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Dystopian Regimes in Suzanne Collins' "The Hunger Games" (2008-10) and George Orwell's "Nineteen Eighty-Four" (1949)

Table of contents

1. Introduction	1
1.1 Plot Synopsis	2
2. Dystopia- Definitions and Theoretical Considerations	4
2.1 Defining Dystopia-Thomas More <i>Utopia</i> – The Opposite of Dystopia?	5
2.1.1 The Authors' Contemporary Societies as a Motivation for their Works	5
2.1.2 How is Power Exerted in Dystopian States? Physical and Intellectual Oppression	9
2.1.2.1 Propaganda, Violence and Education	10
2.1.2.2 Brainwashing	11
2.2. The Maintenance of Power	12
3. The Conception of Man in the Totalitarian Regimes of Oceania and Panem	14
3.1 Division Proles/ Party Members vs. Capitol Inhabitants/ District Inhabitants	14
3.2 Reality Control	18
3.2.1 Restrictions of Personal Freedom	21
3.2.2 Education, Indoctrination and Brainwashing	25
3.2.3 The Enemy	30
3.2.4 Surveillance	34
3.4 Death and Killing as a Spectacle	37
3.5 Maintaining Power	41
4. Intertextuality	44
4.1 Theory of Intertextuality	44

4.1.1 Intertextuality as a Frame that Allows the Reader to Make Sense	44
4.1.2 Subcategories of Intertextuality	45
4.1.3 Which Texts are Intertextual? Issues of Classification	46
4.1.4 Intentional vs. Accidental Intertextuality	48
4.1.5 Originality vs. Imitation	49
4.2 Intertextuality in <i>The Hunger Games</i> and <i>Nineteen Eighty-Four</i>	51
4.2.1 Major Intertextual References in Suzanne Collins's Novel: Gladiators, Theseus, Reality TV	51
4.2.2 Similarities and Differences in Action and Plot	53
4.3 Discourse Level- Functionalizing Differences	61
4.3.1 The Narrative Perspective	61
4.3.2 Intended Readership	62
4.3.3 Critique of Contemporary Society	63
5. Rebellion- a Conceivable Option for Overcoming a Totalitarian Government?	66
5.1 The Mockingjay	68
5.2 Insurgency as the Weapon of the Suppressed- Organized Revolt	72
5.3 Success vs. Failure- Why is Rebellion Successful in Panem, but Impossible in Oceania?	75
6. Conclusion	81
7. Bibliography	91
8. Appendix	95

1. Introduction

This thesis intends to conceptualize the intertextual relationship between George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and Suzanne Collins' trilogy *The Hunger Games*, *Catching Fire* and *Mockingjay*. Authoritarian regimes are an integral part in both works, and it is the main aim of this thesis to explore the way in which Suzanne Collins has adapted and elaborated on George Orwell's masterpiece in order to create the fictitious world of Panem. On those aspects where Collins' work significantly deviates from Orwell's, the objective is to functionalize these deviations. It will be considered in what way Collins has modified the plot, narrative perspective and underlying message.

After a brief synopsis of theoretical concepts of Utopian vs. Dystopian societies as well as some general considerations on the theory of intertextuality, I intend to focus on such an essential concept as the "conception of man" constituting the political conditions in the two works. Additionally, I will discuss how the two authors allude to rebellion, surveillance, restriction and the alleged enemy. It will also be considered whether or not Orwell and Collins consider the overthrowing of the totalitarian government to be a conceivable option.

The dystopian societies depicted in both works bear a striking similarity to each other, thus suggesting the assumption that Suzanne Collins' *The Hunger Games* was in fact intended to be a kind of response to, or even 'palimpsest' of, Orwell's classic. The focus of this thesis will be to a large extent on the 'story level', on analyzing the intertextual relationship between the action and plot of the novels and on a comparative analysis between Suzanne Collins' *The Hunger Games* and George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. I am also going to explore differences and similarities on the 'discourse level' in order to demonstrate Collins' 'borrowing' as well as the changes made by her.

Especially when it comes to the depiction of the authoritarian regimes governing the two societies, important differences become apparent. It will be the aim of this thesis to unravel the intertextual relationship between the trilogy and Orwell's novel, and, where appropriate, discuss the function of deviations.

It is of utmost importance to acknowledge here that the assumption that Suzanne Collins loosely based her *The Hunger Games* trilogy on George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is only a hypothesis. Any attempt to contact Mrs. Collins in order to verify my hypothesis proved to be unsuccessful, which is why the conclusions drawn in this thesis are hypothetical and based on evidence by way of analogy. However, when asked for some of her favorite novels when she was a teenager in an interview ¹ Collins gives the following titles :

A: *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn* by Betty Smith
The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter by Carson McCullers
***Nineteen Eighty Four* by George Orwell** [emphasis added]
Anna Karenina by Leo Tolstoy
Slaughterhouse-Five by Kurt Vonnegut
A Wrinkle in Time by Madeleine L'Engle
Lord of the Flies by William Golding
Boris by Jaap Haer
Germinal by Emile Zola
Dandelion Wine by Ray Bradbury

This verifies the claim that Collins had read Orwell and been familiar with *Nineteen Eighty-Four* before writing her trilogy. Additionally, it is important to mention that, due to the relative newness of *The Hunger Games*, it has not yet received concise attention by scholars, and secondary literature on *The Hunger Games* is practically non-existent. On the other hand, secondary literature on *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is numerous and I will include much of it.

1.1 Plot Synopsis

Nineteen Eighty-Four

George Orwell's classic *Nineteen Eighty-Four* portrays the dystopian society of Oceania through the eyes of the party member Winston Smith. It paints a disturbing picture of oppression, control and permanent supervision by an

¹ published on <http://myfavoriteauthor.blogspot.com/2009/01/conversation-with-suzanne-collins.html>, accessed August 5 2010.

omnipresent symbolic head of party by the name of “Big Brother”. Winston Smith, working as a government official with the main task of manipulating media information in order to suit the needs of the Party, for a second allows himself the thought of escaping the horrors of his world with the aid of a fellow citizen by the name of Julia. They secretly meet and manage to get hold of a forbidden copy of “The book”, a classified and strictly prohibited piece of writing by Emmanuel Goldstein, a designated enemy of the Party. Whilst in their secret hideout in the back of a little shop, Winston is abducted by members of the Thought Police, a secret organization aiming at thoroughly and comprehensively controlling all Oceanian citizens’ thoughts and actions. Winston is tortured by a government executive named O’Brien, who he had initially believed to be his ally. The story ends with Winston being brainwashed and released back into freedom. His mind has suffered enough trauma to make him utter what may be one of the most famous quotes in literary history: “I love Big Brother.”

The Hunger Games

The Hunger Games is a trilogy by Suzanne Collins published between 2008 and 2010. It describes the world and life of the adolescent heroine Katniss Everdeen, who, with her mother and little sister, lives in district 12 of the fictitious country of Panem, which is situated in the place of today’s North America. Every year, the government, ruling from a region called the Capitol, enforces the cruel tradition of “The Hunger Games” in order to demonstrate its all-consuming power. Two contestants, referred to as tributes, children aged 11-18, are chosen from each of the 12 districts of Panem, and locked into an arena to fight and kill each other. The last person surviving is declared victor.

Book 1, *The Hunger Games*, describes how Katniss voluntarily takes the place of her sister Prim in order to spare her life. A media- centered spectacle begins, which forces Katniss and her ally Peeta, who, for publicity purposes is portrayed as Katniss’s lover, to fight and kill. When in the end both of them are still alive, they threaten the Gamemakers with eating poisonous berries, thus effectively leaving them without a victor, a circumstance that would be

inexplicable to the (wealthy) inhabitants of the Capitol. In the last second, the Gamemakers spare their lives and declare Peeta and Katniss victors. However, with their unprecedented action, the two of them have sparked off the idea of rebellion.

In book 2, *Catching Fire*, the Capitol attempts to reestablish its power by announcing that for the “Quarter Quell”, the 75th anniversary of the Hunger Games, the tributes would be chosen from the row of victors. Katniss and Peeta are thrown back into the arena, and once again have to prove to themselves and to the audience that they can survive despite President Snow’s attempts to disassemble the icon of “Mockingjay” that Katniss has taken on. The Mockingjay, a bird mutation whose existence underlines the government’s fallibility, is adopted as an emblem of rebellion. Struggling with the benevolence of his citizens, President Snow intends to take down Katniss and what she stands for simultaneously.

Book 3, *Mockingjay*, is an account of a civil uprising long overdue. With the aid of a district 13, Katniss and her fellow fighters use propaganda, force and tactics to overthrow the Capitol. President Coin, head of the rebellious activity and governor of district 13, proves to be untrustworthy. The story is dominated by Katniss’s loss of beloved friends and family members, most notably her sister Prim. Although she ultimately succeeds in terminating the atrocities of the Capitol government, she remains traumatized.

2. Dystopia- Definitions and Theoretical Considerations

This section intends to discuss the concept of Dystopia on an abstract level. The main focus of this chapter will be on analyzing how power is exerted in Dystopian regimes and what it is that keeps citizens under control, i.e. what kinds of methods government officials make use of. Additionally, there will be considerations on how – or if - power can be maintained over a longer period of time.

2.1 Defining Dystopia: Sir Thomas More's *Utopia*- The Opposite of Dystopia?

In order to be able to effectively evaluate dystopian societies it is primarily important to define the concept of Dystopia.

Merriam Webster's Encyclopaedia of Literature defines Dystopia as an "imaginary place where people lead dehumanized and often fearful lives." (Webster, Inc. 360), a description that definitely holds true for both dystopian societies depicted by George Orwell and Suzanne Collins. Gordin et al discuss:

Ever since Thomas More established the literary genre of utopia in his 1516 work of that title, much of historians' writing on the relevance of utopia has focused on disembodied intellectual traditions, interrogating utopia as term, concept and genre. Dystopia, utopia's twentieth-century doppelganger, also has difficulty escaping its literary fetters. Much like utopia, dystopia has found fruitful ground to blossom in the copious expanses of science fiction, but it has also flourished in political fiction. [...] Despite the name, dystopia is not simply the opposite of dystopia. A true opposite of utopia would be a society that is either completely unplanned or is planned to be deliberately terrifying and awful. Dystopia, typically invoked, is neither of these things; rather, it is a utopia that has gone wrong, or a utopia that functions only for a particular segment of society. (Gordin et. al., 1)

It is important to acknowledge here that, contrary to the commonly assumed notion, Dystopia cannot simply be defined as the opposite of Utopia. Rather, More's controversial conception of a perfect society published in 1516 serves as the basis for considerations of a perfect society. Dystopia is, as Gordin puts it, Utopia gone wrong, because it privileges only the powerful members of society, whereas the original Utopian idea paints a picture of an ideal society for the general population.

2.1.1 The Authors' Contemporary Societies as a Motivation for their Works

Utopian novels, and consequently its dystopian subgenre, have become distinct genres, which have had enormous influence on literary development

over the centuries. It is perhaps interesting to highlight here that utopia, as an “openly political genre” (Dunst, 25), has been especially inspired by socio-economic changes throughout history. The 20th century, with its spread of capitalist exchange mechanisms down to the most private aspects of modern life including the subconscious, and its ensuing rationalization and technological progress of society, has paved the way for the partial replacement of utopian by dystopian narratives. (cf. Dunst, 25 f) With paradigm shifting experiences such as the Holocaust as well as the subsequent destruction of belief in the power of reason, as well as the loss of faith in the capitalist superstate, and the collapse of totalitarian Stalinism, it does not come as a surprise that the state is confronted with one of the most arduous crises in this historical period. (cf. Dunst 25 f)

Chris Ferns, in his “Narrating Utopia”, points out conclusively that

[...] it is only in the twentieth century that dystopian fiction, combining a parodic inversion of the traditional utopia with satire on contemporary society, begins to take on the kind of mythic resonance that underlies the appeal of the traditional utopia from the time of More on. Indeed, many of the very factors that undermine the appeal of the utopian dream of order in the modern era also serve to heighten the relevance of the dystopian parodic inversion. Where utopian fictions gave expression to humanity’s growing sense of mastery over both social conditions and the natural world, the works of writers such as Zamyatin, Huxley, and Orwell speak to an audience increasingly disillusioned by the consequences of such controlling aspirations. (Ferns,106)

Very much like Dunst, Ferns suggests that sociopolitical circumstances strongly call the influence of the state into question. One reason for this, he adds, is “the modern experience of totalitarian governments whose conduct has called into question the traditional utopian premise that strong, centralized authority would act in the best interests of the citizen.” (Ferns,106)

If it is sociopolitical circumstances that allow dystopia to flourish, it is definitely also sociopolitical circumstances that encourage writers to compose dystopian novels. Orwell’s thought-provoking novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four* can certainly be seen as a literary reaction to political and sociological circumstances, which came at a sensitive point in history. In fact, Bernd-Peter Lange suggests a

deep-rooted connection between George Orwell's novel and the totalitarian theory valid at the time of the Cold War:

1984 enthält nahezu alle Bestimmungen der zur Zeit des Kalten Krieges gängigsten Fassung der Totalitarismustheorie: das System des "Ingsoc" in Oceania, ebenso wie die beiden konkurrierenden Weltmächte Eurasia und Eastasia, ist eine zentralistische Kollektivwirtschaft, es besitzt Rüstungs- und Nachrichtenmonopol, stützt sich auf einen hierarchischen Parteiapparat sowie eine mit terroristischen Methoden arbeitende Geheimpolizei und bringt schließlich eine eigene Ideologie hervor. (Lange, 36)

Alok Rai attributes a general reference to European post war in Orwell's works when he claims that "It would require little effort [...] to start out discussing Orwell and slip almost instantly, imperceptibly, into discussing postwar European politics." (Rai, 5)

However, even as far back as in the Age of Discoveries, where the exploration of previously unknown lands and the production of new factual and fictional territory supplied the emerging bourgeois for the first time with a conceivable alternative to feudalism, Thomas More's genre- initiating narrative "Utopia" was a controversial, yet nevertheless extremely important, response to political and social conditions. (cf Dunst, 9)

Certainly, it is not only Thomas More and George Orwell who respond critically to their current sociopolitical living conditions. Also Suzanne Collins, in an interview published on the Internet platform Youtube, explains that:

The actual moment when I got the idea for the Hunger Games, I was lying in bed late at night one night, and I was channelsurfing and I found myself going in between reality television programs and footage of the Iraq war. And these images sort of began to melt together in my mind in a very unsettling way and that's when it sort of struck me, this idea for the Games. And I thought well if you take those and you combine them, what do you get? And the element of it being life and death and competition, but then the elements of it also from the reality television program being a public entertainment, well those were all the elements of a Gladiator Game.²

² transcription of Collins interview <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nDNJd192Tcw> (accessed July 7 2010)

She refers to the political situation between the United States of America and Iraq as an 'inspiration' for the creation of the fictitious world of Panem. To be even more precise, it is the sociological controversy of combining the terrors of war with shallow reality television entertainment that sparks off Collins's flow of ideas. Her reference to gladiator games already bears within an aspect of intertextuality that will be elaborated on in the subsequent chapters.

It could be argued that the fictitious world of Panem is a terrifying vision of the future. Collins explicitly states that Panem is located in what we now call North America, thus indicating, and perhaps dreading, an expected collapse of the current democracy and the descent into totalitarianism. While it is true that the same hypothesis is valid for *Nineteen Eighty-Four*- its title and the date of publication suggest that the novel is intended as a prophetic vision of the future³, it can be safely assumed that the creation of both Oceania and Panem may have been inspired by current sociopolitical events. Both works can thus be said to process, to some extent, the political reality as perceived by the authors at the time when the respective books were written. Slaughter explains why dystopian visions of the future experience literary success by means of referring to the movie *The Matrix*, another dystopian vision of a future world.

