

**PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF
ALGERIA Ministry of Higher Education and
Scientific Research University of Tlemcen**



**Faculty of Letters and Languages
Department of English**

**Exploring Identity Alteration in Suzanne Collins' Dystopian Novel:
*The Hunger Games Trilogy Part One (2008)***

*Dissertation Submitted to the Department of English as Partial Fulfillment for the
Master's Degree in Literature and Civilization*

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Academic Year: 2018/2019

Dedication

*I would like to dedicate this modest work to the memory of my dear Father,
the person I miss everyday in my life, to my mother, the light of my heart.*

*A special dedication to my two sisters Sakina and Hanan,also my only brother
Mohammed God bless them all*

*A particular dedication to my friend Francesca who has been there for me
whenever I needed help.*

Acknowledgments

First and foremost, I would like to thank my supervisor Dr Kheladi for his patience .similar thanks go to my co-supervisor Miss Mengouchi who provided me with great ideas and constructive feedback, I would like to thank them both for their genuine help and support during this work.

Also, I am so grateful to the board of examiners Prof Senouci and Ms Menouer who have accepted to evaluate the present work. Their invaluable comments and criticism will be undoubtedly a further enrichment to the work.. I am also grateful for the teaching staff at the English Department of English my second home, a special thanks to my all teachers who have been through the way the whole five years at University.

Abstract

In recent years, the spread of Young Adult novels gained a massive interest among readers from different ages, featuring themes such as Dystopia and corruption. These novels became a trend in the world of literature nowadays. This dissertation aims to highlight the issue of identity alteration in *The Hunger Games*(2008) by Suzanne Collins, follo

wing a psychoanalytical approach, analyzing the main character in the first novel. The work focuses on the Young Adult genre as a new style of writing and its relevance to dystopia. It also tackles several aspects that exist within this style such as the psychological development of adolescents and their behaviors, compromising concepts such as characters and characterization since the interest is centered on the individuals in the novel alongside the effect of oppressive government and the self-esteem as well. The analytical part of this work is mainly devoted to the protagonist's identity formation in the first novel of the trilogy, and it provides several pieces of evidence that prove her change of character during the games and after. Therefore, the novel portrays the major character's personality change as a teenager and the challenges she passed through to

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

General Introduction

Literature has always been an interesting field of study simply due to its popularity among readers from different categories, and different genres as well. Young Adult Fiction which is a new style of writing gained massive attention in the recent years, this literary stream is characterized mainly of dystopian themes that is mostly read by teenagers. With series written alongside film adaptations, this latter gained interest among readers; not only among young adults but even old people are fascinated by these books. Very probably, this is because of the themes they tackle, such as corrupted systems, featuring young protagonists in a war with the system, where the individual defeats the global and brings in justice .In literary terms, corruption is having a huge impact on our societies and the majority of writers of this type of literature have emphasized this point throughout their books. With *The Hunger Games* (2008), the American author and screenwriter Suzanne Collins attracted fans from all over the world highlighting such themes. The result was *A trilogy* (*Catching Fire* was published in 2009 and *Mocking Jay* in 2010), which paved the way for more Young Adult dystopian trilogies.

The major objective of this work is to shed light on the Protagonist identity alteration throughout the first part of *The Hunger Games* trilogy. It is devoted to the analysis of the identity formation of the protagonist Katniss Everdeen inside and outside the arena .In addition, the study helps readers understand how adolescents in Young Adult Fiction shape their own identity through a psychoanalytical approach, thus focusing on individual' manifestations in the novel . This research also focuses on the importance of society and how it affects individuals especially a dystopian one , where the system controls every single aspect of people's lives .Hence, the questions that need to be answered in this research are as follows:

- What is Young Adult Fiction and its relation to Dystopia?
- How is the protagonist Katniss portrayed in the first novel of the trilogy, i.e. what are her personal motives and traits?
- What is the impact of the Capitol (the dystopian government in the *Hunger Games*)on Katniss in the arena ?

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- How was Katniss before and after the games and what changed in her personality?

-Which role does the media play in affecting Katniss's performance in the arena and how is she playing the role of a survivor in the games?

To answer these questions, a number of hypotheses are put forward:

- Dystopia and Young Adult Fiction are interrelated, mainly because of the themes and topics they both share .
- The focus on the protagonist of the novel would show that she maintains a certain character to convince the audience because the games are based on pretense and appearances.
- Katniss is rebellious in the arena , and she keeps defying the rules in the games trying to prove herself , thus her identity quest develops gradually when the games progress.
- Katniss plays the role of a survivor in the games; she defies the rule of the game and survives. Her identity's change is apparent throughout her journey in the deadly arena. She witnessed a complete transformation after being a shy teenage girl with a low self-esteem .
- Media plays a significant role in affecting the character and personality of Katniss.

The method followed in this work is descriptive and analytic, focusing on the psychological aspects of the major character.

This research is divided into two chapters. A theoretical part which is an exploration of certain definitions of the term dystopia along with Young Adult fiction as a new style in literature. It also focuses on the psychological aspects of adolescents since these novels are centered on this category. Moreover, an account is given on the relevant theories such as Erickson's eight stages on the development of young adults and the importance of oppressive systems and how they affect individuals during the phase of adolescence .Whereas chapter two is devoted to the analysis of the major character and her personality shifts This work is centered on the adolescent category in

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the literary world, which is better represented throughout the Young Adult novels, highlighting important themes such as identity and moralities as well.

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Young Adult Fiction
and Identity**

1.1. Introduction

Literature in general gives pleasure to readers, at the same time it provides them with lessons and life experience. In this chapter, the focus is put on dystopian themes in Young Adult Fiction. These two are related, dystopia is often a central theme in these novels. Therefore, the appeal of this new literary stream among reader as such the author of the *Hunger Games* Suzanne Collins, discussing further her inspirations and influences as well.

The second part of this chapter deals with aspects of identity formation in young adult fiction, first presenting individual's psychological development of identity ,providing a discussion on the protagonist self-esteem and self-image and how these two aspects affect individual's self progress .Finally , explaining the impact of the oppressive government on individual .

1.2 Definition of Young Adult Fiction

It is not easy to define Young Adult Fiction because there is no clear definition to the term alone; it is likely linked to other genres such as dystopian themes and adventures where individuals play major roles. This style of writing is mainly written for a specific generation which is the young adult generation, but in fact these books are appealing to the older generation as well according to Michel Cart's paper" From the Insider to Outsider"(95).

Cart explains that the popularity of this new genre which is known as «realistic fiction for teens" became more appealing with the publication of S,E .Hinton's *The Outsiders* and Robert Lipsyte's *The Contender* (95) .However, Antero Garcia traces back the origins of Young Adult fiction in the United States explaining that the definition of the term has a relation to when adolescents started learning to spend money and interact in the global world (5). Young Adult fiction gained an immense popularity recently due to its fascinating and appealing novels, such as the *Twilight* series and the *Hunger Games* trilogy.

In Young Adult novels, authors such as Suzanne Collins and many others tend to bring topics of identity quest for adolescents and subjectivity as well. Teenagers are likely

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associated with questions about their true identity , as Robyn McCallum suggests that young adults deal with different ways of psychological ideas about their identity formation and subjectivity during the period of maturation(McCallum 67);she also argues that in many novels, ideas such as finding the self is highly emphasized (68) claiming that one’s identity is unique and not linked to society. Therefore McCallum also discusses multiple narrative strategies used in these novels such as the internal dialogue, which implies the split of individuals from the society (68); this technique also reflects the character’s moral issues or questions about their true self. Thus, Young Adult fiction is specialized in different themes, romance, adventure, and most of the times it has to deal with futuristic themes and science fiction.(Cart 95).

Furthermore, the definition of the Young Adult fiction differs from one scholar to another, Allen, Pace, Nilsen and Kenneth, L, Danelson two American authors define Young Adult Literature in their book *Literature for Today’s Young Adults* as “anything that readers between the appropriate ages of twelve and eighteen choose to read either for leisure reading or to fill school assignments” (3),they also argue that teenagers need these books because they offer real meaning to their lives and most of them find it easy to relate their emotions with these books(5).Another important point is that the Young Adult books tend to be accurate and relevant for younger readers as Nilsen and Danelson suggests that “a prerequisite to attract young readers is to write through the eyes of young person” (20)which suggests that these novels depict the young people experiences as teenagers . The type of narration also plays a part in attracting readers’ attention “First-person narration is common that we have heard people discuss it as a perquisite for YA fiction” (26).In other words using the first-person point of view narration reflects the characters’ real emotions and this serve the reader as well.

1.3 Dystopia in Young Adult Fiction

The term Dystopia is defined by the *Concise Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms* as "a modern term invented as the opposite of utopia ,and applied to any alarmingly unpleasant imaginary world ,usually of the projected future. The term is also applied to fictional works depicting such worlds. A significant form of science fiction and of modern satire, dystopian

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writing is exemplified Herbert George Wells *The Time Machine*(1895),George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949),and Russell Hoban's *Riddley Walker*(1980) "(100). In other words, dystopia is a style of writing that signifies the opposite of utopia, dealing with chaotic worlds and futuristic themes.

