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İstanbul Üniversitesi

Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü

Batı Dilleri ve Edebiyatları Anabilim Dalı

İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı Bilim Dalı

Yüksek Lisans Tezi

**The Representation of Women in Twentieth and
Twenty-first Century Dystopias**

Gökçe DOĞAN ŞALTAN

2510160249

Tez Danışmanı

Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Özlem KARADAĞ

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DR.ÖĞR.ÜYESİ SEVAL ARSLAN		

ÖZ

Yirminci ve Yirmi Birinci Yüzyıl Karşı-Ütopyalarında Kadın

Karakterlerin Yansıması

Gökçe DOĞAN ŞALTAN

Bu tez, İngiliz yazar Angela Carter'ın **Heroes and Villains**, Kanada'lı yazar Margaret Atwood'un **Damızlık Kızın Öyküsü** ve Amerikalı yazar Suzanne Collins'in üçleme serisi **Açlık Oyunları**, **Ateşi Yakalamak** ve **Alaycı Kuş** karşı-ütopya romanlarında ana karakterler üzerinden giderek feminist karşı-ütopyanın dönemsel etkisini karşılaştırarak analiz eder. Bu tezin amacı feminist karşı-ütopya romanlarında kadın karakterlerin edebiyatta tarihsel olarak daha cesur ve umut vadeden karakterlere dönüştüğünü göstermektir. Giriş bölümünde ütopya, karşı-ütopya, erkek ve kadın karşı-ütopya yazınları genel açılarıyla ele alınıp karşılaştırılır. İlk bölümde Angela Carter'ın **Heroes and Villains** romanındaki kadın karakter Marianne'in karşı-ütopya dünyasına bakışının umutsuzlukla dolu olduğunu ve bunu kabullenişinin altında yatan pasifliğini anlatır. Nitekim, Marianne bu umutsuzluk içinde hayatta kalan bir kadın karakterdir. İkinci bölüm Margaret Atwood'un **Damızlık Kızın Öyküsü**'ndeki Offred karakterinin umutsuz bakış açısını sunar. Offred, karşı-ütopyayı umutsuz bir şekilde karşılar ve yaşadığı karşı-ütopya dışında bir hayat düşler. Nitekim, bu karşı-ütopya'dan kaçır. Üçüncü bölümde Suzanne Collins'in üçlemesi **Açlık Oyunları**, **Ateşi Yakalamak** ve **Alaycı Kuş** romanlarındaki ana karakter Katniss'in yine umutsuz karşı-ütopyada önceki işlenen romanlara ve karakterlerin analizlerine tam zıt olarak umut aşıl原因 bir karakter ve kahraman olduğu gözlemlenir. Katniss karşı-ütopyayı sonlandırarak ütopyaya dönüştürür. Bu tez, feminist yazarların yaşam mücadelelerine tepkileri doğrultusunda, kadınlar tarafından yazılan karşı-ütopyalardaki kadın kahramanların edebiyatta giderek daha umutlu hale geldiğini göstermek amacıyla bu üç feminist karşı-ütopyalara odaklanmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Angela Carter, Kadın Karakter, Kadın Yazar, Karşı-ütopya, Margaret Atwood, Suzanne Collins, Umutsuzluk.

ABSTRACT

The Representation of Women in Twentieth and Twenty-first Century Dystopias

Gökçe DOĞAN ŞALTAN

This thesis analyses the impact of the feminist dystopian writing on female protagonists based on a comparative study of one British dystopian novel by Angela Carter **Heroes and Villains**, one Canadian dystopian novel by Margaret Atwood **The Handmaid's Tale**, and one American dystopian trilogy by Suzanne Collins; **The Hunger Games**, **Catching Fire**, and **Mockingjay**. This thesis aims to show how the female characters in feminist dystopian writing sequentially evolve into brave and hopeful women in literature. The introduction presents utopia, dystopia, male and female-written dystopian writings in general terms. The first chapter offers the viewpoint of the passive female protagonist Marianne in Angela Carter's **Heroes and Villains** and explains that she accepts the hopeless point of view. Thus, she is a female character who is able to survive in this hopelessness. The second chapter suggests Offred's point of view in Margaret Atwood's, **The Handmaid's Tale**. She greets the dystopia , and the character idealizes for a better world outside the dystopia that she lives in. Yet, she ends up in "nowhere" by escaping from that dystopia. The third chapter analyses the trilogy of Suzanne Collins' **The Hunger Games**, **Catching Fire**, and **Mockingjay** in terms of the female protagonist's perspective showing how the protagonist Katniss becomes the dystopian heroine. She brings her dystopia's end and turns it into a utopia instead at the end of the book which distinguishes her from the other protagonists. The thesis focuses on these three feminist dystopias with an aim to show that the female protagonists in dystopias written by women are gradually becoming more hopeful in literature in accordance with feminist authors' reactions to the struggles in life.

Key Words: Angela Carter, Dystopia, Hopelessness, Margaret Atwood, Suzanne Collins, Female Characters, Female Writers

PREFACE

This study took 7 years of my life's time, without the intention of prolonging it, with the gradual changes happening throughout its process of writing. One of the worst things that took place was an attempted coup that changed the course of this dissertation's process along with many other people's lives. This thesis also brings together my passion for the dystopian literature from which I get a lot of pleasure in reading. In this dissertation, the effect of the dystopian feminist writers on the female protagonists is grounded on a comparative study of one British, one Canadian, and one American dystopian trilogy. Dystopia is fed by utopia the fears and hopes of life itself. Dystopian writing images a society that is formed on false and twisted perceptions of societal conceptions. The main focus of this thesis is to show the progress in hopeful narration of the female protagonists in feminist dystopias. Those characters find themselves in dangerous situations due to the dominance and formation of the masculine dystopia in which they are doomed to live and suffer. This formation of a society affects the characters' progress. Therefore, it is seen that the projection of female protagonists in dystopias reform gradually from past to the present time in literature in a positive way.

My first thanks for this thesis should go to the ones who resisted all along, continue to resist the injustice surrounding us all, and to the ones who are seeking justice for all. They keep their hope and sanity for us, and for those who do not even know them in a world that is getting dystopian day after day. It is you that gives us our utopian hopes in such a dystopian world.

Then, I would like to express my deep gratitude and appreciation to the Department of English Language and Literature Professors and Lecturers of my undergraduate and graduate years who have always been nothing but supporters in any kind of trouble that I have gone through in my educational life at university.

Above all, I am especially thankful to my insightful mentor and a great scholar with her wonderful qualities as advisor Asst. Prof. Özlem Karadağ because without her encouragement, I would be lost during my dissertation process. I feel that she is my pure luck explaining every little detail I got stuck in. Thanks to her

intellectual personality, along with her patience, guidance, peacefulness, and her expertise; I have a better perception of academic life.

Meanwhile, I would like to state my admiration for my family; my mother, as being my idol in life, my father, as being my hero in need of desperation, my sister as being my other half, and my older brother, as being the source of motivation. They have never ceased to believe in me and created the best environment for my studies at all times, even when I was not feeling doing so. Thank you very much for everything you have done since my childhood. This journey would not have been possible without their support and I would not be successful without their great care and devoted love, which basically made me feel merry.

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Finally, I owe my hearty thankfulness to my beloved husband Serkan řaltan. He has accompanied me with his loving attitude through this process. In my times of desperation, he shared his limitless sympathy, encouraged me with his utmost effort by all means and the whole time that he has been in my life since I knew him. Thank you for being the sunshine in my life and for offering me whatever you have at all times. To my lovely unborn baby son, Uygur Dođan řaltan, who made me very patient and helped me with his silence during my pregnancy. He has cherished the hopeful conclusion of this thesis as well as being cherished by it because he is the light at the end of the tunnel. You are and will be loved.

İstanbul, August 2019

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INTRODUCTION

“Our life dreams the Utopia; our death achieves the Ideal.”
Victor Hugo

“To know oneself is to disbelieve Utopia.”¹
Michael Novak (Novak, 1983: 203)

“Utopian movements produce dystopias.”
– Interview with Dennis Prager

“For this is what dystopian future fictions recount: what would have happened if their empirical and implied readerships had not been moved to prevent it.”

– Andrew Milner, “Changing the Climate: The Politics of Dystopia” (354)

It would be relevant to think that utopian thought has been a part of our lives at any given time. As the famous writer Victor Hugo states in the quotation above, life is a struggle for achieving the ideal. However, in general terms, it is not always possible to achieve this ideal because the ideal has a never-ending limit. Therefore, Michael Novak is suspicious about the idea of living in a utopia.

This study is about three feminist dystopian novels, one being a trilogy; the first one is Angela Carter’s **Heroes and Villains** (1969), the second one is Margaret Atwood’s **The Handmaid’s Tale** (1986), and the last one is Suzanne Collins’ trilogy **The Hunger Games** (2008), **Catching Fire** (2009), and **Mockingjay** (2010) which were all written according to the traditional dystopian conventions of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. The thesis aims to show how the female characters in the selected feminist dystopian novels gradually turn into brave and hopeful women in literature nourishing from the real-life events. The reason why these novels and characters are chosen is that they vividly demonstrate the female point of view in dystopian literature. Unlike the male protagonists in the male dystopian writings, the characters that are chosen in Carter and Atwood are not heroes but survivors in their

¹ Michael Novak, **Confessions of a Catholic**. Harper & Row. 1983.

social environment contrary to Collins' heroine. Also, this thesis seeks to fill in a gap in dystopian literature by focusing on female-centred dystopias rather than the classical male-written ones because dystopias that involve male protagonists have received more attention in literature. Additionally, more attention has started to be paid to feminist dystopias very recently. Although there are studies on the protagonist of **The Handmaid's Tale** as there is more research on Atwood, the research that focuses on feminist dystopias or female-centred dystopias is actually a field that needs cultivating. Nearly no published critical work can be found on Carter's or Collins' works and protagonists which depict the huge gap concerning research on the genre. Therefore, it is necessary to examine the concept of utopia and dystopia before delving into the analysis of the ties between the feminist theory and dystopian writing, as well as the genre's relation to male-centred dystopias.

Initially, utopia is the portrayal of an ideal society. According to **Encyclopaedia Britannica**, the term *utopia* derives from Greek and its literary meaning is *no place*, or when it is spelled as *eutopia*, its meaning becomes a *good place*. According to Krishan Kumar, the term stands for "nowhere" or "no place" refers to the place it represents is the place of perfection, so it cannot be real (Kumar, 1987: 1). *Utopia* suggests the presence of a community of people who have eradicated the societal problems and designed an ordered and systematic environment for its members or people (Kumar, 1991: 1). Therefore, this state might be understood as ideal only by those who share the author's point of view. In his book, Kumar suggests as follows: "To live in a world that cannot be, but where one fervently wishes to be: that is the literal essence of utopia. To this extent, utopia does share the quality of a dream." (Kumar, 1991: 1) Kumar defines utopia through these words as a place that is dreamed and wished. He presents that utopia is similar to a dream place. It calls people to act and make a different move for a better chance in the future ahead. For this reason, utopia becomes a non-existent place, but it is vital for people to have hope for a better future to live in. In other words, utopia emerges from the present idea and has an obliquity towards the future, which might be formed.

The history of imagining a perfect or a nearly perfect world has a long past coming along with Plato's **Republic**, which stands as a milestone for the utopian thought from past to the present. Plato's utopian world is not only a criticism of the prevailing system but also an alternative of idealization. The very first utopia was written by Plato and the name utopia was found by Sir Thomas More. Along with his work **Utopia** (1516), Sir Thomas More also made a significant contribution to the topic in the early sixteenth century. Sir Thomas More says that the reader wants fictions to show the reality afresh. In this respect, Sir Thomas More made a major contribution to the genre of utopia and gave a name for the genre in his literary work **Utopia**.

One more fundamental thing to mention about utopia is that it has a relationship with the issues of freedom and autonomy. Therefore, it cannot be thought only as a literary genre. According to Frye:

The utopian writer looks at his own society first and tries to see what, for his purposes, its significant elements are. The utopia itself shows what society would be like if those elements were fully developed. (Frye, 1973: 26)

By this, utopia is a worldwide discourse and it could not avoid the impact of totalitarianism since it has a lot to do with developing the present society to a better one. In her chapter "The concept of utopia" in *The Cambridge Companion to Utopian Literature*, Fatima Vieira asserts that "one of utopia's most recognizable traits is its speculative discourse on a non-existent social organization which is better than the real society." (Vieira, 1999: 7) To be precise, "[...] we need utopian fictions to see the reality of our own society and the costs of putting it right." (Claeys, 1999: 47) One more explanation of utopia might be from Lucy Sargisson; in **Utopian Bodies and The Politics of Transgression**, she depicts utopias as the "thought to be finite and perfectible and to offer a blueprint for the ideal polity." (Sargisson, 2004: 8)

In this respect, it might be beneficial to get Ernst Bloch's idea of utopia as a drive or stimulus. In his magnum opus, **the Principle of Hope**, Bloch mentions

utopia from a different perspective. The society searches for a better living without knowing what the better means. As noted above, hope stands as the milestone in this thesis as it also defines utopia as a concept for the reader because utopia is not achieved yet, but it becomes the mere idea of the road that is taken to a greater future. Bloch (1986) explains utopianism as if it was something more than the field of literature and defines it as a system that is nourished by the condition of the not-yet happening process. This is the exact explanation where hope comes forward as the core point for the utopia as well as for the opposite of it, which is a dystopia. It is also important to mention Michael W. Barclay because he defends that utopia and dystopia are alike in the way that they are perspectives of each other (Barclay, 1990: 24). Through the meaning of utopia and the definition of being as the road that is taken to a greater or a better future instead of an unrealistic, indeterminate, mysterious, or unbeknown one makes the term more achievable in the eyes of the people and summoning them to take action for it to happen. The way does not always lead to a “better or greater” place, but sometimes to an opposite or a nightmarish one. Such kind of action paves the way to the emergence of the concept of dystopia because hope exists in both terms. The idea of hope comes out as a hope for the best in a utopia, while the lack of it leads to hopelessness in a dystopia.

According to Dennis Prager in the epigraph, dystopia comes from the idea that has been created by the utopian literature. Simply, dystopia is the opposite of utopia, which can be seen as the other side of the coin or medallion. Therefore, it is not possible to think of dystopia without utopian thought because they are in correlation with each other. When utopia is thought, the idea of the imaginary heaven comes to mind, whereas when dystopia is thought, the idea of the imaginary hell pops up in the reader’s mind. Moreover, dystopia is pessimistic of human nature, and it shows a similar type of purpose in terms of slavery, autocracy, or anarchy. John Stuart Mill explains in a speech given to the British Parliament in 1868 as follows: “What is commonly called Utopian is something too good to be practicable: but what they

appear to favour is too bad to be practicable.”² (Mill, 1986) To look at it specifically, two ideas have fed the dystopian discourses, which are also closely related to each other. Vieira suggests in her chapter as follows: “The idea of scientific and technological progress which, instead of impelling humanity to prosper, has sometimes been instrumental in the establishment of dictatorships.” (Vieira, 1999: 18) Chiefly, from the 1970s to the present times, dystopias have been maintained by the visions of scientific and technological developments. David W. Sisk makes it clear by giving a crystal-clear difference between the concepts of utopia and dystopia in his book **Transformation of Modern Language in Dystopia** as follows:

Utopian fiction explores the perfectibility of human society through hypothetical advancements in technology, philosophy, and social structures, resulting in perfect or near-perfect communities located in distant lands or in the future. Dystopian fiction, utopia’s polarized offspring, turns human perfectibility on its head by pessimistically extrapolating contemporary social trends into oppressive and terrifying societies. Utopia’s optimistic portrayal of advancement toward stable human societies gives way, in dystopia, to totalitarian stagnation. Individual freedom, especially the freedom to entertain and communicate unorthodox ideas are ruthlessly suppressed in dystopias. (Sisk, 1997: 2)

It is seen the quotation above that dystopia is a new genre compared to utopia and its deep fundamental roots. Inevitably, dystopia exists as an idea for a less hopeful future and is born as a consequence of losing hope for a greater future. The atmosphere of a dystopian telling is no different than a darkened, gloomy, and suppressing setting. For this reason, dystopia has gotten a much deeper meaning lately, which relates approximately to the late twentieth and the early twenty-first

² “Dystopia was first used probably by John Stuart Mill (1806-1873) in a speech in the British House of Commons, 12 March 1868. He was debating the Conservative government policy on the Irish question. For forty-nine years England had ruled Ireland, Mill said, as he attacked the government on the question of land-ownership and religious equality in Ireland. Earlier, the government had indicated it might consider the principle of religious equality in Ireland; but this was not possible, Mill continued, as long as the national property administered by the Episcopal Church of Ireland was not divested from its present purpose. The cost involved would be far too high for the English and Scottish people to accept, he claimed, and the Roman Catholic clergy were never to be bribed. In a humorous way Mill then said that he and his betters had sometimes been called Utopians (largely because they espoused impractical schemes) and now suggested that the Conservative government seemed to have joined such goodly company. Suddenly Mill changed his mind. He said: ‘It is perhaps too complimentary to call them Utopians, they ought rather to be called dys-topians, or caco-topians’ (Trahair, 1999: 110)

centuries, so it emerged as a more recent term when it is compared to utopia. As a consequence, it becomes nearly impossible to consider utopia and dystopia as if they were different from each other imagining the social and political background they originate from. To see the bitter reality in a nutshell, after the advancement of science and technology in the nineteenth century, without having a vision of a utopia, it would be impossible to write a dystopia.

As a consequence of the imminent World War I and II after the developments in technology and science, the harmful impact of the technology has already started to increase. In one of his interviews Dennis Prager simply says as follows:

Although the images of perfection in people's personal lives can cause unhappiness, images of perfect societies, utopian images, can cause monstrous evil. In fact, forcefully changing society to conform to societal images was the greatest cause of evil in the twentieth century.³

He means that idealizing a perfect world could also be a reason for people to feel hopeless by realizing that they are not living in their ideal world. Therefore, in the nineteenth-century, utopian tradition went on by the idealization for fostering industrial technologies. The catastrophes came by the world wars and technological advancements. Those catastrophes revealed the issues of industrialization and their pros and cons. At the beginning of the twentieth century, previous utopian structures were conclusively coming to be real in the manifestations of the United States and the Soviet Union. They became unsuccessful in their utopian integrity. People from various regions of the world came closer with these two societies and bound their hopes to them seeing how those societies fell short to reunite their utopian expectations. The continuing effect of the Bolshevik Revolution created totalitarianism. This brought about a lack of confidence and a feeling of insecurity among people. As a consequence of falling into a condition of dismay for utopianism, loss of hope and the disappointment of utopian pursuits got even worse right after the two World Wars. Also, this situation eventually laid the groundwork

³ Interview with Dennis Prager, www.dennisprager.com

for the emergence of dystopian or the anti-utopian sub-genres in literature. According to Moylan, this labelled the twentieth century with: “[...] exploitation, repression, state violence, war, genocide, disease, famine, ecocide, depression, debt, and the steady depletion of humanity through the buying and selling of the everyday life.” (Moylan, 2000, p.xi) While utopian writing pictures a betterment of the idea of community, dystopian writing illustrates an image of how worse community and governmental power can become unless the society is developed or advanced. Therefore, dystopian writing becomes a valuable source of literature under which society can be examined. Hence, this writing enables the reader to come to the realization of the wrongdoings of the state in a broader sense. To illustrate, Booker depicts dystopia as the aftermath and as a result of the utopian literature by arguing that: “Briefly, dystopian literature is specifically literature which situates itself in direct opposition to utopian thought, warning against the potential negative consequences of arrant utopianism.” (Booker, 1994: 81) Although utopia had given people hope and something to wish for, the emergence of dystopia was inevitable. What constituted a dystopian society and government may one day damage or worse be the end of them. Booker says that dystopian literature can be thought as a warning to arouse society from its dormancy. In his book **The Dystopian Impulse in Modern Literature**, M. Keith Booker expresses as follows:

The principal technique of dystopian fiction is defamiliarization: by focusing their critiques of society on spatially or temporally distant settings, dystopian fictions provide fresh perspectives on problematic social and political practices that might otherwise be taken for granted or considered natural and inevitable. Dystopia links the emergence of new perspectives on literary themes to specific social and political issues in the real world. (Booker, 1994:19)

Therefore, the dystopian future or state is told by a hopeless or disastrous writing, like a nightmare or hell on earth. What is experienced on earth as disasters or wars are reflected in the dystopian writing which the scholars address as a dystopian turn in the mid-twentieth century. However, according to Barclay, the dystopian thinking is the rise of post-modern ideas given by: “[...] gloomy themes of nihilism, pessimism, and relativism as well as optimism, new-age spiritualism, and dogmatism.” (Barclay, 1990: 31-32) Therefore, dystopia provides a way to express

negative and hopeless feelings about the future. In other words, dystopia foretells the exploitation with the current political, social, and economic depressions. Within the framework of these ideas, to reach the perfect harmony of the world, Michael W. Barclay suggests that dystopia is based on the utopian ideals hiding behind the image of evil. Barclay summarizes this in his book by specifying as follows: “The implied nature of utopian message gives it its character as an ideology. Thus, the equation of ideology and utopia.” (Barclay, 1990: 94) The dystopian genre warns the reader that unless they avert the optimistic and neglectful style of utopian thinking, a nightmare in the future will be inevitable. Thus, evil dystopia will be an indispensable reality.

All things considered, the pessimistic side of the world is best pictured in some of the major dystopian novels by male writers who also seek and explore explanations of a hopeless society, which is shaped by a type of totalitarian government in the future and foreseeing the dictatorial downfall. These are **Erewhon** (1871) by Samuel Butler, Eugene Zamiatin’s **We** (1921), Aldous Huxley’s **Brave New World** (1932/1939), George Orwell’s **Animal Farm** (1945) and **1984** (1949), Kurt Vonnegut’s **Player Piano** (1952/74), **Fahrenheit 451** (1953) by Ray Bradbury, **Lord of the Flies** (1954) by William Golding and Anthony Burgess’ **A Clockwork Orange** (1962). Such authors have referred to dystopian thought as being the worst outcome of a totalitarian regime. Society is always being manipulated by the government. Thus, chaos becomes the inevitable terror and fear becomes the sole construct to control the society. Those novels are some of the dystopian works that criticize their foul governments and give a solid picture of dystopia as a wake-up alarm for the society. All of these novels tackle the issue of liberty. The dystopian writers want to picture a world that has somewhat a hell-like setting. The reader sees a world that is depicted as the worst things came to life, so idealizing a better or a hopeful future is inevitable. Since there are ultimately grim factors that create a dystopian narrative, dystopian fiction shows itself as imagining a horrible future in the novels.

While looking at these examples of the classical male-written dystopian novels written by male authors, it is imperative to point out the fact that they have certain

elements in common, male-centred narratives created by male writers, along with a fight against the governmental authorities. No matter how oppressive the government is, in these male-written dystopian novels male protagonists behave heroically. That is why dystopian writing was defined by a male-centric perspective which can be attributed to social and political male authority. Also, in the male dystopias, the characters or the heroes are the ones who take action as they are the male protagonists. Generally, at the end of the male dystopian novels, the character achieves his role in the society, stands forward, and fights against the government.

After looking at what dystopia is and at classical male-written dystopias, it is time to turn to feminist dystopias as well as what the term feminism means and how it affects the feminist dystopian novels written by female authors who became especially effective after the 1950s and 1960s. Since the 1950s, female authors have had little impact on male dystopian writing and their effect was not seen in those writings at all. Much has been theorized about the challenges women writers encounter and several feminist literary critics and philosophers such as Simone de Beauvoir and Elaine Showalter made useful studies about this subject. Firstly, the term feminism is used to describe a political, cultural, and economic movement to create equal rights and legal protection for women. According to **Encyclopaedia Britannica**, it derives from the Latin word *femine* which means woman. The word has come into use in English in the 1890s. It was a movement that aimed women's emancipation and recognition in literary and social contexts. Therefore, the women in literary arena could not find their place in the canon until after the mid-twentieth century.

In order to understand the nature of female dystopian writing, it is important to look at the feminist waves that affected the course of the feminist dystopias. Feminism can be divided into mainly three "waves" starting from the late nineteenth century. Women did not have the right to vote until 1918. The First Wave of the Feminism movement refers to a time that women seek to have equality with men in social and political spheres. In the nineteenth-century, their place in society and political environments was not thoroughly acknowledged yet. Historical and literary

scholar Sylvia Strauss states on the subject: “scientists, philosophers, essayists, novelists, and politicians” were discussing women’s roles in society in order to “keep women in their traditional domestic sphere, fervently believing that the preservation of civilization depended on it.” (Patai, 1988: 67) That is why the first wave is defined as the *suffrage movement* that emerged in the United Kingdom and the United States in the late nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries.

