

Exploring the Convergence Between Magical Realms: A Comparative Analysis of Harry Potter and A Court of Thorns and Roses Series

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Abstract:

Fantasy has always been an underlying theme in almost every plot, whether it is romance or nature-influenced writings. Every genre has a faction of imagination in it, an element of imagination that seems to be engraved in it, hidden or expressed. For some, it is a way to escape reality, while for others, it is a way of living. Almost everyone has read or heard a fairy tale. A story full of wonders that transports us to an enchanted realm. The fairy tales and the supernatural world have grasped readers' minds since the dawn of time, some believe it to be real and existent yet hiding, while others ignore it as a figment of lies, castles in the air. This paper delves into the trivial details of similarities that have existed in the two series of fantasy by different writers at different times yet transporting into the same realm.

The present article wishes to acquaint the readers with the plot of fantasy literature and the presence of the underlying settings and elements that create a complete story that feels different but contains almost similar principles. This paper deeply examines so that it could also serve as a basis of comparison for other fantasy literature written by different writers. This paper further delves into similar methods that use magic and myths to create themes of power, identity, and transformation despite their differing plots and settings. This paper explores the similarities of the same genre, as both involve magical realms with rich, detailed worlds, though their plots and themes diverge significantly. They share common elements such as otherworldly adventures, complex characters, and the blending of the magical with the mundane.

Keywords: A Court of Thorns and Roses, Fantasy, Harry Potter, Magical, Similarities.

We all love to live in a magical world. Magic is like a divine power for a human who feels ordinary in regular life. Magic as an element differs and makes everything special. It might even become dangerous and harmful, but human always covets the impossible, peculiar, and different. Almost everyone has read or heard a fairy tale. The story is full of wonders that transport us to grasped readers' minds since the dawn of time, some believe it to be existent yet hiding, while others want it to be real. Bailey(2009)¹ defines magic as the use of extraordinary power to make possible something impossible. This paper delves into the trivial details of similarities in the two series.

This paper explores the similarities of the same genre. Both involve magical realms with rich, detailed worlds, though their plots and themes diverge significantly. They share common elements such as

otherworldly adventures, complex characters, and the blending of the magical with the mundane. HP (Harry Potter) has brought magic into the limelight and spread the aura that is a basic need of humans. The dominant similarity is that the magic laws serve as the element of surprise for the character. The acknowledgment of such power and wishful thinking to get it and acquire it has been growing. But as it cannot be gained, the readers turn to the books and their fictional characters to be able to feel them.

Magical fantasy literature often builds on intricate plots where magic serves as a core element of the world, the conflicts, and the character development. Hawthorn (2001) states that there are the elements of a novel which are very useful in analyzing fiction: narrative technique, plot, character, structure, setting, theme, symbol and image, and speech and dialogue.

The element of wonder can be defined as the idea of seeing things that are extraordinary from one's point of view. A few theories and ideas that frequently shape the plots in this genre are discussed in this paper. For discussing these specific points, the summary and the time of the release of both the fiction has been mentioned so that the reader could perceive the and yet understand the similarities beneath.

Written in seven sequels, namely Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone(1997), Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets(1998), Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban(1999), Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire(2000), Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix(2003), Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince(2005), Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows(2007), Harry Potter is the story of wizard orphan boy living with his relatives Dursleys, who treat him as filth. Harry learns of his magical history when he turns eleven and is admitted to Hogwarts School of Witch and Wizardry and gains his magical expertise. But as every story is incomplete until the protagonist wins over the antagonist, facing trials and difficulties.

So, in every sequel, Harry wins over Voldemort's evil plans and defeats his ways of killing Harry and spreading evil in the world. In this quest, Harry makes friends and foes along the way and is pitched into many hair-raising adventures, but the friends' courage, loyalty, and curiosity mean they triumph over time and again.

These adventures are just part of the book's appeal. The fact that Harry and his friends are casting spells and fighting evil against the backdrop of normal school life whilst dodging teachers doing homework, yet managing friendships, conflicts, and even romance, makes them all the more thrilling. This establishes a relationship and a bond with the reader, making it a mesmerizing read.

On the other hand, written in five sequels, namely A Court of Thorns and Roses (2015), A Court of Mist and Fury (2016), A Court of Wings and Ruin (2017), A Court of Frost and Starlight (2018), A Court of Silver Flames (2021), ACOTAR is the story of Feyre Archeron a young huntress, who is the lone bread earner of her family. She has to feed her crippled father and two elder sisters. Her mother died in her early childhood, making her promise to look after the family. Just like every other fiction, Feyre has to pass trials to release her love of life from the clutches of evil and save the world from destruction.

The way Harry Potter has beseeched every reader's mind, ACOTAR (A Court of Thorns and Roses) is gaining same popularity slowly and steadily, as there seem to be many similarities in the content of the texts of these magical realm fantasy fiction.

