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Bodies under Siege in Suzanne Collins' the Hunger Games

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Dedication

It is with my deepest gratitude and warmest affection that I dedicate my dissertation to my dear parents Farid and Farida, whose love, encouragement and prayers of day and night make me able to get such success and honor.

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To all my hard working and respected teachers.

HADJER



Dedication

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Abstract

This study is an attempt to explore, from a Marxist perspective, the different features of a totalitarian regimes depicted in Young Adult literature, as well as its impact on modern societies through a critical study of Suzanne Collins' the *Hunger Games*. To achieve this aim, we will unveil the different characteristics of dystopian literature which is a genre that flourished during the twentieth century due to many historical events such as the two World Wars and the October Revolution of 1917. Dystopian societies are characterized by their oppressing governments who have total control over people's lives .*The Hunger Games* is considered to be one of the most important dystopian literary works that described future societies in a pessimistic way. Accordingly, the primary goal of this research is to provide a critical explanation of how Suzanne Collins' the *Hunger Games*; in its plot and themes; carried out this futuristic pessimistic description of the modern world.

General Introduction

General Introduction

After having been introduced to the worlds of the *Harry Potter* series, *Twilight*, *Lord of the Rings*, and *The Hobbit*, the *Hunger Games* trilogy by Suzanne Collins offers us a new sort of environment and setting for children's and young adult fiction. All fantastic and supernatural things are stripped away and we find ourselves in a depressing, dystopian version of our very own future.

The terms young adult novel, juvenile novel and young adult book all refer to texts in young adult literature category. The roots of young adult literature go back to the time when teenagers were given their own distinction as a social demographic group: World War II. These fictional novels share one thing in common: a young protagonist that loses one's innocence.

Young adult literature of the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries has experienced a remarkable shift from the positive utopian thinking to the negative dystopian portrayal of the future societies. This shift resulted in the emergence of what is called "Dystopian Fiction" which aims to criticize modern societies by depicting their negative aspects and highlighting their weaknesses.

Many authors of Young Adult fiction are pessimistic about the future of the human kind. This negative view is a result of the current political and social issues that occur all over the world like wars, famine... Since these issues are considered to be disastrous, writers use their critical abilities for the sake of warning their audience and creating a more conscious citizen aware of the threats of a totalitarian government. Many Young Adult literary works emerged during the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries to reflect the different aspects of a totalitarian society. Such works include "the Hunger Games" by Suzanne Collins which is the

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main subject of this study. This novel reflects the image of a totalitarian government. It uses a protagonist who struggles throughout the story to rebel against the totalitarian regime.

One of the major concerns of the 20th century writers is the pessimistic view and the negative description of the future government. In an attempt to portray the negative aspects of a totalitarian government, authors wrote dystopian fictions using their critical abilities their styles and the historical context, which resulted in the diversity of dystopian novels. However, they used a common theme which can be seen in the struggle of the individual against a totalitarian regime. This regime applies a variety of ways to take absolute control over the human life. These ways include the use of technology and propaganda, surveillance, destruction of human values and isolating humans from their natural world.

Suzanne Collins' *The Hunger Games* is considered as one of the best dystopian fictions. It reflects the different characteristics of a totalitarian government that is presented through its themes, plot and characters. As with most books for children and young adults, the *Hunger Games* series does take up traditional topics such as the good vs. the evil, friendship, family, loyalty, and love, but in addition, it arguably also offers stark criticism of our present society and of our treatment of our fellow human beings and our planet. Our lack of compassion, humanity, and future orientation are central ideas here. Through this thesis, we intend to show that Collins, through her work and the topics she addresses, is really commenting on our society today. To do so, we are going to answer the following questions:

- What are the main characteristics of dystopian fiction?
- How does Suzanne Collins portray the different aspects of totalitarianism in her novel?

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Most dystopian novels depict the modern government as an absolute and oppressive power that controls and manipulates all aspects of life. A totalitarian government imposes a very restricted discipline on people in order to limit their actions and influence their thought in an attempt to make them obedient and submissive to the regime and to ensure its supreme power. As a result, citizens lose control over their bodies and their minds; they become prisoners of the state's system.

In our thesis, we deal with dystopian literature and its main characteristics. We focus on the different aspects of totalitarian societies as depicted in Suzanne Collins' "*The Hunger Games*" and we examine how the themes of oppression and love are portrayed in the novel. Accordingly, the primary objective of our study is to explore the absolute control of totalitarian government over peoples' lives and how they struggle to release themselves from this kind of oppression through depicting the different features of totalitarian government. Moreover, we will focus on the role of the bourgeoisie (ie: the Capitol) that can be seen in the complete control over peoples' social and emotional lives.

Finally, we tackle another important point which is the impact of political development and technological progress on totalitarian societies and their role in making the state the supreme power.

Research studies about totalitarianism and apportion embodied in dystopian works are of high importance, as they give the readers information about this new genre (dystopia). *The Hunger Games* is a recently released Young Adult work which gives the floor for more works to be conducted on it. Moreover, such studies about the former mentioned themes, pave the way to more researchers to deal with it in a more detailed way. This study lays the floor for future investigations about the aspects of dystopian States and its totalitarian system of government according to different perspectives of writers. Additionally, the focus of this

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research is mainly on the themes of Totalitarianism, class struggle and love as depicted in Suzanne Collins' *the Hunger Games* through applying the Marxist theory.

This critical study of *Suzanne Collins' the Hunger Games* will be based on studying the different aspects of oppression as depicted in the novel, and on showing how does the totalitarian government of Panem take control over the other twelve districts. As the society of Panem is considered to be a "dystopian" one, light should be shed on dystopian aspects of that futuristic society. Conducting this research, the use of Marxism is of paramount importance in portraying the totalitarian aspects. Marxists see that the power of the government "arisen out of society but placing itself above it, and increasingly alienating itself from it" (Engels, 2008).

Because this research deals with critical and descriptive study of totalitarian aspects in Collins' *The Hunger Games*, data are basically collected from the novel itself as a primary source, and from other secondary sources such as books, articles, dissertations and websites.

The theme of Totalitarianism has been the focus for many literary works and studies recently. One of the most significant works that have dealt with the theme of totalitarianism and which is the primary source of our research is Suzanne Collins' *'The Hunger Games'* (2008). It is far more political than any teenage fiction written in the 21st century. Its plot is set in a near future where countries have been destroyed and replaced by 12 Districts under the control of the Capitol.

To strengthen its tight control over the districts, the Capitol organizes games each year where 24 helpless children, 2 from each district, have to fight to the death in a wild arena filled with dangerous animals and cruel tactics to destroy the teenagers, both physically and psychologically. The winner, after killing all the others to survive, has to deal with the pain, the nightmares and the Capitol's control. Forced to appear on camera constantly, physically changed and shaped for entertainment, the tributes remain all their lives tied to the Capitol.

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and its murderous president. Katniss Everdeen is one of the tributes. She volunteers for her sister and takes her place in the arena. Since that first step, she starts embodying rebellion, and here starts her mission to free the whole nation from tyrannical oppression and poverty.

In this novel, Collins attempts to warn against the destructive force of humans, the unjust social hierarchy and the danger of abusive powers. She creates an imaginary futuristic city, Panem, while at the same time tracing back its historical roots, drawing an interesting parallel with Romans and their arena games, linking past and future and showing how humanity always had, and still has, this violent impulse, this thirst for destruction. She gets inspiration from *1984*, *Metropolis* and *A 'clockwork's Orange* while modernizing them at the same time. Like these classics, she pushes the boundaries of violence to the extreme. But unlike them, she addresses it specifically to adolescents.

In 1949, another work that explores the theme of totalitarianism; George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty Four*; was published. It is a literary political fiction and dystopian science-fiction novel. It popularized the adjective Orwellian, which describes official deception, secret surveillance, and manipulation of recorded history by a totalitarian or authoritarian state. This novel remains one of the most powerful warnings ever issued against the dangers of a totalitarian society since Orwell had witnessed the danger of absolute political authority in an age of advanced technology.

Like Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* (1932), *1984* is one of the most famous novels of the negative utopian, or dystopian, genre which shows the worst human society imaginable, in an effort to convince readers to avoid any path that might lead toward such social degradation. In 1949, at the dawn of the nuclear age and before the television had become a fixture in the family home, Orwell's vision of a post-atomic dictatorship in which every individual would be controlled by means of the telescreen seemed possible.

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The most dangerous human traits for totalitarian states include the family ties and the notion of love in which the government tries to destroy any value that can make any citizen emotionally attached to another one. Furthermore, it attempts to impose on its citizens the idea that the community comes always before the individual to destroy their ambition and to prevent them from challenging the regime.

Another dystopian work was Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451*, published in 1953, a classic dystopian novel of a post-literate future which stands alongside Orwell's 1984 as a reflection of Western civilization's enslavement by the media, drugs and conformity. It is indeed a story about a world where books are outlawed and burned, but it is also a tale about the value of intellect, the importance of information and the singular, irreplaceable experience of reading books *as* books — as physical and precious objects.

Bradbury kept explaining that the novel was not about the dangers of government censorship or authoritarian rule; as he told his biographer Sam Weller, “‘*Fahrenheit 451*’ is less about Big Brother and more about Little Sister.” By this he seemed to mean all the small discouragements and impediments that take us away from our intellectual pursuits, whether peer pressure, overriding technology or indifference. Fortunately, there is a positive aspect in the novel which can be found in the fatalistic final words of the woman who chooses to stay behind with her smoldering papers: “You can’t ever have my books” (Bradbury, 1). Bradbury tried to convey a very important message: that we gave ourselves a sustainable and still reliable mechanism to provide shelter from these distractions, as well as the option to use it or not. It is a choice as simple, and as significant, as the decision to light up a mind or to turn it off.

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Our work is divided into two main chapters. In the first chapter, we will introduce Marxism which is the theory we are going to apply throughout our thesis; its basic tenets and how they are reflected throughout the novel. Then, we will deal with the main theme of this research which is Totalitarianism by tackling its different aspects revealed in *The Hunger Games*. After that, we will give an overview about Young Adult literature providing its definition and main characteristics. Finally, we will speak about the socio-historical background of the novel, providing a short biography of the writer Suzanne Collins and exploring the factors that inspired her to write this novel.

The second chapter is a practical one in which we extract the aspects of Totalitarianism referring to our primary source Suzanne Collins *The Hunger Games*. Food appears to be a powerful control mechanism used by Totalitarian government of Panem over the other districts, along with the strategy of divide and conquer and entertainment that is the Capitol's use of the hunger games spectacle as another means of control. Human feelings and survival are recurrent themes in the novel that can be seen through the images of love and sacrifice. We also present the effects of these yearly hunger games on the population of Panem that resulted in the class struggle between the districts. Finally, we will examine Katniss' critique of the society of Panem.