The Second Wave of the Feminist movement follows the rise of the counterculture right after the Beat Generation in the 1950s. This movement was influenced by the worldly issues and the writers who support it wrote about them as male authors in dystopian literature starting from the 1960s. Feminist writers of science fiction seriously drew attention to the development of counterculture in the 1960s. As a result, the Second Wave of the feminist movement in the 1970s emerged. A term for women in society came forward which was “New Woman” (Grand, 1894: 271). This was a term that was brought up by Sarah Grand in her article in 1894 (Grand, 1894: 272). It became especially prominent for women with the right to get a divorce in 1937 with Matrimonial Causes Act because it allowed women to have equal rights with men in divorce law. The term was used for women who have the economic independence. Those women cut their hair in a short style like men do and “demanded [...] access to higher education, the vote and the right to earn a decent living [...] and challenged [...] views of femininity and female sexuality.” (Heilman & Beetham, 2004: 1) The acceleration of the Religious Right and the conservative party of the political balance of the time brought about the 1980s backlash against feminist civil rights. The political entrance of the fundamentalist Christianity in the United States made the alterations in society possible in an unfriendly and inhospitable way. As a result, the Second Wave feminist activism along with the Civil Rights Movement indicated a continuous passion for going back to the consciousness of the subsidiary norms of the 1950s or earlier. A quote by Rita Felski makes it possible to understand the foregrounds of such incidence as follows:

The emergence of the second wave of feminism in the late 1960s justifies the analysis of women's literature as a separate category, not because of automatic and unambiguous differences between the writings of women and men, but because of the recent cultural phenomenon of women's explicit self-identification as an oppressed group, which is in turn articulated in literary texts in the exploration of gender-specific concerns centered around the problem of female identity. (Felski, 1987:1)

According to the quotation above, dystopian writing of the female writers was especially affected by the political atmosphere, and it publicized other perspectives on politics, society, and culture. In the late 60s and early 70s, the outcomes of the Second Wave feminist movement gave rise to the female writers to focus on dystopian fiction because it was about destruction of a thought against the idea of female identity. The female dystopian writing boosted more power that spoke well by making aware of the probable futures, not only just dealing with the daily problems but also constructing them. The female point of view in the dystopian writing controverted. Therefore, it refuted the male-centred dogmas by making use of the female voice in the narration. The male dominant government asked for the obedience and subservience of the individuals. This kind of problem became consequential for the Second-Wave feminism when its concept began to change from a demand for equal rights to a need for equal acknowledgment. The female voice in the dystopian writing shows that utopian thought is not stable but a continuing process. Moreover, the major numbers of male writers made it impossible for the female perspective to be heard. Therefore, the female writers made it possible to analyse the dystopian narration represented in the eyes of the female characters. It led the reader to read a representation of female characters by female writers. Continuing with the general characteristics of the dystopian fictional writing, feminist writers of the genre wrote actively against the dominant literature by men. For instance, they did not write about the fixed or stable society that is described in non-feminist, male-authored, traditional utopian and dystopian writings. Rather, feminist writings, which are written in the late twentieth century and twenty-first century, contrast utopia with dystopia in binary oppositions. It is not a coincidence that the dystopian novels such as the male and female-written ones were built and

written upon a critical time of the events that took place from the beginning of the twentieth century.

As well as novels written by male authors, some female writers' names emerged in the dystopian female writing process. Also, feminist dystopia has been around much longer than one might think. The oldest example of this is Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley's **The Last Man** (1826). The novel describes a nightmarish atmosphere in a future world that is deteriorated by a plague. Some of the crucial examples of the genre before the 1950s are Charlotte Haldane's **Man's World** (1926), and Katharine Burdekin's **Swastika Night** (1937). These examples depict dystopian worlds that are ruled by men. In fact, women are described as purely feminine and their sole purpose is to serve men biologically. Stunningly, the female characters in both novels do no attempt to get away from their social situations. Indeed, they accept the roles that are forced on them by the male authorities. However, a genuine blast of dystopian writing by female writers came after the impact of the Beat Generation in the late 1960s which is preliminary to the Second Wave feminist movement. Some of the feminist dystopian writings are Anna Kavan's **Ice** (1967), Kate Wilhelm's **Baby, You Were Great** (1968), Anne McCaffrey's **The Ship Who Sang** (1969), Angela Carter's **Heroes and Villains** (1969), Pamela Kettle's **The Day of the Women** (1970). These novels give voice to a consciousness that is a little distinctive when compared to the ones published after the 1970s and onwards. They cannot be called quite feminist but semi feminist because of the dominant Second Wave Feminist movement afterwards. (Cavalcanti, 2003:49) Novels such as James Tiptree Jr.'s (Alice Bradley Sheldon) **The Girl Who Was Plugged In** (1973), Margaret Atwood's **The Handmaid's Tale** (1986), Nalo Hopkinson's **Brown Girl in the Ring** (1998), Susanne Collins' trilogy **The Hunger Games** (2008), **Catching Fire** (2009) and **Mockingjay** (2010), and Naomi Alderman's **The Power** (2016) introduce a female point of view written by female writers. Furthermore, recently as can be seen in Collins' trilogy, the reader sees a heroine in the feminist dystopias, as one can find in the dystopian novels written by men.

Heroes and Villains comes from the late 60s background of such depictions of the society in general. **Heroes and Villains** is explicitly a turnout of the 1960s anti-culture, which was nourished by the beats in the 50s. This period resulted in a change in the sexual freedom and the Cold War. It is constituted in a post-apocalyptic future where the city was founded by the Professors near a forest by the Barbarians. As another illustration, Margaret Atwood wrote her novel **The Handmaid's Tale** right after Ronald Reagan's presidential election in the United States in 1985 and that of Margaret Thatcher in the United Kingdom. Considering the society in the 80s, in brief, many women encountered the perils of conservatism and androcentrism. Similarly, the women in Atwood's novel **The Handmaid's Tale** harshly experience conservative oppression from the government. Booker makes a point by adding that Atwood's novel is a "[...] direct reaction to the growing political power of the American religious right in the 1980s." (Booker, 1994: 78) In the 70s, the concept of sex was observed to be public, which highlighted people's indulgence in it for pleasure. Also, it revealed unintended consequences. Fiona Tolan summarizes this issue in her book as follows:

Against a backdrop of the postmodernist debate, the mid-1980s became a point of evaluation and reinvention for feminism, as the second generation of feminists inherited the second wave. **The Handmaid's Tale** looks back at this transition, examining the changing concerns and evolving vocabulary of an increasingly theorised feminism. Through her dystopian vision, Atwood exposes something of the limiting and prescriptive nature of the utopianism that had underpinned much of the feminism of the early second wave. By juxtaposing flashbacks of 1970s feminist activism with contemporary descriptions of Gileadean practices, each informs the other, so that *The Handmaid's Tale* comes to satirically depict a dystopian society that has unconsciously and paradoxically met certain feminist aims. (Tolan, 2007: 145)

Hence, in the eyes of powerful political figures, the prevention of sex acts was one of the simplest ways to inflict fear on women by which to have jurisdiction over them in the meantime. In doing so, governments reached out from their offices into the bedrooms of their citizens curtailing their pleasure in the process.

The Hunger Games trilogy was written in a time when individualism which was formed as a result of excessive use of technology in the twenty-first century. Sicher and Skradol remark this by saying as follows:

[...] the twentieth century marks the twilight of utopia. Dystopia has finally arrived because, on the one hand, the reconstitution of society seems impossible while, on the other, technology threatens basic concepts of individual freedom and human life. (Sicher & Skradol, 2006:166)

Furthermore, the trilogy is a product of an ongoing current which is named as neoliberalism. Also, it paves the way to collectivism as an essential element on the way to social and political enhancement. It can be regarded that the trilogy is a criticism of socialism and a product of social ecofeminism, which was found out by a French writer François d'Eaubonne in 1974. It was a term that came into existence as a distress call to get women together in harmony to protect the world. The term suggests in its foundations that both women and nature are repressed by the patriarchal system. When men have absolute power, the nature and humans are repressed and live in despotism. In this sense, the trilogy criticizes both the capitalist background and hierarchy that oppresses the nature as well as the humans in the society and environment. Therefore, in **The Hunger Games** trilogy, the society lives in an actual dystopia which was established in the twenty-first century. Thus, what Katniss achieves at the end of the trilogy becomes the utopia itself. At the beginning of the story, the setting was a dystopia and with the help of revolutionary hope, it changes into a utopia. **The Handmaid's Tale**, on the other hand, approaches collectivism as inception of totalitarianism and desolation of individual power.

The first chapter of this thesis will explore Angela Carter's **Heroes and Villains** in a social and historical context by showing the idea of dystopia from the female protagonist Marianne's point of view in the mid-twentieth century. The novel is a representative of feminist dystopian fiction of its time and comes forth as a British dystopian female writing, which was affected by the conditions the society was under. For example, Marianne ends up fleeing from the Platonian-like, utopian government created by men, especially the Professors. Instead, she is stuck in a

worse, chaotic, anomalous dystopia in which she undergoes numerous tortures as a woman. Also, she is exposed to certain physical torment, including sexual harassment. It does not take much of her time to understand that the dystopia she escaped from is not very much different from the one that she ends up with, which is the Barbarians' dystopian order. Furthermore, Marianne does not come forth as a character of spreading hope. Instead, she is a hopeless female character in Carter's dystopia. Yet, she does her best to survive in the dystopia by developing a hybrid character out of these two dystopian settings in the novel. Marianne's journey is to find her self, her role, and place in a world that allows a female struggle for one's survival.

With regards to the social setting of **Heroes and Villains**, it must be noted down that Angela Carter effectively presents the binaries, clarifies them in the idea of her composition, i.e. protagonists and antagonists, feminine and masculine, body and mind, nature and culture, self and other, civilized and barbarian, passion and reason. One thinks that she utilizes folklore in connection to the demonstration of the male-centric request from the Barbarians' and Professors' perspective. In this sense, symbols, illustrations, representation of such binaries straighten the argument of women relating to chaos, bodily functions, and nature whereas; aligning men with the societal, political, historical order, and a structural mind that controls the overall system. All of these build up ground for the male-centric portrayals of the society. This leads the focus on control or exploit one group over the other both socially and politically. At the end of the novel, Marianne gets the title of "Tiger Lady" in the patriarchal order and she is forced to find her place and role in the male dominant society from which she wanted to escape in the first place. That is why Marianne is a hopeless female character in this female-written dystopia.

In the second chapter of this thesis, Offred, in Atwood's **The Handmaid's Tale**, will be examined in detail. She exhibits the dystopian elements. Starting from certain feminist objectives and moving on to a dystopian feminist point of view, both of the novels **Heroes and Villains** and **The Handmaid's Tale** are representatives of the feminist dystopian fiction of their time. They both include female protagonists

but not heroines. Both characters manage to escape from the dystopia they live in. Atwood tells about the totalitarian or totalitarian-like regime. Offred lives under a totalitarian government as a handmaid in a dystopian post-apocalyptic future. To illustrate, Offred is shown as a character who is disposed of every kind of power and freedom in the Gileadean regime, which calls itself a utopian state ruled by men. Moreover, Offred's and other women's freedom is curtailed within the system, also they are limited to live under the circumstances which were created by a male-centric government. In addition to this, Offred is forced to have sex with a man who is called the Commander in the house she has to live without any choice. If she wants to have a better future, she has to get pregnant from him for the sake of a government she hates very much because the government is responsible for the position in which she finds herself. Moreover, the protagonist Offred experiences a socially and physically limited life, tells the story in the first person, lives in a world that both characters are desperate to escape or willing to do whatever it takes to change it and unwilling to live in government's oppressing life standards.

Lastly, in the third chapter of this thesis, Collins' trilogy's character Katniss will be analysed. The twenty-first-century point of view of the heroine in the dystopian feminist novel from the eyes of the character Katniss Everdeen in Susanne Collins' **The Hunger Games**, **Catching Fire**, and **Mockingjay** trilogy will be demonstrated. From a twenty-first-century female protagonist's point of view, Katniss also suffers from a totalitarian government, which is the Capitol that withholds the supply and power in its hands. The system exploits the people who live there. Katniss becomes a character who had enough of the wrongdoings of the government and takes action against ruining its reign. Katniss idealizes and hopes for a better society, she is stuck in this regime, and she does everything in her power to live in a free one instead. As a result, Katniss turns out to be an opposite character, who is in a hopeless dystopia, similar to the ones that are examined in the first two chapters. Therefore, she becomes a hopeful character, unlike the other characters that are being analysed in the first and the second chapters formerly. Consequentially, the characters in this thesis will demonstrate the despotism and pessimism that comes

down from the so-called utopian creation of governments. Instead, they all end up in cruel dystopian regimes that call themselves utopian ones.

Katniss represents the active women in a hopeful future, in a hopeless society, and she evolves the female hopeless characters, who are Marianne in **Heroes and Villains** and Offred in **The Handmaid's Tale** in the twentieth century dystopian writing, into a character that takes her own destiny in her hands, creates her own idealized future for the sake of a better future for her society by imagining the linear writing time of the novels that will be examined. Not to mention that the details will be given by delivering a certain comparison and contrast between the characters of Angela Carter's Marianne in **Heroes and Villains**, Margaret Atwood's Offred in **The Handmaid's Tale**, and Susanne Collins' heroine in her trilogy, Katniss Everdeen.

Finally, Angela Carter's **Heroes and Villains** and Margaret Atwood's **The Handmaid's Tale** were written with a fear of an unavoidable nightmarish future, and thus Atwood warns the reader of the upcoming destined reality or simply reality itself as she puts in one of her interviews with Jo Brans in his book *Margaret Atwood: Conversations* (1982) as follows: "There is nothing in the book that hasn't already happened [...] All the things described in the book; people have done to one another." Arising as the products of their political and social conjuncture, **Heroes and Villains**, **The Handmaid's Tale**, and **The Hunger Games** trilogy give the nightmare version of the government during the times of their writings. **Heroes and Villains** having been written in the mid-twentieth century, shares the exotic and grotesque factors. For instance, the presence of the voice that we hear in Carter's writing is of the third-person, who is the narrator. As the main concern of this thesis, it is imperative to mention the status of female characters in relation to each other as well as their comparison and contrast to one another. Those characters find themselves in hazardous circumstances because of the power formation of the masculine dystopia in which they are doomed to suffer and live.

Heroes and Villains, **The Handmaid's Tale**, and **The Hunger Games** trilogy differ from male-written dystopias in the aspect of being feminist dystopian fictions since they define the world from women's perspective. The analyses of the characters will be given in the light of female point of view; what kind of elements have changed from Angela Carter's **Heroes and Villains** (1969), and Atwood's **The Handmaid's Tale** (1986) up to Susanne Collins' trilogy **The Hunger Games** (2008), **Catching Fire** (2009) and **Mockingjay** (2010) and how we see the protagonists Marianne, Offred, and heroine Katniss in terms of evolving female characters in female dystopian writings in literature.



CHAPTER ONE

Angela Carter's **Heroes and Villains** and the Dystopian Heroine

Marianne

“In the mythic schema of all relations between men and women,
man proposes, and woman is disposed of.”
(Carter, **Sadeian Woman**: 2)⁴

“Is not this whole World an illusion? And yet it fools everybody.”
(Carter, **Nights at the Circus**: 14)⁵

“I do think fiction should be asking the great, unanswerable,
adolescent questions.” (Carter in Evans)⁶

- Angela Carter

According to the epigraph, in her works, Carter endeavours to explain a universal psychological schema. In this aspect, Angela Carter's novel **Heroes and Villains** reveals a real stoutness, and a wistfulness to agree with the world on its own terms and reform it from top to bottom or bottom to top. From these premises, her dystopian world depends widely on the imaginative factors rather than imitative ones because of the fact that she strives to keep herself aloof from the contemporary tradition and oppressive culture. This feature of hers becomes quite clear when one looks in detail at her writing. **Heroes and Villains** was written in 1967 and describes a world that is dystopian and chaotic, relating to the global concerns of the time the novel was written. Tew mentions in his book as follows:

[...] Carter only makes sense in relation to a long-view appreciation of 1960s literary and social culture. It is very much an *a priori* reading of “the Sixties” in which texts are arranged vertically and are made to illustrate a retrospectively constructed framework. In this regard the assumed operating mode of the writing in question is either a discourse of realism that is resolutely mimetic, reflective of a particular historical period or the result of a metaphoric

⁴ Angela Carter. **Sadeian Woman**. UK, Hachette. 2015

⁵ Angela Carter. **Nights at the Circus**. Random House. 2012.

⁶ Heidi Yeandle, **Angela Carter and Western Philosophy**. Palgrave Macmillan

substitutive approach in which estrangement of science fiction is made to stand in for the same socio-political context. (Tew, 2018: 274)

Namely, Carter offers few or maybe artificial hopes from the female protagonist's point of view in her dystopian novel. In this way, she successfully explores the tendencies of the norms of a female dystopian fiction by creating a female child-protagonist. Carter manages to reflect the socio political status of the 1960s and she does that successfully.

The heroine, Marianne, is a hopeless female character in her hopeless dystopian world, and she is stuck in not only one, but two dystopian worlds. She manages to escape from the first one after the death of all her family members, and she is doomed to live in another dystopia where the Barbarians have full power over. Marianne escapes from a Platonian-like utopia which was founded by the Professors, similar to the one Plato suggests in **The Republic**. The ideal society for Plato is ruled by a Philosopher Ruler. Therefore, Marianne breaks out from the Professors' utopia and willingly lets herself to be captured by one of the Barbarians, Jewel. However, this is also another dystopia both in the reader's and Marianne's eyes. Immediately after she is captured, she understands that the Barbarian's dystopia is no different than the place where she escaped from. For this reason, Carter's heroine Marianne becomes a character who is hopeless in a hopeless dystopia.

One thing in Carter's novel about Marianne is that the reader comes across the notion of the destabilized, undecisive condition of a hopeless female character. For example, Marianne is a virtuous victim in Carter's narration as she shows awareness of narcissistic longing along with its damaging consequences on human relations. It is significant to bear in mind that Carter creates Marianne as a hopeless character, yet Marianne evolves into a totally different character than what she is at the very beginning of the novel. The reader realizes in the course of the novel that if there was another dystopian world created within the novel by the writer, Marianne might possibly have escaped to live in this one as well. Since she escapes from the city walls of the Professors', she tries to escape from the Barbarians dystopian world as well.

Under the light of this information, another thing to feature about Marianne is that she witnesses the hazardous and inflicting impacts that Western metaphysical presuppositions have upon male and female relationships as binaries. Eva Karpinski mentions this at the beginning of her article as follows:

Carter interrogates the binaries of self/other, body/mind, male/female, nature/culture, passion/reason, or civilized/barbarian, binaries informing patriarchal institutions and representations that serve to justify exploitation and domination of one group by another. (Karpinski, 2000: 1)

This can also be read as a reflection of Plato's utopian work **The Republic** on Carter's **Heroes and Villains**. Afterwards, she continues to disentangle and transcend the discussion of patriarchal presuppositions about the dystopian world order she creates. In this way, **Heroes and Villains** establishes Carter's point of view for male and female encryption because the novel comes into existence out of Western philosophical background and culture. Herein, Carter naturally maintains the study of male and female relationships that **Heroes and Villains** introduces.

When it comes to the social context of **Heroes and Villains**, one highlight has to be noted down that Angela Carter successfully introduces the binary oppositions. For instance, when the novel is taken into consideration as a whole, there is no unity in terms of the structure of the societies neither socially nor physically. However, the forest that is mentioned in the novel presents a totally big risk to the stability of the city of the Professors merely by offering a communicative tautness into the text. Almost in its all characteristics, the forest proposes a total oppositeness to the city. The Professors live in "tranquil order" (Carter, 1967: 14), while the Barbarians live in "chaos" (Carter, 1967: 11); the "colours of the Professors are browns and sepias, black, white and various shades of grey", whereas the Barbarians "like bright colours [...] beads, things that shine." (Carter, 1967: 39) Even the colours of the people are different from each other which makes the order specific to a dystopian hierarchical society. Moreover, the Soldiers seem to be "mechanical, ingenious objects" (Carter, 1967: 21), while the Barbarians are lively and garish, with flesh of "many colours and great manes of hair" and horses "caparisoned with rags, small knives, bells and chains dangling from manes and tails." (Carter, 1967: 5) Therefore, the two settings

contradict each other, just like the male and female relationship. They produce another opposition by contributing to the binaries in the whole context. Her narration sheds light on the competence beyond doubt between the male and female duplicities or the masculine and feminine binaries. Her writing emerges as nothing less than authenticating these kinds of representations of antagonisms. Even by demonstrating these oppositions, Carter dismantles them instantly. She does that by subjecting them to the danger of having them perceived in a manly manner. Also, she is stereotyping them powerfully by suppressing.

In this Platonian-like utopian society of the Professors, which is actually the dystopia that Marianne escapes from, the social class members such as the Professors, the Soldiers, and the Workers cannot be socially or politically mobile among each other. That is, this rule orients the system in a way that they are socially and politically formalized within the system which “every Professor's eldest son became a cadet the Soldiers and Professor's younger sons, nascent Professors.” (Carter, 1967: 13) As a matter of fact, this is notably a primogeniture point of view, which was prevailing within a patriarchal society. It is known that in these patriarchal and aristocratic families, the oldest son gets the heritage. The other sons, in contrast, seem to have the title of being soldiers. In other words, no one in the socially-differentiated parts of the society can belong to another part of the society or transfer from one to another within society. This situation can be read in terms of Carter's dystopian creation as a turnabout to a feudal structure in the society. Even though they live in a post-apocalyptic world order which can be regarded as a vision of the future, there is the reappearance of a feudal class order in society. For this reason, the society is represented as if it is a Platonian utopia. Moreover, when Marianne is analysed, she is the daughter of a Professor and she ends up in a more strictly clear and predetermined representation of a character because she has the right to choose the person she would like to marry someday only from her own class. When viewed from this perspective, the system protects itself from the outer people's intrusion by restricting marriage rules according to its needs. Also, the system does not encourage Marianne to establish a social distinctiveness. Not especially

pertaining her to personal or lower-class roles. In this way, she is disarmed from the political and economic premises.

It is clearly understood that the societal order in **Heroes and Villains** is a hierarchal one. Last issue regarding the hierarchal order in the society and the binary oppositions is the name of the book. Carter mentions the hierarchal order at the beginning of the story as attribution to the order of the society, which makes it meaningful. It is said in the book as follows: “The Soldiers are heroes, but the Barbarians are villains.” (Carter, 1967: 4) This passage is at the very beginning of the novel. The title of the novel constructs the roles and the stereotypes that form the societal organization. Karpinski asserts in her article by saying that:

The book's very title **Heroes and Villains** draws attention to the role stereotypes have in shaping the social perception of difference and conditioning children to hate the other. It derives from the game that Professor's children play, casting themselves in the roles of heroic Soldiers who triumph over wicked Barbarians. (Karpinski, 2000: 7)

This depiction gives a clear-cut distinction and a binary opposition of the societal order in the novel in order to explain the system. On the same page that this quotation is mentioned, there are children who play a game, being settled within the portrayals of brave Soldiers. The Soldiers always end up winning over the Barbarians in the game. Karpinski goes on about this by adding as follows: “Ironically, Marianne not only refuses to play, but also puts into question the mechanism of binary stereotyping into good and bad, when she says that she does not know “which is which any more, nor who is who.” (Karpinski, 2000: 7) According to the quotation, Marianne never wants to play this game, rather she asks about the nature of the binary stereotyping which is put into action in the game as good and bad. When Marianne decides to go with Jewel and goes to the area where the Barbarians live, she is seen as an alien. The Barbarians consider her as something other than human. That is why they make a superstitious but an absurd sign whenever they come across her. Karpinski says that:

Marianne's presence terrifies the Barbarians, so they make a superstitious sign against the evil eye every time they see her. "She was only a young girl" (27) yet Jewel is afraid of her. (Karpinski, 2000: 7)

The sign shows that she bears a curse or an evil feature to be protected against. From the Barbarians' perspective, she comes from a privileged place as if she has immunity.

While reading through **Heroes and Villains**, one thinks that Carter uses the fundamentals of utopian thinking to show the patriarchal order from the Barbarians' point of view. This brings the solution that Carter's high ranked Professors have put together their revived civilisation on grounds of Plato's **The Republic**, utilizing the conditions of the end of the world as a chance to make Plato's idealization turn into a reality. Heidi Yeandle makes a clear statement by saying as follows: "[...] Carter's Professors have based their resurrected civilization on **The Republic**, using the circumstances of the apocalypse as an opportunity to make Plato's fantasy a reality." (Yeandle, 2017: 23) In other words, Carter's novel creates a sense of "what would happen if Plato's theory was put into practice." (Yeandle, 2017: 23) Furthermore, the novel creates a ground to give information about the patriarchal institutions or representations of society. As a result, the practice of this theory can be conducted by controlling or taking advantage of one group over the other both socially and politically.

Another thing to mention about Carter's **Heroes and Villains'** historical and social context is the male orientation in the society. They are described in the novel as follows:

Before the war, there were places called Universities where men did nothing but read books and conduct experiments. These men had certain privileges though mostly unstated ones: but all the same, some Professors were allowed in the deep shelters with their families, during the war, and they proved to be the only ones left who could resurrect the gone world in a gentler shape, and try to keep destruction outside, this time. (Carter, 1967: 10)

In this way, men are the privileged residents whose first-class status enables them to endure the atomic war on safe grounds, along with their families. Furthermore, it is understood that the setting is in the aftermath of an atomic war. It is a dystopian society, just as Carter verbalises, it is: “Hell [...] Hell on earth.” (Carter, 1967: 45) She uses this specific depiction because this is the exact definition of dystopia in its literary meaning. In other words, they are living in a hell-like world. One more passage that shows the binaries for the dystopian worlds of Carter is that she writes from Jewel’s perspective: “The world becomes a dream and the dream, a world.” (Carter, 1967: 103) Here, Carter gives the idea that reality, which is hopelessness for Marianne, is a dystopia whereas dreams are utopia, namely the hopefulness. Also, Carter goes on by explaining the details about the dystopian world as follows:

[...] These sects held in common the belief that the war had been the wrath of the Lord. The communities maintained Professors of theology while the Barbarians (it was said) practised human sacrifice. Marianne recalled descriptions of hell in her father’s books, a place of fire and torment. (Carter, 1967: 45)

Carter specifically makes it clear in this quotation that the knowledge keeps the Professors at the top of the hierarchy; in contrast, the chaos the Barbarians are said to create keeps them at a lower level in the society in relation to the human sufferings. From Marianne’s utterance, the reader gets the opinion that the Professors regard themselves as the utopian civilization. Therefore, the place they live in is attributed to as if it was a utopic place. From the Professors point of view, it is totally opposite to the place where the Barbarians live because it is ascribed as a place of torment and torture, which is regarded as the dystopia itself. This statement could also be read as one more binary opposition portrayed by Carter.

