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FILOZOFICKÁ FAKULTA

**Harry Potter and the
Deathly Regime: A
Study of Dystopian and
Totalitarian Themes in
the Final Three *Harry
Potter* Volumes**

Magisterská diplomová práce

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5.7 Permanent War

Sigmund Neumann maintains that society in totalitarian states is usually viewed as permanently at war, which may be a result of the great wars of the past (Neumann, *Permanent Revolution* 231–32). In *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*, Cornelius Fudge refuses to acknowledge the return of Lord Voldemort, and consequently does not wage war on him. Instead, another permanent war can be observed in the fifth *Harry Potter* volume: the war against the Muggles. It is mentioned that in the past, during witch hunts, Muggles tried to eradicate wizards by burning them at the stake. However, on the rare occasion that the witch hunters did catch a real witch or a wizard, he or she would simply perform a Flame-Freezing Charm and “then pretend to shriek with pain while enjoying a gentle, tickling sensation” (Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* 2). However, as stated previously in this thesis, the Ministry of Magic decreed that it would be safer still to isolate magic users from Muggles (Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* 23) to make Muggles, one day, view wizards merely as creatures from legends and fairy tales.

This decree caused wizards to form their own social circles in Muggle Britain, as, for example, the village of Hogsmeade inhabited by wizards alone (Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* 14). In other cases, Wizarding families concentrated on living close to each other among Muggles, as, for example, in the village of Godric’s Hollow, which is said to be a “home to a number of Wizarding families” (Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* 217). In totalitarian states, the political leader often

controls his people easily by stressing the danger of outside enemies (Neumann, *Permanent Revolution* 230). Indeed, as the Ministry emphasizes the threat the Muggles might pose, wizards hide their existence without questioning and longing for contact with non-magical people. Thus, with its separation from the outside and unknown, J. K. Rowling's Wizarding world fits a description of a totalitarian state quite well.

It is also known to wizards that in case of a serious breach of rules set by the Ministry, they might get sent to the feared Azkaban. It is safer for wizards to obey the Ministry's rules, as the Wizarding system of justice is anything but unflawed. Numerous wizards, such as Rubeus Hagrid (Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* 276) or Sirius Black (Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* 359), get sent to Azkaban despite their innocence. Even the hearings of the accused may be compromised, as seen in Harry Potter's trial, which has the time and place changed at the last moment to prevent Albus Dumbledore from attending (Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix* 139). Even at Hogwarts itself, it is common to receive serious and life-threatening punishment for stepping out of the line (Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* 261), such as going into the dangerous Forbidden Forest at night (267). All of these severe punishments and strict rules of the Wizarding law can be, however, justified by the government by maintaining the order must be kept because of the ongoing danger from Muggles.

In *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince*, the Wizarding community finds itself at war with the Dark wizard Lord Voldemort once again. In a desperate attempt to seem