, and society. Kings reside in castles, important political and military decisions are made inside castles, they are sieged, guarded, and fought for. As Rudd also states that castles are "associated with aristocracy, with military might and war and, more generally, with patriarchy" (264). But Jones transforms this patriarchal space into a domestic and feminine one by subverting our expectations. According to Rudd, Jones manages this deconstruction by the subversion of the ideas about a castle's invincibility and impenetrability, giving the example that

“Howl's castle seems impenetrable, but really it is permeable, welcoming anyone in need of shelter” (265). As such, the castle becoming a feminine and domestic space provides a familiar environment for Sophie, which she can facilitate and use to her advantage. This is seen in her actions, as soon as she enters the castle, she starts to change it by cleaning, and through her influence, she prepares herself a safe space inside the castle. In return, the castle provides many opportunities to her for growth as thanks to this supernatural space and the interactions it provides Sophie manages to gain self-confidence. In the end, this fantastic and domestic space becomes a part of her, her home, symbolizing her growth.

The moving castle as a space subverts not only the conventions of fantasy but also Bildungsroman. It transforms the patriarchal castle that is typically a centrepiece in traditional fantasy into a feminine domestic space. Moreover, it transforms static domestic space that is an enslaving environment for most young women into a dynamic one that induces growth and development. Jones manages this deconstruction through the fantasy genre and in doing so creates an ideal environment where Sophie can grow. The space that allows Sophie's coming-of-age story can only exist in the realm of fantasy as without these subversions and stepping outside the conventions, boundaries, and norms, Sophie would remain stuck in her old life, enslaved in her self-doubt, the stagnant domestic space would remain her prison.

3.2.3. Ending

It is established pretty early in the novel that Sophie has some powers, as she can alter the course of the life of people around her through her words, the twist, however, is that she is unaware of these powers, and she affects herself as well. This reflects how powerful the words are and how much they can affect people and Sophie is the one that is the most affected by these strange powers of hers. The superstitions of the oldest sibling being bound to failure, the expectations of the society from younger people, and the myths concerning old age shape Sophie's ideas and mindset which influences her lifestyle immensely. Throughout the novel, by the constant remarks she uses, she enslaves herself by building a narrative where she cannot be happy. “Like an old maid” (Jones 19), “Interesting things did seem to happen, but always to somebody else” (Jones 20), ““What made me think I wanted life to be interesting?” she asked as she ran. ‘I'd be far too scared.

It comes of being the eldest of three” (Jones 21), ““You just can't win”” (Jones 177) “I have a genius for doing things wrong” (Jones 281) are just a few examples of the constant self-degrading words of Sophie, and as a person who has the power of giving life to her words, she puts herself into a spiritual prison by not believing in herself and her power. Instead, she lets the prejudices of society run her life, even though she has potential. Sophie curses herself as well by constantly saying she is like an old woman, which proves that self-belief and self-degradation are indeed more powerful than the effect other people have on an individual. Sophie may be the one cursing herself, but she is hardly the responsible one as due to the expectations of the society and fear of not being able to fit in them, Sophie thinks she is bound to failure and curses herself through self-degradation. The grand narratives of old age as a time of illness and weakness and superstitions that specifically belong to the land of Ingary change her ideas and shape how she thinks.

Sophie’s lack of self-confidence is caused by the societal norms, expectations, and narratives that enslave most young women, which is why Jones’ brilliant subversion of the genre allows Sophie to have her own Bildungsroman. Due to the norms and pressure of living in a fairy tale world as the eldest of three sisters, she is enslaved by the idea that she is doomed to failure. Because of this at the beginning of the novel, she already feels like an old woman even before she is cursed. “Like an old maid” (Jones 19), she says to describe herself when she looks into the mirror even before she is cursed. She also starts feeling like an old woman due to her job as a hatmaker, “Sophie felt as if the past months of sitting and sewing had turned her into an old woman or a semi-invalid” (Jones 20). By building a parallel between being old and being semi-invalid, the narrator also shows how restrictive and stereotyped the narrative concerning old age is. However, Jones by turning Sophie into an old woman manages to create a narrative where it shows that “Bildung” is not about age thanks to the subversion of the fantasy genre. The supernatural elements are the main forces behind her development as Mia Annisa Utami also supports by stating that “Sophie’s character has gradually developed to the betterment of herself after she undergoes some changes through the magical events she experienced” (83). As a result of these changes and magical events she discovers herself and becomes the person she is. Fantasy allows her to break the curse of self-doubt and self-degradation and the fact that she manages to lift the curse symbolizes that she completed her own coming-of-age story.

