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# **Decoding Class Clashes and Society through Marxist Criticism in the Dystopian Novel *The Hunger Games***

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of Master in Civilization, Literature and Language Teaching.

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## ***Dedication***

*To my late grandmother taken by the Covid-19.*

**Ms. Kourini**

## ***Dedication***

*I dedicate this humble work to those who are always by my side My parents Mr. Halmous and Mrs. Rahmoune who offered me, unconditionally, their love and taught me to be a better person.*

*To my fiancé who supported and encouraged me to proceed with this research,*

*To my brothers: Abdelkader, Redouane, Abdesallam, Ibrahim who encouraged me to reach this level.*

*I dedicate this work to my dearest and closest friend Hanin Merzouge. Thank you! for believing in me and reminding me of my strength and capacity to achieve the hardest tasks in life including the achievement of this work.*

*To my friends Bouchra, Wahiba, Rania, Meriem. Thank you! for being besides me along the past four years and making my journey at the university unforgettable!*

*Thank for all.*

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## Abstract

Suzanne Collins's *The Hunger Games* trilogy narrates the post-apocalyptic nation of Panem, the Capitol, and its thirteen districts. Marxism basically deals with the struggles of poor and working class against rich people of society, and socio-economic effects of their struggles on society. In *The Hunger Games* supreme power of capitol over all districts is the prominent fact of Marxism. In three chapters, this study examines *The Hunger Games* to highlight the aspects of dystopia by applying the Marxist and the Capitalist theories. This young adult dystopian novel is considered one of the main significant literary works that succeed to reflect the gloomy picture of the present society. This study aims to deeply explore and analyze themes of totalitarian regimes that create dystopia.

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# **General Introduction**

## General Introduction

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### General Introduction

*The Hunger Games* is not only a mere combination of words, but rather every single word hold a deeper meaning. Every word from this literary work is a representative of different emotion and multiple human situations. *The Hunger Games* has its unique print on the mind of readers since it has tackled political, economic, and social issues that interest the man of today. Unlike other dystopian novels, *The Hunger Games* trilogy tries to present something appealing and drastic as it succeeds in mirroring the circumstances of the post-apocalyptic and shows its social flows. The trilogy by the American writer Suzanne Collins, actually, is a series of three main novels; *The Hunger Games* (2008), *Catching Fire* (2009), and *The Mockingjay* (2010). Among the principle themes of the novel, the poor living conditions and the materialistic psyche of the dominant man seem to be the most controversial and debatable ones.

Many utopian and dystopian readings have been conducted on the *Hunger Games* trilogy by many scholars in which it acts as a warning teachers to the young readers. Moreover, the novel has been analyzed through Marxist and Capitalist perspectives in order to highlight the aspects of dystopia.

In his book *The Dystopian Impulse in Modern Literature: Fiction as Social Criticism* (1994), Keith M. Booker asserts that all these dystopian traits are already present in our society and they are the reason our world is facing the demoralization of humans. Dystopian literature also brings awareness to

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readers about the disturbing features of society, and how powerful people are controlling the powerless people .

Henthorne in his book "Approaching The Hunger Games Trilogy: A Literary and Cultural Analysis " (2012) argues that President Snow rules the citizens of the Panem under a totalitarian system. This later offers President Snow a massive control over the poor individuals and using them as a labor force to accomplish his domination on the vital resources. This clearly represents the exploitation of the labor force by the bourgeoisie class and how much the dominant capitalist class works to achieve its objectives in gaining power and accumulating illegal wealth by means of exploitation.

Pavlik in his book "Absolute Power Games: Of Bread, Blood and The Hunger Games "(2012) explains that the Capitol's power strongly depends on the disunity of the population and dividing its social classes to the bourgeoisie and proletarian class. This division guarantees the over rule of the dominant class on the oppressed one. Thus the division of the social classes into two conflicted classes results in social inequality and classism as well.

In a thesis submitted to University of Ilorin, entitled "Class Struggle: A Case Study of Festus Iyayi's Violence and Animata Sow Fall's The Beggar's Strike" (2001),Martha stats that true cause behind the imbalance of society is the control of capitalist class over the working class. The powerful class is termed as bourgeoisie and the class upon which they rule is defined as proletariat by Marx. This class differentiation depicts the capitalist society.

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The aim of this study is to explore and examine *The Hunger Games* in order to highlight how this novel reflects the political and the socioeconomic traits of the present societies where everything turned into destruction. Furthermore, the dystopian novel the *Hunger Games* represents the existing ideologies, norms, and the social flows that govern the post-apocalyptic society.

The significance of this study lies in the fact that the modern societies are witnessing a harsh war between the dominant powers that are hungry to monitor the world economy and its human resources. Capitalism a “dystopian ideology” as a dominant and cruel system was the reason behind the emergence of classism, poverty, wars and so on. In fact, it seems that our actual world is “pro-Marxist” a utopian ideology hoping the decline of such a dominant system that is hungry to consume the human resources regardless of their humanity. So, this study may open doors to understand and discuss those issues from a new angle.

This study tends to investigate and answer the following central question; to what extent does the dominant ideology in *The Hunger Games* trilogy function in creating the Post-apocalyptic dystopian world and the fall of utopia? Besides, what are the main dystopian features and ideologies manifested in the novel? Is *the Hunger Games* a Marxist novel by excellence?

What is hypothesized therefore is: Class Struggle due to biasness in society is one of the important traits of dystopia with the capital governess. Moreover, Marxism helps in highlighting different aspects of dystopian

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features in dystopian fiction which is considered as more than source of entertainment.

A descriptive-analytical approach is followed in the examination of the dystopian aspects manifested in *The Hunger Games*. Qualitative data is collected and analyzed With respect to the Marxist theory which guides the readers to understand the crux of this story written by Suzanne Collins. It provides the reader with a vivid image to the world they are living in.

This dissertation is made up of three main chapters. The first chapter represents a theoretical background of the topic starting from defining utopia and giving its origins, then defining dystopia, Marxism and Capitalism. The second chapter presents an introduction to the *Hunger Games* trilogy as a dystopian young adult novel. Then it also provides the application of the Capitalist theory on the novel. Third chapter provides the aspects of dystopia in the novel. In addition to the aspects, an application on Capitalism has been conducted on the novel.

**Chapter One:**  
**A Marxist Approach to Dystopia and  
The Post-Apocalyptic World**

# **Chapter One: A Marxist Approach to Dystopia and The Post-Apocalyptic World**

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## **Introduction**

The events of the two World Wars and the Cold War had their unique prints on the creation of dystopia and post-apocalyptic worlds. Those events have brought a radical change to the human life and literature as well. This chapter tends to examine these two concepts (dystopia and post-apocalyptic) as two successful literary genres, and how these literary genres gained an outstanding position among readers.

### **1. Investigating Dystopian and Post-Apocalyptic Fiction**

Dystopian literature portrays the cruelty and the negative side of technology such as the nuclear power that was used in the two World Wars (Abdelbaky 23). Post-apocalyptic fiction deals with those survivors after the apocalypse (Bederina 4). It also succeeds to depict the human lifeless waste land and his poor living conditions of man and it pushes him to speak up his views about the world he is living in.

#### **1.1 Exploring Utopia and its Dimensions**

Utopia describes the beginnings of humanity in which man inhabited a perfect world. A perfect world where everyone can live in peace without crime, disease, and poverty. It reflects humanity's dream of a better life that leads individuals towards heaven or utopia on earth. People made all what is necessary to achieve this dream. Utopia mainly refers to people's struggles and trials to create such an ideal perfect world. This later lays on better living

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conditions and progress. For that, it is necessary for people to cooperate and communicate with each other in order to achieve this demanding task (Dima-Laza 12).

Utopian communities claim that people should perform in a positive way without crime, theft, hatred, enmity, and so on. Utopia simply represents a paradise or heaven on earth. Moreover, churches and governments carry the duty of creating such a utopia society since both of them must provide people with food, clothes, shelter, and health care instead of wasting time in distributing religious beliefs. The government has to give freedom to its citizens and enacts laws that guarantee peace. All these activities aim to enlarge horizons towards utopia. Therefore, the utopian society is closely related to money, production, and providing a personal heaven for every single individual (Dima-Laza 13).

People who perform positively (who do not commit negative behaviours in society) will create such an ideal society. Some believed that the total respect of social rules and orders contribute to constructing this perfect world. In addition to this, people also have the right to speak their thoughts and revolt in case the government has negative actions toward them.

