



## Panopticism and Resistance in the Republican System: A Foucauldian Analysis

Rana Hazem Georges Al kldani <sup>ID</sup>

Department of English Language / College of Arts/  
University of Mosul / Mosul- Iraq

Salih Abdullah Abdulrahman <sup>ID</sup>

Department of English Language / College of Arts/  
University of Mosul / Mosul- Iraq

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#### Correspondence:

Rana Hazem Georges Al kldani

[ranahazemalkldani@gmail.com](mailto:ranahazemalkldani@gmail.com)

### Abstract

This study examines Marie Lu's *Champion* (2013), the final novel in the Legend trilogy, through the theoretical lens of Michel Foucault's concept of panopticism. It investigates how the Republic in the novel employs surveillance, normalization, and control over knowledge to shape society and maintain power. The study highlights how the Republic's methods such as technological monitoring, propaganda, and the manipulation of disease create a system in which citizens regulate their own behavior out of fear of being watched. Meanwhile it explores characters like June and Day, who resist and challenge these forms of authority. In this regard study summarizes the key elements of panopticism, tracing its origins from Bentham's Panopticon to Foucault's broader theory of social control. By connecting these theoretical concepts to the novel's narrative, the study reflects the real-world concerns about surveillance, power, and resistance. Thus, it emphasizes the importance of questioning authority and demonstrates that, even in highly controlled societies, resistance and the pursuit of justice remain possible.

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## المراقبة والمقاومة في نظام الجمهورية : تحليل فوكويي لرواية البطل للكاتبة ماري لو

صالح عبدالله عبد الرحمن \*\*

رنا حازم جرجيس الكلداني \*

### المستخلص:

تتناول هذه الدراسة رواية البطل لماري لو، وهي الجزء الأخير من ثلاثية الأسطورة، من خلال الإطار النظري لمفهوم البانوبتيكية كما طوره ميشيل فوكو. إذ تستكشف الدراسة الكيفية التي تعتمد بها "الجمهورية" في الرواية على أدوات المراقبة، والتطبيع، والتحكم بالمعرفة، لتشكيل المجتمع والحفاظ على السلطة. تسلط الدراسة الضوء على الأساليب التي تستخدمها الجمهورية، مثل المراقبة التكنولوجية، والدعاية، والتلاعب بالأوبئة، في بناء نظام يجعل المواطنين يضبطون سلوكهم بأنفسهم نتيجة الخوف من المراقبة المستمرة. وتبرز الدراسة شخصيات مثل "جون" و"داي" اللذين يحاولان مقاومة هذه الأشكال من الهيمنة ويسعيان إلى تحديها. وبهذا الصدد، تعرض الدراسة العناصر الرئيسية لمفهوم البانوبتيكية، بدءاً من تصميم بانوبتيكون الذي اقترحه بنتام، وصولاً إلى نظرية فوكو الشاملة عن آليات السيطرة الاجتماعية، ومن خلال الربط بين المفاهيم النظرية والبنية السردية للرواية يُرى كيف تعكس رواية البطل قضايا معاصرة تتعلق بالمراقبة والسلطة والمقاومة.

\* قسم اللغة الانكليزية/ كلية الاداب / جامعة الموصل / الموصل -العراق

\*\* قسم اللغة الانكليزية/ كلية الاداب / جامعة الموصل / الموصل -العراق

تشير النتائج إلى أهمية مسألة السلطة، وتبين كيف أن المقاومة والسعي إلى تحقيق العدالة بظان ممكنين، حتى في أكثر المجتمعات خضوعاً للرقابة والسيطرة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: السلطة/المعرفة، التطبيع، المقاومة، البطل، ماري لو

## 1.Introduction

Dystopian fiction has become a significant genre in contemporary literature, offering readers a way to reflect on issues of power, control, and resistance in imagined societies. Marie Lu's *Champion*, the concluding book in the Legend trilogy, is a compelling example of this genre. Set in a divided future America, the novel presents a society governed by the Republic, a regime that relies heavily on surveillance, strict rules, and the management of information to maintain its authority. These features make *Champion* an ideal subject for analysis. Using Michel Foucault's theory of panopticism.

Foucault's concept of panopticism is rooted in Jeremy Bentham's Panopticon - aprison design that allows a single guard to observe all inmates whom are unaware or uncertain if they are being watched. Foucault expanded this idea, using it as a metaphor for modern social systems where people internalize surveillance and control their own actions. In *Champion*, the Republic's widespread use of cameras, propaganda, and the obligatory Trial system demonstrates how surveillance and normalization operate together to shape citizens' behavior and beliefs.