CHAPTER ONE:
**Socio-political struggle and Dystopian
Literature.**

Chapter One : Socio-political Struggle and Dystopian Literature

Introduction:

Collins' *The Hunger Games* is considered as one of the best Dystopian novels that embodies not only entertainment to Young Adults but also implies a political message to them. Dealing with this novel, it is important to understand what Dystopian Literature is as well as the most significant events that led writers to shift their vision from an optimistic to a pessimistic one. Also, it is necessary to highlight the historical context in which the novel occurred as well as the biography of its writer.

In this first chapter we will deal with the Marxist theory as well as the Dystopian literature, its characteristics and its themes introducing later on the focus of this thesis *The Hunger Games* and its writer Suzanne Collins shedding light on its historical context.

1. Marxism: the Revolutionary Theory

1.1 An introduction to Marxism

« Men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly found, given and transmitted from the past. »

(K. Marx 1852 'The Eighteenth Brumaire')

Marxism is the set of political and economic theories founded by Karl Marx, a German revolutionary socialist and his partner Friedrich Engels, the German social scientist. Later, these theories were developed by their followers to form the basis of communism. (www.oxforddictionaries.com)

Marxist methodology originally used a method of economic and sociopolitical inquiry known as historical materialism to analyze and critique the development of capitalism and the role of class struggle in systemic economic change. According to Marxist perspective, class conflict within capitalism arises due to intensifying contradictions between the highly

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productive mechanized and socialized production performed by the proletariat, and the private ownership and appropriation of the surplus product (profit) by a small minority of the population who are private owners called the bourgeoisie.

As the contradiction becomes apparent to the proletariat through the alienation of labor, social unrest between the two antagonistic classes will intensify, until it culminates in social revolution. The eventual long-term outcome of this revolution would be the establishment of socialism – a socioeconomic system based on social ownership of the means of production, distribution based on one's contribution, and production organized directly for use. As the productive forces and technology continued to advance, Marx hypothesized that socialism would eventually give way to a communist stage of social development, which would be a classless, stateless, humane society.

It is an astonishing that a philosophy like Marxism, which attacks the whole social system, remained for many decades more or less unattacked. Karl Marx was not very well known in his lifetime and his writings remained practically unknown to the greater part of his contemporaries.. After his death in 1883, there appeared the first part of *Böhm-Bawerk's* critique of the economic doctrines of Karl Marx. And later in the 1890s, when the last volume of *Das Kapital* was published, there appeared the second part of this critique, which completely killed Marx's economic doctrines. The most orthodox Marxians tried to revive and restate his doctrines. But there was practically no sensible critique of the philosophical doctrines of Karl Marx. (Von Mises 38)

The economic analysis of history as a whole and of capitalism in particular, is essential to the understanding of society today. Indeed, it forms the basis upon which we can learn and struggle to change society. By economy I mean the manner in which society creates and

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divides goods, wealth and services. Marx called this the method of production and means of distribution and exchange. (Introduction to Marxism 1)

1.2. Marx's Method

1.2.1. Labour and Alienation

For Marx, however, labour is the essence of man and the basis of society. Man is a labouring animal. 'It is just in his work upon the objective world...that man proves himself to be a species being. This production is his active species life. Through this production, nature appears as his work and his reality'. Like the other animals, man is a part of nature, and, like them, he is motivated by the need to survive, and to reproduce himself. But what sets human beings apart from other animals is that they are self-conscious creatures. Human beings are not subject to this limitation. They can even think up new goals to pursue. But the labour of human beings not only transforms nature, it also alters human beings themselves. Production is, for Marx, a social activity. He describes labour as involving 'a twofold relation: on the one hand as a natural, on the other as a social relation—social in the sense that it denotes cooperation of several individuals, no matter under what conditions, in what manner and to what end'.(Callinicos 67, 68)

1.2.2. The Logic of the Capital

When Marx produced his major work, *Das Kapital*, Capitalism as an all encompassing social system was still developing, despite this they discovered its fundamental laws, they discovered the contradictions that make it tick but that would ultimately lead to its downfall. It was up to another great Socialist, V. I. Lenin, to develop and update the analysis to reflect Capitalisms true nature in the 20th century. But to describe this I must go back again to Marx and Engels.

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“Capital consists of raw materials, instruments of labour, and means of subsistence of all kinds, which are employed in producing new raw materials, new instruments, and new means of subsistence. All these components of capital are created by labour, products of labour, accumulated labour.”

(K. Marx. 1847 ‘Wage-Labour and Capital)

Capitalism is a social system in the same way feudalism and slave society were before it and socialism will be after. That is, it, as a method of producing everything around us, dictates and forms every other part of our lives from our relationships to our education and ideas.

“Capital also is a social relation of production. It is a bourgeois relation of production, a relation of production of bourgeois society.”

(K. Marx. 1847 ‘Wage-Labour and Capital)

Capitalism developed out of the growth of the merchant trading industry. From this money began to be used to purchase and produce. Money also began to be used as a method of payment as the growing working class could not be paid in their product in the way peasants could be. Money and those who controlled and owned money, the bourgeois or capitalist class, eventually revolted against feudalism and its political control, monarchy, and established themselves as rulers through varying forms of parliamentary democracy to fascist rule, favourably parliament but fascist if necessary. We have seen the manner and method by which capitalism creates and exploits labour; we will now mention capitalism's most important trait, that of ruthless competition. It is this constant need to create profit and increase profit that leads Capitalism and society into crises on a reoccurring level.

Marx's concept of class is thus very different from that used by sociologists, for whom classes are defined by the technical function they perform in the division of labour. Classes for Marx only emerge through their antagonistic relationship to each other. In a sense, the class struggle comes before classes, since it is only when they clash and perceive their conflicting interests that social groups begin to behave as classes. Many sociologists and historians are prepared to admit the existence of, and to study ‘social conflict’. However, this conflict is seen as

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something accidental, the product of abnormal and temporary tensions, which can be eliminated by skilful ‘social engineering’ without damaging the fabric of the existing order. Society, for most non-Marxist thinkers, is essentially harmonious. Marx, on the contrary, conceived society as a unity of opposites, of which the class struggle was an essential part, and would continue until the basic contradiction, the exploitative social relationship at the heart of society, was eliminated. (Callinicos 77)

1.3. Class struggle and Capitalism

Marx assumed that “interests” were independent of human ideas and thoughts. He said that socialism was the ideal system for the proletariat. He said class interests determine the thinking of individuals and that this situation causes irreconcilable conflicts between the various classes. (Von, Mises 11). Relations of production are, in class society, ‘not relations between individual and individual, but between worker and capitalist, between farmer and landlord, etc’. For Marx, these class relations based on exploitation are the key to understanding society. The fundamental concept of the *Communist Manifesto* (1848) was that of “class” and “class conflict.” But Marx didn’t say what a “class” was. He did not regard the class struggle as his most important discovery. (Callinicos 88, 89)

“Modern socialism, is in its essence, the direct product of the recognition, on the one hand, of the class antagonisms, existing in the society of today, between proprietors and non-proprietors, between capitalists and wage workers; on the other hand, of the anarchy existing in production”

(F.Engels. 1892 ‘Socialism: Utopian and Scientific’)

Socialism develops out of capitalism and it must be built upon its ruins. From a Marxist perspective, it is what takes over the ownership of the means of production from the bosses. Socialism is the ‘dictatorship of the proletariat, it is the state owned and run by the working people. The Socialist state, through a democratically planned economy, builds equality in

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material conditions, culture and education. But this again cannot be achieved overnight as it must be built from the vast inequality of capitalism. It is working class solidarity and unity that builds the revolution and the same unity that prevents counter revolution and progresses socialism to communism. Solidarity is the key that again enables us to understand why socialism is realizable fact not a fantastic dream. (Introduction to Marxism 16)

2. Totalitarianism and Oppression

The term totalitarianism describes a government that takes total, centralized, state control over every aspect of public and private life. Totalitarian leaders appear to provide a sense of security and to give a direction for the future. A dynamic leader who can build support for his policies and justify his actions heads most totalitarian governments. Often the leader utilizes secret police to crush opposition and create a sense of fear among the people. To dominate an entire nation, totalitarian leaders devised methods of control and persuasion. These included the use of terror, indoctrination, propaganda, censorship, and religious or ethnic persecution. In a totalitarian state, the police serve to enforce the central government's policies. They may do this by spying on the citizens or by intimidating them. Sometimes they use brutal force and even murder to achieve their goals.(Case Study 440).

In order to fight totalitarianism, one needs to understand only one thing: Totalitarianism is the most radical denial of freedom. Yet this denial of freedom is common to all tyrannies and is of no primary importance for understanding the peculiar nature of totalitarianism. The very existence of totalitarian movements in the non-totalitarian world, that is, the appeal totalitarianism exerts on those who have all the information before them and who are warned against it day in and day out, bears eloquent witness to the breakdown of the whole structure of morality, the whole body of commands and prohibitions which had traditionally translated

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and embodied the fundamental ideas of freedom and justice into terms of social relationships and political institutions. (On the Nature of Totalitarianism 329)

It is well known that Louis XIV said: “I am the state”. This is the main sign of totalitarianism making a state the same as its authorities. Totalitarianism aims at fully transforming human beings in line with its ideology. People are transformed through the establishment of strict control over their actions and, what is most important, thinking. Totalitarianism dictates everyone how to think, demanding absolute obedience, which implies the disappearance of individualism and personal features. This has had quite a deep impact on our inner world. Of course, the description of reality in a manner contrary to real life and in line with desires was also visible in oral folklore.(Ratiani 10)

2.1. Police Terror and Indoctrination: Dictators of totalitarian states use terror and violence to force obedience and to crush opposition. Moreover, Totalitarian states rely on indoctrination—instruction in the government’s beliefs—to mold people’s minds. Control of education is absolutely essential to glorify the leader and his policies. Indoctrination begins with very young children, is encouraged by youth groups, and is strongly enforced by schools.

2.2. Propaganda and Censorship: Totalitarian states spread propaganda, biased or incomplete information used to sway people to accept certain beliefs or actions. Control of all mass media allows this to happen. No publication, film, art, or music is allowed to exist without the permission of the state.

2.3. Religion and Ethnic Persecution: Totalitarian leaders often create “enemies of the state” to blame for things that go wrong. Frequently these enemies are members of religious or ethnic groups. Often these groups are easily identified and are subjected to

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campaigns of terror and violence. They may be forced to live in certain areas or are subjected to rules that apply only to them. '(Case Study, 442)

3. Political Dystopia and Young Adult Literature

3.1. Political Dystopia

The term "dystopia" occurred for the first time in one of John Mill's parliamentary speeches, in 1868. thirty years later, the first English dystopian novels; *The Story of the Days to Come* and *When the Sleeper Wakes* by H.G Wells, were published. YA dystopian literature places the reader within the context of a futuristic, post-apocalyptic version of the United States. Kay Sambell offers two necessary elements of dystopian literature: first, it serves as a warning against "current human behaviors" and second, it must present a hopeful solution to those behaviors (163).

