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Manifestation of Totalitarianism in Suzanne Collins' Dystopian Fiction: *The Hunger Games* Trilogy

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Declaration

This thesis, I; the undersigned, do hereby declare, is a product of my original research work, based on my own comprehension, examination, and analysis of the original sources. I declare that all procedures are taken to properly state any contribution taken from works of other researchers, with sincere acknowledgement and adequate reference.

I further declare that this material is not published anywhere in any form. The work was done under the guidance of Mrs. Cheriet Asma at Mohamed Khider University of Biskra, Faculty of Letters and Languages, English Language and Literature Department.

Signature

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Slami', with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke extending to the left.

Slami Kaouthar.

Dedication

It is with genuine gratitude and warm regard that I dedicate this work to the people whom, without their support, I would not be able to get this far.

My warmest heartfelt appreciation to my beloved parents; to my mother Salima and my father Salim, for their unwavering, and unconditional support; for constantly providing me with moral, emotional, and financial necessities to help me reach this point.

This is for you; my mother, for your daily prayers that paved the way for me to reach my goals

This is for you; my father,

For never hesitating to wake up in the frigid mornings to drive me to college

Endless love and gratitude.

This work is also dedicated to the best sisters I could ever ask for; Linda and Oumaima, as well as my dearest cousins; Shaima and Haneen, for their continual encouragement and the positive environment they create.

To my dear brothers Rami and Taki

To my second family; for all the times we have shared together over the past five years

For all the memories we share together

I wholeheartedly dedicate this to my friends

Aya, Ines, Selsabil, Romaiissa, Rayen, Anfel, Zahra, and Meriem.

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Abstract

In recent years, dystopian literature has risen to prominence, and dystopian novels have cemented their position in the young adult genre. The authors of this type of fiction foresee a post-apocalyptic future society defined by severe oppression and distress, thereby reflecting the severity of brutality imposed on people by totalitarian rulers seeking ultimate control over the lives of their citizens. This study seeks to examine the different facets of totalitarianism and its manifestation in dystopian fiction through a meticulous study of *The Hunger Games* trilogy consisting of; *The Hunger Games*, *Catching Fire*, and *Mockingjay*. This study adopts the Marxist literary approach to examine different sociopolitical and power-related issues that are caused by the oppression of the totalitarian Capitol of Panem to the people of the twelve impoverished districts. This study reveals that the power of totalitarianism in *The Hunger Games* trilogy is achieved through the use of coercive, brutal psychological and physical methods that serve to keep total control over citizens by oppressing them and causing them any possible harm to weaken them. As dystopian literature serves as a criticism to totalitarian regimes, Suzanne Collins, through this prominent dystopian work, warns the readers of the direction the world is heading to if such regimes are not fought.

Key words: Capitol, Dystopian Fiction, Panem, The Hunger Games, Totalitarianism, Totalitarian Regimes.

List of Abbreviations

(HG) Hunger Games

(CF) Catching Fire

(MJ) Mockingjay

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General Introduction

Dystopian literature has recently emerged and expanded as a genre of speculative fiction in the literary world. As it explores societal and political structures, numerous contemporary novelists have been inspired to build the worlds of their stories based on this type of fiction. Hence, action, science fiction, and thriller readers flock to dystopian works. It gained popularity due to the release of several notable works in literature. The gloomy vision and unfavorable depiction of the future administration is a key concern of the twentieth-century dystopian authors. A prominent theme in dystopian novels is the issues of totalitarian regimes that are characterized by excessive tyranny and extreme misery.

Writers developed dystopian literature utilizing their analytical skills, techniques, and historical background to illustrate the terrible features of a totalitarian society, resulting in the variety of dystopian works. Nevertheless, they apply a similar motif that may be found in the fight of individuals against a totalitarian government. This regime employs a range of methods in order to achieve total control over all aspects of human life. The misuse of science and technology, the separation of individuals from their ecological environment, and the loss of human ideals are all examples of these methods.

The Hunger Games trilogy; the studied novel, is narrated from the perspective of 16 year old protagonist Katniss Everdeen; a girl who is a citizen of Panem; a futuristic country that emerged in North America following a series of wars and natural disasters. Panem consists of a wealthy Capitol, which is a highly advanced metropolis that wields political power over the rest of the country, and 12 impoverished districts after the 13th was destroyed in a 74 year-old earlier rebellion called "the dark days". As a punishment for that rebellion

and a reminder of the power of the Capitol, citizens are forced to participate in the Hunger Games, which is a yearly competition in which one boy and one girl are chosen by lottery from each of the 12 districts to engage in a televised combat leading to the victory of only one contestant and the death of the rest. The broadcasted Hunger Games serve as an entertainment to the people of the Capitol, and an intimidation to the people of the districts.

The Hunger Games trilogy by Suzanne Collins is widely regarded as one of the best dystopian works. Through its characters, storyline, and ideas, it represents a great depiction of a totalitarian regime. *The Hunger Games* trilogy, despite being a fictional work that deals with conventional themes like any novel written for young adults and children, it offers us constant indications about our current world and that the behaviors of humans may lead to a real dystopian version of Panem.

The Hunger Games trilogy, dealing with a dystopian society ruled by a totalitarian regime, contains a powerful criticism of brutality and terror, along with a thoroughgoing political perspective for the future. It is classified as a political novel tackling the tyrannical totalitarian regime, where the state goes to great extents of oppression and terrorism by using different cruel physical and psychological tools to keep citizens under control. Therefore, the research problem that underlies this study is the manifestation of the totalitarian government in the dystopian society of Panem, and the different coercive methods used by the regime to oppress citizens and keep them under control. Accordingly, the main question to be addressed is as follows:

What are the different facets and methods of control totalitarianism, and how is it manifested in the dystopian world of *The Hunger Games* trilogy?

In the process of answering the main question of this study, the researcher intends to divide it into the following four sub-questions:

1- To what extent does dystopian literature emphasize the theme of totalitarianism?

2- What are the different traits and indicators of totalitarianism that are depicted in *The Hunger Games* trilogy?

3- How is control maintained by the ruling regime in the novel?

4- How does the dystopian society of *The Hunger Games* portray totalitarianism?

This study aims to explore the representation of the totalitarian regime in the dystopian society of *The Hunger Games* trilogy, along with its oppressive tactics and methods of control.

To achieve this aim, the following objectives shall be followed:

1- Shedding light on how totalitarianism is significantly present in dystopian literature, especially *The Hunger Games* trilogy.

2- Clarifying how dystopian literature, notably *The Hunger Games*, portrays the atrocities of totalitarian regimes, and warns of their dangers.

3- Examining the characteristics and acts of the government towards its citizens in the novel.

4- Analyzing the different totalitarian methods of control used in the novel.

As a qualitative research, this study follows a descriptive analytical technique in analyzing the data. As a bibliographical research, it has a material object and a formal object; the former is the novel trilogy itself, *The Hunger Games* trilogy by Suzanne Collins, and the latter is the different totalitarian methods of control used by the Capitol of Panem. The whole trilogy is selected, as it is needed in providing more data and information that are necessary

to the analysis. In this study, there are primary and secondary data sources. The primary data source is the selected novel trilogy itself. Meanwhile, the secondary data sources are taken from other sources that are related to the primary one, such as university articles, literary books, journals, previous studies, websites, and other different sources that support this study. It is based on the application of the Marxist literary approach tackling the different types of oppression that are used by the totalitarian regime, as well as class struggle and power distribution issues.

This research is divided into two chapters; one theoretical and one practical. The first chapter is devoted to contextualizing the current work. It is an attempt to give an overview about the most important concepts related to the topic; the different aspects of dystopian literature and totalitarianism. Additionally, this chapter gives some perceptions about the Marxist literary approach, its tenets, and the concepts related to it. As for the second chapter, it is fully devoted to the analysis of the different totalitarian methods of control used by the Capitol to maintain total control over citizens of Panem.

The significance of this research is to foreground the message that lies within the dystopian world of *The Hunger Games* trilogy which, with its dystopian nature, emphasizes and criticizes the atrocities of totalitarian regimes that might be implicitly existing in our world, in which they brainwash the citizens, thus lead them to conform to such brutalities and cruelties; as well as the explicit ones that exist in many countries, and if not fought, will spread throughout the whole world, eventually, leading us to walk the same path of Panem.

In conducting this research, several limitations have been faced. As a first limitation the researcher faces some difficulties due to the lack of experience in data collection, conducting research and composing sizable academic papers. Another limitation is the inaccessibility to many sources; many of the most beneficial sources are paid ones, and others

are inaccessible only to the staff of the related university. Furthermore, this research is a time consuming one, since it needs a good grasp of the topic. To conduct this research, a good understanding of dystopia, dystopian literature, young adult literature, and young adult dystopian literature is necessary. Additionally, totalitarianism has to be well understood as a concept and as a regime, including its plenty of features and methods of control. It is necessary to give each element an appropriate time to study, especially the new less common terms that are related to the novel and the topic, as well as understanding the Marxist literary approach and its tenets in order to apply it correctly. In addition, the length of the trilogy makes it more time consuming.

Chapter One: Dystopian Literature and the Apparatus of Totalitarian Rule

1.1 Introduction

This chapter is a theoretical framework which attempts to present an overview of the main concepts and literary theories related to the current study. It explores dystopian literature and totalitarianism, which are the main focus of the study along with their different aspects and characteristics, as well as the Marxist literary approach; the theory that is followed in this research. Presenting later on the focus of this thesis, *The Hunger Games* trilogy by Suzanne Collins, which is regarded as one of the best dystopian novels, for its main plot revolves around characters whose stories undermine a political message to the young adult audience.