The climax of *Howl's Moving Castle* is full of action and confrontation. It marks the point where Sophie gains enough self-confidence to confront The Witch of the Waste and her fire demon Miss Angorian. By helping to defeat this evil force, Sophie ensures the safety of her new home and family. All ends well and everyone gets their happy ending as in a typical fairy tale fashion. However, the happy ending for Sophie is not marked by the defeat of the Witch of the Waste and Miss Angorian, even though they are the main subjects behind Sophie's curse. Instead, Sophie's happy ending comes through her development as gaining enough self-confidence to help in this action-filled climax means that she can finally be true to herself. The completion of her development and the coming-of-age story happens at the moment when she gets rid of the curse that turned her into an old woman. The defeat of the evil witch results in the removal of several curses, but it is significant to point out that Sophie gets rid of her curse before the Witch of the Waste is defeated as she realizes "Her hair kept getting in her way. It fell across her face in reddish fair hanks" (Jones 298). The reddish hanks reflect that she gets rid of the white hair of her older self and returns to being young, but she manages to do this without defeating the Witch of the Waste. This removal of the curse happens at the point where Sophie starts believing in herself and takes action to save the ones she loves which reflects that she finally gained enough self-confidence to take the matters into her own hands. The order of events points out that Sophie finds the force to break her curse herself and confirms that she was cursed by not only the evil witch but also by her own lack of self-confidence.

The ending, in typical Bildungsroman fashion, marks the point where Sophie has completed her development and now, she is ready for the rest of her life with Howl in the moving castle. Punda Somkid points out that "Sophie's journey shows a cycle of adventure which the protagonist returns to the starting point with developed character traits at the end of the story" (42). As she has returned to her original age at the end of the book, she has returned to her starting point, but now she is equipped with character development the magical experiences and experiences of the old Sophie provided. Without these experiences, she would lack the necessary character development and would have an unfortunate, uneventful life as she could not free herself from the prison that enslaves her. Fantasy provides opportunities for subversion and deconstruction which allows her to grow up. Sophie reaches maturation thanks to fantasy and can only belong

in the supernatural as without it she would never go through experiences that allowed her to gain self-confidence. Fantasy made her coming-of-age story possible as such Bildungsroman portrayed it to show subversion of certain norms may be necessary for “Bildung,” not just in fantasy and fiction, but in real life as well. By the end of the novel, Jones reflects the importance of this subversion by presenting Sophie with her developed character traits which mark the end of her coming-of-age story as the rest of her story is beyond the realm of the Bildungsroman genre.

3.3. FANTASY AS A NECESSARY DETOUR

Sarah Gilead in her study of the closure in children’s fantasy fiction studies the return to the real world, “the ordinary reality” and suggests that fantasy serves as “a necessary detour in a schematic Bildung” (282). The real world being the final destination of a fantasy protagonist means that the realm of fantasy becomes secondary, as Gilead states that “The return closure establishes a clear ontological and narrative hierarchy wherein dream becomes secondary to ordinary reality of consciousness and social life” (281, 282). The return closure is the case for Nobody in *The Graveyard Book*, as he concludes his story by leaving the supernatural realm behind to go into the real world, the ordinary reality, the place he was at the beginning of the novel so that he can start his life. However, the opposite is true for *Howl’s Moving Castle*, Jones once again subverts the norms as Sophie stays in the realm of fantasy, inside the supernatural moving castle while the door to the real world is there, but unused. Even if the fantasy acts merely as a detour as in *The Graveyard Book*, or becomes the life itself, as in *Howl’s Moving Castle*, its necessity in the “schematic Bildung” is undeniable. Moreover, considering the majority of the novels decide to focus on the realm of fantasy suggests a reversal of the hierarchy, where the stories of real-world, such as Nobody’s adventures in the real world or the life behind the door that opens to Wales, inside the moving castle, becomes secondary to the stories of fantasy.