[...] in other words the most likely futures before us are irredeemably Dystopian in nature. They have already been explored, in essence and sometimes in considerable detail, in many Science Fiction books, films and TV programmes. One of the reasons for the commercial success of the movie *The Matrix* [...] was the fact that it powerfully depicts a fictionalized version of our real-world predicament. The everyday world appears to proceed pretty much as usual. But underneath it lies a much more ugly reality that challenges everything human beings stand for and aspire to. [...] It is not normally possible to bring such 'subversive' notions to full awareness. The social sanctions against doing so can be severe. In fiction, however, we can allow ourselves a glimpse at the truth without directly challenging the prevailing social order. We can experience our anxiety and fear in the safe confines of a book, a movie

³ Even though Voorhees claims that this is a misinterpretation: "*The inordinate desire for power, and the violence, abolition of private life, and manipulation of the truth to serve that desire which Orwell describes in Nineteen Eighty-Four indicate clearly enough that Orwell regarded totalitarianism with horror. It is just a great mistake, however, to read the novel as a prediction of universal totalitarianism before the turn of the century as it is to read it as a mere "psychological necessity" of Orwell's temperament.*" (Voorhees, 85)

theatre or TV screen, where they can also be safely resolved, at least for the time being.” (Slaughter, xxi f)

She attributes the success of literary dystopias to the fact that actual fear and anxiety about our current living environment is more enjoyably reflected on in the ‘safe confines of a book’. According to Slaughter, it is a unique characteristic of literature to bring a dystopian notion to awareness. It is thus relatively safe to conclude that Western political reality is, to some extent, processed in dystopian literature. It is rather the question as to how this is done which is of primary importance.

2.1.2 How is Power Exerted in Dystopian States? Physical and Intellectual Oppression

Michael Curtis gives the following characterization for totalitarian societies: “ If there is any single characteristic that differentiates totalitarian systems from others in time and in space, it is the extreme use of terror.” (Curtis, 16) For Oliver Baum, the following characteristics constitute the essence of totalitarian systems: “ Zu den eklatanten Charakteristika eines totalitären Systems zählen die offizielle Ideologie, der Führerkult, die hierarchische Segmentierung der Gesellschaft, die Monopolisierung der Überwachung, terroristische Polizeikontrolle sowie die Mobilisierung der Bürger. (Baum, 70)

Naturally, Orwell and Collins both create their dystopian societies with ideological reference to utopian systems. For both of the two societies, and probably for the overwhelming majority of literary dystopias, the original, pristine ideology aims at perfection- be it in terms of power, money or mindset. Achieving an ideal society, however, always comes at a price. Drawbacks of totalitarianism eventually result in chaos. Dystopia is created.

Lange (1982, 36) interprets Orwell’s depiction of Oceania as a framework of three essential levels of utopian system formation, which gives the novel persuasive ideological credibility. The first, the elements of reality as perceived by the author at the time he is writing the novel, support the second, discourse level with Orwell’s inherent criticism of totalitarianism. The third level, the

carriers of potential resistance against the utopian system of Oceania, fuses with the other two levels to constitute the configuration of the anti- utopian system of “Nineteen Eighty-Four”, controlling plot, motifs and ideological contents of the book. (cf. Lange,36)

Dunst (2005) claims that “it is these [...] four words, ‘ the negative and the body, suffering and death’, which can be said to form the basic premise of literary dystopias. Where literary utopias deliberate on a dreamlike place and time, dystopias address the nightmares of physical and intellectual oppression and violence in the search for possible modes of escape.” (Dunst, 24)

Terror, in dystopian societies, takes on a myriad of forms, ranging from physical and intellectual oppression, through propaganda and constant supervision, to violence and torture. Physical and intellectual oppression indeed play an important role in both depictions of totalitarian governments. Curtis describes dictatorships, despotisms, and autocratic regimes as “akin to totalitarian ones in their elitist rule, arbitrary use of political power, minimization of private individual rights, and in their ordered, hierarchical institutions.” (Curtis, 2)

2.1.2.1 Propaganda, Violence and Education

With arbitrary use of power comes oppression, with oppression comes total control. However, as Orwell conclusively points out in his *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, total control does not stop at the gates of physical acts. Total control aims at the minds of citizens, it aims at a thorough and complete adaptation of Party ideologies. Well-known publicist Hannah Arendt explains that “Totalitarianism is never content to rule by external means, namely, through the state and a machinery of violence; thanks to its peculiar ideology and the roles assigned to it in this apparatus of coercion, totalitarianism has discovered a means of dominating and terrorizing human beings from within.” (Arendt, in Baehr, 36)

The main ingredient of despotism, and also by far the one most disconcerting, is thus the manipulation of the mind, the gradual alteration of basic concepts

and elaborate thoughts via the means of education, propaganda, indoctrination and torture. Lange (1982, 38) claims that the contradiction between a permanent and a manipulable human nature is not resolvable in the future world of 1984. Any attempt to categorize it as dialectic fails. This is because dialectics are declared as “double think” by the Oceanian party, which is why a notion of terror is added to it. (cf. Lange 38) That is to say that the Oceanian Party has, to a major extent, succeeded in shifting the paradigms of thought and common sense by incessantly indoctrinating the Oceanian inhabitants.

Propaganda definitely plays a very large role in this kind of indoctrination. Bluntly, propaganda appears to be the means with which the masses are captivated. Arendt is convinced that “Only the mob and the elite can be attracted by the momentum of totalitarianism itself. The masses have to be won by propaganda.” (Arendt, in Baehr, 39)

Thymian Bussemer indicates that the term propaganda has experienced a paradigmatic shift of meaning over the last few centuries. He calls to attention that it was only in the 20th century in the beginnings of the First World War that propaganda first experienced its connotation of

[...] unverzichtbare[r] Bestandteil der Kriegsführung. Ihre (vermeintlichen) Erfolge inspirieren die totalitären Bewegungen in Deutschland, Italien und Russland. In diesen Staaten wird Propaganda zur zentralen Herrschaftstechnik, die sämtliche Lebensbereiche durchdringt. In allen Ländern wird sie Mittel der gouvernementalen Selbstrepräsentation von Staaten, vor allem in der Außenpolitik. In den westlichen Demokratien wird Propaganda ab den 1930er Jahren zudem als Mittel zur Herstellung gesellschaftlicher Stabilität eingesetzt und in diesem Prozess nachhaltig verwissenschaftlicht. (Bussemer, 27)

2.1.2.2 Brainwashing

The main aims of brainwashing, adapted loosely from Eldon Taylor's investigations of CIA programs, can be classified as the following: “(1) the speedy hypnotic induction of unwitting subjects; (2) the ability to create long-lasting amnesia; and (3) the implanting of long-lasting, useful hypnotic suggestions.” (Taylor, Eldon, 93)

It seems perfectly reasonable to point out [...] that totalitarian regimes attempt to brainwash those subject to their rule or to indoctrinate them with the fundamentals of a given ideology. Why else, we can ask, do they attach so much importance to establishing a monopoly over the agencies of socialization such as education and the media? Why else to they attack the freedom of speech and the autonomy of newspapers, publishing houses and the like? [...] All of this would be completely meaningless unless it were understood as being for the purpose of inculcating certain beliefs and values, and by extension fostering respect and love for the regime or leaders. However, it is one thing to point out that a regime is attempting to brainwash its population but quite another to show that those efforts have been successful. (Tormey, 175)

Brainwashing is a violation of human rights as it mostly involves the indoctrination of specific thoughts via physical torture. Additionally, the very idea of 'conditioning' citizens is, to say the least, disturbing.

However, it would be unsatisfactory and insufficient to reduce the impact of authoritarian regimes to methods as outrageous and blatant as propaganda and brainwashing. Restrictions of personal freedom in any way possible, ranging from constant supervision, to the monitoring of actions and thoughts bear within a powerful tool of mastery that must not be underestimated. Dystopian governments often take the liberty of intruding into the most private aspects of its citizens' lives, thus creating the impression of having to be on alert constantly. It is this inability to go about privacy that constitutes the real notion of terror here- the feeling of never being able to escape, the all-consuming helplessness that intrudes is what eventually breaks the mind of the majority of 'dystopian citizens'.

2.2 The Maintenance of Power

Assuming that the implementation of a totalitarian government has been successful, it is the next logical step to reflect on possibilities of how to maintain power. Tosi et. al. suggest that

Legitimate authority and organizationally based power can be perpetuated and strengthened by maintaining the current structure of organizational relationships and the organizational culture that support stable behavior patterns. This way, the powerful subunit will maintain control over strategic contingencies, retain its centrality, and protect its level of nonsubstitutability. (Tosi et al, 435)

Organizational hierarchy and stable behavior patterns thus form the basic premise for the durable upholding of power. Power has to be executed in as consequent a manner as possible in order to ensure the hierarchical superiority of the government. Still, this method may under certain circumstances not be sufficient for an unobstructed execution of power. Dystopian governments often resolve to pretended warfare in order to be able to justify their actions.

Even Sir Thomas More, in his *Utopia*, refers to a “make-believe war, so that money can be raised under that pretext” (More, in Logan and Adams, 31). Many literary dystopian governments have taken up this idea of feigned warfare in order to justify and sanctify any action the government may choose to take. Whether the actual strategy is to justify actions by claiming to avoid war, or whether, as in “Nineteen Eighty-Four”, warfare is merely taken as a given, this strategy proves to be an effective method of maintaining power. Hannah Arendt says:

It tends to achieve its goal by a menace which is never put into execution, rather than by the act itself. To be sure, the insight that peace is the end of war, and that therefore a war is the preparation for peace, is at least as old as Aristotle, and the pretence that the aim of an armament race is to safeguard the peace is even older, namely as old as the discovery of propaganda lies. (Arendt, 16)

We may conclude that in dystopian societies any measure taken to enforce power is inevitably linked to propaganda, physical and intellectual oppression, violence and lies. The state is formed, portrayed and changed according to the needs of the party- ‘reality’ is created.

It is perhaps radical, yet nevertheless shockingly true, to point out that, in conclusion, “In 1984, the laws of nature would be suspended and put under the control of The Party. “(Mendelsohn, Nowotny, 10)

3. The Conception of Man in the Totalitarian Regimes of Oceania and Panem

3.1 Division Proles/ Party members vs. Capitol Inhabitants/ District Inhabitants

In order to evaluate the machinery of the two dystopian societies of Oceania and Panem, it is inevitable to focus attention on the classification of citizens. Why is there a distinction between Proles and Party members in Oceania? What relevance do the wealthy Capitol inhabitants have for the Panem government? At first glance, it is perhaps objectionable to try and compare Collins' representation of Capitol inhabitants and Orwell's notion of Proles. However, after careful consideration, the comparison does not seem quite so far-fetched as it may appear.

The first similarity that leaps to attention is both of the authors' portrayal of the intellectual capacities of Proles and Capitol citizens. Due to their lack of education, and several other factors, which will be discussed in this section, their limited intellect does not allow them to even consider the possibility of an uprising. Orwell writes:

From the proletarians nothing is to be feared. Left to themselves, they will continue from generation to generation and from century to century, working, breeding and dying. Not only without an impulse to rebel, but without power of grasping that the world could be other than it is. [...] They can be granted intellectual liberty because they have no intellect. (Orwell, 240)

Orwell's categorical assertion that "Proles have no intellect" may seem harsh at first glance. Why would he excoriate a part of society that, according to his own point of view, merely has not been privileged enough to receive education? What does he gain from portraying them as, for all intents and purposes, free, yet nevertheless locked up in their own simplemindedness? Taking into consideration the idea that it is indeed contemporary society that inspires authors to write about dystopian societies, it may be a sensible question to ask: Is there more to the Proles than just a fictitious description of

a non-existent social class? Does Orwell, by hyperbolizing the Proles' futility, indeed suggest that the masses at his time were ignorant and indifferent?

The government's constant restrictions on education and the impossibility of comparison to "what the world could be" have originated a people that is no longer relevant in the eyes of the government. "The masses never revolt of their own accord, and they never revolt merely because they are oppressed. Indeed, so long as they are not permitted to have standards of comparison, they never even become aware that they are oppressed", Orwell says. (Orwell, 237) There is no uprising, because people are gradually rendered unable to imagine even the possibility of one. Even more so, the masses may not even be aware of the fact that they find themselves in a situation of oppression.

The Proles, as opposed to the Party members, enjoy a relative freedom as far as their daily lives are concerned. They are given the liberty of going outside the city, and, except for the occasional mark of the permanent presence by the Thought Police and the telescreens, are left relatively to themselves. For Party members, who, for the sake of the Party, need to maintain at least a certain level of cognitive aptitude, freedom of this scale would be unthinkable. It is the sharp contrast between 'freedom' as far as surveillance is concerned, and 'freedom' in terms of thought that constitutes the basis of criticism here. The Proles, virtually free when compared to the Party members, are unable to grasp what their freedom could achieve. They have installed themselves in a 'comfortable' environment, which they fail to perceive as confining. They are unable to understand that due to the fact that they are free, they could change the situation in Oceania, that they could in fact take over control. Any irregularity from the part of the government that should be doubted and put into question is simply neglected. Orwell explains: "By lack of understanding they remained sane. They simply swallowed everything, and what they swallowed did them no harm, because it left no residue behind, just as a grain of corn will pass undigested through the body of a bird." (Orwell, 180)

It is especially noteworthy and interesting here that, for Orwell's conception of oppression, the political dimension is even negligible as far as the Proles are concerned. "It was not desirable that the proles should have strong political feelings." (Orwell, 82) To Orwell, even an aspect as fundamental as

concurrence with the Party doctrine can be neglected due to the Proles' irrelevance for politics.

Again, it seems obvious here that Orwell's depiction of the Proles serves the purpose of holding up a mirror in front of his contemporary fellow citizens. It may very well be that he criticizes political apathy on the part of his contemporary society, and, by drawing up the most abominable 'future' imaginable, intends to alert them to the possible menace that 'behaving like a Prole' may generate.

Suzanne Collins chooses quite a similar approach. She also portrays the Capitol inhabitants as intellectually shallow, and unable to grasp the ferocity of the Capitol government when enforcing *The Hunger Games*. What Collins adds, however, is the issue of media overconsumption. As she has mentioned in an interview (see section 4.1.1), it was the merging of reality TV and footage of the Iraq war that inspired her to write *The Hunger Games*. Due to the fact that the Capitol inhabitants are jaded with death on the media, they fail to perceive the reality of murder as objectionable. It could be argued that the same holds true for her contemporary fellow citizens. Maybe she, too, aims at holding up a mirror. Maybe she considers the oversaturation of our media with death to be responsible for the mass's indifference towards other people's death, and accuses her contemporary society of losing sight of humanity.

However, when it comes to Capitol inhabitants, Collins does not only portray them as a bloodthirsty crowd who, due to their own prosperity and affluence, have unlearned to understand the implications of killing for entertainment. Rather, on several occasions, Collins describes them as almost pitiable:

"They're not evil or cruel. They're not even smart. Hurting them, it's like hurting children. They don't see... I mean, they don't know..." [...] "They don't know what, Katniss?" he says. "That tributes- who are the actual children involved here [...] are forced to fight to the death? That you were going into that arena for people's amusement? Was that a big secret in the Capitol?" "No. But they don't view it the way we do" I say. "They're raised on it and- " "Are you actually defending them? (Collins, 2010, 64)

We can only speculate on why Collins chooses this approach that differs so considerably from Orwell's merciless portrayal of the Proles as intellectually incapable. One possible suggestion for why this may be the case could be a reflection of Collins' personal attitude towards our contemporary society. Assuming that she in fact exposes present day media- consumers as being callous, we may speculate that Collins does not perceive this to be their own fault alone. Rather, she may see them as victims of a media- governed superiority, who have generated total indifference to the fate of new is media- consumers.

While it can be argued that this also holds true for the Proles in Oceania - the Proles are no more 'guilty' of being manipulated than the Capitol inhabitants are - the general idea of seeing the oppressed masses as victims and thus as pitiable can only be found in *The Hunger Games*. This can probably be, and this is mere speculation, traced back to the authors' personal attitudes towards the duties of the masses. While Orwell rather evokes an impression of Oceania's society living in self- inflicted misery because the Proles are too shiftless to realize that they could actually make a difference, Collins takes the more passive approach and portrays the Capitol citizens as blameless victims of unfortunate circumstances.

When it comes to the district inhabitants, it is interesting how Collins portrays their dependence on the Capitol. Given that every district has its own area of producing goods which are to be sent to the Capitol, it comes perhaps as a surprise that there appear to be fundamental differences in the Capitol's treatment of the different districts.