The Professors’ realm was not an ideal place for Marianne, in the first place. The reason why Marianne stayed there is not only because she loved her father, but she also had no choice. Her motive of escaping from the so-called utopia where the Professors live is that she does not feel she belonged there, which is the city walls of Professors. Later on, the reader also learns that she wants her brother to be dead towards the end of the book when she puts it as follows: “You see, I did not even

love my brother much.” (Carter, 1967: 161) What is more, there is nothing for Marianne concerning her mother because the reader knows that her mother died because of suffering fell upon her by the death of her son. Therefore, Marianne is connected with patriarchy because she is pointed to the plight of females who are dumped by their mothers. When the circumstances are taken into consideration in terms of the Professors’ realm, there cannot be a conclusion to draw as it was a civilized city. Yet, it is a place where the fight takes place among the captured Barbarians as if it is an entertainment show to be watched by the Professors. This can be a reference Carter uses to the Roman Empire’s gladiator fights at the arena, which is again a turnabout in her narration to old wrongdoings of the states. Here, Carter also shows the destructive structure of the Professor’s governing style. Although they and the society are attributed to as elites, there are arena shows that take place, so it is a problematic society. For this reason, Marianne wants to escape from that world hoping that she will find a better one in the wilderness instead.

Another example to show that Carter’s novel is a dystopia is that there are three jobs for men. Those jobs are divided into groups hierarchically in the Professors’ city. Firstly, there are the Professors, who are dull and do nothing but being engaged with reading. Karpinski specifies this in her article by saying: “[...] the Professors are busy with their books, [...]” (Karpinski, 2000: 4) and she goes on as follows:

[...] the Professors rely on books, which are relics from an extinct world; the Professors represent academia in a post-apocalyptic environment, prioritising learning over survival and basing their knowledge of the Barbarians on old literature. (Yeandle, 2000: 44)

It is clear in the quotation that the Professors depend on their books and they are the reflections of academia in the post-apocalyptic atmosphere of the novel. Also, they are eager to learn. Afterwards, there comes the Soldiers who are responsible for the security of the city walls and within. Next in line in the social order are the Workers who help the agricultural development and do the work related to farming. Also, Karpinski states in her article by saying: “[...] the Professors are busy with their books, [...] and the Workers with tending the farmland.” (Karpinski, 2000: 4) Then,

the reader sees the Barbarians, who are the migrants and wanderers, assaulting Professors' settlements in order to get supplies for food and keep their livelihood conditions. Lastly, there are the Out People, who are spoiled in a bad way. They are mutated because of radiation, and they reside in the desolated areas. In this respect, the Professors refer to themselves as the workers of pure knowledge, history, and society. Also, they feel as an agent for enriching the recollection of disappeared or extinct cultures. Therefore, it is obvious in the structure of the society that there is a hierarchy, and the classes are named one by one to show the difference between them.

Furthermore, one thing that makes the Professors scared of the Barbarians is that they are afraid that the power, which they have in their hands, will be gone one day. They dread the idea that Barbarians will one day take control and destroy the worldly resources. Another fear they hold against the Barbarians is that there will be no one to blame for the Soldiers' wrongdoings. Here, it is obvious that Carter uses binary oppositions in order to show that the Professors need Barbarians to exist as well as they fear them. In the novel, it is depicted as follows:

If the Barbarians inherit the earth, they will finally destroy it, they won't know what to do with it. Their grandfathers survived outside the shelters, somehow: they survived at first by accident and continue to survive only by tenacity. They hunt, maraud and prey on us for the things they need and can't make themselves and never realize we are necessary to them. When they finally destroy us, if they finally destroy us, they'll destroy their own means of living so I do not think they will destroy us. I think an equilibrium will be maintained. But the Soldiers would like to destroy them, for Soldiers need to be victorious, and if the Barbarians are destroyed, who will we then be able to blame for the bad things? (Carter, 1967: 14)

This quotation exhibits the Professors' point of view against the world of Barbarians. This can only be one of the many examples of showing the reader how the sense of othering works in both ways in the novel when displayed from both perspectives. Thus, the Professors see the Barbarians' taking over the power as a catastrophe that might trigger the worse outcome for the world. The Professors are obviously afraid of the Barbarians, but at the same time, they see themselves superior to the Barbarians. Furthermore, the Professors serve as the Barbarians' scary duplicates.

Karpinski has a point in explaining this as follows: “There are numerous examples showing such othering works both ways and that Professors function as the Barbarian’s frightening double.” (Karpinski, 2000: 7) Therefore, it can be concluded that the Professors predicate their logic strangely on the fact that the Barbarians need them for survival.

One more example for the sense of othering in the novel is what Marianne says to Jewel when she sees him in the woods. It reflects the way she was educated. She remarks as follows: “The Professors think you have reverted to beast hood, [...] You are a perfect illustration of the breakdown of social interaction and the death of social systems.” (Carter, 1967: 28) Marianne is taught in this perspective by the Professors, and she does not set back from saying this to a Barbarian whom she has just met. As opposition to and a challenge against Marianne’s point of view, Jewel flaunts and enunciates as follows:

You can’t go back to your village, can you? You wouldn’t half look a fool, wandering back with some concocted story to explain what happened. And they wouldn’t believe you; they’d invent a crime and punish you for it, for they wouldn’t understand why you had wanted to go away in the first place and would suspect you. And you can’t stay right here cos you’ve got nothing to eat and there’s peril of Out People, isn’t there to say nothing of savage beasts. (Carter, 1967: 28)

From this standpoint, the Professors regard this kind of society as a utopia, which they built and are on top of the hierarchy, as it is known in Plato’s **Republic** as well. In Plato’s **Republic**, the utopian society is ruled by the intellectuals, and they are the ones in power, controlling the state affairs. However, it is the opposite in **Heroes and Villains**. When it is looked from Marianne’s and the Barbarians’ point of view, this society can be easily seen as a dystopian and a patriarchal system in itself. The fact that Marianne does not have a reason to stay with the Professors causes her to escape as a girl, though she was raised there. Also, the Barbarian Jewel knows the rules of the city’s societal order and how brutal they are within their walls. When the reader possesses Jewel’s view of the Professors’ city, it becomes obvious that it is not a utopian place unlike it is explained by the Professors. On another level, Jewel shows off by using idiomatic expressions as if he is a professor of some sort. While

Marianne and Professors think that the Barbarians know nothing and they are nearly beasts, she is amazed at how he can speak in such a flawless way. In fact, Jewel is a man who knows how to speak practically. He displays this and Marianne is shocked as follows:

[...] ‘An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth.’ said Jewel philosophically, chewing on a stem of grass. He talked like a half-educated man and this surprised her very much since she had thought the Barbarians possessed no education at all. He also possessed, in his curiously elegant if abrupt movements as much as in his speech, a quality her father had called irony, unusual among the Professors. (Carter, 1967: 31)

Marianne sees the Professors’ character in Jewel because he talks like he is one of them. He surprises her with his knowledgeable speech, ability to express himself perfectly well. Because of the way that Marianne is raised, she only recognizes the Barbarians through the explanations of her family and the Professors’ point of view. That is why Marianne is startled.

Marianne, the protagonist of **Heroes and Villains**, escapes from the world of order and security. She does that in order to follow up a life in a chaotic and unreliable forest because she does not know what will happen to her after she escapes from the Professors’ realm. The novel is a dystopian fable, which depicts Marianne's quest so as to find her own self, her role and place in a world that allows nothing more than the ordinary struggle for one’s survival. For example, the men in her life have a tendency to be philosophical and fatalistic. They are in a world, where anything other than fatalism is entirely unrealistic. She trusts the men in her little world very much. These men are her father and Jewel, and they are revealed as so-called protectors and guardians in her life. However, her father dies too early and Marianne is not able to stand entirely on her own feet. That is why she makes a variety of attempts to escape, though some of which are only half-hearted. However, in the end, complete escape eludes her.

Carter selects a female child-protagonist different from the one the reader is used to seeing in the classical dystopian writings. Moreover, one important thing about Marianne is that her world is shaped by higher powers such as her father, her

uncle, her nurse, and her peers. Marianne perceives an antagonistic world. For that matter, Marianne contributes an innocent perspective to the novel. She questions whether the other people around her are “real or not.” (Carter, 1967: 103) In this quotation, the reader sees that Marianne questions the notion of the reality and asks if the things and people are around her or not by giving the reader quite a sense of questioning the nature of the novel itself, and the author.

As a dystopian and feminist text, the novel makes it clear that the female character has to suffer under the given conditions. Since Carter portrays Marianne as a feminist character, she has to survive in an environment in which she does not want to be, she is not wanted but neglected. Along with that, Marianne inwardly wishes to become more powerful. Therefore, her character and body are both very strong to encounter whatever comes along. As Coover also suggests in her introduction to the novel:

[...] her ruling passion was always anger rather than fear. This is a girl who is bored with the impotent intellectual life of the Professors, hates their community festivals and rituals, including marriage, and disdains their self-referential language, a ‘severe’ child who won’t play the games of others, upending the little boy who in his somewhat nasty innocence, only wants to play the hero, leaving him yowling in the dust. The boy calls her a Barbarian and a villain, and she becomes one. (Coover, 1967: 2)

As a passionate female character, Marianne presents risk to the order of the city as it can be understood from the quotation above, she has the potential to be dangerous to the system. She is not interested in intellectuality like the Professors and she is different than the other children. In addition, Marianne becomes somewhat powerful and a strong female character who does not get influenced by anything that tries to damage her. Even when she is exposed to sexual, physical violence, and abuse, she is aware of these negative enforcements. Even, she has ways to save herself of all the nonsensical deeds. Therefore, it can be concluded that she is self-directed over her life. She realizes that being tough and strong as a woman enables her to move forward. For these reasons, these features of Marianne make her strong enough to

deal with the difficulties she comes across. One occasion which expresses her personal trait is discussed by Cooper in detail as follows:

[...] To save her Barbarian husband's life, Marianne has to kill one of these creatures, but feels neither shame nor horror, only a release from boredom and, with it, a certain sense of well-being. Marianne is a strong-willed and independent young woman, unfazed by rape or savagery, fearing only the loss of her own autonomy [...] Marianne knows herself to be too tough to be eaten. (Coover, 1967: 2)

Here, she is depicted as an independent woman who only fears to lose her autonomy. She turns into a character that can kill a creature after her elite world with the Professors. She feels that she achieves something good by being savage and brutal.

Marianne is expected to fulfil the traditional roles in this framework of the system or the society by being wedded to a young fellow and subsiding into pre-established examples. Therefore, she lacks good female examples such as an enduring mother. Not to mention that in her case, her options about what to do on this matter appear to be growing thin. Therefore, like every other person in the city, she should slip effectively into the set-up scheme. As the protagonist, she does not do the things she is told, she chooses to oppose the conventional desires of others surrounding her for her sake in her journey of finding her self. Carter successfully positions her character into one that engages with the social issues of equality between the sexes. Therefore, in the course of the story, even if she is forced to marry a Barbarian, Marianne never totally obeys the rules of the society. She wholeheartedly clashes the idea that a woman should bestow the role of a wife to a man. As a result, she is in opposition to the male-centred world system.

Marianne straightforwardly rejects even the possibility of marriage, but she is forced to do so because she has no other choice. Progressively, what is vital and ideal for Marianne is that she dares to confront and benevolently stands still against the figures of power socially or politically. This holds the utmost significance over her course of life. As an illustration and to give more details thereupon, Marianne's nurse attempts to dishearten and demoralize Marianne's enthusiasm for the obscure depth

of the woods and the very idea of Barbarians by confusing her thoughts and says that:

If you're not a good little girl, the Barbarians will eat you [...] They wrap little girls in clay just like they do with hedgehogs, wrap them in clay, bake them in the fire and gobble them up with salt, and Barbarians slit the bellies of women after they've raped them and sew cats inside. (Carter, 1967: 10)

The nurse introduces Marianne with the fear of Barbarians by a horrific example as if they were the bogeymen, which can be attributed to the binary oppositions noted before. The nurse frightens Marianne with a terrific story in order for Marianne not to have the intention to be a part of that society. In the light of the character of the nurse, it is seen that the Workers have retained the legends about the Barbarians spread by the Professors. That is why the nurse teaches Marianne the Barbarians' kid eating jokes and their techniques of assaulting ladies.

Antithetically, the Barbarians have such kind of superstitious beliefs that the Professors' women do not bleed when they are cut. Also, among the Barbarians it is strangely believed that the Professors' women have toothed vaginas. The stories can neither be real for Marianne nor for the nurse, nor for the Barbarians. As a matter of fact, they can be a mumbo jumbo, or a superstition created by the intellectual community and the Barbarians to isolate and alienate each other. The reader does not know the reality for sure, and neither does the protagonist until she meets the Barbarian society and starts living with them. Marianne sees that what she was told in the Professors' society is no different than what she is told in the Barbarians' society. Tew says that:

A post-apocalyptic narrative that depicts the remains of society divided into encampments of Professors and Barbarians, both perceive the other in stark binaristic terms. As such, both require the other to legitimate and determine their community boundaries. (Tew, 2018: 274)

Therefore, the Barbarians are also told horrific stories about the Professors as well. What is transparent about that quotation above is that the nurse tries to block and protect Marianne even from the possibility of coming across or meeting with the

Barbarians, or worse living with them. For that matter, the conversation between the nurse and Marianne shows that the nurse marginalizes the Barbarians and she creates a sense of othering them in the eyes of the reader.

Through Marianne's eyes, the reader witnesses the actual fears that the nurse holds within herself and the whimsical terminology of Marianne's father. As regards to this, the Professor and the nurse anticipate that Marianne will most likely be a part of the world inside the borders, whose order and security were settled by the civilized people from their own perspectives. Contrary to what has been assumed by the characters, Marianne alternatively withstands this understanding. Moreover, she recognizes a tendency within herself to be critical upon her society's baseline principles, seemingly in an innocent approach, which is cloaked in her immaturity. The reader's point of view, thus, wends its way to be biased with Marianne's guidance through Carter's narration. To clarify, even though Marianne has a childish perspective throughout Carter's oeuvre, she not only manages to cut herself loose from the indiscretion of her people but also she frees the reader from that objectivity.

When the time comes, Marianne suspects and starts asking questions about the fundamentals and the nature of similar allegations, her nurse cuts her off and makes Marianne silent without any more clarification by saying that: "that is the nature of the Barbarians." (Carter, 1967: 2) The women in the novel are taking their power from the patriarchal system in which they live. To be precise, the nurse gets the power from the man-centred society of the Professors as well as Mrs. Green does of the Barbarians because both worlds are patriarchal. Those different worlds contain dystopian structures within themselves. Hope Jennings remarks in her article about this issue by stating that:

[...] exposing where this feminist fantasy, even if it originates in a desire to overturn the patriarchal order, might in the end further oppress women. Carter offers us potent maternal figures, or myths surrounding the disruptive power of the mother, only to deflate them, exposing how female identity is not in fact contingent upon the iconic status of motherhood. (Jennings, 2008: 65)

In this manner, the two characters are seen as the matriarchal women living in the patriarchal order. Moreover, Marianne's real mother dies right after Marianne's

brother is killed by Jewel. Marianne somewhat compares Mrs. Green in the Barbarians' society to the nurse in the city. As Jennings suggests:

In other words, women's assigned place in the symbolic order is this maternal role. To deviate from the "norm," for a woman to play with or reject the reproductive positioning in which she has been situated, is to transgress the paternal law, requiring punishment and repression of her desires [...] For Carter, matriarchal myths are more often than not equally as oppressive as their patriarchal counterparts, since those feminisms that express a desire for the maternal as a source of inherent female power do not so much grant women freedom from phallogentric parameters but, in fact, help keep them in place. Overall, Carter challenges the ways in which women's reproductive status has been used to define and oppress them through deconstructive tactics and subversive irony. Her dystopian texts invest women with power precisely because they are in possession of a womb, yet the very thing that grants them potency also makes them slaves to a patriarchal ideology, subjects only in relation to their reproductive roles. (Jennings, 2008: 66)

That is why Marianne learns the systematic rules that create the Barbarian society from Mrs. Green. Similarly, the nurse helps Marianne in any way that she can in order to survive in the city by explaining her the rules and the order in the city. Resulting from Marianne's doubts and what the nurse suggests, these lessons capture her thoughts from the beginning to the end.

Marianne bears the classic dystopian female characteristics. For starters, Marianne fixes her viewpoint to show the reader the absurdity, disorder, unequal preponderance, and the difference in both societies where she lives in virtue. That is why this raises the issue that the disorder is seen as largely usual. As a dystopian character, Marianne manifests a similar repugnance to conform to the accepted class levels.

Marianne sets out on a dangerous, but a fundamentally important journey of finding herself. Hence, she makes her decision to carry out her responsibility in spite of the impediments she faces. At the start of the novel, Marianne leaves the white tower, which was in the land of the Professors, and goes into the depths of the forest of the Barbarians. In order to explore the typical features of her character, it is depicted in the novel that Marianne escapes and when she is asked why she ran away from the Professor's world, she answers as follows: "I came of my own free will."

(Carter, 1967: 103) What she basically and childishly feels is that she is isolated and alienated from her own society in which she was born. The reader understands this from her father's conversation with her: "You never made friends with the other children [...] I know you'd rather not live here but there is nowhere else to go, and chaos is the opposite pole of boredom, Marianne." (Carter, 1967: 13) It can be deduced from the quotation above that Marianne is a character that could not make friends in her society. She is already an isolated child and she does not want to have any friends because she had no intention or effort to do so. Her father makes it obvious from the quotation that Marianne would go away and have a different life other than the one in the Professor's city walls. Carter writes specifically about Marianne's circumstances in the book as follows:

However dangerous the open country might be, she would be safer there than among these strangers [...] she was full of pity for them but more than anything she wanted to escape. So she ran away into the wood, not much caring if the wild beasts ate her. (Carter, 1967: 58)

Feeling the unsafety in the society and having the need to be with someone or some people, Marianne determines that she would be with the people whom she does not know rather than the people whom she spent her whole life with. She has a determined point of view from that perspective. Therefore, she becomes close with the Barbarians. In this respect, it is apparent that she lacks the taste of fear after losing every member of her family. Obviously, she feels alone in the wilderness, ready to face the difficulties that life has cracked wide open to her. Marianne does not mind whether the environment is safe for her or not, she just runs away and does not think it over deeply.

Even though Marianne runs away from the dystopian reality, she is caught up in another one and feels intensely hopeless and sorry for that. She meets Jewel, who is Marianne's brother's murderer, and she seeks refuge in him. However, the only point of view that Jewel holds towards Marianne is to disable her from moving away and keeping her at a close distance to himself, maybe even by making her his wife by raping her. For all that matters, the reader knows that he does not know any other

ways for including Marianne in his society. In this way, he might be able to keep Marianne under his constant domination and thus, as his one and only possession. Marianne's is totally against this concept. She is simply not in favour of a male-dominant society which commands that a woman has no duty other than being a wife and/or a mother. She does not want to accept the female role attributed to her by society. In the novel, it is stated as follows:

[...] her vindictiveness increased for she was more cruelly wounded in her pride than in her body and, besides, she feels herself quite trapped and entirely without hope. She remained in an agony of despair [...] refusing food and speech. [...] At last Mrs. Green arrived [...] "Tomorrow you'll have to sleep with Jewel, won't you. That's the way of the world." At that, Marianne sprang up, her cold eyes sparking. 'All this is a dream,' she said. It can't happen, it didn't happen and it won't happen. "Young men will always take advantage, dear, said Mrs. Green and we'll have to take what we can get." (Carter, 1967: 66)

According to this quotation, it is transparent that Marianne refuses to be someone's possession, a person's concubine, or a man's wife. It can be seen that being a mother exists only to classify women in the society. Therefore, she totally ignores this idea. Here, it can also be obviously said that the idea of rape is strangely normalized with men. In addition, this idea becomes a phenomenon that it wants to be felt like as if men are always like this by their nature and Marianne has to accept this. Furthermore, it can be suggested that Marianne's thinking is premeditated by Luce Irigaray's thoughts informing that a woman does not have any credentials or a place in a patriarchal society because "men just see women as a container." (Irigaray, 1993: 165) Man plainly desires that the container is his possession, and he wants to incapacitate her. As a result, Marianne thinks that the idea of being a man's possession or a container is nightmarish for her.

As a matter of fact, it is clear in the quotation above that she sees herself in despair and in great hopelessness by indicating that what she goes through is a state of unreality or a nightmare which cannot be real for her. In addition to these, Marianne is regarded as the other in her society and within the Barbarians as well, so

she is an outcast in these dystopian structures, even when she wants to be a part of it. When she starts questioning, the nurse reminds her of the societal order. Similarly, she starts questioning the things happening around her the time when she is among the Barbarians. During her adventure, she experiences hardships of being a woman as regards the hindrances and bitter conditions which she was subjected to. At the beginning of the novel, she was a child and desperately in search of a proper environment she can live in. For this reason, she briefly asserts in one of her conversations with the head of the Barbarians' society, Donally, that:

'why it's necessary for you to marry me to that Yahoo who raped me yesterday [...] 'Consider and make the best of things' said Donally, the leader of the Barbarians. [...] 'There must be something you want. Power? I can offer you.'
(Carter, 1967: 68)

As it is understandable in her words, Marianne noticeably contradicts the patriarchal notion which situates women into a subordinate position, without knowing that this Barbarian society was established by a former Professor, which makes it no different than the societal order of the Professors. Yet, it could be particularly examined that Marianne is in need of womanly competence to make things better for herself in that society because she is seen as an outcast the Barbarians too. Clearly, Marianne foresees that she wields the power of being durable and having the stoutness of dealing with problematic conditions. She stands firm against the Barbarian society showing that she questions the nature of their practices and social conducts. At some point, after being sexually abused, she asserts that:

Just yesterday he jumped on me with appalling brutality, he has the hands of a butcher and eyes like trick mirrors that can see out but cannot be seen through. We have nothing whatever in common and now you tell me to be kind to him!
(Carter, 1967: 77)

It can be deduced from the quotation that she is eager to stand tall and have power against such kind of violence. She is hopeless but does not have any intention or whatsoever to be seen as powerless in terms of having control over her body. Still,

Jewel clarifies that there is a patriarchal society among the Barbarians. He explains to Marianne in one of their conversations as follows:

‘Dynastically, [...] It’s a patriarchal system. I need a son, don’t I, to dig my grave when I’m gone. A son to ensure my status.’

‘Give me another reason.’

‘Politically. To maintain my status.’

‘I suppose these are both good reasons, given the initial situation, but I think here is a less abstract one.’

‘Revenge,’ [...] ‘Shoving a little me up you, a little me all furred, plaited and bristling with knives. Then I should have some status in relation to myself.’

(Carter, 1967: 99)

This mindset is also depicted in **The Republic** by Plato and he describes the role of men and women in his book. It can be thought of as one of the oldest considerations of this opinion originating back then. From the quotation above, it is obviously seen that just like Jewel needs his status and position to be precise in his society, Plato states the situation of women within the social order as follows: “[...] women who have a character to maintain they are of no use, and much less to men.” (Plato, 2016: 115) In terms of the patriarchal order, the position of women remains its role merely to be a mother. After some time, it becomes clear that she was impregnated from Jewel and she somewhat feels that she has a bond with him. Jennings comments on this by saying in her article that:

She is seduced by the allure of a mythic version of herself, accepting somewhat apathetically and then wholeheartedly the reproductive function into which Jewel has trapped her. She comes to believe a child might provide her with some form of dynastic power, ensuring her place among the Barbarians, just as Jewel had desired a son to ensure his own status. (Jennings, 2008: 69)

Marianne had to endure the patriarchal order in both societies, from where she escaped, yet in another, she must survive. She was forced to marry Jewel because of the fact that she had been raped, as if there was no other option in the society. Also, however hard it was for her to do so, she tried to find her place in the society, and life in general by this act; “Having so singularly failed to find the glamorous objective Other [in Jewel], Marianne instead transforms her own self into an icon of otherness.” (Gamble, 1997: 79) It shows the reader that the Barbarians’ society does

not have any kind of a moral obsession. This is another argument that draws the reader's attention. She explains Marianne's situation after her marriage with Jewel as follows:

The tribe no longer protected itself against Marianne with signs, for marriage had secularized her. She was still a stranger and hence fearful but now she was specifically Jewel's responsibility and evidently they trusted him to control her dubious magics, keeping them knotted in a bag, perhaps, under his pillow, for now the children were content to ignore her and she could come and go about the camp as she pleased, creating no ripples about her. When she asked for a pony, they gave her a little black and white dappled one like a toy horse in a nursery, with a coarse white mane. Sometimes she rode around in the edges of the wood but went no farther. (Carter, 1967: 96)

In the Barbarians' society, Marianne was seen as a witch or a magician when she first came with Jewel because she was an alien. They had no intention to accept her as one of them. However, right after the marriage that took place with Jewel, they had no other option to accept her in society. After the marriage, she is seen as a responsibility that came with Jewel. In the end, they rely on Jewel and they will charge Jewel if something goes wrong about her. Therefore, Marianne is obliged to remain in this patriarchal order. In order to survive there, she has no other option than to get married to Jewel, which is the thing that she never wanted to do in the first place.

Another thing that is important to mention about Marianne and Jewel is that they start having this twisted relationship with each other. Actually, they have to have some kind of a relationship as it is. In so doing, it is shaped around the patriarchal order in which Jewel was raised. Yet, Marianne comes across such a treatment that she had never experienced in her life before because she was raised with privileges in Professors' society. However, in Barbarians' society, she has to put up with the ridiculous accusations for being a Professor's daughter, endures a certain amount of physical and psychological torture, and sexual harassment. For instance, during one of their intercours, Marianne is shocked by what she hears from Jewel's screams because Jewel utters: "Conceive you bitch, conceive." (Carter, 1967: 98) In this quotation, Marianne sees the beast that lives within Jewel because it symbolizes

the patriarchal authority in Barbarians' society. Jewel merely makes it obvious that their sexual integration is for the sake of a patriarchal agreement so as to provide that specific system with sons to ensure his place in it. That is why they form a connection that is impossible to be mended by any probability of pure communication because Jewel ruins this relationship by raping Marianne over and over. As a consequence, they end up having a contorted and a spoiled relationship at the end which becomes impossible to be bettered.