The American scholars Carrie Hintz and Elaine Ostry advocate the view that as a counter to earlier fictional utopias (depiction of idealized societies that promise a glorious future), dystopian fiction instead emphasizes on societies where negative social forces play the supremacy (10). The concept of dystopia emerged in the twentieth century in response to world events such as the World War I, according to literary scholar Gregory Claeys(16).

Clayes defines dystopia in reference to utopia, which was coined by Thomas More and stands for an ideal society, he pinpoints that dystopia and utopia are not completely diverse from each other, since they come from the same root (Clayes14). Moreover, dystopia is not an old concept but a much younger one indeed (14). Utopia was popular during modernity and the time of the enlightenment, in contrast, dystopia came into prospect with the age of confusion and human's catastrophes, the twentieth century witnessed the emergence of dystopia as a trend in literature (16). Hence The definition of the term may vary from one scholar to another. Mark Hillegas defines dystopia as a literature that describes:

nightmare states where men are conditioned to be obedient , freedom is eliminated , and individuality crushed ;where science and technology are employed not to enrich human life, but to maintain the state's surveillance and control of its slave citizens (3).

For Hillegas Dystopia describes a world where human's freedom is conditioned, and science plays a role in destroying people's lives rather than helping them.

The emergence of Dystopian literature helped marking the rise of a new genre called Young Adult fiction ,as Antero Garcia explains , this literary stream emerged in the United States with the unexpected popularity of Young Adult¹ novels such as the *Twilight* series², and *The Hunger Games* trilogies (11). Consequently, Young Adult fiction gained huge

¹ See definition in page 6

² A series of young adult fiction written by the American novelist Stephanie Meyer

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attention and success in the last few decades. As in *the Hunger Games* trilogy, the novel presents young Katniss, a 16 year old teenager who struggles against the oppressive government that rules her district, playing the role of a provider to her family (*Hunger Games* 28).

On the other hand the *Hunger Games* is classified as Post-apocalyptic rather than Dystopian which means (denoting or relating to the time following a nuclear war or another catastrophic event) by the online Oxford Dictionary , as the American English Professor Keith Booker points in his book *Dystopian Literature* that, these novels mostly emerged during the phase of massive scientific changes ,capitalism and the beginning of a new decade marking the shift in literature as well ,hence dystopian novels became the trend that time(6).

In *the Dystopian Impulse in Modern Literature*, Booker draws attention to the alienating power of science fiction and dystopian fiction as well. For instance, the *Hunger Games* trilogy puts emphasis on our fears upon total government control, the danger of mass media, overrating them that readers cannot help but think critically and interpret them (176). However, as Karen Springen writes in an article on the appeal of current Young Adult dystopias, people cannot be retrained, the attempt to put strains on them will only end in dystopia, and which will cause rebellion just like what happens in the *Hunger Games* and many dystopian novels.

Significantly, the presence of hope in Young Adults fiction is what distinguishes it from dystopian stories as Springen argues that this hope gives adolescents a reason to move forward and hold on to something, despite the horrible situations they may go through and actively urges them to improve their status; just like Collin's protagonist Katniss, who is determined to survive and always in search of hope in the middle of chaos. In contrast, classics such as Orwell's *1984*, the characters tend to be pessimistic and the end is often sad and tragic. Unlike the classic dystopias, Young Adult Fiction focuses on heroism and mainly survival (Sambell 249);they offer a sense of hope and optimism, intending to make the readers aware of what is happening around them by pushing them to think critically(Sambell 248).

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There is a strong relation between utopia, dystopia, and science, Booker remarks in his book *Dystopian Literature* that science cannot change the past, therefore, the outcomes of science are noticed in the future (6). As long as science is attempting to make the world a better place, it can seem that the results of science should lead to a brighter future and better than the reality we live in (7). However, dystopian literature often highlights the idea in which what society thought to be a blessing, turned out to be its misfortune (7).

Booker also adds in another book entitled *Dystopian Impulse* There is a common belief that things used to be better in the past than they are now, which implies a utopian view of the past, Booker sees this as a nostalgia for the perceived better past(5).

1.4 The Appeal and Popularity of Young Adult and Dystopian Fiction

Dystopian novels have always been in demand for readers, but from the turn of the twenty first century, they became more apparent that the interest in such novels increased significantly. However, there are multiple views about the nature of Young Adult fiction, but the main drift is that these books are set in a chaotic and totalitarian society ;portraying the life of a teenager, his/her emotional, physical dilemmas and shifts. Thus, these novels are exciting to read especially, for the younger generation simply because it is intended for them more than the adults ;Young Adult fiction tends to bring a protagonist with a heroic features, which is likely a key element in the success of this literary stream (*Phillips 1*).

In a *New York Times* article titled “Teen-agers Are For Real”, Susan Hinton explains that “Teen-agers want to read about teen-agers today”, the appeal of this type of novels by adolescents specifically, is due to the topics these novels discuss (27). Karen Springen emphasizes on the point that the Young Adults trilogies suggest questions such as “What if”, which is appealing to teenagers because they are likely concerned with questions about their own future(22). Springen adds that dystopias tend to show by “exaggerating current concerns over reality TV, global warming, technology”(23);in other words, these novels suggests that the world could be a different place. Moreover, Young Adult novels target the adolescents category because they are the future of this world. Multiple critics have discussed adolescents’ identity search and formation likewise.

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Furthermore, this type of writing became extremely popular in the past few decades; however it is not labeled as a genre from all people. Lea Phillips explains in an article entitled “*What is Young Adult?*” that this type of writing is better categorized as a field of literature rather than a genre “calling Young Adult a genre is analogous to the glossing that occurs when they are conflated”(2). Thus, Young Adult Fiction is better described as a style of writing rather than a genre .

Young Adult literature shares the traditional genres: romance, realism, science fiction and fantasy...also sub-genres that play a heightened role within Young Adult, dystopian fiction, and paranormal romance.”(3) , Phillips explains further “ to call Young Adult a genre is to refuse this multiplicity ... genres are limited by nature , and Young Adult inherently resist such categorization...to label Young Adult a genre” , Phillips insists, “is to refuse its very nature” (3).

On the other hand, Young Adult fiction is appealing to adolescents, as Larson and Richards explain: the setting , themes and characters in the dystopian novels are an equal fit to the changes adolescents pass through during their development , they are more able to understand the world around them and engage in critical thinking ; they also show interest in issues related to their society (567).

As Patricia Kerig , Schulz and Hauster suggest , when teenagers start asking questions about their surrounding , consequently , they begin paying attention to the structures and systems , which include career and lifestyle choices; also the moral standard and the social norms . Thus the shifts they experience lead to an uncertain identity and future, this uncertainty and questioning is a part of the process through which teenagers develop their own values and personalities (33).

Another essential reason for the massive appeal of the Young Adult fiction *The Hunger Games* , is told from the first-person-present tense narration, which became popular among Young Adult Fiction authors , Laura Miller states “it is about what is happening , right this minute , in the stormy psyche of the adolescent reader” (3). This kind of narration depicts everything happening in the story , giving the audience a more vivid and clear image about the characters. Moreover, the majority of Young Adult fiction tells the events of the novels

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in a realistic way, *The Hunger Games* trilogy read like episodes of reality television where the events are “happening right before your eyes”(54).

Many studies in this field explained that there are numerous factors behind the appeal of dystopian fiction to young adult readers, Robert Gadowski explains that one of the reasons, is the fact that this group of people are accustomed to the rapid progress of technology and science(145).Dystopian fiction also draws attention to the risks that could occur as a consequence of this fast progress; freedom is another factor Gadowski discussed in which the emphasis is put on individualism in these novels (147). Finally, Young Adult literature provides its readers a chance to reflect themselves and their lives, the focus is always on individuals as a theme in these books.

1.5 Suzanne Collins’ the *Hunger Games* trilogy: Inspirations and Influences

In an interview with the author of the *Hunger Games* trilogy, Suzanne Collins explained to “*The Journal of Adolescents and Adult Literary* “

that her very first influence to write such stories is her father, who was a history professor in the US army. Describing that her life overseas had a great impact on her writing especially the *Hunger Games*, which justifies the choice of the setting she opted in the novels also the conflict in the novel reflects her familiarity with the warzones as she stated “when I was a kid my father fought in Vietnam (Blasingame726).

The central theme of her novel is based on the conflict individuals have against a tyrannical, corrupted system over the twelve districts and the forms of social control (726).Additionally, Collins stated that the emphasis on the sociopolitical overtones in the *Hunger Games* are intentional, highlighting these topics “to characterize current and past world events”, including the use of the Games as a weapon to control people, and the oppression of individual’s rights. Furthermore, Collins is highly influenced by the myths, Roman and classical literature. She admitted that the main character in the *Hunger Games*

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“Katniss” is inspired by the myth of Theseus, the mythical king of Athens where she shows human hunger for violence and entertainment, throughout reality television, also the games reflect the ancient Roman coliseum like in the ancient Gladiator games (726).