In order to substantiate the thesis of the study, the introduction outlines the main questions addressed as follows: How does the Republic exert control over its people? What forms of resistance emerge in response? And how does the novel reflect broader concerns about surveillance and power in the real world? By combining literary analysis with Foucauldian theory, this study seeks to offer new insights into both the novel and the ongoing relevance of panopticism in understanding contemporary issues of authority and resistance.

### 1. Panopticism

English philosopher Jeremy Bentham's architectural proposal, known as the Panopticon, was first intended for a jail but later found use in various institutions that needed to monitor their people. Separate cells with two windows facing inside and outward are part of the design, which enables a single supervisor to keep an eye on people in nearby cells without the inmates being aware that they are being watched. In addition to physical confinement, Bentham's primary goal was to create a cost-effective surveillance system that encouraged ongoing visibility and self-control in those under observation.

Bentham's Panopticon was reinterpreted by French philosopher Michel Foucault as a metaphor for how power operates in modern society. According to him, panopticism demonstrates a shift in the way power is exercised, from overt and frequently violent demonstrations of dominance to more covert, efficient, and pervasive methods of social control that extend beyond prisons. Rather of relying solely on real, continuous monitoring, panoptic surveillance seeks to be a ubiquitous, ever-present system that functions well by giving individuals the impression that they could be monitored at any time.

Historical types of power, such as Sovereign Power, Disciplinary Power, and Biopower, are distinguished by Foucault. While disciplinary authority operates through subtle processes intended to develop, control, and improve individual skills, sovereign authority is distinguished by spectacular public displays. The entire population is subject to biopower, which controls biological processes to govern life.

Foucault's theory of panopticism emphasizes the inherent resistance in power relations, which manifests as non-compliance, collective action, and overt revolt. This method works especially well for examining dystopian literature, which often deals with concerns of control, resistance, and surveillance. According to Foucault's argument, actual totalitarian regimes, such as Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union, employed extensive surveillance to stifle dissent and instill terror, resulting in a deeply distrusted culture. Digital technology has created an "electronic Panopticon" in the modern era, which is characterized by widespread, frequently undetectable, and increasingly automated surveillance.

A thorough understanding of power relations, social control, and the human search for freedom and autonomy in a panoptic society is made possible by the application of Foucault's panopticism thesis in Marie Lu's book *Champion*.

### **3. *Champion* as a Work of Dystopian Fiction**

*Champion* by Marie Lu, which was released on November 5, 2013, is the last book in the highly regarded Legend trilogy, which also includes *Prodigy* (2012) and *Legend* (2011). Occasional allusions to the first and second volumes are included to support the analysis of *Champion* because of the coordinated setting of the Legend trilogy. These cross-references are necessary for a thorough comprehension because the events and character arcs are present in all three novels. Against the backdrop of a broken, dystopian America, engulfed in political unrest, widespread plague, and looming war, the novel culminates the intertwined tribulations of its heroes, June Iparis and Daniel "Day" Altan Wing. *Champion*, which was set in the wildly popular Young Adult (YA) Dystopian Fiction genre, which experienced a notable upsurge in the early 2010s—was praised by both readers and critics for its emotional depth and gripping ending. Sources like Publishers Weekly, which praised it as a "stirring, poignant finale to a standout trilogy," attests to its favorable reaction and its ability to provide a satisfactory conclusion to the intricate story Lu had crafted. This response demonstrates how well the book addresses the fundamental ideas and reader expectations of modern dystopian fiction.

The story takes place in a well-constructed dystopian future North America that is split both geographically and ideologically. The Colonies, which hold the eastern lands, are at war with the Republic, an authoritarian military state that currently occupies the western portion of the former United States. Antarctica, a politically neutral, technologically advanced global force that looms on the outskirts, plays a crucial role in *Champion* (Lu, *Champion* 156). The Republic itself is extremely divided, with the poor masses fighting for their lives in slums, plagued by disease and the privileged military and political elite living in wealthy areas. According to literary critic Karin Bookman, "dystopia is often portrayed as the outcome of a previous societal breakdown, allowing authors to explore the reconstitution of society along new, often repressive lines" (Bookman 45).

