To Whom It May Concern:

Please see attached my documents for entry into the 2019 Student Book-Collecting Contest.

Title: *A Harry Potter Rosetta Stone*

Submitted by:

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Thank you.

Sincerely,

Sean McAllister
A Harry Potter Rosetta Stone

In 1997, Joanne Rowling published the first novel of her seven part series about the adventures of a young wizard, Harry Potter. Since that time, the series has been authorized for publication in 75 other languages and been printed in over 500 million copies worldwide (see article¹), with these numbers continuing to grow. I first read Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone in 1999, at 13 years of age, and have loved and leaned on the series since that time. In 2003, I began my collecting adventure, and present here the 442 authorized books that can be found in my collection in addition to book illustrations. The purpose of my collection has changed over time. However, reading the series and my collecting journey has nurtured my love of reading and printed material.

What Harry Potter means to me

It would be difficult to understand why I have such a sizable collection without first understanding what the series means to me. I was gifted the first Harry Potter book midyear in 1999 (30th printing) (Figure 1), a present from my cousin. I put the book aside, because, at that point, I wasn’t a huge fan of reading new books – I tend to reread old favorites. But by Christmas, I had the time and read that first book…and the second and third books. At that point, I had to wait a year for the next release, which seemed like an eternity. My parents saw the lag in publications of the series and wondered if I really wanted to get into it, since I would be in college before the final book was released. I was unperturbed. I am glad I kept going.

In college, I spent the summer between Freshmen and Sophomore years at a field camp based out of Dillingham, Alaska. Mid-way through the season, which was spent fishing and performing surgery on *Salvelinus malma* (Dolly Varden char), I had an opportunity to read the sixth book. When I arrived at the final act, I was deeply moved. Dumbledore’s death – sorry, spoiler warnings don’t apply 14 years later – coincided with the deaths of two of my own personal mentors. Scott Powell, counselor at Boy Scout Camp Gorsuch, was an excellent mentor to me as I attended the camp over several years growing up. Scott died suddenly by an electrical incident, though he was doing what he loved, helping out others at a Boy Scout event. Ed Loescher was a teacher of mine in high school (pre-calculus), and had also recently passed in a motorcycle accident. So, I deeply empathized with what Harry felt in that moment, and this marked the start of me using the series as a means to ground myself in emotional situations. When I felt lonely or lost, Harry Potter was there to find escape and comfort.

**Collecting the Harry Potter books**

The first Harry Potter book I collected was the Spanish translation of *Harry Potter y la piedra filosofal* (HP1) in 2003 (Figure 2). This was a natural place to start, since I was taking Spanish in high school at the time, and my parent’s decided to gift me something on which I could practice my reading. From that moment, an idea sparked that initiated further collecting. In 196 BC, King Ptolemy V issued a tax decree, inscribed and copied on slabs of stone in two languages used in his domain: Ancient Egyptian (hieroglyphic and Demotic scripts) and Ancient Greek (Parkinson, 1999²). This simple text, discovered nearly 2000 years later, proved to be the key to deciphering Ancient Egyptian hieroglyphics, which could be accomplished through direct comparisons of the nearly identical texts (Bianchi, 2001³). Being a fan of post-apocalyptica, it seemed to me that a library of identical texts featuring the world’s languages would be both interesting to collect and potentially useful. Harry Potter is currently in the top 20 most translated books in history, the bible clearly at the top overall (see wikipedia article⁴). Thus started my collection, which I’ve titled *A Harry Potter Rosetta Stone*.