Last but not least characteristic that might be significant to report about Marianne is that she is defined as a character that learns and be able to be taught by others. At the beginning of the novel, when Marianne is residing in the city walls of the Professors, she is taught by her father about history, sociology, and the laws of the order in the white tower and the societal background of the city. Furthermore, the nurse is another character that helps Marianne to learn about the indoctrinations of the city and the moral understandings of the society. She generalizes the society's teachings and the doctrines against the Barbarians and educates Marianne about them. Although she questions the very nature of this education, she retains herself to be a child that is open to education and able to learn what is being taught to her. Another person that teaches Marianne how to position herself among the Barbarians is Mrs. Green. She is like a mother that treats Marianne with care. Carter explains it as follows:

Mrs. Green gave up her own bed to Marianne, a hay-stuffed mattress spread with linen sheets and some blankets, [...] While Marianne was ill, she stayed with her much of the time and, [...] she sometimes sang her lullabies like those her nurse had sung. [...] (Carter, 1967: 42)

As it is clear in the quotation above, Mrs. Green can be seen as a mentor and Marianne is shaped with her teachings. Giving her bed to Marianne can also be a sign that Marianne will eventually take her place in Barbarians' society. Finally, Donally and Jewel are the characters and the last steps for Marianne's exploration of otherness that shape her into being her ultimate self at the very end of the book by getting the title of Tiger Lady. By their teachings throughout the novel and the conversations they have, Marianne ratifies an intermediary identity which can be

seen as a hybrid character. She turns out to be a character that comes to self-realization who is coming out of two dystopias and grounding her personality's features on the indoctrinations and practices of both of the dystopian worlds. Even though she cannot escape from the hopeless dystopia and ends up being a hopeless character, she evolves into one character that is able to escape the dystopia of the Professors and survive the one in Barbarians.

In order to see Marianne's character development from a weak character into a hopeless but one that tried her best, one can look at the passage where Carter explains how Marianne sees a lighthouse at the beach where she and Jewel escape to. To be more precise, she comprehends the existence of the lighthouse as if it is the white tower in the city walls of the Professors, the place she escaped. Carter delivers that moment as follows:

[...] it was a lighthouse. Its light was put out, like the woman's eyes but here it stayed and if there were no longer any storm-tossed mariners to give thanks for its helpful beams, yet, functionless it was, it was intransigent. To Marianne, it looked the twin of the white tower in which she was very much moved for, though neither tower any longer cast a useful light, both still served to warn and inform of surrounding dangers. (Carter, 1967: 115)

What is clear in the quotation above is that Marianne understands the entity of the lighthouse, which can be seen as a phallic symbol of the Professors. Through this interpretation, the reader gets the conclusion that Marianne recognizes her symbolic improvement in her character. Also, it is possible that Marianne remembers her education in Professors' city. Carter explains further as follows:

[...] this tower glimpsed in darkness symbolized and clarified her resolution; abhor shipwreck, said the lighthouse, go in fear of unreason. Use your wits, said the lighthouse. She fell in love with the integrity of the lighthouse. (Carter, 1967: 115)

In the end, it might be deducted from the quotation that Marianne understands the fact that she realizes the big picture around her and utilizes that picture from her own perspective. Afterwards, she stargazes the lighthouse recognizing that she is in need of a clear picture. Therefore, at the end of the novel, it becomes quite clear when

Jewel is killed by the Soldiers, Marianne attributes herself to the identity of the Tiger Lady. It can be deduced that Marianne attains her identity at the end of the novel and her character becomes meaningful by her quote: "I'll be the Tiger Lady and rule them with a rod of iron." (Carter, 1967: 163) On the occasion that she cannot fit in the society, Marianne actually becomes someone that rules the thing that she does not want to be a part of at the beginning of the novel. She turns out to be a mother figure as well as a leader accepting and positioning her place in the end. This is what makes the character Marianne a hopeless dystopian character because Marianne turns her character into one that survives in this hopeless dystopia and this character becomes a strong one. Meaney explains Marianne's transformation as follows:

The novel ends with one form of tyranny replacing another, as Marianne adopts a masculine positioning in relation to the law by transforming herself from victim to predator. (Meaney, 2000: 96)

It is understood from the quotation that however hard Marianne tries, she cannot escape the traditional roles of patriarchy. Although Marianne seems like a character of weakness at the beginning of the novel, she creates a sense of strength in the eyes of the reader during her course of self-realization journey through her practices and experiences. On the other hand, Jewel reflects the beast hood within human beings, and he is demonstrated as a character among the Barbarians. It can be concluded that by forcing her into another role, Jewel helps Marianne to find her soul and self-consciousness in her journey in the novel. She escapes from one dystopian world after her father dies and abandons her to loneliness. She sets out a journey on her own and finds Jewel in the woods. They create a relationship, however, distorted it is, they hold on to each other. Eventually, Marianne gets the title of Tiger Lady in the Barbarians' society after Jewel's death. Jennings observes Marianne's situation as follows:

[...] as we have seen in **Heroes and Villains** [...], Carter's texts force us to think through the problems that arise when women attempt to assert a specifically feminine/sexual subject while continuing to define themselves according to male representations or symbols of femininity. (Jennings, 2008: 82)

That is why Marianne reaches a sense of fulfilment within herself because she accomplished what she set out for in terms of her character's development. As a result, she gets what she idealizes within the society, which is to be acknowledged by the Barbarians. Yet, she cannot get out of the dystopia from which she escapes.

To sum up, the protagonist Marianne is hopeless in her hopeless dystopian world, and she is stuck in not only one, but two dystopian worlds at the same time. What can be added to this is that she manages to escape from the first one after the death of all her family members. She is condemned to live in the latter dystopia, where the Barbarians rule and roam however they like. It is obviously seen that Marianne flees and she is in desperate desire to get away from Professors' Platonian utopia. Marianne breaks out from the Professors' utopia and apprehended by Jewel, a Barbarian. She is stuck in a worse, chaotic, anomalous dystopia in which she undergoes numerous tortures as a female character. Also, she is exposed to some physical torment, including sexual harassment. Soon enough, she notices the place they live is also another dystopia. As a result, Carter's protagonist Marianne becomes a character who is a hopeless female character remaining in a hopeless dystopia even though she tries her best to escape from it. Marianne's journey ends up finding her self, her role, and place in a world that allows a female struggle for her survival in a patriarchal order.

CHAPTER TWO

Margaret Atwood's **The Handmaid's Tale** and The Dystopian Heroine Offred

Politics, for me, is everything that involves who gets to do what to whom and get away with it, even as far as death. Politics really has to do with how people order their societies, to whom power is ascribed, who is considered to have power. People have power because we think they have power, and that's all politics is.

Interview with Jo Brans. *Margaret Atwood: Conversations* (1982)

Notably, Atwood considers her writing to be a crucially political one, and she does not allow an easy answer in the political analysis. However, Atwood defines politics as an instrument of power that is under the surveillance of the one who holds it. In addition to that, she implies the infliction of vandalism and brutality without any inquiry, which is basically what is known as politics. Also, her ideas are not only political; they exist in sexual contexts and become a concern in her novel **The Handmaid's Tale**. In so doing, the historical background of Atwood's novel achieves to become of extreme value with the appreciation of the fundamental principles of her writing represented along with the narration itself. Atwood inevitably had written a novel that has much to tell in terms of the society, genre, utopian and dystopian thought grounding her novel on the societal realities of that time and culture by sparking the attention of many reformists, sociologists, and other experts.

To illustrate this issue, this type of a governmental interpretation of the society is one of the well-portrayed issues of the time by Margaret Atwood in her novel **The Handmaid's Tale**, which was written in 1986. Since the sexual urges had been suppressed in the society at that time, Atwood bases the ground of her novel on sexual freedom, how it was banned and how it shaped the governmental system that was founded on its outcome. The dystopian writing of Atwood became a voice for the fears that the female writers during the Second Wave feminist movement had.

The dystopia that she shapes conveys propagandists' fundamentalist dogmas to far beyond limits. Atwood basically makes use of the appraisals of religious fundamentalism as a means to analyse the modern flow of her time. Hence, encountering the dangers of such a government that enforces its fellows is rooted on in ethical absolutism stemming from a holy text.

Thereupon, in this chapter, the general dystopian elements in Margaret Atwood's **The Handmaid's Tale** will be analysed from the eyes of the dystopian heroine Offred, concerning the time of the book in a social context, which becomes quite similar to the argument that was introduced in the former chapter. Atwood foresees the possible future and reveals the problems of the society in which she lives. Therefore, the protagonist that she creates in her novel faces all these possible future problems which Atwood attributes. As Mohr states in his article frankly: "dystopia holds up a hellish mirror and describes the worst possible futures." (Mohr, 2005: 27) Atwood simply tells whatever happened before has the potential to shape a hopeless future. Moreover, reading this from Offred's eyes makes it even more shocking to the reader. In this way, in her novel **The Handmaid's Tale**, Atwood projects an uncertain hopeless dystopia from Offred's point of view. Offred dreams of a change in the circumstances that she is in, if not escaping from it. Just like the only thing that is left from Pandora's box is the box itself. Her sole hope and belief are to escape from that dystopia, hopefully, one day.

It is even more lucid that Atwood's **The Handmaid's Tale** can be viewed as a critique of going back to the fundamentalism of the past. Also, it can be attributed as an arraignment of fundamentalism in contemporary society. Stephanie Barbé Hammer marks in her article that Gilead smacks readers by saying:

[...] as a reactionary step backwards in time, to a kind of government and lifestyle that resembles that of the Middle Ages – based on one-part biblical patriarchy, one-part Islamic militarism, and one-part Hindu caste system. (Barbé, 1990: 45)

It would not be so hard to deduct the fact that Atwood is nourished from what has happened or is still happening around the world and writes about whatever happened in reality.

Atwood tells the probable dystopia through Offred's eyes who happens to be the desperate protagonist of the story. The status of a handmaid in the dystopian society of Gilead gives the reader a point of view, but a shallow one. Atwood places the female protagonist Offred within an alien atmosphere that jeopardizes her physical and psychological territory where she becomes perfectly aware of the belief that she needs a position outside the Gileadean society. If she has the intention to survive this world, she needs to make sure that she escapes from it. It should not be forgotten that she can only have the intention to escape from that world because she lives "not in a prison but a privilege as Aunt Lydia said." (Atwood, 1986: 8) Therefore, in the eyes of the government, there is nothing to escape from for the handmaids because she is already living in a privileged place in this dystopian world. The government officials believe that they created a perfect utopia and no individual has any right to think or say anything against it. As an illustration, Bacci baldly states in her article that: "Margaret Atwood creates a hopeless planet, shaping an oppressive society." (Bacci, 2017: 161)

The Gileadean society is deteriorated in terms of procreation, and the sole purpose of that system is to bring healthy babies in the society by means of the handmaids. Using this as an excuse, the Republic of Gilead bans sexual violence as well as sexual freedom for women so long as to maintain a fundamentalist regime. This kind of state takes its foundations from the Bible and prohibits women's rights as it pleases. Unless the women give birth to the barren couples whom they work for, the handmaids will conclusively be harmed or killed; it does not matter how hard the state claims that they restrict violence against women, in reality the government makes its hand stronger against women. Thus, the government officers or people who work in the government are excluded from or immune to all types of restrictions. For these reasons, the government is ready to make any kind of sacrifices, even to kill people for the restoration of its foundations or the status quo

that is created. To give more examples on this, each law which is in effect is only for the sake of men. This makes Gilead a male dominant society and it can be understood as follows: “There is no such thing as a sterile man any more, not officially. There are only women who are fruitful and women who are barren, that’s the law.” (Atwood, 1986: 70, 71) It can be deducted from the quotation that in a male-driven society, men are not ever accused of their infertility, but women do. They are specifically protected by the law. Also, this is explicitly said in Latimer’s article as follows:

[...] abortion is a word no one uses in Gilead. It, like the word sterile, is forbidden. When the Commander’s wife, Serena Joy, suggests that Offred is not pregnant because the Commander may be sterile, Offred thinks it’s heresy. It’s only women who can’t, who remain stubbornly closed, damaged, defective. (Latimer, 2009: 219)

Among these events, Atwood strongly integrates gender issues as a noteworthy theme throughout her oeuvre. Accordingly, **The Handmaid’s Tale** ends up describing a dystopian society sardonically by manifesting some past narration of the 1970s and 80s feminist activism with modern depictions of Gileadean practices in her novel by using biblical tones and the reminders of the Middle Ages in terms of limitations. When the reader gets to have an idea about the whole handmaid’s world from Offred’s eyes, especially in the Red Centre, the reader is also brought upon to the light in terms of the indoctrinations of such biblical tones of the Gileadean society. Being the narrator of the story, Offred is totally aware of the abnormality of the so-called system running in Gilead. However, she still wants to render and understand the influences of the system and the nature of such doctrines. She defines the situation as follows: “We were on some kind of pill or drug I think, they put in the food, to keep us calm.” (Atwood, 1986: 80) The certain routines of the regime clearly seem odd to all the handmaids, but they all seem to have accepted this fact and live in those circumstances. This quotation strictly reminds the reader of the military circumstances in which they have to live and accept whatever comes from above because the handmaids are at the bottom of the system, yet at the same time they are seen as the saviours of this system with their breeding purposes. As it is understood from the case of the handmaids, every person grouped under the

hierarchical order is aware of the ridiculous rules and systems. Offred tells the reader this by asserting: “[...] Ordinary, said Aunt Lydia, is what you are used to. This may not seem ordinary to you now, but after a time it will. It will become ordinary.” (Atwood, 1986: 54) Aunt Lydia is also aware of the system that she indoctrinates. She tries very hard to push the boundaries of the understanding of normality, or a natural human response into nothingness. Basically, she needs the handmaids to act as if everything is normal and under control. That is why it should be regarded as there is nothing abnormal about the system at all. Aunt Lydia’s words suggest the fact that tyranny becomes normal in this Gileadean system. In so doing, everyone in the system stays strangely calm concerning the circumstances that they are under. As a matter of fact, Atwood accepts and tells the reader openly that “Think of it as being in the army.” (Atwood, 1986: 17)

The hierarchy among women can easily be seen as equally oppressive as the government itself. For instance, on the one hand, what the handmaids have with the Commanders is illegal because they have a relationship with married men; on the other hand, the new system proves that they are protecting women from sexual violence and restricting sexual freedom at the same time. On the contrary, this is an illegal action, but its new rules make the biblical Ceremony between the Commanders and the handmaids officially recognized. Therefore, the position of the women changes, and it goes on like this as a vicious cycle and gets quite worse. What is more, one night the Commander decides to go to a brothel with Offred secretly, in other words, illegally. Thence, he gets Serena Joy’s old clothes and makeup products, which Serena Joy does not use, gives them to Offred so that Offred gets rid of her red robe and dresses up just like a normal woman rather than a handmaid. Here, also the reader is introduced to the sick and twisted reality of life under the Gileadean regime. Despite Gilead appearing to be an ordered system based on honour, the humiliation of women is rife. The Commander says to Offred, “If someone asks you, say you’re an evening rental.” (Atwood, 1986: 245) In reality, the system in Gilead contradicts itself. For example, a place such as a brothel is illegal to go or even exist. By means of this contradiction, it shows that human nature remains the same whatever the outward image is. That is why the system itself is humiliating.

Having said that the world Carter creates has no hope, yet it retains the idea of hopefulness, Atwood antithetically writes hopelessness through Offred's eyes. In Carter's world, Marianne experiences brutality and harm from men and is forced to endure and live with it in defeat. With this in mind, patriarchal, totalitarian, and oligarchic governments, such as Gilead, have both men and women in power. While those who hold power are on top of the hierarchy, the others, who do not hold power find themselves at the bottom of the hierarchical ladder. In addition to that, the handmaids find themselves humiliated and raged against, while they are expected to continue the next generation for the Gilead. All the handmaids have to be under strict surveillance because the fate of the entire population is up to them solely. As Latimer explains in her article this issue basically as follows:

The handmaids are supposedly held in high regard, since it is only through them that the population will continue, but in reality it is for this reason that they are watched, controlled, and under constant threat of death. (Latimer, 2009: 219)

For example, Offred is harmed by both men and women, who have the same sex as she does, in power and she suffers from them. Moreover, the handmaids wear a robe when they are in the streets and cover their heads and hands. Even though they feel that they are humiliated, they are prominent and in the spotlight. When they are seen on the streets, everyone moves away from them as if they are quarantined. As another fact, Serena Joy possesses power on Offred because "she is in control of the birth-giving process and thus of the product." (Atwood, 1986: 104) This is the hopeless position in which Offred finds herself as the story unfolds. As another example, the women, who rank on top such as the Aunts and Serena Joy, have various types of power over the handmaids (one of the lowest hierarchical ranks). For instance, the Commander's wife, Serena Joy, and the Gospel Singer deliver some speeches on the TV channels to persuade women as follows:

She wasn't singing anymore by then; she was making speeches. She was good at it. Her speeches were about how women should stay home. Serena Joy didn't do this herself, she made speeches instead, but she presented this failure of hers as a sacrifice she was making for the good of all. (Atwood, 1986: 55)

Hypocritically, Serena Joy publicly campaigned for women to undertake labour only at home, but at the same time, she used to have a career of her own. This leads to the probable conclusion that just like everyone else, Serena Joy cannot do anything but accept this charade of a system. Even though she is affected by the falsehoods of this system deeply, she leaves her past intellectual life behind. Offred is in her house at the bequest of the government in order to give birth to the next generation. When looked at it that way, Serena Joy has to share what is hers with another woman who has to be with her husband in her house in order to have her child. This is also something unbearable for her or any other Wife in the system. However, she cannot oppose it. On the contrary, she comes forth by promoting the whole new Gileadean system as if it is something good for her status.

When it is expressed that the idea of freedom is curtailed in the Gileadean system, it is curtailed for the Wives, thus, Serena Joy as well. The quotation above also conveys the meaning that Serena Joy was there in women's lives long before Gilead was established. Therefore, she holds an obvious and evidential irritation against this system and career as well. In that perspective, maybe she can be recognized as the opposite pole of Offred's mother in the formation of the new religious system who "was involved in the Take Back the Night marches and other activities." (Wisker, 2010: 34) Consequently, the adjacency of her position before and after the Gileadean government can be inclined in a tragically binary way. It becomes ultimately sad when Serena Joy gets successful at what she intended by all of her speeches. Still, she ends up in a governmental system where she stays passively at home, losing her publicity by leaving her speeches, while she was piously advocating for it even before it was real. Offred remarks and explains it:

She doesn't make speeches anymore. She has become speechless. She stays in her home, but it doesn't seem to agree with her. How furious she must be, now that she has been taken at her word. (Atwood, 1986: 56)

It is understood from the quotation that the new political system in Gilead is shocking for Serena Joy as well. She is muted and cannot speak anything about the system that she fought so hard for and made propaganda about. Yet, in the end, the

system turned out to be a ridiculous show instead. Overall, she ends up being a slave to the system as a defender and a victim of it at the same time. Eventually, what Serena Joy supported comes in her way and causes her unhappiness, as seen in Offred's statement because Serena Joy becomes speechless. Another idea to confirm this is Serena Joy's name. Her name looks and sounds as if it was a very happy person's name concerning the root being "serene" and "joy", but actually the narrator, Offred, tells the reader that "...she is made of wood, or iron..." (Atwood, 1986: 215) It is also revealed to the reader at the end of the novel that Serena Joy's previous name was Pam. In the Historical Notes part of the novel, the Professor at the conference tells that Offred is not a reliable, but instead an ironic narrator and he mentions Serena Joy's name as Pam several times. Therefore, Serena Joy's name becomes an irony and fallacy in the meantime.

Another thing that is important to mention about Offred's hopeless dystopia is that Aunt Lydia claims that the handmaids have the "freedom of state protection because they were a society dying of too much choice." (Atwood, 1986: 35) What she actually means by this is that the people in the government and in the society have all the means to freedom that is already given them sufficiently by the government. They do not need any other choices to make, any comments to have upon the system. Too many choices or too much freedom had already been there in the society before the formation of Gilead and it led to destruction, turmoil, and anarchy. In her article, Shirley Neuman suggests that: "In dystopias clichés from 'the time before' signal both normalcy and extreme differences of power." (Neuman, 2006: 865) Therefore, they created Gilead, which is the supreme utopian government. Moreover, Aunt Lydia adds by saying that:

There is more than one kind of freedom said Aunt Lydia. Freedom to and freedom from. In the days of anarchy, it was freedom to. Now you are being given freedom from. Don't underrate it. (Atwood, 1986:34)

Aunt Lydia's purpose is to speak highly of the new Gileadean government and simply disapprove of the former society and the state. She declares that there is freedom in appearance, yet there is none in reality. Instead, there is a restriction of

freedom. No matter how harsh, ridiculous, barbaric she sounds, she fulfils her duty eventually. She is the real extremist, and she radically supports the Gileadean society. Latimer makes it explicitly clear in her article on this topic by adding:

Aunt Lydia's use of the word freedom here reveals how patriarchal law always actually protects itself, even under the banner of protecting women and children. Obviously for women to only be free through imprisonment is not an actual freedom, but the empty logic of Aunt Lydia's comment indicates what happens when terms like freedom lose their social context; rights that are given in the name of freedom can just as easily be taken away in the name of another kind of freedom. (Latimer, 2009: 222)

That is why Aunt Lydia has no intention to see or think that the handmaids would stand against the government. Furthermore, Aunt Lydia is a hardcore fanatic about the regime regarding that it respects all the women in the state and keeping them safe at all times, especially on the issue of sexual violence. She acts as the government in power itself and as if she was a pure authority. Owing to her belief, she accredits that the Gileadean government is divinely ordained. Her work as an Aunt is her twisted way of serving Christ and abiding all the biblical doctrines. From Aunt Lydia's perspective, she makes sure that the handmaids do whatever they have to considering their position and what is expected from them. Aunt Lydia wants to prepare the handmaids for what awaits them for the life they are going to live. In a sense, Aunt Lydia carries out the duty, which was bestowed upon her by the government, which was also bestowed upon them by the Bible. She gets the power from the government even though she is useless to the government because she is infertile. The government could also be taken as a fatherly or a husband figure for Aunt Lydia. Hence, feeling like an important part of the government, she sees the handmaids as her child, or the product of her and the government altogether. She is pretty much like a nun or a priestess. Not sharing the word Sister Lydia for Aunt Lydia becomes inevitably a deliberate choice by Atwood because the same system oppresses the women. Since the word "sister" creates a sisterly environment just like the one in a nunnery, Atwood gives a specific attribution to the Aunts by calling them Aunts, which makes it unfriendly and hollow-hearted. As a last resort, it means that there is

no such thing as a sisterhood in this Gileadean system since it is built upon the previous generation's fallacies.

When the circumstances are taken into consideration, the new reigning and ruling system of Gilead judges the pre-governing system due to the fact that they were anarchical and insurgent. In fact, Aunt Lydia warns the handmaids sternly that the former government used to be revolutionary about every decision and gave a lot of freedom away unnecessarily. Therefore, the Republic of Gilead wields the power of giving freedom and distributing it as it wishes. For the reasons above, it evolves into a dictatorship to be protected by the women in the hierarchical order. Moreover, the handmaids are prepared and told to empathize with the Wives of their Commanders. They have to be worried about the well-being of the Wives. Offred retells Aunt Lydia's suggestion by saying:

It's not the husbands you have to watch out for, said Aunt Lydia, it's the Wives. You should always try to imagine what they must be feeling. Of course, they will resent you. It is only natural. Try to feel for them. Aunt Lydia thought she was very good at feeling for other people. Try to pity them. Forgive them, for they know not what they do. (Atwood, 1986:46)

Given this aspect, Aunts seem to be carrying out a good relationship with the Wives and the handmaids. This brings the reader to the conclusion that there is a twisted sisterhood among them. Having the power of manipulating the handmaids in the house as they please, yet Aunts are the ones to be afraid of the most for the handmaids because they have the magic wand, which is the power given them by the system. Aunts tame, beat, teach manners, discipline and manage the handmaids by those sticks in their hands. In other words, they replicate a patriarchal doctrine, which is very similar to nuns. Nonetheless, this type of regime intends to ask the handmaids to be giving into and to obey regardless of the circumstances. Aunts play the role of the bridge between the government and the handmaids by ruling them and telling them how to behave, by being the voice of the state. Finally, this quotation from Aunt Lydia crystalizes not only the handmaids but also the other hierarchical figures of the regime as victims in this system.

Hence, the reader has a limited as well as a female understanding of this dystopian world depicted by Offred. Because of the fact that the handmaids and all the other women in power are in the same location, they see everything and witness everything at the same time altogether. The handmaids are educated in the building of a former Boys School, but they are not boys at all. The handmaids are all grown up women who are brainwashed and rebooted by the harsh education system under which they are obliged to live. There seems to be a matriarchal system existing, although it is established upon a male point of view, which is similar to the ones that exist among nuns. Adapting this survival instinct to nature with a method that is not even close to being natural creates other problems in this system. Trying so hard to systematize everything actually makes all the system break loose and terminate itself. Atwood shows how the society is afraid of liberating women. The fear that society holds against women is the only reason to create such a dystopian world in the novel. By looking at the quotation taken from Aunt Lydia below, it is only fair to appreciate the hopeless dystopia that Offred is inevitably experiencing and thus being forced to live in. Aunt Lydia puts as follows:

You are a transitional generation, said Aunt Lydia. It is the hardest for you. We know the sacrifices you are being expected to make. It is hard when men revile you. For the ones who come after you, it will be easier. They will accept their duties with willing hearts. (Atwood, 1986:117)

One thing to be clear with this situation is that ruining the education system is the most pivotal noteworthiness in a tyrannical state like Gilead. There is also more to this dystopian world because Offred's perspective is one of hopelessness. One can only imagine escaping from that dystopian reality. Offred knows very well that if she tries to escape, it will definitely be made sure by the authorities, which are quite many, she will be punished by all means available to the government, the Aunts, or Serena Joy. However, women are doomed to suffer when they fail to conceive by their infertile Commanders. Either way, whatever happens, women are the only ones who are responsible for nearly every negative occurrence, even for a society which established itself and based its laws upon the desires of men. The handmaids are there to satisfy and do their jobs as the reproductive organs. That is all that can be

deducted from that passage. However, the system is still trying to make everything systematized unsystematically. What does not really matter to the system is that the handmaids can do nothing to escape from the pressure which they are under. If they ever try, they are harshly punished by being an outlaw or worse being killed.