The world, created after ecological disasters and civil wars, symbolizes a dystopian trope of oppressive regimes emerging from societal collapse. Lu uses this broken environment to explore themes of political control, injustice, and the human cost of ongoing conflict. *Champion* and the Legend trilogy revolves around the captivating characters of Day and June, who represent rebellion against the government and personal tragedy. Day, from the poorest areas, represents the voice of the oppressed against the system and resistance from below (Lu, *Champion* 23)

June, on the other hand, starts off as a brilliant offspring of the Republic's elite military hierarchy, devoted at first but gradually losing faith as she discovers the corruption of the state. Her transformation from an insider to a pivotal resistance figure emphasizes the moral enlightenment and personal struggle that

protagonists in oppressive institutions frequently go through (Lu, *Champion* 178). A less frequent but important character in dystopian stories examining alternatives to outright revolt is Anden Stavropoulos, the youthful Elector, who inherits leadership and symbolizes the possibility, albeit tense, of reform from inside the current power structure (Santos 67). Lu explores the effects of living under an authoritarian government on people through these characters and others, such as Day's brother Eden, who is afflicted by the disease.

One of the main components of the Republic's dystopian nature is its extremely centralized, authoritarian, and militaristic political structure. True authority is in the military machinery and a strict hierarchical structure, although being nominally governed by an Elector, a role that was first held by Anden's father and inherited rather than democratically chosen (Lu, *Legend* 56). The Republic uses both overt methods of control, such as a strong military presence, repression of opposition, and public executions, as well as more covert social control techniques. These include widespread surveillance, propaganda spread by state-run media, and the critical trial system, which is a compulsory examination at age ten that decides each citizen's future and essentially solidifies a strict class system, acting as the main instrument for social sorting and control (Lu, *Legend* 45). Regarding such regimes, political theorist Michael Walzer observes that "Dystopian systems often feature a concentration of power in the hands of an individual or a small elite, with blurred lines between political, military, and economic authority" (Walzer 56).

Additionally, the Republic uses biopower as a powerful tool of control, especially when it comes to manipulating created diseases and conducting unethical medical research. The government employs its own population, particularly those who fail the Trial or are from lower sectors, as test subjects for experiments aimed at creating biological weapons or remedies, and weaponizes disease against the Colonies (Lu, *Champion* 89). Foucault's idea of biopower, in which the state controls populations at the biological level, is chillingly embodied in this state control over life and health. As Susan Sontag notes, "The use of illness as a political metaphor has a long history, often casting opponents or marginalized groups as 'diseased' threats to the 'health' of the social body" (Sontag 67), her examination of illness as a political metaphor is pertinent in this context. In *Champion*, the Republic demonstrates a profoundly cynical use of biopolitical control by literally controlling disease, utilizing the ensuing fear and the possibility of a cure as tools of power and negotiation.

The novel's fundamental themes of power, conflict, and resistance are encapsulated even in the title, *Champion* and the cover image. The name "Champion" alone creates uncertainty in the dystopian setting: Is it Day, the renegade, who is defending the populace? June, the prodigy, giving up something for a better future? Is it Anden, trying to promote change? Or does it mock the Republic itself, promoting its repressive philosophy? This ambiguity is a reflection of the novel's nuanced moral terrain, which questions conventional ideas of heroism. According to Joseph Campbell, a literary theorist, "The hero in dystopian narratives is often one who challenges the system rather than defending it, thus redefining the concept of heroism itself" (Campbell, 123). In a society characterized by structural injustice and the struggle against it, the title compels the reader to think about what it means to be a champion.

The title's thematic weight is complemented by the cover artwork. The visual components evoke the main conflicts of the novel and are typically characterized by the Republic's emblem, a stylized, possibly eye-like symbol that represents state authority and surveillance. It is frequently depicted in imposing colors like red or gold and occasionally splattered with blood (Lu, *Champion* cover). While the chaotic aspects allude to the violence, sacrifice, and rebellion undermining that rule, the primary emblem represents the

Republic's omnipresent strength. The overall narrative and thematic concerns of the series are reinforced by the design, which frequently preserves visual consistency with the earlier books in the trilogy. "The use of stark symbols, restricted color palettes, and imagery suggesting surveillance or decay effectively communicates the oppressive atmosphere characteristic of the genre," (Color56) is what art critic David Color name dystopian book covers. Therefore, *Champion's* cover serves as a visual introduction to the concepts of violent struggle and panoptic control that are discussed in the book.

Deemed a notable addition to the wave of YA dystopian fiction that rose to prominence in the early 21st century is Marie Lu's *Legend* trilogy, which ends with *Champion* Lu's work stands out due to its distinct focus and narrative style, even if it shares similarities with contemporary works such as Veronica Roth's *Divergent* and Suzanne Collins' *The Hunger Games*, which all feature young heroes against repressive regimes in futuristic settings (Johnson 99). In contrast to the faction-based society of *Divergent* or the televised *Hunger Games*, *Legend* goes further into military combat, political intrigue, and the difficulties of reform and governance in a hierarchical, surveillance-driven state. This difference is emphasized by critic James Dashner, who writes that "Lu offers a more grounded and complex portrayal of political power and social division, whereas many YA dystopias rely on exaggerated fantastical elements" (Dashner 115).