Dystopia is "a utopia which goes wrong"(Vieria,16). Thus dystopian literature tries to depict the negative aspects of the society that was once intended to be made an ideal one, it is important to recognize that a fine line exists between utopia and dystopia and that the former could easily turn to be the latter, this transformation may happen due to one of two reasons: either because of a corrupt, authoritative government or a citizen who does not want to conform to the collectivism of the state.

Dystopian literature also gives a view of a bad future to which present societies may evolve. Booker illustrated this idea in his book entitled *Dystopian Literature: A Theory and Research Guide* stating: "by focusing their critiques of society on imaginatively distant settings, dystopian fictions provide fresh perspectives on social and political practices that might otherwise be taken for granted or considered natural and inevitable" (4).

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Some historical events of the twentieth century were a turning point to literature and contributed to the shift from utopian to dystopian literature "Dystopian critique is largely the product of the terrors of the twentieth century"(Moylan 6) .Both of the two World Wars and the October Revolution of 1917 are significant factors that led to the utopian decline ,according to Peter Ruppert ,most of the utopian hopes vanished after the October Revolution which resulted in the Soviet Union socialism's failure (100). Moreover, as science started to go against human nature after the huge technological advances of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, this fact led to the emergence of dystopian thoughts .Hence technology becomes a source of its suppression and control (Booker 6). The last factor to be mentioned is the philosophical and psychological discoveries that found out that human beings are driven by natural passions and desires (Walsh 55).

3.1.1. Major Dystopian works

Scholars consider Aldous Huxley, George Orwell, H. G. Wells, and Yevgeny Zamyatin as four of the most important classic authors in the dystopian genre Huxley's *Brave New World* (1932), Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949), Wells's *A Modern Utopia* (1904), and Zamyatin's *We* (1924) are regarded as some of the major canon works of twentieth-century dystopian literature. Critics have repeatedly noted the influence of these works on the writing of modern dystopian authors, including Margaret Atwood, Chinua Achebe, Anthony Burgess, Ursula K. Le Guin, Isaac Asimov, Kurt Vonnegut, and Ray Bradbury, among numerous others.

Yevgeny Zamyatin's *We* ,written in 1921 is considered to be the cornerstone of and first original dystopian novel that inspired many writers later on ,its writer believed and defended the October Revolution ,he also was a supporter for communism and hoped for its success in the Soviet Union .However, his attitude later on was accompanied with frustration as he started thinking

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about how the government instead of protecting its citizens and their needs , turned to be totalitarian and authoritative .We portrays a society that lacks all forms of productivity and creativity ,its people are completely denied and subjugated by the government .

Huxley's *Brave New World* is a warning of the dangers of new and powerful technologies. One major theme of *Brave New World* is the rigid control of reproduction through technological and medical intervention and its story is set in a time when humans finally "succeeded in eliminating disease, aggression, war , anxiety , suffering ,guilt , envy and grief" (Kass312).However ,this success was at the expense of abolishing art and religion ,and destroying humans relationship with one another(Baggini 60).

Nineteen Eighty-Four was the result of Orwell's thinking of the social and political issues that took place in the Post War Britain that resulted in his fear from the future of the citizens under a totalitarian government caused by the outcomes of the wars. This novel is one of the great dystopias of the twentieth century that depicted all the aspects of a totalitarian regime as Jeffrey Meyers states:"For what is 1984 but a picture of humanity without a heart, of a people without tolerance or civilization, of a government whose sole object is the maintenance of its absolute totalitarian power by every contrivance of cruelty"(247).

In 1953, Ray Bradbury published his famous dystopian novel *Fahrenheit 451* which reflects the author concerns about the government's strict surveillance in a time when freedom of thinking was totally restricted leading to the loss of Imagination and creativity .Hence, *Fahrenheit 451* is considered as a social criticism of a technological totalitarian government that demands obedience at the cost of individual rights.

All of the above stated novels discussed the most important themes of dystopian genre , and described the lives of people of dystopian societies , and how the freedoms of its citizens is controlled especially through the use of technology . In it, children are raised to be loyal

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and faithful to the government .Dystopian protagonists are dissatisfied with their society and they are always realistic, alienated and more conscious than the other citizens.

Dystopian fiction became even more popular with the books adaptations into movies, and original novels started to be reflected through many dystopian TV shows.

3.2. Young Adult Literature

3.2.1. Definition

Young Adult: The Young Adult Service Division of the American Library Association defines the age range of an adolescent or young adult as ages: 10-19.

Early adolescence (Elementary or Middle School or grades 5, 6, 7)

Middle adolescence (Junior High or grades 8, 9, 10)

Later adolescence (High school or grades 11, 12) (public.iastate.edu).

Young Adult Literature: Karen Coats argues that the constantly changing readership makes it difficult to offer a definition for this luminal genre (322). Nevertheless, YA literary critics still attempt to classify its slipperiness; the most basic definition is literature “intended for readers between ages of 12 and 20” (Bean and Moni 638). This definition does not, however, account for the widespread adult audiences. Roberta Seelinger Trites offers the most comprehensive definition:

The basic difference between children’s and an adolescent novel lies not so much in how the protagonist grows — even though the gradations of growth do help us better understand the nature of the genre — but with the very determined way that YA novels tend to interrogate social constructions, foregrounding the relationship between society and the individual rather than focusing on Self and self-discovery as children’s literature does. (20).

A simple definition to Young Adult is: Literature *written for and marketed to young adults*. Young adult literature is usually given the birth date of 1968 with the advent of S.E. Hinton's *The Outsider* Other forms of literature prior to this date may have had young adult protagonists (such as *Huck Finn*), but it was usually intended for an adult audience, some argue that Young Adult Literature began in 1967with the publication of *Books and the*

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Teenage Reader: A Guide for Teachers, Librarians, and Parents by G. Robert Carlsen (historycooperative.org).

3.2.2. Characteristics

Some characteristics of Young Adult Literature can be summarized first in its limited number of characters and their detailed description of appearance and dress. It is often written in the first person (of the teenage protagonist). (public.iastate.edu)

4. The Hunger Games as a Sample of Dystopian Literature

4.1. Suzanne Collins: the Woman behind the novel

Born in Hartford, Connecticut, in 1962, Suzanne Collins was the daughter of an Air Force pilot, and her family moved several times when she was young. Collins then went on to earn a master's degree in dramatic writing from New York University. In 1991, Suzanne Collins began her professional career writing for children's television including *Clarissa Explains it All* and *the Mystery Files of Shelby Woo*, she also worked on *Little Bear* and *Oswald* for preschool viewers. Most recently she was the Head Writer for Scholastic Entertainment's *Clifford's Puppy Days*.

In 2003, inspired by *Alice in Wonderland*, Collins published *Gregor the Overlander*, the first book of *The Underland Chronicles*, which became a New York Times bestseller. *The Underland Chronicles* series was composed of this and four additional books: *Gregor and the Prophecy Bane*, *Gregor and the Curse of the Warmbloods*, *Gregor and the Marks of Secret* and *Gregor and the Code of Claw*. (www.biography.com)

As young, Suzanne Collins developed her love to reading thanks to her English teacher in the fifth and sixth grades, "Miss Vance, was wonderful. On rainy days, she would take

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whoever was interested over to the side and read us Edgar Allan Poe stories." (A conversation with Suzanne Collins, Questions and Answers) .AS adult, Collins ' love of reading grew up and by then her interest shifted towards novels written for young adults like George Orwell's 1984, Leo Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina*, or even *Germinal* by Émile Zola, readings that would later on help a lot in writing *The Hunger Games*. (A conversation with Suzanne Collins, Questions and Answers)

In 2008, Collins wrote her book *The Hunger Games* which would be followed later on by *Catching Fire* and *Mokingjay*, as she later recalled, *The Hunger Games* was born when she was flipping between TV channels; Collins was suddenly struck by the lack of distinction between reality TV and coverage of the Iraq war. "We have so much programming coming at us all the time," she says. "Is it too much? Are we becoming desensitized to the entire experience? . . . I can't believe a certain amount of that isn't happening." (A conversation with Suzanne Collins, Questions and Answers)

The story revolves around the series' rebel heroine, Katniss Everdeen, who lives in the post-apocalyptic nation of Panem, formerly known as North America. In Panem, the Hunger Games are an annual event in which young boys and girls fight to the death in a televised battle. The series' first book, *The Hunger Games*, was released in 2008. Its two sequels, *Catching Fire* and *Mockingjay*, were published in 2009 and 2010, respectively. Overall, the series has been a fantastic success, selling more than 50 million print and electronic copies. A film adaptation of the first book was released in 2012, to *Catching Fire* in 2013, and two parts of *Mockingjay* the first in 2014 and the second in 2015.

4.2. Historical Background of the Novel

Most authors of novels are inspired by the life around them including social, economic and political issues. These aspects often become the main theme of a story. For example in the novel *1984* by George Orwell, the main theme in this novel is the political issue at that time.

The novel *The Hunger Games* is the first book in The Hunger Games trilogy by Suzanne Collins it was published in 2008, the same year that the financial crisis hit America. The novel follows the story of Katniss Everdeen, a sixteen year old girl who lives in the dystopian country Panem (formerly North-America). A totalitarian government in the country's capitol, aptly named Capitol, rules Panem with an iron-fist, making it a frightful place. The country is divided into 12 districts which are devoted to a specific kind of laboring industry. A rich minority, living in the Capitol and Districts 1, 2 and 4, dominates society (Collins 66) while the rest of the population is kept living in dire poverty in the other districts.

Rigorous control is kept over every aspect of people's lives in order to minimize the chance of civil resistance. The Hunger Games are a central event to this society. The Games are a yearly event devised by the government where 24 children aged 12-18, two from each district, compete to death in a specially designed arena, in a tournament in which there can only be only one victor. As the Games are televised and presented as a grand spectacle, a gaudy competition, human suffering and brutal murder is turned into a yearly "reality television" event.

Katniss lives in District 12 with her mother Mrs Everdeen, and her twelve year old sister Primrose. Because of poverty, they have difficulty affording enough food for themselves and hunger has left its mark on them. Therefore, in order to provide for them, Katniss has resorted to hunting and trading illegally. As a result she is a skilled hunter, physically strong, brave and has a keen survival instinct but she is also serious, guarded of herself and harbours a lot of

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anger and frustration because of her position in life. At the reaping for the 74th Hunger Games, Katniss volunteers to go as the female tribute instead of Primrose who is originally drawn. Also going are the male tribute, Peeta Mellark, and their sponsor Haymitch Abernathy.

As Katniss experiences life in the Capitol, she notices the glaring discrepancy between classes in her society and how the existing social structure both threatens people's lives and makes them suffer. Once she enters the Games, her life becomes a matter of desperate survival as she must face great dangers and fight to stay alive as she tries her best to win. It is interesting to bring out the Marxist critique in *The Hunger Games* since it is written by an American author and has found most of its popularity in America, a country that has a complicated historical relationship with Marxism and communism ever since the Cold War. The Marxist critique in *The Hunger Games* makes the book quite radical, especially considering its place of publication and the socioeconomically fraught time in which it was published.