However, fantasy may be suggested to be a necessary detour for growth not only for protagonists but also for readers as well. Books themselves act as a detour to life as they interrupt daily life to tell stories of different characters from multiple places. In the case of fantasy literature, life is abjured by magic and imagination to tell impossible and

supernatural stories that real life has no chance to tell. Through this detour into fantasy, the reader gets the chance to observe and experience supernatural experiences. Bildungsroman like *Howl's Moving Castle* and *The Graveyard Book* can offer experiences that may contribute to the development process of the readers themselves. It has been discussed throughout the thesis how fantasy was necessary for the coming-of-age stories of both Sophie and Nobody, as fantasy allowed them to grow up, build their identities and find a place in the world. Similar to Sophie and Nobody, there might be some people who need supernatural experiences to grow and develop however real life cannot offer moving castles, curses, or vampire mentors. In this case, the supernatural realm of fantasy and the literature that depicts it acts as a necessary detour to life so that readers can experience these developing events before returning to the real world as new people equipped with the lessons from supernatural literature.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

This thesis has argued about the possible generic mixture of Bildungsroman with the fantasy genre, under the name of Fantastic Bildungsroman. The genre has transformed and adapted with the influence of many literary movements such as modernism, postmodernism, and postcolonialism which proves that this genre is open to change to accommodate the necessities and voice the conditions of these periods. Considering the ever-changing nature of Bildungsroman, seeing that it has resorted to fantasy to be able to tell the coming-of-age stories of the contemporary period is intriguing. Looking at the contrast of the supernatural elements of fantasy fiction with the typically realistic Bildungsroman, a generic mixture of these two genres presents a type of fiction that is outside the established boundaries. As a result, it is revealed that the subversive nature of fantasy fiction is necessary to be able to tell certain coming-of-age stories as the realm of fantasy provides many opportunities for growth that is missing in the primary world. As such, with the help of *Howl's Moving Castle* by Diana Wynne Jones and *The Graveyard Book* by Neil Gaiman, this thesis claims that during the contemporary period Bildungsroman needs the subversive nature of fantasy not only to properly reflect coming-of-age stories but also to comment on the growth in the contemporary world, and the literature that is created as a mixture of these genres can be called Fantastic Bildungsroman.

Both *Howl's Moving Castle* and *The Graveyard Book* portray protagonists at the beginning of their coming-of-age stories. However, both novels are set in the fantasy realm, which means that the growth of their protagonists Sophie and Nobody are heavily impacted by the supernatural. As contemporary fantasy novel examples, these novels are selected for this thesis with the intention of portraying the transformation of traditionally realistic Bildungsroman in the realm of fantasy. In *The Graveyard Book* how a typical coming-of-age story occurs with the influence of the supernatural in a fantastic setting is discussed with the story of Nobody. As Nobody's early years are depicted thoroughly in the novel and since the novel follows traditional Bildungsroman conventions, it is a fitting example to study the generic mixture of fantasy and Bildungsroman. On the other hand,

Howl's Moving Castle subverts several expectations related to Bildungsroman, fantasy, and age. As the literature of subversion, in the diction of Rosemary Jackson, Jones uses fantasy as a force to subvert and deconstruct established norms and expectations to widen the boundaries of these genres. A study of Jones' novel provides valuable insight into the liberating force of fantasy by pointing out that there are countless untold coming-of-age stories in the realm of fantasy, and the supernatural creates invaluable opportunities not only for growth but for Bildungsroman as well.