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Contents of my collection

As a modern Rosetta stone, my collection centers on translations. Initially, I collected only translations of HP1, which has the most language translations. To identify these, I relied heavily on the work of linguist and enthusiast Potterglot (potterglot.net\(^5\)), who has reviewed the Harry Potter books currently available to determine if they represent a novel translation and if they are authorized for publication. This led to the number presented at the top of the essay (75 languages validly published in addition to the original English). However, the total count of unique languages does not take into account several variations that may exist for each language (Figure 3): 1) multiple translations, 2) multiple scripts, 3) regional adaptations and variants. For example, the initial Turkish translation, initially translated as *Harry Potter Büyülü Taş* (entry 422), was re-released as *Harry Potter ve Felsefe Taşı* (entry 423), to improve on the original translation. Similar new translations have been released for Simplified Chinese (entries 39-40), Italian (entries 293-294), Mongolian (entries 339 and 341), Romanian (entries 354-355), and Russian (entries 364-365). Additionally, languages like Serbian have been transliterated into both Latin and cyrillic scripts (entries 379-381). Adaptations are also widespread: Catalan (entries 22) was adapted into a regional variant, Valencian (entry 432); Spanish and Portuguese have also been adapted into regional variants, divided between the

\(^{5}\) <https://www.potterglot.net/the-list/> Accessed May 10th, 2019.
Figure 3. Examples of translation and language variants. (A) The original Turkish translation (left; entry 422) was redone (right; entry 423), modifying the original title and improving the translation. (B) Serbian exists in three different variants with two different scripts: Montenegrin spelling (left; entry 379), Latin script (middle; entry 381), and Cyrillic script (right; entry 380). (C) Portuguese was translated into two adaptations, featuring words and grammar more commonly used in Brazil (left; entry 353) or Europe (right; entry 350).
continents (European vs. Latin America) (entries 385-405, 350-353). Even our own publication in America was adapted for our region, with American English (entries 84-90, 92-118) replacing common U.K. English (entries 119-122, 133-186) words and phrases, most evident with the title change of HP1: *Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone* to *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone*. I also have several transliterations of English in Braille at different grade levels (not in bibliography). Given this amount of variation, there are at least 97 different translations of Harry Potter that have been authorized by J. K. Rowling.

On the other side of this discussion are unauthorized translations. These translations have not been granted authorization for publication and distribution (and as such are not listed in my bibliography). However, these languages should be represented all the same. Unique languages that have only been published in an unauthorized format are Uighur (پاری بودن ٰت ہر کسے تیار کیتے یالگ طویل، published 2012) and Esperanto (*Hari Potter kaj la Ŝtono de la Saĝuloj*, published in 2004). Uighur is spoken by the Uighur muslims, currently on the news for their repression in the Xinjiang autonomous region of China. Esperanto is a constructed language designed to be a flexible international language. In addition to these languages, many authorized translations started as unauthorized translations that served a particular need from their community. Nepali speakers searching for texts to improve literacy, published the first three Harry Potter books before gaining authorization (entry 345) (*Figure 4*). Similar patterns occurred for the Armenian, Mongolian, Farsi, Sinhala, and Urdu translations.

As I added more HP1 translations to my collection, I naturally was drawn to the variation in cover art (*Figure 5*). Many languages were represented by unique art that reflected interesting cultural preferences. These unique covers inspired me to expand my collection to include all unique cover art variants. Alvaro Tapia, illustrator of the Swedish Harry Potter books, has a unique detail and vibrancy in his cover art (*Figure 5A; entries 406-413*). Some cover art, like the art from the Catalan 2nd Editions (entries 22-25) and Occitan (entries 347-348), appear slightly comical and light (it is a young adult series after all) (*Figure 5B*). Others are dark and foreboding, like the black Russian Gift edition (*Figure 5C; 367-373*). These unique cover illustrations have also inspired me to add original sketches and commissioned artwork from Harry Potter illustrators to my collection. Giles Greenfield, illustrator of the Bloomsbury U.K. publication of *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire* (entry 136) was kind enough to produce lovely pencil illustrations of all seven books, based only on an emotional prompt I suggested (*Figure 6*). I also commissioned a stunning pen sketch of Dumbledore during his fight with Voldemort at the Ministry of Magic (HP5) (*Figure 7*), completed by the illustrator of the new Indonesian edition, Nicholas Chandrawienata (entries 285-291) (*Figure 5D*).
Figure 4. All extant translations of Harry Potter in Nepali. (A) The authorized translation (entry 345) was preceded by unauthorized publication of the first three Harry Potter books (B), all by the same publisher: Sunbird Publishing House.