### **1.2 Origins of Utopia**

Plato(428-348 B.C) is considered to be the founder of the concept Utopia. Utopian literary works present in the Utopian canon that was first found in

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Plato's work *The Republic* (375B.C). Plato depicts a perfect society that lays on a specific appearance, and he also introduced a significant description of the sociopolitical system(Abdelbaky 18).

Thomas More(1487-1535) in his book *Utopia*(1516) deposited a utopian society that contains all the best conditions for living such as equality and peace. This ideal environment is dreamt by citizens and nations, and promised by the politicians to be real. More's *Utopia* was published two thousand years after Plato's *The Republic*. This work presents a utopian world in the contemporary English where all people are living utopian days. The two sexes men and women were farming and learning together. Another key component within this society was the intellectuals who were elected by citizens to be the leaders of the society. After More 's *Utopia*, many writers were influenced by him(Abdelbaky 19).

Those writers have started to write and develop the utopian genre of More. This English writer, Renaissance humanist, lawyer, political leader, social philosopher, and councilor to the king of England at that time had published a unique work and opened the door to many philosophies, notions, and even political movements. As a remark, More's work *Utopia* did not mention the real location of this ideal society and it still remains as an imaginary place that does not exist.

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### **1.3 Knowledge and Utopia**

knowledge has its generous part in constructing a perfect society by stopping evil, pollution, disease, and providing production capacities. The government, the educational institutions and business must all corporate together in an effort to increase in spreading knowledge. However, some regards utopia as an impossible dream, yet it is still a person 's desire that can be accomplished. In order to achieve this goal, people have to agree upon the same common ideas that targeted to achieve this goal. Knowledge is a key to utopia in which everything becomes attainable through it. Actually, utopia is not really a place, but rather it is a state which should reach perfection (Dima-Laza14).

### **1.4 The Psychologist Perspective**

In psychology, utopia means people's freedom of depression, mental illnesses, and total control of any kind of emotions. This control enables people's brain capability to work freely and naturally. It also creates a sense of happiness where other negative emotions are absent. Moreover, people will be able to experience everything in the virtual dimension without damaging anyone or anything. They will be given the opportunity to perform their daily life activities morally and freely. If people reach this high formidable level, they will be no longer addicted to drugs, crimes and other such activities. Consequently, such people will no longer be in a need of social restrictions and rules since they are psychologically stable. Unfortunately, the human

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mind cannot reach this high level of thinking. Yet, this will remain a dream that people want to accomplish (Dima-Laza16).

### **1.5 The Utopian Writings**

Utopian writings mainly have four main characteristics are: First, unexpected dramatic development events are included in the narrative. Second, the narrative process always presents a dominating class within the society. Third, the narrative presents some significant norms and values that govern the standards of the utopian community. Fourth, the narrative describes a disconnected place that is totally different from other places (Abdelbaky20).

The main aim of utopian work is criticizing the social problems and the political weaknesses in the system (Abdelbaky20). Almost all utopian works call for dignity, humanity and sociopolitical equality. The utopian genre is divided into five main components are: the Earthy Paradise, the Religious Utopia, the Golden Age, the Folk Utopia, and the Planned Society(Alexandra Aldridge3). Religious Utopia aims to eliminate evil, suffering and misery. However, this is not a possible task since it requires all citizens to have one common ideal religious doctrine and this is impossible. This kind of utopia based on some religious concepts such as reward and punishment. Paradise of Aden is an example of this form of utopia.

Utopian works focus mainly on depicting the social issues and all utopian works have titles. All utopian works depict the social and political

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systems in the utopian atmosphere. Utopia succeed to improve scientific development, to eliminate slavery, and it also gave birth to womanism and woman rights. What is unique about utopia works is that it could really succeed to accomplish some of its goals and aims. While regarding utopian work, the reader of such a genre is aware and afraid of the present (Abdelbaky 23). Edith Clowes said that utopian literature especially fiction is a call for nihilism toward the present and the future as well (32). It is said that science and utopia go hand in hand since each one of them carries on with the other one.

### **1.6 Science Fiction**

Science fiction is the best genre that succeeds to mirror the social issues in its two forms utopia and dystopia (Abdelbaky 27). It is more connected with society and characters who play the role of the citizens. It plays a major role in creating changes in people's life. H.G. Wells (1866-1946) was a pioneer and perfect model in this field. He had many successful works like *The Time Machine* (1895). This later is a famous novel that presents future island inhabited by slaves who have no civilization. Later H.G. Wells became a model for many utopian and dystopian writers such as Aldous Huxley (1894-1963) and George Orwell (1903-1950).

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### **1.7 Apocalypse and Post Apocalypse in the Scope**

Apocalypse comes from the Greek word “apokapubsis” which means uncover or reveal. According to Oxford English Dictionary, apocalypse stands for a situation causing very various damage and destruction of the world. Wikipedia also has defined these concepts (the apocalypse and post-apocalypse) as a situation in which the earth's civilization is collapsing or has collapsed as a result of climate change, medical eschatological imaginative. Boukhalfa and Ghersallah stated in their dissertation that the apocalypse and post-apocalypse as concepts started first with religious documents like the Holly Book of Islam, Christianity, and Judaism which prophecies and predict about the end of the world (6,8).

As the gate of the twentieth century had opened, the human memory has recorded and experienced the most painful fearful events ever. The two World Wars and the Cold War used the most destructive weapons that threatened the existence of earth and of the human race. So, the trauma of these events left a public fear that predicted the end of the world and the death of the human race. As a subgenre of science fiction and dystopian literature, the apocalyptic fiction mirrors the events during the times of the collapse in which everyone was struggling to survive and live (Boukhalfa and Ghersallah 10).

The post-apocalypse deals mainly with the events that followed the collapse in which survivors who fought to live alone in this atmosphere where

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everything had collapsed and disappeared. This literary tool shows how characters fight and survive in this environment (Bedrina 20). It further deals with the psychology of the survivor within this period. So, these events of the two World Wars pushed the intellectuals to write thousands of texts about the collapse in which they gave their predictions and warnings. These writings called for a radical global warning.

The publication of the *Dernier Homme* in 1805 is unique since it inspired many writers to talk about the end of the world. The best example of this revolution is Marry Shelly's(1797-1851)*The Last Man* in (1826). The latter has become a well-known work especially after the Cold War when people have predictions about the end of the world and the end of humanity(Boukhalfa and Ghersallah 13 ). After the second World War, this type of writing have become famous and many writers have embarrassed it as a tool to reflect the dark side of nuclear power. The main goal of this type of writing is to warn people about the collapse of the human race. Barry Commoners' *The Closing Circle* (1917), Robert Heilbroner's *Inquiry into Human Prospect* (1974), has dealt with themes of climate change, nuclear catastrophe, and collapse of society.

### **2. From Utopia to Dystopia**

The two World Wars that shaped the face of the twentieth century have led to the rise of dystopia and marked the fall of utopia. Krishan Kumar in his

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book *Utopia and Anti-Utopia in Modern Times*(1987):“How could Utopia stand up in the face ofNazism,Stalinism,genocide,mass unemployment?”(381). During the twentieth century, dystopian genre has appeared to play a major role in depicting the social, political, and moral circumstances. Dystopia follows the utopian works technically since both of them used the same techniques. However, both of the genres used different themes.

### **2.1 Introducing Dystopia**

The term dystopia was first coined in 1868 by John Stuart Mill(1806-1873). The decline of morals, the loss of manners, the spread of individualism and man's selfishness lead to the rise of this dystopian atmosphere. The duty of the author is to introduce the dystopian elements that threaten justice, freedom, and happiness of citizens. Dystopia actually emerged first to criticize utopian fiction of being an unachievable goal because perfect societies do not exist as it is argued by Margaret Atwood that the writings should cover the existing societies(x,xi). Dystopian works used many themes such as loss of morals, loss of humanity, chaos and so on.

It can be defined as the reverse of Utopia. It is derived from the Greek word “*dus*” means a bad place. Dystopia is used in literature as a very bad place, unfavorable, and faulty(Morris and Kross 83).

Dystopia is defined as a nightmare or the presence of a character who is treated in an inhuman way under political oppression, technological, and

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ecological collapse (Abdelbaky 25). Writers of dystopia describe the world we are living in as a black frighten one which is full of moral, social, and political problems. The author, therefore, creates a fantasy society in which the characters or the citizens are suffering from. The reader can understand that these sufferings are not a result of individual circumstances, but rather they are a result of socio-political conditions.