4.3. Suzanne Collins Inspiration for *the Hunger Games*

4.3.1. Reality TV Shows

Suzanne Collins has said in many interviews that she found the inspiration for the book series while channel surfing. She was switching between a reality show where young people were competing for money and actual war coverage where young people were fighting for their lives. She saw the similarities between the two and wanted to comment on it. She, along with many others, has seen how reality shows have evolved. They have become more popular and with that popularity they have also become more violent and severe in order to attract more viewers.

4.3.2. The Influence of Collins' Father

Collins's father was a great influence for many parts of the book. He was a military Specialist, a historian, and a doctor of political science. He made sure that his children understood why wars occurred, how they played out, and the consequences. Katniss' hunting abilities are also based on Collins' father: "He grew up during the Depression. For his family, hunting was not a sport but a way to put meat on the table. He also knew a certain amount of edible plants" (Collins Interview Everett). Katniss' father is the one who teaches Katniss to hunt and how to recognize what is edible. He does so in order for her to be able to provide her family with food, since they are very poor and cannot buy everything they need. Collins has a very close relationship with her father and that relationship inspired Katniss' relationship with her father. Collins has talked about the anxiety that comes with having an absent parent, something she experienced when her own father served in Vietnam. This anxiety is clear in Katniss who lost her father when she was very young, an experience that also forced her to become more of an adult herself.

4.3.3. The Influence of Greek Mythology and Antique Roman Society

The Hunger Games draws its inspiration from many sources, both contemporary and historical. It mixes up some literary genres like science fiction and fantasy and also takes on modern society phenomena such as "reality television", celebrity creation and fixation, fashion gaudiness, and violence as a form of media entertainment. However, like other fantasy novels, it also gets inspiration from historical sources such as various mythologies, religious tales, and the cultures of antique societies. Both Greek mythology and Roman society have a great influence on *The Hunger Games* novel.

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4.3.3.1. The Influence of Greek Mythology

Katniss' story is based upon the Greek myth of Theseus and the Minotaur. According to the myth, King Minos of Crete wanted to punish the people of Athens for the death of his son, Androgeus. He therefore decreed that each year, they were to send seven boys and seven girls to Crete. These tributes were to enter the great labyrinth, a maze that was reportedly impossible to get out of. There, they were meant to serve as food to the Minotaur (a half man, half bull) that resided within.

Later, Theseus came to Athens and when he learned of this tradition he decided to volunteer to go as a tribute as he felt sorry for the children and their families and was certain that he could kill the Minotaur. When Theseus came to Crete, Minos's daughter Ariadne fell in love with him and decided to offer him help. She gave him a magic ball of thread and told him it would unravel within the labyrinth and that if he followed it, it would lead him to where the Minotaur was. When he wanted to return, all he had to do was rewind the thread and he would be able to go back to the entrance. Theseus followed her instructions, found the Minotaur and killed it. He then wound his way back and was able to get the rest of the tributes out as well. He guided them to the harbour where they managed to escape in a ship into the darkness and back to Athens (Graves 312 ,315).

In both *The Hunger Games* and the myth of Theseus ,power is used as a fear mechanism and a tool of civil oppression with the purpose of minimizing the chance of civil resistance. President Snow, the ruler of Panem, represents Minos and the Games themselves represent the Minotaur. The labyrinth represents the Game arena itself and the twelve districts and their people represent the citizens of Athens. In the myth king Minos's purpose is punishing the people of Athens for his son 's death by sacrificing their children ,similarly in Panem ,the

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games were originally organized as a punishment for an unsuccessful uprising against the Capitol that had occurred seventy-five years before.

Taking the kids from our districts, forcing them to kill one another while we watch – this is the Capitol’s way of reminding us how totally we are their mercy .How little chance we would stand of surviving another rebellion. Whatever words they use, the real message is clear: “Look how we take your children and sacrifice them and there’s nothing you can do. If you lift a finger, we will destroy every one of you. (Collins 22)

The ultimate purpose of the Games and the ritualistic sacrifice to the Minotaur is to put people under control and to put them in a state of powerlessness.

4.3.3.2. The Influence of Roman Society

In the novel, a so called tesserae system is for food distribution. In Roman society, tessera was “a small square of bone, wood” (“Tesserae” 1885) that was passed out by the government and used as a free ticket of admission to public spectacles (Theater 532).

The name of the country, Panem, comes from the phrase “*Panem et circenses*” which translates as “bread and circuses” from Latin. The phrase was created by the Roman satirist Juventus. He used it to refer to how the upper class “sedated” the lower class by providing them with food, public games and spectacles so that they would forget their troubles and disadvantaged position in society (Köhne 8). One kind of such event was the gladiatorial games. Gladiators were armed combatants (professionals, slaves or criminals) that fought with criminals or wild animals in a mortal combat in order to provide entertainment for the public (Jackson 7).

In *The Hunger Games* the situation is in many ways the same. The Games are turned into a spectacle but unlike in the Roman Empire, the Games are not used to “sedate” the lower classes but instead as a control mechanism by the government. As Katniss explains it: "To make it humiliating as well as torturous, the Capitol requires us to treat the Hunger Games as

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a festivity, a sporting event pitting every district against the others" (Collins 22). The tributes in the Hunger Games are like the gladiators, armed combatants that fight to the death, but they are only children. The rules of the game are still the same; human suffering and death is in both cases a shocking form of entertainment. The tributes suffer for the sake of giving people something to watch and cheer for.

CHAPTER TWO

A Marxist Critical Study of Totalitarian Aspects in Suzanne Collins' the Hunger Games

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Introduction

In this chapter the diverse parts of the presence of the Hunger Games themselves will be talked about alongside what they symbolize. Amusement and means of control and power are the significant points here; what control and power mean in the realm of *The Hunger Games* novel. Associated with this is additionally what consequences this kind of discipline/diversion may have on a populace and to what extent abuse of the populace can be permitted to proceed.

1. Food as a Control Mechanism

Food is a glaring image of the Hunger Games spectacle. It is something that the people of twelve districts lack and they daily struggle to provide it for their families. Food is the point of weakness that the Capitol can maneuver on and can make use of for its own good. In the novel *The Hunger Games*, power is taken away from the public and instead put into the hands of only a few that is able to yield it as they please. In the novel, power is established over people's lives in many ways but in particular by limiting their access to food sources, thereby making it difficult for them to provide enough food for themselves. Life becomes a matter of desperate survival and people are left weak as they are never able to get enough food. When it comes to the districts of Panem, the lack of food is a highly intentional move by the Capitol to keep the districts under control. And by in addition controlling the media, the Capitol makes sure that its own citizens do not know on what or at whose expense their feasting is done. (Hamre 32)

Abundance of food and drinks in Capitol attract the poor and also the wealthy inhabitants of the Capitol. "The huge waste of food in the Capitol clearly shows that the resources are not being used or distributed fairly in Panem" (Hamre 31). Food is an innovation or a modern tool in the hands of the Capitol to keep the twelve districts under its own control and highlight

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class distinction. The inhabitants of the districts try to provide food for themselves at the cost of killing their citizens and friends, especially in the Games. Because people are poor and have no access to food and drinks, President Snow can easily deceive them by employing spectacle strategy.

Obviously, food is a tool for the Capitol to reach its brutal aims which is entrapping people's soul and body so that they are kept unaware of the cruelties of President Snow and consequently they do not revolt against the Capitol and its dictatorship as they are so desperate and weak, consequently unable of getting enough food:

“Starvation is not an uncommon fate in District 12. Who hasn't seen the victims? Old people who can't work. Children from a family with too many to feed. Those injured in the mines. Straggling through the streets. And one day, you come upon them sitting motionless against a wall or lying in the Meadow, you hear the wails from a house, and the Peacekeepers are called in to retrieve the body. Starvation is never the cause of death officially. It's always the flu, or exposure, or pneumonia. But that fools no one “. (Collins 33,34)

1.1. “Panem et Circenses”

The expression "panem et circenses" (bread and circuses) clarifies extremely well how the Hunger Games are associated with amusement for the subjects in the Capitol. This analogy for sustenance in return for political power is intensely played upon in the Hunger Games set of three and furnishes us with a fantastic perspective of the arrangement of government in Panem.

The Merriam-Webster webpage adds that it is “a palliative offered especially to avert potential discontent.” These definitions state that a society where this form of rule is prevalent is not necessarily a place where the government is being fair to all its citizens or where the rule is democratic or in any way just. On the contrary, as long as the citizens get their basic and superficial needs met, like food and entertainment, those in charge can do more or less as they please.

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To the people in the Capitol, the Hunger Games have taken the role of “circenses”, the distraction; they “are so caught up in the artificial drama that plays out on the television that they pay little attention to the fact that their “president” is, in fact, a dictator who attained power by murdering his rivals, or that their affluence comes at the cost of great privation elsewhere” (Henthorne 105). ‘So that’s what the districts are for’, to provide the bread and circuses’ (Mockingjay 261). In Panem, many people are working for the wellbeing of the few; each district has its main product (everything from food to luxury items), which they provide the Capitol with. This system of (not) sharing the resources of the earth is found throughout our history, and history also attests to the fall of regimes where the governments have shown no concern for the population over whom they rule; from Imperial Rome, to Bourbon France, to the Soviet Union (Pharr 13). Those who have, want more, and those who have little, get less. By giving up their political rights, the people of the Capitol have also turned a blind eye to the people and places their wealth originates from.

The same situation can be found elsewhere, all over the world today. Although we do not live under the same circumstances as the people in Panem do, there are similarities to be found between us, suggesting that very little have changed in Panem from our time, at least not to the better. It is not difficult to see that it is this type of unjust government that rules Panem, especially when we look at the Capitol where the citizens have succumbed to decadence.

Adrienne Kress points out that the world of Panem could only have come to be when people’s purpose in life became only to indulge themselves and only care about themselves, and then anything that comes in the way of this purpose must be stopped. When you care only for yourself, why should you care for the people who make your lifestyle possible? (Wilson 224) It does sound a bit backwards and even a bit like a paradox, but if your sole purpose in life is to make sure that you are doing well and having a good time, then all other things

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become minor and unimportant. As long as the government provides you with what you need, food and entertainment, you do not need to care about anything else; that is the government's job, the deal you have entered into. This has made the citizens of the Capitol more concerned with "their appearance, food and entertainment, than with politics or the fate of the districts that they consider beneath them" (Pavlik 33).

Compassion towards other human beings is gone and thus there is no moral concern about sending children to slaughter. To say it pointedly, the people of the Capitol have forsaken their humanity and care for others in order to live a carefree life, where the most terrible thing for them is to be out of nail polish, whereas the really terrible things are not thought twice about. The citizens of the Capitol have given up their right to have a say in politics and with it their responsibility for their fellow human beings (they think), and in return they are provided with an abundance of food and the ultimate form of entertainment.