Just by looking at the District 2 rebels, you can tell they were decently fed and cared for in their childhood. [...] 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. (Collins, 2010, 226)

While districts 3 to 12 are kept at the lowest level of prosperity imaginable, districts 1 and 2 are favored by the Capitol. They receive nutrition and vesture, are comparatively well 'looked after' and therefore, as a result, less prone to

rebel than the oppressed, poorer districts. The consequence of this arrangement is that the people of districts 1 and 2 are inculcated that it is an honor to be chosen as a tribute for the Hunger Games. Due to the fact that the Capitol is the sole provider of wealth for these two districts, it may even appear plausible for them to sacrifice two of their children every year in order to uphold their living standards. This wrong-headed ideology only plays into the Capitol's desire of providing their bloodthirsty mob with spectacular Hunger Games. The "tributes" of district 1 and 2 may train hard for the Games, are even known as "Careers" among the other tributes, in order to repay the government for the living standards of their districts.

It needs to be asked why Collins portrays these two districts in that way. One possible solution to this question is that Collins wanted to create suspense by adding four more opponents to the tributes. Alternatively, she could imply political benefits that the Capitol gains from supported, and supportive districts. The fact that there is a tighter alliance with the economically stronger districts, which produce luxury goods provides the Capitol with a substantial advantage. When the uprising begins, it takes very long for districts 1 and 2 to side with the rebels. This provides an enormous advantage for the Capitol, because the rebels lose time recruiting their own people.

It would go beyond the scope of this thesis to analyze the political implications of oppressing some districts while granting comparative luxury to others. Suffice it to say that both Collins and Orwell distinguish sharply between different social groups in their societies.

3.2 Reality Control

Every man, savage or sage, however incontestably reason and experiment may prove to him that it is impossible to imagine two different courses of action in precisely the same conditions, feels that without this irrational conception (which constitutes the essence of freedom) he cannot imagine life. He feels that however impossible it may be, it is so, for without this conception of freedom not only would he be unable to understand life, but he would be unable to live for a single moment. He could not live, because all man's efforts, all his impulses to life, are only efforts to increase freedom. [...] A man having

no freedom cannot be conceived of except as deprived of life. (Tolstoy, 2459)

Freedom is, according to Leo Tolstoy an indispensable prerequisite for life, and thus a crucial concept in the fictitious worlds of Panem and Oceania. How is freedom defined? Does the subjective sensation of being free, as in the case of the Proles and Capitol inhabitants discussed in the previous section, suffice for defining freedom? Are we free, as long as we believe that we are? Or is there more to freedom than the intellectual oppression resulting in a perceived happiness?

Orwell introduces an interesting euphemism for the restriction of freedom: “reality control”. By systematically controlling and monitoring, as well as deliberately altering the living environment of its citizens, the government implements the total control of people’s private lives. They control reality, as it were.

The dystopian governments depicted in both novels both make use of their absolute authority to intrude into their citizens’ private lives. Virtually everything, from education over past time activities to thoughts, is, in one way or another, controlled and/or supervised by the government. “To achieve complete thought-control, to cancel past utterly from minds as well as records, is the objective of the State. “, says Meyers. (Meyers, 254) This is usually done with the aid of government institutions such as the “Thought Police” and “Peacekeepers” , as well as by technical devices such as telescreens and cameras, which allow for constant supervision and control.

The Oceanian concept of “doublethink”, which allows the unchallenged co-existence of two contradictory statements is, of course, the most blatantly shocking example of reality control by a government. Orwell uses this controlling feature to show comprehensively the depths of intrusion into every individual’s mind that the government has been able to attain. The message that Orwell conveys here is obvious: In a world where indoctrination has gone as far as to abolish the human ability of independent and logic thinking, humankind will forfeit the chance of survival.

It is very probable that, by depicting the de-humanizing of society in such a disturbing way, Orwell intends to remind the reader of the importance of critical thinking. The Oceanians' 'ability' to accept the co-existence of two contradictory statements serves as an illustration for the impact of the loss of logical reasoning, which will lead to apathy, loss of self-determination, and, finally, oppression.

The authorities in the Panem Capitol do not quite go as far as that. However, restricted education and a strictly censored information policy compromise the intellectual prosperity of the Panem inhabitants to a considerable extent. Panem thus employs a modified version of "reality control" in the Orwellian sense.

The fact that the media are controlled, and much of the information is issued by the Capitol government, demonstrates the practice of "reality control" in Panem. Given that the Capitol monopolizes education, the watching of the Hunger Games is mandatory, and 'Peacekeepers', a governmental unit very much like Orwell's "Thought Police", are roaming the streets to ensure the citizens' unconditional obedience to the law, it is not hard to imagine that a certain kind of reality control is also practiced in the country of Panem.

However, Collins, unlike Orwell, leaves minimal room for escape from the law. Katniss and her friend Gale try to overcome the government's boundaries and spend their free time hunting in the woods, an undertaking that remains virtually without consequences. When Winston, in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, attempts to do the same and meets his friend Julia in a private place in the forest, this can only be achieved with considerable effort. Katniss sells her prey on the black market, disapproves of the government in her (private) discussions with Gale and generally enjoys a relative intellectual freedom that would be unthinkable on the character of Winston.

Seed suggests that "For the most part, the novel shows an endless sequence of actions that reinforce the state ideology of collectivism. Slogans and catch phrases continually reassure characters that their thinking is as uniform as their clothes." (Seed, 3f), This characteristic of a dystopian government, however, is only true of Oceania. In Panem, independent thinking is not

entirely condemned or blotted out, but rather, on a private level, tolerated. But this is only a minor difference. In *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, uniformity, conformity and obedience constitute the essence of the government's 'success' in Oceania, but this hardly applies to the political system in *The Hunger Games*. This circumstance may, to a certain extent, be the reason why the dystopian regime can be overcome in Panem.

If it is true that "reality control" is less severe and less efficient in Panem, it is nevertheless definitely practiced. Information control, a monopoly on education and powerful executives of the law who do not shy away from using force are definitely effective examples of reality control in Panem. It must be said, however, that the impact of reality control as portrayed by George Orwell remains by far more disconcerting, which is primarily due to the fact that it comprises intellectual oppression of its subordinates down to a point where logic, independent thinking appears to be no longer possible. The fact that the district inhabitants of Panem are granted relative intellectual freedom may be seen as the primary reason for the eventual collapse of the Capitol government.

3.2.1 Restrictions of Personal Freedom

A characteristic of dystopia that goes hand in hand with reality control is the implementation of restrictions. Plehwe, Walpen and Neunhöffer claim that "the more direct the government restrictions of individual rights, the better suited they are for their representation in a dystopia." (Plehwe, Walpen, Neunhöffer, 167) For establishing and upholding a dystopian government, it appears to be necessary to control the lives of the citizens down to the most private spheres. Restrictions, the compliance with which is vigorously enforced, play an essential role in controlling society in a dystopian state.

One of the most exceptional examples of George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is certainly the restriction of sexuality to the mere purpose of reproduction.

The aim of the Party was not merely to prevent men and women from forming loyalties which it might not be able to control. Its real,

undeclared purpose was to remove all pleasure from the sexual act. Not love so much as eroticism was the enemy, inside marriage as well as outside it. All marriages between Party members had to be approved by a committee appointed for the purpose, and- though the principle was never clearly stated- permission was always refused if the couple gave the impression of being physically attracted to one another. The only recognized purpose of marriage was to beget children for the service of the Party. (Orwell,75)

The Party has recognized the potential 'danger' that love carries within itself: it is aware of the risks that the irrationality of a lover's behavior may bring. In order to minimize any such risk, the Oceanian government has implemented a 'life-partner- policy' that functions without any emotions. This, Orwell claims, has 'desirable' effects on the citizens' behavior towards the Party. The constant frustration that the suppression of sexual urges generates is a powerful tool that the Oceanian government makes use of.

When you make love you're using up energy; and afterwards you feel happy and don't give a damn for anything. They can't bear you feel like that. They want you bursting with energy all the time. All this marching up and down and cheering and waving flags is simply sex gone sour. If you're happy inside yourself, why should you get excited about Big Brother and the Three-Year Plans and the Two Minutes Hate and all the rest of their bloody rot? (Orwell, 153)

It is inconceivable for anyone socialized in a contemporary western society to imagine a government taking the liberty of depriving people of taking such elementary, private choices, and, even more so, of strictly enforcing compliance. Suzanne Collins has adapted this aspect from Orwell, but slightly modified it. In Panem, people are allowed to live as couples bonded by love, and sexuality is not controlled by the government. Nevertheless, raising a child is probably similarly unthinkable for Katniss as it is for Winston.

I know I'll never marry, never risk bringing a child into the world. Because if there's one thing being a victor doesn't guarantee, it's your children's safety. My kids' names would go right into the reaping balls with everyone else's. And I swear I'll never let that happen. (Collins, 2008,311)

For Collins, it is not the direct prohibition by the government that detains Katniss from the prospect of bearing a child. Rather, she paints a picture of intrinsic restraint by Katniss herself. The atrocious circumstances in her living environment constitute, essentially, an indirect 'veto' by the government. It can thus be said that, while it is true that the government does not actively interfere with its citizens' reproduction, it still has a large influence on the private decisions on childbearing of its citizens, given that they naturally aim at sparing their children the miserable circumstances they are currently experiencing.

Obviously, restriction is not confined to the controlling of sexuality and family life. Even seemingly insignificant aspects of life such as music become subject to drastic constraint. "It struck him as a curious fact that he had never heard a member of the Party singing alone and spontaneously. It would even have seemed slightly unorthodox, a dangerous eccentricity, like talking to oneself." (Orwell, 163 f) Orwell elaborates: "The birds sang, the Proles sang, the Party did not sing." (Orwell, 252) Again, the government aims at keeping the level of well-being among its Party members as low as possible. It is interesting to acknowledge here that Orwell distinguishes between Proles and Party members when it comes to the restriction of music. As for the Capitol inhabitants of Panem, music and entertainment are not considered to be dangerous for the Proles. On the contrary, it is by keeping the masses 'entertained' on a shallow level that the government ensures a, however superficial, sensation of satisfaction on the part of the Proles and Capitol inhabitants. The primary intention of this kind of lulling is to prevent dissatisfaction, which may in turn provoke an uprising. It continually provides a shallow level of entertainment in order to keep the masses under control.

For the Party members this kind of entertainment is undesirable. The Party demands lethargic compliance with even the most illogical instructions- a feeling of, however lukewarm, satisfaction would be a hindrance for the achievement of this purpose.

In *The Hunger Games*, Collins also refers to the subject area of music as a problematic concept. "He taps me on the arm and uses a twig to write a word in the dirt. SING? [...] I have not sung "The Hanging Tree" out loud for ten

years, because it's forbidden, but I remember every word. I begin softly, as my father did." (Collins, 2010, 244) While singing as such is not generally prohibited in Panem, the singing of specific songs is subject to censorship. Music is often referred to in *The Hunger Games*, even though Katniss first seems to underestimate the value of it: "Music?" I say. In our world, I rank music somewhere between hair ribbons and rainbows in terms of usefulness." (Collins, 2008, 211) When she sings for her dead friend Rue in the Hunger Games arena, however, she gradually begins to grasp the immense impact that music can have on individuals. The Hunger Games media cannot help but broadcast Katniss' musical homage to her dead friend, because viewers would become suspicious if the event was not shown on TV. However, the media censor the rest of Katniss' symbolic testimony of respect. "But I do notice they omit the part where I cover her in flowers. Right. Because even that smacks of rebellion." (Collins, 2008, 363)

Collins uses Katniss' singing as a first indication, a foreshadowing of rebellion. The fact that Katniss dares to sing on such an occasion as the Hunger Games is demonstrative of her recalcitrant attitude towards the government and thus indicates her power and initiative to the potential followers of her plans for rebellion. This clearly demonstrates the great importance Collins attributes to the power of music.

It is thus worth noting the value that both authors assign to music. Both Orwell and Collins are aware of the positive influence music can have on society, and both are aware of the 'risks' that music may have on their dystopian societies. This is why both the governments of Oceania and Panem censor music to some extent. However, Orwell also portrays music as a tool of shallow entertainment for the masses, which dulls their sense of political reality, whereas Collins actively uses music as a means of foreshadowing rebellion.

Another aspect that is strongly restricted in both Oceania and Panem is contact with foreigners and/or inhabitants of districts other than one's own: "[...] and he is forbidden the knowledge of foreign languages. If he were allowed contact with foreigners he would discover that they are creatures similar to himself and that most of what he has been told about them is lies." (Orwell, 226) The motives of the government for restricting contacts to the

outside world are obvious: As long as there is no means of comparing one's living situation to other parts of the world, the citizens are unable to imagine an alternative way of living. This kind of prevention of imagining alternatives may be considered the most efficient method of intellectual oppression. As long as prospects for an alternative future are missing, rebellion stands little chance of success. If people are no longer given the opportunity to compare their living situation to another, it is easier for the respective governments to keep the masses under control.

In *The Hunger Games*, members of different districts are forbidden direct contact with each other: "We have so little communication with anyone outside our district. In fact, I wonder if the Gamemakers are blocking out our conversation, because even though the information seems harmless, they don't want people in different districts to know about one another." (Collins, 2008, 203) In this case, the reason for the government to impose restriction may lie in preventing reciprocal knowledge of the customs of different districts, which would provide an advantage in *The Hunger Games*. However, they are also forbidden direct contact with the Capitol, the reason for which is precisely the same one that Orwell suggests- as long as there is no means of comparison, people are unaware of what they could have, and dissatisfaction is prevented.

It can be concluded that restrictions, in many areas of dystopian life, are an integral part in the perpetuation of dystopian governments. Restricting sexuality to a mere means of reproduction, music to a means of shallow entertainment, and to abolish contact to the outside world all together all serve the purpose of keeping the masses under control.

3.2.2 Education, Indoctrination and Brainwashing

Making a dystopian society 'successful' does not stop at the mere implementation of restrictions. On a deep-level structure, durable obedience from the part of the inhabitants can only be achieved via the aid of education in the broadest sense of the word. In the context of Dystopia, this term comprises not only education in the primary sense of the word, i.e. in the

course of an institutionalized, artificial learning situation in schools, but also the forcible indoctrination of thoughts facilitated by the use of violence and propaganda.

Both Collins and Orwell refer to governmentally monitored education. Collins describes a very basic level education that deals with the necessities of the individual districts, as well as some general propaganda featuring the portrayal of the Capitol as laudable.

Besides basic reading and math most of our instruction is coal-related. Except for the weekly lecture on the history of Panem. It's mostly just a lot of blather about what we owe the Capitol. I know there must be more than they're telling us, an actual account of what happened during the rebellion. But I don't spend much time thinking about it. Whatever the truth is, I don't see how it will help me get food on the table. (Collins, 2008, 42)

It is interesting here that, although restricted education and indoctrination do occur in Panem, Katniss does not appear to be greatly affected by the consequences of her education. She seems to be enough capable of thinking independently so that she can deliberately dismiss or accept pieces of information reaching her. Again, unlike Orwell, Collins presents a less totalitarian view of governmental influence on education.

In *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, 'education' happens on a deeper psychological level. Given that Orwell's protagonist is of adult age, the reader does not immediately learn about firsthand experiences of child education, even though there are several references to it. Rather, Orwell depicts 'education' as yet another method of achieving all-encompassing power - the most significant feature of which is the implementation of a new language. Orwell dedicates an entire section of his book to the explanation of "new speak"- the language of Oceania to be implemented. It aims at gradually eliminating the traditional vocabulary in order to make thoughts about undesired political ideas literally impossible.

The endeavor to control such essential aspects of life as thought and language is definitely a radical limitation of intellectual freedom, and, consequently, an extremely efficient method of manipulative 'education'. By

systematically reducing the means to make use of undesirable concepts, these concepts are destined to vanish entirely.

Fear is another vital concept that the dystopian governments of Oceania and Panem make use of in order to intimidate and control citizens. The main problem that the protagonists seem encounter is the fact of being exposed to the complete mercy of a government that has no objective other than the preservation, establishment and maintenance of power. Power is exerted at any time, leaving the citizens no choice but to deal with its ramifications. Children are ripped from their families in order to be sent into an arena to slaughter themselves, which is the method used to acknowledge that Panem inhabitants are completely at the mercy of the Capitol. This is one of the most conspicuous instances of demonstrating absolute power. Torture for the sake of torture is another example of exercising power in an outrageously inhuman manner:

“I watched them being tortured to death. [...] It took days to finish him off. Beating, cutting off parts. They kept asking him questions, but he couldn't speak, he just made these horrible animal sounds. They didn't want information, you know? They wanted me to see it.” (Collins, 2010)

If the comparatively harmless method of indoctrination by manipulative education proves to be inefficient, systematic brainwashing is applied. Winston Smith, in Orwell's infamous scene in room 101, becomes the victim of a shockingly effective session of brainwashing that exploits the subject's most deep-rooted fears and conditions him into a state of apathy. In *Mockingjay*, Collins adopts a similar technique, which she refers to as hijacking⁴, when she describes how the Capitol conditions Peeta into making him identify Katniss as an imminent menace.