Moreover, Collins post-apocalyptic dystopian nation which is referred to as “Panem” , is therefore a reflection of the Latin phrase “panem et circuses” or “bread and circuses». The myth of Theseus which is about king Minos of Crete who demanded the selection of seven boys and seven girls from Athens ,as a tribute to be devoured by the Minotaur; seemingly this is nearly the same plot in the *Hunger Games* , where the capitol chose twelve boys and girls to be in the games, just like Theseus who volunteered to enter the labyrinth slaying the Minotaur ,which puts an end to the tyrannical system; Katniss in an act of sacrifice she volunteers in her sister’s place.(*Hunger Games* 24).As a matter of fact, Suzanne Collins told “*The School Library Journal*” in 2010 that “Theseus and the Minotaur is the classical setup for where the *Hunger Games* begins, ...with the tale of Minos...as an eight years old , (I was) horrified that Crete was so cruel...in her own way, Katniss is a futuristic Theseus”(1).

Collins explains Katniss’s act of rebellion in relation to the myth of Theseus, arguing that the main objective in the stories is the establishment of a new law, fighting for justice against an oppressive system .yet Murty Guvindini indicates that the myth of Theseus is not the only Greek figure Katniss symbolizes, but she can be seen as an allusion to the Roman Goddess Diana as well since both of them are hunters (2).

Katniss rebellion against the Capitol is a clear representation of the Roman gladiator games and its arena (2).Collins aims to show how people in the capitol are thirsty for blood and violent scenes which were apparent during the games, through the reaction of the audience, she explained this point in many interviews. Nevertheless, when Collins was asked about what was the most difficult part of writing the story she answered in an interview with the *School Literary Journal*,” when you’re going to write a story like the *Hunger Games*,you have to accept from the beginning that you’re to kill characters...”(2),thus Suzanne Collins was also influenced by multiple dystopias as such George Orwell’s books *1984*, *Lord of the Flies* and many others(2).

1.6 Characters and Characterization in the Novel

The study of characters in literature as a theory has been a field of research among several scholars and experts. Indeed, characters play a major role in influencing and deciding the events of the story, and affecting every single event within the plot. Characters are the center of any story.

According to the American literary critic M.H. Abrams, a character is “a person in dramatic or narrative work who are interpreted by the reader as being endowed with moral, dispositional, and emotional equalities that are expressed in what they say-the dialogue and what they do- the action”(46). Hence characters play the role of controlling the incidents and are often interrupted by the reader’s opinion which is reflected in the dialogues and the actions of the story. Richard Gill argues that characters may have all kinds of relations with the people we encounter every day; yet we do not actually meet them in reality, but only in books “only exists in the pages of books “(7). ”Characters are as they are because the author has made them that way...” (7), arguing that the nature of characters, their appearances, conversations..., all these features is selected by the author (127).

Richard Gill claims in his book *Mastering English Literature*, that in order to understand the novel there are three elements that should be taken into consideration: “the characters and events of the book, the author who made the book in a particular way, and finally the reader who responds”(7). Gill also talks about the importance of characters in the novel and how the readers respond to them.

...we know that characters only exist in books and yet we respond to them as we do to people whom we know “(8), he makes distinction between characters and characterization as follows: “character is a product, while characterization is the process”(10), he explains more, that the only way to know a character is through the reader, ”characters are the figures in a book, characterization is the process that creates them(10).

Moreover, Gill pointed in his book that the novelist Foster makes the distinction between what he called flat and round characters, stating that a flat character has few characteristics,

while a round character has several(130),while others suggested different names such as major and minor characters, thus these categorizations play a role in the analysis of any text , in which characters are at the center ,hence making such a classification is helpful in understanding the author's intentions.

1.7. Aspects of Identity Formation

Identity is a complex term that has been a subject of research among researchers in the field of psychology; the individual is affected by many things such as the people around him/her, also external factors such as the surrounding they are associated with. This sub-chapter focuses on individual's identity changes according to the situations they face during their search of identity.

The first part of this sub-chapter deals with the psychological study of adolescents, in relation to the protagonist of the novel, representing theories such as Erikson's eight stages on identity development and how they form their own identity during the period of young adulthood. The second part focuses on self-image and self-esteem , explaining some of the reasons behind developing a low-self esteem, describing how the protagonist Katniss had a low –self esteem at the beginning of the novel .In the third part ,the theme of oppressive government and how it affects individuals, especially the main character in the novel ,where she faces a corrupted ,tyrannical system trying to fight against it, thus ,the system influences her identity formation as a teenager .

1.7.1. Understanding the Psychological Development in Adolescence

The Adolescence period is a very sensitive phase in life in which children start asking questions about their identities, thus, Young Adult fiction attempts to describe this phase; it is likely to encounter characters that go through the same stages. Therefore, young readers often find it easy to relate themselves to these novels. Indeed, understanding the development of the characters is linked to the changes that occur in youth (Bach et al 20).

Furthermore, this period is characterized with multiple shifts both physically and psychologically, David Moshman suggests in his book *Adolescent Psychological*

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Development (2004), that there are many things that could be studied about adolescents , including their physical functions; the way they behave according to different situations ”how they solve problems and make decisions , how they relate to each other”. Moshman argues further that studies show that “adolescents are an extraordinary diverse group of people”(15). He explains that understanding adolescents requires understanding their Psychological development (15). Multiple studies investigated the field of psychology, as such Eric Erikson’s theory on the psychological development.

According to Don Hamacheck ,Erickson’s theory suggests several stages that human beings go through in their lives, during each stage , individuals face a so –called crisis which they are obliged to solve to move on with their development, known as psychological crises (354), Moshman also argues that there are different sorts of changes , which he suggests to make the distinction between developmental and non-developmental changes. Change is developmental in those cases in which it is extended (extend over a substantial period of time),self-regulated(developmental changes are directed from within.),developmental changes are qualitative rather than merely quantitative, development is progressive (Moshman17).

Moshman’s theory implies that not all changes can be seen as a mere development (18). Nevertheless, Erickson argues that the period of childhood is a test upon the child’s mental and physical capabilities in order to develop a basic trust, Erickson’s stages can be seen in Young Adult fiction in which the protagonist struggles to establish a certain role in the society, gaining independence over their parents and discover the world alone, they will be given a chance to explore the world and define who they are(78); after that comes the phase of the crisis of industry, in which individuals learn and establish their identity(94).Then, comes the period of adulthood where the individual needs to “develop interpersonal intimacy, which allows them to build meaningful relationships”(137),” generativity ,which stresses on the importance of the next generation”(103), finally, ”integrity ,accepting one’s life cycle”(139) ,hence these stages describe how individuals develop their own identity quest during the period of adolescence .

Erickson’s theory is based on Freud’s psychoanalysis,(which suggests that human’s personality is structured by three elements the id , ego and superego) , but the focus is more

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on the ego as the center of development as Hamachack (354) view it. Consequently, it implies that the social context formed by family, friends, school and other social environments, contribute in the formation and development of the adolescent's identity. Developing an identity is the most crucial task in adolescence; Erickson focused on identity development during the youth period(355).

His Psychosocial theory (psychological and social aspects), which he developed based on Freud's psychosexual theory, resulted in his eight stages in the psychological development ,Erickson proposed through this theory that individuals are driven by a need to achieve competence in certain areas of our lives, which is likely apparent during the adolescence period; Erickson's theory argues that we face eight stages of development over our life course, at each phase there is a crisis that needs resolve. Thus, successful results would lead to a healthy personality , whereas , the failure in each stage would lead to feelings of inadequacy(354).The two psychological crises associated with adolescence and young adulthood are identity verses role-confusion and intimacy verses isolation, during adolescence ,children meet these two tasks, according to Erikson , an adolescence main task is developing a sense of self, Hamachek ,claims that a psychological crisis means that individuals must deal with the crisis to reach a successful development (355).

Another important point is concerned with the cognitive development of the mind ,which is argued by Moshman as an essential part in the adolescent's identity formation(19).Additionally ,Moshman suggests Piaget's conception of cognitive maturity as a formal operation , Moshman explains that Piaget's theory attempts to demonstrate that during the period of adolescence , individuals form new structures of knowledge and reasoning, Erikson also emphasize this theory ,he claims that the cognitive development allows the adolescent to "operate on hypothetical propositions"(247), Erikson insists that adolescents need to be aware of their personal qualities , which will help them form a permanent identity(156).The second crisis that Erikson addresses for adolescents to solve is the "crisis of intimacy"(137), he claims that when individuals solve this crisis they must be able to share their lives with others successfully ,and feel comfortable with them "we are what we love"(140).In contrast, if adolescents fail in solving other stages , they may face hardship developing and maintain a successful relationship with others, and may experience feelings of loneliness and emotional isolation(136).The adolescents are given the

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opportunity to experience what they want as if they are not children anymore ,and not yet adults , this is supposed to be a transitional phase.