Lu's emphasis on the workings of political power, the potential for internal reform, and the morally difficult decisions that characters must make, Adds a layer of realism and complexity that sets the *Legend* trilogy apart from the larger field of YA dystopian fiction, even as it conforms to fundamental dystopian tropes like the young rebel and the oppressive state (Johnson 112).

#### **4. The Analysis of *Champion* according to Foucauldian Key Concepts**

##### **4.1 Power and Knowledge**

In Marie Lu's *Champion*, Michel Foucault's assertion that knowledge and power are intertwined and form a mutually reinforcing nexus called as "Power/Knowledge," provides a necessary basis for understanding the ways of control inside the Republic. Foucault argued against seeing knowledge as neutral or distinct from power in his book *Discipline and Punish*: "power produces knowledge... power and knowledge directly imply one another... there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations" (Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* 27). This concept demonstrates how actively the Republic shapes, regulates, and employs knowledge not only to inform but also, fundamentally, to rule and subjugate its people. The Republic's panoptic exercise of power is focused on information manipulation, truth hiding, and intentional dissemination of state-approved narratives. These methods demonstrate how comparable control over what is known or allowed to be known is to control over individuals (Gutting 84). The Republic controls formal education and historical accounts to present a reality that affirms its authority and demonizes opponents. Curriculum promoting obedience and loyalty presents the Republic's founding and ongoing challenges from a biased perspective: "At school, they taught us the Republic rose to protect the people from the chaos of the warring states, that the Colonies were the aggressors seeking to destroy us" (Lu, *Champion* 78).

Consistent with this historical manipulation is Foucault's concept of the "politics of truth," in which society power structures define what is factual or acceptable knowledge. By guiding its people's basic understanding and so making it more difficult for them to challenge the status quo or envision alternative realities, the Republic reinforces its dominance through the very production of knowledge by means of control over the educational discourse (Foucault, *Power/Knowledge* 131).

The state greatly influences propaganda and the media; the Republic aggressively employs them to change public opinion and silence resistance. Mass media channels, particularly the ubiquitous public "Jumbotrons," offer a consistent stream of government-approved news, often with too dramatic portrayals of rebels like Day or justification of military operations. Day highlights early in the series how pervasive this propaganda is: "The big screens in the public squares always show my face, calling me a terrorist, a killer" (Lu, Legend 111). This controlled information flow makes raising questions of the official narrative dangerous. Following Foucault's ideas on discourse and control, the Republic understands that maintaining public order and consent depends on control of how events and persons are shown. This shows how knowledge disseminated through the media becomes a direct weapon of power affecting public opinion and supporting governmental violence by means of justification (Bohman 56).

The deliberate concealing and use of private data are maybe the clearest illustrations of *Champion's* power/knowledge dynamic. The Republic aggressively suppresses material that could question its legitimacy or reveal its unethical behavior. Day's perfect score on the Trial is a classic example of the cover-up; the government controlled his findings to mark him for testing or removal out of fear of his talent and to take advantage of his history (Lu, Legend 289). Likewise, the fact that Commander Jameson, not Day, had executed Metias Iparis was hidden in order to control June and maintain the image of state justice (Lu, Legend 312). Furthermore, in *Champion*, the Republic exploits this knowledge as a tactical advantage in political debates by first concealing crucial facts on the origins and potential cure for the epidemic afflicting both its people and the colonies. This shows how hiding knowledge could be just as successful as disseminating specific stories, therefore increasing control by rendering the population ignorant and dependent (Lu, Champion 187).

June Iparis's character arc deftly shows the complex interaction of information, authority, and personal agency inside the panoptic state. She is first positioned as a strong spokesperson of the Republic because of her great intelligence and access to special knowledge. Using her skills, she hunts Day thinking the state's account of his and her brother's deaths to be accurate. Her attitude with authority, however, alters dramatically when she acquires unauthorized knowledge including the truth behind Day's Trial, Metias's murder, and the Republic's more general corruption. Her fresh insight provides the will to say no. She begins to see that "Everything I thought I knew was a lie... they built our world on foundations of deceit" (Lu, Prodigy 156). June shows the multiple possibilities of knowledge inside the power/knowledge dynamic by exposing secret facts, therefore acquiring the critical perspective needed to face the very power structures she once served. Her path is a perfect illustration of Foucault's thesis that knowledge may also be a weapon for resistance (Baccolini).