2. Divide and Conquer

In addition to the fences and the control of information and food supplies, the ultimate way of controlling the districts, however, is through the Hunger Games themselves, which then become the second reason for their existence in Panem. "The Games are the ultimate terror tactic because they are played with the lives of innocents" (Pavlik 30). However terrifying the Games are, the rulers of Panem must nevertheless each year give their citizens a show worthy of the name in order to keep their power and to prove their dominance. The Games must both be entertaining and horrific.

The Hunger Games mirrors the Capitol's control over the districts only on a smaller scale; the Gamemakers control the availability of food and other goods necessary for survival in the arena, just as the Capitol controls the resources the districts need (Henthorne 98). Pavlik (31) adds to this and explains that by making the districts compete in the arenas we are shown the continuation of the divide and conquer method exercised by the physical separation of the

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districts. The Hunger Games being such an important symbol of the Capitol's power cannot afford to send any signal of weakness or lack of control to the people of Panem. However, throughout the series we are made aware of small shortcomings in its power and it is the exploitation of these shortcomings that ultimately helps Katniss and the other rebels to show their dissatisfaction with the Capitol's rule and change the world they live in.

The Capitol exerts its dominance and control over the various districts in many ways, and the fence surrounding the districts is only one of them. But as we are told of the shortcomings of the fence, we are also given that very first glimpse of hope that is supposedly to be found in dystopias for children and young adults; the Capitol's control has its defects, or holes if you like, just like the fence, and is therefore, if unintentionally, giving someone like Katniss an opportunity to develop into a potential threat to its rule. For in addition to hunting, the holes also provide Katniss and Gale with a moment of liberty to speak their mind about the Capitol, the Hunger Games, and the unfairness of their situation; to think out loud, something that cannot normally be done without serious consequences. Katniss explains that when she was younger, she would scare "my mother to death, the things I would blurt out" (*Hunger Games* 7).

Not even in their own home are the characters free to say what they want. They can never be sure whether they are being overheard or not, and even in the woods, Katniss' acquired habit of keeping her thoughts to herself, is sometimes hard to overcome. The hunting trips also contribute to social bonding, not only between Katniss and Gale, but also with the people they trade with.

People forming loyalty to someone other than the Capitol, cannot be good for it. In this connection, it should also be mentioned that it is not only the inhabitants that keep quiet about their feelings and knowledge; the Peacekeepers in District 12, although they know of Katniss and Gale's illegal hunting, keep quiet because they themselves are enjoying the

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prospects of fresh meat and other things found in the woods. They even meet in the “Hub”, the black market in District 12 and share a meal once in a while. Even Mayor Undersee is a customer of Katniss’, enjoying the sweet strawberries she picks for him. Again we see weak links in the system of control in Panem; when the servants of the authorities are not following the rules established by the government; this gives courage to, and sets precedence for, the rest of the population and thus creates another hole in the total control the Capitol wishes to exert over the districts.

This, combined with the defects of the fence, provides more of the hope that things may change, that the Capitol’s power is not total, and as a consequence the future prospects of Panem do not seem so dark anymore. Not only is the Capitol’s lack of attention to, and lack of law reinforcement in District 12 one reason for Katniss’ development, in addition, Despain (71) comments, the Capitol actually forces the people in the districts to illegal actions because of the desperate situation they have been put in. If there had been no food shortages, there would have been less reason for poaching, stealing, and prostitution, and for thinking alternatively.

The 12 districts of Panem are controlled mainly through division by creating gaps between individuals and groups; between the genders, the working and merchant classes, and between the districts themselves (Henthorne 46). A classic “Divide and Conquer”-tactic. The Capitol does this by controlling the supply of food, work, and information. Freedom of speech is unthinkable and those who in various ways have acted or spoken in opposition to the Capitol have been turned into Avoxes. An Avox is “someone who committed a crime. They cut their tongue so they can’t speak” (Collins 94,95), and then made into a servant for the Capitol. This also creates a barrier between those who dare speak, and those who do not. Everything in Panem is controlled and therefore even the smallest of lapses in District 12 becomes that much clearer.

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In connection with the entertainment part of the Hunger Games, one might wonder why on earth the Capitol carries out something as horrible, expensive, and time consuming as the Hunger Games in the first place? Of course it is to punish the districts for their previous disobedience, but why not just round up boys and girls and have them executed? Why make a show out of it? There are several possible reasons for that. One is what Katniss points out:

“This is the Capitol’s way of reminding us how totally we are at their mercy. How little chance we would stand of surviving another rebellion. Whatever words they use, the real message is clear. ‘Look how we take your children and sacrifice them and there’s nothing you can do. If you lift a finger, we will destroy every last one of you. Just as we did in District Thirteen.’” (Collins 24)

“To make it humiliating as well as torturous, the Capitol requires us to treat the Hunger Games as a festivity, a sporting event pitting every district against the others” (Collins 22). They do not have only to send their children to slaughter; they must also watch them being killed and pretend to be happy about it. By going after the children, the very symbol of hope and future, the Capitol is trying to kill off any hope or idea about rebellion. If people do not have the means and power to protect their own children, then the means to do anything rebellious at all is gone too. By taking the children away, the Capitol also creates a gap between children and adults. In an act of self-preservation, the adults might not get that much attached to their children because it hurts too much to have them taken away.

The Capitol is always in control and always reminding the people of it. “It is hard not to fear a power that can so easily, thoughtlessly sacrifice the lives of children” (Kress 233). Although the movie adaption of the first book is not being discussed in this thesis, there is an interesting conversation in it between President Snow and the Head Gamemaker of the 74th Hunger Games, Seneca Crane, about the purpose of having a winner and Snow asks:

”Seneca, why do you think we have a winner?” “What do you mean?” “I mean: Why do we have a winner? Hope.” “Hope?” “Hope. It is the only thing stronger than fear. 25 A little hope is effective. A lot of hope is dangerous. A spark is fine, as long as it is contained.” “So...?” “So; contain it!” (The Hunger Games Movie: 2012).

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By providing the contestants with that taunting, little spark of hope, not more than can be controlled by the Capitol, the people of the districts have a chance of seeing their child again, and it also provides the contestants themselves with an incentive to try and win the Games because they have a chance of coming home, which in turn provides for a much better show. If we compare this tiny ray of light with the complete darkness in Orwell's 1984, we see a clear difference between the adult and the children's version of the dystopia novel. By giving the people of the districts this small possibility of a better life, the Capitol is arguably also making its biggest mistake.

By not completely quenching the spark of hope, the Capitol is making itself vulnerable. In 1984, the Party does no such thing (the one hope turns out to be a ruse) and has thus a very different ending than the Hunger Games trilogy. The spark of hope that Katniss provides the districts with becomes too big for the Capitol to contain. Most reality shows that fail to keep up with the increasing demands of the viewers, are quickly abandoned by them, and for the Capitol, being abandoned by its viewers may be the beginning of the end of its rule. This nearly happened one year we are told by Katniss, when "we spent one Hunger Games watching the players freeze to death at night (...) it was considered very anticlimactic in the Capitol, all those quiet, bloodless deaths" (Collins 48).

So with the popularity that comes with the Hunger Games comes an ever increasing demand to keep the viewers watching. "To hold on to the viewers, the producers have to make each season fresh and new" (Ryan 101). Therefore, the Gamemakers are constantly trying to come up with new and terrible ways to make the life in the arena as challenging as possible, and making sure that a quiet death becomes the exception to the rule. They cannot afford for the Games to look cheap and boring. The shows are kept interesting by making them more demanding and extreme for the contestants.

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As Carrie Ryan comments, the annual Hunger Games are the very symbol of the Capitol's power over the Districts and their people, and a boring game may be taken as a sign of the Capitol's weakness and of lacking the means necessary to produce a worthy Game, and thus people might begin to question their allegiance to it (Ryan 102). Although a powerful weapon against the oppressed population in the districts, the Hunger Games are also the very reason there exists an opposition in the first place. In addition, the Capitol's total dependence on the districts for various goods "makes its position somewhat precarious" (Palvik 31) and so the holes in the Capitol's power are getting bigger and more numerous.

3. Entertainment: Panem the Society of Spectacle

The society of spectacle is presented by Debord as "a mere representation of seemingly real images which is used by the capital for its own good" (Debord 6). It is a society in which the dominant class (the capitalists) rules people by the help of media, entertainments and games all of which attract people's attention so that they would not see the reality of the society and how much oppressed they are and also to distract them from making a rebellion against their rulers' injustices.

According to Debord, capitalism has taken another dimension so that it takes the new concept "advanced capitalism"; like its name tells, this kind of capitalism employs modern technologies to drown people's minds in the sea of unreal images which are called spectacle; this latter refers mainly to mass media, entertainments and games, such artificial representations have huge effect on the labor.

When we enter the story, it is the day of the procuring – the determination, by lottery, of the tributes who will battle in the 74th yearly Hunger Games. Subsequent to adapting more about the Games, their motivation and how they work, the idea of the Hunger Games helps us especially to remember the unscripted TV demonstrates we have today. By blending Survivor

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and Big Brother with dangerous kids, Collins has taken this idea to an extraordinary level. By having young men and young ladies kill each other for the diversion of the not very many and well to do in the Capitol, and as discipline for the general population in the locale, we are route past the breaking point of what we would discover worthy both as amusement and in all probability as discipline today.

We should not forget, however, the fact that reality shows have become more and more popular during the last two decades, increasing both in topics and concepts, and what are the Hunger Games if not a very barbaric, and yet, for some, a very entertaining, live reality show? The reason for the Hunger Games' existence in Panem is twofold: "on the one hand they entertain a frivolous crowd in the Capitol [...] and it reminds those in the districts of the Capitol's relentless powers" (Clemente 24). In addition, Collins' directness in describing the brutalities of this extreme version is most likely a comment on whether or not we are heading in a direction that will ultimately end up with our own television shows becoming something in the nature of the Hunger Games.

4. Human Feelings Vs Survival

4.1. Love as a Stimulus to Sacrifice

There are several types of weapons used in the Hunger Games trilogy, both physical and psychological weapons, and also media and human beings, all of them destructive and harmful in their own ways. The physical weapons are perhaps those that are the most familiar to us, swords, bows and arrows, bombs and various advanced forms of traps and snares. We also see examples of torture and threat being used to incapacitate the enemy, as when we learn of President Snow's threat to both Katniss and Finnick to hurt their loved ones if they do not do as he says. For Finnick this has led to prostitution for Snow's political allies.

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Torture can be seen in combination with humans being used as weapons, the prime example being Peeta who is captured after the rescuing of the tributes from the Quarter Quell arena. After Peeta has been re-rescued and brought to District 13, we learn that he has been tortured and brainwashed, “hijacked” is the term used, into believing that Katniss is the enemy. “Peeta becomes what the Capitol perceives as the ultimate weapon against Katniss” (King 115). Not only has the Capitol made Katniss feel guilty and worried for what might be happening to Peeta, now she is also afraid of being attacked by him. By keeping Peeta prisoner, the Capitol has also been hindering Katniss to focus on her role as the Mockingjay. She compares herself with Buttercup, and his chase for the torch beam in the game “Crazy Cat”.