The use of brainwashing is not an uncommon literary subject. As David Seed points out

Yevgeny Zamyatin's *We* (1924), Huxley's *Brave New World* (1932), Arthur Koestler's *Darkness at Noon* (1940), and Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949) all describe different kinds of brainwashing before

⁴ cf. Collins, 2010, 209f - a method similar to brainwashing involving the use of venom

the letter. All four focus on a quasi-religious “subjection to the Subject”, where the Leader has assumed mythic dimensions as a personification of the state; and all three describe the working of the most powerful apparatus of the state- its security arm- as it redirects the desire of deviants to accept their subjection. (Seed, 2)

It is important to acknowledge the deviations in the approaches of Collins’ and Orwell’s to the concept of ‘subjection to the Subject’. The main aim of brainwashing in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, as Seed has pointed out, is definitely the complete subjection of the self to the ideology of the Party. O’Brien, with his extremely brutal and efficient method of brainwashing involving the use of deep-seated fears, achieves just that. Collins takes this idea one step further. Her conception of brainwashing involves another extremely psychologically atrocious component. By ‘hijacking’, i.e. brainwashing Peeta, Katniss’ friend and ally, the Capitol adds the component of guilt. It is not directly by means of brainwashing Katniss herself that the government seeks to establish its power, but by deliberately and forcefully indoctrinating the mind of Katniss’ friend. The Capitol is aware of the fact that Katniss, as an extremely loyal and allegiant person, is more likely to succumb to its will when force is used against Katniss’ friends than when used against herself.

Coming back to the notion of ‘subjecting to the Subject’, Seed refers to Althusser’s considerations on the ‘Subject’ with the status of a deity.

Smith’s interrogation and indoctrination are enacted through a dialogue with O’Brien whose stated aim is to confirm Smith’s status as a subject. Althusser plays on different dimensions to the meaning of this term when he describes individuals’ “subjection to the Subject”. If the capitalized Subject is the deity, then Benefactor, No. 1, and Big Brother are clearly images of the deity’s displacement, a point O’Brien makes clear when he declares: “we are the priests of power”. (Seed, 16)

It is true that, to a very large extent, Orwell’s portrayal of Big Brother can be compared to an almost religious manifestation of God-like power. The process of brainwashing serves the purpose of making the subject acknowledge and accept the status of the Leader as a kind of deity. Interestingly enough, this is not the case in *The Hunger Games*. There, brainwashing is used merely as a temporary means of detaining the rebels from further progress in their

uprising. The implementation of a “Big Brother”-like, divine leader figure by the Capitol government is not addressed by Collins at all.

For O’Brien and the Oceanian Party, brainwashing serves the purpose of ‘cleansing’ the individual from any mental ‘impediment’ that may disturb the subject’s willingness to accept the indoctrination of Party ideology.

O’Brien is a skilled manipulator of metaphors of transforming the self-by occupation, purging and cleansing. He rejects all earlier forms of martyrdom as inefficient because the victims had not been converted. Accordingly he predicts to Smith that his inner space will be removed: “you will be hollow”, the emptiness connoting his accessibility to ideological reconfirmation. (Seed, 18)

The concept of ‘hollowness’ figuratively describes the Party’s conception of individuals. In order to obtain obedient followers of their ideology, all that needs to be done is the ‘emptying’ of the mind of any previous idea that may have existed, and to replace the created ‘emptiness’ by an ideology in line with the purposes of the Party. Edward Hunter points out that, with the aid of atrocious torture methods, brainwashing can even achieve the complete annihilation of logical reasoning and common sense:

His speech seemed impressed on a disc that had to be played from start to finish, without modification or halt. He appeared to be under a weird, unnatural compulsion to go on with a whole train of thought, from beginning to end, even when it had been rendered silly. For example, he spoke of no force being applied to him even after someone already had pointed out that he had been seen in shackles. He was [...] no longer capable of using free will or adapting himself to a situation for which he had been uninstructed; he had to go on as if manipulated by instincts alone. This was Party discipline extended to the mind; a trance element was in it. (Hunter, 14 f)

Both Collins and Orwell refer to impaired common sense of the citizens of the dystopian societies described in their works. O’Brien finally makes Winston succumb to any proposition of how many fingers he is holding up, regardless of the obvious reality. With completed brainwashing, Winston believes O’Brien when he tells him that $2+2=5$.

Smith’s interrogation resembles processes of measurement and a distorted kind of psychotherapy [...] where his inquisitor asks factual

questions as tests of his subject's attitude. One deleted passage from the manuscript captures the officials' pretence of concern: "There were men in white coats who stroked his forehead & looked deep into his eyes while metronomes ticked somewhere near at hand." The metronome links the interrogation to Pavlov's experiments and briefly casts Smith in the role of guinea pig. The famous case of how many fingers O'Brien is holding up makes the point clearly that no commonsense notion of the real can substitute for Smith's required "act of submission". (Seed, 16)

The point of this method, obviously, is to enable the government to implement any idea that may suit their purpose into an individual's mind. Collins takes up this idea, and describes how the Capitol government uses venom that induces a sensation of extreme fear in order to brainwash Peeta into loathing Katniss, despite his obvious romantic feelings for her. The fact that the hijacking succeeds in obliterating even a feeling as strong as infatuation or love can be compared to Orwell's notion of unlearning common sense by means of brainwashing.

To conclude this chapter, it is important to acknowledge again the immense importance that manipulative education, indoctrination and brainwashing have for the perpetuation of a dystopian society. Both authors highlight the importance of thought manipulation in dystopian states, and refer to it repeatedly.

3.2.3 The Enemy

Another issue that is crucial to the depiction of the dystopian societies in *The Hunger Games* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is the implementation of an (unreal?) national enemy. However, Collins and Orwell take quite diverging approaches to this topic.

In *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, the Party establishes the notion of an enemy by the name of Emmanuel Goldstein. "Goldstein was the renegade and backslider who once, long ago [...] had been one of the leading figures of the Party, almost on a level with Big Brother himself, and then had engaged in counter-revolutionary activities, had been condemned to death and had mysteriously

escaped and disappeared.” (Orwell, 14) This collective enemy is portrayed as the personification of evil:

Wo es einen Gott gibt, muss es auch einen Teufel geben. Das ist der angebliche Kollektivfeind Emmanuel Goldstein (der offenbar an Trotzki und Emma Goldman, die amerikanische Anarchistin, erinnern soll). Ähnlich wie Trotzki für den paranoiden Stalin zur Erklärung aller Missstände in der UdSSR herhalten musste, wird auch Goldstein zu einem dämonischen Widersacher aufgebaut, den alle Menschen Oceanias hassen müssen. (Rattner, Danzer, 169)

Numerous suggestions relating to the significance of the name of Goldstein have been proposed, many of which suggest a relationship between the figure of Goldstein and actual historical characters:

[...] , the unceasing campaign against the possibly nonexistent Emmanuel Goldstein, who is held to be the evil genius behind all that goes amiss under the rule of Big Brother, is modeled after the elaborate Stalinist vilification of Trotsky. Even the facial features of Big Brother and Goldstein suggest those of Stalin and Trotsky, respectively, and “Goldstein” is surely a verbal echo of “Bronstein,” Trotsky’s original surname. (Freedman, 176)

The principal reason for the introduction and, ultimately, invention of a collective enemy serves the purpose of uniting the masses against one common adversarial target. It is by doing so that the Oceanian government triggers, by means of the manipulation of the media, emotional reactions against a common foe, which leads to a desirable identification with the Party ideology. O’Shaughnessy points out that, for a concept of an enemy, “one of the most important aims in propaganda is to demonstrate, indeed, that the enemy is not like us, is a ruthless, amoral monster, in order to incite the mobilizing emotion of anger.” (O’Shaughnessy, 127) The hatred of a barbarous villain unites the masses through the creation of a certain sense of superiority. “The sense of superiority thus created is attractive to people at the bottom of some social pyramid, and they can be managed by creating a new people lower than they, upon whom they can look down.” (O’Shaughnessy, 124) The implementation of the figure of Goldstein thus serves a very particular purpose - the definition of a common unity among an otherwise detached public.

Having a common object of hatred is, as O'Shaugnessy puts it, a source for social integration:

The social construction of an enemy fulfils several important functions. We define ourselves by reference to what we are not. This clarifies our values or where we stand, and gives us a coherent sense of selfhood. Second, it is only by reference to enemies that we became united, and the greater the internal discord within societies the more powerful will our need for enemies be: the propaganda construction of enemies is a source for social integration. (O'Shaugnessy, 125)

The fact that the Oceanian citizens are confronted with the image of Goldstein on a day-to-day basis, "The programmes of the Two Minutes Hate varied from day to day, but there was none in which Goldstein was not the principal figure." (Orwell, 14) is an extremely important factor for upholding the 'unity of hatred' described above. It is only by continuously exposing the masses to the adversary that the desired negative emotions fuelling the masses' affiliation to the Party ideology can be durably maintained.

In *The Hunger Games*, Collins chooses an entirely different approach to the concept of a collective enemy. Unlike Orwell, who channelizes all negative emotion into the hatred of an individual, Collins creates a 'bogey man image' of an entire district. District 13, a region that had attempted uprising at an earlier stage in history, and which has been defeated and literally annihilated by the Capitol government, serves as a governmentally imposed image of collective hatred in *The Hunger Games*. Footage of a bombed region rendered chemically uninhabitable is continuously broadcast across the screens of Panem, and accompanied by explicit warnings never again to attempt an uprising against the government in order to avoid being exterminated by the Capitol.

The messages that Collins and Orwell convey by employing the motif of the collective enemy could not diverge further from each other. While the Capitol government intends to intimidate potential rebels by providing footage of how it has defeated and annihilated a former uprising force, the Oceanian government describes Goldstein to be an insurmountable, imperishable enemy, even for a force as powerful as the Oceanian government. One reason for why Orwell may portray Goldstein in this particular way may be the

facilitation of a perpetuation of hatred. Given that Goldstein, who is probably non-existent, can never be caught, the collective image of hatred that proves to be so crucial for the unity of the masses can stay alive for an indefinite amount of time. The Oceanian government has created an enemy who is commonly recognized as the personified evil, and whose invincibility guarantees a durable concept of an agent of uniting the masses. Collins, on the other hand, portrays an exemplary, dissuasive concept of a once powerful enemy, who has, despite its power, been defeated. This demonstration of might is destined to keep the masses under control.

It is clear that Collins and Orwell portray their concepts of the common enemy with different perspectives on vincibility. However, it is very important to understand here that a governmentally imposed personified evil as in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, whose aim it is to unite the masses in a common sensation of hatred, does not exist in *The Hunger Games*. Evil is rather represented by District 13 and is portrayed as a dissuasive example of failed rebellion. However, Collins employs another image of an enemy dissimilar to Orwell's: President Snow. President Snow, as the leader of the totalitarian government of Panem, exemplifies and personifies the atrocities of the society and serves as the designated enemy of Katniss Everdeen. Instead of a governmentally imposed figure against which all hatred is directed, Collins works the other way around and focuses on a member of the government as an antagonistic character. Snow, who is the primary manipulator of the Hunger Games, is presented as evil personified – but, not as in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* – evil operating *against* the government, but *for* the government. This significant difference manipulates the perspective of the reader, and foreshadows the success of the rebellion at the end of the trilogy.

In order for rebellion to be successful, Collins uses the motif of the personified evil government represented by Snow, and suggests that “[...] if we can film the Mockingjay assassinating Snow, it will end the war.” (Collins, 2010,329) In *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, where there is no clear-cut leading figure (the image of Big Brother is described to be symbolic)⁵ that can be assassinated, the

⁵ “Big Brother is the guise in which the Party chooses to exhibit itself to the world. His function is to act as a focusing point for love, fear and reverence, emotions which are more easily felt towards an individual than towards an organization.” (Orwell, 238)

overthrowing of the government becomes considerably more difficult, since there is no particular person to attack, but a whole system.

To conclude, both authors employ different concepts of enemies- either for the purpose of provoking a common sensation of hatred in the general public, for establishing a daunting example of a conquered enemy that prevents future rebels from attempting an uprising, or, as in Collins, to exemplify personified evil on the part of the government in order to provide a motive for a public uprising.

3.2.4 Surveillance

The concept of surveillance in connection with the conception of man in *The Hunger Games* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is elementary. George Orwell's classic is most notably known for the figure of "Big Brother", a term that has become part of every-day language. Collins transforms the idea of a surveillance force into her own version of it linked to the cruel tradition in the fictional state of Panem called The Hunger Games. Ericson and Haggerty point out that

[...] the most intrusive manifestation of surveillance would involve information about a core identity, a locatable person, information that is personal, intimate, sensitive, stigmatizing, strategically valuable, expensive, biological, naturalistic, predictive, that reveals deception, is attached to the person, and involves an enduring and unalterable documentary record. (Ericson, Haggerty, 31)

Basically all of the above characteristics hold true for the conception of Big Brother. Every citizen's motion, gesture and facial expression is captured and meticulously analyzed. Any action suggesting merely the slightest non-conformity with Party ideology becomes a potential threat to the life of an Oceanian citizen.

David Lyon claims that

much surveillance theory is dystopian. The stark contrasts and helpless fear depicted in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* [...] may be muted in sociology. But the note of warning, the doom-laden prediction, is often present via the chosen concepts- surveillance capacities, for instance- or the conscious allusions such as those to Big Brother, watching. We have seen how the dystopian yields some strong clues both about surveillance itself and how it is perceived by its subjects. (Lyon, 201)

In Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* the citizens are fully aware of being at risk by surveillance at any given moment. The presence of telescreens, an electronical device installed in every Oceanian household enabling unilateral communication and monitoring, is considered normal. People behave as if continuously under scrutiny in order to avoid harsh punishment by the government.

There was of course no way of knowing whether you were being watched at any given moment. How often, or on what system, the Thought Police plugged in on any individual wire was guesswork. It was even conceivable that they watched everybody all the time. But at any rate they could plug in your wire whenever they wanted to. You had to live- did live, from habit that became instinct- in the assumption that every sound you made was overheard, and, except in darkness, every movement scrutinized. (Orwell, 5)

As is often the case in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Orwell paints a picture of absolute, all-encompassing control, of which there is no escape. Even when Winston manages to sneak out into the forest at one occasion, he runs the risk of being monitored by means of bugging devices. Governmental supervision in Panem, by contrast, sometimes does allow a chance for escape. Although there is no constant technical supervision in the districts, and surveillance is to a large extent carried out by so called "Peacekeepers", Katniss and her friend Gale successfully escape into the forests at several occasions.

In Oceania, the telescreens are everywhere- and are often invisible- and capture even the slightest expression that may suggest a thought crime, a governmentally introduced term in the language of "newspeak", which denotes a mental discord with Party ideology, even if no actual crime has been committed. Oceanian citizens have to be fully aware of their facial expression at any time if they wish to escape prosecution. This kind of self-restraint and

apparent peace of mind is virtually unfamiliar to Katniss when she first enters the Hunger Games Arena. In her district, where surveillance is mostly carried out by Peacekeepers, it is substantially easier to conceal 'illegal' activities.

It is only once the Games have begun that she is exposed to the same level of permanent surveillance suggested in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. The cameras capture the progress of the Games in order to broadcast it across Panem, Katniss is fully aware that her gestures are observed by government officials and Panem inhabitants. She carefully creates an official persona of herself and skillfully plays her role required to achieve her goal. "But I can't let my fear show. Absolutely, positively, I am live on every screen in Panem. " (Collins, 2008, 223)

It is worth noting that both authors refer to their protagonists' ability to disguise any sentiment they have by turning their faces into an expressionless mask when confronted with surveillance. "His heart was thumping like a drum, but his face, from long habit, was probably expressionless. He got up and moved heavily towards the door." (Orwell, 23) "So I learned to hold my tongue and to turn my features into an indifferent mask so that no one could ever read my thoughts." (Collins, 6) Self-control and the ability to hide emotions thus are vital criteria for survival in both dystopian societies.