In literature , the period of adolescence is labeled with failure especially if the teenager is put in a situation where he or she is obliged to face the reality of being an adult, as such young Katniss from the *Hunger Games* trilogy is required to take the responsibility of her family after her father's death, and also after being a tribute in the games(*Hunger Games* 26).This affects her identity formation and may cause an identity crisis ,where the individuals have no longer a definition to who they are.(*Hunger Games* 10). There are several aspects that affect adolescent's development, but the cultural and social factors are the most important ones as Erikson implies (133).

Individuals in Young Adult fiction are often in a clash with the social system , mainly because the system is oppressive ,tyrannical to the citizens and adolescents find it hard to adopt not only with the system but the ancient ideologies as well, which is called a social evolution as Erikson calls it (134). The psychological development in adolescence is an essential component in understanding individuals , Erikson's theories and descriptions , can be a good help to understand the psychological and behavioral changes that adolescents experience during their search of identity(Hamacheck 356).

1.7.2 Self-image and Self-esteem

During the period of adolescence, which is a developmental stage, individuals are likely to develop a specific self-esteem and self-image as well. Morris Rosenberg, discusses the issue of self image in his book "*Society and the Adolescent self-image*"; Rosenberg explains that individuals tend to ask themselves questions such as "What am I like? How good am I? what should I ,or might I become?, on what basis shall I judge myself?" (3), Adolescents are usually consumed by such questions during this phase, because they do not know who they are yet and what identity they have. Individual's self-esteem is built throughout making decisions and accomplishing their goals, thus success helps establishing a strong self-esteem, whereas failure may cause a low self-esteem (22).

The protagonist in *the Hunger Games*, Katniss Everdeen who lives in district twelve ,the poorest district in the country of Panem as Rena Nyman writes in an article titled "The

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Hunger Games as Dystopian Fiction”(1) , Katniss had to be responsible for her family in a younger age ,after her father’s death she was the only provider of the family ,this deprived her from developing a positive self-esteem , due to the lack of choices she had her whole life ,she has no hobbies ,no dreams all what she aims for is to make her family survive . In the first part of the trilogy , Katniss negative self-esteem is apparent through her behaviors ,and interpretations of people’s thoughts of her , as such she thinks that most people favor her sister over her and she even thinks that they only talk to her because they know her father. Young Katniss never accepts compliments and thinks low of people who treats her well because she built a circle of the people she trusts the most including her sister Prim ,her mother and her best friend Gale.(*HungerGames*28).

Furthermore ,the way individuals perceive themselves differ from one person to another depending on different situations likewise, for instance Katniss felt strange when she first saw herself on the screen in the Hunger Games’ preparations(*Hunger Games* 70) .In this regard , Morris Rosenberg explains that “...we cannot perceive ourselves exactly as we see other objects; from the viewpoint of the outside observer, our perceptions often appear somewhat distorted”(11), and that is what happened to Katniss in the games , she had a low vision of herself because of her negative self-esteem. Moreover, Rosenberg , stresses on the value of the self which he refers to as “reflexive”(11),arguing that the self is what evaluates individuals’ self esteem ,reflecting their identity , he also mentions another important idea which he discussed through Cooley’s debate entitled “Looking Glass Self” in which Cooley argues :”...a self-idea of this sort seems to have three principal elements : the imagination of our appearance “(11) ,which is relevant to Katniss’s situation in which she never admired her image and always wanted to be like her sister Prim ,the second element “the imagination of his judgment of that appearance and some sort of self-feeling ,such as pride or mortification” (11).

On the other hand, the social aspects also play a role in affecting individual’s self – esteem, Katniss’s entourage implies on her to think, behave in a certain way , she never takes people’s offers for help and if so, she would feel uncomfortable about it , because she lives in unmerciful world that made her develop this attitude towards the outsiders , and this has to do with her low self-esteem as well (30).

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As Rosenberg writes “All fundamental dimensions of attitude-content, direction, intensity are completely relevant and significant aspects of the self-image” (14). The protagonist of the Hunger Games had a low self-esteem at the beginning of the trilogy, Katniss found it hard to develop a positive self-esteem because she was surrounded with a negative atmosphere, and her mental processes also contributed in depriving her from seeing the positive results of her own actions (16), yet learning and acquiring new skills and potentials allowed her to develop a strong self-esteem with a positive self-image, consequently, this would help her deal with success and failure rightfully (358). Thus, developing a positive self-esteem and self-image helps individuals in their identity formation (17).

1.7.3 Government’s Oppression and Individuals

Suzanne Collins represents Dystopian North America as “Panem”, the place in which the capitol (the oppressive government) takes control over twelve districts and over uses its power and surveillance at the expense of its weak, poor, oppressed citizens. (*Hunger Games* 7).

Collins influences by the classical dystopias such as Orwell’s 1984, is clearly mirrored in her trilogy the Hunger Games, Panem resembles Oceania in multiple ways; the government in 1984 which is called “Big Brother is Watching You” (Orwell 2), similarly, the Capitol is the supreme power in the Hunger Games (the competition) led by President Snow (Blasingame 726). Moreover, in Collins’ trilogy, the social division plays a major role in people’s lives, in which a hierarchical system takes place, people in the districts are categorized according to their production, specialization, for instance district one and two are privileged because they provide the capitol with luxury items and trained peacekeepers (the capitol’s army), whereas, district eleven and twelve, have low advantages on food and supplies because the Capitol keeps firm control over resources, the aim is to create a gap between the rich and poor as a means of reinforcing its supremacy (*Hunger Games* 7).

Furthermore, the games also symbolize the capitol’s oppressive government, they are hosted for the purpose of entertaining the rich people and as a reminder to the poor districts that they owe the system (*Hunger Games* 20), as Anthony Pavlik writes in a collection of

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critical essays “the games represent the near-starvation they suffer owing to the capitol’s policies”(24). Therefore, they also serve as a warning to any kind of rebellion against the system “... the capitol brutally put down some seventy-five years ago, the rebellion that culminated in the destruction of district thirteen and the signing of a treaty of complete submission” (24).

On the other hand, the capitol celebrates its rule over the districts ,through the reaping ceremony ”a commodity harvest for the capitol appetite”(25) , in which they select a boy and a girl from each district as tributes in the deadly games; people cannot disobey or show their disapproval towards the system because they are convinced that they have no right to do so, and they would be punished if they rebel ”the television screens throughout the country regularly play stack footage of district 13’s destruction”(24).The Surveillance act is reinforced through the use of technology , which is available for the capitol solely “...the media turn the games into commodity , their broad cast reminds those in districts of the capitol’s relentless power” (24). This affects the characters and the reader as well, Katniss is aware that the capitol is monitoring her every move ,and the reader shares the same suspicion “ while hunting in the woods beyond the fence , Katniss is always afraid of drawing attention “even here; even in the middle of nowhere , you worry someone might overhear you”(Hunger Games 6). Additionally , the capitol builds fences on each district not to protect them but rather to keep them isolated “fences that surround each district ...work to contain the human inhabitants “(26)trespassing these fences is forbidden and the people for the districts are kept away from each other.

Katniss’s behavior in the arena and out of the arena is affected by the capitol’s surveillance, instead of being afraid she plays the role successfully and fulfills people’s need of an act(Nyman2), though it was not an easy task for her , she maintained the same scenario during the games .

Collins stresses on the role younger people play in the society ,she implies that change is likely to be successful when it is done by adolescents ,as Pavlik indicates this view in his book that :

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The presentation of ultimate power and supreme government control in the Hunger Games trilogy offers an implicit understanding that the downfall of totalitarian political systems require people (here, younger people) to engage in violent military actions for a supposed ultimate good: the just war (30).

That is to say, younger people are expected to fight for justice by breaking the rules and defying the corrupted system for a better one, as in the *Hunger Games*. Pavlik suggests that the image of oppressive government and what constitutes the right response to them can be seen through Eco's essay *Notion of Ur-fascism* "...for Eco who lived through the fascist excesses of World War II, and his comments on the nature of fascist ideologies and practices emerge from both firsthand experience and theoretical considerations.." (30), Pavlik explains that Eco's comments on the nature of fascist systems provide a way to assess the nature of the trilogy and "its place within a wider social context" (30). As such, determining, whether the series subverts itself by working within political assumptions that have produced a gradual familiarization with, and even adoption of, the very principles the series present as unacceptable (30). Besides, the trilogy depicts oppressive violence as a tool of political supremacy, Katniss, exhibits the use of violence and power to the reader "...through Katniss's eyes, the reader is privy to the capitol's atrocities and oppressive mechanizations.." (30), In addition to that, Panem is supposedly to be North America, emerging from wars, devastation and natural disasters "Brutal war for what little resistance remained" (*Hunger Games* 21). After a rebellion against the capitol, twelve out of thirteen districts remained, with the annihilation of the thirteenth district as a punishment for revolting against the law, which gave birth to the annual Hunger Games as an act of defense from the capitol, and a reminder to the people that they have to obey the rules or they will be punished (*Hunger Games* 19). Oppressive government affects individual's identity formation indeed, just like Katniss who struggled with her own status as a tribute in the games, trying to please the audience in a way that made her change her personality.