The vital fact about the handmaids is that they are trying to live through the conditions every other day. The quotation above shows the grotesque and crooked ways of educating the handmaids. As regards to this, the handmaids are expected to be submissive, no matter what their circumstances are. They are expected to be obedient only for the sake of the next generations. They can actually escape from that twisted reality of the Gilead government if they really act like sisters, not in a make-believe sisterhood as among the other women in charge such as Aunts, Marthas, or Wives. The handmaids need to endure the impossible living conditions, which are known to all authorities, supposed rituals, brainwashing sessions of the Aunts, and many of these can be listed among the others. The Handmaids do not unite in the idea of escaping from the pressures of the government, but they unite in giving birth to a Commander whom they do not know, or to a Wife whom they have no relations with. It will surely be understood that Atwood is making a severe critical analysis of the Second Wave feminism of the late 70s basing it not only on the handmaids', but also the Aunts', Wives', Marthas', Unwomen's unsuccessful and false attempts. Nothing is done in concurrence with other women to liberate them. In this aspect, unless the women in Gileadean society have solidarity, it is nearly impossible to obtain a full autonomy neither on their bodies nor on themselves. Atwood clearly creates a theatrical scene as if it was a dramatic play when she describes the chapter where the handmaids come together with a handmaid who is giving birth. The Wives are there, but they seem and act like they are the ones who are giving birth. Such a process is pictured in that chapter as if the Wife of the house has given birth. Therefore, the whole event becomes a charade, a funny business, and a make-believe role-playing in the eyes of the reader.

In truth, most of Aunt Lydia's use of words, who is the supreme female character patronizing the other women who are held captive in Atwood's novel,

surprisingly mirrors the slogans of the 70s and 80s Second Wave feminism such as “Sisterhood is Global” and “Let a Woman Do It” or “Women Unite!” Tolan suggests specifically in her article by stating:

In fact, much of Aunt Lydia’s language ironically echoes the slogans of early utopian feminism...With this vision, she apes the feminist project of communal living and shared labour that was propagated...It is Aunt Lydia who best articulates Gilead’s partial satisfaction of feminist demands. (Tolan, 2007: 152)

The strongest and the most impressive slogan for the Gileadean regime is “Gilead is within you.” (Atwood, 1986: 23) This slogan gets the reader to think that the affection of the state government is with the handmaids. For instance, she is always in favour of the idea that women being and living in harmony altogether with “bonds of real affection, helping one another, united for a common end!” (Atwood, 1986: 172) On reflection, it seems more accurate to say that Aunt Lydia’s behaviours and speeches of unity are reminding the reader some of the activities of the feminist movement during the time Atwood writes her novel. In other words, Aunt Lydia becomes the best representative of the articulation of Gileadean society’s “partial satisfaction of feminist demands.” (Tolan, 2007: 152) Even though they are trained not to trust one another, the handmaids are encouraged to improve a mob consciousness and mentality in terms of their unified identity. “We grip each other’s hand, we are no longer single” (Atwood, 1986: 161) Offred thinks and says this out loud during the birth of each handmaid. In this sense, it seems that the handmaids create a collective consciousness.

Here, an invaluable issue comes in, Offred becomes afraid of committing any kind of crime because this is what is indoctrinated to her in the Red Centre. Offred knows if she accepts the doctor’s offer to impregnate her, it is a serious crime that could result in death. She chooses not to do so, owing to the fact that she speculates about this offer being a trap to capture and imprison her. Actually, she will be punished, unless she gets pregnant, so the ultimate question here is: Does she not choose death anyhow? In other words, the system itself requires Offred to commit a crime in one way or another. There are also some occasions on which she commits

crimes, but they are not the ones in which she acts alone. In fact, she avoids doing so. For example, the Commander desires to meet Offred in his room at night, but it is one of the first rules to be known by the handmaids that they must not be alone with their Commanders because it is punishable as a crime, but at the same time she has to obey the Commander's wishes.

Another example for Offred to seem like she is committing a crime but in fact, she is saving her life is that Offred secretly has sex with Nick in his room owing to the fact that Serena Joy wishes her to do so, so that Offred can get pregnant. In this case, Serena Joy also knows the absurdity of the situation and the system. Her husband cannot have children, and Serena Joy wants to have official status in society by having Offred pregnant under any circumstances. It surely does not make any difference if Offred is gotten pregnant by the Commander or Nick, let alone committing a crime. Last but not least, Offred goes to Jezebel Night Club with the Commander, which is also a crime. This is again not her wish or doing but the Commander's. This situation brings about another light upon this issue regarding the former Offred in Offred's room, who left some messages on the wall to the latter Offred. The reader and Offred can only presume that the former Offred committed suicide. Therefore, Serena Joy and the Commander are afraid of Offred thinking that she will also commit suicide.

One thing to underline and highlight what is mentioned above is that the theocracy, which is in The Republic of Gilead, obligates women, beyond question, to get back to their strictly mandated domestic reproductive roles of power. Not to mention, those are the ideal models of how limiting those domestic roles can be for women. As an illustration, a few of the society's roles for women consist of the Marthas who are "domestic helpers" that do the housework (Coad, 2011: 54), the handmaids who give birth to children for wealthy and powerful families that are impotent and known as the "substitute wives half mistress and half-whore" (Coad, 2011: 54), and the Wives who do the gardening and bring up the children. It is inferred that women are divided "from each says the slogan, according to her ability; to each according to his needs." (Atwood, 1986: 117)

In order to give a clear picture of this explanation, the types of women who have their own names from the book itself might be given. To exemplify, there are Econowives, Unwomen, Marthas, Aunts, and Handmaids. Atwood describes the hierarchical order in her novel as such:

There are other women with baskets, some in red, some in the dull green of the Marthas, some in the striped dresses, red and blue and green and cheap and skimp, that mark the women of the poorer men. Econowives, they're called. These women are not divided into functions. They have to do everything; if they can. (Atwood, 1986: 32)

Just by looking at this explanation, it can be highlighted that there is an obvious and outstanding lack of comprehension and societal disunity or detachment among the changing classes of women. This raises the question of most women, having experienced the power over the other and dissimilar roles below themselves, behave those women disrespectfully, or even more to it, insultingly. Owing to these, such a treatment gets to be the main component and reason why Offred is a hopeless heroine in Atwood's **The Handmaid's Tale**. Aunts, who are infertile, or women who passed childbearing age, are given some power over the handmaids and chosen to symbolize the state power. It is comprehended that Aunts make people aware of the philosophy or the ideas of the government through their barbaric indoctrinations.

One other crucial and essential feature to be realized in Atwood's **The Handmaid's Tale** as a dystopian novel is that she creates a highly restricted society in which not just the freedom of movement is curtailed, but also eating and bodily functions are regulated. Particularly, nothing is free but forbidden and limited. The handmaids are being watched, controlled, or under constant threat of death; language, food, population, books, dresses, sexual intercourses, and other social activities are strictly forbidden and controlled. What is more to that is Serena Joy will have a better reputation if the Commander has a child from Offred because the Wives gain legal status by means of the handmaids who were successful in conceiving a child from their Commanders.

As for another example in terms of language, some words are not used because of prohibition, such as abortion and sterile. In a way, Gilead turns into a place that language becomes a device or a kind of power that is controlled by the government. Furthermore, it is limited for the well-being of the society and the perseverance of politics that was created way beforehand. What is more, whatever the handmaids do is carefully monitored, whatever they consume or eat is watched or reported to the superiors, and whatever they eat is authorized in the interest of the potential child that they might carry. By this, Atwood raises awareness of the limitations of the Gileadean society by enabling the reader to question why everything happens in society and for what reasons.

To point out another depiction of the limitations in the Gileadean society, it will be reasonable to clarify the sexual intercourse that Offred and all other handmaids have to live through with their Commanders every month during their ovulation periods. It is called the Ceremony. The reason why it is called as such is that it is held according to the Bible and it is performed as a ritual. Offred has to lie on Serena Joy's lap, a phrase from the Bible has to be said out loud by the Aunt which is as follows: "And she said, Behold my maid Bilhah, go in unto her; and she shall bear upon my knees, that I may also have children by her." (The Bible, Genesis 30:3) What is more about that phrase, the tale of the handmaids actually comes from that story which is depicted from Genesis 30:3. In order to convey the seriousness of this ritual, Atwood uses this passage from the Bible. According to Bacci's article, it is obvious that: "In a theocracy like Gilead, the Bible becomes an instrument that can justify all the extreme and oppressive actions of the government." (Bacci, 2017: 160) In a sense, Atwood builds the problematic system of Gilead's false image on holy grounds, which can be seen as the most fundamentalist structure of societies. The system in Gilead is based upon conservatism, and therefore the Bible. In this way, they think that they practise religion. In her article, Neuman tells plainly that:

In dystopias, the doxology of the Christian fundamentalist Right that would return women to their homes to fulfil their putative biological destiny is realized by a handmaid lying between a wife's legs in a parody of the Biblical story of Rachel and her servant Billah. (Neuman, 2006: 865)

To be precise, the story that goes in Genesis 30: 3 is about Rachel and Jacob who cannot marry each other because Jacob's family lures him into marrying Rachel's sister, who is called Leah, instead. In the end, he winds up marrying both of the sisters and he cannot get them pregnant. Jacob is allowed to get his maids pregnant so that Rachel could demand the right to have the children as if they were her own because Leah and Rachel can have none. From another perspective, Serena Joy cannot have babies, and she and the Commander want to claim authority in the government. She can do that so long as she can have children. On reflection, she uses Offred's body to wield power. If by any chance Offred gets pregnant, Serena Joy will claim right on her child just like Rachel does in the related story in the biblical phrase.

This ceremony has to be conducted in the presence of Serena Joy, the Wife of the house, and all of the participants should be robbed out of all emotions, especially love. The Ceremony stands only for reproduction, and it is for the sake of giving babies to the government. Love and passion are the sentiments that are forbidden in this process. This sexual intercourse becomes a responsibility and business that has to be carried out or fulfilled for the state. Offred remarks her idea of the ceremony and the sex as follows: "The sexual act, although he performed it in a perfunctory way, must have been largely unconscious, for him, like scratching himself." (Atwood, 1986: 169)

The idea of love is not liked; as a matter of fact, it is despised in this system. The reason for the idea of love to be despised is that the more the government blocks the thoughts and feelings, the more they have power over the system and the people within it. In other words, any kind of emotional diversion would endanger the perpetuity of the system, which is why the idea of love is despised. Aunt Lydia, who is the best representative of the state voice in the novel, says that:

Love said Aunt Lydia with distaste. Don't let me catch you at it. No mooning and June-ing around here, girls. Wagging her finger at us. *Love* is not the point. (Atwood, 1986: 232)

Without any doubt, she signifies that love is another type of crime that all the handmaids should keep in their minds. That is why Aunt Lydia makes it very clear that love is a waste of time that might as well be used for reproduction or bettering the birth rates in the state. Also, she makes sure and reminds the handmaids that their purpose is not to fall in love with their Commanders but to get pregnant from them and give birth to their children. Therefore, Offred becomes a character that makes a choice between death and such a limited way of lifestyle. Offred thinks silently during one of the ceremonies by reasoning the situation in her mind as follows: “Nor does rape cover it: nothing is going on here that I haven’t signed up for. There wasn’t a lot of choice but there was some, and this is what I chose.” (Atwood, 1986: 88) Atwood addresses this by envisioning a world where being a mother is strictly related to government despotism in which any kind of action against the government, such as illegal sexual intercourse, is thought of as a constitutional felony. On the grounds that the handmaids in Gilead are not allowed to have abortions, they are all sorted owing to their fertility rate - the ratio of giving birth. From all the reasons above, they are seen as negatively connected to the fetus, lawfully and culturally little less significant. The handmaids are expected to give birth, and if they cannot give birth, they will be sent to the colonies immediately. According to Heather Latimer’s article, she supports this idea by saying that: “[...] women are named unwomen when they are unable to reproduce [...]” (Latimer, 2009: 221) What is considerably shocking is that handmaids can be killed if they are accused of starting an uprising, even if they can bear children and give birth. In this case, the foundation rule of the government, which is upon birth-giving rights, can be broken if they are involved in a rebellion. The system itself is problematic in terms of constituting and establishing all odds and components upon the idea of giving birth and building a healthy generation. For this reason, the system requires to be feared in order to be protected and therefore be protested against and antagonised. It creates a situation to guarantee its own safety without any confusion or uprising.

However, it is an undeniable fact that the Commander takes a liking to Offred because he invites her to his room simply for the innocent wish to play scrabble with her. Actually, it becomes quite clear when the story unfolds that the Commander felt

that way towards many Offreds before, as well. It seems like it is not a special occasion for him because he lives through this with all of them. At first, Offred thinks that the Commander will do something pervert in his study room to her, and in fact, he has all the right and power to act as he wishes in this male centred system. On the contrary, after some time passes with these appointments in his study, the Commander desires to move these feelings for Offred to the Ceremony as well, which is again considered as a crime. Offred gets bewildered and starts to feel something that she cannot put her finger on. She ponders:

I ought to feel hatred for this man. I know I ought to feel it, but it isn't what I do feel. What I feel is more complicated than that. I don't know what to call it. It isn't love. (Atwood, 1986: 68)

She is in-between and torn apart, in terms of feeling anything towards him, and this situation leaves her in a rock and hard place. She defines her emotions as follows:

It's lack of love we die from. There's nobody here I can love, all the people I could love are dead or elsewhere. Who knows where they are or what their names are now? They might as well be nowhere, as I am for them. I too am a missing person. (Atwood, 1986: 113)

Offred knows that there is nobody in her life that she can actually feel affection for or love. She has to survive in the Republic of Gilead. If it was not for this government, she would not exist at all, or worse she would be dead or an unwoman just like her mother.

In this respect, it becomes utterly vital to give the example of Offred's mother as being the unwoman since Offred blames her mother as a consequence of her mother's activities. According to Wisker's article:

[...] she burned pornography and invited Offred, as a child to do the same. Her mother represented the energies of women in 1980s who sought to argue for and achieve political, personal, and economic equality while Offred and her generation reaped the benefits with their own jobs, bank accounts, and equal rights, at least ostensibly. (Wisker, 2010: 34)

Because Offred's mother could not change her position within the society, she could not escape but wound up an unwoman. The reader understands from Offred's indication that the whole issue is with the system itself, and it is an existential matter for Offred. In stating that vaguely, but comprehensively, Offred in a way asserts that the system is circular in itself and doomed to treat the citizens similarly. For example, her mother burns all the magazines of pornographic figures just like the religious believers do. From Offred's point of view, she is against such an idea of othering and thinks that it is not the solution but the source of all the unacceptable rough actions in the novel. This idea of othering makes the system oppressive, and it is a continuing circle when the opposite is considered. If the roles were different, the ones who are unwomaned now would unman or unwoman the others back then in return. In other words, Atwood successfully presents similar ideas between the religious and feminist point of view through Offred's narration. Thus, Atwood mirrors the religious and feminist points of view to each other by showing their similarities.

As for another element to consider as the utmost relevance and predominant significance in **The Handmaid's Tale**, Atwood pictures a dystopian novel framework for her female protagonist experiencing restriction not only socially, but also physically. Latimer points out in her article that:

Women in Gilead are not only banned from having abortions, but are socially stratified according to their ability to successfully give birth; they are not only seen as adversely related to the foetus, but are less important legally, politically, and culturally. (Latimer, 2009: 216)

This kind of depiction in the article is one of the typical characteristics of dystopian novels, which is a prominent feature of the hopeless dystopia. In the Gileadean society, the women along with other people are classified and grouped according to their prescribed job descriptions, which are also bound to the constitution. No matter how hidden or secret the resistance is, Gilead's tyranny does not put up with women who do not conform to those prescribed roles. It is also worth bearing in mind that women in Atwood's writing are not only unconditionally precluded from the

presence in the government, but also from any business or any activities outside the house.

The handmaids are in a powerless situation, and they are only seen as empty vessels, which reflects the passive female role that was prevailing during the 18th century. During that era, the actual relation of the baby was considered to be no other than the father. In the novel, the only purpose of the handmaids' existence is to produce children for Commanders to whom they are obliged to serve whenever the Commanders say so. For instance, Offred owns a file as if she was a worker in a company. Serena Joy says: "I've read your file. As far as I'm concerned, this is like a business transaction." (Atwood, 1986: 25) Serena Joy explicitly conveys the message in this quotation by saying that this whole thing is a kind of business to her. However, it is only fair to consider that Serena Joy herself is also a part of that system, and she has no choice but to accept Offred with no questions asked. Since Serena Joy's husband, the Commander, is one of the new founders of the state, Serena Joy has to embrace whatever comes from that system acquiescently. Hence, the handmaids, without having any choice, are regarded as the bodies to carry the children of the future of Gilead.

Offred simply plays the role of an unreliable narrator. Considering this, Offred develops to a much more believable character. All the more reason, she is a psychologically immature female character written from a woman's point of view. The reason for her to remember and narrate this story is to remain sane and keep her sanity. Not to mention that the women are subservient in this sense, unfortunately, the plight of them is abysmal, and their conquest is complete. At the heart and core of Offred's idea reclines some innocent victimized way of womanhood that is being utilized. To illustrate, Offred was a character who once had a family, a personal life, a job; however, at the course of the events that occur in the story, she had already forgotten her own name, let alone her family, her life, and her job, etc. The reader gets to comprehend this kind of information through what she narrates in her flashbacks, or memoirs as follows:

I have them, these attacks of the past, like faintness, a wave sweeping over my head. Sometimes it can hardly be borne. What is to be done, what is to be done, I thought. There is nothing to be done. (Atwood, 1986: 62)

In this part, she portrays the general look of Gilead, yet in addition to this, she describes how she is treated in Gilead as a woman and how this influences her psychology profoundly. It is obvious in some terms that Offred experiences a military coup and lives through a new regime. Over night, she loses everything that constitutes her identity and whatever there is to define herself. When the theocratic regime is formed, she has already lost her property to the state, along with her husband and daughter. She is a hopeless character that can do nothing but accept the new regime. Keeping her real name and remembering it continuously is an important detail, but she never says it out loud. She hides her identity to remind herself of what she used to be. One reason for Gilead to give names to the handmaids is to create perception operation and deplete the collective memory. She states her exact feelings by putting them into words as follows:

My name isn't Offred, I have another name, which nobody uses now because it's forbidden. I tell myself it doesn't matter, your name is like your telephone number, useful only to others; but what I tell myself is wrong, it does matter. I keep the knowledge of this name like something hidden, some treasure I'll come back to dig up one day. I think of this name as buried. This name has an aura around it, like an amulet, some charm that's survived from an unimaginably distant past. (Atwood, 1986: 88)

While reading along these lines, one can understand that the new names are given by their Commanders to the handmaids. Also, the new government does not let the handmaids use their old names. Instead of these, they are identified merely by the Commander they serve, so a handmaid's identity is totally subsumed within her Commander's. She becomes a possession of the regime. Moreover, she has no choice to support a political party or side with a rebellion. Offred's name then is literally what it looks like "of Fred", which means Fred is her Commander and she is his possession. (Coad, 2001: 58) When she leaves, the next handmaid who takes her place will become the new Offred, and the narrator will have this new name. She owns no name and she possesses no identity. Namely, she is just a handmaid that

serves the Commander, who will impregnate her. As Latimer makes it quite simply plain in her article that:

For instance, the handmaids are forbidden to read and write, and are dehumanized through the erasure of their names. Offred takes her name from her Commander Fred only (Of Fred). This reminds her that he is her sole identity, and her sole salvation, as the next handmaid in his house will share this name if she is unsuccessful in producing a child for him. (Latimer, 2009: 219)

This kind of an act, such as naming, isolates the protagonist or the other handmaids from any kind of individuality. Officially, they are labelled as the products of the government; in fact, they become no different than animals. Latimer also puts forward in her article additionally that:

The fact that Offred takes her name from her Commander only, for instance, parodies the illusory control of patriarchy, which takes its symbolic power to a large extent from men's ability to name women and children. (Latimer, 2009: 221)

It means that the handmaids are solely a possession of the Commander. As an illustration, Aunt Lydia imposes on the handmaids that they have to characterise themselves with the Gileadean government. It means that they should not claim themselves as individual human beings, but merely the seeds working for the government and serving the Commanders. As Aunt Lydia says to all the handmaids in the Red Centre "Think of yourselves as seeds." (Atwood, 1986: 28) It does not matter if their bodily functions are not working properly; what matters most is if their reproductive organs are fertile and ready to bear a child to the new government system. As Rubenstein observes in her article about this issue as follows:

From the central issue of procreation to the language and imagery that form the substructure of Offred's narrative, *The Handmaid's Tale* demonstrates multiple inversions and violations of nature and natural. Not only is the female body used as a tool for reproduction, but bodies in general are objectified and described in terms of parts rather than as wholes. (Rubenstein, 1988: 103)

All of these point out that the handmaids are only there because of breeding intentions, and their womanhood is only acceptable for their reproductive organs.

By looking at Offred as a dystopian character, she may be seen as one who does not feel worthy of herself. That is why she always reminds herself of her former name, what she could once do and how others used to see her in her previous life. In this respect, she feels so weak and thin as she thinks she becomes transparent “as if she was made of smoke.” (Atwood, 1986: 85) She thinks that people will be able to see through her as if she was a “mirage, fading before their eyes.” (Atwood, 1986: 85) Nonetheless, she wants to be recognized, valued, and seen important, and she cries out “I want to be held and told my name, I want to be more than valuable.” (Atwood, 1986: 97) Offred is in such a situation that she has lost control of herself and she is fading. Besides, the handmaids “have been warned not to look too happy.” (Atwood, 1986: 85) Given this fact, even what they should feel is under control.

In terms of the narration, the framework that Atwood draws can also be seen in the first-person narration as follows:

My presence here is illegal. It's forbidden for us to be alone with the Commanders. We are for breeding purposes: we aren't concubines, geisha girls, courtesans. On the contrary: everything possible has been done to remove us from that category. There is supposed to be nothing entertaining about us, no room is to be permitted for the flowering of secret lusts: no special favours are to be wheedled, by them or us, there are to be no footholds for love. We are two-legged wombs, that's all: sacred vessels, ambulatory chalices. (Atwood, 1986: 146)

Therefore, the reader closely connects with the character via personal relationship. For example, in this quotation, Offred tells openly to the reader that she has to obey the Commander's commands. However, she has the perfect capacity to understand that she is not allowed in that room alone with him. Moreover, it is undeniable that this sort of narration provides the reader with Offred's point of view without external influence. Hence, Offred's narrative is noteworthy for several reasons. Offred tells her story throughout the novel in the first-person, even though she is not allowed to write, read, think, and even criticize. This kind of a narration simply enables the reader to have access to the ideas of the character and directly reach the handmaid's thoughts. Another point of looking at this matter is that other than creating a bond between the reader and herself, telling her story wholly becomes an act of defiance.

This act makes it clear that in a society such as hers, which does not allow women to read or write, Atwood's writing is a protest in itself. As a matter of fact, it occurs as a "gesture of resistance to imprisonment in silence, just as it becomes the primary means for her psychological survival." (Howells, 2006: 127)

Atwood is fully aware of the dystopian reality of hell on earth, as well. She asked in one of her interviews in the early 80's "What future hell awaits women?" and she indicates specific answers for that question. She makes a thorough analysis claiming from Offred's standpoint at the beginning of Chapter forty-one by writing that:

I wish this story were different. I wish it were more civilized. I wish it showed me in a better light, if not happier, then at least more active, less hesitant, less distracted by trivia. I wish it had more shape. I wish it were about love, or about sudden realizations important to ones' life, or even about sunsets, birds, rainstorms, or snow. (Atwood, 1986: 267)

One might resolve from the quotation above that Offred is very much in pain and reflects this feeling of hers in a very realistic way by giving examples from life itself. No matter how hard she does not want to be in this story, she always finds herself in the middle of it. Her tale is founded on the self-consciousness of her storytelling and the self-reflexivity of her narration. She is so trapped in this dystopia that she knows perfectly well that there is nothing she can do to change this reality. She even makes a connotation in the line where she asserts:

By telling you anything at all I'm at least believing in you, I believe you're there, I believe you into being. Because I'm telling you this story I will your existence. I tell; therefore, you are." (Atwood, 1986:267)

It only seems fair to state that she exists as long as she tells the story of her life on the grounds that she wants her narration to be her validation and value. (Cavalcanti, 2000: 172) By way of telling her story this way, she also makes sure that her audience exists as follows:

I feel very unreal, talking to you like this. I feel as if I'm talking to a wall. I wish you'd answer. I feel so alone. All alone by the telephone. Except I can't

use the telephone. And if I could, who could I call? Oh God. It's no joke. Oh God oh God. How can I keep on living? (Atwood, 1986:205)

Accordingly, the act of telling stories, having a connection, and striving against solitude through stories are substantial to Offred because she is gradually moving to a radical notion of the self. As a matter of fact, she undertakes a self that could walk outside of its society, and she even utters a critique about that society. However, Atwood delves into the fact about her creation that Bloom makes clear in his statement as follows:

The voice is that of an ordinary, more or less cowardly woman rather than a heroine because I suppose I am more interested in social history than in the biographies of the outstanding. (Atwood qtd in Bloom, 16)

In this quotation, it might as well be understood that while reading Offred's story, the reader does not know what is next. Atwood depicts her character as coward and ordinary. Also, it becomes obvious that the reader has access to the simplest thoughts of the handmaids by reading these lines. Atwood endeavours to make it clear from the protagonist Offred's point of view that Offred desperately hopes to be a fruitful handmaid in this system because she knows that this is the least she can do in order to earn respect in this society. "Oh God, obliterate me. Make me fruitful. Mortify my flesh. That I may be multiplied." (Atwood, 1986: 194) The message here is that Offred wants to get rid of all the continuous ceremonies and rituals in this way, to give birth and to be sent to somewhere else at the end so that she can get rid of the house.