Next page:

Figure 5. Variation in Harry Potter cover art. (A) Alvaro Tapia’s cover art from the Swedish translation, showing HP1 (entry 407), HP4 (entry 410), and HP5 (entry 411). (B) Cartoonish illustrations by Enric Jardi from the Catalan 2nd edition translation (left; entry 23), and illustrations by Kalou for the Occitan translations of HP1 (entry 347) and HP2 (entry 348). (C) Dark and ominous illustrations accompanying the black Russian Gift Edition, showing HP1 (left; entry 367) and the spines of all seven books (right; entries 367-373) (illustrator unknown). (D) Nicholas Chandrawienata’s cover art from the new Indonesian edition, showing HP1 (left; entry 285), HP4 (entry 288), and HP6 (entry 290).
Figure 6. Commissioned artwork by Giles Greenfield, the cover illustrator of *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire* (U.K. children’s edition, Bloomsbury). The artwork shows one scene from each of the seven novels, with the following emotional prompts: Wonder/Awe, Anticipation/Fear, Joy, Courage in the Face of Death, Anger, Despair, and Confidence.

Next page:

Figure 7. Commissioned artwork by Nicholas Chandrawienata, the cover illustrator of the new Indonesian edition. The artwork shows Albus Dumbledore wielding the Elder Wand in his battle with Voldemort in the Ministry of Magic (in HP5).
The final component of my collection contains unauthorized parodies/bootlegs. The most common bootlegs and parodies come from China and Russia. From China, *Harry Potter and the Leopard-Walk-Up-To Dragon* features a Harry Potter that quickly finds himself morphing into a hobbit and fighting with Smaug (Tolkien’s *The Hobbit*). *Harry Potter and the Porcelain Doll*, *Harry Potter and the Big Funnel*, and *Harry Potter and the Chinese Overseas Students at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry* all feature alternate storylines full of interesting characters from Asia, come to save the day and Harry Potter. From Russia, Tonya Grotter finds herself in much the same situation as Harry Potter (at least in HP1). This clear copyright infringement spawned a complete series of 14 books, most of which are a completely unique story, which are widely popular in Russia. Of course, the most entertaining aspect of these bootlegs and parodies are the covers (*Figure 8*).

*Figure 8.* Parodies and bootlegs of the Harry Potter books, from China (A) and Russia (B). From China: *Harry Potter and the Leopard-Walk-Up-To Dragon* (A, left), *Harry Potter and the Porcelain Doll* (A, middle), and *Harry Potter and the Golden Armor* (A, right). From Russia: *Tanya Grotter and the Magical Double Bass* (B, left) and *Tanya Grotter and the Hammer of Perun* (B, middle) represent the 1st and 2nd editions, both featuring household objects as broom replacements. Another Russian series, featuring Porri Gatter, is shown to the right in B.
Collection development

My collection journey has progressed through three phases. At the beginning, I mostly collected books that pertained to my life, whether that be books related to my language studies, books gifted to me by friends and family, or books collected in my travels abroad for research collection and conferences. It was during one of these trips abroad that I attempted to find a book – and failed. In that moment, I decided to begin collecting in earnest so that I could complete my collection (someday), and not miss out on books that are only available for a short period of time.

With this realization I began phase two, where I actively searched for rare books online and through forums so that I could whittle down the books I still needed to complete my collection. As with any satisfying collecting adventure, there are books that are easy to find (available on amazon.com for instance), and books that are extremely difficult. It was in my initial searches that I found the incredibly helpful information presented by Potterglot and Peter Kenneth (a.k.a. ThePotterCollector). Through “The List,” estimates of difficulty, and helpful lists of ISBN numbers, I was able to work on my collection with confidence. That is when I heard about the “Big Six,” a group of six Harry Potter books that are nearly impossible to find. Of course, I did not think I would ever own any of these books, but now five of the six are in my collection (Figure 9).