1.8 Conclusion

Young adult fiction proved to be one of the most appealing styles of writing in literature, with its sensitive subjects that deal with reality in a fictional, futuristic manner; such themes became very popular and appealing to read about; also in the film industry where the majority of these books were adopted on screen such as Suzanne Collins's the *Hunger Games* trilogy. This literary genre gained massive attention from readers especially teenagers, simply due to the topics they tackle, issues of identity crisis and oppression are at high demand from readers because they find it relatable to their everyday life and mainly they discuss topics that describe reality.

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Games

2.1.Introduction

The protagonist of the *Hunger Games* went through several challenges that pushed her to find her true self also , her psychological development and identity shifts in the arena ,starting with her characteristics as a teenager from District twelve all these aspects played a role in therefore explaining how she her personality shifted in the games from being a shy preserving person to a more confident with a high self-esteem victor, and finally discussing how Katniss sense of rebellion in the arena helped her win the games , also her moral traits allowed her to build a strong character that is aware of everything around her especially the corrupted capitol.

2.2. The Characteristics of the Protagonist

Collins' story *the Hunger Games* is centered on its protagonist Katniss Everdeen, a teenage girl from district twelve who lives with her mother and her little sister Prim. The events of the story concentrate on the main character Katniss, her emotional and physical features. Furthermore, Katniss plays a major role in controlling the events of the story , unlike other characters she has multiple characteristics that allow readers understand and decipher her identity through the descriptions the author provided .Katniss played significant roles before the games and during the games as well.

2.2.1 Katniss the Provider

Collins opted for the name Katniss deliberately for its connotations, it refers to a plant called «the Cattail», as Valerie Frankel explains in an assimilation to the plant's nourishing nature, “katniss who sees herself as the provider for her family , her entire life is devoted to nourishing...”(12); seemingly, Katniss and the cattail plant resembles each other in the nourishing process.

Ever since Katniss's father died in a tragic coal mining incident , Katniss has taken the role of looking after her family ,while her mother lost herself in a deep depression , Katniss was the only one who works to feed her family at a younger age ,thus these

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circumstances made Katniss grow up earlier, that she took the responsibility of her family, at the expense of her own childhood, she did not experience being a child, she was always serious and cautious about the world around her.

She described the process as follows:

It was all going at first, but I was determined to feed us. I stole eggs from nests, caught fish in nets, sometimes managed to shoot a squirrel or rabbit for stew, and gathered the various plants that sprung up beneath my feet. Plants are tricky. Many are edible, but one false mouthful and you're dead. I checked and double-checked the plants I harvested with my father's pictures. I kept us alive (*Hunger Games* 51).

Katniss finds her true self in the forest, where she feels free as Frankel describes the connection between Katniss and the wilderness, "the plants of the forest are a part of Katniss, so much, so that the Katniss roots give her name"(13). Katniss's father was the very first reason she became a good hunter and a survivor in the woods, because he taught her the basics and how to survive "as long as you find yourself, you'll never starve" (*Hunger Games* 52). Katniss's role is very clear, she has one mission which is providing a shelter for her family, and this makes her herself, Katniss's family is everything to her, and she is ready to risk herself to assure their safety just like what she did in the reaping day, which was apparent in her reaction when she volunteered in her sister's position, describing her thoughts she says:

Prim! the strangled cry comes out of my throat, and my muscles begin to move again. "Prim!" I don't need to shove through the crowd. The other kids make the way immediately allowing me a straight path to the stage. I reach her just as she is about to mount the steps. With one sweep of my arm, I push her behind me." I volunteer "I gasp "I volunteer as a tribute!(22).

when the story progresses, it is notable that Katniss is trying to play the role of the "provider" in the arena as well. Especially, when facing the girl from district eleven

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,Rue, her providing instinct lead her to help her alley Rue, they share food, and companionship. Additionally, Katniss explained that she teamed up with the girl “because she’s a survivor ,and I trust her ,and why not admit it?” ,She reminds me of Prim” (28).

Afterwards, Katniss and Rue will cross paths ,Rue dies and Katniss finds the boy from her district “Peeta”, who is short in hunting and providing food in the arena. Unlike Katniss ,Peeta is a son of a baker , he is good at “decorating cakes”(25).Katniss on the other hand , has the skills of hunting and tracking other contenders in the arena Peeta is “not very good with weapons”(25), he does not know how to survive in a forest full of dangerous competitors . Thus, Katniss and Peeta team up together in the arena ,and when the games reach its climax , Katniss finds herself risking her life to save Peeta by bringing him medicine.

Katniss is good at making people depend on her , she has been doing this her whole life ,first with her family and then Rue and Peeta in the arena, indeed , Katniss’s identity lies in providing help for others and that made her think of a possibility that she could win this game ,she lets herself ask this question:

For the first time , I allow myself to truly think about the possibility that I might make it home .To fame. To wealth. To my own house in the Victor’s village . My mother and Prim would live there with me. No more fear of hunger . A new kind of freedom . But then...what ? what would my life be like on a daily basis? Most of it has been consumed with the acquisition of food . Take that away and I’m not really sure who I am , what my identity is .The idea scares me some(*Hunger Games*62).

Even if the answer to this question left unanswered by the end of the first book, but we can bet that Katniss will find a new role for herself, a new identity because she is a determined person and her personal traits show that she is capable of challenging the system and win the games ,also she has skills and she can maintain any role she wants.

2.2 .2 The Survivor

From the very start Katniss was a survivor whether in or out of the arena , she always searched for a way to survive ,like Peeta's mother comments , rather than coldly "she's a survivor, that one"(31).Katniss is concerned with one thing, is to keep ahead of everyone ,maintaining her life which makes her a fierce competitor ,with her hunting skills , Katniss is indeed a survivor.

The book shows two different kinds of audience ,some considered Katniss as a survivor and got attached to her by betting money on her to win;on the other hand some disliked her tough character , saying that she has no emotions and her personality is hard to decipher, in fact Katniss does not care about showing her emotions , she focused on winning the games and going back home, the capitol's audience craved for a love story in the arena , and Katniss is not good with pretending , fulfilling the Capitol's needs was the least she cared about , but later on she understood that her physical abilities in survival are not enough to win the games.

Katniss's serious ,and resilient nature allowed her to survive in the arena , she is not terribly sentimental compared to Peeta ,because she knows exactly what to do , she keeps her emotions guarded, and rarely shows them. An example of Katniss's responsible personality is apparent in the way she described the cat of the family "the last thing I need is another mouth to feed " (*Hunger Games* 3), this does not mean that she hates the cat ,but means that she is thinking from different perspectives . Similarly, Katniss does not warm up when she sees children, she cannot imagine herself as a mother, because she knows how hard it is to provide food and safety in such a totalitarian world , she tells Gale:" who will fill those mouths that are always asking for more" (28) Katniss lives in a world with no future for her bringing children to this world of poverty is nonsense.

2.2.3 The Celebrity

The Hunger Games are all about showing off and fame, the Capitol intends to entertain people at the expense of innocents' sacrifices, just like what happened to

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Katniss when she entered the arena her world turned upside down. Katniss was under the spotlight from the very first second she hit the capitol (an incident happened when Katniss was trying to impress the capitol's team, while they were not paying attention to her performance, she hit the ball right on the head in an act of rage and frustration) she describes it as follows:

without thinking, I pull an arrow from my quiver and send it straight at the Gamemakers' table, I hear shout of alarm as people stumble back, the arrow skewers the apple in the pig's mouth and pins it to the wall behind it. Everyone stares at me in disbelief (*Hunger Games* 102).

This made her at the top seven, when she never asked for it to happen, she never looked for attention, Katniss's character is very closed off, she does not know how to express her emotions in front of the camera because she knows that it is just an act, a spectacle that she never asked to be a part of, she has an aggressive attitude towards the capitol, as her mentor Haymitch puts it that whenever she opens her mouth, she comes across as "sullen and hostile" (*Hunger Games* 17). Katniss knew that to win she has to maintain a public image, an image that the audience supports, that she becomes a celebrity, creating her own persona in the arena. With the help of both her mentor and stylist, Katniss will learn to manipulate the audience and attract their attentions. As Murty writes in an article that Katniss needed to convince people with a good story to make them sympathize with her "...she must also create a convincing public narrative that she and fellow tribute Peeta Mellark are "star-crossed lovers" in order to win the allegiance of the audience and outwit the (gamemakers)" (*Hunger Games* 298), playing the role of a romantic girl helped Katniss win people's trust and made them believe that she cares about Peeta and his safety, which paid off successfully (298).