It is interesting to see that Collins employs another method of surveillance: symbolic messages. "Positioned on my dresser, that white-as-snow rose is a personal message to me. It speaks of unfinished business. It whispers, *I can find you. I can reach you. Perhaps I am watching you now*". (Collins, 2010, 18) The fact that the symbolic white rose that is left on Katniss's dresser is used as an indicator of potential secret surveillance is striking when compared to the method of surveillance applied in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, which is ordinarily not camouflaged, but an obvious fact in Oceania. The sharp contrast between an openly displayed surveillance and the sending of symbolic messages indicating secret surveillance is definitely worth noticing. While Orwell chooses an overt approach to surveillance in order to establish an omnipresent sensation of being watched, Collins creates a feeling of a hidden threat that is even more discomforting to the citizens.

It can be concluded that both authors consider surveillance as an effective means of keeping citizens under control. Orwell, having coined the term “Big Brother”, attributes an enormous importance to continuous observation of citizens by cameras as a feature typical of a dystopian state. Collins, in her depiction of the districts of Panem, does not necessarily consider surveillance to be of primary importance. However, once the Hunger Games are broadcasted all over the country of Panem, the realization of the threat of surveillance becomes imminent. It is of paramount importance for both protagonists to be able to conceal their emotions from their faces in order to escape prosecution. However, while Orwell chooses to portray his vision of surveillance as an overt, easily recognizable force that is taken as a given by the Oceanian citizens, Collins refers to the possibility of being watched secretly at several instances.

3.4 Death and Killing as a Spectacle

One of the most fundamental concepts shared by both George Orwell and Suzanne Collins on the subject of dystopia is their depiction of violent death, dying and killing as a spectacle conveyed to the masses by mass media. In line with the predominant contemporary trend of portraying death as a means of mass entertainment as pointed out by McIlwain, Collins has adapted Orwell’s countless references to death as a public spectacle when she created her *The Hunger Games* trilogy.

To wholly assert that death remains taboo ignores the manner in which public fascination, concern, and contemplation of death and dying have continually increased over the past three to four decades. This is to say, the growing attention given to this topic, especially in mass entertainment, is significant in terms of what we as Americans think and believe about death and dying, and how these sentiments influence human behavior and the broader American culture in our search for community. Proof of this rising trend in the degree to which death has invaded public discourse is evident in a variety of forms. Over the past five decades there has been an increase in the number of popular and academic writings about the subject. In the 1950s, only nineteen books on the subject were published [...] As we get to the 1960s, the number increases to 120 books. [...] In the 1970s, 714 recorded books were on the market [...] The second major increase [...] brought the American public 1,123 books on the subject of death and dying. (McIlwain, 19)

One of the many obvious similarities between the two depictions of dystopian societies by Orwell and Collins is the presentation of death as a spectacle generating media attention. It is interesting to acknowledge here that both authoritarian regimes seem to recognize the need for mass entertainment. Following Crick's notion of a society of "bread and circuses"(cf. Crick, 60), there seems to be an inherent benefit for the two governments if they offer, however destructive, entertainment to the masses.

Why, we may ask, is this the case? Following the general trend of oppression and elimination of pleasurable activities, would it not be more cost- and time-efficient for a government to deprive citizens even of the controversial pleasure of watching people suffer and be killed in deadly combats?

On the contrary, the Panem Capitol requires mandatory watching of the Hunger Games. The government of Oceania enforces Hate Weeks and public hangings. What benefit do the governments gain from these terrible forms of 'entertainment'?

Taking the kids from our districts, forcing them to kill one another while we watch- this is the Capitol's way of reminding us how totally we are at their mercy. [...] To make it humiliating as well as torturous, the Capitol requires us to treat the Hunger Games as a festivity, a sporting event pitting every district against the others. (Collins, 2008, 18 ff)

Using the compelling force of death as a medium of installing and maintaining power can be considered the main objective that governments aim to accomplish here. It is by no means accidental that both writers relate to this disdainful practice. Orwell portrays violence and death as an alarmingly desirable family activity:

They do get so noisy, " she said. "They're disappointed because they couldn't go to see the hanging. [...] "Why can't we go to see the hanging?" roared the boy in his huge voice. "Want to see the hanging! Want to see the hanging!" chanted the little girl, still capering round. Some Eurasian prisoners, guilty of war crimes, were to be hanged in the Park that evening, Winston remembered. This happened about once a month, and was a popular spectacle. Children always clamoured to be taken to see it. (Orwell, 1949, 28)

Collins, by comparison, takes the idea even further to a point where the Hunger Games are set at a later time of the day in order to be convenient for the Capitol inhabitants, who then get the chance to sleep longer and “enjoy” the spectacle even more. (cf. Collins, 2008, 138)

It is especially important to the Gamemakers in *The Hunger Games* to keep the audience entertained by artificially creating as violent a circumstance as possible. Starvation and freezing are even considered to be “anticlimactic” (Collins, 2008, 39) and thus undesirable, rendering combat, deceit and slaughter the more attractive options. The audience is fully aware that Gamemakers are intentionally manipulating the process of the Games, releasing nerve gas and wild animals into the arena as they see fit. “Somewhere, in a cool and spotless room, a Gamemaker sits at a set of controls, fingers on the triggers that could end my life in a second. All that is needed is a direct hit.” (Collins, 2008, 175)

Nevertheless, Capitol and district inhabitants do get the chance to interfere, at least partially, with the Games by sending (very expensive) gifts to the participants. They are encouraged to take part in betting activities, thus creating a striking resemblance to modern sporting events. Moreover, in doing so, they indirectly sponsor death.

Katniss cannot help being repulsed by the unscrupulousness of the Capitol inhabitants, but understands that they are just as oppressed as district inhabitants when it comes to questioning the governments’ intentions behind The Hunger Games. However, very much like in Orwell’s depiction of the proles, there is a lack of emotional attachment and affection on part of the Capitol inhabitants, which suggests that they are shallow, inconsiderate as well as brutal and inhuman.

What must it be like, I wonder, to live in a world where food appears at the press of a button? How would I spend the hours I now commit to combing the woods for 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 around for a new shipment of tributes to roll in and die for their entertainment? (Collins, 2008, 65)

In the presentation of sporting events, Collins mentions that arenas from former games are preserved as historic sites, and constitute popular sites for Capitol residents to go on vacation to. Even reenactments of previous games for the benefit of tourists are described (cf. Collins, 2008, 144 f), emphasizing the notion that death is a spectacle even more.

It is definitely worth referring to similarities between Orwell's and Collins' depiction of a staged, bloodthirsty, media-savvy orchestration of death with the sole function of demonstrating the power of the respective governments. Collins has developed further what Orwell only refers to marginally, and, with the influence of intertextual references such as the myth of Theseus or various Gladiator stories (cf. section 4.1.1), Collins created a plot centered on spectacle which combines Orwell's adumbrations with aspects from other literary works.

What is perhaps the most interesting aspect to consider here is the ambivalent term that Suzanne Collins uses, which derives from Roman antiquity and implies a pun on Panem as well. "[...] in the Capitol, all they've known is *Panem et Circenses*. [...] *Panem et Circenses* translates into 'Bread and Circuses'." (Collins, 2010, 261)

The fact that she names her dystopian state after the ancient topos of "*Panem et Circenses*", in a way foreshadows some of the action of the trilogy. When she states that "in return for full bellies and entertainment, his people had given up their political responsibilities and therefore their power" (Collins, 2010, 261), a clear indication of the attitude towards the Capitol inhabitants is given. On this level, Collins' depiction resembles Orwell's concept of the Proles (as discussed in section 3.1) to a very large extent. Like Orwell, Collins accuses the Capitol inhabitants of not exploiting their potential, and, consequently, of giving up a responsibility that could be lifesaving for many district inhabitants.

To conclude this chapter, it is important to point out again that Suzanne Collins has elaborated on Orwell's basic concepts of death, dying and killing as a media-centered spectacle, and incorporated intertextual aspects of historic Gladiator Games in order to create her vision of the Hunger Games. It is

interesting to note that both authors point out the 'beneficial' force coming from uniting its citizens in a bloodthirsty spectacle, which serves the purpose of reminding the citizens of being completely at the government's mercy. Collins' extension of Orwell's rudimentary concept of death as a spectacle includes a very detailed account of rules and regulations underlying the Hunger Games, a fact that is certainly also supported by Collins' intertextual incorporation of Gladiator Games and the myth of Theseus. Finally, her choice of name of her imaginary dystopia – Panem – refers to the fascination of society with "games", i.e. mass entertainment involving death.

3.5 Maintaining Power

The one thing that all of the above mentioned considerations of conceptions of man in *The Hunger Games* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four* have in common is that any implementation of reality control, restrictions, brainwashing and surveillance from the part of the government serve the purpose of establishing a permanent, durable society where existing power can be maintained. When it comes to power, it is not only its current existence that is of importance, but primarily its perpetuation over time. All of the aspects mentioned in the previous chapters fulfill an essential task in preserving the predominant leadership. However, it is not only by directly interfering with the citizens' lives that the maintenance of power can be facilitated. Also, by the creation of a certain living environment, power and mastery can be sustained for a long time.

Orwell elaborately describes how the decimation of amenities to a bare minimum, the abolition of independent thinking, the instigation of hatred as well as the continuous state of war the country finds itself in, play an enormous role in upholding the undisputed mastery of the totalitarian government. Randall Marlin points out that

In *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, the political leaders of Oceania, one of three political groups in its world, have figured out how to control a population for an indefinitely long period of time: it is only necessary to foment hatred and to eliminate memories and independent thinking. War is necessary to limit the abundance of goods, since otherwise people would have sufficient time and leisure to ask themselves why they allow

a privileged elite to rule over them. The population is taught the language of Newspeak, designed to narrow the range of thought. (Marlin, 27)

According to Marlin, it is not only the fomentation of hatred and the elimination of independent thinking (for example via the implementation of the language of Newspeak) that allow for the perpetuation of power in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. Most notably, he refers to the purposeful realization of poverty as an extremely efficient means of maintaining power. Also Richard Saage considers the intentional implementation of poverty to be of great importance:

Im Gegensatz zu Wells und Huxley [...] kehrt Orwell zur Sozialsaskese der frühneuzeitlichen Utopie zurück, freilich mit einem charakteristischen Unterschied: War von 16. Bis zum Ende des 18. Jahrhunderts der materielle Mangel eine Rahmenbedingung der Sozialutopie, die dem Stand der noch in den Anfängen befindlichen Naturbeherrschung entsprach, so wird er im Staat des Jahres 1984 künstlich herbeigeführt, um die bestehende Kastenstruktur zu befestigen. Die Einfrierung des Lebensstandards der Massen, hart am Existenzminimum, erfolgt durch die systematische Vernichtung der Überproduktion: So fallen im Zuge permanenter Kriegsvorbereitungen maschinelle Erzeugnisse der Vernichtung anheim, um zu verhindern, daß sich der allgemeine Lebensstandard hebt. Von der Führungsspitze der Partei einmal abgesehen, gelten diese Konsumschränken selbst für die mittleren und unteren Funktionärskader. Nahmen in den Sozialutopien des 19. Jahrhunderts die Menschen ihre ausgesuchten Mahlzeiten in luxuriösen Palästen ein, so speist der Held des Romans, Winston Smith, in einer schäbigen Kantine, deren Häßlichkeit nur noch von der elenden Qualität der dort angebotenen Nahrungs- und Genußmittel überboten wird. (Saage, 152)

It is extremely important to acknowledge here that poverty and a low living standard are by no means portrayed to be the inevitable outcome of a dystopian regime. Rather, there are references in both *The Hunger Games* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four* to an actual surplus of consumer goods that is intentionally and systematically made inaccessible for the citizens.

“It’s coffee”, he murmured, “real coffee.” “It’s Inner Party coffee. There’s a whole kilo there,” she said. “How did you manage to get hold of all these things?” “It’s all Inner Party stuff. There’s nothing those swine don’t have, nothing. But of course waiters and servants and people pinch things, and- look, I got a little packet of tea as well. (Orwell, 163)

The main aim of this procedure is to delimitate the amelioration of a living standard that may in turn allow for thoughts aside from the immediate struggle for survival.

As discussed in section 2.2, pretended warfare plays a very large role in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. The fact that the Oceanian Party claims to be perpetually at war with alternating enemies facilitates the explanation of poverty. Any personal needs from the part of citizens can be subordinated to the immediate necessities of war, a fact that can be easily made comprehensible to the masses. Taking into consideration that there is most likely no actual warfare going on, it becomes easy to detect the strategic motifs behind the pretence of war.

In order to conclude this section on the perception of man in *The Hunger Games* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, it can be summarized that virtually any measure taken from the Panem and Oceanian governments serve the purpose of perpetuating power over time. It is by the conscious division of social classes (by the names of Proles and Party members in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, by the names of district- and Capitol inhabitants in *The Hunger Games*), by the enforcement of reality control, restrictions, the implementation of (imaginary?) enemies, perpetual surveillance, the uniting of the masses via media-centered, bloodthirsty spectacles, and the implementation of poverty and pretended warfare that the dystopian visions of Suzanne Collins and George Orwell gain sustainability.

4. Intertextuality

4.1 Theory of Intertextuality

Taking into consideration the previous considerations on dystopian life in Oceania and Panem, it becomes obvious that Collins, on many occasions, refers to George Orwell's classic on an intertextual level. This chapter is dedicated to addressing some of the key issues brought up in intertextuality theory.

In his study on *Intertextuality*, Heinrich Plett attributes a "twofold coherence" to an intertext, "an *intratextual* one which guarantees the immanent integrity of the text, and an *intertextual* one which creates structural relations between itself and other texts. (Plett,5) Following Broich's and Pfister's considerations on intertextuality, who claim that "Schon seit der Antike haben sich Texte nicht nur in einer imitatio vitae unmittelbar auf Wirklichkeit, sondern in einer imitatio veterum auch aufeinander bezogen. " (Broich, Pfister, 1), Collins acknowledges that the inspiration for her trilogy partially stems from other literary works. It will be the main aim of this chapter to provide a selective overview over the theory of intertextuality, which has had a relatively long linguistic tradition.

4.1.1 Intertextuality as a Frame that Allows the Reader to Make Sense

Plottel defines intertextuality as "the recognition of a frame, a context that allows the reader to make sense out of what he or she might otherwise perceive as senseless." (Plottel, in Orr, 11), which already suggests the immediate involvement of the reader in the process of 'deciphering' literature. This linguistic peculiarity is certainly rarely put in doubt. However, when it comes to a global perspective on intertextuality, experts' perspectives could not diverge farther from each other. Ranging from Kristeva's radical approach to intertextuality in her *Seméiotike*, which claims that "tout texte se construit comme mosaïque de citations, tout texte est absorption et transformation d'un autre texte. A la place de la notion d'intersubjectivité s'installe celle d'intertextualité, et le langage poétique se lit, au moins, comme double."⁶ ,

⁶ Every text is a mosaic of quotations, every text is absorption and transformation of another text. In the place of the notion of intersubjectivity is now the notion of intertextuality, and poetic language is now to be read, at least, with a double ulterior motive. (Kristeva,146) (cf. Broich,Pfister,6)

through to less all-encompassing conceptions which suggest that one should only talk of intertextuality if the relation between text and pretext does not stay punctiform, but if it relates to structural homologies between text and pretext (cf. Pfister, Broich 19) , or even theories as suggested by Michael Riffaterre, restricting intertextuality to the semantic relation between text and pretext, where intertextuality presupposes an inherent conflict between the two, which is to be classified as a semantic- ideologic divergence, (cf. Pfister, Broich, 19) , any approach to intertextuality has been followed.

4.1.2 Subcategories of Intertextuality

Attempts by Gérard Genette to define and classify several aspects of intertextuality have led to a categorization of subcategories of intertextuality that is anything but clear-cut, ranging from plagiarism, paratextuality and metatextuality over hypertextuality through to architextuality.