The job of the dystopian writer is to make readers think about the world they are living in. The protagonist is a depiction of the social principles and ideologies that reflect power and domination. What separates him or her from society is the sense of individuality. This later pushes the protagonist to revolt against the social norms and then views life in a different unique way. He or she does not believe in the government and its rules (Abdelbaky 26). Thus, it is understood that the government is not going to accept any sense of individuality since it is a sign of revolt and resistance. Orwell's novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949) is a good example of this.

### **2.2 Characteristics of Dystopian Society**

There are clear elements that define dystopian societies. All aspects of life in the state are totally controlled by the government. Not only materiel that is controlled, even knowledge and manipulation of media have their generous part from the control. Since the access to knowledge and freedom are considered as signs of rebellion, the government made all what is possible to limit the knowledge of its individuals. Media is something appealing and

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drastic since it is used as a vital source to watch everything in the state. Furthermore, media is the monitor that transmits the messages and the instructions to the people "propaganda ". So, knowledge, media, and propaganda are totally banned and the access to them would result in social rebellion and revolution<sup>1</sup>.

### **3. Capitalism and Marxism as Two Conflicted Ideologies**

Capitalism is an economic system started in Europe in the 16<sup>th</sup>c. It is a system that does not benefit all social classes in certain countries till the present day. It is a system that does not benefit all people. It is one of the reasons that creates dystopia. Karl Marx and his revolutionary ideas criticize this system of being totalitarian system. His concepts consolidates revolution against this system in order to create a utopian society for all.

#### **3.1 The Origins of Capitalism**

The term capitalism was first coined by socialists in the mid of the nineteenth century. It calls mainly for economic individualism and wealth that Adam Smith (1723-1790) earlier named "the obvious and simple system of natural liberty"<sup>2</sup>. The idea of economic individualism argues that self-interest and the full right to own private property are legitimate, moral, and legal. It further believes that the state or the government exists to protect its citizens

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<sup>1</sup>[http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/lesson\\_images/lesson926/DefinitionCharacteristics.pdf](http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/lesson_images/lesson926/DefinitionCharacteristics.pdf)

<sup>2</sup>[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adam\\_Smith](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adam_Smith)

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without governmental restrictions. These citizens are free to invest whatever, whenever, and whoever they want to sell their products. The emergence of such Western Ideology has originated from the Puritan Work Ethic German Sociologist Max Weber writing in 1903 in which Puritans transformed their energies into hard work and reinvestment (Randal Collins 925).

As the gate of the twentieth century has opened, England is the best example of capitalism despite the poor working conditions. This later is featured by the long working hours, the low payment, and the dangerous environment. Moreover, the issue of child labor has emerged within the capitalist era. The growth of this issue in the period between the 1820s and 1830s constructs the picture of self-interest and the pursuit of profit. The capitalist system has been associated with the notions of individualism, selfishness, and accumulation of wealth. Within this century, the western industrialists are aggressive competitors who are hungry and ready to compete in any industry. They successively adopt the innovative technologies that serve all consumer needs(Haykal 1).

### **3.2 Identifying Capitalism**

Capitalism can be defined as an institutionalized system started in Europe in the sixteenth century to the nineteenth century. The word Capital is rooted in the Latin word "*caput*" that means head. The meaning of head is the source of wealth or money or material. Tom Bottomore the British socialist defines the word capitalism as " the mode of production "(95). Max Weber too defines

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capitalism as an economic activity that intended to the markets and endorsed in order to generate earnings from the commuting markets (925).

### **3.3 Characteristics of Capitalism**

Ideologically, capitalism is defined as the economic system that controls the production process, goods, and services. It has three main characteristics: first, the big part of the production is governed by individual or capitalist who owns the means of production. Second, Services and goods are managed in a competitive way in the free-market process. Third, Capitalists invest in different businesses in order to enlarge profits and interests<sup>3</sup>.

### **3.4 Advantages of Capitalism**

The capitalist system has good results on the economic side of the state. Its advantages are the advancement of the good's quality, the stability of the prices, the distribution of production serves all the needs of the consumer. So, indeed this system has good results on the world economy and consumerism .

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<sup>3</sup>Amadeo, Kimberly. <https://www.thebalance.com/capitalism-characteristics-examples-pros-cons-3305588>

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### **3.5 Marxism**

Hegel(1770-1831) and Marx (1818-1883), both have constructed the ground of Marxism. Hegel believes that there is a relation between philosophy and religion. However, Marx did not believe in this relation. Hegel believes that the governmental laws and its organs are the substances of citizens(Rosen 1). Socialist views and Marxism come with a social movement against the United States Imperialism in order to stop capitalism, sexism, and racism. Is specific, Marxist views aim to improve social, economic, and cultural aspects. Therefore, they also aim to put an end to the existing neoliberal regimes that impose total control, power, and domination(Kouvélakis 5). Karl Marx came with a social and economic revolution within the neoliberal.

Marx is first associated with Hegelians who criticize Hegel's thoughts. Hegel claims that nature and society are embodied in the rational order of *Giest* “spirit”. He also believes in the strong connection between philosophy and religion. Hegelians, however, do not believe in this relationship. Marx stats that materialism should go with a consideration to human energy. Young Hegelians believe that philosophy is able to give necessary and enough living conditions for humans. In the 1840s, they have brought Hegel's philosophy into question(Rosen 5).

Marxism is considered as a school of thoughts and a theory of social justice. It brings its ideas and views from the traditional forms of the Enlightenment that lays its principles on social contrast(Kouvélakis 8). This

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later considers that all citizens and individuals are equal. The views of Marx marks a harsh attack on capitalism. Marx describes this system as a selfish and mean system that benefits one class on the expense of another class(Srivastava 3). It makes the rich richer and poor even poorer.

Marx the Young Marx gives a unique connection between the economic theory and the philosophical view of human nature. He discusses the concept of alienation and labor process in which labors are considered as exchangeable goods(Srivastava 1). Moreover, Marx criticizes the concept of “classical economy” that aims towards the essence of capitalism without considering other social classes mainly the working class. Marx claims that exceeding the limits of the political-economic rules that are governed by the bourgeoisie, we will realize social justice (Rosen 16).

### **3.6Marx on Capitalism**

Marx as a critic, introduces five main points that incriminate capitalism. He claims that the modern world is alienated and this alienation has resulted in human and economic crisis(Srivastava 1).

He recognizes that the capitalist system as an unfair system that does not give equal rights to all citizens. Capitalists get more payment and become richer on the expense of workers of course(Srivastava 2). Marx believes that capitalism tends to give small wages to labors in which he called “Primitive Accumulation”(Kouvélakis 211). Capitalists then recognize capitalism as a source of wealth and power. They are excessively ambitious and hungry to eat

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and consume everything. Marx recognizes these profits as theft aims to accumulate wealth on the expense of others.

Marx has recognized that capitalism is an unstable system. This system is characterized by a series of crisis that threaten its existence. Therefore, any economic or social crisis will directly affect the capitalist system. Unemployment, inflation, reduction of production will all put an end to capitalism (Razu 2).

He considers that this system is not good for capitalists. Marx identifies capitalism as a nightmarish future on the values of marriage and family. Bourgeoisie marriage was an extension of business and profits. Bourgeoisie people do not marry for love, but rather they marry for material interests. Moreover, Marx argues that those bourgeoisie families that lay on such principles are highly exposed to tensions, problems, divorce, and so on. So, these capitalist families make their interests the heart of their lives with total neglect of other principles like family and marriage. Marx calls this psychological state the Commodity Fetishism<sup>4</sup>. It is understood that Karl Marx is calling for an equal distribution of wealth among all citizens. His concepts aim to give equal opportunities in accumulating wealth as a social condition.

Karl Marx is clearly against capitalism. Instead, he calls for social rights such as the welfares(Razu 2). He claims that the dominating system (capitalism) bring about slavery, massive misery among the lower class,

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<sup>4</sup> Karl Max. *Capital* .ND. volume one. Chapter one. NP.

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oppression, degradation of economy, and exploitation of the working class. This system ,moreover, had widens the gap between social classes.