As a result Katniss secured a powerful place in the hearts of the audience, Haymitch explains:

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;

although that in itself was a small miracle .Now I can say you're a heartbreaker Which do you think will get you enough sponsors ?(*Hunger Games*24)

Thus Katniss will master this game of pretense and do exactly what people wants her to do , but she will also understand that the distinction between what is real and not can sometimes blur , and after all she knows that the risks to live a life based solely on appearances.

2.2.4 Identity Transformation

Katniss has been the center of attention from the very beginning of the games because of her fierce attitude , and what made her more noticeable to people was the dress her stylist Cinna made for her specifically, as she describes it .

Every head is turned our way, pulling the focus from the three chariots ahead of us . At first , I'm frozen ,but then I catch sight of us on a large television screen and am floored by how breathtaking we look. In the deepening twilight ,the firelight illuminates our faces(*Hunger Games*56)

Katniss is called the girl on fire because of her dress, but her rebellious nature and her defiance against the capitol's rules , all these reasons worked in her favor and also in her identity formation as well. She transformed during her participation in the deadly games. Throughout the novel, it is notable that the main character "Katniss Everdeen", went through different stages and events that helped shaping her identity. The first time Katniss got into the games , she had a low self-esteem she never thought she could make it till the end, especially when she witnessed the abilities of other tributes from richer districts, but her wiling less to fight and win is what made her survive.

Before the games Katniss was a hunter and a survivor in the woods , she held her family's responsibility all alone without any help at a younger age.

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At eleven years old ,with Prim just seven. I took over as head of the family . There was no choice . I bought our food at the market and cooked it as best I could and tried to keep Prim and myself looking presentable. Because if it had become known that my mother could no longer care for us, the district would have taken us away from her and placed us in the community home(*Hunger Games*28) .

Everyone praised her abilities in coping with hard environments, Peeta's comment shows that : "she's excellent "says Peeta . "My father buys her squirrels .He always comments on how the arrows never pierce the body. She hits everyone in the eye .It's the same with the rabbits she sells the butcher .She can even bring down deer "(89), Collins opted for a protagonist that is featured with a sense of responsibility and commitment towards her family , teenagers nowadays crave attention and most of them are associated with a loss of identity , however, Katniss always knew who she is ,although the games are about showing off and pretense Katniss did not like being at the center of attention , she was obliged to do what her mentor asked her , maintaining a good image, an image that the audience asked for .

Furthermore , Katniss always remained the same girl from district twelve , she struggled to prove her existence since she is from a poor district, the majority underestimated her abilities ;but she proved them wrong eventually .Living in a dystopian society that overuses its authority on people , made Katniss see the truth from a different angle ; Katniss hated the capitol and its tyrannical system and always talked about it to her mother " when I was younger , I scared my mother to death, the things I would blur out about district 12 , about the people who rule our country , Panem , from the far-off city called the Capitol"(7). Katniss's hatred towards the capitol resulted in the arena ,when she faced the capitol and survived.

When katniss entered the games , she had one clear mission which is surviving the games and going home as a victor , though she was terrified from her opponents in the arena . She tried her best to win; being a hunter helped her cope in the forest , along with other factors that helped her survive. Katniss is a very preserving person, and a

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fighter indeed .She resembles the Roman Goddess of the hunt Diana, hunting in the woods is what young Katniss masters the most. She is a very stubborn person , she does not give up easily and it is apparent through her speech “ there’s always hand-to-hand combat .All you need is to come up with a knife and you’ll at least stand a chance “(*Hunger Games* 90), her words show her resilient nature , she knows that she has to fight back to win .

Katniss always underestimated herself , she had a low-self esteem before entering the games , she always tried to remain strong in front of her family member, for instance when her mother and sister came to see her for the last time before she was escorted to the capitol , her sister Prim told her that she could win , Katniss knew that she had low chances compared to other contenders ,who have been trained for this specifically unlike herself , she is good at hunting and bringing food to her family but not killing people ,but she is willing to fight just like her father taught her .”Maybe , I say , because I can hardly tell my mother to carry on if I’ve already given up myself .Besides ,it isn’t in my nature to go down without a fight ,even when things seem insurmountable “.(*Hunger Games*36), it is seen through her thoughts that she will do whatever it takes to survive.

On the other hand, Katniss reserved nature is also clear in the interview, while Haymitch was pushing her to act like she is enjoying being in the games and satisfy the audience, she said she cannot pretend to be something she is not in reality ,then Cinna advised her to be herself because people like her spontaneity.

In the arena , Katniss’s identity transformation lies in her attitudes and her psychological development which is seen throughout her stances in the arena , although the games were horrific for her and all the tributes ,it helped her shape her own personality , she learnt many things , discovered things about people in the arena and even built closer relationships ,for instance with her mentor Haymitch and Cinna ,Katniss got attached to them .Nevertheless , Katniss’s identity is formed based on her social context , inside the arena Katniss is a brave , patient character , but most importantly she is a loving person who depends on making bonds with others , first with Rue and then with the boy from her district Peeta , although Katniss and Peeta’s

relationship was only for fulfilling people's desires ,pretending to be in love with Peeta for Katniss was the hardest thing .but she cared for Peeta as a friend .

Katniss in the arena remained the same girl from district twelve ,she never changed her morals , she only got more brave and mature , she considered winning the games not just for herself but for the people she loves as well , Rue for example which is seen through her words: “ you have to win she says. I'm going to .Going to win for both of us now. I promise “(228).Katniss cares about her family that she sacrificed herself in order to save her sister.

Adolescents in Young Adult fiction seek their own quest of identity development , unlike normal teenagers ,Katniss learnt that reaching adulthood is wholly dependent on the her ability to conform to her society's mandate ,which controls every aspect of their lives , as Green argued(49) , thus, Katniss is compelled to rebel because of the corrupted government that rule over the society, the process of rebellion helped Katniss transform and shape an individual identity .

2.3 Katniss's Self-exploration

The Hunger Games are based on Pretense and deceiving , and this made Katniss pretend to be someone else in the arena , keeping a certain profile that the capitol and people supported.

Katniss struggles to please the audiences and sponsors as well, because she knows that as much as they like her performance in the games ,they would support her and provide her with help when she needs it. Besides , the games are about appearances , that is why she has to convince people and gain their trust ,in the process Katniss explores her true self , though most of the times she did not exhibit her true identity .

Another important point is Katniss's struggle with her morality , she knows that the games are about killing and the strongest remains , but she never enjoyed killing other tributes ,simply because she is not a killer ,unlike others who have been well trained to kill and violence , Katniss only killed as a means of defending herself ,she even built friendship in the arena instead .Thus , it is her nature to build trust and care for

others, her words demonstrate how much she hates killing other tributes“...I killed a boy whose name I don't even know. Somewhere his family is weeping for him .His friends call for my blood .Maybe he had a girlfriend who really believed he would come back ...”(236), Katniss's words show her human nature , she knows that everything is wrong and the responsible for the deaths is the capitol ,thus , Katniss developed her self-exploration and her identity witnessed changes within the games, but she is still in the process of establishing her true self.

In the arena , Katniss's true identity is not clear and most of the times is blur , because she keeps an image to the public and another to herself that we only get to see through her thoughts. There are times where Katniss portrayed her true self , for instance with Rue her ally in the arena , when Rue died ,Katniss could not hold her tears and rage towards the capitol , she aimed at shaming the capitol for their deeds.

2.4.Defying the Game Rule

Katniss's rebellious nature helped her survive the hardship the Capitol's games put on her in the arena, living under an oppressive government that enslaves its citizens ,created a sense of rebellion among adolescents mainly Katniss.

Green argues that teenagers living in a dystopian society are “neither encouraged nor expected to develop into autonomous adults”(*Hunger Games* 48),as such young katniss did not pass through the usual process of adolescents ,in which every teenager go through , Katniss is not expected to follow the same course because she became independent in an early age , Green explains that in the dystopian worlds “adolescence only ends when individuals are integrated into their society's controlling framework” ,in other words , adolescents in dystopian novels seek for an outlet from the system ,as such Katniss quest of identity is portrayed throughout her acts of rebellion ,where she developed her personality during the process of defiance .Unlike other teenagers , Katniss defied the system ,despite the risks ,Green suggests “ small acts of rebellion often beget larger ones ,which in turns lead to an increased understanding of self” (48),just like Katniss did in the arena ,she started an act of rebellion which will pave the way for a revolution later on .

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Furthermore, the fact that the games are broadcasted helped Katniss in her act of defiance, and the first thing she did was focusing on the cameras ,trying to send a message to the capitol and the people as well. When Rue Katniss's ally died , Katniss showed her grief and anger towards the unjust capitol , where she covered Rue in wildflowers and using district twelve's sign of solidarity ,also aiming at disgracing the capitol by using little kids for their pleasure and entertainment .