1.2 Dystopia and Dystopian Literature

Utopia and dystopia are two linked concepts that are in direct opposition. In 1868, the term dystopia was invented by the philosopher John Stuart Mill as an antonym to utopia. As Fatima Vieira states: “a dystopia is the product of utopia which goes awry” (16). Similarly Gary Saul Morson states: Dystopias; anti-utopias, depict an endeavor to escape history, that is, the reality of unpredictability, struggle, and doubt, as opposed to utopias, which depict a departure from history (128). The Merriam Webster defines dystopia as an imagined society where there is severe suffering and injustice, generally one that is post-apocalyptic or totalitarian. Whereas Utopias are fabricated depictions of the ideal society; these concepts are known as utopianisms. For a solid cause, Thomas More created the neologism utopia for his 1516 essay that popularized the contemporary genre. The expression "no place" refers to how imperfect humans seek to be ideal in all spheres of life; political, social, economic, and

personal, yet fall short. The result of putting utopian ideals into effect are dystopias, which can be described as oppressive governmental structures, failed social experiments, and oppressive economic systems (Shermer).

It is crucial to understand that there is a fine line between utopia and dystopia, and that the former can easily morph into the latter. This transformation mostly occurs because of a corrupt totalitarian government, or because a citizen refuses to accept the collectivism of the state. According to Terri Chung:

The reality of the society is just an illusion of a flawless utopian world, where in fact the natural world is distrusted and banished in which dissent and individuality are prohibited; information and freedoms of thought and expression are constrained; and citizens live in a state of inhumanity, fearful of the outside world, controlled by propaganda, perceived of being constantly watched, and subject to uniform expectations (qtd. in Frey 7).

Meanwhile, according to Gregory Claeys, the relationship between the two ideas is intricate. Not all literary or intellectual utopias result in a dystopia. A dystopia is not always a failed paradise. Insofar as they rely on the exploitation of one group for the benefit of the majority, utopias may have a dystopian element or perhaps be dystopian for some groups (qtd. in Siméon 4). Furthermore, Fantasy and science fiction elements can be found in both utopias and dystopias, which are typically situated in a future where technology has been employed to produce ideal living standards ("The Giver").

Dystopian fiction is a type of speculative fiction that got its start as a reaction to utopian literature. Themes like widespread poverty, injustice, and anarchism are frequently explored in dystopian literature, which has a didactic message. It is a technique to educate

and forewarn people about the risks posed by the world's current political and social institutions. It presents a future vision that provokes readers to consider new perspectives on the social and political landscape, and in certain cases, may even motivate them to take action (“MasterClass”). Similarly, Keith Booker defines dystopian literature as that which stands in direct opposition to utopian ideology, warning of the dangers of utopianism going awry, and at the same time, it makes criticisms of current political systems and social conditions through a critical examination of the utopian contradictions on which those conditions and systems are based, or through an imaginary extension of those systems and conditions into other contexts that more clearly highlight and reveal their contradictions and flaws (3). As defined above, Booker sees dystopian literature as a reaction to utopian belief, and a sort of criticism of political systems and social conditions. Dystopia and dystopian literature, then, strive to provide social criticism and scrutinize political systems by depicting a frightening imaginary futuristic society (qtd. in Rouibi 7).

At the start of the twentieth century, modern dystopian fiction first appeared. Political turmoil and general unease were prevalent at the period, and two world wars were imminent. Jack London's legendary book *Iron Heel* was a startling premonition of the oncoming global unrest that would spark World War I (Shiau). According to Tom Henthorne, 2008 financial crisis, and the protracted wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, the attack on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon (42). Dystopian fictions are fundamentally political in nature; they explore certain socioeconomic concerns by imagining a horrifying alternate reality in which they play a significant role. Many of these stories function as warnings against persisting with particular practices or policies, or as cautionary stories (237). Additionally, Fredric Jameson suggests that due to their blatant preachiness and passionate delivery, these dystopias are frequently read as "sermons" (7).

According to Louisa Mackay Demerjian, the dystopian horror of fictional works is a manifestation of the shadows of the modern, industrial, and post-industrial eras. A fear of people's own development is evident in the unsettling future portrayed in George Orwell's novel 1984. People's preoccupation with the post-apocalyptic as well as dystopian in modern literature is a sign of a greater necessity to recognize the darkness of all this progress and to consider the immense sociological, ecological, and psychological destruction that it has induced over the last several centuries (5). The hope for scientific progress in the Enlightenment was superseded by a feeling of the inability of humanity to control its newly developed destructive forces. With technological utopianism reaching its peak, dystopian literature turns into an important recognizable cultural force (Booker 5).

1.3 Characteristics of Dystopian Literature

Dystopian fiction is characterized by its frequent depictions of a dismal future and how humans have devastated the world. H.G. Wells' *The Time Machine* is one of the best instances of this style of dystopia. The novel clearly demonstrates the gloomy approach that dystopian literature is known for, with the goal of warning readers that something is wrong or about to go wrong. Another feature of dystopian fiction is the idea of a schemed society, which refers to a society that was intended to be utopian but has instead become dystopian. *The Hunger Games* trilogy by Suzanne Collins is a good sample that foregrounds this trait. Furthermore, dystopian fiction is frequently post-apocalyptic, with its futuristic, and pessimistic gloomy style, operating as a vision on the present and a critique of it (Schmidt). The oppressive class system is another characteristic of dystopian literature. Frequently, a seemingly immaculate society reveals a strict social stratification wherein the wealthier upper classes distance themselves from the large masses of poor and miserable people (qtd. in Nikoloso 11).

Furthermore, dystopian literature is characterized by totalitarianism, alienation, anxiety, revolution, and scientific and psychological experiments (Dominte 153). Several common features that dystopias are concerned with are; a one-party state with complete control over technology and police, particularly the media and surveillance tactics; a leadership cult; an ideology that demands ultimate devotion, loyalty, and sacrifice; a willingness to kill domestic adversaries in the name of the regime (Cettl 140).

Dystopian literature is frequently more realistic than the utopian one due to the tenet of extrapolation, which states that authors identify a dubious feature in the culture of their society, then project it in an overstated image into the future for the sake of stressing the risk that is implied within the trend. Individual responsibility is also emphasized in dystopian literature by addressing problematic matters such as, political confiscation during political unrest, the influence of technology on society, environmental degradation and the overall deterioration of living quality associated with it, and civil rights restrictions for the security of the people or specific groups of citizens. Readers are encouraged to interact with global social, cultural, environmental, and political challenges, debates, and situations through dystopian fiction (Horan).

1.4 Prominent Dystopian Novels

We by Yevgeny Zamyatin, published in 1921, is widely regarded as the first original dystopian novel, inspiring a generation of writers. The novel depicts a society that thrives on all sorts of output and creativity, but whose citizens are entirely denied and subordinated by the state (Peranginangin 3). Another dystopian novel, is *Brave New World* by Aldous Huxley. It is a cautionary tale about the risks of powerful new technology. In this novel, a dystopian society under scientific management is shown. Huxley intended *Brave New World* to serve as a warning; he thought that developments in science and technology were laying the

groundwork for the kind of society that he envisioned in his novel. An additional work, which is considered as one of the most prominent dystopian works, is *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. This novel resulted from Orwell's reflections on the political and social concerns that arose in postwar Britain, which led to his fear of the future of citizens under a totalitarian government resulting from the outcomes of the wars (Luckhurst).

Additionally, the Algerian Wassini al-Araj's novel *The Tale of the Last Arab*, which was published in 2016, is considered as a dystopian novel. The book deals with tales of the future that awaits the Arabs, as its writer anticipates the enormity of this future. Wassini depicts the fates that the Arabs are led to in a cruel and shocking way ("2084"). Another example of dystopian literary works is *Naughts and Crosses*; a masterpiece written by Malorie Blackman. In a dystopian frame, this novel poses an alternate world in which Africans colonise Europe, thereby making the Europeans their slaves. It successfully tackles racism, totalitarianism and politics which makes it a prominent African dystopian work (Rzeuska 258).

Furthermore, *The Hunger Games* trilogy by Suzanne Collins is widely regarded as one of the best dystopian novels ever written, as it discusses a number of social concerns, including corrupt regimes, abuse of authority, manipulation of the masses, and limitation of individual liberty. Through its plot, characters, and themes, it represents the various traits of a totalitarian regime. It is arguable that it is a harsh critique of our current civilization and a warning from Collins that something has to change, which creates a work that captivates different aged readers (Afiani 1).

1.5 Young Adult Dystopian Literature

Young Adult Literature is simply the literature created for and sold to young adults. It is said to be born in 1968 with the publication of S.E. Hinton's *The Outsider*. Prior to this

date, some works of literature, such as Huck Finn, may have featured young adult protagonists, but they were primarily written for an older audience (Reyneke and Kaiser). The development of young adult literature aimed to ease the shift between children's and adult's books (Dunning 45). It is a subgenre of fiction aimed at readers between the ages of 12 and 18 (Randall 498). Young adult books arose from children's literature and were later split, and despite the fact that the genre is geared toward teenagers, almost half of its readers are adults (Kitchener).

The themes and genres of young adult literature are related to the protagonist's age and background. The majority of the adult novels categories are represented in the wide range of young adult literature. Love, family, friendship, identity, and relationships are frequent young adult themes (Wells). Works that highlight the particular difficulties faced by young people are commonly known as issue novels or coming-of-age books. Accordingly, Roberta Seelinger Trites states:

Although the gradations of growth certainly help us better comprehend the nature of this genre, the fundamental difference between the novels of children and adults resides not much in how the protagonist grows, but with the zeal with which young adult books question societal structures, emphasizing the relationship between individuals and society rather than self-discovery as novels of children do (20).

Since young adult readers are introduced to the stories through the eyes and representations of the youthful characters of novels, they acquire a direct understanding of overcoming obstacles, making choices, getting to know tragedies, and experiencing the tough process of development (Hudson).

Basu believes that young adult dystopia differs from ancient dystopia in its incorporation of more prevalent forms and tales into the contemporary explicit form of literature. In addition, traditional dystopias tend to be pessimistic, whereas young adult dystopias will either embrace this, or continue the heritage of optimism found in children's literature. Most of the time, children's and young adult dystopian novels end with a notable change, although the adult versions rarely do; they often end with a cruel death of hope unlike the ones for children and young adults in which the transformation of society is challenging but attainable. Children are frequently clashing with adults and must frequently assume primary responsibility for transforming the dystopian society into a brighter one (Hintz and Ostry 1). In *The Hunger Games* trilogy, Young Katniss assumes responsibility for finding the right way to a better society. It is her role as the symbol of the revolution and her actions that make the districts band together against the Capitol.