The Marxist theory is an economic theory that emerged in the nineteenth century by Karl Marx. It is mainly for interpreting literary texts in terms of economic aspects. According to Marx's views, man should be proud of what he or she creates or produces. The fruits of man's creative ability are taken only by the capitalists. Those workers, therefore, become estranged from what they produce or create. Workers are also alienated from the person who gets or sells what they produce. They even do not know about the prices of their products since they are estranged from the capitalist process (Rosen 7).

Workers or labors in the capitalist system are oppressed and exploited because their creative ability in production is taken by the capitalists or the owners. Those labors do not even have the opportunity to know where and to whom their products are taken. Marxist theories critically examine the different economic, ideological, and social contexts. Marxist literary texts aim to show the social or the labor oppression by the dominating capitalist forces. It further aims to criticize the capitalist system and its negative impacts on production. The views of Marxism play the role of a counter discourse to that one of capitalism discourse. This counter discourse becomes a vital source for revolution and social rebellion against the concept of classism(Srivastava 3,4).

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### **3.7 Marx as a Socialist Thinker**

The publication of Marx's Manuscript 1844 was unique since it called for great philosophical events of that century. Marxians claim that the existing system capitalism of course is an unfair system because it makes people alienated instead of being united. It has also been described as being exploited and dehumanized system(Rosen 7).

His theory of Revolution later becomes as an essential element in the social struggle. It stands as a powerful point in the Marxism historical struggle. Furthermore, its concepts are translated into practices, and these practices become points of resistance and social power. It becomes a social weapon that helps society to fight the long-standing regimes and economic ideology. The exploitation of workers, the inhuman working conditions, the oppression of the leaders, all these substances have created a social awareness. This later pushes people to resist, revolt and having radical changes in the existing system. People and workers are struggling in order to have equal and fair opportunities (Halimi 23).

### **Conclusion**

The concept of utopia as the copy of dystopia is an ideal meaning for an ideal society. Utopian fiction adopts and uses an optimistic view, whereas dystopian fiction presents a gloomy pessimistic view about the world we are living in. The poor living conditions, the over control of one group on another group, poverty, dehumanization of man, and the domination of one system has

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resulted in creating such a dystopian corrupted world. The capitalist system as an authoritative system welcomes the domination of the capitalist group on the oppressed one. As a response to this dominant system, the Marxian ideas come with a radical revolution against this system. A revolution aims to eradicate the existence of the oppressive tools ( dehumanization, exploitation, and alienation) that are practiced on the proletarian class. It further encourages individual achievement in accumulating wealth as a social condition. Thus , this utopian theory lays its principles on individualism, social justice, and equality.

## **Chapter Two:**

# ***The Hunger Games: A Young Adult Dystopian Quest for Power And Control***

## **Chapter Two: *The Hunger Games*: A Young Adult Dystopian Quest for Power And Control**

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### **Introduction**

As the gate of the twentieth(s) century has opened, young adult dystopian literature has become a popular successful literary genre in reflecting the circumstances of the century. It is claimed that there no single reason behind the immense popularity of this genre. However, the consequences of the two world wars and the cold war, the rapid technological progress, the threat of the apocalypse, terrorism, and beyond all these factors might cause the increase of such literary genre. Young people of today are aware that their experiences are totally different from their predecessors because of those reasons mentioned earlier. The dystopian fiction succeeds to feed the appetite for warning people about the apocalypse and make them aware of their current social issues. *The Hunger Games* trilogy as a young adult dystopian novel is the best exemplification of the cruelty of the world we are living in today. A cruel world where a teenage female protagonist lived in. So, this novel is a very impactful one succeed to create a radical shift in young adult minds not only across the western world, but it further exceeds the western boundaries.

### **1.Introducing Collin's *The Hunger Games* as a Young Adult Novel**

Young adult fiction can be considered as “coming of age novel” that usually tells a story of a teenage protagonist. This kind of story captures the protagonist’s experience during his or her adolescent age (Finnsson 5). It

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simply portrays developmental changes in a teenage way of thinking. So, the turnout on this kind of literature among readers and authors has reached its zenith.

The main characteristics of this genre consist of involving a teenage protagonist and its mirrors his or her views, opinions, way of living, way of thinking, and so on. Besides, such novels or genres are fast-passing process since they usually have a direct dialogue or they have a limited period of time. This kind of literature contains a variety of themes, genres, subject matters, and a variety of goals. Some young adult novels include historical fiction, fantasy, war stories, science fiction. Themes are included such as loneliness, drug addiction, poor social conditions, love, and so on. Young adult novels have usually an optimistic endings or at least it ends with hope<sup>1</sup>.

### **1.1 Adolescent Developmental Changes and Dystopian literature**

The settings, themes, and characters in dystopian novels are depictions of the intellectual developments that happen during adolescence (Owen 1)<sup>2</sup>. Those adolescents grow up with a mature understanding of all what is occurring to the world around them. In addition to this, they are easy to engage in their social, political, and cultural circumstances. They further grow up with critical thinking to the subjects matters that are happening to the environment

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<sup>1</sup> Its source is <http://vig.pearsoned.com/samplechapter/0133066797.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Its source is taken from <https://cpb-us-e1.wpmucdn.com/cobblearning.net/dist/a/37/files/2015/04/Developing-a-Love-of-Reading-YA-is-important-1o5upm7.pdf>

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around them. They also show responsibility and interests in issues related to their societies (Scholes and Ostenson 10)

### **1.2 *The Hunger Games* as a Young Adult Dystopian Novel**

The practice of violence, tyranny, Inhumanity are the substances of society in the Panem. This dystopian society is controlled by the capitol under very poor living conditions. As it is mentioned before that the protagonist or the citizen who raises up in such a dystopian society, will be aware of all what is happening around him. Thus our protagonist Katniss Everdeen who is able to clearly understand the inhumanity and injustice rules of her society in the districts. So, when she grows up with the whelming sense that her society lays on and simply it lost its values and its social conditions that- of course – normally lays on justice, freedom, and better living conditions. *The Hunger Games* is the best example of a young adult dystopian novel that manifests human living conditions and how individuals work to make changes and actions.

### **2. *The Hunger Games* and the Operations of Power**

Operations of power are those techniques or methods that a state uses to control and oppose any kind of resistance. Oppression, humiliation, and dehumanization are the best examples of these operations of power. These operations are clearly manifested in *the Hunger Games* novel. The relationship between the capital and the districts in the Panem lays on these operations.

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The concept of dehumanization is strongly related to the word humiliation and it means the degradation of people.

*The Hunger Games* can be analyzed from a power-centered approach to explore the means of power that the Capital uses to control its citizens. Panem is a state that is controlled by the Capitol. A state where a system of domination and power is highly practiced. It further holds all that sources of wealth in that nation. It practices several strategies to maintain control over citizens of the districts. The Capitol wants to maintain power by adopting the strategy of divide and conquer in order to weaken and divide the citizens.

### **2.1 Beyond Power**

Foucault in *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (1995) argues that power is not a thing, but rather it is a relation (789). He further claims that power is not only a governmental property that interests only the state, but it is also a productive social property as well (789). Simply, power is everywhere, and it exists inside us. It lays within any individual and anyone of us can embrace it. This state called "power to". Power to means the potential that exists inside us. It is simply the ability that pushes us to fulfill and make things accomplished. In *the Hunger Games*, the protagonist Katniss has given abilities guarantee the power that enables her to oppose the Capitol and the Gamemakers.

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### **3. Dystopian Elements in *the Hunger Games***

*The Hunger games* trilogy is written by Suzanne Collins started by *Hunger Games* 2008, *Catching Fire* 2009, *Mockingjay* 2010. This novel is considered a Young Adult Dystopian one. To prove this we highlight the dystopian elements in the novel. The dystopian elements are dehumanization, over control of humans, poor political system, control of one class on another one and so on.

#### **3.1 Post-apocalyptic Setting**

The novel is considered as post-apocalyptic novel. The events are set in the Panem which is a society raised from the ashes of North America after the harsh war.

The Capitol wins a war against the districts who rebel against it. After the rebellion of district 13, the Capitol creates an annual game as a punishment for that rebellion. These games are controlled by the capitol in which the tributes fight against each other to survive from death. The survivor will be rewarded. In the rules of the games only one will remain alive. He or she struggles to reach eatable food and kill his or her enemies in order to survive. This world is considered for the tributes as an apocalypse world where they have to fight in order to survive. The protagonist Katniss Everdeen lives an apocalypse world aiming to win the games. She is a spotlight of hope for the

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oppressed people of her country who suffered a lot from the tyranny of the Capital.