“[...] (1) die Intertextualität als die Kopräsenz zweier oder mehrerer Texte, die greifbare Anwesenheit eines Textes in einem anderen (Zitat, Anspielung, Plagiat usw.), (2) die Paratextualität als die Bezüge zwischen einem Text und seinem Titel, Vorwort, Nachwort, Motto und dergleichen, (3) die Metatextualität als den kommentierenden und oft kritischen Verweis eines Textes auf einen Prätext, (4) die Hypertextualität, in der ein Text den anderen zur Folie macht (Imitation, Adaption, Fortsetzung, Parodie usw.) und schließlich (5) die Architextualität als die Gattungsbezüge eines Textes. (Klassifizierung von Gérard Genette “Palimpsestes”, S. 7) (Broich, Pfister, 17)

There is an wide range of terminology for the phenomenon of intertextuality, suggesting the literary relevance of the concept in history.

Alongside it, or in place of it, appeared other terms, for example dialogism, polyphony, heteroglossia, polylogue, paragram, transposition, semiosis, difference, trace, iterability of sign, writing, influence, revisionism, renovation, allusion, citationality, vertical context system, subtext, extratextual connections, text within a text, literary implication, literary reference, palimpsest, architextuality, transtextuality, intersemioticity, intermediality, interdiscursivity, or metacommunication. (Juvan, 5)

When it comes to forms and ways of interdependence of texts, several categories have been established:

Formen dieser zweistimmigen Erzählprosa sind die ironische Stilisierung, der verfremdende skass, die Parodie, die versteckte Polemik oder die Dialogreplik, in der die Vorrede jeweils mehr oder weniger latent eingeht, und all diesen Formen ist gemeinsam, daß das einzelne Wort seinen Absolutheitsanspruch verloren hat, nicht mehr auf die eine, kanonisierte Wahrheit pochen kann, anfechtbar geworden und perspektivistisch relativiert ist und sich zu sich selbst in Distanz sehen kann. (Pfister, Broich, 4)

It is important to acknowledge here that all forms of intertextuality are considered to have lost their "claim to absoluteness", which already presupposes that originality is a desirable feature of language- an aspect which is going to be elaborated on later in this section.

4.1.3 Which Texts are Intertextual? Issues of Classification

When attempting to define which kinds of texts are actually to be conceived as intertextual, several problems arise. It is by no means commonly agreed on whether or not all texts refer to each other in some degree or other, or whether there are in fact unique texts, which can be analyzed in isolation from other texts.

Die Theorie der Intertextualität ist die Theorie der Beziehungen zwischen Texten. Dies ist unumstritten; umstritten jedoch ist, welche Arten von Beziehungen darunter subsumiert werden sollen. Und je nachdem, wieviel man darunter subsumiert, erscheint Intertextualität entweder als eine Eigenschaft von Texten allgemein oder als eine spezifische Eigenschaft bestimmter Texte oder Textklassen. Die weitere und in ihren texttheoretischen Implikationen radikalere Konzeption geht davon aus, daß es in der Kommunikation keine tabula rasa gibt, daß der Raum, in den ein einzelner Text sich einschreibt, immer bereits ein beschriebener ist. Jeder Text ist Reaktion auf vorausgegangene Texte, und diese wiederum sind Reaktionen auf andere und so fort in einem regressus ad infinitum- jeder Text, das heißt nicht nur der literarische Text oder der moderne literarische Text, sondern auch jeder kritisch-diskursive Text und jede alltäglich-normalsprachliche Äußerung! (Pfister, Broich, 11ff)

It is self-evident here that this controversial classification has led to extensive discussions among linguists and literary scholars. Harold Bloom, in his "A map of misreading", for instance, claims that "there are no texts, but only relationships between texts" (Bloom, 3), the consequence of which is that one has to deny that a text can be regarded as an independent unity. Even if, on a syntagmatic level, the text is self-contained, according to this point of view there still is relatedness and correlation on a paradigmatic level. (cf. Pfister, Broich, 12). Gérard Genette, in his "Palimpsests", supports this point of view, even though he acknowledges that "[...] though all literary texts are hypertextual, some are more hypertextual than others, more massively and explicitly palimpsestuous." (Genette, xi)

This idea can be traced back to Julia Kristeva, who claims that "our tendency to presume that texts possess a meaning unique to themselves is illusory". (cf. Allan, 37) Rather, it is the complex meaning of words and their arrangements which characterize Kristeva's approach to classify texts as "textual arrangement with a double meaning- a meaning in the text itself and a meaning in what she calls the "historical and social text". (cf. Allan, 37)

Broich and Pfister take a less radical approach of referentiality when they say that "a relationship between texts is all the more intertextual when one text broaches the issue of the other by uncovering its own very unique characteristics" (cf. Broich, Pfister, 26)

So wie man ein Wort oder eine linguistische Struktur entweder nur verwenden oder darauf auch verweisen kann, so kann man sich auch vorgegebener Texte oder Diskurstypen entweder einfach bedienen oder aber auf sie referieren. Wir nennen dieses Kriterium daher Referentialität und postulieren, daß eine Beziehung zwischen Texten umso intensiver intertextuell ist, je mehr der eine Text den anderen thematisiert, in dem er seine Eigenart [...] "bloßlegt". (Broich, Pfister, 26)

4.1.4 Intentional vs. Accidental Intertextuality

At this point, it is definitely a sensible question to ask whether or not the author of a metatext actually has to be aware of the existence of the text he/she is (allegedly) currently referring to. How, we may ask, can you refer to something

you have no knowledge of? Broich and Pfister, in their summary of functional models for universal intertexts, however, deem the distinction between intentional and unintentional reference to specific texts merely of small importance.

Innerhalb solcher umfassender Funktionsmodelle für den universalen Intertext, in den jede Textproduktion und –rezeption über die gemeinsamen Codes und noch abstraktere Systeme und über den regressus ad infinitum der Texte eingebunden ist, spielen Erwägungen, ob ein Autor einen bestimmten Text gekannt hat und sich bewußt und intentional auf ihn bezieht [...] keine oder eine nur untergeordnete Rolle. (Broich, Pfister, 22)

They do, however, distinguish between the accidental or unintentional use of intertextuality, which gives the text a more pointed connotation, but no additional significance, and an actual intertextual allusion which needs to be thoroughly understood by the reader in order to grasp the tenor of the text:

Man unterscheidet dabei produktionsästhetisch zwischen zufälligen und oft unbewußten Reminiszenzen des Autors, die zwar in den Text eingehen, deren Aufdecken diesem jedoch keine zusätzliche oder pointierte Bedeutung verleiht, und der eigentlichen intertextuellen Anspielung, die vom Autor intendiert ist und vom Leser erkannt werden muß, soll das Sinnpotential des Textes ausgeschöpft werden. (Broich, Pfister, 23)

In this context, perspectives on whether or not the intentional reference to existing literary works has to be marked, diverge considerably. It is often agreed, however, that if the original text that is being alluded to is known to the general public (however controversial and vague this definition may be), it is acceptable to neglect the use of specific markers or signals, such as italics or quotation marks:

Wenn nun bei der hier zugrunde gelegten Definition von Intertextualität ein Interesse des Autors vorausgesetzt wird, die Beziehung seines Textes zu anderen Texten dem Leser bewußt zu machen, so bedeutet dies natürlich nicht, daß Intertextualität in jedem Fall durch entsprechende Signale markiert sein muß, daß Markiertheit also ein notwendiges Konstituens von Intertextualität ist. So kann ein Autor z.B. auf jede Markierung verzichten, wenn sein eigener Text auf Texte

verweist, die einem breiteren Leserpublikum bekannt sind. (Broich, Pfister, 32)

It is self-evident that, with intentional intertextuality, the authors rely on a very pointed appreciation of their propositions on the part of their readers. Many linguists have already discovered and discussed the enormous importance of the relationship between author and reader, among them Heinrich Plett, who claims that “great importance must be accorded to the role of the author and the reader. Both (and several other communicative factors) actually make the intertext visible and communicable.” (Plett, 5) The intertextual reference can thus be considered a ‘social contract’ that entails the recognition and understanding of intertextual allusions, whose relevance would otherwise be perceived as senseless, or else be missed entirely.

4.1.5 Originality vs. Imitation

Especially when it comes to the aspect of originality, which has been previously referred to in this chapter, the “interlocutor’s ears and expectations” (Orr, 95) play an integral part in understanding the author’s intentions. What is it, then, that we consider original? What is imitation? Is there still originality or do all texts, in an, as it were, *regressus ad infinitum*, refer back to previously written works in one way or another?

The earliest surviving literary theory of imitation is in the *Poetics* of Aristotle, who applies the term *mimesis* to the dramatist’s transactions with reality. *Mimesis* here means imitation in the sense of a “representation of reality”, but some three centuries later, and for inexplicable reasons, *mimesis* had come to mean “the imitation of authors. (Ruthven, 103)

Derek Attridge describes the process of creation as “a private event. It happens when an individual brings into being something hitherto beyond the reach of his or her knowledge, assumptions, capacities, and habits. When what is brought into being is also other to the norms and routines of wider culture, our usual word for the quality thus displayed is “originality”.”

(Attridge,35) He further elaborates: "It will be obvious that by "originality" we do not mean *any* difference between a given work and its predecessors in a certain field. Originality that is highly valued- as distinct from mere novelty- entails a particular kind of difference from what has gone before, one that changes the field in question for later practitioners." (Attridge, 35f)

When hearing the word "imitation", a certain derogatory notion of 'cheapness' springs to mind. For some reason, originality is esteemed higher in value than reference to originality. Orr, however, argues conversely. In fact, she claims that "for postmodernism, imitation should fare rather better, since cultural recycling is among postmodernism's key dynamics." (Orr, 95)

In the case of Suzanne Collins, it is precisely this kind of "cultural recycling" that forms the basis to her inspiration for her trilogy. Cultural influences mingle inside her mind into a story that admits to having been substantially influenced from "outside":

There's another level to the Hunger Games which is much more contemporary and that deals with our [...] fascination now with reality television. And you'll see a lot of aspects of that, also because the Games are televised across the country of Panem and it is mandatory that you watch them. Because they're not only supposed to be "entertainment" of course, they are the yearly reminder that the districts are being punished for having the audacity to rebel against the Capitol. [...] One night I was lying in bed, I was very tired, and I was just sort of channel surfing on television and I was going through, flipping through images of reality television where there were these young people competing for a million dollars, or a bachelor or whatever. And then I was flipping and I was seeing footage from the Iraq war. And these two things began to sort of fuse together in a very unsettling way. And that was, really I think that was the moment where I got the idea for Katniss' story.⁷

To conclude this chapter, it is perhaps helpful to look to Jonathan Culler for a comprehensive summary of what intertextuality implies:

"Intertextuality" thus has a double focus. On the one hand, it calls our attention to the importance of prior texts, insisting that the autonomy of texts is a misleading notion and that a work has the meaning it does only because certain things have previously been written. Yet in so far as it focuses on intelligibility, on meaning, "intertextuality" leads us to consider prior texts as contributions to a code which makes possible the

⁷ Transcription of Collins interview <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rdSAyDFiMTk> (accessed July 25 2010).

various effects of signification. (Culler, Presupposition and Intertextuality, in: The pursuit of signs(S.100ff) (Broich,Pfister16)

4.2 Intertextuality in *The Hunger Games* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four*

This section will focus on intertextual aspects relating *The Hunger Games* to *Nineteen Eighty-Four*.

4.2.1 Major Intertextual References in Suzanne Collins's Novel: *Gladiators, Theseus, Reality TV*

In order to be able to effectively evaluate the intertextual aspects of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and *The Hunger Games*, it is of utmost importance to accept the premise that the claim that there is an intentional intertextual relation between the two novels is a mere hypothesis and has not been verified by Suzanne Collins. Unfortunately, any attempt to contact Mrs. Collins proved to be unsuccessful. However, when asked about the inspiration for writing the trilogy in an interview published on the video platform Youtube, Collins explicitly refers to several other literary works. This information is important when trying to relate the *Hunger Games* trilogy to *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. On the interview Collins states that:

And when I was a child I was obsessed with those old biblical Gladiator movies, or even the non-biblical ones, but these epic ones, like "Spartacus " and "Demetrius and the Gladiators" and I loved the whole concept of working with that. And I was thinking okay what circumstance could possibly get them to the place that they would have to enter these awful Hunger Games. And that's when I went back to another one of my childhood loves which is "The myth of Theseus". I was fanatical about Greek mythology when I was your age. [...] so I decided to take this myth of Theseus.⁸

Additionally, in another interview, she refers to Gladiator Games and the legend of Spartacus as another source of inspiration for her trilogy:

Your books send a strong message that grown-ups have messed up the world big-time, and kids are the only hope for the future.

⁸ Transcription of Collins Interview <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nDNJd192Tcw> (accessed July 7 2010)

Absolutely. I can't remember how much we talked about Theseus and the Minotaur the last time we spoke, but Theseus and the Minotaur is the classical setup for where *The Hunger Games* begins, you know, with the tale of Minos in Crete....

Right. As punishment, Minos ordered the Athenians to throw seven young men and seven maidens into a labyrinth to be devoured by the Minotaur—until Theseus finally kills the monster. I remember you telling me that as an eight-year-old, you were horrified that Crete was so cruel—and that in her own way, Katniss is a futuristic Theseus.

But once the “Hunger Games” story takes off, I actually would say that the historical figure of Spartacus really becomes more of a model for the arc of the three books, for Katniss. We don't know a lot of details about his life, but there was this guy named Spartacus who was a gladiator who broke out of the arena and led a rebellion against an oppressive government that led to what is called the Third Servile War. He caused the Romans quite a bit of trouble. And, ultimately, he died.⁹

The myth of Theseus particularly lends itself to comparison with the *Hunger Games*, as “Theseus is not victorious solely because of his divine parentage [...] The Athenian prince triumphs because of his moderate and restrained nature and his commitment to law and justice.” (Castriota, 60), an observation that can be considered equally true of Katniss Everdeen.

In very much the same way, intertextual reference can be attributed to *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, for instance when Voorhees claims that

Rosenfeld bases his case on his reading of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. This ingenious reading identifies Orwell with his hero, Winston Smith, and Winston with [sic] Ippolit in Dostoevsky's *The Idiot*. Both characters, says Rosenfeld, defy an intolerable world by yielding to it even more than it demands. (Voorhees, 32 f)

It would go beyond the scope of this paper to analyze the intertextual relationship between *The Hunger Games* and the respective stories of Spartacus, Theseus and those of the Gladiator Games as well as *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and Dostoevsky's *The Idiot*. However, when attempting to investigate an intertextual relation between *The Hunger Games* and *Nineteen*

⁹ <http://www.schoollibraryjournal.com/article/CA6590063.html>

Eighty-Four, it is essential to bear in mind the intentional, conceded intertextuality that Collins attributes to her work.

4.2.2 Intertextuality on the 'Story level': Similarities in Plot and Action

This section's aim is to demonstrate and analyze some of the most apparent intertextual relations between *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and *The Hunger Games* on the 'story level'. Collins refers to George Orwell's classic on a myriad of occasions. Taking into consideration the fact that she admits having read *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (see section 1.1), some of the more obvious allusions instantly leap to attention. These will be discussed and analyzed in the following chapter.

One of the most obvious examples that immediately refers to George Orwell's classic is her use of the following poem:

Are you, are you
Coming to the tree
Where they strung up a man they say murdered thee.
Strange things did happen here
No stranger would it be
If we met up at midnight in the hanging tree.
[...]
Are you, are you
Coming to the tree
Wear a necklace of rope, side by side with me.
Strange things did happen here
No stranger would it be
If we met up at midnight in the hanging tree." (Collins, 2010 144f)

This poem, a childhood relict buried in Katniss' memories, instantly brings George Orwell's "Chestnut Tree", to mind.

Under the spreading chestnut tree
I sold you and you sold me:
There lie they, and there lie we
Under the spreading chestnut tree. (Orwell, 88)

The fact that these two poems are very much alike on both the semantic and syntactic levels suggests an (intentional?) intertextual relationship. It is highly improbable that without intentionally referring to *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Collins would have used this poem in *Mockingjay*. Referring back to the considerations on marked and unmarked intertextuality from section 4.1.4, the use of this poem can be considered a borderline case of distinction between the two. While it is true that there is no explicit, denoted reference to George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, the erudite reader will immediately recognize the highly symmetrical syntactic and lexical structures that suggest an intertextual relationship. The fact that Collins refers to Orwell's classic in such a distinct, yet nevertheless unacknowledged manner, suggests a deliberate and conscious analogy between the two dystopian societies, that is, however, only grasped by a well-read readership.