When the desired object is out of reach, both Katniss and Buttercup are sent “into a tailspin” and neither can be “comforted or distracted” (Mockingjay 180). Furthermore, the thought that “Peeta is being tortured specifically to incapacitate her is unendurable” and this is also what happens to Finnick: “It’s what broke him” and what is breaking Katniss (Mockingjay 180-181). Peeta is the Capitol’s only weapon against Katniss and they will do to him “what ever it takes to break her” (Mockingjay 177).

We see another example of this form of weaponry in the Quarter Quell arena, where both Katniss and Finnick hear the screams of persons close 42 to them; Katniss hears Prim, her mother, Gale, and several others, and Finnick hears Annie Cresta, his wife-to-be. Before they realize that the screams come from the birds, both of them are nearly driven crazy in their attempt to find the source. Threat has had a different outcome for the Quarter Quell Tribute, Joanna, as we learn when she enters the jabberjay part of the arena: “They can’t hurt me. I’m not like the rest of you. There’s no one left I love” (Catching Fire, 418). The awfulness of Panem becomes extra clear here, as the alternatives are to either live under constant threat and fear when it comes to your family’s well being, or to lose those that you

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have dear and live with the knowledge that it is your fault. Similar to the constant surveillance, the constant fear and guilt becomes another way of controlling the people of the districts and the winners of the Games.

Katniss is another example of a human weapon, but initially not intended to be as deadly as she in fact becomes. Although not hijacked, Katniss is being used as the rebels' front figure, a deal she entered into believing that it would help the cause and her own wish to get revenge. Her role as the Mockingjay, however, is very similar to her role as the Girl on Fire: "in both cases her words, actions and appearance are managed by others as to achieve certain effects" (Henthorne, 75). The difference may be that the Girl on Fire was solely for her own cause and survival, but the Mockingjay is for others' as well. In addition, Katniss' role as the Mockingjay also becomes a form of weapon when she appears in promos and in person to speak the rebels' cause. Katniss is the main actor in the rebels' promos and they use her popularity and the fact that people recognize her to send their messages to the people in the districts. In District 13 and as the Mockingjay,

"Katniss serves as persona rather than person" (Wezner,153). Both Peeta and Katniss are victims of manipulation by higher powers who want to use them for their own gain. Peeta, after he is rescued and has received some treatment for his mental state, president Coin, like Snow before her, attempts to use him against Katniss when she orders them to be put in the same squad. After having served her purpose in uniting the districts, the Mockingjay can continue to serve as a symbol equally well being dead as being alive.

4.2. Love as a Stimulus to Success

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The dilemma of rights and wrongs in warfare is also connected to the love-triangle in the series and who Katniss chooses of her two suitors. Gale represents the revengeful type, most likely partly responsible for the bombing in the end, whereas Peeta is the one who wants to achieve peace through humane means and end the conflict and the years of violence without any form of revenge. *He "is the one who, despite everything he's been through (...) is able to retain his essential humanity. He, unlike Gale, recognizes there is a line that must never, ever be crossed"* (Littman 202).

The believed turning point comes when Katniss votes for a final Hunger Games with Capitol children as Tributes. The first thought is that she has chosen the revenge side, but when she assassinates President Coin instead of Snow, it is clear that she has not only chosen to really end the war, but also that she clearly thinks that Coin is not a good alternative to Snow. Katniss has by this action hopefully broken the cycle. Pavlik suggests that this is a way of saying that "one form of absolute power cannot be used to replace another" (35).

By killing Coin, Katniss has finally come to terms with how she wants the future to be and with her choice of mate. Thinking of the things she has witnessed during the war, she no longer "feels any allegiance to these monsters called human beings," arguing that there "is something significantly wrong with a creature that sacrifices its children's lives to settle its differences" (Mockingjay 440) Although both Snow and Coin are out of the picture, the reminder of Prim's death and the connection it has to Gale, eliminates him as an alternative suitor.

Katniss cannot live and at the same time kindle her hatred for what has happened; what she needs is a symbol of rebirth, not destruction, and a "promise that life can go on, no matter how bad the losses. That it can be good again" (Mockingjay 453). And that only Peeta can give her. And true to Gale's prediction about Katniss, she chooses the one "she thinks she

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can't survive without" (Mockingjay 385). What we choose to do with our lives and how we choose to treat each other should both reflect how we want to be treated and what kind of world we want to live in.

Even outside of the Games, there's a battle for survival going on. The Games are just an extreme version of the daily struggle in the poor Districts of Panem, where death by starvation or mine explosion is always a distinct possibility. And it is just not physical survival that's at stake. As Peeta suggests, he would rather die on his feet than live on his knees. When the two of them finally make it out alive, it is their psychological and spiritual survival that's almost more thrilling than the fact that they are both still in one piece.

4.3. Effects of the Hunger Games on the Population of Panem

Suzanne Collins's novel *The Hunger Games* accounts a dystopian life of Panem which is divided into two parts of the Capitol and the twelve poor districts under the dominance of a cruel ruler called President Snow. He is a dictator who exploits the districts by imposing inequality on them. Each district is producing a product for the Capitol; for example district twelve produces coals. But the poor themselves are not allowed to use their productions and it is the Capitol that appropriates all productions for itself. Here a wide class distinction appears between Capitol and the districts.

Katniss, the sixteen year old hero of the novel, lives in district twelve and by hunting she provides food for her mother and her little sister, Primrose, since the death of her father in a mine explosion. She is a skilled hunter; she goes to the places where she and other inhabitants are prohibited to go for hunting; the Capitol determined a penalty for anyone hunting there. But Katniss has to go there as she is the breadwinner of her family:

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“Even though trespassing in the woods is illegal and poaching carries the severest of penalties, more people would risk it if they had weapons. But most are not bold enough to venture out with just a knife. My bow is a rarity, crafted by my father along with a few others that I keep well hidden in the woods, carefully wrapped in waterproof covers.” (Collins 5)

Katniss lives in a place where even eating bread is a dream for her and the inhabitants. When Gale, Katniss' hunting partner, gives her a loaf of bread, she becomes surprised and says: “It is real bakery bread, not the flat, dense loaves we make from our grain rations. I take it in my hands, pull out the arrow, and hold the puncture in the crust to me like this is for special occasions.” (Collins 5)

So, a wide class distinction and inequality pervade Panem. But why people do not rebel against this wide class distinction and injustice imposed on them by the powerful President Snow? Panem is the setting of this novel which is divided into two districts of different classes; one is the Capitol in which the wealthy people live and the other is the twelve districts who are poor and under the control of the Capitol. Peterson says: “while the citizens of the Capitol live in luxury and complacency, the citizens of District 13 are taught from an early age that they have to fight to survive and are forced to live under controlled circumstances” (5).

District thirteen is entirely destructed by the Capitol because of its rebellion against the Capitol. Panem is ruled by the President Snow who is a cruel and unjust president who employs "spectacle strategy" to develop enmity among people. President Snow exploits the labor of the districts for his own advantage without granting any benefit to them and keeps the inhabitants hungry. Instead, in order to attract their attention to the images of food, clothes, wealth and comfortable life, he brings the spectacle of the game of Hunger Games in which the participants are the poor. In fact, the victims of this game are the poor people of the twelve districts.

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The rules of the Hunger Games are simple. In punishment for the uprising, each of the twelve districts must provide one girl and one boy called tributes to participate. (Collins16). Even children living in twelve districts are educated based on the products they are supposed to produce in a near future. It is mostly a lot of blather about what we owe the Capitol” (Collins 38). In fact, the mob is prepared to be exploited by the Capitol in a near future. They are not allowed to decide about their education which is fundamentally a personal issue.

As a political tool in the hands of President Snow, Hunger Games is a threat for the districts not to rebel against the Capitol any more. Every year President Snow reminds the poor of their past uprising and his control over the districts; that's why he uses glittering images of the televised Hunger Games to control the minds of the people. Collins, in an interview, states: “in the book, the annual Hunger Games themselves are a power tool used as a reminder of who is in charge and what will happen to citizens who don't capitulate” (Blasingame726).

The images of these games including the images of food and wealth are so inviting for the starving people of the districts that they can even kill one another to win the wealth. Thus the Capitol succeeds to manipulate the minds of the people by imposing its rules, demands and ideologies through modern technologies such as spectacle without bloodshed and physical war.

In fact, spectacle is a deceitful game against the minds of the poor people who are deceived by these fake images. Consequently the people of the districts under the rule of the Capitol will not rebel against the Capitol's power. They even cannot talk about his injustice as it is explained by Katniss, the hero-narrator of the novel: “so I learned to hold my tongue and to turn my features into an indifferent mask so that no one could ever read my thoughts” (Collins 5). Therefore, Hunger Games are one of the sources of inequality and enmity

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between people of different districts and this is the strategy used by the Capitol to prevent them from upheaval. Hunger Games and the images are just for absorbing people's attention and entangling them in the images which are based on their needs; though these fake images do not fulfill their needs. (Sasani, Darayee34)

Another element in Hunger Games which make enmity among people is the rule of killing for gaining wealth and award. Thus, winning the prize of food and money is a glaring rule in Hunger Games to attract the people towards an unreal generosity of President Snow. Unfortunately, some are revealed in to this glaring image. Many boys and girls practice a lot and are the volunteers of taking part in the games with the hope of winning money. Hamre stipulates that how these tributes prepare themselves for the games in order to win the prize: "These children seek to win the Games for glory. This only adds further to the split between the districts and also between the tributes in the arena. Everyone becomes an enemy for one reason or another." (International Letters of Social and Humanistic Sciences Vol. 48 35)

5. Class Struggle and Capitalism

The history of all hitherto existing societies is the history of class struggle. That is the opening of the legendary text written by Karl Marx and Friederick Engels the Communist Manifesto. The conflict between bourgeois and proletariat, working class and the land owner, all of this fact lead class struggle became one of prominent issue in modern life. Class struggle is a very important concept for Marxist theorists; the importance of the concept of class struggle to Marxism is affirmed by its appearance in the very first line of the *Communist Manifesto* (1848):

"That the history of these class struggles forms a series of evolutions in which, nowadays, a stage has been reached where the exploited and oppressed class – the proletariat – cannot attain its emancipation from the sway of the exploiting and ruling class – the

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bourgeoisie – without, at the same time, and once and for all, emancipating society at large from all exploitation, oppression, class distinction, and class struggles” (8_9).

According to Marx's view on class struggle , analyzing *The Hunger Games* one can say that it is mainly about the "haves" and the "have nots" that is to say ,the people who are rich and those who are poor . In Suzanne Collins's *The Hunger Games*, There are two kinds of groups of people living with a big difference, they are bourgeoisie and proletariat.