The Hunger Games are a reminder about the previous rebellion and the Capitol's power. Any rebellious action will be punished and destroyed. This is clearly shown in the following quotation: "Whatever words they use, the real message is clear. "Look how we take your children and sacrifice them and there's nothing you can do. If you lift a finger, we will destroy every last one of you. Just as we did in District Thirteen." (*The Hunger Games* 21)

### **3.2 Political Dystopia**

It is the political elements that the Capitol uses. These elements are manifested in the organization of the government and the social order. The political system in the Panem lays on domination, dehumanization, and the use of terror. The aim of this system is to control all aspects of life in the districts.

The political system of Panem is divided into two main subsystems that one of the Capitol and the one of the rebels. The Capitol is ruled by the president Snow and elites living in the Capitol. Rebellions start first in district 13 followed by Katniss and some other game-winners even the game organizers whom are lead by Alma Coin<sup>3</sup>. They decide to rebel against the oppression and the poor living conditions especially the hunger games. Peacekeepers who play the role of the police. Those peacekeepers are used by

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<sup>3</sup> She is the president of the district thirteen.

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the Capitol in order to force the citizens to obey the rules. They are given the green light to punish or kill any disobedient.

The citizens of Panem seem to live under a colonized rule. They do not have the right to take care of their health. They are not allowed to travel to other districts or to the Capital. They do not have the right to speak up their thoughts. Even the job of journalism and literature are totally forbidden because they are signs of rebellion.

The system of the Panem is similar to the Roman Imperium. The symbol of Capitol contains an eagle which symbolizes power and this symbol is also adopted by the Roman Imperium. Panem is originated from the Latin statement “Panem et circenses”

Capital uses a special bird to hear the conversation of people. This bird is Jabberjays (can repeat conversations). The districts use it for their interests in misleading the Capitol. Later on, the Capitol gets rid of it. The revolutionary way of the emergence of this bird made them choose it as a rebellious symbol. Also, they have seen Katniss wears it even she does not know its real meaning. She further creates a slogan which is: “Because you know who they [the Capitol] are and what they do [...] If we [the rebels] burn, you [the Capitol] burn with us!” (*Mockingjay*).

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### **3.3 Control of Population**

One of the main characteristics of the dystopian genre is highlighting the issue of controlling citizens and being aware of their numbers by the government. The Capitol registers every citizen who reaches the age twelve years old: “Attendance is mandatory unless you are on death’s door. This evening, officials will come around and check to see if that is the case. If not, you’ll be imprisoned. (...) People file in silently and sign in. The reaping is a good opportunity for the Capital to keep tabs on the population. Twelve- to eighteen-year-olds- are herded into rope areas marked off by ages” (*The Hunger Games* 18). The moment of reaping the participants for hunger games is also for counting the adult and teenagers whom are controlled concerning their job either they inherit job or join the production of their districts. If he or she is ill, he or she has to find a solution away from the forbidden tasks which are controlled by peacekeepers. This latter are used as a tool to control districts in case the market is burnt in the district twelve because it is not regulated by the Capitol. Inside the game, the participants are watched by cameras. This tracer device play a major role in watching every single action made by the participants.

### **3.4 Brainwashing**

Citizens of the Capitol are indoctrinated to stereotype the citizens of districts. They recognize them as inferior, and they do not even think of them as humans. They are only concerned with clothes, parties, celebrities, even

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mentally they are like children who know nothing. It is clear through this quote: “Not evil or cruel. They’re not even smart. Hurting them, it’s like hurting children. They don’t see.... I mean, they don’t know.....” (*Mockingjay* 64).

Furthermore, the Capitol manipulates history books. It aims to give a fake image about the reality of the government and the creation of the annual games. It tries to show them the other face that the Capitol wants to protect them. The Capitol further wants to manipulate and shape the brains of children. They use children to wash their brains effectively because they are young enough and easy to shape their brains the way they want. Through education, they show them the dreadful world during the rebellion and the beauty of Panem during the Capitol’s rule.

During the elections of the participants, a speech by the Capitol is forced to be heard by children in order to inculcate terror in their minds. In which they remember them about the dark days and the reason behind creating the hunger games. This makes them hopeless and not thinking again about rebellion. Katniss describes the situation during the speech as follow:

It’s the same story every year. He tells the story of Panem, the country that rose up out of the ashes of a place that was once called North America. [...]Then came the Dark Days, the uprising of the districts against the Capitol. Twelve were defeated, the thirteenth obliterated. The Treaty of Treason

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gave us the new laws to guarantee peace and, as our yearly reminder that the Dark Days must never be repeated, it gave us the Hunger Games. (*The Hunger Games* 21)

The other tool used is the television as compulsory device in every home to wash their brains mainly children. It introduces only news, programmes related to hunger games, and winners or the game itself. Through television, they are enforced to see the reaping, and broadcast of hunger games. This situation is similar to the Big Brother in *1984* (1949). Citizens are always reminded by the games forcing them to totally delete the idea of rebellion from their brains.

People of Capitol like Katniss at the beginning and they want to imitate her, but when she transfers to be rebel they directly hate her. This change in their minds is a result of the manipulation of media and minds. At first, through the TV show the Capital represents Katniss as a model citizen by naming her the “Girl of Fire” which makes people like her. They further make a brainwashing for Peeta to make him hate Katniss who he loves.

### **3.4 Dehumanization**

This element is very important in the dystopian genre. It is shown clearly in the novel through the dehumanization of the districts and the victims by the capital. First, there is a huge difference between the living conditions in the districts and the capital. Districts do not have good living conditions such

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as public health service, food, and electricity supply. On the other side, citizens of Capitol live under the best living conditions. They do not care about them as if they are not human beings. This quote is taken from the moments when the team<sup>4</sup> met Katniss: “The three step back and admire their work. “Excellent! You almost look like a human being now!” says Flavius, and they all laugh. I force my lips into a smile to show how grateful I am(...) “We promise! You know, now that we’ve got rid of all the hair and filth, you’re not horrible at all!” says Flavius encouragingly (*The Hunger Games* 72). For them, a good appearance indicates that you are a human being.

Capitol forces citizens to deal with the game as a festival and a source of entertainment. In fact, these games cause pain and makes the participants look like animals kill each others in order to survive..

The creation of these games is inspired by the Roman Gladiator Games. This later uses people killing each other in battleground groundered by the elites of the Roman Empire. What makes Hunger Games more cruel is the use of innocent children instead of men which is painful for their families and the audience too.

When the victim enters the games, he or she has to be like animals fighting to kill his or her prey. However, Katniss shows humanity with her friend Rue especially at the moment of her death. Capitol does not show that part for the audiences because it is a clear nobel message for humanity. Most

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<sup>4</sup>Team from the capitol specialized to work with katniss

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of the members of the group which is formed during the games are from privileged districts. They are like savage animals or barbaric killing without empathy or giving the victim any chance to live.

In *Catching Fire* victims are asked again to participate in another hunger games though they are promised to live a good life. Dehumanization is clear here when they seem like toys to play with.

Enobaria becomes a famous person in the Capitol because of her cruel way of killing. It is shown in this quote: “She killed one tribute by ripping open his throat with her teeth. She became so famous for this act that, after she was a victor, she had her teeth cosmetically altered so each one ends in a sharp point like a fang and is inlaid with gold. She has no shortage of admirers in the Capitol” (*Catching Fire* 270). The Capitol’s audiences like more bloody than peaceful deaths. The government also seeks to provide this action for them through pushing them to meet in gigantic Cornucopia. This latter provides device and armory (what victims need to fight with). This encourages creating suspense and enjoyment for the audience -the elites in specific-. Collins describes this in this quote: “It was considered very anticlimactic in the Capitol, all those quiet, bloodless deaths”(The *Hunger Games* 45).

Dreadful death and dehumanization do not occur only in the games, but also outside of it. Katniss’ and gale’s fathers were killed in a mine explosion. District 12 is destroyed at the end of the second book (*Catching*

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*Fire*). Also, Bogs' legs are cut by the blast. Some members of the military unit of Katniss are killed in a very cruel way during the revolution.

At the end of the trilogy, humanity and its principles are totally lost. Snow uses children as bar in front of the palace of, Snow on the stage to stop rebels. He sends boombs in forms of gifts to children and many of them are killed among them Primrose<sup>5</sup>. This cruel government adopts a very cruel ways in treating those who betray it.