The motives for producing dystopias for young adults and children, according to Hintz and Ostry, are various, ranging from fun and escapism to extended political thought. Furthermore, they add that this type of writing helps youngsters to examine the society in which they live by looking at the causes of social behavior. Thus, for young readers, these novels serve as an early and gentle introduction to political life (1). The dystopian novels become realistic and less horrific when romance, adventure, excitement, and comedy are added to the mix; accordingly, the true political message is softly delivered to children. According to Sambell, dystopian novels for children mostly serve two purposes: a cautionary narrative about the repercussions of human behavior, and a call for societal reform (qtd. in Hamre 9).

1.6 Totalitarianism and Totalitarian Regimes

Totalitarianism, according to the Oxford Dictionary , is the political philosophy in which citizens are completely subject to the power of the state. It refers to a government that exercises complete centralized authority over all aspects of private and public life. Similarly, Jay Bergman defines totalitarianism as a genetic idea relevant to societies where individual privacy does not exist, politics are of much importance, and the individual is essentially sentenced to a permanent state of impotence due to the lack of institutions safeguarding him from the state (248). A. James Gregor explains totalitarianism as a political power:

In terms of the unique leader himself, his restrictive ideology, and the dominant party it animates, totalitarianism exhibits distinguishing political rule. It is not solely a personal dictatorship or a police state, it is a political system in which the government grants itself the authority to propose and enact legislation without the checks and balances seen in pluralistic systems (31).

According to Hannah Arendt, totalitarianism is the most extreme kind of freedom deprivation. This limitation of freedom, however, is common to all tyrannies and is of secondary relevance in comprehending the distinctive nature of totalitarianism. All existence of totalitarian movements in the non-totalitarian world, that is, the appeal totalitarianism has on those who have all the information in front of them and are constantly warned against it, bears eloquent witness to the breakdown of the entire structure of morality, the entire body of commands and prohibitions that had traditionally translated and embodied the fundamental ideas of freedom and justice into terms of social relationships and polity (329). Totalitarianism seeks to completely turn human beings into its philosophy. People are transformed by establishing total control over their actions, and more importantly, over their thoughts. Totalitarianism controls how people think, and it demands complete compliance,

which means the elimination of individualism and personal characteristics (“Totalitarianism” Encyclopædia).

Zbigniew Brzezinski, a recent Harvard Ph.D. who wrote with Carl Friedrich; in their book *Totalitarian Dictatorship and Autocracy*, identify a totalitarian regime as an ideology, a radical police force, a single-leader political party, a centralized control of the economy, and a monopoly on communications and weaponry. They also consider that the lack of any dependable political or legal framework is a defining characteristic of totalitarian societies, and that totalitarian rule is perceived as being arbitrary because the citizen is never sure when they will hear a knock on the door; this is also referred to as "terror" (Menand). The incredibly gory terror actually has the sole intention of defeating the adversary and making any further resistance impossible. Totalitarian governments succeed by employing harsh punishment as a means of behavior modification, creating oppressive police states (440). Similarly, to reach its objectives, totalitarian dominance employs ideological indoctrination and extreme terror in order to dehumanize people, weaken them, and conduct a dreadful experiment of elimination (Arendt 438).

Based on Cernak the elements of totalitarian regimes can be: a central ideology that governs all aspects of life, a single dictator who runs a one-party government, excessive control of the media through propaganda and falsehoods, a secret police that ensures compliance of the people, absolute control of the economy, and complete control of weaponry (12). Additionally, totalitarian regimes are defined by their continual surveillance, employment of terror, and most importantly propaganda (Arendt 341). They are characterized by their desire for each individual member's complete, unrestrained, absolute, and unchangeable loyalty. By dominating and repressing dissenters, they impose their grandiose ideals and demand complete loyalty from their subordinates (Arendt 323).

Arendt argues that totalitarian governments who want worldwide dominance, are unique in their ability to mobilize their people and to gain their support. Mass organization is what totalitarian movements strive for and accomplish. These people value having a charismatic leader, or as George Orwell puts it, a "semi-divine leader," who can control the media to promote their cause. Totalitarian leaders rely on popular support to preserve their authority and to control and restrain the populace. The mass man's isolation and lack of normal relationships are his defining traits. This results in group liquidation as a means of mass atomization; totalitarian leaders were successful in dividing the unity of citizens, and phasing out any opposition by imprisoning the dissidents and their families. The periodic purges were conducted in a way that threatened the litigant and all of his relatives with the same fate, whether distant acquaintances, or family members, obliterating all ties and relationships, forcing the people to avoid any intimate contact (qtd. in Vargas 33).

Additionally, Claeys argues that totalitarian regimes are characterized by; a One-party rule and power centralization, lack of individualism, suppression and eradication of domestic enemies and adversaries, the use of terror to intimidate civilians, the use of technology to promote the control of the regime, politicization of organizations, a leadership cult, and a totalist ideology. They demand and typically require total loyalty from their subjects, and rely on technological breakthroughs to maintain social control (qtd. in Banks 3).

Arendt adds that propaganda is the most important tool in order to create indoctrinated, loyal followers: "it is one and possibly the most important instrument of totalitarianism for dealing with the non-totalitarian world". She, therefore, emphasizes that this method contributed to the success of the complete seizure of power, and that Bolshevik rulers succeeded in establishing a personalized and atomized society by pushing this mechanism to its farthest and most fantastic extremities. Totalitarian movements are, at their

core, nothing more than a mass formulation of dissolved solitary individuals. Additionally, technology is, in fact, the result of human intellectual progress, although it has frequently been viewed as harmful to humanity. For it should be emphasized that technological advancements aided the efficiency of classic tyranny in the twentieth century, and supported the construction of totalitarian regimes in terms of espionage monitoring, which had not previously been possible owing to a lack of technology (qtd. in Bensahla 13).

1.7 Totalitarianism in Dystopian Literature

Dystopian societies are those in which the state is dominated by a totalitarian regime with the ultimate goal of establishing total control over its people. Accordingly, a key theme in dystopian literature, is totalitarianism and the struggles and battles perpetrated against it. Since the past 100 years have undoubtedly been bloody, it makes sense that people's understanding of dystopia centers mostly on the crimes of the totalitarian state (Zuckerman). Different writers responded to the horrors of totalitarianism through works of literature, and notably, dystopian literature in which they foreground the issues of totalitarian societies. According to Gregory Claeys, the current dystopian genre is largely a 20th-century development, closely related to the non-success of totalitarian state ideologies in the first half of the century (Cettl 140).

The genre is set in a post-apocalyptic futuristic society, marked by excessive oppression and despair; hence, conveying the nature and intensity of brutality inflicted on citizens by totalitarian rulers. Novelists such as Aldous Huxley and George Orwell promoted this discourse, which mirrored the ramifications of a hellish vision on humanity if totalitarianism was not repressed instantly ; as totalitarianism has the potential to prevail wherever if it is not combated. It is worth noting that a lot of dystopian fiction revolves around the issues of totalitarian regimes, such as a one state governed by a mysterious leader

with contradictory ideals who is revered by his adherents as a deity, like "Big Brother" (1984), and protected by a loyal police force like "The Thinkpol" (1984). This results in an asylum state with continual and obligatory surveillance for subjects who happily accept their imprisonment and conform to the unfair hierarchy of society; accordingly, the rebellious protagonists fail in bringing justice to the corrupted society (qtd. in Bensahla 15). Similarly, Gorman Beauchamp notes that the dystopian vision depicts a developed totalitarian state reliant on a large technological structure that perfectly serves the government to oppress its citizens. Totalitarianism and high technology are frequently linked in dystopian societies, because if science is primitive, the technological force of dystopian bureaucracies fades with it, and totalitarianism no longer qualifies as a dystopia.

The reason behind totalitarianism being the main theme in dystopian fiction is mostly due to the fact that many novelists and thinkers foresaw the threats of totalitarianism, or at least some of its traits, and sought to alert the masses about them. This reveals why, in order to criticize totalitarianism and emphasize the potential threat, some writers exaggerate several of the totalitarian evils in their works. The majority of these dystopian novels depict how totalitarian states take advantage and benefit from the efforts of laborers as they are exploited in hard work for no personal gain. The state never regards its citizens as valued individuals; instead, it views them as just one part of a larger whole dedicated to the welfare of the state, particularly, its rulers. Therefore, any kind of opinion, passion, aspiration, or individuality is frowned upon to the point where even mentioning them is considered a minor matter (Keshk 378).

In dystopian fiction, totalitarian governments raise class divisions due to bias in society, in which the classification of people into different classes leads to plenty of issues that are connected to societal and economic behavior (Lodhi et al. 92). *The Hunger Games*

trilogy depicts a dystopian society governed by a totalitarian regime that serves the interests and the needs of the Capitol; a dictator President and his ruling elite. The Capitol forces its citizens to comply with the totalitarian regime of the state, and submit to its rules. The people of the Capitol live in opulence, whereas citizens of the districts live in a dire state of anguish and oppression, where they are constantly hungry and forced to labor in deplorable conditions to supply services and products to the Capitol (Afiani 7).

1.8 The Marxist Notions of Power Distribution and Class Struggle

Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, both Germans, were the ones who developed Marxism. The heart of Marxist ideology is how to modify and better society by implementing socialism on the way to communism through economic and sociopolitical reforms (Barnett 50). As a critical theory, Marxism is defined as a philosophical instrument for studying and understanding ideologies, relationships, and events in historical-sociopolitical contexts (Drake 2). As a prescriptive method, it is defined as an economic system that aims to achieve human equality and justice by eliminating personal property and promoting economic equality. This aspect of Marxism is utopian in its claim that by achieving social equality, it can permanently abolish certain sorts of human misery (Drake 3).

1.8.1 Class Struggle in *The Communist Manifesto*

In *The Communist Manifesto*, Friedrich Engels and Karl Marx focused primarily on societal issues, notably class conflicts. Class divisions, according to Marx, are likely to be of a greater importance than other issues such as ethnicity and gender. He argues that history is the result of a long conflict between social classes, and that social transformation is the result of that struggle. According to *The Communist Manifesto*, society is increasingly dividing into two enormous opposing camps: the proletariat and the bourgeoisie (Ksprinter308).