5.1. The Conflicted Classes

As it was mentioned previously, *The Hunger Games* mainly concerns upon the contest of exploiting and exploited, ruling and oppressed classes at the same time in the post-apocalyptic nation of Panem. Historically, the nation of Panem is a shining Capitol ringed by thirteen districts, which brought peace and prosperity to its citizens. Then came the Dark Days, the uprising of the districts against the Capitol. Twelve were defeated, the thirteenth obliterated (Collins 15).The conflicted classes reflected in *The Hunger Games* novel are the Capitol as the ruling class and the twelve districts as the classes that are ruled.

Capitol, a place that is described as a city with a variety of glittering skyscraper and people living in luxury. The Capitol represents the bourgeoisie who owns the means of production People in capitol have all the things that the districts people can't afford. This make them having power to ruling all over Panem. These people are representative upper class as they can pay for and do whatever they like. Meanwhile the districts represent the proletariat (the workers) which is defined as the class that does not own the means of production, and owns nothing other than its labor power.

The districts are classified into two different levels of welfare; the wealthier districts or the career districts and the poorer districts. Although the wealthier districts live under the Capitol's mercy, they are not as wealthy as the Capitol people, and their status is similar with

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the poorer; the workers. The districts are locked in struggle with the Capitol which owns and controls the means of production. Hence the relation between the Capitol and the districts reflects the relation between the capitalist and the workers in capitalist society.

5.2. Causes of Class Struggle

The idea of Panem et Circenses which is adopted by the Capitol as its political orientation is the root for the class struggle pervading Panem this idea is simple; the districts are for providing the bread and circuses for the Capitol (Collins 162). By this orientation, the districts have the obligation to produce and procure their resources based on the quota of production—District 1; luxurious items, District 2; weaponry, District 3; electronic gadgets, District 4; fishing, District 5; power and electricity, District 6; transportation, District 7; lumber, District 8; factory, District 9; grain, District 10; beef and live stocks, District 11; agriculture, and District 12; coal—and the obligation to send their boys and girls to the death arena of the annual event Hunger Games. The Capitol employs the forced labor to both wealthier and poorer districts.

Taking district 12 as an example, it is a common fate in District 12 to see people starving and struggling till the peacekeepers come to retrieve their body (Collins 22). Poverty and inequalities can be seen by the existence of the wealthier and the poorer districts. The wealthier live with good living standard; meanwhile the poorer districts always deal with the starvation and poverty. In coercing the rules, the Capitol also employs violence through its peacekeepers. Public whipping, as well as public shot, is something common in the districts, especially in the poorer ones. Capitol has no end of creative ways to kill people or punishing them, one way of punishing someone who committed a crime is turning them into a mute servant called an Avox. "Avox is someone who committed a crime. The Capitol cuts their tongue so they can't speak" (Collins 56).

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5.3. The Power of Relation

Just like the Roman the Capitol uses the political strategy, divide and conquer in order to maintain their power it can be seen how the Capitol arrogantly deliberated District 13 with its military force, and also the harsh law enforcement that associated with violence. Moreover, all the Capitol's rules are set in order to make the districts disunited, from the Hunger Games until the district boundary. The Capitol is fragile since it depends on the districts from foods until the peacekeepers, hence, if the districts are united and declare their freedom, the Capitol will collapse.

The Hunger Games depicts that the long lasting oppressions of the Capitol to the districts is mainly caused by the disunity of the districts. Hence, the power relation of the districts deals with the development of class consciousness in the course of class struggle. Wherein, the districts as whole become aware of themselves as a single class with common interest and common enemy toward the Capitol. And this class consciousness is a vital prerequisite for revolution that manifests itself in a sense of solidarity based on class identity. For the districts, class consciousness means revolutionary consciousness through revolution and the overthrow of the Capitol.

6. Katniss' Critique of the Society in *the Hunger Games*

In the start of the book, Katniss is reluctant to condemn the Capitol - not on the grounds that she concurs with how the general public is administered but since she knows that it is so risky to scrutinize. The main place where she feels she can state what she truly thinks and gets a handle on is in the woodland, outside of the fence. Be that as it may, even there she is apprehensive: "'District 12. Where you can starve to death in wellbeing,' I murmur. At that point I look rapidly behind me. Indeed, even here, even amidst no place, you stress somebody may hear you" (Collins 6).

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Katniss comprehends that what they are instructed about the insubordination in school is not the entire story but rather she doesn't generally mind: "Whatever in all actuality, I don't perceive how it will help me get nourishment on the table" (Collins 42). Her attention is on keeping herself and her family alive, not on opposing the Capitol. It is as James Blasingame wrote in his survey of *The Hunger Games* for the *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*: "Natives are so stressed over where their next dinner will originate from that they at times try to consider the totalitarian government which abuses them" (Blasingame Review).

As mentioned before, Katniss is a piece of what Marx would call the low class, "the poor" of society. She, alongside alternate natives of the areas, are kept in a consistent condition of dread and yearning by the pioneers of Panem to guarantee that the pioneers keep their financial power, which, as indicated by Marxist hypothesis, is the primary spark for all human conduct. The more Katniss is in the Hunger Games field, be that as it may, the more she feels the shamefulness of the Capitol's administration. At the point when her partner Rue is murdered she needs to detest the kid who slaughtered her yet she understands that it is the Capitol she despises:

"To hate the boy from District 1, who also appears so vulnerable in death, seems inadequate. It's the Capitol I hate, for doing this to us. [...] Rue's death has forced me to confront my own fury against the cruelty, the injustice they inflict upon us" (Collins 236).

This is the minute when Katniss begins to effectively defy the Capitol. Katniss begins to acknowledge what Marx trusted all individuals from the working class would one day acknowledge: she begins to "build up the class awareness expected to ascend in rough insurgency against their oppressors" (Tyson 54). She gives Rue what might as well be called a burial service. By doing this she has brought areas 11 and 12 together. She even gets bread

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from the natives of District 11: "For reasons unknown, this is a first. An area blessing to a tribute who's not your own" (Collins 239).

Katniss is not just revolting herself, she is conveying individuals from various locale together to revolt, which is precisely what the pioneers of Panem dread. As per Marxist hypothesis, the bourgeoisie (or "those who are well off") keep the low class in "warring groups that achieve almost no social change" (Tyson 54) so as to shield them from going about as a gathering and oppose the pioneers, for this situation the Capitol. Katniss, herself, does not understand how insubordinate her activities are. She will probably demonstrate the Capitol that what they are doing is not adequate: "I want to do something, right here, right now, to shame them, to make them accountable, to show the Capitol that whatever they do or force us to do there is a part of every tribute they can't own" (Collins 237)

It is really Peeta who plants this thought in Katniss' mind. Before they enter the field, Peeta discusses how he wouldn't like to lose himself while he is in the field. Katniss thinks that its difficult to comprehend him in light of the fact that for her, surviving is the most imperative thing. Before entering the field, preceding Rue's demise, Katniss does not comprehend what Peeta implies when he says: "Just I continue wishing I could think about an approach to... to demonstrate the Capitol they don't possess me. That I'm something other than a piece in their Games" (Collins 142).

In the wake of having lost Rue and been compelled to murder another tribute, Katniss at long last comprehends what Peeta implied. She understands, nonetheless, that she should be cautious about reprimanding the Capitol even while she is in the field. When she discovers that another tribute, Thresh, has been slaughtered she is exceptionally disturbed yet she feels that she needs to conceal that reality:

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“But no one will understand my sorrow at Thresh’s murder. The word pulls me up short. Murder! Thankfully, I didn’t say it aloud. That’s not going to win me any points in the arena” (Collins 308).

Peeta needs to be viewed as an individual and not just a piece of the Games. Adorno and Horkheimer contend that "in the way of life industry the individual is a hallucination not simply due to the institutionalization of the methods for generation. He is endured just the length of his entire recognizable proof with the all inclusive statement is unchallenged".(Adorno and Horkheimer 154).

District 12 is encompassed by a high steel fence, which is here and there energized. The official explanation behind the fence is to guard the nationals of District 12 from the wild creatures in the timberland; however the fence works similarly too to keep the general population inside the region. The fence is another path for the pioneers to keep individuals from the areas, or the "warring groups separated and ensure that they can't rally against the Capitol. (Tyson 54)

At the point when Effie Trinket, the escort of the District 12 tributes, tries to get the group to give Katniss a series of praise they won't: "I remain there unmoving while they partake in the boldest type of dispute they can oversee. This is an old signal in District 12, which Katniss clarifies: "It implies much obliged, it implies profound respect, it implies farewell to somebody you adore" (Collins 24). Katniss does all that she can to ensure her more youthful sister and when Prim is picked as tribute; Katniss does the main thing she can do: she volunteers to have Prim's spot. Every one of the individuals from District 12 put their three center fingers on their left hand to their lips and hold it out to Katniss.

Due to Katniss' activities the individuals from District 12, the working class, are defeating their disparities to oppose the power structure and the way the bourgeoisie are controlling them. Katniss' initial move towards really defying the Capitol comes when her

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sister's name is picked amid the harvesting, the function where the tributes for the Hunger Games are picked.

Yet, a move has happened since I ventured up to have Prim's spot, and now it appears I have progressed toward becoming somebody valuable" (Collins 24). When she ventures up on the stage, the general population of District 12 show her their support: "Then something sudden happens. In any event, I don't expect it since I don't consider District 12 as a place that thinks about me"(Collins 24). This is the place Katniss turns into an image for the unrest just through her activities.

Katniss has figured out how to remain quiet about her feedback: "When I was more youthful, I frightened my mom to death, the things I would proclaim about District 12, about the general population who govern our nation, Panem, from the far away city called the Capitol"(Collins 5). The bows and bolts that Katniss' dad made were adequate to be sold to other individuals, however he didn't set out, despite the fact that the weapons would in all likelihood just be utilized for chasing: "My dad could have taken in substantial income offering them, yet in the event that the authorities discovered he would be openly executed for instigating a disobedience" (Collins 5). The Capitol tries to keep defiance by sticking the general population in the regions against each other.

Mockingjays are animal groups that were made by mating female mockingbirds and the transformations that the Capitol made amid the resistance: the jabberjays. The mockingjays are not as capable at mirroring human sound as jabberjays: "They had lost the capacity to articulate words however could at present copy a scope of human vocal sounds, from a kid's piercing chatter to a man's profound tones" (Collins 43).

The gold stick that Katniss gets from a companion before leaving District 12 for the Hunger Games is an unobtrusive resistance to the Capitol. Katniss clarifies the tesserae as

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"An approach to plant disdain between the keeping specialists from the Seam and the individuals who can for the most part depend on dinner and subsequently guarantee we will never trust each other" (Bonnarp 14). As said before, keeping the low class in "warring groups" is a route for the bourgeoisie, or the pioneers, to keep their monetary power and guarantee that the low class does not cooperate to defy the power structure. The Capitol, then, discharged the flying creatures into the wild, supposing they would cease to exist since they were solely male.