### **3.5 Other Elements**

The winners of the games are promised to live a good life but it is a lie. Economically, the winners are stable but mentally they suffer a lot from the drawbacks of the games. They are still affected by the terror of the games. Haymitch a previous winner becomes a drunk man because of the mental effects of games on his personality. He considers alcohol an escape from his cruel experience. He won as a result of a mistake was made by the organizers of the game whom later killed his family and his girlfriend. He does not drink only as a result of his experience but every year he supposed to train the victims whom all of them died. Another couple of winners *Catching Fire* become addicted to drugs as a consequence of their experience in the games. They consume morphling<sup>6</sup>. Even Katniss and Johanna Mason<sup>7</sup>, they struggle to stop consuming this product. It is the same situation in *Brave New World*

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<sup>5</sup> She is the sister of Katniss.

<sup>6</sup> A medical product can affect the mind like the drugs.

<sup>7</sup>Katniss' partner in the hospital.

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when people are addicted to drugs as a consequence of their painful experience in order to make people happy and forget things. They uses drugs but for different sake: for Peeta, they wants to make him calm because his brain is transferred and washed in order to hate his friends. So they uses drugs in order to calm his cruel actions against them.

The most painful thing in the novel is that when children know that their parents can do nothing to protect them from the tyranny of their government. After the death of Katniss' and Gale's fathers, they take responsibilities. She becomes a father and mother. As Katniss says: "At eleven years old, with Prim just seven, I took over as head of the family. (*The Hunger Games* 31). This feeling also comes as a result of hunger games when fathers know that their children are going to be killed. They become the ones who provided the family with food and money: "If we didn't have so many kids," he adds quickly. They're not our kids, of course. But they might as well be. Gale's two little brothers and a sister. Prim. And you may as well throw in our mothers, too, because how would they live without us? Who would fill those mouths that are always asking for more?" (*The Hunger Games* 10-11). Childhood was destroyed as a result of bad conditions. She blames her mother to not took care of her. Therefore, she decides not to have children because of this. Her decision is not a result of her mother but more about the negative circumstances resulted from the Capitol.

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The more you are poor the more you are closer to death. For example in district 12 children are allowed to put their names more times in the reaping in order to have grain and oil for their families. They play the role of providers. They are exploited and oppressed because of their poor economic positions. The poor people are more supposed to be chosen to die in the games. Simply, They take risk of their life for their families.

After the destruction of district 12, merchant children are removed to district 13 where they face difficulties. One of them is Delly “Delly’s a bit thinner than I remember, but she was one of the few kids in District Twelve with a couple of pounds to spare. The diet here, the stress, the grief of losing her parents have all, no doubt, contributed” (*Mockingjay 218*). Not only Delly who finds difficulties after the destruction, but also Katniss and Peeta faced the same difficulties.

Even love is crucial in this atmosphere. Katniss gets confused between Gale and Peeta since both of them are close to her. She does not know who she loves more, Gale (her oldest friend) helped her a lot of times. Also, Peeta did a lot for her to rescue her in the games. She got confused when she is forced to act as she loved him during the games.

### **4 The Resemblance with the Current Moment**

The main aim of the dystopian genre is to depict the current social issues concerning poverty, inequity, segregation. Writers of this genre work their best to

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depict the current living conditions of the present world. There are clear similarities between the world Collins lives in and her novel. Thus, this novel is a representative of the present world. So, through a critical reading to these kinds of literary work, the reader will understand the hidden message that is transmitted by the author.

In *the Hunger Games*, there are clear similarities between the present world and the events of the story itself. The dominance of the powerful on the poor countries is the same in the system adopted by the Capitol. In addition to this, the Capitalist system that is still dependable in some countries is the same system practiced in nation of the Panem. This system is similar to the system in first world countries. They purchase products that have been produced by workers by giving them small wages. The consumption of drugs in the novel is strongly similar to the current world in which millions of people are addicted to. The drugs in the novel are consumed by the characters in order to forget their past experiences. In reality, people consume drugs for the sake of forgetting their bad experience.

Another key similarity is the control of media and propaganda. Nowadays, the human is witnessing a total control of this device in which reality is hidden on the public opinion. Indeed, people of today is suffering from a world similar to the apocalypse. A world that is featured by tyranny, domination, terrorism, crimes, and war. So, the message of Suzanne Collins is clear and must be interpreted in a rightful way.

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### **Conclusion:**

*The Hunger Games* trilogy is a good example of a dystopian young adult fiction since it discusses adolescents' issues in a dystopian environment. It uses a teenage protagonist to reflect the living conditions that a teenage person is experiencing. Hence, as a dystopian novel, its diverse and complex themes such as the dehumanization of people, the ill political system succeed to reflect the post-apocalyptic settings. Starvation, famine, oppression, poor living conditions, and totalitarian regimes are the substances of this post-apocalyptic environment. In addition to these settings, the annual games that were created to over-control people of the Panem mainly the poor people and as a vital source for the entertainment of the elites. Many themes are embodied in the trilogy such as Inhumanity, poverty, propaganda, control of media, death, and so on.

**Chapter Three :**  
**A Critical Marxist Reading to the  
Totalitarian Regimes in *The Hunger  
Games***

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### **Introduction**

The ideas of social revolution and class ideology are highly manifested in the novel. This chapter presents and interprets Collins' *The Hunger Games* based on the Marxist perspective which is the base of the dystopian genre. Power is the main feature of dystopia as it is highlighted by Marx as the main element of dystopia. *The Hunger games* depicts the ideology of power and control in our world in an artistic way the different techniques that are adopted by the Capitol to maintain its supreme social position in the Panem. The government has adopted a totalitarian system that imposes power and exploitation. This system is grounded on a special social structure based on the class ideology.

### **1 . Tracing Class Ideology in *The Hunger Games***

Collins represents the socioeconomic classes termed by Marx as the Base and the Superstructure. The base represents the government, whereas the superstructure represents the districts in the novel. The government of the Capitol persecutes the working class by using several techniques such as oppression and exploitation.

#### **1.1 Panem : The Society of the Spectacle**

Debord defines the spectacle as the exact presentation of unreal images that are used by dominant system (Capitalism) for its personal interests( Debord 6). Simply, it is a society in which the dominant system rules the oppressed people by adopting significant mechanisms such as manipulation of

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media and the use of games as a source of entertainment. This later, plays a major role in deceiving people by the attraction their minds to unreal and fake images about the governmental system practiced on them. The aim of this society is to deceive people's minds and giving them fake images about the reality of the society they are living in. In the Hunger Games, the Panem is a vivid image to the spectacle society of the modern world. A society that is managed by mass use of media as a vital source deceive the oppressed's mind. The Capitol succeeds to deceive people of districts and attract their attention to fake images . The Capitol further succeeds to reshape its citizen's way of thinking by imposing its instructions, and inculcating its ideologies mainly through the games and media. Collins uses such an extraordinary work The Hunger Games Trilogy to reflect the present world of today. People of today are colonized by a mass media and millions of deceitful tools. Hence, people of the present world are living in spectacle where they are totally blind about the brutality of the absolute power of the dominant system.

### **1.2 Panem's Social and Economic Structure**

The Panem is a state ruled by the dominant capitalist system where a proletarian class is oppressed by the bourgeoisie one. The proletarian class works hard to provide its biological needs like food. The bourgeoisie class works to accumulate wealth by the over use of the oppressed class.

## Chapter Three: A Critical Marxist Reading to the Totalitarian Regimes in the Hunger Games

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The Capitol owns the vital resources (fuel and food) and the process of games as a strong source of power. The prosperity of the Capitol depends mainly on the working class. This later is forced to work hard for the profits of the government without any objection. Class classification has its generous part in the governmental process. Moreover, the Capitol and its grow up with the belief that people of districts are inferior. They do not even recognize the districts as a part from the nation of the Panem. President Snow and his governmental devices insist on the exploitation of the working class in order to save the picture of classism faculty. This faculty is constructed on two main conflicted social classes :the higher and the lower.

In *The Hunger Games*, Capitol is the heart of Panem where the control of economy is the artery of this heart. According to Sozzan “The people who rule our country, Panem. From the far off city called the Capitol” ( *The Hunger Games* 6). The economic control gives the Capitol enough power to force the working class following its order.