She described the process as follows:

I decorate her body in flowers .Covering the ugly wounds .wreathing her face. Weaving her hair with bright colors” (230),showing the capitol that they do not own her , shaming them “to show the capitol that whatever they do or force us to do there is a part of every tribute they can't own. That Rue was more than a piece in the Games . And so am I (230).

Another act of rebellion is killing the boy from district one who killed Rue, Katniss's first kill in the arena in a jester of revenge and self defense “the boy from district one dies before he can pull out the spear .My arrow drives deeply into the center of his neck “(*Hunger Games* 227).Though Katniss killed the boy , she knows that it is not his fault but the capitol's which she hates the most.“...to hate the boy from district one who also appears so vulnerable in death ;seems inadequate , it's the Capitol I hate for doing this to all of us “(230)

Katniss reacted against the capitol's deceive and manipulation when they changed the rule of allowing two victors from the same district, she attempted a double suicide with Peeta , defeating the capitol because she knows they need a victor , she can no longer kill Peeta the boy from her district because she cares for him , hence , this turn of events made by Katniss obliged the capitol obey and accept two victors instead of one (335).

Miranda Green argues that another factor plays a role in the rebellion process, which is Katniss's gender identity , she explains that Katniss 's character is unlike the twenty century female behavior ,her female status in the story ” helps rather than

hinders her refusal to conform “(50). Green also adds that Katniss’s act of defiance helps her have a better understanding of who she is (50). Nevertheless, another essential point highlighted by Green is subjectivity, in which Katniss becomes aware of who she is ,and this makes her commit more rebellious acts. “which then leads to deeper self understanding of self and society”(51), Besides, Katniss’s rebellion nature enables her decipher that “ such acts can be both transformative and empowering” (48),Katniss became more independent and self-governing .

Moreover, in a comparison between realistic fiction and dystopian fiction , Green argues that in realistic fiction adolescents are likely presented with a” sense of identity by successfully navigating their positions “(51)within the social institutions, when they start learning about the society’s norms and functions , they tend to be able to “direct their own future” (51). Whereas, in dystopian societies, young adults are expected to accept what the society implies on them “they are not meant to develop into independent subjects”(51).

The concept of power in dystopian fiction plays a key role , Green suggests Michel Foucault’s “domination repression” model of power (192)),in which Foucault argues that power is a process , and Katniss understands that rebellion is power. The capitol restrains its citizens using oppressive power , requiring people to abandon their” individual power in exchange for a certain level of safety and security”(52).She explains that following Foucault’s model , Katniss claims her individual rebellion , learning that power “exists only in action”(89).Katniss’s acts of rebellion in the arena made her understand who she is and develop her identity with a self-independency.

2.5.Media as a Tool of Oppression

In contemporary America “Panem”,the media plays a major role in controlling people’s lives and events as well and the *Hunger Games* are all about media and violence. According to James Potter “the media use violence for our entertainment in telling fictional stories”(1), the capitol moderation of the annual *Hunger Games* is a way of spreading control and power over its citizens , reminding people in the twelve districts that they have no rights to object ,it is their duty to obey . But the most

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important factor is that the games are televised by the media, Potter points that the game makers have created a formula on which they make benefit ,designing a character such as Katniss as a protagonist in the games who fights back against the villains ,thus the aim is to attract people's attention and drag their views to the games.

People in the capitol are accustomed on mass violence since the games take place several times ,the game makers have to create new tricks and ways to amuse people ,driving them by suspense .However, the *Hunger Games* are a part of people's lives in the districts in which they waits for the events just to end with it and keep hoping for another year ,the capitol keeps reminding people of its supremacy ,they intentionally use big screens hosting the games .

Katniss and her friend Gale talk about the games several times , discussing how the show was disappointing one year because the majority of the tributes died freezing of cold ,instead of killing each other , Gale's words explains that “ ...since that year half of them died of cold , Not much entertainment in that “(39),Besides , violence is seen as the most appealing factor in the games to put on screen ,and the game makers aim at keeping the audiences' attention high as long as possible. Furthermore, they push the tributes to kill each other violently as a part of the show for instance the antagonist of Katniss ,Cato is being tortured by biologically enhanced creatures without killing him , but enjoying his slow death ,this scene portrays extreme violence in the arena , Katniss on the other hand sympathizes with him and wondered why the hounds do not end his life, and that implies how much they enjoy torturing him for the sake of creating a game.why don't they just kill him?’ I ask Peeta“You know why, he says, and pulls me closer to him “And I do. No viewer could turn away from the Game makers' point of view, this is the final word in entertainment “(339), The capitol dictate its power using the media which is apparent in the games, Potter suggests that the game makers increase the amount of violence in the arena to satisfy the needs of the viewers (125).

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On the other hand, Katniss the protagonist represents the moral object in the games, through her emotions and feelings in the arena, it is clear that she never lost her identity and most of all her humanity remained rigid, her attitudes show her morality . In addition , the games are based on appearances and glamour ,they feature twenty-four different children of various ages ,some are well trained and some have skills like Katniss ,and the capitol's goal is to create a TV program for people's entertainment ,full of drama and violence all at the expense of young children following their every move in the arena ,bringing the events of the games closer to reality ,Besides before the games the capitol hosts interviews with each tribute as a way of celebrating the annual contenders of the Hunger Games , not minding that there will be one winner and the others will die.

In an interview with Peeta the boy from district twelve , he mentions Katniss claiming that he cares for her , which heats the audiences' attention because they crave for such topics , Peeta deliberately confronted Katniss in front of everyone ,Katniss knows that everything about this reality television show is real , but after Peeta reveals his secret love with Katniss ,her reaction was not as expected she discusses the matter with Haymitch her mentor “ you're all they're talking about , the star-crossed lovers from District Twelve “ says Haymitch (130).

“But we're not star-crossed lovers “I say ,Haymitch grabs my shoulders and pins me against the wall, ”who cares?” “it's all a big show” (132).

Katniss knows how important it is to maintain a good image in front of the audiences ,she gained their interest with her high score in the training ,and now Peeta gained her more affection . “... I have my eleven in training , But now Peeta has made me an object of love”(133),Katniss is not familiar with such feelings ,so when Peeta offered her affection she was overwhelmed and surprised at the same time.

Consequently, dragging people's attention to her will be in her favor in the arena , because she needs sponsors and if she is likeable and popular they will help her ,Haymitch says :” You're going to have sponsors lined up around the

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block”(134),Katniss’s popularity in the arena is due to her survival skills but also the love story between her and Peeta played a role .

In the capitol the access of media is limited to the capitol itself and its citizens out of the twelve districts , people in these districts have only television, which is ironic because supposedly the *Hunger Games* are set in a futuristic environment ,but the government restrain the spread of technology ,specifically in the districts, the only available channel is taken over by the capitol for one reason which is clarifying the totalitarian regime of President Snow, who is responsible for everything ;the aim is to remove people’s freedom of choice ,and this makes Panem a pure dystopian society . Moreover , the games are a solid tool to spread propaganda ,the games portray violence in every single aspect in the arena , and the tributes are the source of thriller and excitement for viewers, showing their disputes and killing scenes as a means of entertainment .Nevertheless, the games are a festive event for people outside the districts where they celebrate this event ,wearing customs ,partying, gambling and having fun. Whereas, in the districts people keep hoping for another year without being selected for the games , the hunger games are a source of terror and horror for them .thus ,only the the people living in the twelve districts suffer from a dystopian system unlike the capitol’s .

In the games, the responsible of making the games are aware of everything happening in the arena through the use of hidden cameras , monitoring the tributes , depiction everything “live” ,also ,controlling the physical environment and performing several factors such as starting a fire or sending creatures to steer the games. There are significant scenes that show how Katniss and her friend Peeta contemplated the possibility of facing situations where they will be obliged to kill others which is inevitable .Peeta was anxious about his own identity in the arena and he confronted Katniss that all what he cared about was his true self ,that he does not want to change into someone else like the game makers wanted them to become “ ...I want to die as myself”(138). Both of Katniss and Peeta were aware of the risks they will face ,knowing that the circumstances could change them. Katniss kept thinking about Peeta’s words and compared him to a previous contender from district six ,who

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completely lost himself in the games “ he went completely savage and the gamemakers had to have him stunned with electric guns to collect the bodies of the players he’s killed before he ate them” (139) ,the goal of the capitol is to create monsters in the arena and rid the tributes from their humanity .

Furthermore, in Panem the games are a form of propaganda that celebrates violence which is similar to the ancient Roman Gladiators. However, concepts of power and supremacy are demonstrated within the games for instance when the gamemakers started a fire to drag Katniss from a territory in the arena because she was far from other contenders as she describes it “ this fire is designed to flash us out ,to drive us together” (173).