Privacy is also considered to be another issue by Atwood as it is quite clear in the quotation below by Howells. The policy that is put by the government suggests that no handmaid should have privacy so that they can easily be penetrated. Howells makes it simply clear by telling as follows:

"My room, then. There has to be some space, finally, that I claim as mine, even in this time." (Atwood, p. 60) These words spoken by Atwood's Handmaid, deprived of her own name and citizenship and known simply by the patronymic 'Offred', might be taken as emblematic of a woman's survival narrative told

within the confines of a patriarchal system represented by the dystopia known as Gilead. Restricted to private domestic spaces and relegated to the margins of political structure which denies her existence as an individual, nevertheless Offred asserts her right to tell her story. (Howells, 2006: 126)

As it is stated by Howells, the status of a woman is defined by that male-dominant system. Even the rooms' doors of the handmaids do not close properly. "The door of the room-not my room, I refuse to say my- is not locked. In fact, it doesn't shut properly." (Atwood, 1986: 18) As it is seen in the quotation, she does not have the intention to own the room. She says that it is not her room because she does not want to be a part of that house or the system in the big picture. Apparently, she rejects the idea of having a place or a room in the system as much as she can. If she starts owning the room as her own, she will already have acknowledged the system and be normalized in it. Moreover, Offred says that she cannot own or possess anything. She is not allowed for that either because everything is the state's possession or she cannot own anything at all. She should not have an identity other than what is attributed to her by the Commander, she should not own anything other than the red robe given to her by the Commander. She does not even have a right to say that her room is actually her room. Therefore, she refuses to say, "my room." Furthermore, their loneliness is not wanted other than the times when they get a shower or sleep.

Offred keeps all her emotions starting from the very beginning of the novel, and now in this quotation below, the reader gets to know the overall intentions of Offred against the house, the Commander, and Serena Joy as follows:

There are a number of things I could do. I could set fire to the house, for instance. I could bundle up some of my clothes, and the sheets, and strike my one hidden match. [...] I could tear my bedsheet into strips and twist it into a rope of sorts and tie one end to the leg of my bed and try to break the window.... I could go to the Commander, fall on the floor, my hair dishevelled, as they say, grab him around the knees, confess, weep, implore.... I could hide behind the door, wait until she comes, hobbles along the hall, bearing whatever sentence, penance, punishment, jump out at her, knock her down, kick her sharply and accurately in the head. To put her out of her misery, and myself as well. To put her out of our misery. I could go to Nick's room, over the garage, as we have done before. I could wonder whether or not he would let me in, give me shelter. (Atwood, 1986: 292)

Prior to the arrival of Mayday officers, Offred muses that there are many things she could do before being collected. She has a lot of things in her mind, but she cannot make them real. With the coming of the black van, which was prior to their arrival, Nick says it is Mayday, and Offred's fate was sealed. The reader does not know if Nick is lying to get Offred calmly downstairs to the so-called Mayday officers, which she always wanted, or to the watchers to capture her instead. However, while the officers are taking her, the Commander and Serena Joy ask if they have a warrant to take Offred, or what Offred has done to be taken away like this. The supposed Mayday officers reply "Not that we need one, sir, but all is in order...Violation of state secrets." (Atwood, 1986: 295) After that, no word was heard of Offred's whereabouts. Atwood chooses not to mention Offred's denouement, leaving the reader without any clue. However, there are some interpretations of what could have happened to her such as: being helped by Nick just like he says that the Mayday officers arrived to take her and make it look like a violation of state secrets, having been sent to the colonies to become unwoman like her mother was, and being helped to escape to be abducted again later on, or worse killed. Atwood wants the reader to form his/her own opinion about Offred and work on it in his/her imagination.

One last issue about the hopeless dystopia that Offred is in can be observed on the last pages of the last chapter:

[...] As all historians know, the past is a great darkness, and filled with echoes. Voices may reach us from it; but what they say to us is imbued with the obscurity of the matrix out of which they come; and, try as we may, we cannot always decipher them precisely in the clearer light of our own day. (Atwood, 1986: 324)

In this quotation, Atwood directly explains her idea of the political order and how silently things may change. Like Orwell's reading of Soviet Russia in his dystopian novel **Nineteen Eighty-Four**, and Huxley's critique of consumerist America in the **Brave New World**, Atwood reflects such kind of themes and motives from the contemporary political environment of North America and Canada she lives in. Looking back at those times, shreds of evidence and examples of events such as

nuclear waste, declining birth rates, religious cultism, surrogate motherhood, and more issues can be found in her novel. Margaret Atwood emphasizes such several issues in her novel **The Handmaid's Tale** including the separation of biological mothers from their children, handmaids being enforced by laws, and giving babies to the Commanders they serve.

Another opinion in order to grasp the idea of hope in the novel, referring to the closing part of the novel, which is the conference part, is also noteworthy. In other words, the last chapter of **The Handmaid's Tale** will be the last thing that will be analysed in this chapter. At the very end of her novel, Atwood addresses a far future of the world. It is approximately a hundred and fifty years. In general terms, by looking at the atmosphere in the novel at the end, she gives voice to an archivist Professor Pieixoto, by revealing the proof that is unearthed by means of a number of cassettes. Atwood warns the reader about the past and present holding false perceptions of each other, just like Professor Pieixoto warns his audience in the conference part of the novel, too. Professor Pieixoto specifically mentions at the beginning of his speech that the audience should not be judging the Gileadean government from the viewpoint of their own time and cultural standards. In his speech, he also reminds that now that the audience is free of the things which are mentioned in the recorded cassettes left from the Gileadean period of time, they are better off than the settled and seemingly barbaric circumstances. He continues as follows:

[...] in my opinion we must be cautious about passing moral judgment upon the Gileadeans. Surely we have learned by now that such judgments are of necessity culture-specific. Also, Gileadean society was under a good deal of pressure, demographic and otherwise, and was subject to factors from which we ourselves are happily more free. Our job is not to censure but to understand. (Atwood, 1986: 302)

Briefly, Professor Pieixoto sees and understands the difference in the shape of the governing styles between his time and back then. Also, he wants the audience to understand the contrast between the communities and the era. The societal pressures of the Gileadean society do not exist anymore in Professor Pieixoto's society, so the

audience would have a limited perception with their contemporary outcomes commenting on the events that occurred in Offred's time in Gilead. After hearing that from the professor, hearing them laugh about what happened before in the Gileadean system is what actually makes the end of the book a more hopeless one in the eyes of the reader. In her article, Cavalcanti makes it clear about this part of the book especially by saying that:

[...] they (the reader) are initially shocked by the triviality of the conference announcements given just before the Professor's speech. Lacking the rhetorical sophistication and emotional appeal of the Handmaid's personal account, the latter consists in a collection of gross misinterpretations, misogynistic asides and jokes, and instances of academic vanity and false modesty delivered to a passive audience. (Cavalcanti, 2000: 172)

Considering that there is a conference held in the aftermath of the dystopian government of Gilead gives the reader the impression that the audience learnt what had been suffered all along by the handmaids. Now, the intellectual community is delivering speeches about the government then and commenting on the catastrophic events before that time in Gilead. According to Cavalcanti's article: "[...] All this is rendered in a type of prose [...] increasing the distance between Pieixoto and his audience and conveying an authoritarian and possessive attitude." (Cavalcanti, 2000: 172) Nonetheless, this is just one face of the medallion and sadly not the bright one. Since laughing after such disastrous events make the situation scary and seem like black humour, the reader is inclined to think that the extreme side of everything results in dystopia. The problem within this hopeless dystopia is that after the desolation of Gileadean society, the intellectuals of the aftermath of this society make fun of the things that happened. In this sense, the conference part of the novel, which is the last chapter, shows the reader that a reversed system of a dystopia could be another dystopia that can be created by every kind of government, not especially a theocratic one. The conferences mentioned in this part of the novel are approximately a hundred years of the demolition of Gilead.

In conclusion, Atwood plays the role of a herald and of a messenger of catastrophes, which can also be seen as true in life in terms of politics, human and

feminist rights. In other words, she can basically apprehend the world as it is – reaching slowly to a dreadful terrible end of its own. This is also a possible issue that has already been discussed in Latimer's article:

Many critics have already noted that Atwood's novel can be read as a feminist warning of what is to come if we are not vigilant about maintaining women's rights, while others are ambivalent about the novel's feminist politics, noting that Offred has a little or no real agency in the story or that the novel's premise is itself implausible. (Latimer, 2009: 214)

As a matter of fact, she does not suggest an end of life because Atwood's dystopian creation uniquely deteriorates every other day, even supposing that her fantastic world coincides with or more acutely mirrors our actual world. Thus, even the end of the novel turns out to be a hopeless dystopia because Offred's whereabouts remain uncertain. The reader knows for sure from the recordings that Offred escapes but does not know what happened to her. What happens to her at the end is uncertain. The conference part of the novel is overall proof of the hopeless dystopia that is told in this chapter. The reader gets the chance to have an opinion of Offred's denouement thanks to the last chapter. Atwood creates a meta-narrative by providing the reader with the last chapter of the novel. Therefore, the reader comes to the realization of Offred's narration after her escape. Thus, Atwood's **The Handmaid's Tale** remains to be a hopeless dystopia for the reader just as the one aforementioned in Chapter One on Angela Carter's **Heroes and Villains**.

As a last resort, one important aspect that Atwood presents is that there is a sheer reality in a society like Gilead because the reproductive laws ridicule the patriarchal, man-centred theocratic culture. As it is stated in Latimer's article:

The novel's use of satire allows for an experimentation of reproductive politics beyond dominant frameworks that not only supported reproductive debates in the 1980s, but continue to support them today. (Latimer, 2009:213)

Along with that, the laws which carve out this society unveil how notions such as choice, freedom, and privacy are useless by their nature. (Latimer, 2009:213) What is more, they give the sense of how futile they might be because of enclosing a

patriarchal legal system and its gender-oriented reproductive politics in the meantime. For instance, Coral Ann Howells characterizes Atwood's position as representing a balance between respect for generic conventions and an insistent challenge to traditional limits. In detail, Howells rightly speaks of Atwood as follows: "[...] continuous experimentation across genre boundaries, and the political and ideological significance of such revisions." (Howells, 2006: 139) Also, she poignantly points out that not only genre theory nowadays regards genres as fixed categories, but also as follows: "[...] rhetorical strategies or social institutions which are responsive to particular historical and ideological imperatives." (Howells, 2006: 140) Therefore, the novel inevitably meets some of the certain feminist and dystopian objectives of its time. Although it may slightly be regarded as a critic of the utopian thought, it could be classified as a critic of the dystopian idea as well. In this respect, Atwood conjointly and intentionally conducts her writing against the expanding postmodern trend within the 1980s feminism, together in a social context of her time.

All things considered, according to the journalist Susan Faludi, feminists were "a prime enemy" in the New Rights' point of view, which evolved in America in the period of 80s. In order to completely comprehend this point means practically to grasp the true meaning of **The Handmaid's Tale**. For this reason, through Atwood's dystopian vision of the near future, she accurately unmasks the directive nature of utopianism, which attributes the major amount of feministic thought of Second Wave feminism. This kind of a societal assertiveness is one characteristic of the dystopian vision, which clearly touches on the matters distressingly, and these issues are close to contemporary concerns just like the intensifying war over abortion, pregnancy, and fetal rights. (Latimer, 2009: 213)

As a consequence of these events, Atwood ends up foreseeing the sick and decayed results of today's rotten and spoiled realities vividly by showing them to the reader in her novel. Atwood's novel **The Handmaid's Tale** shows conservative oppression's effect coming from the government that is inflicted upon women. Whereof, this chapter proves that the protagonist Offred is a more hopeful character

than Marianne considering their female dystopian writing background because she is able to escape the dystopian world and tell her story to the world.



CHAPTER THREE

Suzanne Collins' Trilogy and the Dystopian Heroine Katniss

Suzanne Collins' trilogy **The Hunger Games** is the last dystopian novel series that will be looked at in detail. The first novel **The Hunger Games** came out in 2008, and then the second novel **Catching Fire** was published in 2009. Lastly, the last novel of the trilogy **Mockingjay** was out in 2010. Suzanne Collins apparently wrote the series for a certain audience in order to create an actual heroine with the coming of a technological era and a tech-savvy youth. The novel regards dystopian fiction as the consequences of a political outcome. As Andrea Ruthven plainly declares in her article that:

Arguably, the consumerist, individualistic, competitive and apparently apolitical Capitol of Suzanne Collins' *The Hunger Games* trilogy calls attention to the ways in which postfeminist rhetoric surrounding women's alleged liberation through capitalist consumption, competitive individualism and heteronormative desirability, can be read as a contemporary dystopia. (Ruthven, 2017, 49)

That is why the qualities of this trilogy which are stated above in the quotation are what make it a contemporary dystopian fiction in the reader's eyes. What is more, Collins successfully puts the protagonist in the centre of the novel and embeds her in the first narrative. Also, the series is similar to the types of dystopias that are depicted in the former examples of dystopian fictional writings such as the ones written by Anthony Burgess's **A Clockwork Orange**, or Margaret Atwood's **Oryx and Crake**. As the trilogy unfolds and the story develops, the protagonist, Katniss, also evolves into a character that betters herself consciously for the greater good.

The background of **The Hunger Games** trilogy is actually the type of set that has been analysed in any dystopian novel so far when especially looked at the classical ones such as **Brave New World**, or **Nineteen Eighty-Four**. What makes **The Hunger Games** trilogy different from those classical dystopias is that the society in Panem is portrayed as more or less a type of society that acquires the

control and gets movement on grounds of hope by acting on it. In this case, it can be said that the people of Panem were in need of a revolutionary figure of just like Katniss, and hope was not something that was deficient in their lives. Ruthven states in her article about that by saying:

Collins' novels participate in this by critiquing humanist individualism through Katniss' affective community-building, which relies heavily on a posthuman understanding of the body. [...] As such, the trilogy offers an alternative to postfeminist narratives of fierce individualism expressed through commodity culture and disciplinary measures for grooming and beauty. (Ruthven, 2017: 50)

Therefore, it can be understood that hope was there in the society only as a mindset of hoping for a better lifestyle but not in a collective mindset, rather an individualistic one.

In a manner of speaking, **The Hunger Games** trilogy shows itself as a result of the twenty first century's neoliberal political world. Together with the coming of the excessive use of technology in the twenty-first century, the trilogy shows the idea of a collective mind like an imperative component on the way towards a public improvement and reformation. On the other hand, **The Handmaid's Tale** and **Heroes and Villains** might be read as the basis of totalitarianism and the desolation of the individual agency. It can easily be said that either as a part of the political formation or the societal conjuncture, people have always benefited from the ideas of desire. They hoped for the idea of a better place starting from the early times and going on up to now. Therefore, it is seen in the conversation below that the notion of hope is used by the oppressive government in the trilogy, which is the Capitol as a means to control people as follows:

President Snow: Seneca, why do you think we have a winner?

Seneca Crane: What do you mean?

President Snow: I mean, why do we have a winner? I mean if we just wanted to intimidate the districts why not round up twenty-four at random, and execute them all at once? It would be a lot faster. [*Seneca Crane stays silent*]

President Snow: Hope.

Seneca Crane: Hope?

President Snow: Hope. It is the only thing stronger than fear. A little hope is

effective. A lot of hope is dangerous. Spark is fine, as long as it's contained.
(**The Hunger Games**, 2008)⁷

This quotation is of great importance, and it exemplifies a higher authority trying its utmost probability and doing whatever it can to settle the lower class in the dark and keeping them ignorant. The impact of containing that hope might as well bring about the proletarians accepting the idea of life is something that is not. President Snow, who is the political leader of the totalitarian regime in the trilogy, attributes to having hope as little hope. In fact, this works on the condition that the system maintains itself and keeps its people within this oppressive governmental system, not the kind that people can revolt against and pave the way to challenge the government. In this perspective, **The Hunger Games** begins like a post-apocalyptic dystopia in which societal judgment is included. Afterwards, it turns into an effort and coming to an understanding of what can be regarded as a revolution. The plot of the trilogy brings the notions of autocracy and individualism together with the consciousness of the political environment and the abuse of power. President Snow is making sure that every person relies on the fact that they are playing their one and sole piece of the act in society. That is why hope becomes the weapon that President Snow uses to disarm society, which eventually becomes the end of his creation.

That dialogue displayed above is taken from the first novel of the trilogy right after the elections of the tributes that take place at the beginning of the novel, while the tributes are showing their abilities to the Game-maker, Seneca Crane. In one moment of an instant mindset, Katniss dares to shoot her arrow right next to Seneca Crane's head proving efficaciously that she is capable of using an arrow flawlessly and as Ben Murnane states in his essay "she fights for real." (Murnane, 2018: 294) Only by this action, she shows evidence of defiance, insomuch as President Snow wants her to play the role of hope that he is very eager to implement on his people through Katniss' actions. However, it will demonstrate itself in no time that too much hope, which can be dangerous for him and his regime, might cause a revolution to

⁷ Even though this thesis is about the trilogy of Suzanne Collins', it is imperative to site this quotation from the first movie adaptation of **The Hunger Games** book. Basically, this quotation shows the relation between hope and power for the status quo and the President's potency.

become reality, which again he has no intention to come across. This chapter of the thesis seeks to analyse the powerful heroine in a dystopian world who fights for her freedom and rights throughout **The Hunger Games** trilogy. By looking at her classical features as being the oppressed female character in an oppressing government, Katniss is seeking out for justice, as a result of which she achieves to be a hopeful figure in her society in order to create a change in her and people's lives.

The last chapter of this thesis will be evaluating how the heroine, Katniss, in **The Hunger Games** trilogy evolves into a hopeful character and takes the control of the society and her destiny when she is compared to the other heroines in the previous chapters of this thesis. Katniss achieves to turn the dystopian reality in the trilogy into a utopic one. The different hopeful representation of the female protagonist who is Katniss Everdeen in Suzanne Collins' trilogy will be examined in detail in terms of her socially hopeful place and role in society. The trilogy of Suzanne Collins' simply does not necessarily offer a revolutionary overview or suggests an assertion demonstrating an ideal society or a governmental order. What Collins puts forward is that having hope is necessary to the reality of survival. Briefly saying, living another and an alternate life other than the one in dystopia but outside of it seems highly possible in her trilogy.

After having looked at the understanding of hope in Collins' dystopian female creation, it is inevitably eminent that we look at the societal dynamics in Panem, the name that is given to the Districts in Collins' trilogy. Primarily, there are two kinds of different lives in the trilogy that can be observed. On the one hand, there are the districts, which are being watched regularly at all times closely and kept in check all the time by the government of the Capitol; on the other hand, there is the Capitol, the city whose residents live in luxury and eat food of every kind, which is also quite scarce in the districts and about which the people in the Districts know nothing. Moreover, it is important to point that the people who live in the Capitol have a totally different life than the ones in the Districts because they spend most of their time to fuss about the latest trends and hairstyles, as if there was nothing to be discussed about the issues such as the absurdity of the hunger games, poverty in the

Districts, and the poor living standards in which the people live in the Districts. In a way, that is how they waste their time and explicitly express their individuality. Therefore, it might as well be regarded that Collins creates a dystopia upon disequilibrium in society in an extreme way.

However, in **The Hunger Games**, along with being an incentive of the awakening of a revolution, Katniss, hopefully, strives to become an alteration of the actual system in power. Together with that, she ends up becoming the hope for the idea of accomplishment collectively. By way of explanation, she symbolizes the hope which gives people something to live for. What's more, hope makes people become aware of the likelihood of an alternative, eventually encouraging people to stand up against the government. In addition, what is catchy about the setting in Collins' dystopian trilogy is that it is somewhat different than the settings in the common dystopian novels and the ones in the novels that have been examined in the first and second chapters in this thesis. Although it gives a hopeless dystopia like the ones in Atwood's and Carter's, the society in Collins' dystopia is driven by hope or merely the act of hope up until the end of the novels that eventually turns into a revolutionary hope and changes the course of people's lives forever. As the story unfolds, the intention of living in a better world comes into being together with the idea of hope and the representation of hope in Katniss' terms and conditions.

In order to give a more general outlook of the atmosphere and the societal preposition, it is substantial to point out the fact that at the very beginning of the trilogy in the first novel **The Hunger Games** where the reaping takes place, the mayor of District 12 gives a speech, and there he points out the background of the hunger games and how they emerged. Katniss retells the story in the first person, and she says:

He tells the story of Panem, the country that rose up out of the ashes of a place that was once called North America. He lists the disasters, the droughts, the storms, the fires, the encroaching seas that swallowed up so much of the land, the brutal war for what little sustenance remained. The result was Panem, a shining Capitol ringed by thirteen districts, which brought peace and prosperity to its citizens. Then came the Dark Days, the uprising of the districts against the Capitol. Twelve were defeated, the thirteenth obliterated. The Treaty of Treason

gave us the new laws to guarantee peace and, as our yearly reminder that the Dark Days must never be repeated, it gave us the Hunger Games. (**The Hunger Games**, 2008: 21)

By the quotation above, the reader is provided with a point of view that Panem has been a powerful society starting from its formation. The reader comes to the recognition that there was one rebellion long before, and the reader is given the question mark about whether the one that will take place in the novel be successful or not. Furthermore, it is clearly understood from the quotation above that Panem is a country that was established on the basis of a post-apocalyptic period in history.

The opinion that Capitol originated and caused “peace and prosperity to its citizens” is merely by that allegement’s contravenes with the savage circumstances of hunger and retribution, which they were subjected to without having been given a choice. On top of that, the reader further finds out that there used to be disobedience and revolt before Panem or in the recent past. It is revealed to the reader that it was exactly seventy-four years ago because of the fact that this is the exact number of yearly hunger games. It is also noted that this rebellion had been relentlessly restrained. Consequently, Panem seems like not only a strong and effective country but also a politically contained one. Rather, the legal dissertation about that retells the history and the background by referring the days of rebellion as the Dark Days and the rebellion itself as treason. It might as well be understood from the name that it was attributed to the treaty and it was legislated subsequently to the contained rebellion as the Treaty of Treason. For this reason, the government of the Capitol was placed as the provider of peace in contrast to the people who carried out the rebellion as traitors and betrayers. The districts were found as guilty and accused of that kind of treason as well and thus, they had been penalized by the hunger games in remembrance of the Dark Days. It is understood that the government was solely afraid of the reality that the districts might have an uprising in the future and keep them busy creating the fake reality of the hunger games.

It is imperative to mention the nature of Collins’ dystopian trilogy **The Hunger Games** and know the meaning of it to recognize and fully comprehend the overall

context. The hunger games, which is the same as the first novel name of the trilogy, are an annual tradition directed by the Capitol rulers, which is the old city of Panem, “a country that rose up out of the ashes” of North America. (**The Hunger Games**, 2008: 17) The trilogy depicts a future dystopian country such as the ones in **Heroes and Villains** and **The Handmaid’s Tale**. The games are played by the 12 districts’ chosen children and those districts constitute the city. In the novel, it is mentioned as follows:

The rules of the Hunger Games are simple. In punishment for the uprising, each of the districts must provide one girl and one boy, called tributes, to participate. The twenty-four tributes will be imprisoned in a vast outdoor arena that could hold anything from a burning desert to a frozen wasteland. Over a period of several weeks, the competitors must fight to the death. The last tribute standing wins. (**The Hunger Games**, 2008: 18)

In the quotation above, the reader is provided with a general outlook of the games. These games are not just only to entertain the citizens but also to demonstrate the dominant control over the districts by the Capitol’s pressing authority. Murnane makes it clear in his article by stating that:

[...] the Districts residents are made players in a performance of surface entertainment for the Capitol citizenry; those same players accomplish their respective roles in the Games – in the Capitol’s system – by suppressing or sacrificing any desires they might have for their own lives. (Murnane, 2018: 293)

Under the light that Murnane sheds upon the systematic play and the quotation from the book above, it is understood that every other year, each district is obliged to send a boy and a girl representative to those games who are called the tributes in order to make their district proud. Meanwhile, the whole nation shall watch the games on the large screens as those 24 tributes combat with each other to death until one of them becomes the victor, who ends up having the honor of being the pride of his/her district along with being rewarded with some food and luxurious products for him/herself and his/her family, as if those are the only problems that concern the society about the government.

Another point is that Katniss is far from a typical female dystopian protagonist because she is a character of strength and power, which derives from her lifestyle in Collins' dystopian trilogy. Primarily, she is 16 years old and strong enough to take care of her desperate widow mother "with her dead eyes" and little sister Prim "with her hollow cheeks and cracked lips." (**The Hunger Games**, 2008: 34) right after her father's death at the mine explosion since her childhood. Katniss shows her strength of character because she is as resistant as her father was. Moreover, she does not hesitate to show this feature of hers by taking all the responsibility of their house and feeding the rest of the family. For these reasons, it is up to Katniss to look after her psychologically problematic mom and little sister because her mom and sister rely on Katniss' efforts and talent of hunting to survive. For example, Katniss spends all her time during the days with her best friend Gale by hunting in the woods with her bow and arrows. "Katniss Everdeen is a hunter; she hunts alone, or with one friend, Gale." (Murnane, 2018: 294) She explicitly defines her experience in the forest as follows:

[...] the woods became our savior and each day I went a bit further into its arms. It was slow 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. (**The Hunger Games**, 2008: 62)

In a world like hers in the Districts, it is hard to find food. Despite that, she knows what to trade with what kind of food, what kind of animals to hunt, how to trade the materials, and with whom to trade. She has a lot of adjectives that define her, and some of those might be a hunter, a tradesman, a sister, a mother, and a father. However according to Murnane, "Katniss identifies more with her father than her mother." (Murnane, 2018: 294) The cause for Katniss to be identified with her father is that the person who took her to the woods is firstly her father.