The bourgeoisie are the ones who exploit others for physical labor, and control money provided for produced goods; whereas the proletariat are the poorer ones who are compelled to engage in physical labor in order to survive (459). Marx believes that supremacy is the reason for such a struggle between social classes. The structured power from one class oppressing another is the source of power of the upper class, especially in political aspects (468). He claims that government, like all social institutions, is generated by economic factors, especially by class conflicts wherein one class strives to rule all of the other ones (457).

According to Caroline B. Cooney, *The Hunger Games* trilogy presents a concrete illustration that confirms the ideas that Marx indicates in *The Communist Manifesto*. The illustration of class struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat is shown in the struggle between the ruling Capitol of Panem and its twelve impoverished districts, in which people of the districts are compelled to provide the Capitol with goods and services while they should have no say over their own production.

1.8.2 Marxism and Social Injustice in Dystopian Literature

The allure of Marxism to literature in general and dystopian literature in particular, stems from its political economic roots. Marxists consider man to be a political, economic, and social being. The postulates of Marxism may aid in its analysis, because the dystopian novel ultimately arose out of the responsibility of the author to portray sociopolitical and economic events, as Eagleton clarifies it: “Marxist critique is part of a larger corpus of theoretical analysis aimed at understanding the ideas, ideologies, feelings, and values that men have as they experience society at different eras. And we can get some of those feelings, values, and ideas only through literature” (12). Marxist critique is based on the premise that literature can only be adequately understood in the context of a broader social reality.

Marxism has much to offer the current dystopian novel, as it appears that the dystopian novelist portrays social actuality which evinces the realistic sociopolitical problems of the new society (Afolayan 2). The Marxist societal utopianism is a welfare state in which the utopian; ideal, society provides a large range of social services, ensuring for its residents a particular standard of living (6).

The Marxist concept of the utopian society serves as the benchmark for labeling the intrinsic societies of these writings as "dystopian". It will be sufficient to briefly assess the Marxist perspective on society; it is common in dystopian novels that societies frequently conform to societal injustice. The conviction in social justice is that all citizens have the same social rights and opportunities, enjoy the right to be economically self-sufficient, and the right to express their political views. Contrarily, only a few people have luxury in dystopian novels. For example, in Suzanne Collins' *The Hunger Games* trilogy, The Capitol is in charge of citizens, and they are expected to be obedient to the point of walking to their own deaths. In Veronica Roth's *Divergent*, injustice is caused by the division of society in which the factionless are obliged to live in poverty and isolation. In Lois Lowry's *The Giver*, portrayals of infanticide, the lack of choice, euthanasia of criminals, restriction of word use, and lack of color are all viewed with disdain. In all these works, the protagonists face hard choices, and many of them are choices of whether conforming to the social standards of a defective society, or taking actions for social justice by cultivating a voice for change (Bradbury 1).

As for young adult dystopian literature, in the process of growing up, the adolescent protagonists of the novels begin to recognize the defects in their communities and to take actions according to a long and hard questioning and examination of their societies. They create a voice for change that is perceived to have a significant impact on their societies (Hintz 255). The perception of having a responsibility to actively steer young readers to a

better future has a significant impact on the literature produced (Hintz et al. 164). Many authors are scared to leave specifics to the understanding of the child, citing their age as a reason to sugar coat; yet this has resulted in many books that invite children and teenagers to watch peer protagonists grow and fight injustice. Thus, authors write stories that make the readers attached to the nonconformist characters and their quest for social justice (4).

1.9 *The Hunger Games* as a Dystopian Novel

The Hunger Games is considered a dystopian novel because of its depiction of an oppressed population in a terrifying world ruled by a totalitarian government that dramatically restricts the rights of its citizens, in order to hold onto power and prevent the districts from rebelling, in which power is exercised by putting district residents in a dehumanizing situation. It could be argued that a large part of *The Hunger Games* appeal stems from its inclusion of several post-apocalyptic dystopian elements (“Examples of dystopia in *The HG*”). *The Hunger Games* depicts a dystopian gloomy and pessimistic view of life, in which Collins is able to make the reader picture a solution that makes things get better in Panem. By building a society where it is universally accepted that the flaws and weaknesses must be remedied, she may influence the expectations of the readers for the future of the protagonist, while also persuading them to accept her intended message (Hamre 6).

In addition, the novel is dystopian in its misuse of advanced technology, along with the controlled information and the citizens' loss of free will and identity. Advanced technology is exploited in manipulating both participants and spectators in the games, transforming them into animals, predators or prey. In the dystopian nature of the novel, television, holograms, computers, genetically modified animals, and surveillance devices serve as entertainment for the affluent, an oppressive control, and a display of inventive

technological marvels mishandled by the government. The state uses reality programs, surveillance technologies, and limited access to information as tools and methods to control what citizens do, where they go, and who they see. People are provided only with the information that the government believes they must have, or even misleading information that the government may use against them. Citizens lose their identities as a result of all of these control mechanisms. They are unable to do any of the things that characterize them as the people they wish to be; instead, they are the people the government wishes them to be (Nikoloso 16-17).

A further manifestation of dystopia in *The Hunger Games* trilogy is seen in inequality. The latter can be seen not only in the relationship between the districts and the Capitol. The book serves as a cautionary tale for contemporary readers, implying that the gap between the rich and the poor in our society is quite comparable to the disparity shown in the book. Katniss Everdeen, Collins' main character, experiences financial inequality on the part of the capital. People are forced to break the law just to survive, for that the Capitol's welfare programs for the poor offer little help. It would be beneficial if the Capitol distributed the districts their fair share of the country's wealth, but also inside the districts. Despite the fact that all districts are disciplined by labor and threats of technology, not all districts are equally affected by Capitol politics, as inequality is seen even between the different districts, wherein the districts are divided into the richer ones and the poorer ones. Inequality is further evident as it exists even between citizens of the same district, and this can be seen in the tesserae system for picking tributes (“Inequality - *Hunger Games*”)

1.10 Conclusion

The dystopian literary genre offers a vision of the future, and challenges readers to think differently about current social and political climates, and in some instances, it can even

inspire actions. As the 20th century witnessed various social, political, and cultural disputes, it serves as an inspiration for countless writers, including contemporary writers, to deal with different political themes, especially the tyrannical ones such as totalitarianism, which is the most prominent and key theme of dystopian novels, as it allows readers to follow the story and to be engaged the whole time.

The Hunger Games trilogy is a dystopian novel which is mainly about the totalitarian regime and its different methods of control that are used in the process of oppressing citizens and maintaining total control over them. These totalitarian methods of control are the focus of the coming chapter.

Chapter Two: A Marxist Analysis of the Totalitarian Methods of Control in *The Hunger Games Trilogy*

2.1 Introduction

The majority of twentieth-century and contemporary dystopian literature primarily deals with totalitarian regimes. It portrays technology and science as tools of governmental domination and social oppression. In other words, dystopian literature uses these tools to criticize totalitarian regimes that try to exert complete control over the lives of their people, and are defined by a strong central rule which uses repression and coercion to command and control all aspects and elements of social and individual life.

The Hunger Games is a dystopian depiction of a society in which submitting to totalitarian rule is an obligation, and it is enforced at any cost. Citizens of the districts in *The Hunger Games* are forced to obey the regime, and to remain under control through a variety of oppressive and coercive methods by the order of their totalitarian president, in which they face multiple tortures and horrors. This chapter analyzes these different totalitarian methods of control that are used against the people of districts in *The Hunger Games* trilogy.

2.2 The Struggle of Class Inequality and Power Distribution

The Communist Manifesto, written by Marx and Engels, has a strong influence on *The Hunger Games* as it is primarily focused on the struggle between exploited and exploiting, oppressed and ruling classes in the post-apocalyptic totalitarian nation of Panem. The borrowing of said ideas of *The Communist Manifesto* is clearly visualized in the depiction of the totalitarian state of Panem, in which wealth equals power and the lack of it equals the loss of rights. The conflicted classes reflected in *The Hunger Games* novel are the Capitol as the ruler over the twelve destitute districts that are the ruled classes; as it is shown in the

following quotation: “the people who rule our country, Panem, from the far-off city called the Capitol.” (Collins, *HG* 6).

Just as it is explained in *The Communist Manifesto*, the struggle of power between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie is apparent in the novel; the Capitol, which controls the means of production, is characterized as a city with a plethora of gleaming buildings and opulent residents. People in the Capitol have access to everything that residents of the districts do not. As a result, they have complete control over Panem. Those people represent the upper class as they can afford to do and pay for anything they want. Conversely, the districts are the proletariat who do not possess the means of production and own nothing except their labor force (Kspringer308).

The Hunger Games demonstrates the beliefs that Marx indicates about the bourgeoisie owning the means of production. The Capitol has total authority over the ruled classes just like the bourgeoisie is represented in *The Communist Manifesto*. As it owns the means of production and wealth over the districts, it forces the children of the districts to obtain for their families a supply of grain and oil which is barely sufficient for one year, in exchange for entering their names additional times in the reaping list. Since the inhabitants of the districts have little to no money, they are not able to afford food or anything close to that of what is available in the Capitol (Pharr 13). For the sake of survival, Katniss Everdeen is compelled to break the laws in her society by her habitual hunting: “Days of hunting and gathering for this one meal, and even then it would be a poor substitution for the Capitol version. What must it be like, I wonder, to live in a world where food appears at the press of a button?” (Collins, *HG* 65).

There are many examples of differences in equality between the Capitol and the districts in their food and living conditions. With the districts concerned with just surviving

and having a shelter, people of the Capitol who live in luxurious and highly advanced houses often make themselves vomit after eating, only to make space for more food: “in District 12, looking old is something of an achievement since so many people die early....but here it is different. Wrinkles aren’t desirable. A round belly isn’t a sign of success” (Collins, *HG* 150). Additionally, the Hunger Games themselves are the epitome of inequity, as the Capitol is excluded from the games, while the districts are compelled to participate: “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 at their mercy...” 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” (Collins, *HG* 76). The Hunger Games are clearly the weapon of the Capitol which the districts should not be able to overcome, as it is a reminder to the people that the Capitol is always in control: “It is hard not to fear a power that can so easily, thoughtlessly sacrifice the lives of children” (qtd. in Hamre 24).