To set the groundwork and to get ready for the wider discussion, the introduction part of the thesis focuses on necessary descriptions and the study of the Bildungsroman and fantasy genres. The historical background of Bildungsroman along with the critical survey of the genre has been given with the intention of reflecting the genre's change and transformation throughout different literary periods. In doing so the genre is defined and numerous studies that debate the origin and definition of the genre have been presented. This background study revealed that Bildungsroman as a genre is open to change and it has transformed throughout different literary periods to better reflect the conditions of those times. The coming-of-age stories of each period has different aims and Bildungsroman tried to reflect this not only through structural changes but also through thematic ones. In doing so, various sub-genres of Bildungsroman have been defined such as Künstlerroman, Erziehungsroman, and Entwicklungsroman, and the changes Bildungsroman went through during the Traditional, Modernist, Post-Modernist, and Post-Colonial periods has been studied. As a result, Bildungsroman is accepted as a wide tree with many branches that bifurcates from the same root, as Moretti suggests. Considering the thematic and structural aims of the genre vary, the common denominators of the genre are also subject to change. However, looking at the core aims of the genre, the common denominators of the Bildungsroman have been defined as the representation and depiction of formation, coming-of-age, and growth of young protagonists by telling a journey of development portraying the challenges, struggles, and journeys of the childhood and growing up.

Following the study of Bildungsroman, the introduction part of this thesis continues with a study of the fantasy genre. The popularity and the rise of the genre during the contemporary period are pointed out with parallels to the rise in critical studies on the genre. A critical survey of the genre has been given to prepare the discussion for the wider

discussion. In doing so, the definition and the aims of the genre have been discussed with the help of influential critics of the genre, such as Rosemary Jackson, Lucie Armitt, and J.R.R. Tolkien. With Jackson the genre is defined as the literature of subversion, pointing out the subversive, and critical nature of the supernatural as it can be used as a tool to challenge the status quo. Armitt and Tolkien helped in defining the common denominators of the genre by stating that fantasy concerns itself with the creation of a “Secondary World” where the supernatural and magic are possible. With transportation into this “Secondary World”, fantasy texts tend to focus on characters who go on journeys to explore this magical world and encounter many challenges which in turn allow them to develop both physically and mentally.

The historical backgrounds and critical surveys of both genres furthered the discussion into their generic mixture. Looking at the common elements of Bildungsroman and fantasy, it is stated that fantasy works tend to carry Bildungsroman elements as a part of their storytelling. As a genre that is a big part of children's and young adult fiction, fantasy tends to tell coming-of-age stories. With the help of examples like *Harry Potter* by J.K. Rowling and *Earthsea* by Ursula K. Le Guin, a first look into the Fantastic Bildungsroman is provided. Through these two highly influential series of fantasy fiction, it has been stated that fantasy and Bildungsroman have become inseparable. As a result, a generic mixture, in Fowler's terms, of Bildungsroman and fantasy is suggested. However, to go into detail, to explain the generic mixture, and to display what the mixture of fantasy and Bildungsroman achieves, this thesis shifts its focus to two separate novels.

The chapter titled “Bildungsroman Elements amongst the Supernatural” focuses on the typical Bildungsroman tropes and denominators found inside the two main novels this essay focuses on, *Howl's Moving Castle* and *The Graveyard Book*. With a thematic approach to both novels, many elements of the traditional Bildungsroman genre are stated to be a part of these contemporary fantasy novels. Looking at the thematic features of both novels many features surface and it is stated that these features are influential parts of coming-of-age stories. For instance, considering both Sophie and Nobody are orphans, taking a look at orphan tradition allows this study to draw parallels between many orphan characters that came before them and found their stories told in Bildungsroman. Following that, the issue of naming is studied in detail to portray how the name of the protagonists are used as a tool to symbolize their growth. Home and belonging are other

features that have been mentioned in relation to the development of these characters. Considering the influence of home in the development process and the search for a place to belong as driving factors to grow, these features emerged as key features in defining the novels as Bildungsroman. In the wake of the home and belonging as studies that study space, the thesis shifted its focus to the setting in order to reveal certain patterns in Bildungsroman. The change of setting has been defined as a feature that parallels the growth of protagonists and it is stated to reflect certain points and milestones in the coming-of-age stories. Following this, education is explained as a significant milestone in the development process, and it has been observed that Bildungsroman tends to reflect education experiences as well. Considering this, the experiences of Sophie and Nobody with education are studied to draw parallels to the Bildungsroman genre and present how their development is influenced by it. All of these elements are studied in detail and with examples to crystalize the points made. By doing so, the thesis situated these two works as Bildungsroman, however, their nature as fantasy novels is kept in mind to reflect how fantasy influenced and transformed Bildungsroman in telling coming-of-age stories.