The Republic's retention of scientific and medical information highlights the need of knowledge and power especially with regard to biopower. The state monopolizes research on epidemics; it also hides possibly life-saving knowledge for political motives and does testing without permission. After Day discovers his younger brother Eden has the key to the cure thanks to Republic past experimentation on him, the state attempts to tightly regulate Day's knowledge. "They know Eden is the key, but they won't use him unless you cooperate," an official explains (Lu, Champion 101). This instrumentalizing of medical knowledge, treating people as biological resources or negotiating chips rather than as patients clearly shows how specialized knowledge may be utilized as a strong tool of control, determining life and death in line with the political interests of the state. It is clear how knowledge might be applied as a weapon to regulate life itself (Sontag 89).

Academic critics often utilize Foucault's power/knowledge concept to assess dystopian fiction since its critique of oppression depends on it. Keith Booker argues that "dystopian governments often maintain control by manipulating information, rewriting history, and suppressing dissenting voices, demonstrating a keen awareness that controlling knowledge is fundamental to controlling the population" (Booker 78). This vital knowledge is exactly in line with the Republic's multifarious approach, which comprises weaponizing scientific findings, concealing truths, controlling education, and disseminating false information. The Republic creates a reality that supports its own continuation by precisely regulating the domain of knowledge, so attesting to the great Foucauldian realization that power functions not only through coercion but also and this is crucial through the creation and control of truth in society (Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* 27).

## 4.2 Surveillance

A distinguishing quality of the Republic in *Champion*, surveillance, that is observation and monitoring, forms the pragmatic basis of Foucault's Panopticism. Foucault claimed that surveillance is meant to inculcate self-regulation by being an active form of disciplinary power involving continuous awareness of possible visibility. The Panopticon worked effectively in creating an "unverifiable" gaze that internalized control since it made the prisoner permanently visible while hiding the observer (Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* 201). The Republic uses a sophisticated and multi-layered surveillance system reflecting and extending on this concept to guarantee conformity and strengthen its authority by the psychological weight of being observed. It achieves this constantly monitoring its people using technology, institutional processes, and human networks (Lyon).

The most obvious example of surveillance enacted is the Republic's extensive camera and Jumbotron network, especially in the less wealthy neighborhoods. Day describes this continuous electronic surveillance as "cameras watch every corner in the poor sectors, recording every move". (Lu, *Legend* 34). Acting as the windows of the panoptic prisons, these cameras expose people to the possible gaze of the state. By simultaneously broadcasting state propaganda and showing images of people sought-after, the Jumbotrons turn public spaces into monitoring and social control platforms.

Like Bentham's prison, which was built with visibility, this technical infrastructure creates an environment whereby anonymity is constrained and the knowledge that one could be being recorded alters conduct, therefore promoting conformity even in the absence of direct involvement (Bentham 41).

Apart from using technology, the Republic includes monitoring into its basic institutional processes especially through the Trial system. The Trial is a thorough examination gathering detailed data on every citizen's mental and physical capacities in order to classify and arrange them according to the strict Republic hierarchy, not only a mere appraisal. Based on their supposed significance to the state, the results define a person's course of life and basically expose them to institutional control for the rest of their existence (Lu, *Legend* 56). This is in line with Foucault's concept of the "examination" as a vital disciplinary tool that combines hierarchical observation with normalizing judgment to make people visible and identifiable to those in positions of power by means of standardized testing. The Trial is an illustration of how monitoring can be included into apparently objective processes to affect people's life (Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* 184).

The Republic enhances its monitoring capabilities even further by deploying biometric tracking especially embedded identifying chips for military personnel and perhaps regular citizens: "The chip in my wrist allows them to know my location at every moment. There's no escape, not really." (Lu, *Legend* 145)

June's sharp awareness of her tracker, judges. Monitoring with this technology has evolved from the solely visual surveillance of the Panopticon to a more invasive, bio-integrated technique. It helps the authorities to keep close observation and track movements, therefore reducing the physical area accessible for protest or escape. This development illustrates the emergence of panoptic principles in a technologically evolved society and mirrors current worries about digital and biometric surveillance, where monitoring goes beneath the skin (Lyon 88).