As a matter of fact, hunting as an illegal activity defines Katniss' intentions throughout the novel starting from the beginning by giving this openly because she is already hunting, and her life is all about living like that. In this respect, her life is overall a rebellious activity that is committed against the Capitol outside the

boundaries and the restrictions of the government's powers and its screens. As Murnane states in his article "Katniss prefers to be away from the crowd." (Murnane, 2018: 294) Her natural habit of survival becomes the necessary rebellion itself resisting the very idea of survival by fighting the idea of the government. Also, Ruthven states in her article that: "The ability to hunt and to move outside the limits of her town becomes necessary for survival [...]" (Ruthven, 2017: 51)

Katniss demonstrates a strong female character in Collins' dystopia, and she can be seen as she is a mythological character, as well. In this sense, Katniss resembles one of the Greek gods, Artemis, because she bears some similarities in character and appearance to Artemis. Primarily, just like Artemis, Katniss looks after her sister and mother as Artemis looks after little girls and children characteristically. "I protect Prim in every way I can." (**The Hunger Games**, 2008: 16) She has to protect her family because they are vulnerable without Katniss' help and support. In addition to this example, Rue, one of the tributes that helps Katniss to gain and become the hopeful female protagonist that Katniss evolves into, is a girl that resembles Prim. For this reason, Katniss saves her life in the arena, so Katniss looks after her as well. Another element that can be attributed to Katniss in comparison to goddess Artemis is that Artemis is the symbol of purity and virginity, so she is against any relation to men. Similarly, Katniss wants no lover connection, neither with Gale in her life nor with Peeta in the arena. She portrays herself as an independent and strong character. Therefore, she is totally against the idea of showing off a lover relationship, even if it is for the sake of attracting the sponsors so as to stay alive in the arena. Murnane explicitly puts in his article about that by asserting: "Katniss is who she is, and she cannot act something different [...] she almost inevitably fails when she must be a fake, even when the stakes are extremely high." (Murnane, 2018: 294) It can be understood that she is against a love relationship and using it in her favor even if it is a matter of life and death for her life. She likes being herself all the time. Therefore, in this case, she is forced to go on with that love show with Peeta in the arena because she wants to get back to her life prior to the games. Doing that seems to be the only way out for her. She wants to be the hunter again, help her mother and Prim and look after them. They are desperately

in need of Katniss in order not to die due to hunger. Katniss does not choose to live a love affair with Peeta because she wants to survive the arena because she wants to get back to her family. One last resemblance of Katniss to the Greek goddess Artemis is that Katniss hunts and owns an arrow just like Artemis. Katniss passionately hunts for the sake of her family as it is explained as follows: "It's more than experience. It's a natural gift. Like the way I can shoot at an animal in almost complete darkness and still take it down with one arrow." (**Catching Fire**, 2009: 6) For example, in order for her to survive in the arena, at the very beginning of the games, one thing that she runs for is the bow and arrow because she is aware that she is only capable of surviving the arena by means of these tools. Likewise, Artemis is a goddess who is pictured with an arrow and a bow in the mythological pictures. In relation to these, along with those similarities told above, Katniss shows a strength of character in which the reader finds out through reading the trilogy in detail.

One more feature that makes Katniss a strong-willed character is that she narrates the trials in her life with frankness and in a realistic manner. She is not very sure about trusting people around her so easily, but what she is sure about is her feelings and that she hates the Capitol, which is the oppressive government she eventually crushes. In addition to that, she is ready to make a move to change if it means a better end or a greater future for her, for the people around her, for the districts, and most significantly for her little family. At the beginning of the first novel **The Hunger Games**, Katniss is only a character who cares about feeding her family and surviving the day with a full stomach, which also can be depicted as what constitutes her overall character. However, as the plot resolves, her ability to mind and foster about the other people around her and how she channels her inner nature of nurturing others becomes effective. As a result, she turns into the symbol for hope for the rebellion, and she can give rise to the idea of hope in order to survive. What Katniss basically opposes is the idea of killing the tributes in the so-called games but in fact, she is humanizing her opponents by her action and resist against the idea of killing them in the first place.

Reading deeper throughout the trilogy, it is recognized that the districts are apart from each other, divided into 12 parts, and ruled by the Capitol. Among the districts, there can be no connection, which was formerly made impossible by the oppressing and all watching government because any kind of relation would be considered as an act of heroism, terrorism, uprising, and defiance against the Capitol's rules. Furthermore, the Districts provide the needs of the city. All the 12 districts provide the Capitol with the essential food, livelihood supplies, housing, mines, money, resources, and everything that the people in the Capitol would feel the need to have in order to make their lives comfortable. In return of this act, the Capitol is in charge of the equal distribution of the things that come from those districts.

Nevertheless, as far as the reader can witness from Katniss' point of view, districts are never able to contact each other outside their own districts "[...] as travel between districts is forbidden except for officially sanctioned duties." (**The Hunger Games**, 2008: 41) A vacant relationship is being built between the districts. Through establishing an "us and them" state of mind, the Capitol guarantees alienation and detachment of the Districts. Ruthven suggests in her article about that by asserting:

Clearly, the Capitol's disciplinary measures work to separate individuals and communities from each other and reduce the potential for affective bonds and community to emerge, and by choosing to sacrifice herself Katniss actively defies this individualistic imperative. (Ruthven, 2017: 51)

Thus, the Districts are compelled to regard each other as rivals instead of partners. During the games, the Capitol controls the tributes towards each other to encounter and strife constrainedly. Also, Gale says in one of their conversations with Katniss that: "It's to Capitol's advantage to have us divided among ourselves." (**The Hunger Games**, 2008: 17) Even though unions are made, there must be one victor in the end. Since the Capitol makes all the districts subsidiary and subordinate to itself, it additionally puts another disincentive to the expansion of another chance of rebellion, just like the one in Dark Days as the Capitol fears. As President Snow fears, in the middle of the second novel **Catching Fire**, Katniss starts to realize this

issue when she starts her tour, which is called the Victor Tour after her victory in the hunger games at the end of the first book as follows:

Well, I've learned one thing today. This place is not a larger version of District 12. Our fence is unguarded and rarely charged. Our Peacekeepers are unwelcome but less brutal. Our hardships evoke more fatigue than fury. Here in 11, they suffer more acutely and feel more desperation. President Snow is right. A spark could be enough to set them ablaze. (**Catching Fire**, 2009: 83-4)

After Katniss is known to almost all districts, she starts to have this tour with Peeta. There, she sees what is happening in the districts and begins to have knowledge of the districts even more closely. Upon that, she realizes what she has known about them is not correct at all; they are not that obedient as they are seen. She gets the idea that there is more to the Districts than meets the eye.

Those invented games of the Capitol stand only for the districts to keep that predisposed non-existing relationship. Ruthven underlines the fact that:

Prior to becoming a tribute, Katniss has no contact with anyone outside of her district. The relationship between districts is non-existent, and the games function to foment distrust and competition and ensure that districts do not bond with each other. (Ruthven, 2017: 51)

As it can be deduced from the quotation above, heating up the anger and conflict between the districts makes sure that the districts are to stay distrusting each other forever. Designing the games in this way enables people to be forced to conform to their personal advantages instead of moving collectively. They are purposefully stopped by the government from creating any kind of unity that could fundamentally provide them the essential basis for practicing their agencies. Nevertheless, these fictitious, made-up games cease to become a connection in a plot twist, resulting in a scenario that the Capitol would think as the last resort in the chain of events.

Along with being uninformed and ignorant about the others in the Districts and thus each other's lives or conditions, the competition which is appointed among the Districts by way of the games is mischievously calculated and designed to manage them against the constitution of any kind of solidarity, which the government is very

much intimidated by. The very nature and essentiality of the games enforce the tributes to endure. They can be attached to their ability to kill others while being murdered at the same time. Because of the Capitol's unorthodox way of showing the fear of losing power over the society, a rather odd question pops up in the reader's mind: why not confine and take all those children in a place and assassinate them all together in public? A clear explanation for that can be the Capitol establishing itself on the grounds of people being dependent on it. Showing this kind of brutal way of slaughter seems like a reasonable way for keeping the districts away from each other just like the Capitol has intended.

This conduct also precedes that districts are kept enemies rather than knowing the real enemy is the Capitol itself. In this way, the Capitol hides its true self and intention behind the games. Besides, such a system gives the districts and the individuals some little hope that the President mentions at the beginning of this chapter in the quotation above. Encouraging them with little hope, also turns them into being hateful enemies and not realizing who the actual rival or the villain is. Their little hope of survival in the games is bound to the filthy, rich people in the Capitol, who are responsible for the death of those tributes. By this matter, the Capitol achieves to the side away the districts and keep them away by making them enemies to each other for its sake and for its safety in the future. In a way, the districts become hostile to each other on the basis that being subjected to the same kind of pain by the government. By this means, the chances of districts to recognize that in reality they are truly on the same side diminish. To conclude, the Capitol refrains the rise of class consciousness from happening.

The culture and life in the Capitol are so materialistic and indulgent that it bears a clear cut between the District life and the one in the Capitol's. Whereas the Capitol's inhabitants enjoy the comfort, bliss, richness provided by the Districts, the people in the Districts endure the hunger along with the pressure of the government. In this respect, Katniss imagines what it must be to live in a world where food appears at the press of a button, and so she wonders:

How would I spend the hours I now commit to combing sustenance if it were so easy to come by? What do they do all day, these people in the Capitol, besides decorating their bodies and waiting for a new shipment of tributes to roll in and die for their entertainments? (**The Hunger Games**, 2008: 80)

It is remarkable to see these differences are so incontrovertible among the Districts and the Capitol. Even though there is quite a big amount of famine and hunger among the districts and their people, grandeur and high rate of consumption is needlessly at its peak in the Capitol's residents. The people in the Capitol possess a hedonistic culture, and the need for an exaggerated outlook is of remarkable cruciality. In the Capitol, happiness means luxury, eating more and more, dressing up fashionably, coloring themselves up, whereas in the Districts happiness has an entirely opposite meaning. Panem and the Capitol are totally unaware of each other's lives. Namely, the people in the Capitol are nourished and entertained by the government, and they do not realize the uneven conditions in Panem, especially in the Districts. Katniss sees this lifestyle in the Capitol and says that "Who knows who I would be or what I would talk about if I'd been raised in the Capitol?" (**Catching Fire**, 2009: 46) To put it simply, the people in the Capitol and the people in the Districts have nothing in common. Furthermore, what is unjust for the ones in the Districts is entertaining those who reside in the Capitol. Another thing that is captivating while reading through the trilogy is that in order for the people of the Capitol to experience that luxury, the people must suffer the consequences and the hardships of the harsh living conditions in the Districts. That is to say, for the sake of the Capitol's welfare and meaningless consumption, the people in the Districts have to work and suffer painfully.

One element to bear in mind while reading through the trilogy as a dystopia is that Katniss narrates the whole story in the first-person just like Offred does in Atwood's **The Handmaid's Tale**. While Collins narrates her series in Katniss' first-person narration, she adds a sense of humor, which could be addressed as similar to the one in Atwood's **The Handmaid's Tale** in Offred's first-person narration. For that Offred uses tape to record her experiences and the reader learns about them years later in a conference. On the other hand, Collins, in the first novel of her

trilogy, loads and burdens the reader with Katniss' hate for the Capitol. Nearly every action she performs comes out of the hatred that she has toward the Capitol and President Snow. On the day of the reaping, she volunteers for the games in replacement of her little sister Prim. Katniss clarifies her state of mind about her volunteering by saying: "Family devotion only goes so far for most people on reaping day. What I did was the radical thing." (**The Hunger Games**, 2008: 31) In addition to that, Tan puts forward the idea that: "By offering her body as sacrifice, and willing making herself vulnerable to physical destruction, but on her own terms, Katniss inspires her world to take action." (Tan, 2013: 63) When glanced from the reader's perspective, it is obvious that she never regrets this decision. Ruthven astutely notes that: "Katniss cares, but she also fights back." (Ruthven, 2017: 55) because this action of sacrifice enables Katniss to be revolutionized from becoming a person who is ready to kill others to save herself, or who is predisposed to go into the woods so that she can be far away from the Capitol's radar. According to Ruthven, this action identifies the act of sacrificing herself for Prim as stated below:

Katniss is the first in her district to ever volunteers, and the act is read not only as selfless but also as a direct but subtle challenge to the Capitol's bid to pit residents and districts against each other. (Ruthven, 2017: 51)

Additionally, this kind of behavior changes her into someone who forfeits whatever she possesses for the absolute collapse of her enemies. Moreover, this act of devotion is seen as an impressive action by the crowd, which is gathered there on the reaping day. However, they cannot say anything about it or react against it. Just like her, they are also all silenced and standing still, as Katniss narrates:

So instead of acknowledging applause, I stand there unmoving while they take part in the boldest form of dissent they can manage. Silence. Which says we do not agree. We do not condone. All of this is wrong. (**The Hunger Games**, 2008: 28-9)

In return to what she says, the crowd makes a sign which is distinct to District 12. They touch their lips with three middle fingers. They simply hold their arms out to Katniss, which refers to the demonstration of great respect to the person whom you

cue this sign to. This sign could also mean a good good-bye to a loved person. This act actually exhibits that being disobedient is not only a feature that rests in with Gale and Katniss. To a certain degree, it is also frequently held, and it is in the District's power to side with Katniss, but they are afraid and cannot articulate openly.

One more phenomenon to consider before jumping into any quick conclusions is that Katniss has no idea how Capitol life has been there long before the hunger games. Thus, she comes to think that she can make it out of the games alive and be successful as the victor. Thinking that Prim would not be able to do that as well as Katniss, Katniss gets angrier by the day as she spends her time in the arena fighting and killing her peers and other tributes who are at the same age as Prim. In a way, she sees the other tributes as if they are her brothers or sisters. "All I can think is how unjust the whole thing is, the Hunger Games. Why am I hopping around like some trained dog trying to please people I hate by killing?" (**The Hunger Games**, 2008: 142)

She intellectualizes that hunger games are a horrible event. For example, Peeta who is Katniss' peer from her district in the games points out that he wants to stay as himself during the games. Katniss regards Peeta as a compassionate, steady, reliable, and well-grounded person. Therefore, he proves to possess a calming and relaxing influence on Katniss throughout the entire games. What is also intriguing about him is that he, too, conceives the Capitol as a ridiculously unreal type of government. He is in Katniss' side from the beginning till the end, except in the part where the Capitol captivates Peeta somewhere in the middle of the second novel by making him use drugs forcefully and propaganda in favor of the Capitol on the screens. The Capitol takes him by force, but just for a short while. Afterwards, he becomes the Peeta as he evolves into the last novel as follows:

I want to die as myself. Does that make any sense? I don't want them to change me in here. Turn me into some kind of monster that I'm not. When the time comes, I'm sure I'll kill just like everybody else. I can't go down without a fight. Only I keep wishing I could think of a way to show the Capitol they don't own me. That I'm more than just a piece in their games. (**The Hunger Games**, 2008: 171)

It can be understood from the quotation that he tries to show that he is not going to become a commodity the Capitol can use. Which is why he wants to stand firm and strong. What awakens Katniss to pull her senses together and not kill anyone in the games anymore is by means of Peeta's sensibility. Peeta is already a person who is well-behaved and developed as a character. It can be ascribed that he is a more humanistic person in that sense. He is into arts and drawing, so he saves himself from one of the attacks in the arena by camouflaging and painting himself by the mud as if he is a part of grass and plant. One more thing associated with Peeta is that just because he is interested in painting, he is more emotional than Katniss. That is why he has a very significant role in the series for helping Katniss realize her true purpose, starting from the beginning to the end. Due to the fact that Katniss is a character who acts on instincts, Peeta gives her the chance to intellectualize and ability to think deeper on her objective in the games as well as against the government.

When the games are told as an arena for the tributes to execute one another, there it gets to a point that all the tributes from other districts see each other outside of their districts for the first time. Thereby, Katniss is put into an environment in which she is unable to ignore all the other tributes' humanity, and she ends up being able to hear and be heard in return by all the districts. Without the games, this event would not happen at all. Katniss makes a touching connection in the games with a girl called Rue from another district. This bond will soon to be a connection that will help Katniss after the games being the uprising symbol in the Districts, adding to Peeta's influence on her. Katniss learns a lot of information about Rue's district and realizes that there is so much to know and learn outside their closed district.

It's interesting hearing about her life. We have so little communication with anyone outside our district. In fact, I wonder if the Game makers are blocking out our conversation in the districts because even though the information seems harmless, they don't want people in different districts to know about one another. (**The Hunger Games**, 2008: 246)

As being a part of the family struggling to survive in her district, Katniss is used to the hardships but has managed to maintain a sympathetic personality and an underlying strength that is not obvious. Rue, being one of the youngest tributes, is at the same age as Prim. Sonya Sawyer Fritz states in her article that: “Katniss’ political activism and acts of rebellion in the *Hunger Games* novels are also often largely informed by her impulse to look after others’.” (Fritz, 2014: 28) Accordingly, Katniss gets very affected by her looks and the story of Rue’s life. If Katniss had not volunteered for Prim, Prim would have been in the games instead of her. That is why Katniss always thinks about this reality and somewhat pities Rue for being in the games and feels emotional for her. At some point, they become friends, and becoming friends with the strongest tributes is very common in order to see the end of the games and survive together. In fact, Katniss herself is a very strong opponent by her nature, and antithetically she unites with the seemingly least strong and the weakest tribute, but not the least intelligent one. According to Ruthven:

Once in the arena, Katniss befriends another tribute, Rue. Alliances are common in the arena, especially between the strongest, as tributes join together to increase their individual chances of survival. Katniss, however, does not ally with the strongest; rather, she joins with one of the smallest and weakest (but no less intelligent and strategic) tributes, less from a desire to increase her own chances, than from a feeling of affinity and caring. (Ruthven, 2017: 52)

In a practical way, this alliance between Rue and Katniss becomes mutually beneficial by making Katniss an emotional competitor at the end. Thinking Rue as equal as to her sister Prim, Katniss creates a special unseen bond between Rue and herself, which is forcing Katniss to fear and care for Rue’s and her own life during the games.

I turn back and head back to the stream, feeling somehow worried. About Rue being killed, about Rue not being killed and the two of us being left for last, about leaving Rue alone, about leaving Prim alone back home. No, Prim has my mother and Gale and a baker who has promised she won’t go hungry. Rue has only me. (**The Hunger Games**, 2008: 258)

When the end of the game comes, Rue gets killed and her death forces Katniss’ anger to confront her own inner rage against the whole idea of the Capitol, its cruelty and

the injustice it inflicts not just upon her, but also upon her family, her district, all of the tributes, their family and their districts. It can be seen that as an act of both respect to Rue and a rebellious attitude against the Capitol, Katniss makes a tomb for her and decorates her grave with flowers. In Katniss' viewpoint, something has to be done and Rue's death should not be in vain but in fact, she is dying for doing something against the system. In doing so and by thinking in that way, Katniss honors Rue's death. What she does has not been done ever before, and people watch this act in shock on the technological surveillance systems reflected on the big screens. What Katniss does is not an oral interpretation of her critique, but a craving or a desire else than easing her hunger, feeding her family, or saving someone's life. Even though it is a move instead of an oral assertion, it is a performance enunciation of criticism. This act is a slap on the faces of the Capitol's residents and the public of Panem, showing the truth that these young souls who are called as the tributes in the Capitol's eyes are not just pieces of meat in their games, but actual human beings.

I want to do something right here, right now, to shame them, to make them accountable, to show the Capitol that whatever they do or force us to do there is a part of every tribute they can't own that Rue was more than a piece in their games. And so am I. (**The Hunger Games**, 2008: 286)

She remembers what Peeta told her about not being a part of this system and dying as himself. In thinking this, Rue ignites a flame with her death causing Katniss to channel her anger and find the strength to overcome the games, more importantly, be the symbol for the rebellion. This action becomes an utmost significance in Collins' series as it turns out that it is her first rebellious act against the Capitol, which is the beacon for the revolutionary hope of which President Snow was afraid in the first place.

I can't stop looking at Rue, smaller than ever, a baby animal curled up in a nest of netting. I can't bring myself to leave her like this. Past harm, but seeming utterly defenseless. To hate the boy from District 1, who also appears so vulnerable in death, seems inadequate. It's the Capitol I hate, for doing this to all of us. Gale's voice is in my head. His ravings against the Capitol no longer pointless, no longer to be ignored. Rue's death has forced me to confront my own fury against cruelty, the injustice they inflict upon us. (**The Hunger Games**, 2008: 286)

After the relationship that Rue and Katniss form in the games in such a short time, Katniss practically rises from her ashes and reaches a breaking point of becoming the representation of hope with Rue's death. By this act she performs, District 11, where Rue comes from, is deeply influenced. Therefore, bread is sent to Katniss as a gift from one district to a tribute of another district, which has never been done before in the history of the games.

Another thing that happens following this event is that Katniss goes to save Peeta in the arena and she dives into a bloody war against the other tributes. However, she does not want any other tribute to be sacrificed for this ridiculous, nonsensical and absurd game of the Capitol. Upon this, she comes across with the other tribute from District 11, Thresh. She no longer has the intention to kill anybody, so she stops for a moment and Thresh says: "Just this time 12! [...] For Rue" (**The Hunger Games**, 2008: 288), and he runs away from her. It is understood that she triggered a humanitarian side in the other tributes as well by not killing each other. This was something that could not have been thought before Katniss because the moment they see each other, they have been focused on the idea of killing one another, let alone leaving or helping. Peeta realizes that if they sneak around, Cato might be able to kill Thresh because Katniss has had a graceful feeling growing inside her. Actually, it turns out that Katniss grows compassionate feeling towards every tribute in the arena because she clearly says that:

I don't want Cato to kill Thresh at all. I don't want anyone else to die. But this is absolutely not the kind of thing that victors go around saying in the arena. (**The Hunger Games**, 2008: 357)

Hence, living through the arena and surviving it becomes not just Katniss' doing or characteristic but others' as well. Together in unity and solidarity, they outface the games. From that moment on, one idea is for sure that combining forces is yet to become essential in coping with the government.

Another essential element to ponder in the trilogy for the sake of the rebellion is the bond between Katniss and Peeta. What they live through from the beginning of the novel up until the end is that they care for each other every second. When it

comes to the very end of the games and either of them has to die for the other to live, Peeta suggests sacrificing himself for Katniss in order for her to become the winner of the games. At that moment in the game, which is right after Katniss' action of burying Rue with flowers, singing songs to her with the purpose of relieving her soul and acting charitably, the Capitol announces that there has been a change in the rules of the games.

The rule allows two tributes of the same districts to become victors, instead of just one to be the winner as in the former rule. After this announcement, they start helping one another even more than before and begin to act as if they are one tribute to win the games. This change of rule actually changes the course of the games in terms of Katniss and Peeta because Katniss immediately comes up with a solution, and she courageously dares to swallow the poisonous berries thinking that no one should be the winner of these games. Along with sacrificing herself, her intention of killing herself, the other tribute Peeta and leaving the games without a winner is primarily another act of defiance against the Capitol. She orients this role of killing as if it was a weapon to be used against the Capitol. By this action, she ridicules the game-makers and the Capitol, makes fun of the games, awakens a question in the minds of the other tributes, and thus their districts. Moreover, she does not choose to die and let Peeta die in the hands of the Capitol she hates so much. This kind of strategy keeps her and Peeta alive, which brings the argument to the main point that Katniss is a symbol of hope in the eyes of the society and the Districts. She chooses to fight with her own will. In so doing, Katniss and Peeta become the victors of the hunger games. In reality, they were not the utmost powerful tributes when compared to others such as Cato and Thresh. As a matter of fact, they did not even have high potential or ability to win them over. What made Katniss and Peeta better than the other tributes was that they acted in association and in accordance with each other. Their unity and solidarity saved them from being killed in the arena.

By the move of changing the rules of the games, the Capitol kills the goose that lays the golden egg under itself, and it digs its own grave by announcing this. This rule allows Peeta and Katniss to act intuitively and attempt to eat the poisonous

berries, which makes the authority that the Capitol has over the tributes diminish in its intensity. They establish solidarity together depending on the fact that they are no longer enemies of each other but friends and co-operators in a sense. Without a doubt, what makes this situation even more thought-provoking is that Katniss starts devoting her life to the survival of both of them. Katniss saves Peeta's life without even thinking deeply on it many times and puts her own neck on the line.

This action of solidarity and self-devotion brings forth the upcoming feeling of collective hope. People are impressed, so a mass unity comes out among them and this unity becomes prominent in the eyes of the Capitol as well. The fear, hatred, lack of courage, and powerlessness that have surrounded the districts for years slowly cease in order to leave their place to hope, fight, sacrifice for the better and greater good of the community. What the Capitol actually fears is about to become reality as a result of Katniss and Peeta's act of eating the poisonous berries together. She concurs by adding: "If my holding out those berries was an act of temporary insanity, then these people will embrace insanity, too." (**Catching Fire**, 2009: 88-9) On the contrary, in the Capitol, "the berries were only perceived as a symbol of a desperate girl trying to save her lover." (**Catching Fire**, 2009: 96). In a nutshell, the Capitol still wants this rebellious action to be regarded and known as if it was something they approved right from the beginning and turn this whole thing in their favour.

Although it is known that Katniss is already a character of devoting herself for the greater good of her loved ones as stated above before her family, friends, district; she enlarges this scope not only just limiting it to her family, but also to the society and the other districts, as well. To some extent, Katniss did not just give hope and gave rise to a feeling of encouragement among the people, but also took a risk for somebody else and saved someone else's life along with hers. In the course of the trilogy, where the reader has the chance to read the destruction of the arena through Katniss' arrow, Katniss gets into such a character that forfeits her own life including her loved ones for the sake of the greater good and welfare of her people and society in the long run. She basically gives way to a change in herself by formerly being ready to murder others to save herself and the latter being someone who gives up

everything she owns. She is only ready for that to see the complete elimination of her actual rival and opponent, which is the Capitol.