General conclusion

General Conclusion

Ultimately, this thesis is a critical study of Suzanne Collins the *Hunger Games* which is a political dystopia written for children and young adults. By creating a story set in a dystopian future for this age group, Collins is addressing those who have to live with the consequences of decisions being made now, both within science, war, and environment. It may be too late for the adult generation to change the course they are on, but it might not be too late to prevent the next generation from going in the same direction. As mentioned in the introduction, dystopias written for children and young adults almost always end on a happy note. This is one of the traits that separate them from their adult equivalents.

As mentioned before, the purpose of our research is to depict the main characteristics of Young Adult literature along with political dystopia focusing on the different aspects of totalitarian societies as depicted in Suzanne Collins' *The Hunger Games* and examining how the themes of oppression and love are portrayed in the novel. Thus, , the primary objective of our study is to explore the absolute control of Capitol over other districts and how they struggle to release themselves from this kind of oppression by citing the multiple characteristics of totalitarian regime.

By intentionally writing for children and young adults, authors are trusting the next generation to do a better job than the last one did. The *Hunger Games* series asks important questions about how we would like our future to be, and through its identifiable qualities, children and young adults can more easily understand the importance of Collins' message.

This study highlights the aspects of oppressive, totalitarian system of government as depicted in the futuristic society of Panem in the first book of the trilogy written but Suzanne Collins: *The Hunger Games*. It discusses the characteristics of Dystopia ,Young Adult Literature, and Science Fiction genre ,taking “Panem “ from Suzanne Collins ‘*The Hunger Games* as a sample in which, this study emphasizes many political elements. Limitations faced while working on this study was mainly the lack of data and sources, thus, it was difficult for us to

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collect an efficient amount of data needed. Time was another problem for us, as we were limited with a specific period of time, which we could not well-manage it.

Based on the analysis of Suzanne Collins' *The Hunger Games* novel, this research has been conducted to answer two main questions; each question has been addressed in a separate chapter. In the first chapter, as a first step, we have introduced Marxism, then we have defined Young Adult literature providing its main characteristics. After that, we have dealt with dystopian genre shedding light on some famous dystopian works, as it was necessary to give the socio-historical background of the novel. The answer to the second question is embodied in the second chapter in which we tried to demonstrate the features of a totalitarian government that can be clearly found in the society of Panem.

The entertainment found in the *Hunger Games* turns out to be a very extreme and distorted version of our own. Although watching people being killed for entertainment is not exactly something new, having been top entertainment in the Roman era, it is quite disturbing when it is children who now have taken the role of gladiators in future Panem. In addition, this form of entertainment is not at all common anymore, and it is doubtful that even the Romans would have found children gladiators entertaining.

The most extreme forms of entertainment today are reality shows like *Survivor* and *Big Brother*, where, although they are to some degree acted out and edited before broadcasting, we can watch people suffering in tough environments and disclose their innermost feelings for everyone who cares to turn on their television set. It has become a perverted form of pastime where people engage themselves in other peoples' lives instead of their own. In the *Hunger Games*, we see how the residents of the Capitol have become completely desensitized to the horrible things that happen to the children in the arena.

The same thing might be happening to us, argues Collins through her work; we engage ourselves in the lives of reality show stars, and thereby forget to be involved in the real events

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of the world. The difference between the two becomes blurred and as a result we can no longer differentiate between acting and reality. Just like the people in the Capitol have become desensitized to the annual murder of children, we are becoming desensitized to the suffering of real people because we have already “seen” something like it on a reality show.

“When the last tree is cut, the last fish is caught, and the last river is polluted; when to breathe the air is sickening, you will realize, too late, that wealth is not in bank accounts and that you can’t eat money.”

Alanis Obomsawin

As Obomsawin suggests, we might not even realize the extent of our mistakes before it is too late, and there are not many excuses we have considering all the time we have had to learn our lesson. By planning to make a republic, the characters in the *Hunger Games* trilogy suggest a belief in learning from history to prevent the same mistakes from being repeated.

And perhaps by writing this story, Collins suggests that we should start learning sooner rather than later to avoid a situation like Panem.

By writing about the topics commented on in this thesis, Collins has also made clear what issues she thinks are the most important to address. She is commenting on our society through the *Hunger Games*, because most of the topics in it are also relevant and have their counterpart in our world. The different views the characters have when it comes to handling a difficult situation are reflected in conflicts today. Further, their situation is a result of our actions, according to Katniss.

We have all heard that even the smallest of contributions can make a difference to a cause, and so we should not stop trying to make the world a better place for everyone. This may be the reason why authors like Collins bother to write stories like the *Hunger Games*; it is their own contribution. And the response this particular literary work has received suggests that there are more people out there who want to join the cause for a better future. Although

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Collins does not provide us with all the answers, she has in any case opened our eyes to the problems and challenges at hand.

By remembering our past and caring for our fellow human beings we are heading with small steps in the right direction. “We are responsible, as citizens, to look beyond bread and circuses and not to accept information as it is handed to us but search for a deeper truth” (Vizzini 111). Like the light left on in children’s and young adult dystopias, so the light is on in our world as well; at least for now.

It is clear that the novel *The Hunger Games* has had a major impact on both youths and adults in today’s society. Katniss has, as a strong female character, inspired many girls and women to be more independent. She has inspired many to take action against injustice and cruelty. Katniss’ critique of the society she lives in inspires many readers to examine their own society and react against things they find unjust.

This thesis has shown that *The Hunger Games* critiques late capitalism and the power structure capitalism supports.. Despite the fact that the media tries to focus on parts of the novel which have nothing to do with critiquing the society in order to hide the critique, many readers have picked up on the socio-political overtones in the novel. Many people are discussing reality TV and the effect of the extreme forms of entertainment that are popular today much more now than before the publication of *The Hunger Games*, which suggests that the novel has had a great impact on the way people view the society they live in.

There are five political aspects of dystopia that is found occur in *The Hunger Games*. First, totalitarian government in which the country in the story is led by a ruling city, the Capitol. The dictator in the Suzanne Collins’ *The Hunger Games* is President Snow, a leader in Panem who leads the country in a totalitarian way. Second, political repression in which the Capitol repressed the citizens in the districts in order to make them submissive and obedient towards the Capitol. Third, dehumanization in which reflected by *The Hunger Games* show

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itself where humanity is prohibited by Capitol. Fourth, restrictions of freedom in which Capitol restricted the citizens' freedom through the strict rules in order to make the districts in line. Last, oppression which led to the rebellion in which the main protagonist, Katniss Everdeen, rebels to the Capitol because of the oppression she had from Capitol.

This thesis can be used as an additional matter for other researchers who are interested in dystopian fiction especially political dystopia and as a material for further study which is related to dystopian aspects especially the political aspects in dystopian fiction. It may also pave the way for future researchers who are interested in this topic .researchers may work on *The Hunger Games* novel using a feminist perspective ,with which a great amount of data is available .A comparative study is also a good way to explore other themes that are common between the present novel *The Hunger Games* and other works such as *The Divergent* or *The Twilight series*. *The Hunger Games* belongs to a trilogy so other researches can be conducted upon one of the two other books: *Mokingjay* and *Catching Fire* with new different themes.

Résumé

Cette étude est une tentative d'explorer, utilisant la théorie de Marxisme, les différentes caractéristiques des régimes totalitaires dépeints dans la littérature jeunesse, aussi bien que son impact sur les sociétés modernes par une étude critique de notre roman *the Hunger Games* de Suzanne Collins. Pour atteindre cet objectif, nous dévoilerons les différentes caractéristiques de la littérature dystopique, un genre qui a devenu fameux durant le vingtième siècle en raison de nombreux événements historiques comme les deux guerres mondiales et la révolution d'Octobre 1917. Les sociétés dystopiques se caractérisent par leurs gouvernements oppresseurs qui ont le contrôle absolu de la vie des gens. On considère que *the Hunger Games* l'un des oeuvres littéraires dystopiques les plus importantes qui décrivent d'une façon pessimiste les sociétés du future. Par conséquent, l'objectif principal de cette recherche est de fournir une critique de la façon dont Suzanne Collins dans son ouvrage *the Hunger Games* ; dans son intrigue et ses thèmes; a effectué cette description pessimiste futuriste du monde moderne.

ملخص

هذه الدراسة هي محاولة لاكتشاف الخصائص المختلفة للنظام الشمولي عن طريق النظرة الماركسية الظاهرة في الأدب الشبابي مع تأثيراته على المجتمعات المعاصرة عبر دراسة نقدية لرواية "ألعاب الجوع" للكاتبة الأمريكية "سوزان كولينز".

لتحقيق هذا الهدف والمتمثل في إظهار خصائص الأنظمة الأحادية كان لا بد من اكتشاف المميزات المختلفة لأدب الدستوبيا. هذا الأدب الذي ازدهر على مدى القرن العشرين بسبب أحداث تاريخية كالحربين العالميتين الأولى والثانية والثورة البلشفية في روسيا عام 1917. المجتمعات البائسة تعيش تحت قمع الأنظمة الظالمة والتي تتحكم كلياً في حياة الناس وتصرفاتهم. تعتبر رواية "ألعاب الجوع" أحد أهم الأعمال الأدبية البائسة والتي تصف المجتمعات المستقبلية بطريقة جد تشاؤمية ولذلك كان الهدف الرئيسي وراء هذه الدراسة هو الوصول إلى شرح نقدي حول كيفية توصل "سوزان كولينز" في رواية "ألعاب الجوع" إلى وصف المستقبل المظلم للعالم المعاصر.

Glossary of Terms

Totalitarianism

The principles and practices of a political system in which there is only one party that has complete power and control over the people to oppose dictatorship and totalitarianism 'democratic countries were fighting against totalitarianism.'In our work, this system of government is applied by the Capitol on the other thirteen districts of *Panem*.

Dystopia

An imagined place or state in which everything is unpleasant or bad, typically a totalitarian or environmentally degraded one .the opposite of Utopia.

Panem

Fictional nation in Suzanne Collins `The Hunger Games ,it consists of the Capitol where the totalitarian government resides ,and the outlying districts ,numbered one to twelve each with a different economy .

Young Adult Literature

Literature written for and marketed to young adults .it is given the birth date of 1968 with the advent of S.E. Hinton's *The Outsiders* .Other forms of literature prior to this date may have had young adult protagonists (such as *Huck Finn*),it was usually intended for an adult audience.

Science Fiction

A form of fictional literature that draws imaginatively on scientific knowledge and speculation in its plot, themes, etc.

Propaganda

Information, ideas, or rumors deliberately spread widely to help or harm a person, group, movement, institution, nation, etc.

Utopia

An imagined place or state of things in which everything is perfect: 'misplaced faith in political utopias has led to ruin. The opposite of *dystopia*.

Bourgeoisie

The middle class, typically with reference to its perceived materialistic values or conventional attitudes.

Panem

A Latin word which means "bread".

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