Individuality also plays a role in the games of the capitol , featuring the importance of keeping people separated from each other in the twelve districts , in which they have no interference because it is forbidden , the capitol knows that collaboration is power and if the districts come together they cannot stop them ,creating a rebellion is the last thing they want, therefore they maintain their power over people using the Hunger Games, that is why people in the districts see each other as competitors rather than allies .

2.6. Katniss After The Games

Katniss’s life in district twelve characterized of numerous challenges that face her every day, being responsible at a younger age affected her identity development , Katniss unlike normal teenagers had to be mature earlier than expected , she took the role of the provider and the survivor , her identity developed in the arena in which she faced several obstacles ,that helped her discover her true self.

The Capitol on the other hand had a great impact on Katniss, especially in the games, where she struggled in the beginning to survive but later on she easily adapted, with her innate skills in the forest. Challenging the system became one of her priorities in the arena, by sending them messages like the one with Rue her ally. she became conscious about the capitol’s plans and what they want from her. In the process

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Katniss's identity changed from being a shy little girl who is afraid of being under the spot lights ,to a more confident and a rebel in the arena; learning how to convince people katniss portrayed the image of the innocent girl who is deeply in love with her partner Peeta, which helped her gain people's trust and popularity . Therefore, Katniss maintained her moralities in the arena .she never abandoned her human nature ,she remained the same girl from district twelve with her loving and caring heart ,she sought to survive without changing her true self ,also her sacrifice traits Katniss attracted people's attention from the very start when she volunteered in her sister's place as a tribute .

By the end of the games , Katniss's character in multiple ways , from being a tribute to a female rebellion and a survivor .her disobedience and defiance against the capitol altered her personality ,seeking vengeance and justice , Katniss became the victor of the seventy four *Hunger Games* , honoring her district and her family as well. Besides , Katniss's journey in the arena is indeed a rich one , in which she experienced being a celebrity "the girl on fire" , she even became a love object thanks to Peeta , a warrior and a survivor , Katniss was a special girl from the beginning , she had morals unlike other tributes who only cared of winning ,thus all these features gained her support from the audiences where she established a confident character.

Furthermore, there are several aspects that discusses Katniss's identity ,even though she developed her own quest of identity in the arena ,she still had some doubts about herself which will be clarified later on in the coming parts of the trilogy .In addition , Katniss's success is depended on the people around her , for instance Peeta the boy from her district , he had a huge effect on Katniss's personality , where she compared him to Gale her friend noticing that Peeta is more humane and sensitive unlike Gale , he has morals just like herself , she sees him as a decent guy .

Henthorne describes Peeta as follows : " He is strong and handsome , but is much more empathic , sensitive , and socially oriented than Gale"(31).Katniss and Peeta became close in the arena , this helped Katniss survive because she is a social person , who depends on people's affection towards her ,friendship also , hence it is a reflection to Ktaniss's true nature .

Although the Hunger Games are indeed a negative event in Katniss's life but the games helped her discover new things about herself ,where she learned many things and developed her identity ,and most of all she had a purpose in life which is revolting against the tyrannical system .

2.7. Conclusion

Through the analysis of Katniss's character, it is notable that her identity shifted when she entered the games, as a tribute Katniss learned many things about her personality, the games helped her discover new traits in her character, and she became more courageous and responsible ,but the main thing that Katniss developed in her character is the sense of liberty and defiance ,she became aware of what is happening around her more than before, the games helped her discover her rebellious nature where she aims at rebelling the system even more ,also she understood that in order to survive the enemy she is obliged to play the same games as the capitol .Katniss's identity transformation is also one of the main aspects in the *Hunger Games*, she developed her identity during the games ;all the challenges she witnessed helped her get a better definition of who she is. Along with her acts of defiance in the arena , Katniss succeeded in forming a strong ,brave and rebellious character of herself.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

The aim of this research is to focus on identity as a major theme in the *Hunger Games* trilogy, analyzing the protagonist's characteristics, portraying her status as an adolescent, since the novel is intended for the young adult generation ;Collins deliberately opted for a young protagonist following her journey in the arena with a number of challenges she had to endure and fight against a dystopian society. Chapter one provided an overview on adolescence as a developmental phase, emphasizing on the kind of changes teenagers go through, also focusing on their behaviors. The typical theme of Young Adult literature and mainly the *Hunger Games* trilogy deals with individual's identity alteration which is tackled in the analysis.

The protagonist of the novel Katniss Everdeen had a fragmented identity ,she first struggled with a low self-esteem feeling like an outsider , having issues to adopt with the environment .Yet, in order to become a grown-up Katniss had to build a strong identity ,by developing a high self-esteem ,finding her role in the society she lives in.

Furthermore, Katniss went through several traumas in the arena such as facing the death of her friends .Katniss's relationship with others allowed her to develop and shape her own identity alteration ,because she depends on people's affection ,establishing bonds with them .All these changes in Katniss's character took place within a dystopian setting where violence , death and social problems are in the center of individual's lives, therefore Katniss faced difficulties in her psychological development ,but at the same time this dystopian setting helped her discover new features in her personality such as acting in the arena to convince people and the capitol as well, she also developed a sense of survival ,maintaining her moralities.

The dark themes that are present in the *Hunger Games* trilogy and in many other Young Adult novels are also common in dystopian fiction, however, the research is based on the first novel in the trilogy, discussing the issue of identity alteration in Katniss the major character and her evolution in the arena, how she was portrayed before and after the games , becoming a more confident and mature young woman, as a winner in the games Katniss maintained her true self with her morals.

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Resume

French :

Ces dernières années, la diffusion des romans pour jeunes adultes a suscité un vif intérêt chez les lecteurs de tous âges, abordant des thèmes tels que la dystopie et la corruption. Ces romans sont devenus une tendance dans le monde de la littérature de nos jours. Cette thèse a pour objectif de mettre en évidence la question de l'altération de l'identité dans *The Hunger Games* (2008) de Suzanne Collins, à la suite d'une approche psychanalytique, analysant le personnage principal du premier roman. Le travail se concentre sur le genre Jeune adulte en tant que nouveau style d'écriture et sa pertinence pour la dystopie. Il aborde également plusieurs aspects de ce style, tels que le développement psychologique des adolescents et de leurs comportements, compromettant des concepts tels que les personnages et la caractérisation, car l'intérêt est centré sur les individus dans le roman, ainsi que sur l'effet du gouvernement oppressif et de l'estime de soi. ainsi que. La partie analytique de ce travail est principalement consacrée à la formation de l'identité de la protagoniste dans le premier roman de la trilogie et fournit plusieurs preuves qui prouvent son changement de personnage pendant et après les jeux. Par conséquent, le roman décrit le changement de personnalité du personnage principal à l'adolescence et les défis auxquels elle a fait face pour devenir autonome et mature.

Arabe

في السنوات الأخيرة ، اكتسب انتشار روايات الشباب البالغين اهتمامًا هائلًا بين القراء من مختلف الأعمار ، ويضم مواضيع الفساد. أصبحت هذه الروايات اتجاهًا في عالم الأدب في الوقت الحاضر. تهدف هذه الرسالة إلى تسليط الضوء على مسألة تغيير الهوية في ألعاب الجوع (2008) من قبل سوزان كولينز ، اتباع نهج التحليل النفسي ، وتحليل الشخصية الرئيسية في الرواية الأولى. يركز العمل على هذا النوع من الشباب كأسلوب جديد للكتابة. كما يتناول العديد من الجوانب التي توجد داخل هذا النمط مثل التطور النفسي للمراهقين وسلوكياتهم ، والمساومة على مفاهيم مثل الشخصيات والتوصيف لأن الاهتمام يتركز على الأفراد في الرواية إلى جانب تأثير الحكومة القمعية واحترام الذات. كذلك. يخصص الجزء التحليلي من هذا العمل بشكل أساسي لتشكيل هوية بطل الرواية في الرواية الأولى للثلاثية ، ويوفر العديد من الأدلة التي تثبت تغير شخصيتها خلال الألعاب وبعدها. لذلك ، تصور الرواية تغيير شخصية الشخصية الرئيسية في سن المراهقة والتحديات التي مرت بها لتصبح معتمدة على نفسها وناضجة.

English

In recent years, the spread of Young Adult novels gained a massive interest among readers from different ages, featuring themes such as Dystopia and corruption. These novels became a trend in the world of literature nowadays. This dissertation aims to highlight the issue of identity alteration in *The Hunger Games*(2008) by Suzanne Collins, following a psychoanalytical approach, analyzing the main character in the first novel. The work focuses on the Young Adult genre as a new style of writing and its relevance to dystopia. It also tackles several aspects that exist within this style such as the psychological development of adolescents and their behaviors, compromising concepts such as characters and characterization since the interest is centered on the individuals in the novel alongside the effect of oppressive government and the self-esteem as well. The analytical part of this work is mainly devoted to the protagonist's identity formation in the first novel of the trilogy, and it provides several pieces of evidence that prove her change of character during the games and after. Therefore, the novel portrays the major character's personality change as a teenager and the challenges she passed through to become self-reliant and mature.