The final part of this thesis “Fantasy and its Double: The Process and The End in Fantastic Bildungsroman” acknowledges these two novels as Bildungsroman and explores the effect the supernatural elements have on them and in turn Bildungsroman genre. Considering the subversive nature of the fantasy genre, it is a great tool for fiction to comment on, criticise and deconstruct the established norms and narratives. During this chapter, it has been stated that fantasy through its mixture with Bildungsroman subverts the elements of the genre by going outside the expectations. Thanks to this subversion, these novels comment on the growth and development in the contemporary world and provide possibilities for growth beyond the established narratives. *The Graveyard Book* sees the contemporary world as a dangerous place to grow and offers an alternative to the supernatural, nature, and the past. *Howl’s Moving Castle*, through the deconstructive nature of Jones’ prose, suggests that the growth and development do not end after teenage years and an old woman can experience a coming-of-age story as well. Fantasy offers innovative possibilities and opportunities for growth by broadening the boundaries of traditionally realistic Bildungsroman. It presents experiences that are not available in the real world and as a result, it makes it possible to grow. Both Sophie and Nobody would not be able to grow without the supernatural as the world was ready to

neglect them. However, fantasy shifted the perspective into their neglected stories and through its subversive nature gave both Sophie and Nobody a chance to grow and have their own coming-of-age story.

In conclusion, this thesis has argued that Fantastic Bildungsroman raises as one of the contemporary bifurcations of the tree that is Bildungsroman. As Bildungsroman went through many formations to adapt and portray the coming-of-age stories of each literary period, it is not surprising that it has transformed once again and resorted to fantasy with contemporary fiction. This generic mixture of fantasy and Bildungsroman has been stated to provide fresh and plentiful experiences for growth with supernatural elements. Moreover, as the literature of subversion fantasy criticises the status quo and manages to reflect coming-of-age stories that would not be possible in the traditionally realistic realm of Bildungsroman. Through this shift in the perspective, unique coming-of-age stories and supernatural growth experiences have been depicted in Fantastic Bildungsroman, which not only contributes to the development of the protagonist but also the development of the reader, since the supernatural opportunities for growth do not exist in the real world, reading them in fiction can be a didactic experience. These points have been crystallized with the help of Diana Wynne Jones and Neil Gaiman as their novels *Howl's Moving Castle* and *The Graveyard Book* provided plentiful examples to support the argument. As such, this thesis claims that as a contemporary branch of the Bildungsroman genre, the Fantastic Bildungsroman arises as a type of fiction that provides a fresh perspective by portraying growth in a supernatural setting, which in turn subverts the expectations concerning Bildungsroman and widens the boundaries of the genre.

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CURRICULUM VITAE

1. **Name Surname** : **Özcan KAHRAMAN**
2. **Title** : **English Teacher**
3. **Education** : **Masters Degree**

Degree	Program	University	Years
BA	Faculty of Literature / English Language and Literature	Hacettepe Üniversitesi	2014-2018
MA	Faculty of Foreign Languages / English Language and Literature	Ankara Sosyal Bilimler Üniversitesi	2019-2022

Conferences

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After finishing high school Özcan Kahraman enrolled in the English Language and Literature department of Hacettepe University. After getting his BA in 2018 he started working as an English Teacher. He enrolled in the MA program of English Language and Literature at Ankara Social Sciences University. His primary research interest concerns the presence of the ordinary in fantastic universes and the tabletop fantasy experience. He is deeply interested in exploring fantastic universes across multiple media such as video games, tabletop games, movies, animations, and literature.