Technological and institutional surveillance is exacerbated by the Republic's dependence on a network of human informants and general skepticism of its policies. The implicit or explicit encouragement of residents to report suspicious activities or conflicting viewpoints might lead state surveillance agents' neighbors, friends, even family members to become involved. "You can't trust anyone in the Republic. Your neighbor might be an informer, your friend might sell you out for an extra ration," (Lu, Prodigy 78) is how Day describes the climate of mistrust. This use of peer surveillance effectively extends the state's gaze into the most private areas of life, so increasing the number of points of control, much as Foucault's observation of panoptic power can permeate the social body makes everyone both a possible observer and a potential observer (Foucault, Discipline and Punish 207).

This widespread surveillance has a significant psychological influence, influencing the Republic's residents' attitudes and behaviors. The constant observation of one fosters a culture of self-censorship and fear. Characters like Day develop complicated evasive techniques and become quite attentive as a survival tactic (Lu, Legend 61). June struggles the ingrained self-monitoring habits she picked up in the Republic's disciplinary systems even after defecting (Lu, Prodigy 133). Regular people show signs of internalizing the observer's gaze by acting cautiously, avoiding eye contact with soldiers, and conversing in low tones. The anticipated results of the panoptic system are this widespread fear and self-regulation, demonstrating its effectiveness in upholding order by psychological coercion as opposed to only using physical force, as Foucault hypothesized (Foucault, Discipline and Punish 202). The Republic's monitoring system shares similarities with Foucault's Panopticon, focusing on unverifiable visibility and self-discipline. However, the Republic's system is more complex and extensive, involving biometric tracking, electronic surveillance, and vast informant networks. This "surveillance society" is influenced by contemporary technology, leading to a more widespread and potentially unavoidable network of observation (Lyon 194). *Champion* serves as a literary investigation of these modern panoptic surveillance adaptations.

### **4.3 Normalization**

According to Michel Foucault, normalization is a key tool of disciplinary authority that, when combined with surveillance, creates conforming people. It means the development of standards or norms in terms of behavior, ability, loyalty, health, and identity, that people are tested, evaluated, and corrected against. Particularly in modern civilizations, Foucault argues that "one of the great instruments of power" is normalizing, which uses institutions to classify people and impose homogeneity (Foucault, Discipline and Punish 184). Normalization is aggressively used by various state apparatuses to enforce uniformity, rank citizens, and marginalize those who do not conform to the prescribed standards in the Republic portrayed in *Champion*. This consolidates state control by defining what is deemed acceptable or "normal" in its society (Rose 78).

In the Republic, the Trial system is the most overt normalizing tool. In addition to serving as a surveillance tool, this required test administered at age ten serves largely as a normalization mechanism by assigning a numerical score that determines a person's entire destiny. A high score defines the "norm" of



success and loyalty, indicating that a person is important and suitable for high-level government or military roles. A low score, on the other hand, labels a person as inferior and condemns them to menial work, enlistment into undesirable units of the military, or even medical experimentation (Lu, Legend 45). Foucault's idea of normalizing judgment is that it must "compares, differentiates, hierarchizes, homogenizes, excludes. In short, it normalizes" (Foucault, Discipline and Punish 183) is powerfully illustrated by this system, which establishes a strict hierarchy based on perceived adherence to state-defined standards of intelligence and potential usefulness.

There is tremendous pressure to adhere to the Republic's standards, and breaking them has dire repercussions. Day becomes the quintessential "abnormal" or "deviant" figure because he defies the authority of the state, even though he had a perfect Trial score that was later suppressed. He is a target for extermination because his status as a wanted criminal places him outside of the accepted standards of obedience and devotion (Lu, Legend 23). In a similar vein, residents of the poorer sectors many of whom did badly on the Trial are subtly normalized as less valuable or disposable, making them more vulnerable to abuse, neglect, and exploitation, including being used in plague research. By showing the harsh consequences of nonconformity, this differential treatment based on adherence to norms upholds the social hierarchy and suppresses dissent. This is consistent with Foucault's theory that punishment in disciplinary systems frequently attempts to correct and reinforce the norm (Foucault, Discipline and Punish 180).

The character development of June Iparis is an engaging example of how state-imposed norms are internalized and then resisted. Growing up among the Republic's elite, she at first exemplifies the perfect citizen, thriving in her training and exhibiting steadfast devotion. She measures herself and others against the state-promoted standards of intellectual achievement, discipline, and patriotism (Lu, Legend 89). But when she learns of the Republic's cruelty and corruption, she is forced to face the contradiction between the state's real actions and its declared norms. As a result, she begins to doubt and eventually reject the very principles she had previously supported, opting instead to support Day and the resistance movement. Even after profound internalization, her story demonstrates how people can critically reevaluate and fight against the normalizing constraints imposed by power institutions (Lu, Champion 234).