The “Big Six” impossible to find Harry Potter translations are: Asturian (entry 5), Gujarati (entry 277), Kalaallisut (West Greenlandic) (entry 326), Macedonian (entry 336), Malayalam (want list #1), and Nepali (entry 345). These books are rare due to a combination of being out of print, part of a limited print run, and/or produced by a now bankrupt/out of business publisher. I’ve been told that the south Asia books (Gujarati, Malayalam, and Nepali) were not popular due to comical translations (including strict translations of spells) and the lack of desire to read non-English texts (unfortunate for their written tradition). Each book that I found was an interesting adventure. The first of the big six that I found was the Kalaallisut translation, the only translation written in an indigenous language. I had spent many weeks searching for this book, even contacting the author of an interesting article reconstructing the indigenous language’s tenseless grammar from a Harry Potter book (Bittner, 20056) – to no avail. Then, by chance, I contacted a bookstore in Greenland, which reached out to a network of booksellers, and found me my first copy of the “Big Six.” Asturian and Nepali were easy to find by comparison, though their discovery was either random (again, on amazon.com) or through a good friend. It was during these searches that I started to develop a network of

Figure 9. The “Big Six” nearly impossible to find translations of *Harry Potter and the sorcerer’s stone*. Clockwise from top left: Asturian (entry 5), Gujarati (entry 277), Kalaallisut (West Greenlandic) (entry 326), Macedonian (entry 336), Malayalam (currently missing from collection), and Nepali (entry 345).
friends in other countries that were willing to look for me. I found Macedonian through a post and reply on Reddit, after which my contact was willing to continue looking for other Potter community members. Gujarati was the combined work of myself and friend Prasanna, where a simple post on Facebook led to a reply from a friendly used bookseller in India willing to deal with the difficulties of shipping internationally. Malayalam: this book is the very last of the books I need to have every translation in HP1. I have to this point tried unsuccessfully to purchase this book twice from irreputable dealers, and may have to resort to traveling to Kerala (India) to finish this collection, which sounds quite fun.

Through my collecting journey, I would now classify myself as an “expert.” There aren’t any editions that I can’t recognize or know their value. I also have a modest network of friends in other countries that are willing to continue the search for rare translations in their language. Because of this, I have entered phase three of my collecting adventure, where I primarily have been acting to aide in expanding others collections, particularly of rare and those nearly impossible to find books. It is this phase that has been the most rewarding, because the Harry Potter collecting community is supportive and continues to grow. I have shared my collection with others on Instagram (@mcallister_alaskagrown), and will continue collecting and joining in community events.

The Want List

There are many Harry Potter books left out there, but only a few that will fill holes in my collection, as I define it (all HP1 translations, all unique cover art). Of course, I have also decided to collect art from the various Harry Potter illustrators, though this is a longer journey.

2. Rowling, Joanne. Harry Potter und die heiligtümer des todes (Book 7). Alternate cover ed. Translated into German by Klaus Fritz, Illustrated by Sabine Wilharm, Carlsen Verlag. Books #2 and #3 will complete my unique cover illustration collection.
4. Ghosh, Uttam. *Harry Potter in Calcutta*. Unauthorized ed. Written in Bengali. *As far as I know, this is the only unauthorized parody published outside of Russia and China, and is a well thought out plot exploring Indian folklore expressed in a modern setting.*

5. Rowling, Joanne. *Harry Potter and the sorcerer’s stone*. Advanced Reader’s Copy ed. Adapted into American English, Illustrated by Mary GrandPré, Scholastic Inc./Arthur A. Levine Books, 1998. *This advance reader’s copy was the first ever Harry Potter publication in America, and will complete my collection from this edition (entries 92-93).*