Capitol represents capitalist system which is lead by a cruel President leader Snow. He is the doer “the base”. His function is keeping the economic control under his hands. In order to keep his government and his economy stable, he constructs boundaries between the districts. As it is depicted in the novel by the herein Katniss “It’s interesting, hearing about her life. We have so little communication with anyone outside our district. In fact, I wonder if

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the Game makers 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" (*The Hunger Games* 194). The quotation ensures that the creation boundaries between districts will guarantee to cut the communication between districts. Communication and unity result in rebellion against the Capitol.

### 1.3 Social Oppression

In *The Hunger Games*, the relationship between the two social classes (the higher and the lower) stands on social oppression. The base or the higher class (Capitol) owns the means of production and it practices oppression on the superstructure or the lower class (districts).

As an example the coal miners are oppressed in many ways. First, they are forced to enter the game of death. It is showed that all families are happy for one year of life for their children. Only two of these children are going to live the worst days during the games. So, the games is the direct source to oppression in the districts. The following quotation ensures this situation:

Tonight. After the reaping, everyone is supposed to celebrate. And a lot of people do, out of relief that their children have been spared for another years. But at least two

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families will pull their shutter, lock their doors, and try to figure out how they will survive the painful weeks to come.

*(The Hunger Games 10)*

The coal miners are not oppressed only in their families, but also in their work. Although they are forced to work hard in order to produce for the economics of Panem, their rights and good conditions are not provided by the Capitol even it lets them hunger. Through this treatment, it is clear that Base deals with the working class as slaves.

Starvation emerges everywhere in districts especially old people and children of big families. Their working in mining is not enough to get rid of starvation. Therefore, they have to find another source of food. Hunting is the solution for them to survive. Unfortunately, the government takes advantage of this situation. It prohibits hunting in order to push them for working without claiming. It further prohibits owning weapons. The government oppresses them in a very cruel way. It is clear through the next quote said by Katniss Everdeen: “Even though trespassing in the woods is illegal and poaching carries the severest of penalties, more people would risk it if they had weapons” (*The Hunger Games 5*). Keeping them suffering from starvation to make sure that they are not going to stand against the capitol. This leads to be itself the only solution for the districts.

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The same way is done by the government in district 11. They are not allowed to own production.

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." "They arrest you or something." I ask. "They whip you and make everyone else watch," says Rue. "The mayor's very strict about it (*The Hunger Games* 193)

The quote above describes that workers face hunger though they produce food. Simply, the only one who takes the fruits of production is the Capitol.

### 1.4 Manipulation of Power

Power is very important concept in social structure. In the *Hunger Games*, it is understood that power is manipulated by President Snow who controls everything in Panem through the Capitol. Furthermore, he controls the lives of people and plays with their souls as toys "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 a totally we are at their mercy"(*The Hunger Games* 18-19). So, dictatorship of President Snow is strongly clear through his actions towards the oppressed people of Panem. The power of the

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Capitol starts after its winning in the war. Snow has created this game only to show his power.

The effectiveness of Katniss's power is unique in succeeding her plan in rebellion. Her power is a weapon that she uses to stand against President Snow. Power is not practiced by President Snow and Katniss only but also, President Coin uses her power to empower her governmental position. Later on, Katniss uses the power of Coin to destroy Snow. After Katniss's success, she thinks about killing Coin when this latter wants to impose her power on the districts.

### 1.5 Media as a Monitor

In *the Hunger Games* media plays a major role in monitoring the games and its participants since cameras are used to watch the games. As a way of control and dominance, the Capitol is the only one who uses media. Therefore, people of the districts see all the messages of the Capitol.

The Capitol twinkles like a vast field of fireflies. Electricity in districts 12 comes and goes ; usually we only have it a few hours a day. Often the evenings are spent in candlelight. The only time you can count on it is when they are airing the Hunger Games on some important government messages on television that it's mandatory to watch. (*The Hunger Games* 98)

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### 1.6 Alienation and Division

The Capitol uses alienation and division of districts as a strategy to maintain its control. It is clearly manifested in district 13 where the Capitol provides a military force to guarantee its disunity with other districts. Besides this strategy, the Capitol also uses other ways and rules to disconnect the unity of people. This strategy succeeds in disunites the districts and ensures their aimlessness. Moreover, the Capitol does all that is necessary to abort revolution and this would be done by those previous strategies. Hence, *the Hunger Games* novel is message states that revolution will be achieved only by unity and public agent between all people of the country. This unity guarantees freedom and social independence from oppression.

### 1.7 Class Ideology

The ideology of classism, dictatorship, and mistreatment of humans are several issues that are clearly manifested in *the Hunger Games*. The power is controlled by president Snow who grasps all means of power in the Capitol. He is the only one who decides about societal, governmental, and economic matters in the districts of the Panem. People of the Panem are putten under the domination of the Capitol. Not even this, but the Capitol also controls their lives. This latter issue is clearly shown in the following quotation: “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”(Collins 2008).

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### 1.8 Economic Process of the Capitalist System

Exploitation, oppression, and controlling means of production are the stones of the dominant capitalist system and its ideology during the post-apocalyptic world of the Panem. Two conflicted social class shape the society in *the Hunger Games*. The Capitol represents the bourgeoisie or the ruling class, whereas the districts represent the proletarian class ( the working class). The bourgeoisie class owns all means of production and construct all rules that guarantee the respect of this system. Besides this, the working class has nothing to do but doing their duties for the benefits of the Capitalist. This atmosphere of the Panem reflects the real image of the Capitalist society. Controlling means of production, workers work for long hours with low wages construct welfare capitalism. In order to fulfill this, the Capitol divides the districts, and each district is specialized in producing a special item. For example, district 2 is specialized in producing weapons, district 5 electricity, district 8 factories and so on. Furthermore, the rules of the Capitol forces each individual to work for the Capitalist besides his participation in the killing games. The practice of forced labor is one of the stones that constructs such an atmosphere. In addition to forced labor, people are enforced to work in inhuman conditions under the threat of violence and punishment. This system clearly shows the cruelty of the dominant ideology that encourages classism, poverty, and social inequality.

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### 2.Revolting the Superstructure against the Base

Karl Marx has proposed the concept of “Social Revolution” as a solution to destroy the authoritative system in order to achieve a social liberation from oppressive dictator system(capitalism).

#### 2.1The Marxist superstructure

For Marx, the superstructure is “have-not” that represents the majority of the population among them the workers who work in mining and factories. Their daily work is manual and they live in substandard conditions. In the *Hunger Games*, all districts are poor, and the poorest are districts 12and 11. She is a depiction of the place where the working class lives.

Katniss is from District 12. She explains in more details how is the life of the superstructure is showed through the heroin Katniss. She states : “Our part of District 12, nicknamed the Seam, is usually crawling with coal miners heading out to the morning shift at this hour” (*the Hunger Games* 4). Her district is specialized in coal mining. The coal miners work from the early morning to the afternoon under poor working conditions. They do not work for themselves but to supply Capitol in order to run out the economy of Panem. Rue from district 11 explains to Katniss how her district works hard to serve the economic supplies without taking any advantage from it.

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### **2.2 Revolting the Capitalist System**

As it is said that every action has a reaction “respond”. The base practices oppression on the superstructure. On the other hand, the superstructure reacts against this oppression. They response in a form of rebellion following Marxist principles. This later believes that the working class has to struggle against the authoritative government. They struggle in order to destruct the Capitol and creates their own utopian world where there is no oppression, war, totalitarian, slavery. A world where there is peace, prosperity, justice, and equality.

It is not easy to wage a war against such an authoritative solid system. The first step towards rebellion is started by heroin Katniss in the arena. This rebellion manifests first when Katniss refuses to follow the governmental instructions. Katniss Everdeen, and Peeta Mallark stand against the new instructions that state to have one winner instead of two winners. Simply, they refuse to kill each other by taking the poison barriers. This later, aims to force the Gamemakers following the old rules of two winners. Katniss recognizes the prominence of the games in the Capitol's power. If the games end without participants or without winners, the show will lose its popularity. This is shown in the coming quotation: “Yes, they have to have a victor. Without a victor, the whole thing would blow up in the Gamemakers‘ faces. They‘d have failed the capitol. Might possibly even be executed, slowly and painfully while

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the cameras broadcast it to every screen in the country”(the *Hunger Games* 337).