The Republic uses controlled information and propaganda to legitimize societal views and emotional reactions, fostering fear of dissent and obedience to authority. This patriotic position is shown as loyal to the state and suspicious of outsiders, such as the Colonies. Characters like June and Day are positioned as departing from the emotional and ideological norm, underscoring the idea that normalization encompasses more than just conduct (Lu, Prodigy 123).

Foucault's larger view of discipline, which aims to mold the "soul" as much as the body, is consistent with this (Foucault, Discipline and Punish 16).

The Republic's social structure requires a grasp of the normalization idea. It produces a society that is sharply split between the "normal" elite, who follow the rules and profit from them, and the "abnormal" masses, who are oppressed and dominated. This distinction is upheld not just by physical coercion but also by the norm's omnipresent influence, which defines worth, molds goals, and defends inequity. This function of normalization is frequently emphasized by critics who analyze dystopian novels. "Normalization operates not by imposing rules from outside, but by shaping desires and identities from within, making individuals complicit in their own regulation according to prevailing norms," as social theorist Nikolas Rose has observed (Rose 78). The Republic's ability to create and uphold strong norms

that people absorb and replicate in their daily lives is crucial to its ability to retain power in spite of its obvious inequities.

#### 4.4 Resistance and Rebellion

The essential counterbalance to the seeming overwhelming character of panoptic control is Michel Foucault's seminal realization that "where there is power, there is resistance" (History of Sexuality 95). He maintained that resistance is inherent in power's own activity and arises exactly at the locations of power application. It is not outside of power. In Marie Lu's *Champion*, several kinds of resistance always surface, threatening the state's authority and proving the underlying instability of even the most ubiquitous power systems, despite the Republic's sophisticated infrastructure of surveillance, normalizing, and control. From Day's overt defiance and the Patriots' planned rebellion to June's inner struggle and final subversion, the book investigates a range of resistance strategies, so highlighting Foucault's dynamic view of power and resistance as an ongoing, relational struggle (Foucault, Power/Knowledge 142).

By means of acts of sabotage, disobedience, and inspirational hope among the downtrodden population, Day Altan Wing personifies the figure of the overt rebel, so directly confronting Republic authority. By interfering with military operations or broadcasting messages of opposition, his actions directly challenge state power (Lu, Legend 112). Although it draws the whole force of state repression, this kind of opposition helps to expose the surface of complete control and inspire others. Day's fight emphasizes how one person's bravery can challenge the prevailing story and offer venues for resistance even in heavily watched surroundings. His presence as a symbol of resistance shows that, even if it is supreme, power always produces people who actively oppose it (Moylan\_142).

Beyond personal actions, concerted opposition movements such as the Patriots function inside the Republic using more unified techniques to challenge the government. To sabotage the Republic's operations, they use guerilla tactics, information warfare leaching confidential data and espionage (Lu, Prodigy 95). This collective resistance uses networks and strategic planning to challenge the state's resources, therefore acting in a different modality. The presence and activities of the Patriots show that even in a system meant to separate people, group opposition can develop by manipulating the flaws in the surveillance system and confronting more general power challenges. Using knowledge and organization as weapons against the state, their approaches replicate Foucault's conception that resistance often reflects the strategies of power (Deleuze 4).

Originally functioning from inside the system itself, June Iparis symbolizes a more subdued kind of opposition. Her path is to challenge Republic power by applying the knowledge and abilities acquired inside its elite institutions. She uses her insider position to support the opposition by carefully releasing material, exposing secret truths, and examining surveillance patterns (Lu, Champion 178). Her resistance is often cerebral and covert, showing that it is possible to oppose without constantly resorting to overt confrontation by means of system tool manipulation against itself. This is consistent with Foucault's theory that opposition results from inside power relations by means of the given tools to question the status quo (History of Sexuality . 96).

Knowing the possibility for opposition, the Republic aggressively watches over and penalizes any kind of dissension. Designed to discourage more resistance, acts of rebellion are greeted with quick and frequently violent action including heightened monitoring, public crackdowns, and executions (Lu, Legend 89). The government also uses counter-propaganda to denigrate rebels and present opposition as either dangerous or pointless. This continuous attempt to stifle opposition emphasizes Foucault's point of view

that power and resistance are engaged in a perpetual dynamic; the use of power requires alertness against the resistance it inevitably produces. The very steps the Republic uses to silence opposition expose the weakness under its facade of ultimate control (Atwood 78).