Class inequality is also seen between the districts, as they are divided into two groups based on their level of welfare: the poorer districts and the richer ones known as the career districts. This distinction is evident in how the career districts have distinct advantages over the poorer ones as they prepare their tributes and train them for the games, although it is against the rules, unlike the poor districts who do not have the means nor the permission to train their tributes: “the exceptions are the kids from the wealthier districts, the volunteers, the ones who have been fed and trained throughout their lives for this moment. The tributes from 1, 2, and 4 traditionally have this look about them. It’s technically against the rules to train tributes before they reach the Capitol but it happens every year.” (Collins, *HG* 94).

Although the career districts are at the mercy of the Capitol, they are not wealthy as citizens of the Capitol, and their social position is close to that of the poorer ones. All of the

districts are immersed in a conflict with the Capitol that controls and owns the means of production. Hence, the relationship between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat in a capitalist society is reflected in the relationship between the districts and the Capitol (Ksprinter308).

Class distinction and inequality is further represented in the novel as it exists even between individuals from the same district. The book continually demonstrates the differences between the lives of the richer and the poorer families, and a great example of this is shown in the tesserae system of selecting tributes. The reaping system itself is in fact a tool that has been designed specifically to emphasize social divisions, as Collins explains through the protagonist of her novel; Katniss Everdeen:

Those who are eligible for the draw can choose to add their name multiple times to the lottery in exchange for a tessera, the equivalent of a meager year's supply of grain and oil for one person. Thus, the system penalizes the children of poorer families, who are led by hunger to avail themselves of tesserae several times over the years, and in this way significantly increases their chances of being reaped. (Soncini 109).

The source of inequality and class struggle in Panem is the ideology of "Panem et Circenses"; bread and circuses, which the Capitol has embraced as its political orientation. This concept simply states that the districts are responsible for providing the Capitol with bread and circuses, which refers to "products and entertainment". The Capitol subjects all of the districts, whether poorer or wealthier, to compulsory labor; as ordered by the Capitol, people within every district are employed by force to produce commodities from a specific industry; District one: luxury goods, District two: weapons, District three: digital devices, District four: fishing, District five: electricity and energy, District six: public transport, District seven: wood products, District eight: factory, District nine: wheat, District ten:

livestock and beef, District eleven: agricultural production, and District twelve: coal. According to the policy of the Capitol, the districts are obliged to generate and obtain their resources in accordance with the production quota (Afiani 6).

The Communist Manifesto makes it quite plain that in such conditions the lower classes will strive to destroy the government through anarchy and riots: “I want to tell people that if you think for one second the Capitol will treat us fairly... you are deluding yourself. Because you know who they are and what they do... we must fight back” (Collins, *MJ* 99). According to Marx and Engels, inequality will inevitably force the proletariat to rebel and topple whoever is in control. The ruling classes will shudder at the prospect of a communist revolution, because the proletariat has nothing to lose except their chains, and they instead have a world to gain.. This idea is shown when the districts start to revolt against the Capitol as they have had enough (Kspringer308); “You can torture us and bomb us and burn our districts to the ground... Fire is catching... if we burn, you burn with us” (Collins, *MJ* 99-100).

Division is not evident through class distinction in power and inequality only, in fact, it results in another method of control; a type of division that has a different face and a different tactic.

2.3 Division and Control

As a totalitarian ruler, President Snow preserves his total control by creating division throughout the country by dividing it into a Capitol and twelve districts, each of which is reliant on the government, and also through creating distinctions and barriers between groups and individuals, between the merchant and the working classes, between males and females, and even between the districts (Henthorne 104). Each district is specialized in producing specific commodities, and nothing besides those commodities, and hence depends on

centralized distribution for the sake of survival. This reliance is reinforced by restrictions such as the prohibition on poaching, which prohibits people from supplementing their inadequate food supply, and this law is habitually broken by Katniss as she always hunts to feed her family.

The division between the districts is further represented by the Hunger Games; a competition that forces citizens of the districts to battle against one another and so forces the districts to focus on their competitiveness and rivalries with each other, reaffirming the reality that the Capitol manipulates them and has absolute control over them. The Capitol also creates a barrier between adults and children; as in order to protect themselves and their feelings, adults may not become overly connected to their children because it would be too painful to have them taken away (Henthorne 105).

Additionally, tessera is another source of animosity between the different districts. The practice of swapping reaping entries for tesserae is more common in poorer districts like districts ten, eleven, and twelve, and much less frequent in richer districts such as districts one, two, and four. With a proportion of more than 1500, the widest discrepancy is between districts twelve and one. Since it records the highest number of citizens taking tesserae, district twelve is regarded as the poorest district, unlike district one, which has the fewest number of citizens taking it, and thus, is regarded as the richest district (“Tessera The *HG* Wiki”); “district Twelve. Where you can starve to death in safety” (Collins, *HG* 6).

“The tesserae are just another tool to cause misery in our district. A way to plant hatred between the starving workers of the Seam and those who can generally count on supper and thereby ensure we will never trust one another” (Collins, *HG* 12). From this line, it is shown that tessera does not divide the different districts only, but even people from the same district. Unlike children from poorer families, those from wealthier families do not need

to apply for tesserae. This proves the reality that tessera is a key weapon in the hands of the Capitol; a political tool that causes inequity and brutality not only between the different districts, but also among citizens of the same district (Roch). Besides dividing the districts by electrified barriers, the classical "divide and conquer" strategy creates social barriers in all aspects: "it's to the Capitol's advantage to have us divided among ourselves" (Collins, *HG* 16). This tactic is employed by the Capitol through controlling information, work, and even supplies of food. For the people, freedom of speech is unimaginable, and those who speak or act against the Capitol in any way are transformed into Avoxes; who are those who have their tongues cut off for committing a crime; they are no more able to speak, and they are turned into servants for the Capitol. Additionally, this builds a boundary between those who dare to speak and others who do not (Hamre 23).

All aspects in Panem are under control of the Capitol; therefore, it can prevent any connection between the districts, the people, and even the tributes in the arena; "I wonder if the Gamemakers are blocking out our conversation, because even though the information seems harmless, they don't want people in different districts to know about one another" (Collins, *HG* 203). The beliefs of Marx about the proletariat and the bourgeoisie can be seen in the example above, in which the Capitol has total control over the lives of the oppressed people to the point of putting restrictions on what they can and cannot hear or see to prevent their unity by keeping them divided. People are never able to speak freely and say whatever they want whether in public places, in the woods, or even inside of their own houses, as they can never know if they are being overheard. Katniss adopts the tendency of repressing her thoughts and keeping them only to herself (Hamre 22-23). She is only a sample that represents the citizens of the districts as the majority of them repress their thoughts and opinions, which increases social divisions between individuals.

Preventing social and individual connections is not enough for the Capitol to keep the districts under control. It uses another method of control which is a purely totalitarian mechanism to weaken the people, which is total control over the economy and food sources.

2.4 Total Control over Economy and Food Sources

The idea of total control over economy is evident in *The Hunger Games*, as the Capitol controls and manipulates the economy of each and every district only for its own benefit. It embodies the ideas of Marx, of the proletariat and the bourgeoisie in the way that every district is obliged to work long hours in order to generate commodities for the Capitol to consume, leaving nothing for the districts who live in deplorable living conditions. To clarify the relationship, Capitol is regarded as a ravenous, vicious beast, with other districts struggling to feed it (Peksoy 80). In the totalitarian world of panem, the Capitol owns and controls the means of production, whereas the districts who do not own them are the proletariat who must sell their labor for survival.

There are many ways and methods in which total control over economy is established, but the main one is by controlling and restricting the access of people to food sources, as it is the point of weakness which the Capitol may exploit for its own benefit. Citizens of the districts lack food and they live in a daily struggle to provide it for their families. This makes life for the people of the districts a matter of desperate survival where they are always feeble and malnourished as they can never get enough food: “Starvation is not an uncommon fate in District 12. Who hasn’t seen the victims? Older people who can’t work. Children from a family with too many to feed. Those injured in the mines. Straggling through the streets.” (Collins, *HG* 28). Food shortages are a deliberate ploy by the Capitol to maintain control over the districts. Furthermore, by controlling the media, the Capitol ensures that its own subjects;

the residents of the Capitol, are unaware of what or who is paying for their feasting (Hamre 32).

Food is not used to control the people of the districts only, but also those of the Capitol. The population control in Capitol is achieved through the huge quantities of food and the notion of "panem et circenses" (bread and circuses), with this the people of the Capitol come to be more concerned with their looks, entertainment, and enormous amounts of food than with political issues or the condition of the districts that they regard as inferior to them. For the people of the Capitol, food is a pleasure rather than a necessity: "and here in the Capitol, they're vomiting for the pleasure of filling their bellies again and again. Not from some illness of body or mind, not from spoiled food. It's what everyone does at a party... Part of the fun" (Collins, *CF* 80).

The profusion of drinks and food in the Capitol attracts both the wealthy and the impoverished. "All I can think of is the emaciated bodies of the children on our kitchen table as my mother prescribes what the parents can't give. More food" (Collins, *CF* 98). The massive food waste in the Capitol indicates that in Panem, resources are neither appropriately exploited nor fairly distributed (Hamre 31). Since citizens of the districts are desperate as they are poor and unable to get any drinks or food, they are ready to kill each other in order to provide it for themselves and families; this is best shown in the games where tributes may kill each other for food. This shortage and lack of food is a political tactic from President Snow, which allows him to easily manipulate and thus control the people.