Following this concept, there are many other details in the novels suggesting intentional reference between the two works. One of the best known scenes in Orwell's classic is set in a particular room, named "Room 101", which has become infamous for all kinds of physical and psychological torture. Winston is brainwashed in this notorious room, which would be known by many readers of *The Hunger Games* as well. "Room 101, " said the officer. [...] "Do anything to me!" he yelled. "You've been starving me for weeks. Finish me off and let me die. Shoot me. Hang me. Sentence me to twenty-five years. [...] But not room 101!" (Orwell, 271)

Interestingly enough, Collins takes up Orwell's idea of numbering doors. "I hesitate at the door marked 307. "(Collins, 2010, 23), again suggesting intentional reference to Orwell's dystopia, even though, as was the case before, it is not explicitly indicated and probably passes unnoticed as an intertextual reference to *Nineteen Eighty-Four* by a reader unfamiliar with Orwell.

Taking into consideration the brainwashing that happens in room 101, another obvious similarity between *The Hunger Games* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four* leaps to attention. Orwell attributes the success of O'Brien's brainwashing technique to the exploitation of the most deep-rooted fears and anxieties of the subjects. In room 101, Winston has to endure a confrontation with rats,

animals most deeply abhorred and feared by Winston. The impact of the brainwashing on Winston demonstrates that it is an extremely efficient method of exposing the subject to the reality of his or her most deep-rooted fears and anxieties in order to break a person's will. Very much the same idea can be found in Collins' depiction of a technique she calls "hijacking":

Now we believe that something more was going on. That the Capitol has been subjecting him to a rather uncommon technique known as hijacking. [...] The Capitol's very secretive about this form of torture, and I believe the results are inconsistent. [...] It's a type of fear conditioning. [...] Recall is made more difficult because memories can be changed. [...] Brought to the forefront of your mind, altered, and saved again in revised form." (Collins, 2010,210)

Likewise, Collins takes up yet another similar idea when introducing what she refers to as the 'tracker jacker venom'. This is a poisonous substance produced by insects in the Hunger Games arena, which exploits the tributes' most engrained anxieties. "How many ways do I watch Prim die? Relive my father's last moments? Feel my body ripped apart? This is the nature of the tracker jacker venom, so carefully created to target the place where fear lives in your brain. (Collins, 2008, 195) Collins' reference to the use of fear as a means to facilitate brainwashing may not be as obviously intentionally intertextual as the previous examples due to the fact that this method can certainly not be claimed to be Orwell's original invention. Also, it can be assumed that the exploitation of fear is likely to be an efficient device in brainwashing in general, i.e. an empirical fact. However, with regard to the hypothesis that *The Hunger Games* can be seen as a kind of re-writing of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* in a different setting and period, the similarities depicted by both authors with regard to brainwashing are definitely striking.

Other intertextual references are less elusive and can be more easily traced back to Orwell. Winston's declaration to Julia "If they could make me stop loving you- that would be the real betrayal." (Orwell,192), has again become an extremely well-known quotation from Orwell's classic. Collins employs the same phrase nearly verbatim in the passage on page 211: "It isn't possible. For someone to make Peeta forget he loves me...no one could do that." (Collins, 2010,211) The use of brainwashing for the purpose of eroding a

subject's ability to love for another human being definitely recalls *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and demonstrates the influence of Orwell on Collins. "Is that what they've done to Peeta? Taken his memories of Katniss and distorted them so they're scary?" [...] "So scary that he'd see her as life-threatening. That he might try to kill her. Yes, that's our current theory." (Collins, 2010, 211)

Another aspect that Collins has most probably adapted from *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is the reason stated why Katniss is so self-assured and responsible already in her adolescence. The narrator describes Katniss' mother as incapable of taking care of the family after the tragic death of her husband:

She didn't do anything but sit propped up in a chair, or, more often, huddled under the blankets on her bed, eyes fixed on some point in the distance. Once in a while, she'd stir, get up as if moved by some urgent purpose, only to then collapse back into stillness. No amount of pleading from Prim seemed to affect her. (Collins, 2008, 26f)

Again, this can be considered a near verbal echo of the description of the fate of Winston's family in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. Even the introduction of a younger sister, taken up by Collins with Katniss' sister Prim, has a parallel in Orwell's novel:

When his father disappeared, his mother did not show any surprise or any violent grief, but a sudden change came over her. She seemed to have become completely spiritless. [...] For hours at a time she would sit almost immobile on the bed, nursing his young sister, a tiny, ailing, very silent child of two or three, with a face made simian by thinness. (Orwell, 187)

It is especially Collins' use of this kind of near verbal echoes of Orwell's classic that suggests intentional intertextual reference. Even if intertextuality is unmarked in Collins' novels, the frequency with which these obvious allusions occur cannot escape the scholarly reader. It is worth noting, however, that in Collins, intertextuality is never explicitly marked. The recognition of the reference is based on the assumption that the readers are familiar with Orwell's work- either directly or indirectly. If the reader does comprehend the underlying message that is conveyed by Collins's subtle allusions to Oceania, the trilogy gains an additional connotative dimension.

Obviously, there are many more analogies to *Nineteen Eighty-Four* in Collins's trilogy that do not necessarily have to be intentional. Similarities such as the narrators' references to surgery "Our surgeons can alter people beyond recognition." (Orwell, 200) and "They do surgery in the Capitol, to make people appear younger and thinner." (Collins, 2008, 124), alcohol "It was gin that sank him into a stupor every night, and gin that revived him every morning." (Orwell, 338) and "This is a man who spent his adult life at the bottom of the bottle, trying to anaesthetize himself against the Capitol's crimes. (Collins, 2010, 194) or else references to music "The music went on and on, minute after minute, with astonishing variations, never once repeating itself, almost as though the bird were deliberately showing off its virtuosity. (Orwell, 142) may be entirely accidental.

However, there are other intertextual relationships that are hard to be dismissed as coincidental. The conception of man as 'breeding stock' as pointed out by Collins: "They need you. Me. They need us all. A while back there was some sort of pox epidemic that killed a bunch of them and left a lot more infertile. New breeding stock. That's how they see us." (Collins, 2010, 9) has a parallel in Orwell's notion of attributing only one sole purpose to sexuality: the reproduction of Party members. "So gilt es im Jahre 1984 als eine der obersten, ehrenvollsten Pflichten eines Parteimitglieds, Nachkommen zu zeugen und die staatlich organisierte Erziehung ihrer Sprösslinge zu willfähigen, künftigen Parteifunktionären aus voller Kraft zu fördern." (Helisch, 18)

Likewise, Collins' idea of introducing a governmental force by the name of "Peacekeepers" has a parallel in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. The name "Peacekeepers" suggests Collins's indebtedness to Orwell: For defining covert or exposed government officials that enforce jurisdiction, Orwell introduces the term "Thought Police". Both terms are euphemisms. While it is true that everyone deems the "keeping of peace" desirable, it is only in combination with that initial positive reaction to the term that we recognize its full horror. Likewise, the words "thought" and "police" do not have immediate negative connotations. Only when we place the word in context do we realize that controlling thoughts implies the loss of freedom and totalitarian control. Both

authors thus demonstrate a sense of (very) black humor when it comes to naming their government officials.

Not only the names of the police forces are similar- also the depiction of their function and power bear striking similarities. The political parties in Panem as well as Oceania are authorized to apply force and resort to violence even at the most minimal deviance from state law. Both avail themselves of spies in order to gain information and intimate details on each and every citizen of their state. And, most importantly, both are omnipresent in the consciences of the people, even though their presence may not always be conspicuous. In fact, Orwell even goes as far as to say that “Nothing is efficient in Oceania except the Thought Police.” (Orwell, 228), thus underscoring the enormous power that this institution has on its citizens.

However, when it comes to the portrayal of the Peacekeepers’ actions, Collins again chooses a less daunting approach than Orwell. The latter depicts his “Thought Police” as a merciless, inclement brigade that can by no means be corrupted or undermined. Collins, however, allows at least some space for a glimpse of humanity when she describes the “Peacekeepers” to “turn a blind eye to the few of us who hunt because they’re as hungry for fresh meat as anybody is”(Collins, 2008, 5). Again, this modification has most likely been inspired by Collins’ intended underage readership and is probably also grounded in her intention to make a rebellion appear plausible.

With reference to the ending, perhaps the most startling resemblance can be discovered. Even if the ending of *The Hunger Games* takes on a comparatively positive tone, a concept that will be elaborated on in section 5, one particularly striking analogy becomes apparent.

The doctor’s puzzlement grows over why I’m unable to speak. Many tests are done, and while there’s damage to my vocal chords, it doesn’t account for it. Finally, Dr Aurelius, a head doctor, comes up with the theory that I’ve become a mental, rather than physical, Avox. That my silence has been brought on by an emotional trauma. (Collins,2010,410)

Even though Collins portrays Katniss’ struggle for justice and the eventual carrying- out of rebellion to be ultimately successful, she does refer to Katniss’

mind being impaired by the agonies of her fight for survival. Very much like Winston, Katniss' psyche remains permanently traumatized by the atrocities of the respective governments. It is extremely interesting to note here that Katniss' ultimate goal, the overthrowing of the government, has been in fact achieved. However, she remains in a similar state as Winston, who is denied a similar achievement. Naturally, Katniss' traumatization is by far less severe than Winston's; nevertheless, the affinities between Collins' protagonist and Orwell's are striking.

Similarly, Orwell's and Collins' reference to the presentation of the theme of love as an influential factor in advancing the plot is likewise a common feature in the two novels. When Orwell hints at a romantic relationship between Winston and Julia, it is remarkable that love is seen as a vital emotion for survival. "At the sight of the words *I love you* the desire to stay alive had welled up in him, and the taking of minor risks suddenly seemed stupid." (Orwell, 125) In Collins much of the dynamic of her trilogy's plot is based on the fact that a romantic component is an integral part of the course of events: "Our romance became a key strategy for our survival in the arena." (Collins, 2009, 9) Interestingly enough, Collins also introduces, to a certain extent, the notion of distrust and suspicion in a way similar to Orwell. "Only five nights ago he had contemplated smashing her skull in with a cobblestone; but that was of no importance." (Orwell, 126) In very much the same way, Katniss, at the beginning of the trilogy, is unsure of how to deal with her ally Peeta, who seems to be fonder of her than she likes to admit. She suspects him of having malicious motives, even though she eventually discovers that this incrimination is unfounded. Again, as in various other occasions, Collins's depiction of love has affinities with *Nineteen Eighty-Four*.

Naturally, Collins' *The Hunger Games* deviates from *Nineteen Eighty-Four* on many occasions and in many aspects, the full analysis of which would go beyond the scope of this thesis. For the sake of illustration, one particular example may serve the purpose of demonstrating a considerable discrepancy between the two works. Collins' depiction of family love is portrayed to be by far more graspable than Orwell's. When Katniss voluntarily takes her sister Prim's place in the Hunger Games, this act constitutes a gesture of

unconditional devotion that would be unthinkable in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. Even though Collins suggests that Katniss' gesture of pure love would not be a natural thing to do in Panem, "Family devotion only goes so far for most people on reaping day. What I did was the radical thing." (Collins, 2008, 26) the gesture in itself remains outstanding. In a very sharp contrast to Katniss' devotion stands Winston's infantile egocentrism when it comes to sharing food with his ailing sister.

[...] but however much she gave him he invariably demanded more. At every meal she would beseech him not to be selfish and to remember that his little sister was sick and also needed food, but it was no use. [...] He knew that he was starving the other two, but he could not help it; he even felt that he had a right to do it. The clamorous hunger in his belly seemed to justify him. (Orwell, 187f)

Collins' and Orwell's depiction of family devotion are thus extremely contradictory. Ranging from near self-abandonment to primitive egoism, the authors' two portrayals of family love could not diverge more from each other, a fact that may also foreshadow the positive ending of the Collins's trilogy.

In order to conclude this chapter, it has by now become clear that there are striking intertextual references and affinities between *The Hunger Games* trilogy and *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. There are presumably accidental allusions to Orwell's novel as well as blatantly obvious intertextual references. Though there is no evidence that Collins' trilogy has intentionally been conceived as an imitation or 'palimpsest' of Orwell's dystopian novel, the many intertextual references and allusions suggest such a conclusion. It is left to the reader to grasp allusions or affinities. It needs to be added, however, that Collins's trilogy can certainly also be appreciated by readers who do not recognize the intertextual allusions to Orwell's novel.

4.3 Discourse Level- Functionalizing Differences between *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and *The Hunger Games*

4.3.1 The Narrative Technique

Whereas Suzanne Collins uses a first person narrator, Orwell employs a third person omniscient narration. The difference in narrative technique obviously makes the assessment of intertextuality more difficult.

The use of a first person narrator allows the reader to identify him/her more easily than with a protagonist in a third person narrative. It permits insights into the most private thoughts and aspirations of the protagonist. If this is indeed the case, it may be interesting to investigate the specific motivation of Suzanne Collins for adhering to this kind of narrative technique. Why does she opt for a subjective point of view over the more neutral perspective of third person narration?

One possible answer to this question may be provided by the intended readership of *The Hunger Games*, young (adolescent) readers. In choosing a use of first person narration, Collins may follow conventions of literature for young people. Collins probably wished to provide her readership with an opportunity of identifying with Katniss Everdeen's feelings and sharing her innermost thoughts. By doing so, Collins allows for genuine identification of the female (?) reader with the female protagonist. Additionally, the narrative technique gives an impression of immediacy that is reduced with the use of a third person narrator.

In order to elaborate on this consideration, a comparison with the narrative technique in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* might be helpful. The fact that Orwell employs a third person narration establishes a certain distance between the protagonist, the narrator and the reader, who perceives Winston Smith from the detached perspective of a neutral, omniscient narrator. There is no immediate identification with the protagonist, only a mediated one.

Collins, however, has favored the subjective approach. By her use of a first person narrator, she can also instill more easily a 'message' to the reader: Rebellion is possible. When she portrays Katniss as a human being, fallible and imperfect like any of her readers, yet brave and determined to make a difference in the world she lives in, the use of a first person narrator also communicates a political message: You too can change the world.

Orwell's implied 'message' by contrast is not at all optimistic: at the end of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Winston finally surrenders to the all-consuming power of the Party. Collins portrays in her trilogy a notion of a dystopian regime that can be overcome. In *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, the use of a neutral third person narrator creates distance and (apparent) objectivity and a feeling of the protagonist's helplessness and impotence. In *The Hunger Games*, by contrast, the reader's identification with the protagonist is facilitated by the first person narrator. Thus, the use of different narrative perspectives by the two authors results in a different degree of empathy evoked in the reader.

4.3.2 Intended Readership

Which audiences did Orwell and Collins have in mind when writing their novels? Are the events and occurrences in the novels implicitly addressed to a specific intended readership? Would elements of the narrative differ if the readership did?

To answer these questions, it is of primary importance to try and establish what kind of audience Orwell and Collins had in mind when writing their dystopias. Collins' *The Hunger Games* can essentially be categorized in terms of conventional narrative for adolescents (presumably for ages 15+). Orwell, however, had primarily an adult reader in mind, though he may have hoped that *Nineteen Eighty-Four* also appeals to an adolescent readership. Today, however, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is, more often than not, considered a classic in the canon of English fiction and has become a 'must-read' school literature. Hence, it has by now also become a standard work for young readers. Whether this was Orwell's original intention is difficult to assess.

The fact that Collins' trilogy adopts a more positive approach to dystopia, in the sense that the trilogy portrays a dystopian regime that is only temporary and doomed to fail, may have been inspired by the wish to convey an optimistic message to the adolescent readership.

Even though suffering, powerlessness and suppression play a role in *The Hunger Games*, it is by determination, tenacity and strong-mindedness that

the protagonist can be overcome these limitations imposed by a dystopian regime. In Orwell's classic, Winston is fiercely tortured and transformed into a will-less, obedient creature. Orwell paints a picture of an unscrupulous regime depriving individuals from any freedom. No matter how strong the urge, how determined the ambition, the government in Oceania cannot be overcome. This pessimistic view on totalitarianism in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is thus to be contrasted to ultimately optimistic ending in *The Hunger Games*.