Fantasy follows a general pattern wherein it flows along the framework and continues to lead through the basis. The basic template for almost all the fantasy fiction that the writers generally follow include the plot, setting and environment, elements defining their identity, power and role in society. This leads to highlighting the impact of character's action ultimately directing towards consequences. Based on Jones (1968) explanation, theme is underlying ideas that are presented by the author. Plot is the movement of a story. To be precise, it is an organized sequence of events and actions that build up the story (Hawthorn,

2001). Setting is the social or physical context where the actions in the story occur (Hawthorn, 2001). Kennedy (1983) defines character as an imagined person who occupies the story.

It begins with the life around the protagonist, his understanding of beliefs, his introduction to the call for the magical world, and unique abilities, tests, and trials faced on every step call for adventure, guidance, team framing, and finally, the triumph of good over evil. Following the above framework are almost every plot, i.e., Lord of Rings, ACOTAR, Harry Potter, The Chronicles of Narnia and many more.

There often exists a classic theme where good wins over evil. A moral discipline in every being. Therefore, in the storyline, when an evil sorcerer, Dark Lord, or malevolent magical entity threatens the world, the protagonists must thwart them, whether it is a simple or multiple entity in case of a series.

In the plot, magic might manifest itself as a corrupt force that tempts the heroes, or it could be a forbidden source that both sides covet, making it ambiguous for the viewers to deduce who is truly good or evil. Following are the storyline that conveys the same- The Chronicles of Narnia and The Wheel of Time. It could also be a new world- a magical world with equal powers or unbalanced powers between the protagonist and the antagonist. It is their decisions and actions that make them prone to good or evil.

Another facet is the pull that promises powerful darkness rewards, manipulating the minds of several characters, although it deceives at the end, leading to a worse fate or a terrible end.

One of the most basic elements in a fantasy story plotline is that there is a prophecy that binds the destiny of the protagonist to wield magical power and save the world. This cliché usually follows a hero who is at first reluctant to do so. This prophecy is ambiguous or, in simpler terms, flawed, making multiple people subject to its atrocities. The atrocities done in the name of the prophecy lead to dangerous outcomes and injustice toward many innocent. At the same time, many others are ready to sacrifice their lives. The ‘chosen’ one who may have the powers may yield dangerous consequences.

The fantasy storyline also has a moral dilemma around using magic. The magic in the story is neither inherently good nor evil, but how it is used determines its ethical standings. This plotline makes the characters face choices that make it vague if the magic should be used or not. This creates a taxing question: What if using magic saves the world but destroys the user’s soul or the environment?

In fantasy stories, the presence of magic usually appears in the form of magical abilities, magical creatures, or magical phenomena. It helps to advance the whole story to be more interesting by building the tension and struggles for the characters.

It is known that magic serves as a metaphor for the protagonist's personal growth with them discovering their magical powers as well as themselves and their standing in the world. Every story has the same drawback that the protagonist's growing power could lead to unintended consequences resulting in causing harm to loved ones, altering reality, and even giving acumen to their personal journey.

Some authors even take advantage of the fact that higher and efficient magic which was once relevant and highly powerful but has been lost or has become outlawed due to the loss of the use of its knowledge. These kinds of plots revolve around rediscovering this ancient knowledge or navigating a world in which magic is now feared or even forbidden. This puts the reader in a dilemma about the reason behind the debarred magic or if the ancient magic is not a solution but the source of the current conflict.

Like the scientific system, magic operates the same, with rules, limitations, and consistency akin to technology. This subtraction allows magic to influence society, much like technological advancement in the world.

This plot line has a complex societal division, with the elite controlling magical resources and common folk relying on limited access/ forbidden access. These kinds of plots involve rebellions, magical capitali-

sm, or even a breakthrough that disrupts the power balance.

Another principal element in a fantasy storyline is that magic opens doorways to other realms, dimensions, or parallel universes. These may include adventures in vastly different magical landscapes. Every parallel world/ dimension could have its own distinctive magic system, and the protagonist must navigate and adjust to them. There are frequent scenarios wherein the boundaries between the world break down, leading to the merger of realities.

The framework of a magical fantasy is incomplete without the use of supernatural forces. As the magic itself is beyond ordinary, supernatural forces uplift it. But this is a subtle art. The more subtly the use of it, the better impression it creates on the reader. These forces could be used in a beneficial or harmful way as and when needed. If the writer is wise enough, this element could create an atmosphere of balance or chaos as the writer intends. Characters using this magic might risk using their identity or sanity.