The major reason behind the power of economic sources, food in particular, when used as a controlling tool, lies in the fact that the districts are being under the mercy of the Capitol, and in that the people of the districts are too preoccupied with surviving food shortages that they have no power to think about resistance or rebellion: "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” (Collins, *HG* 22). In other words, the subtle deprivation is a deliberate technique which represses dissent and rebellion with physical emaciation, a mistrust between the citizens, and a heightened concern of citizens for their lives (qtd. in Rouibi 32). Food is an economic weapon used by the Capitol to achieve its heinous goals of enslaving the bodies and souls of the people so that they remain unaware of the brutalities of President Snow, hence, they do not rise against the totalitarian rule of the Capitol.

Besides depriving people of food sources and forcing them to live in inevitable starvation, the government goes further to apply the factor of terror and violence to assure the total obedience of the citizens, and to keep them under control.

2.5 Terror and Physical Violence

The power of totalitarianism contributes to the appropriation of dangers and the formation of absolute authority. As the tyrant has total control over his subjects, policies can be unexpectedly and rapidly modified (Arendt 409). Totalitarian terror succeeds when skepticism is spread through tainting human solidarity, creating martyrdom, and annihilating individuality. The aim is to implement the severe, cruel, and even bizarre rules and laws of the Capitol in order to maintain their people under control, as well as to obliterate testimonies and witnesses. As the political system of a totalitarian regime establishes positive rules in complete terror, carrying out death penalties becomes the core of totalitarian dominance. Individuals in a totalitarian society are forced into and trapped in the accelerating processes of history or nature, and they can either be the victims or the executioners of the fundamental laws of their society. Totalitarian states do not wait for the less effective and slow processes of history or nature, in which history refers to it as the "dying classes" and nature as the people and races that are "unfit to live" (Arendt 466).

The Capitol of Panem, which represents the government, succeeds in achieving the victory of totalitarian terror by executing individuals in order to create skepticism. When it comes to coercing the laws, the Capitol uses violence in the form of police agents who employ torture and terror to ensure compliance of the people. In her book, *The Hunger Games*, Collins refers to them as "the peacekeepers". The Capitol raises and trains them to follow their orders solely. Peacekeepers are assigned to preserve laws and rules by capturing and punishing rebels, political dissidents, and other lawbreakers like poachers. Punishments often include executions and public whippings for different crimes ranging from oral dissent to poaching to rebellion attempts, ruthlessly repressing protests and instability that is occurring throughout the several districts (Keshk 386-387).

Public shooting and public whipping are widespread in the districts, and they are more common in the poorer ones. The punishments and whipping are frequently carried out by the peacekeepers in public in order to terrify citizens, so as to ensure complete obedience and strict adherence to the regime. As the Capitol is not interested in inventive methods of punishing or killing the people, the only way to punish those who rebel or commit crimes is through transforming them into muted servants known as *Avoxes*; by cutting off their tongue and rendering them speechless, or simply by executing them. In both cases, their defiant voice is stifled, and they are compelled to submit ("The *HG*-Government Oppression").

Katniss Everdeen continuously hunts for food, even outside of her district, and this is considered a misdemeanor that is punishable by public whipping. Peacekeepers in district 12 tend to ignore the hunting that is done by the few people of this district, especially Katniss, for that they themselves benefit from her hunting; this is understood from Katniss: "Most of the Peacekeepers turn a blind eye to the few of us who hunt because they're as hungry for fresh meat as anybody is. In fact, they're among our best customers." (Collins, *HG* 5).

“I’d have thought, in District Eleven, you’d have a bit more to eat than us. You know, since you grow the food,” I say. Rue’s eyes widen. “Oh, no, we’re not allowed to eat the crops.” (Collins, *HG* 202). Rue informs Katniss about their inability to eat from their own crops, and she also tells her about a person from her district, eleven, that was punished by public whipping for stealing some of the harvest from his work. This can be understood through the process of alienation; which is, according to Marx and Engels, the process of making the workers feel alienated and disconnected from the products of their own labor.

In capitalism, workers are exploited in the sense that they do not work to make products that they can then manage or sell to real individuals; instead, the proletariat work to survive, to obtain basic requirements and fundamental necessities of existence, which the only way for them to achieve is by selling their labor to capitalists in exchange for a wage, as if their labor itself is a commodity that can be sold and purchased (Lodhi et al. 95). After making products, the workers of the districts no longer own them; thus they are alienated from their products, which are now owned by the Capitol, which bought the labor force of the districts; the proletariat, in exchange for total ownership over their goods and all revenues earned from their sale. Therefore, any laborer who violates these standards faces severe punishments as disciplinary actions from the Capitol.

In the case of executing death penalties, every citizen of Panem who does not follow the rules will be killed to become “the victim of Panem”. This statement is depicted when the old man is brutally killed after being shot dead by the peacekeepers for making the symbol of the mockingjay during the 74th victory tour: “A pair of Peacekeepers dragging the old man who whistled to the top of the steps. Forcing him to his knees before the crowd. And putting a bullet through his head.” (Collins, *CF* 62). Since mockingjay is the main symbol of the revolution and thus a threat to the Capitol, this act aims to eliminate any witness or testimony

of its existence. Human solidarity is further tainted as no one is permitted to speak out against this act until they are likewise sentenced (“The *HG*-Government Oppression”).

The Capitol employs terror and violence to keep the people of the districts downcast and unlikely to deviate from the established order. Anyone suspected of plotting against the Capitol will be publicly punished, ensuring that no one repeats their act of rebellion. The Capitol continuously enforces such regulations and laws to discourage the districts from banding together and rebelling. People who attempt to flee the capitol or conspire are stripped of their tongues and made into Avoxes; they become slaves for the capitol who only react when spoken to and are forced to provide citizens of the Capitol with anything they need. The Capitol employs these cruel punishments regularly to ensure that they are feared throughout all Panem and that no one dares to oppose them.

Punishments and physical violence are not the only means of terror; the government also practices psychological violence and oppression which can be crueler than the physical one in that it results in the severe dehumanization of people of the districts; which can be one of the most brutal methods of control.

2.6 Dehumanization and Psychological Violence

Living under the rule of the totalitarian state of Panem, and the class divisions between the districts and the Capitol, people of the districts face numerous forms of dehumanization. The latter is mainly caused by the people of the Capitol who deny the tributes and all citizens of the districts any human characteristics by considering them as mere objects. The government achieves this by raising the citizens of the Capitol on being egocentric; they are so selfish that they have no sympathy for the suffering of the tributes, and to the fact that those tributes are children dying in the arena. To ensure this ignorance from its own people; to those living in the districts, the Capitol distracts and confuses them

through the constant entertainment from the shows of the Hunger Games; as it is commented through the character of Gale: “They don’t know what, Katniss? That tributes – who are the actual children involved here, — are forced to fight to the death? That you were going into that arena for people’s amusements? Was that a big secret in the Capitol?” (Collins *MJ* 64). This is also shown in the carelessness of the team of stylists about the tributes; their attention is diverted from the pain and death taking place in the arena to what they were preoccupied with during the announcement of the victor: “I was still in bed!” “I had just had my eyebrows dyed!” “I swear I nearly fainted!” (Collins, *HG* 354).

“At least, you two have decent manners,....the pair last year ate everything with their hands like a couple of savages.” (Collins, *HG* 44). This line, through the character of Effie Trinket, shows the dehumanization of the tributes. Effie does not underestimate them simply because she is an evil person; the real reason, is that she is a citizen of the Capitol, where they are all raised on the idea that the other districts are less educated and cultivated, and that the people of the Capitol are more valuable than all of them. Additionally, the prep team, after spending hours transforming Katniss’ appearance, informs her that she nearly looks like a human: “The three step back and admire their work. ‘Excellent! You almost look like a human being now!’...they all laugh...‘Thank you,’ I say sweetly. ‘We don’t have much cause to look nice in District 12.’” (Collins, *HG* 62). The prep team does not regard Katniss as being on an equal level with them. They view her as an animal or a joke in order to rationalize how unjust her life is in comparison to theirs. The prep group and other residents of the Capital are so accustomed to this mentality that they no longer experience any mercy or other feelings of sympathy towards the tributes (Harris).

Dehumanization is further represented through the intolerable living conditions of the districts: “Our part of district 12, nicknamed the Seam, is usually crawling with coal miners

heading out to the morning shift at this hour. Men and women with hunched shoulders, swollen knuckles, many who have long since stopped trying to scrub the coal dust out of their broken nails, the lines of their sunken faces” (Collins, *HG* 5). As for the tributes in the Hunger Games, they are compelled to battle for their survival in an arena while the whole country watches. They are not even provided with adequate nourishment, drink, or refuge; they have to engage in combat by the order of the game managers to obtain essentials: “Sixty seconds to take in the ring of tributes all equal distance from the cornucopia a giant golden horn shaped like a corn with a curved tail...spilling over with things that will give us life here in the arena” (Collins, *HG* 148). This strategy is employed by the Capitol to dehumanize residents of the districts (“Research paper -HG”).

Dehumanization of the districts is also demonstrated in the tessera system for selecting tributes. Gale, as the eldest of his siblings, became the major supporter of his family at the age of fourteen. In order to get his family this modest supply of oil and grain, he used to enter his name in the tribute drawing multiple times to sign up for tessera. The prime concern of Gale is the safety of his family and his beloved people. When he turned 18, and with the last Hunger Games taking place, the total of the times he had entered his name in reaping becomes 42 times. He risks himself for the sake of getting additional food for his family, and to lessen the chances of his three younger siblings being selected for the games (“Tessera The *HG* Wiki”); “Family devotion only goes so far for most people on reaping day.” (Collins, *HG* 31). By using tessera as a fake assistance, the Capitol humiliates the people of the districts by making them helplessly register for the thing they despise; the games, thus the Capitol ensures that the citizens of the districts are aware of their powerlessness in the face of the Capitol’s power.

“toddlers to teenagers. Scared and frostbitten. Huddled in groups or rocking numbly on the ground.... This is for Snow's protection. The children from his human shield.” (Collins, *MJ* 331). Through this quote, another example of dehumanization in *The Hunger Games* is shown during the final attack of the rebels, in which the Capitol deploys children as human shields. While being herded up and driven to President Snow's mansion, children from the Capitol are told that they are being taken to a secure underground, while in fact they serve as human shields to defend the palace. During rebel raids on the Capitol, many of those kids perish: “because something is significantly wrong with a creature that sacrifices its children’s lives to settle its differences” (Collins, *MJ* 440).