In *Champion*, resistance in all its manifestations finally shows results that cause Republic to change. Day's persistent opposition, June's crucial interventions, the Patriots' pressure, and the mounting discontent among the people force the next Elector, Anden, to negotiate, seek outside support (from Antarctica), and start changes targeted at producing a less repressive society (Lu, *Champion* 305). Although the ending is mixed, especially with Day's memory loss, the path of the story confirms the possibility of transformation motivated by resistance. It implies that constant opposition can change or destroy even strongly ingrained panoptic systems, so they are not unchangeable. This result speaks to the underlying hope usually seen in dystopian stories since it implies that the fight against repressive power is never totally useless even if it is challenging (Fisher 110). The book ends so with showing Foucault's dialectic: power generates resistance, and resistance shapes the configurations of power.

### **5. The Effects of Panopticism on Society and Characters**

In *Champion*, the Republic's extensive Panopticism system significantly influences the mental health and social structure of its people. Constant surveillance, rigorous normalizing, knowledge manipulation, and multifarious exercise of authority generate a society distinguished by fear, conformity, and deep-seated divisions. Those living in these repressive surroundings suffer greatly psychologically at the same period. Analyzing these effects reveals how closely the panoptic framework and the Republic's lived experiences are symbiotic, illustrating how control techniques affect both personal consciousness and group behavior.

The most obvious social consequences of the Republic's panoptic government are the elimination of uniqueness and the encouragement of mass homogeneity. People develop attitudes and behaviors the state approves of as the constant surveillance and rigorous standards discourage deviation and critical thinking. This atmosphere stifles inventiveness, dissent, and honest speech, producing a society that seems orderly but is finally inert. Foucault's critique of homogeneity-oriented disciplinary societies claims that the panoptic apparatus gives up dynamism and diversity in favor of control and predictability, therefore producing a social setting in which obedience is much valued.

Particularly between the rich elite and the poor masses, panopticism helps to create and preserve obvious socioeconomic divisions in the Republic. The trial system deliberately expands this difference and facilitates the allocation of possibilities and resources along class lines by normalizing the idea that people have naturally varied values depending on test results. This unequal application of panoptic mechanisms guarantees the maintenance of the current hierarchy and limits mobility, resulting in a fragmented society with greatly different experiences for the poor and the rich. Subtle variations in the outcomes of panoptic control are highlighted by juxtaposing the Republic's society with other dystopian works of fiction. Internalizing monitoring is a primary psychological effect of the Republic's panopticism, causing characters to become self-policing and facing internal strife and suffering.

Day Altan Wing, a character in Marie Lu's dystopian novel, is constantly targeted by panoptic surveillance, leading to hyper-vigilance, distrust and a broken sense of self. He is forced to live in hiding and adopt various identities to survive, resulting in a conflict between his public and private self-perceptions. This continuous struggle leaves significant wounds, potentially causing memory loss.

Anden Stavropoulos, the top of the power pyramid, is both the main wielder and the major target of surveillance. Striking a balance between his objective for a more open and equal society and the apparent need for security maintained through surveillance, he faces the psychological strain of negotiating opposition and fear generated by the system he oversees .

Day's younger brother Eden represents the psychological damage resulting from the biopolitical element of panopticism. His body is a location of state control due to his unique biological status linked to the epidemic, making him vulnerable to unethical medical experiments and continuous surveillance. This event leaves him both physically and psychologically broken, symbolizing the frailty of those handled as biological data points under a biopower system.

The constant, inevitable feature of surveillance is the most ubiquitous psychological strain on individuals, as it drives deep-seated anxiety, self-regulation, and the uncertainty of when one is being watched. The power of normalizing puts great pressure on people to conform, rendering those who deviate from the pattern either inadequate or guilty .

The panoptic system of the Republic permanently changes the society it governs and the population living in it, fostering a culture built on separation, fear, and compliance. Living under this government causes the heroes great psychological effects like internalized surveillance, trauma, identity problems, and continuous stress of negotiating a society where being seen is a sign of weakness. Foucault's approach helps understand the key ideas and character motives of a champion, as well as the small processes influencing identity, conduct, and thought.

## 6. Conclusion

This study highlights today's concerns about how companies and governments are watching people more and more. It discusses how data collection and technology can be used to control society, acting as a warning. Current discussions about heavy surveillance, lack of digital privacy, and government overreach are clearly reflected in the Republic's actions in the novel, such as body tracking, changing information, camera surveillance, and control over people's health. Lastly, looking at *Champion* through Foucault's idea of panopticism shows how literature and analysis can help us better understand power in today's world.

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