As the story continues, the reader witnesses the awakening of a reformist common interest by the help of Katniss' actions. The people come to a realization that the criticism or the disapproval of a system has to become publicized on condition that they turn it into political awareness, get the attention of the higher authorities, make a change in the remaining conditions, and most importantly establish a collective movement. "It was my arrow, aimed at the chink in the force field surrounding the arena, that brought on this firestorm of retribution. That sent the whole country of Panem into chaos." (**Mockingjay**, 2010: 6). It could be stated that Katniss' actions of solidarity and disobedience, starting within the arena moving on to the other Districts, assist the Districts as a role model and demonstrate the people in the Districts the likelihood of saying no to the existing despotism of the Capitol system and establishing a new one perhaps. For example, her importance during the process becomes prominent when her mentor Plutarch makes it simple to her by saying how her looks and appearance will be crucial for people to notice that there is someone out there fighting for them. This is also essential to hear from Plutarch because he is the only survivor of the hunger games. In one of their conversations, he reports to Katniss by saying:

"You're going to be as useful to the war effort as possible," Plutarch says. "And it's just been decided that you are of most value on television. Just look at the effect Katniss had running around in that Mockingjay suit. Turned the whole rebellion around. Do you notice how she's the only one not complaining? It's because she understands the power of that screen." (**Mockingjay**, 2010: 257)

In that respect, Katniss bears the importance of a figure that has the characteristic of a trigger that develops a political awareness and a societal consciousness that brings about rebellious movement collectively within the society. She comes to the understanding that she bears the feeling of guilt of a person who survived among so many others that could not. When people start seeing Katniss on the screens as the propaganda face against the Capitol, they begin to have faith in her. Because of what Katniss does, actually works against the government. The

rebellion's headmaster persona President Coin explains in her speech in front of everyone by saying:

Dead or alive, Katniss Everdeen will remain the face of this rebellion. If you ever waver in your resolve, think of the Mockingjay, and in her you will find the strength you need to rid Panem of its oppressors. (**Mockingjay**, 2010: 294)

Reading through these lines, the reader gets to think that Katniss matters to so many people and so much to the face of the rebellion that even if she is dead, it might be helpful for the sake of the societal order to be restored. Just because of the fact that Katniss became the symbol of the mockingjay, which is also the name of the last part of the trilogy, she mentions in the story that it has also become "a slap in the face to the Capitol." (**The Hunger Games**, 2008: 42) She is resembling the bird to herself in that sense. In reality, the storyline of the mockingjays might as well be regarded as the foreshadowing of Katniss' destiny in the course of the last novel, especially. Since Katniss changed from a character that was used in and against the Capitol, she also grows into being a weapon herself. It is clear as follows:

During the rebellion, the Capitol bred a series of genetically altered animals as weapons. The common term for them was mutations, or sometimes mutts for short. One was a special bird called a jabberjay that had the ability to memorize and repeat whole human conversations. They were homing birds, exclusively male, that were released into regions where the Capitol's enemies were known to be hiding. After the birds gathered words, they'd fly back to centers to be recorded. It took people awhile to realize what was going on in the districts, how private conversations were being transmitted. Then, of course, the rebels fed the Capitol endless lies, and the joke was on it. So the centers were shut down and the birds were abandoned to die off in the wild.

Only they didn't die off. Instead, the jabberjays mated with female mockingbirds, creating a whole new species that could replicate both bird whistles and human melodies. They had lost the ability to enunciate words but could still mimic a range of human vocal sounds, from a child's high-pitched warble to a man's deep tones. And they could re-create songs. Not just a few notes, but whole songs with multiple verses, if you had the patience to sing them and if they liked your voice. (**The Hunger Games**, 2008: 52)

Katniss becomes the mockingjay in this trilogy which simply means what was being deeply looked into at the beginning of this thesis, together with this chapter and tried to be examined. Primarily, choosing the bird as a symbol for Katniss, Collins attributes a sign of freedom to the protagonist in the reader's eyes along with the

hopeless Panem's society in the novel. The hopeful protagonist and the heroine of this trilogy become the symbol for the rebellion, which the people of the Districts were looking for all along and searching for a long time in connection to their cause to the freedom. Other than being the symbol for freedom, mockingjays are also a hybrid kind of among the birds as were explained in the quotation above in detail. This means that Katniss becomes a hybrid heroine for both sides, which are the Districts and the Capitol, in the novel. the reason for Katniss to be a heroine for both parties in the book is that she becomes the victor in the first hunger games at the end of the first book. Therefore, she is acknowledged not only by the government and its people in the Capitol but also appreciated by the Districts. Furthermore, she catches the attention of the rebellion to be their face and symbol in the course of the freedom fight. For these reasons told above, this mockingjay's bird symbol in the story of Katniss becomes quite serious in terms of gaining a metaphoric meaning within that sense and gets deeply understandable.

The last but not least point on this is that the games that had been managed as the sole armament of fear by the Capitol for years, became the symbol of hope for the society through Katniss. In a nutshell, before Katniss finished the games, they were basically a way of showing the society that the government is strong and fearful. Right after the events occurred at the end of the games, Snow starts to think desperately that Katniss might have the potential to be the danger he was long before afraid of. Then, the rumour starts, and rebellious insurrections occur. Snow wants Katniss to pacify the people who are in an uprising by explaining Katniss what kind of results such attempts might have. Snow simply dissuades Katniss by telling her that there will be many deaths unless she does something. He puts by saying that:

Katniss—And it's my fault, Gale. Because of what I did in the arena. If I had just killed myself with those berries, none of this would've happened. Peeta could have come home and lived, and everyone else would have been safe, too.
Gale—Safe to do what? he says in a gentler tone. —Starve? Work like slaves? Send their kids to the reaping? You haven't hurt people—you've given them an opportunity. They just have to be brave enough to take it. There's already been talk in the mines. People who want to fight. Don't you see? It's happening! It's finally happening! If there's an uprising in District Eight, why not here? Why not everywhere? This could be it, the thing we've been. (**Catching Fire**, 2009: 121-2)

She knows better about the fear of losing someone or be devoid of what is already in her hands to some extent. The only thing that she has in her mind is acting on the consciousness of saving Peeta, Gale, and her family upon Snow's threat. Katniss feels the responsibility of all the people and the society within her heart reflecting their fear, hope, innocence, and unity against the government of Capitol. President Snow makes sure that Katniss knows it will definitely be from her hands, if people die and if the government is put in danger because of all the rebellious actions. It is for certain that she is not even close to being guilty, but the President is. However, in the quotation above it is quite obvious that Gale, on the other hand, wants Katniss to accept the fact that there had already been a rebellion way before her actions had come to reality. Therefore, Gale denies having acknowledged this kind of discourse. When Katniss understands that she would be guilty of all the things that could happen, she wishes that she was not alive. Yet, what Gale sees in this is an opportunity for the rebellion to come to life and creating the uprising as a chance to prove the government wrong. Even the idea of having people to revolt makes Gale very excited. Then, at some point of serenity, Katniss starts thinking just like Gale does if she is guilty or not.

Now comes the harder part. I have to face the fact that my family and friends might share this fate. Prim. I need only to think of Prim and all my resolve disintegrates. It's my job to protect her. I pull the blanket up over my head, and my breathing is so rapid I use up all the oxygen and begin to choke for air. I can't let the Capitol hurt Prim.

And then it hits me. They already have. They have killed her father in those wretched mines. They have sat by as she almost starved to death. They have chosen her as a tribute, then made her watch her sister fight to the death in the Games. She has been hurt far worse than I had at the age of twelve. And even that pales in comparison with Rue's life.

[...]

Prim ... Rue ... aren't they the very reason I have to try to fight? Because what has been done to them is so wrong, so beyond justification, so evil that there is no choice? Because no one has the right to treat them as they have been treated? (**Catching Fire**, 2009: 148)

Here in between these lines, Katniss basically comes to terms with her fate, makes her peace with what has been going on around, and comes to an understanding of the

bigger picture of the whole thing that is happening around her. In brief, she knows and gets the strong desire to fight from the affectionate sisterhood feeling inside. This relationship does not resemble the kind of sisterhood that is depicted in **The Handmaid's Tale**, where all the handmaids know there are wrongdoings but do nothing to change them. Katniss realizes that there are wrongdoings of the government, they get hurt, her sister her family and Rue (who also makes her feel like a sister) and she immediately wants to do something in return to hurt the government back even though she had been made for sure if something happens, she will be the responsible person to be dealt with.

Just by looking at the District 2 rebels, you can tell they were decently fed and cared for in childhood. Some did end up as quarry and mine workers. Others were educated for jobs in the Nut or funneled into the ranks of Peacekeepers. Trained young and hard for combat. The Hunger Games were an opportunity for wealth and a kind of glory not seen elsewhere. Of course, the people of 2 swallowed the Capitol's propaganda more easily than the rest of us. Embraced their ways. But for all that, at the end of the day, they were still slaves. And if that was lost on the citizens who became Peacekeepers or worked in the Nut, it was not lost on the stonecutters who formed the backbone of the resistance here. (Mockingjay, 2010: 226)

Katniss gets the awareness and wants to make sure that something is done for it. What people of Panem, counting Katniss in, were facing was that all of them had been critical and judgmental about the governing system all along. Moreover, they were experiencing was that they were all intimidated to some extent; however, they did not wield any kind of salvation from the system, which had led them to agonize. For all of these reasons above, Katniss does not want anybody in Panem, starting at first from her family, to live through these sufferings and pain any longer. As far as she knows, everyone around her suffered from the malpractices and misconducts of the government.

In her understanding, she declares war against the Capitol and feels the rage more than ever. She also uses the media in return for propaganda against the government and practically turns the screens to President Snow and the people who live in the Capitol. Before that, she was used on the screens by the media, however, she turns Capitol's most effective weapon as if it was her own and eventually makes

everyone, including the President, watch her speeches of confrontation. She plainly asserts:

I want to tell the rebels that I am alive. That I'm right here in District Eight, where the Capitol has just bombed a hospital full of unarmed men, women, and children. There will be no survivors.' The shock I've been feeling begins to give way to fury. I want to tell people that if you think for one second the Capitol will treat us fairly if there's a cease-fire, you're deluding yourself. Because you know who they are and what they do.' My hands go out automatically, as if to indicate the whole horror around me. This is what they do! And we must fight back!'

I'm moving in toward the camera now, carried forward by my rage. President Snow says he's sending us a message? Well, I have one for him. You can torture us and bomb us and burn our districts to the ground, but do you see that?' One of the cameras follows as I point to the planes burning on the roof of the warehouse across from us. The Capitol seal on a wing glows clearly through the flames. Fire is catching!' I am shouting now, determined that he will not miss a word. And if we burn, you burn with us!' (*Mockingjay*, 2010: 118)

In the quotation above it is obviously stated by Katniss that she uses violent language against the Capitol. At the end of the series, Katniss successfully achieves her role as a mocking jay in the eyes of the whole society including her family.

As a conclusion, Katniss criticises the dystopian government of the Capitol and terminates it victoriously by reaching out to a revolutionary story. Eventually, Katniss succeeds in turning the odds in her favour just like it was wished to her at the beginning of the story in the reaping day when she sacrificed herself instead of her sister. In this respect, it can also be added from Andrea Ruthven's article that:

Collins' trilogy is less a reflection of a potential future and a cautionary tale about what could happen than it is a hopeful gesture towards a means of understanding the present. (Ruthven, 2017: 50)

The trilogy retains to become a figure of hope and bears the potential of foretelling of a future form of a society to be in the present time.

At the very end of the series, it can be observed that Katniss never abandons to understand the righteousness of the idea of the rebellion. Therefore, she basically

performs and realizes the utmost reality of herself. Additionally, she becomes a character that makes the utopia come true, which in contrast was dystopia at the beginning of the trilogy. The course of the trilogy shows the reader that, Katniss resolves the problematic structure of the Capitol to one that was idealized by the society in the Districts. She appears to be a character that differs in dystopian female protagonists that were analysed formerly. Katniss starts the story as a person who is only responsible for her family and trying her best to achieve those responsibilities. Afterwards, she takes her destiny in her hands and achieves to turn the dystopian reality in the trilogy into a utopic one. The different hopeful representation of the female protagonist of Collins becomes a hope for the dystopian society at the end of the trilogy, which makes this character differ from Marianne and Offred. Katniss gets to idealize and hopes for a better society, which is not stuck in a man-centered regime but a free one instead. Therefore, she becomes a hopeful character, unlike the other characters that are analysed in the first and the second chapters formerly.

CONCLUSION

In this thesis, the fundamental aspects of female dystopian writing and how it was reflected in Carter's *Heroes and Villains*, Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale*, and Collins' *The Hunger Games* trilogy in terms of female characters is analyzed. Generally, utopian and dystopian works of literature envision the future of the world and seek an ideal world and an ideal political regime for the common good. Primarily, Angela Carter's *Heroes and Villains* reflects the male dystopian fantasy from a Platonian viewpoint within the mid-twentieth century, and historically comes first of the other novels. Secondly, Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* demonstrates the hierarchical order in a totalitarian government within the late twentieth century nearly after a little more than a decade when Carter's novel was published. Thus, Susanne Collins' *The Hunger Games* trilogy projects the dystopian fantasy at the beginning of the twenty-first century. While Carter's dystopia basically pictures an ideological feudal structure of the dystopian society that Marianne lives and escapes from, Atwood addresses a dystopian government that is surrounded by the notion of religion and sexual inequality. Different than feudal ideology and sexual inequality, Collins' dystopia stands as a political and societal disequilibrium.

The motivation behind why these books and characters are picked is that they distinctively show the female perspective in dystopian writing. In contrast to the male heroes in the male dystopian writings, the characters that are picked in Carter and Atwood are not heroes but rather survivors in their social condition in opposition to Collins' heroine. Likewise, this study offers to fill in a hole in dystopian writing by concentrating on female-focused dystopias instead of the old style male-composed ones since dystopias that include male heroes have gotten more consideration in writing. Also, more consideration has begun to be paid to female dystopian writings in all respects as of late. In spite of the fact that there is research on the hero of *The Handmaid's Tale* as there is more research on Atwood, the examination that spotlights on feminist dystopias or female-focused dystopias is really a field that

requires developing. Almost no distributed basic work can be found on Carter's or Collins' works and heroes which delineate the hole concerning research on the genre.

Science fiction and its related utopian and dystopian sub-genre have traditionally tended to focus on male-centred quest narratives that might seem to push against the boundaries of social norms. However, female dystopia writers such as Angela Carter, Margaret Atwood, and Suzanne Collins have taken the formation of the counterculture in the 1960s and the Second Wave Feminism in the 1970s seriously. Therefore, they have been influenced by the advance in the Religious Right and the conservative swing of the political change in the United States that culminated in the 1980s backlash against feminist civil rights. Hope is the mere impulse in utopian literature, which in addition gave rise to the dystopian literary thought and merged in with the female dystopian writing that was analysed within these female writers' novels. It basically gives a purpose and forms a basis to give it a meaning as a dystopian function. For instance, Angela Carter demonstrates the unbreakable hopeless dystopian atmosphere in her novel *Heroes and Villains*, in which the protagonist Marianne lives and how she accepts the reality as vividly and brutally as it is. How desperately Marianne tries to find self-consciousness in her journey is depicted in a way that she finds herself as a hybrid character experiencing both of the dystopian worlds' outcomes. Also, one thinks that in Carter's dystopia, there are symbols of binaries such as male and female, body and mind, nature and culture, self and other, civilized and barbarian, passion and reason. Broadly speaking, in the documented history of female dystopian writing; symbols, illustrations, representation of such fields as understood above, straighten the argument of women relating to chaos, bodily functions, and nature whereas, aligning men with the societal, political, historical order, and a structural mind that controls the overall system.

To be clear, it can be comprehended that both Angela Carter's *Heroes and Villains* and *The Handmaid's Tale* originated from the hopelessness of the 1970s' Second Wave feminist movement. This could also be seen as the outpouring of utopian and dystopian writing which was produced at the time. In Carter's and

Atwood's writing, it is clearly seen that more hope needs to be generated in terms of the protagonists because they are able to survive but cannot spread hope. Moreover, it has to be reiterated that the twentieth-century experiences opened female writers' eyes while relating them to the contemporaneous political and social circumstances and approaches. Subsequently, they comprehended the loss of hope in their conjuncture.

Heroes and Villains is different from the two other novels that are compared as it is an odd female-written dystopian fable. It defines Marianne's journey so as to find her own self, her role, and place in a world that allows the ordinary struggle for one's survival. For instance, she needs to survive in a dystopia, while escaping from another one. Contrary to this, Offred in *The Handmaid's Tale* has no other option to survive in the Gileadean regime and she has no chance to find herself because the novel is not a realization for Offred's character, rather it is a narration of what happens in that dystopian society from her point of view. As a last option, Katniss in *The Hunger Games* trilogy realizes her potential against the government, socializes with the people, contradicts the dystopian values of the dystopian society, and makes the dystopia turn into a utopia. In this manner, all the characters differ from each other.

One thing that is striking about the relationship between the women in the novels is solidarity. It is in *Heroes and Villains*, and *The Handmaid's Tale* among the women both in power and below, and it is thereupon valid and existent in *The Hunger Games* trilogy as well. Especially, it can be seen in the first and the last book with the sparkle of hope which Katniss lights. The characters of Rue, Prim, Katniss' mother, President Coin, and all the other tributes help Katniss within the process of rebellion and Katniss as the beacon of hope in the hopeless Capitol's dystopia. This kind of a dynamic and womanly assistance results mainly in overcoming the imposed individualism, governmental despotism, and the hopelessness. For this reason, it generates a fundamental change in the actions of the collective movement of the people. In relation to that context's dependency, *The Hunger Games* trilogy extends across the dictated framework of a dystopian reality by bringing hope into the scene

and using it as a counter weapon to unite the societal interests of people together. In this sense, The Hunger Games trilogy allows the fundamental basis for unlocking contradictory values and standards.

Another reality about the novels is Carter's plain narration and Atwood's satirical use of language. They pave the way to some of the reproductive policies outside the limits of the primary and main frameworks. They both backed up the reproductive discussions in the 1960s and 1980s. For example, on the one hand, Marianne develops a character for herself at the of the novel nourishing from the two dystopian worlds. While her initial motivation was to escape from Professors' dystopian world, she is stuck in Barbarians' and she develops a hybrid character at the end. She attains that character in the male dominated dystopia because she has no other choice than to survive there with their rules. On the other hand, Offred holds a hopeful narrative, yet the narration of dystopian world is still hopeless. Even though the reader knows that Offred thinks of escape and actually escapes at the end, there is no sign that says she gets a happy ending after all. In contrast to those of British and Canadian perspectives of the late 60s and 80s female writers' dystopian worlds, Suzanne Collins draws a clear-cut distinction between the hopeless dystopian world with Katniss. Furthermore, what Katniss makes real at the end of the series was not achieved by the female characters of the previous novels. Katniss, therefore, becomes the ultimate dystopian heroine and a hopeful character after analysing the hopeless Marianne from Carter's point of view in addition to a hopeful Offred in a hopeless dystopian world. Therefore, a more hopeful and successful protagonist with a similar background of dystopian reality is introduced with the heroine Katniss in Suzanne Collins' The Hunger Games trilogy.

One thing that has to be kept in mind about the novels is that the female characters that are depicted live in a patriarchal society that bestows upon them a motherly role. When Marianne is observed, no matter how many times she escapes from the dystopian worlds that she has to survive in, she suffers from the patriarchal order which she must deal with as her character develops in the course of the events. When deeply looked at Atwood's Offred and Collins' Katniss they also feel the same

things as Marianne does, the reader knows that for sure because of the female perspectives that the writers share throughout the novels. To be precise, they all must survive in and put up with the negative livelihood standards of the society's norms which is hostile, dangerous, and patriarchal. Furthermore, When Offred is observed in detail, she also remains to live in a hopeless dystopia for the reader. Upon seeing that, Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* perseveres to be an uncertain hopeless dystopia in which Offred escapes. Even though the reader learns indirectly that she escaped, what she did or where she ended up is yet to be discovered. At the end of the novel, the reader learns that she escaped, but her whereabouts are unclear. Therefore, the dystopia or hope for the future for Offred remains a mystery, whereas Angela Carter's novel *Heroes and Villains* ceases to have the idea of hope in Marianne's point of view because the reader is introduced with Marianne's ambition to find a place to live and fit in. Though Collins' *The Hunger Games* trilogy creates a hopeless dystopia at the beginning of the trilogy, like the ones in Atwood's and Carter's, the society in Collins' dystopia is driven by hope or merely the act of hope until the end of the trilogy. In the end, this act evolves into a revolutionary hope and changing the course of society's and people's lives forever. Belen Martin-Lucas suggests in his article by stating as follows:

[...] although dystopia is most often considered a pessimistic and depressive mode of writing, this is in fact a genre of hope: after all, there is life beyond the apocalypse and, even more importantly, dystopic fiction's cautionary tales signal the ways to prevent it happening. (Martin-Lucas, 2014: 69)

Therefore, the intention of living in a better world comes into being as the story unfolds with the idea of hope and the representation of hope in Katniss' terms and conditions. In this perspective, Katniss also emancipates herself while the dystopia in which she and the society lives turns into a utopia. Also, when Marianne accomplishes her character to become the Tiger Lady, she realizes that this has been her role from the beginning of the novel and she sees there is life for her yet to be discovered.

Having said that the protagonists in the novels are different in terms of their perspective of hope, one thing is similar in all the characters. The female protagonists

in the novels are all in need of male help and support to live through the difficulties of their dystopias. For example, Marianne lives in Professors' city by her father's status, as well as her brother's. In relation to this, she has a distinctive status. When she escapes from that dystopia she is stuck in another dystopia of the Barbarians. There, in order to be able to survive, she has to be side by side with the Barbarians and get along with them. She endures sexual harassment and rape all over again several times. Besides, she has to marry the Barbarian, Jewel, to gain a place in this patriarchal society. In other words, Marianne needs male back up to have a place in both of the dystopias so as to be accepted. Likewise, another example for male help is that Offred needs to be impregnated by the Commander in order to be sent to a better place and secure her place in society. It is known that the Commander is sterile. No matter the circumstances, so as to become pregnant, Offred has sex with Nick secretly several times under the guidance of Serena Joy. Also, the Wife of Commander, Serena Joy directs her to have sex with Nick even though she knows it is forbidden and equal to committing a crime. She supports Offred in doing so. By showing these examples, one can conclude the idea of inequality in gender relations reflected in the novels. While nourishing from the reality on the process of writing the novels, they also project the unequal condition of women compared to men by showing how the protagonists are indigent to their support.

The last example for male support in The Hunger Games series can be Katniss as the hopeful heroine building a hopeful utopia at the end of the trilogy. Katniss is the strongest character among the other characters that have been analysed. Nonetheless, she needs male support so that she can achieve her goal and become the figure of hope in society. Peeta, being the other tribute from Katniss' district in the games, helps Katniss to realize that she can do things different than before. Therefore, Katniss realizes the potential chance and outbreaks to succeed in her dystopian reality. If it was not for Peeta's guidance, Katniss might not have become the mockingjay figure and come to her character's realization. In addition to this, Katniss has a very close friend, who is Gale. After her father's death in the explosion in the mines, Katniss holds on to the only male around her and he is Gale. She says at the very beginning of the first novel that she feels secure and safe when she is with

Gale that she had not had since her father's death. Being out there with Gale in the woods makes her feel calm and even happy sometimes. As another example, Haymitch is Katniss' and Peeta's mentor. It is clear that, except for his help and support behind the scenes, Katniss would not have done those brave moves that she did in the games. Therefore, she could not survive the games together with Peeta. After reading through the novels, one simply comes to the awareness that whatever happens to the female protagonists, comes upon them by the hands of male dominances or by the help of the male characters in the novels. As a result, although the characters Marianne, Offred, and Katniss seem to be different in their perspectives of hope in the dystopias that they are in, they are alike in terms of the male assistance that they are imposed throughout the books.

There are numerous methods for characterizing dystopian writing, yet at the centre, it becomes an instrument that empowers seeing contemporary issues from an alternative point of view. At the point when numerous elements of society are changed, the ones that continue as before, become increasingly evident. Dystopian writing can be a basic power against agreeing to what the reader has, empowering to see the issues of the general public. Through keeping an association with the real world, by specific places, names or qualities, detailly scanning a work of dystopian fiction might have the effect of opening the eyes of the reader to obvious issues within the general public. Dystopian writing is adaptable in the manner that it tends to be utilized to scrutinize contemporary society by way of changing little yet important elements at the same time keeping the principle thoughts and highlights that are mentioned. As it is evident, there are many origins of power in dystopian literature. Among the origins of power in dystopian writing can be thought of as regarding an existent issue in reality and putting it in non-existent conditions. By doing this, the reader is assisted with the help of a real-life situation and thinking about the circumstances of it which exist today.

Coming from the realities of their times, these female dystopian writings prove their place within the literature in terms of hope within their atmospheres when their publishing time considered sequentially. They show the bitter realities in life,

nourishing from the outcomes of the societies' or governments' doings, and narrating them with a female point of view which makes them different from the classic male-written dystopian narrations. While in Carter's narration, one thinks that there is no out in life but truths to be faced, Atwood gives a light at the end of the tunnel and at the end of her novel, she sees somewhere between dystopia and utopia which is nowhere. That is why the reader does not know where Offred ends up. When Katniss is taken into consideration, she projects a better and hopeful reality to the reader which is a utopia. With all the difficult situations that Marianne, Offred, and Katniss encounter, all characters have a way of reflecting their developments. Marianne shows her feelings with anger and being defensive; therefore creating a whole new character "The Tiger Lady" at the end of the novel. Offred tells her story after she escapes in order to be heard, Katniss takes serious action and makes move whatever the result is; therefore, she emancipates. In this way, it could be said that literature prepares ground for a hopeful future for women and reveals brave women surviving and even turning it into their advantage in their dystopia by reversing the outcomes.

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