In the course of dehumanization, both physical and psychological weapons are used. Humans being used as psychological weapons is the extreme manifestation of dehumanization. The example of Katniss and Finnick in the Quarter Quell arena is the best illustration of this type of weaponry, as they both hear the screams of people close to them. Finnick hears his soon-to-be bride Annie Cresta, while Katniss hears Gale, her sister Primrose, her mother, and many others. They are almost going crazy while trying to search for the source before they discover that those screams come from the birds. However, this threat does not work well on the tribute Joanna, as she states when she enters the jabberjay section of the Quarter Quell arena: “They can’t hurt me. I’m not like the rest of you. There’s no one left I love.” (Collins, *CF* 418). The horrors of Panem are amplified here, since the only options for the tributes are to lose those they love and live with the feeling of guilt knowing that it is their mistake, or to live in continual terror and threat for the safety of their families. Thus the continuous guilt and fear become another controlling tool used by the government to keep citizens of the districts and the victors of the games under control (Hamre 41-42).

This form of weaponry also uses Peeta when he is captured after the rescue of the left tributes from the arena. When Peeta is brought to district thirteen after his rescue from the hands of the Capitol, it is learned that he has been tormented and brainwashed into believing that Katniss is the villain and that his mission is to kill her. The Capitol now has Peeta as its lethal weapon against Katniss. The Capitol now succeeds in making Katniss frightened of being attacked by Peeta besides being concerned and feeling guilty for what is happening to him. By imprisoning Peeta and causing him all this harm, the Capitol has also made it difficult for Katniss to focus on her position as the mockingjay; The idea that Peeta is being tormented in order to incapacitate her is unbearable (Hamre 41); “Peeta is the Capitol’s only weapon against Katniss and they will do to him whatever it takes to break her.” (Collins, *MJ* 177).

The Capitol is not the only oppressive power that uses this form of weaponry; it is also used by President Coin, who appears later to be as dictatorial as President Snow, wanting the rule for herself and using the rebels for her own benefit. Peeta and Katniss are both being manipulated by higher powers who seek to exploit them for their own advantage. After Peeta is released and has received some psychological therapy for his mental condition, just like Snow before her, President Coin tries to use him against Katniss by placing them in the same squad. Katniss is being used as the official representative of the rebels. She engages in this deal believing it would aid the cause and fulfill her personal desire for vengeance; this is evident in the next line: “...“Our plan is to launch an Airtime Assault,” says Plutarch. “To make a series of what we call propos.....featuring you, and broadcast them to the entire population of Panem”.” (Collins, *MJ* 19-20).

Her role as the mockingjay does not differ much from her role as the girl on fire, in that her looks, behaviors, and words are still controlled by others, and she is still manipulated

and exploited to achieve certain ends (Henthorne 75). The difference lies in that the Girl on Fire is exclusively for her own survival and cause, but the mockingjay is for the sake of others. In addition, Katniss is also used as a human weapon through her role as a mockingjay when she starts to appear in advertisements to speak up for the rebels. Katniss is the main figure in the promotional videos of the rebels, and they use her popularity throughout Panem to deliver their messages to the people of the districts. As the mockingjay and in district thirteen, she functions as a persona rather than a person (Wezner 153).

Psychological violence is not the only psychological method of control used by the government; there is also another psychological tool that attempts to brainwash the citizen and contribute in mass conformity to state ideology and rule. This method of control is propaganda and the strategy of spectacle, which is so prominent in totalitarian regimes.

2.7 Propaganda and the Strategy of Spectacle

The Panem government makes sure that every house has a TV and that many of them are placed for public viewing in the middle of towns. Regardless of how impoverished the residents of the districts are, owning a TV is crucial since it gave the Capitol access to the people's minds. It is obligatory to watch any and everything the Capitol broadcasts: "when they're airing the Games or some important government message on television that it's mandatory to watch" (Collins, *HG* 80).

President Snow utilizes propaganda and the spectacle of the Hunger Games, through fashion looks, interviews, live broadcasts, as political tactics that are enforced by the media to hide his brutal acts and to psychologically harm the people of the districts. It is used to threaten and discourage them from any attempt of rebellion as it consumes their minds and spirits. This is a way the Capitol sends a message to the districts to frighten them by showing its power and what it is capable of. It is, in fact, a manipulative game played on the minds of

the poor people who are duped by these deceptive representations. Consequently, as ruled by the Capitol, citizens of the districts will not revolt against its authority. They are not even able to talk about or mention its unfairness, as it is portrayed through the character of Katniss: “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, *HG* 5).

“Hunger Games aren't a beauty contest, but the best-looking tributes always seem to pull more sponsors.” (Collins, *HG* 58). The propaganda of the Hunger Games is evident through the live interviews preceding and following the Hunger Games. Caesar Flickerman interviews each of the tributes the evening before the beginning of each Hunger Games. In order to make an impact on the people of the Capitol to make them support this event, the tributes dress up to attract sponsors (McDonald 19); “who cares? It’s all a big show. It’s all how you’re perceived. The most I could say about you after your interview was that you were nice enough,Which do you think will get you more sponsors?” (Collins, *HG* 164). This is similar to the day of the reaping, where people of the districts are required to dress up as if it is a joyful day. The Capitol helps to create this impression by holding a ceremony where tributes are selected. Despite the fact that it is a tragic occurrence, they make all districts watch it, and they have the peacekeepers applaud it as if it is something positive. Even if nobody is actually happy about the Hunger Games, they nevertheless oblige everyone to be joyful (Krisseyda).

The Capitol uses the games as a political tool for its own citizens to distract them from realizing the real intentions of the Capitol, by keeping them preoccupied with all this entertainment, and careless about the brutalities that are happening in the districts: “no deaths, perhaps no fights at all. The audience in the Capitol will be getting bored” (Collins, *HG* 209). The blatant ignorance of the moral horror that the games have brought upon the

Capitol demonstrates the nihilism that the populace of the Capitol has come to possess due to the propaganda used by the government. The government uses various forms of propaganda to persuade the people of the Capitol to believe what it wants them to believe. Examples include President Snow explaining the games as a heroic act on television, as well as all of the meetings Snow holds on his balcony while looking down at the residents. The people of the Capitol are distracted to the point that they blindly regard the death of children of the districts as a form of entertainment, unaware about the real intention behind the games: “whatever words they use, the real message is clear; look how we take your children and sacrifice them, and there is 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, *HG* 76).

Paying too much attention to appearances and aesthetics is an aspect of the Hunger Games that can be referred to as an unreal image. In reality, putting so much emphasis on outlandish fashion is a means to divert attention from the atrocities committed by the Capitol. President Snow uses this tactic to maintain control over the districts and the Capitol's residents; notably, the outfits of Katniss for luring sponsors and viewers of the television shows. The excessive emphasis on appearances and looks may encourage some people to act in drastic ways to achieve a desired appearance (Hamre 37). Becoming overly preoccupied with appearances just gives people a glittering picture and, as a result, inhibits them from understanding the truth behind it. The truth that underlies their fragility and poverty (Sasani and Darayee 38).

However, in the opinion of the stylist Cinna; who created the vibrant clothing for Katniss and Peeta, a power in the hands of the Capitol is a power that should be in the hands of the residents of the districts. He makes the choice to create Katniss a specific attire for the opening ceremony. "For the opening ceremonies, you should wear something that represents

your district's primary industry," (Collins 60). Cinna, therefore, intends to make clothing and looks as components of the rebellion of the districts, serving as a reminder of the unique personality of each district (38). As when he changes the bridal gown that President Snow forces her to wear, into a mockingjay outfit to promote the rebellion by officially presenting her as the symbol of the revolution:

"Feathers" says Caesar. "You're like a bird." "A mockingjay, I think," I say, giving my wings a small flap. "It's the bird on the pin I wear as a token." A shadow of recognition flickers across Caesar's face, and I can tell he knows that the mockingjay isn't just my token. That it's come to symbolize so much more. That what will be seen as a flashy costume change in the Capitol is resonating in an entirely different way throughout the districts." (Collins, *CF* 51).

The Hunger Games and the visuals are only meant to capture the attention of the people and entangle them in representations that are built upon what they want and need, even though these fictitious images do not meet their wants or needs. Each year, President Snow warns the districts from rebelling by reminding them of their last uprising and how dominant he is over them, through controlling their minds by the use of sparkling visuals of the broadcasted Hunger Games (Sasani and Darayee 34). The visuals of these games, including depictions of wealth and food, are so appealing to the residents of the districts that the tributes are willing to kill one another in order to win the fortune: "she (Cat Lady) killed one tribute by ripping open his throat with her teeth" (Collins, *CF* 270). Hence, the Capitol is able to manipulate the minds of the people by enforcing its ideologies, laws, and demands using advanced technologies and modern techniques such as propaganda and spectacle, rather than through slaughter and physical warfare.

2.8 Conclusion

According to the analysis above, it can be summed up that the young adult dystopian novel *The Hunger Games* is a vivid example of the atrocities of totalitarian rules. *The Hunger Games* shows how totalitarian rulers can get to unimaginable levels of tyranny and inhumanity just to serve their own benefits, through brutal and corrupt methods of control. It then foregrounds these different methods of control that are used by President Snow as a totalitarian ruler, in which they extremely harm the citizens, including physical and psychological oppression and violence, to weaken them and keep them helplessly under control.

Besides the critique of the totalitarian regimes and rulers, Collins also critiques humanity in that the totalitarian society of Panem serves as a kind of study of our current reality and the world we live in, realizing that such concerns still exist even though they are not this extreme. By this young adult dystopian novel, Collins is warning us and the next generations about the direction we are heading to in terms of desensitizing entertainment and political ignorance, by portraying a futuristic society where the main concern of its elites is bread and circuses while the rest of the population is trying to survive under its brutal rule.