A first solid step toward rebellion against the tyranny of the capitalist government starts to take a clear path. The disobedient of participants, and the unity of districts are the first stones within this path. People of districts start to recognize the reality of games, and how its rules commensurate their humanity. Communication among districts signify that unity indeed starts to take a clear road around them. The workers from different districts know nothing about the living conditions of the other districts since communication between them are banned. The government bannes every single sign of communication since it leads to unity. Communication starts to have a position among districts and guarantees that revolution will be easier and faster. What really makes change in people's minds is when Katniss refuses to obey that instructions. This spark of hope given by Katniss is a clear message for revolution. This is clear in the following quotation: “You haven't hurt people—you've given them an opportunity. They just have to be brave enough to take it. There's already been talk in the mines. People who want to fight. Don't you see? It's happening!” (*Catching Fire* 130).

Fortunately, Katniss succeeds to make uprising against the Capitol. Class struggle and social revolution in the Marxist kingdom play a prominent role in pushing people toward liberation and salvation. The districts succeed to

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achieve their goals in getting rid of the totalitarian regimes. A totalitarian regime that has been practiced against their freedom and against their social prosperity. The Capitol is an exact representation of that dominant regime.

Finally, Katniss Everdeen succeeds to make uprising against the Capitol and forming an organized revolution. Now, she becomes The Mockingjay that symbolizes revolution. The revolutionary thoughts of districts transform into actions, and these actions mark the end of Snow's totalitarian regime. They win the war and they kill President Snow and Coin. Districts take liberation and they destroy the faculty of the authoritative system (capitalist system). Now, people of the Panem are free to elect a president and form a new sociopolitical principles.

An emergency election is hold to elect a new president from the working class named Paylor. A solid path is grounded on harsh war and a long struggle are done to accomplish liberation and freedom from the authoritative constraints. Oppressed people of an atmosphere lacks food become a united kingdom lays on prosperity and freedom. The pangs of the revolutionary Marxist ideas have resulted in the birth of a new hope raised up in the utopian kingdom.

### **Conclusion**

Class ideology or classism is key component in the authoritative capitalism system. This system widens the gap between the social classes (the

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base and the superstructure). The cruelty of this system results in the over control of the higher class on the lower one. Panem holds this system by adopting several strategies to maintain the existence of this tyrannical regime. These strategies have result in social unbalance, social injustice, isolation, disunity, and so on. Manipulation of media and monitoring people's minds are key components in those strategies. The revolutionary thoughts of Marx mainly the concept of Class Struggle and Social Revolution have inculcate social awareness. As a utopian ideology, Marxism plays the biggest role in bettering the human living conditions mainly the economic side.

# **General Conclusion**

## **General Conclusion**

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### **General conclusion**

This analytical study tends to explore and investigate the dystopian themes embodied in the young adult dystopian novel *The Hunger Games* through the application of Marxism and Capitalism theories. The first theoretical chapter provides a clear overview to the given topic. The second descriptive analytical chapter introduces the system of capitalism and class ideology as two aspects of dystopia. This chapter further aims to highlight themes of dystopia manifested in the novel. The third analytical chapter analyzes the novel from a Marxist perspective as a utopian ideology. This utopian theory helps in constructing the key totalitarian regimes embodied in the series of Collins.

This study tends to answer the two remaining questions through the application of two conflicted theories (Capitalism and Marxism). This application helps us in drowning the manifestation of capitalism and class ideology in the trilogy. The Capitol as a Spectacle society embraces an authoritative Capitalist system in order to impose its absolute power on districts. The control of means of production and managing the labor force are the key components of such a system. Furthermore, the ideology of classism has create the emergence of two conflicted social classes termed by Marx as the base and the superstructure. This ideology as a dystopian one stands against the values of social equality and against of the values of humanity itself. Hence, the dominance of this ideology is the direct reason behind the

## **General Conclusion**

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birth of dystopia and the death of utopia. The remaining question is embodied in the third descriptive analytical chapter. The totalitarian regimes : capitalism, class ideology, social oppression, manipulation of media, propaganda, dictatorship are the substances of this dystopian ground. This later is the ground of the present world where the dominant powers are controlling all aspects of life economically, politically, socially, and ideologically. This authoritative system considers those who have no access to power as inferior and inhuman.

Collins as a dystopian young adult author succeeds to transmit an extraordinary message to her readers mainly young ones. Through her formidable novel, she depicts the world of today and its socioeconomic principles. She wants to inform her readers about the end of humanity in its intangible meaning. Moreover, her transmitted messages shows how horrible the post-apocalyptic man is shaped by the dominant ideology that succeeds to put him away from the human principles and the values of his humanity. Thus, dystopian writings mainly *The Hunger Games* serves us with a vivid image to the world we are living in. A world that is featured by the massive control of the dominant ideologies practiced by the dominant powers of the postmortem world.

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## Appendices

### A: The novelist

Suzanne Collins was born on August 10, 1962, in Hartford, Connecticut, United States. She is an American novelist, woman writer, children writer, science fiction writer, writer of the young adult literature. She is the youngest of four children. She lived in the eastern United States during her childhood. She was moving constantly.

She graduated as a Theater Arts major in 1980. In 1985 she studied Indiana University Bloomington to get her bachelor of arts degree. In 1989 she gained her Master of Fine Arts in dramatic writing from the New York University Tisch School of the Arts. She has two children, Charlie and Isabella when she divorced from her husband Charles

She started by writing for the children in Nickelodeon channel. Then she was influenced by James Proimos to write children's books. Her first book for children was *Gregor the Overlander*. Then she wrote several books for children until 2008 which was the turning date for her career. She published *The Hunger Games*. She was inspired by the Greek myth of Theseus and the Minotaur. After a year she published her second book of the trilogy *Catching Fire*, then in 2010 her last book of the trilogy *Mockingjay*. In a short period, her two first books got popular. After one year from the publication of the trilogy, it is transformed into a film. As a result of the success of the trilogy she was named Time magazine's most influential people of 2010.

She was rewarded many times like “Best Young Adult Book of 2008”, “2004 NAIBA Children's Novel Award”, “2006 ALSC Notable Children's Recording (audio version)” “2016 Authors Guild Award for Distinguished Service to the Literary Community”

She published other successful works like *The Underland Chronicles* from 2003-2006 which contains several books, *The Hunger Games* trilogy 2008-2010 which contains

unpublished work. This book is named as *The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes* (2020) (prequel)

On the last novel "A Hunger Games without Everdeen might have seemed as peculiar as a Potter without Harry, but it works beautifully, largely thanks to a new character. The clever, charismatic precursor, Lucy Baird Gray, a Covey (a sort of gypsy) who is chosen to represent District 12 in the tenth Games. She is a folk singer of prophetic ballads and has a thing about snakes. She is gorgeous, of course, in her late mother's old rainbow dress (the casting for the film, confirmed by Lionsgate, will be fun)." *The Times*

### **B: Plot Summary of the Hunger Games by Suzan Collins**

The Hunger Games is a novel by Suzan Collins. The events of this novel happened in the Panem which is a dystopian - apocalyptic world where everything under the total control of the Capital. This later presents the supreme power in the country. The events of the story was centered on a 16 years old girl named Katniss Everdeen. The female protagonist Katniss fought to win in the games that were created by the capital as punishment and a source for entertainment. The rules of these games ordered each district to collect two tributes a boy and a girl. These two tributes from each district had to participate in a killing games. That turn was the Hunger Games. At the beginning the sister of Katniss Prim 12 years old was selected to be the tribute in the district 12. Katniss did not allow that to happen when she volunteered to replace her sister's place. Peeta was the boy that was selected from the same district 12. Katniss and Peeta (who had some emotions toward each other) became now the representatives of the district 12.

The story had mainly 11 character. Katniss Everdeen is the female protagonist of the story. A strong, loyal, and soft woman from district 12. She fought with Peeta during the games. She presented a spotlight of hope for the oppressed people of her country the Panem. Peeta Mallerk played the role of Katniss' partner from district 12. He had feeling toward Katniss. The state of these emotions were clearly revealed in the story.

President Snow is the president of the Panem. He is considered the antagonist in the story Haymitch Abernathy is the coach of Katniss and Peeta. He was the winner of the games from the same

district 12. Cinna is the stylist of Katniss who encouraged Katniss to be herself. Primrose Everdeen is the sister of Katniss that she was first selected to fight in the games but later she was replaced by her sister Katniss. Gale Hawthorne is considered to be the friend of Katniss.. Effie Trinket presented the symbol of wealth and power in the capital, and the administrative of the games. Katniss's Parents not appear too much in the story but their prints were clear. in shaping up Katniss personality