An almost common concept is rebellion against magical authority. Rebellion is common in youth, and it draws the reader towards reason. When shackles are placed without consideration for truth, rebellion is a necessary evil. It leads the protagonist towards maturity and changes him/her. Rebel against a magical dominion to bring freedom and restore balance is important to show that the character is evolving. With magic, this rebellion could lead to the unleashing of the Pandora Box that had previously been sealed to get rid of evil and leashing to face unforeseen consequences of their actions, which brings about change in nature with a twist in the plot.

In the fantasy world, magic is deeply connected to the natural world with mythical creatures, spirits, realms, or even the gods tied to it. Magic users/ manipulators often draw from these forces, which can lead to conflicts whenever the balance between the natural balance is disturbed. There often arises a question of what if the magic tied to nature is exploited for industrial or personal gain, leading to ecological collapse? The protagonist might try to restore the balance but may discover that they are part of the problem.

When all the above characteristics are taken into account, a fantasy fiction emerges which could make a great impact on the minds of a reader. Both the series ACOTAR and Harry Potter follow almost the same concept, characteristics, and format of magical fantasy literature that are evident. In ACOTAR, Feyre, a human girl born in the human world, is brought into the magical world where she undergoes adventures, faces antagonists and trials, and comes out victoriously, thereby saving the world. Similarly, in Harry Potter, Harry, who is brought up in the human world, is taken into the magical world where he faces his nemesis year after year by finally saving the world by getting rid of Voldemort.

Both the series end with the moral of victory of good over evil. The protagonist in the series faces evil and wins over due to the goodness in his heart. In ACOTAR, Feyre faces Amarantha and comes out victorious after facing all the trials and tortures set by Amarantha on her. The good of Feyre wins over the evilness spread by Amarantha. While in Harry Potter, Harry faces Voldemort, thwarts his evil plans of regaining life, and stops him from making an entirely new evil world. The moral has always been the victory of good over evil in every sequel of both series.

The plot streamlines the same concept wherein the protagonist isn't born to fight against the Evil rather, the protagonist fits in the role due to the carelessness and arrogance of the antagonist. In the ACOTAR series, Feyre is chosen as the protagonist due to the curse on Tamlin by Amarantha, who arrogantly feels it is impossible to find someone to fit the criteria of her curse. Whereas in the Harry Potter series, Voldemort doesn't pay attention to the complete prophecy made and chooses to kill Harry, thereby marking him as his equal by unknowingly transferring some of his powers to Harry.

In ACOTAR, Feyre is not ready to believe that she is a faerie with powers of all the seven Lords of Prythian, and they have unintentionally transferred their powers to her until Rhysand shows her proofs of her power, which in time makes her realize that Rhysand must be true.

In Harry Potter, the Vernons (with whom Harry lives) had imbibed into him that magic does not exist even though they knew he was a wizard. They felt his magical powers would be subdued if they did not let him know his real identity. But Harry is unable to explain the magical incidents that happen around him whenever he is scared or angry, which Hagrid points out to Harry when he reveals the truth about him being a wizard. He is unsure even after that, but when his aunt and uncle admit to him being a wizard and reveal his true identity, does he believe in Hogwarts? Another convincing factor also is Hagrid's magic on Dudley (Harry's cousin), wherein Dudley gets a pigtail as he eats Harry's birthday cake made by Hagrid. Both the characters are not gullible; they need reasons and proof to believe in whatever is revealed to them.

Facing a serious enemy as soon as they enter the magical world has acted upon the life of both the protagonists, they mature earlier than their age peers. Feyre started hunting at the age of fourteen. She did not tell Tamlin of her birthday on Winter Solstice as there was already a celebration, and she did not want extra gifts as there were already many gifts. Harry, on the other hand, acts maturely when Draco Malfoy behaves arrogantly and offers his friendship.

Protagonists have a strong connection to be the chosen one. The hidden motive might be revenge, but they are the sufferers at the hands of the antagonist. Losing a parent at the hands of an antagonist is one of the main underlying factors. In ACOTAR (though later in the series), Feyre loses her father, killed by the King of Hybern. It is an unbearable pain for a child to lose their only parent that was alive.

While in Harry Potter, Harry loses both his parents, who were killed by Voldemort. Harry, being very young, does not even have memories to relive them. He has not known his parents' love for a really long time. It is not easy for a growing boy to live without his parents' love and protection. By sacrificing her life, Lily Potter grants her son Harry the protection of love.

It is not easy for the protagonist to believe that they are above normal. The protagonist always wants to believe that they fit the criteria of an average normal human and not someone special until they have enough proof provided to believe them.

The similarities can be easily seen in the plots, in the concept to make it believable, although the terminologies used are different for the same concepts. Both the stories contain the same concept of traveling through magic, but with different terminologies, in ACOTAR, we find the power of Wincrowing wherein a person can reach another place that he intends in a few seconds through magic. Rhysand explains to Feyre that wincrowing is like two different parts of one piece of cloth, thereby explaining one piece of cloth referring to the world and two different parts being two different places the person needs to travel from and reach.