General Conclusion

Dystopian literature has notably contributed to warning about the dangers of totalitarian regimes. Although this type of regime existed ever since in the real world, dystopian fiction criticizes and emphasizes it in an explicit manner. Dystopian writers are aware of the perils of totalitarianism; thus it is always a frequent theme in dystopian novels. This genre is set in a futuristic society where totalitarianism is manifested in an exaggerated way. According to this description, it can be argued that *The Hunger Games* trilogy, which combines dystopia with young adult literature, depicts an exaggerated image of the future of our current world, in order to warn us and the young generation and to send a message about the path our world is walking.

This study aimed at exploring and examining totalitarianism and its different aspects and methods of control, that are represented in the form of oppressive physical and psychological tactics. These tactics force the people of the districts to comply with the totalitarian regime, and to remain under control via oppression and coercion. The Marxist literary approach is followed to analyze the different facets and tactics of totalitarianism in dystopian fiction, as it has a direct relationship with both. The main focus of Marxism in dystopian literature is the social divisions, mainly class, that are strongly present in this genre, as well as oppression of the lower classes, and inequality in power distribution, which is centralized in the hands of the bourgeoisie. Marxism criticizes social divisions and urges to fight it through revolutions and uprisings. Thus, the Marxist literary approach was of much relevance in analyzing the different tactics and methods of control in *The Hunger Games* trilogy, which are all related to oppression and social inequality.

The totalitarian Capitol of Panem, which is ruled by the tyrant President Snow, oppresses the masses through violence and ideology. The Capitol emphasizes class divisions

by providing its citizens with the necessary means and conditions to live a luxurious life, whereas the people of the districts cannot even provide themselves or their families with food. The Capitol, which owns the means of production, exploits citizens of the districts in severe labor, in which they have no say over their rights of the products they provide. Furthermore, the Capitol works on dividing any connections between the twelve districts or even between individuals from the same district, in order to prevent them from banding together, and potentially rebelling against the totalitarian rule of the Capitol.

The government of Panem also works on depriving the districts from food and drinks to weaken them and keep them under its mercy, so they will have no power to fight for themselves. It also assigns peacekeepers all over the twelve districts to watch the citizens, to assure their total obedience to the state, to assure total control, to fight any form of unrest, and several other missions. The peacekeepers fulfill these missions through terror and violence. They intimidate citizens and cause them all types of physical harm, from public whippings to public shootings.

Additionally, the Capitol works on dehumanizing the people of districts and treating them as mere objects, and as human weapons; using them against each other, causing them severe psychological harm. Furthermore, Panem as a dystopian society is based on the use of technological advancements; thus, propaganda and the strategy of spectacle are among the most powerful methods of control followed by totalitarian regimes, like Panem's government. The Capitol makes use of sparkling televised shows, such as the Hunger Games competition, interviews, and presidential speeches to brainwash all the people of Panem, including citizens of the Capitol. This brainwashing is to distract people of the Capitol from discovering the reality of the government, in addition to keeping them concerned with the huge amounts of food, fashion, entertainment, so that they will not care about those of the

districts. Whereas for the people of the districts, it is to convince them with their helplessness, and that they are in no position to oppose the regime.

To conclude, this modest study attempted to work on the combination of dystopian literature and totalitarian regime in *The Hunger Games* trilogy, which is still not studied from all aspects. Thus, further studies are required to analyze this distinguishing theme in *The Hunger Games* trilogy from other aspects which are numerous. Therefore, this examination can be a cornerstone for researchers that are interested in totalitarian themes in dystopian fiction, to come up with new studies that may contribute to this area.

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Appendix

Glossary of Terms

arena. The Hunger Games takes place on an outdoor vast terrain which is enclosed within force fields. This arena is watched all the time by the Gamemakers to know anything the tributes see or hear. This arena contains weapons and different equipment for the participants to fight each other. Also, the Gamemakers can control the whole environment of the arena, such as; bringing night into morning, causing earthquakes, floods. The participants have no chance to escape from the arena.

Avox. Avoxes are prisoners who are considered traitors by the government; thus they have their tongues cut as a punishment so they can not speak, and they become slaves to the people of the Capitol.

Capitol. The Capitol is a rich metropolis in the country of Panem, but throughout the whole novel, it refers to both; the metropolis, and the government itself.

career districts. Districts one, two, and four which are richer districts that have many advantages over the rest of the districts, such as training their tributes and preparing them for the Games.

dark days. A term used by the Capitol to refer to the last rebellion done by the districts against it, which led to the destruction of district 13.

feast. It is an event programmed by the Gamemakers in the arena, in which they provide food or other necessities to gather the tributes in the same place so that they fight and kill each other.

Gamemakers. A high-status team who are responsible for programming the games and watching the tributes the whole time, in order to evaluate them, and to create more horrific games to worsen their situations.

hijacked. A term used to describe a type of venom that is used to brainwash, and implement fake memories in people, in order to intimidate and manipulate them.

merchants. The merchants are tradespeople who live in town; they look to themselves as superior to those who live in the Seam.

mockingjay. It is a special bird that was accidentally created from the mating of mockingbirds and jabberjays. It has the ability to mimic many voices, including human voices. As it was created by a mistake from the Capitol, it does not acknowledge the existence of this bird, which is a symbol of a failure of the Capitol. Thus, it was chosen to be the symbol of the rebellion.

Panem. A country that emerged in North America after a natural disaster. It consists of the Capitol, and twelve districts after the annihilation of the thirteenth district.

Panem et Circenses. A Latin phrase that means bread and circuses. It was first coined by the Roman poet Juvenal to argue that the only two things that people firmly want are bread and circuses; and that is the case in Panem.

Quarter Quell. An event related to the Hunger Games, which is held every 25 years. In every Quarter Quell, the districts are forced to do a specific act by the orders of the Capitol

to remind them of their last rebellion. In the first one they were forced to elect the tributes by themselves; in the second one they had to choose a double number of tributes; and in the third one, the former victors were chosen for the games, in an attempt to remind people of their weaknesses and helplessness, and of the power of the Capitol.

reaping. A yearly event in which 24 boys and girls from the districts are chosen by lottery to participate in the Hunger Games.

Seam. An area in district 12, which is inhabited by poor coal miners and their families, and they are being looked at as inferior by those who live in town.

sponsors. They are wealthy people from the Capitol that choose or bet on tributes they like to send them gifts and supplies while they are in the arena.

tessera. Tessera, tesserae as plural, is a system that provides the children with extra grain and oil for their families, in exchange for entering their names multiple times in the reaping list; thus, increasing their chances of being chosen for the games.

tributes. The children of the twelve districts that are selected to participate in the Hunger Games are called tributes.

victory tour. A national tour that is arranged by the Capitol for the Hunger Games victors, in which they visit all the districts, and are treated as heroes.

المخلص

في السنوات الأخيرة برز أدب المدينة الفاسدة، أو أدب الديستوبيا، إلى الصدارة وعززت الروايات الدستوبية مكانتها في الأدب الشبابي، حيث يتنبأ مؤلفو هذا النوع من الأدب بمجتمع مستقبلي من نوع الخيال العلمي ما بعد الكارثي والذي يتصف بقمع وكرب شديدتين، وبالتالي يعكس شدة الوحشية المفروضة على الناس من قبل الحكام الشموليين الذين يسعون للسيطرة المطلقة على حياة مواطنيها. تسعى هذه الدراسة إلى فحص الجوانب المختلفة للشمولية ومظاهرها في أدب الديستوبيا من خلال دراسة دقيقة للرواية الثلاثية ألعاب الجوع، والتي تتكون من؛ ألعاب الجوع، القبض على النار، و الطائر المقلد. تتبنى هذه الدراسة النظرية الأدبية الماركسية لفحص مختلف القضايا الاجتماعية والسياسية، والقضايا المتعلقة بالسلطة التي سببها اضطهاد كابيتول دولة بانيم الاستبدادي لأهالي المقاطعات الاثني عشر الفقيرة. تكشف هذه الدراسة أن قوة الشمولية في ثلاثية ألعاب الجوع تتحقق من خلال استخدام الأساليب القسرية والوحشية، النفسية والجسدية التي تعمل على المحافظة على السيطرة المطلقة على المواطنين من خلال قمعهم والتسبب في أي ضرر محتمل لإضعافهم. نظرًا لأن أدب الديستوبيا يعمل كنقد للأنظمة الشمولية، فإن سوزان كولينز، من خلال هذا العمل الدستوبي البارز تحذر القراء من الاتجاه الذي يتجه إليه العالم إذا لم يتم محاربة مثل هذه الأنظمة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: أدب الديستوبيا، ألعاب الجوع، أنظمة الشمولية، بانيم، شمولية، كابيتول.

Résumé

Ces dernières années, la littérature dystopique a pris de l'importance et les romans dystopiques ont consolidé leur position dans le genre pour jeunes adultes. Les auteurs de ce type de fiction prévoient une société future post-apocalyptique définie par une oppression et une détresse sévères, reflétant ainsi la sévérité de la brutalité imposée aux gens par des dirigeants totalitaires cherchant le contrôle ultime sur la vie de leurs citoyens. Cette étude vise à examiner les différentes facettes du totalitarisme et sa manifestation dans la fiction dystopique à travers une étude méticuleuse de la trilogie *The Hunger Games* consistant en; *Hunger Games*, *Catching Fire* et *Mockingjay*. Cette étude adopte l'approche littéraire marxiste pour examiner différents problèmes sociopolitiques et liés au pouvoir qui sont causés par l'oppression du Capitole totalitaire de Panem sur les habitants des douze districts pauvres. Cette étude révèle que le pouvoir du totalitarisme dans la trilogie *The Hunger Games* est obtenu grâce à l'utilisation de méthodes psychologiques et physiques coercitives et brutales qui servent à garder un contrôle total sur les citoyens en les opprimant et en leur causant tout dommage possible pour les affaiblir. Alors que la littérature dystopique sert de critique aux régimes totalitaires, Suzanne Collins, à travers ce travail dystopique de premier plan, avertit les lecteurs de la direction vers laquelle le monde se dirige si ces régimes ne sont pas combattus.

Mots Clés: Capitole, Fiction dystopique, Panem, Régimes totalitaires, *The Hunger Games*, Totalitarisme.