6. Illustrations: Mary GrandPré (American illustrator), Andrew Davidson (U.K. Adult 3rd edition illustrator), Jim Kay (illustrated edition illustrator), Dan Schlesinger (Japanese illustrator). *Adding sketches or original commissions from these artists would enhance my collection with intricate, colorful, and global interpretations of Harry Potter. Since I grew up with the American illustrations, artwork by Mary GrandPré is a must, but may be difficult due to copyright restrictions.*

7. J.K. Rowling signature. *Many signatures are on the market, but I would like to attend an event in person so that I can obtain the signature of this remarkable author, who has changed so many lives for the better.*
A Harry Potter Rosetta Stone, Annotated Bibliography


15. Rowling, Joanne. Harry Potter i kamen mudrosti (Book 1). 1st ed., ISBN 9789958301063. Translated into Bosnian by Mirjana Evtov, Illustrated by Aleksandra Nina Knežević, Buybook, 2011. This book illustrates the need in the Potter collecting world to get books as they are available. Currently, Bosnian HP1 is very difficult to find because it is out of print, while I found it easily less than a year ago on the publisher’s website.


25. Rowling, Joanne. Harry Potter i el pres d'Azkaban (Book 3). 1st ed., ISBN 847596723X. Translated into Catalan by Laura Escorihuela Martínez,


31. Rowling, Joanne. *Harry Potter i la pedra filosofal* (Book 1). 5th ed., ISBN 9788416367801. Translated into **Catalan** by Laura Escorihuela Martínez, Illustrated by Olly Moss, Editorial Empúries, 2016. **Catalan publisher has been prolific in producing new editions. This illustrated cover is only available on Kindle editions in the U.S., so I was glad to see it somewhere in print form.**


41. Rowling, Joanne. *Harry Potter with the Phoenix* (Book 5). Special ed., ISBN 9787020068388. Translated into **Simplified Chinese** by Ma Ainong, Illustrated by Liu Jing, People's Literature Publishing House, 2008. **This rare special edition is the only publication from China to feature unique cover art.**


8000010402. Translated into **Czech** by Vladimír Medek, Illustrated by Galina Miklinová, Albatros, 2002.


Harvey Macaulay, Gyldendal, 2016.


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<th>No.</th>
<th>Author</th>
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2017.


159. Rowling, Joanne. *Harry Potter and the chamber of secrets* (Book 2). Signature


Davidson, Bloomsbury, 2015.


193. Rowling, Joanne. *Harry Potter and the philosopher's stone* (Book 1). 1st ed., ISBN 9781785301544. Translated into **Scots English** by Matthew Fitt, Illustrated by Thomas Taylor, Black & White Publishing - Itchy Coo, 2017. **One of the only translations that I can actually read, since Scots English is close enough that most words are the same. A great Christmas gift!**


A rather comical representation of a dragon is included on this cover: a fire-breathing...T-rex.


Rowling, Joanne. હેરી પોટર અને પારસમણ (Book 1). 1st ed., ISBN 8186775862. Translated into **Gujarati** by Harish Nayak & Jagruti Trivedi, Illustrated by Mary GrandPré, Manjul Publishing House, 2004. *Another of the “Big Six” near impossible to find books. This one entered my collection for the price in Figure 9, which was a huge shock to me.*

has been translated into.


336. Rowling, Joanne. Хари Потер и Каменот на мудроста (Book 1). 1st ed., ISBN 9989322724. Translated into Macedonian by Blagorodna Bogeska-Ančevska, Illustrated by Thomas Taylor, Publishing House Kultura, 2002. Rumor has it that the Macedonian government is trying to round up as many of these books as possible for use in primary school teaching of the Macedonian language. I would suggest they should reprint, since this is one of the “Big Six” rare books.


Editorial Presença, 2011.


because the publisher of the series changed. According to Russian speakers, the quality of the new translation is much worse than the old translation.


NA. Translated into **Vietnamese** by Lý Lan, Illustrated by Mary GrandPré, Youth Publishing House, 2007.