Harry Potter series has the same traveling from one place to another in a matter of seconds using magic, but the term that is used is Apparating. However, there is a restriction for under-aged wizards who have to clear an apparition test and qualify, as there could be disastrous results.

Both the series have the mortal world as a part of their planning and plotting, the plots are not only limited to the magical world but the evil that can be inflicted on the human world, killing innocent humans. The danger lurking in the Mortal Land is evident in both the series. In the ACOTAR, the shattering of the wall is a great concern, as the plans would be torturing humans and making them slaves. The Harry Potter series declares danger in the mortal world when Sirius Black escapes the prison. Even Voldemort is reali-

zed as a threat to the mortal world...

Not only magical but also supernatural or cosmic elements play an important role in both texts. In the ACOTAR series, due to the use of spells in Cauldron, the King of Hybern is believed to have gone crazy with immense power. Even the Cauldron enslaves Elain to capture Nesta. Such powers are beyond mortal understanding and thereby manipulate events. In Harry Potter, the Deathly Hallows and Horcruxes are such forces that are beyond human understanding. The Deathly Hallows, which is believed to be a myth, actually exists and is revealed to have great power. The legend of Horcruxes, which is believed to be the evillest of the wizard's doing, is another power that creates chaos and leads to Voldemort being invincible. Both the series show rebellion against authority when injustice is done towards someone. In the ACOTAR, Feyre rebels against Ianthe's stringent rules of collecting Tithe and rebels by leaving in mid-ceremony and giving away her ring to a water wraith who is unable to pay her Tithe. In Harry Potter, Harry rebels against Cornelius Fudge, who is not ready to accept that Voldemort is back. He also, along with other students, rebels against Umbridge, who sets limitations on every activity she is suspicious of, which might lead to rebellion against the Ministry. He forms Dumbledore's Army (DA) under the nose of Umbridge and teaches Defense against Dark Arts to every member of the group.

In a fantasy world, almost everything is possible. Every shred of imagination can exist and come to life. So, the world would be incomplete without the presence of magical and mythical creatures. The presence of these creatures makes this fantasy world more believable. Both these fantasy literature have exploited this opportunity to make the story all the more reliable by introducing such creatures that are beyond our wild imaginations. A magical world would feel incomplete with the absence of magical and mystical creatures that make it more believable and existing. In the ACOTAR series, the Suriel, Naga, and Bogge are different magical creatures, to name a few, while the Harry Potter series has the Hippogriff, Threstrals, Dragons, Acromantula, and Unicorns, to name few.

These creatures, some unheard of, present a completely different and deadly view, and with the minute details provided in the text, they bring the imagination into reality for the readers. Not only the land creature but the presence of water creatures can also be seen as another similarity between the two writings.

Along with other creatures in the plots, there is also a special mention of the creatures of the lake and the sea. Water wraiths are the sea creatures mentioned in the ACOTAR series, while Merpeople are found in the HP series. Both the creatures play a significant role in their plots.

If the series would have stuck to creatures, it would have been acceptable. But these writings have delved into a step farther by introducing the existence of otherworldly creatures.

The presence of an otherworldly creature and instruments is evident in both the series. In the ACOTAR series, Amren, Bone Carver, Weaver, and Cauldron are immensely powerful elements, while in the HP series, the hallows, Horcruxes, and dementors radiate extraordinary power. These powers are beyond the scope of normal power and enable the use of powerful magic.

And with these creatures, the otherworldly powerful instruments like Mirror- Oroborous, Mirror of Erised, Hallows, etc., bring about the extent of power magic can induce.

Most fantasies are written with a moral - good wins over, evil loyalty pays. It has the hidden motive of convincing mankind that even through the test of life, the hard times, if someone faces the difficulties till the end and stays true, they would, at last, succeed, like a protagonist in the plot.

For some, it is a conviction, but for others, it cannot be accepted as a reality. As every person, that is the characteristics traits of good as well as evil. It is believed that in every story, good wins over evil. The

moral does not focus on the theme, but it is not. Eradicate complete evil as every person's character carries that evil as a part of the personality as it carries the good. The dominance of the other two characteristics defines what the person is. Some of the time, the person might not be evil but would be acting so due to circumstances that the character is facing. The character might be compared to behave evilly due to the pressure of the antagonist.

As is seen in Harry Potter, in the end, Voldemort is destroyed, but his followers are still alive and are pardoned, which shows that they are not particularly evil but are behaving so under the flagship of the utter evilness of Voldemort. Umbridge, on the other hand, was not a follower of Voldemort, but still, she was utterly evil. At the other time, the dominant quality of being good takes over the malice in the heart and overcomes the evil. They would be a light in the dark that helps to set the plans of the protagonist and lead them to final success.

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