4.3.3 Critique of Contemporary Society

Many theories have been proposed that attribute to Orwell's novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four* prophetic import by depicting a dystopian future. It can be argued that, by portraying a society in which oppression has led to a near paralysis of logical thinking, Orwell criticizes contemporary society. Patai claims that "at the same time, as always happens in fiction, Orwell's text reveals his own implicit values. Although *Nineteen Eighty-Four* may indeed have been intended to warn of a possibility rather than to prophesy, [...] this does not alter its profoundly negative impact." (Patai, 238) She suggests that the implicit values of Orwell's contemporary society constitute the basis for *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. Thus, criticism of society is definitely inherent in Orwell's novel, even though several researchers do not see in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* a dystopian prophecy.

Collins' *The Hunger Games* takes a much more explicit approach to social and political criticism. The fact that Panem is not situated in a fictional world but is explicitly located in contemporary North America implies a prophetic dimension, as well as a moral message addressed to its future: 'If America does not change its ways now, this is how it is going to end up.' It is true that Orwell suggests a setting reminiscent of London, for example when referring to an old poem enumerating various churches of London, the references, however, remain elusive and vague. Collins' criticism of contemporary American (?) society is rather explicit: "Frankly, our ancestors don't seem much to brag about. I mean, look at the state they left us in, with the wars and the broken planet. Clearly, they didn't care about what would happen to the

people who came after them.” (Collins, 2010,99) Harsh criticism of contemporary politics and ethics of this kind occurs throughout the novels.

On the other hand Collins also emphasizes the importance of today’s system of democracy, suggesting that democracy is a value that must be restored and preserved:

We’re going to form a republic where the people of each district and the Capitol can elect their own representatives to be their voice in a centralized government. Don’t look so suspicious; it’s worked before.” “In books,” Haymitch mutters. “In history books,” says Plutarch. “And if our ancestors could do it, then we can, too.” (Collins, 2010,99)

The fact that Collins refers to ‘the ancestors’ as a generation that discarded democracy and lightheartedly thought they could do without it, reflects the spirit of some people in contemporary society.

Collins reminds the audience of the relevance of history and highlights the fact that the same mistakes have been made repeatedly throughout history: “ ‘Now we’re in that sweet period where everyone agrees that our recent horrors should never be repeated,’ he says. ‘ But collective thinking is usually short-lived. We’re fickle, stupid beings with poor memories and a great gift for self-destruction.’” (Collins, 2010,442) Collins refers to the fact that mistakes have repeatedly been committed and people failed to call for or to act against them. People are exposed as „fickle“, „stupid“ and prone to „self-destruction“. When Collins, in an interview, refers to the source of her inspiration for *The Hunger Games*, she claims that the media have numbed many people’s minds and impaired their ability to perceive a difference between reality TV programs and the viewing of real scenes of warfare:

I was channel surfing between reality TV programming and actual war coverage when Katniss’s story came to me. One night I’m sitting there flipping around and on one channel there’s a group of young people competing for, I don’t know, money maybe? And on the next, there’s a group of young people fighting an actual war. And I was tired, and the lines began to blur in this very unsettling way, and I thought of this story.¹⁰

¹⁰ <http://www.schoollibraryjournal.com/article/CA6590063.html> accessed August 5, 2010.

This is obviously harsh criticism of producers of reality TV shows and the media in general. The fact that both, reality TV and coverage of the Iraq war, are broadcast in essentially the same manner tends to blur the distinction between reality and virtual reality.

Q: THE HUNGER GAMES is an annual televised event in which one boy and one girl from each of the twelve districts is forced to participate in a fight-to-the-death on live TV. What do you think the appeal of reality television is—to both kids and adults?

A: Well, they're often set up as games and, like sporting events, there's an interest in seeing who wins. The contestants are usually unknown, which makes them relatable. Sometimes they have very talented people performing.

Then there's the voyeuristic thrill—watching people being humiliated, or brought to tears, or suffering physically—which I find very disturbing. There's also the potential for desensitizing the audience, so that when they see real tragedy playing out on, say, the news, it doesn't have the impact it should.¹¹

To conclude this chapter, it is important to recall that Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, despite the prophetic import it is sometimes attributed, is less explicit in criticizing contemporary society than are *The Hunger Games*. Orwell vaguely suggests that Oceania is located in England, Collins locates fictional Panem unambiguously in North America. She explicitly refers to Panem's 'ancestors' as 'a generation not worth bragging about', and praises the value of democracy, which has not been esteemed enough in the past. Additionally, she refers to the destructive numbing effect of television on the viewers' ability to distinguish between reality and illusion.

5. Rebellion- a Conceivable Option for Overcoming a Totalitarian Government?

¹¹ <http://www.schoollibraryjournal.com/article/CA6590063.html> accessed August 5 2010

Nineteen Eighty-Four and *The Hunger Games* differ fundamentally in one particular aspect: the theme of rebellion. While Collins third book *Mockingjay* is entirely based on the heroine's efforts to overthrow President Snow's government, Orwell's depiction of resistance or thoughts of rebellion are not elaborated because any such thought in the character's minds is censored by totalitarian mind control. It will be the main focus of this chapter to analyze to what degree Collins and Orwell consider an uprising against the barbarous regimes of their fictitious societies a conceivable option.

When comparing the two authors' approaches to rebellion, one needs to focus primarily on the endings of the two novels. George Orwell's momentous final words in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* crush any hopes and expectations for a happy ending: "Two gin-scented tears trickled down the sides of his nose. But it was all right, everything was all right, the struggle was finished. He had won the victory over himself. He loved Big Brother. "(Orwell, 342)

When Winston is tortured by O'Brien, it is the sole aim of the Party to eliminate any thought of opposition radically, albeit tiny and insignificant, and to force every subject to surrender entirely to the regime. Kathleen Taylor proposes a link between brainwashing and totalitarianism when O'Brien describes the motives of the Party behind this kind of torture:

When you finally surrender to us, it must be of your own free will. We do not destroy the heretic because he resists us: so long as he resists us, we reshape him. We burn all evil and all illusion out of him: we bring him over to our side, not in appearance but genuinely, heart and soul. We make him one of ourselves before we kill him. It is intolerable to us that an erroneous thought should exist anywhere in the world, however secret and powerless it may be. (Orwell, 205) This statement [...] is the ultimate totalitarian fantasy: not only behaviour, but every single thought in every single brain in all the world conforming to a single ideological format. [...] It is a demand for perfection, stifling any possibility of freedom, deviance, or change. (Taylor, Kathleen, 24)

It is the enforcement of complete conformity to the principles of the Party that constitutes the real terror here. It is not enough to act according to the Party's demands- it is factual concordance of the Party's and the subject's will that is the ultimate goal.

In a world where not only actions, but also thoughts are controlled, rebellion becomes merely a theoretical possibility. One of Winston's early considerations "Nothing was your own except the few cubic centimeters inside your skull." (Orwell, 32) is no longer true anymore in the ending of the novel, and thus any prospect of an uprising against the government becomes a mere illusion.

In *Nineteen Eighty-Four* the closest the protagonist gets to rebellion is when he manages to acquire a copy of "The book":

There were also whispered stories of a terrible book, a compendium of all the heresies, of which Goldstein was the author and which circulated clandestinely here and there. It was a book without a title. People referred to it, if at all, simply as *the book*. But one knew of such things only through vague rumours. Neither the Brotherhood nor *the book* was a subject that any ordinary Party member would mention if there was a way of avoiding it. (Orwell, 16)

Although we later learn that, due to the fact that O'Brien provided the book for him, the underlying motive was obviously subversive to rebellion.

There is hardly any autonomy granted to the inhabitants of Oceania, thus the idea of instigating an uprising against the government is doomed to fail. In Collins' *Panem*, however, insurgency is a feasible option. Joes defines insurgency as an

[...] attempt to overthrow or oppose a state or regime by force of arms, [which] very often takes the form of guerilla war. That happens because guerilla war is the weapon of the weak. It is waged by those whose inferiority in numbers, equipment, and financial resources makes it impossible to meet their opponents in open, conventional battle. Guerillas therefore seek to wage a protracted conflict, winning small victories over government forces by attaining numerical superiority at critical points through speed and deception. (Joes, 1)

This definition applies to the given circumstances in *Panem* as well. While it is not necessarily true that the inhabitants of *Panem* are inferior in numbers, there is certainly no doubt that equipment and financial resources are scarce. Insurgency, as an act of organized revolt, seems the only plausible option to

overcome a totalitarian regime. This is also claimed by Weinstein when he writes:

A coherent theory of why rebel groups choose the strategies they do depends [...] on a clear understanding of the micropolitics of rebellion, which is achieved by focusing on how groups organize violence- on the choices rebel leaders make about how to recruit soldiers, groups' decisions about whether to centralize or decentralize command, and the structures movements set in place to ensure that foot soldiers act in accordance with objectives. Engaging civilians on the outside of a rebel group is a fundamental aspect of the micropolitics of rebellion, and thus the decisions leaders make about how to extract the resources they need to maintain their organizations, govern civilians who live in their areas of control, and discipline traitors who defect or attempt to defect the side of the enemy all figure prominently in the study of how violence is organized. (Weinstein, 38)

Especially in *Mockingjay*, the recruitment of soldiers, centralized command and the organization of a rebel group are ultimately important factors determining the success of the rebellion. It is important to be conscious of the fact that rebellion seems, and ultimately is, inconceivable in Oceania, whereas it is a successful act of liberation in Panem. It will be the main aim of the following chapters to analyze why and how rebellion could be achieved in Panem.

5.1 The Mockingjay

When it comes to the representation of rebellion in Panem, Collins uses a remarkable technique. She uses the name of a bird- the Mockingjay- as a leitmotif in the text. It becomes a secret code later attributed to the leader of the rebellion in *The Hunger Games*.

A Mockingjay is, per definition, a bird that survived and continued to exist despite the Capitol's attempts to annihilate it:

They're funny birds and something of a slap in the face to the Capitol. During the rebellion, the Capitol bred a series of genetically altered animals as weapons. [...] One was a special bird called a jabberjay that had the ability to memorize and repeat whole human conversations. [...] 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. (Collins, 2008,42ff)

The Capitol expected the jabberjays to die out when left to themselves, but they had ignored the possibility that the birds could mate and reproduce with other species like the mockingbird, which they eventually did. The fact that this lack of precaution by the Capitol allowed a new species to be generated becomes an incentive and boost of motivation of the people to hope for and engage in a rebellion.

When Katniss, at the end of her first Hunger Games, refuses to kill and opts for a hand in hand suicide with Peeta, her unprecedented action sparks off the idea of disobeying governmental rules- and rebellion is initiated.

It's too late to change my mind. I lift my hand to my mouth, taking one last look at the world. The berries have just passed my lips when the trumpets begin to blare. The frantic voice of Claudius Templesmith shouts above them. "Stop! Stop! Ladies and gentlemen, I am pleased to present the victors of the Seventy-Fourth Hunger Games, Katniss Everdeen and Peeta Mellark!" (Collins,2008, 345)

Because of the ubiquitous media presence in the Hunger Games, Katniss reaches the minds and consciences of many Panem inhabitants. As Claude Emerson Welch in his "Anatomy of Rebellion" points out conclusively, Katniss has taken on an essential role in the course of action of a rebellion:

Reciprocal relationships exist between settings for collective action and initiatives by individuals. Yes, there can be [...] prophets of political change whose seeds of protest appear to bring into being widespread political change. Their contributions are essential, for collective action remains latent without some degree of personal encouragement. Individuals articulate grievances, promote a sense of identification among potential insurgents, and attract further support through personal qualities. (Welch,32)

Collins portrays Katniss as the one individual who has the most influence on the consciences of the people in the districts and ultimately also on the Capitol inhabitants. "I must now become the actual leader, the face, the voice, the

embodiment of the revolution.” (Collins, 2010,12) Katniss’ influence on the masses is focused on by the author. “I have had thousands upon thousands of people from the districts at my side. I was their Mockingjay long before I accepted the role.” (Collins, 2010,107)

Symbolically, I suppose, Katniss is something like a mockingjay in and of herself. She is a girl who should never have existed. And the reason she does exist is that she comes from District 12, which is sort of the joke of the 12 districts of Panem. The Capitol is lax there. The security is much less. The peacekeepers, who are the peacekeeping force, are still the law, and they’re still threatening, but they intermix more with the population in District 12 than they do in other districts. And also things like the fence that surrounds 12 isn’t electrified full time.

Because of these lapses in security and the Capitol just thinking that 12 is not ever really going to be a threat because it’s small and poor, they create an environment in which Katniss develops, in which she is created, this girl who slips under this fence, which isn’t electrified, and learns to be a hunter. Not only that, she’s a survivalist, and along with that goes a degree of independent thinking that is unusual in the districts.

So here we have her arriving in the arena in the first book, not only equipped as someone who can keep herself alive in this environment—and then once she gets the bow and arrows, can be lethal—but she’s also somebody who already thinks outside the box because they just haven’t been paying attention to District 12. So in that way, too, Katniss is the mockingjay. She is the thing that should never have been created, that the Capitol never intended to happen. In the same way they just let the jabberjays go and thought, “We don’t have to worry about them,” they thought, “We don’t have to worry about District 12.” And this new creature evolved, which is the mockingjay, which is Katniss.¹²

Collins focuses on Katniss Everdeen and the figure of the Mockingjay as the leading emblem in her account of civil uprising in Panem. Collins’s skilled reference to a (fictitious) animal whose evolution contradicts the Capitol’s intentions is a striking example of foreshadowing, a literary technique that aims at creating suspense in the readers’ minds by giving hints at what there is to come.¹³ By attributing a success story to the bird, Collins suggests that if Katniss takes on the symbolic role of the Mockingjay, she will eventually succeed.

¹² Cf. <http://www.myhungergames.com/suzanne-collins-mockingjay-interview> accessed August 5, 2010.

¹³ cf. <http://contemporarylit.about.com/cs/literaryterms/g/foreshadowing.htm> accessed November 15th 2010

When Collins first refers to the Mockingjay, the reader may merely apprehend the reference as a description of an anecdote serving the purpose of exemplifying the actions of the Capitol government, i.e. the annihilation of a species of birds. Even when the mayor's daughter gives Katniss a Mockingjay pin as a token for her participation in the Hunger Games, the reader may not yet be able to understand the significance of the Mockingjay- emblem. It is only after Katniss has been established the Mockingjay as a political emblem, that the reader begins to realize its full symbolic import.

Collins employs the symbol of the Mockingjay as both an image foreshadowing future action as well as an icon of identification of like-minded citizens. The fact that the Mockingjay is so closely linked with rebellion inevitably evokes suspense and an awareness of danger:

A shadow of recognition flickers across Caesar's face and I can tell he know that the mockingjay isn't just my token. That it's come to symbolize so much more. [...] "Well, hats off to your stylist. [...] And suddenly I am so afraid for him. What has he done? Something terribly dangerous. An act of rebellion in itself. [...] and I'm afraid he has hurt himself beyond repair. The significance of my fiery transformation will not be lost on President Snow. (Collins, 2009, 253 f)

Hence, Collins has succeeded in creating a political icon that represents not only a historic 'victory' over the government, namely the survival of a species that was expected to become extinct, but it is associated with and foreshadows a positive turn of events.

5.2 Insurgency as the Weapon of the Suppressed – Organized Revolt

Rebellion, as has been discussed in the previous chapters, is a crucial issue in *The Hunger Games* trilogy and the most striking difference to *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, where any thought of rebellion has been eroded. The fact that the masses are entirely oppressed and permanently kept under strict control makes it impossible to mobilize military power. Both Orwell and Collins refer to the underlying hope of their protagonists to get the chance of running away and escaping the totalitarianism of their living environment. "Or they would commit suicide together. Or they would disappear, alter themselves out of

recognition, learn to speak with proletarian accents, get jobs in a factory and live out their lives undetected in a back-street. It was all nonsense, as they both knew. In reality there was no escape.” (Orwell, 175) “We could do it, you know,” Gale says quietly. “What?” I ask. “Leave the district. Run off. Live in the woods. You and I, we could make it, “ says Gale. I don’t know how to respond. The idea is so preposterous.” (Collins, 2008, 9)

Given that both authors portray escape to be an impossible undertaking, both protagonists are forced to remain in their respective living environments and deal with the situation at hand. Winston remains unsuccessful in any attempts to undermine the authority of the government. Even an act as comparatively harmless as Winston and Julia having sexual intercourse is considered rebellious.“ Their embrace had been a battle, the climax a victory. It was a blow struck against the Party. It was a political act.” (Orwell, 145) However, it was a political act without any effect on the political situation.

Katniss’ story, however, develops from a single altruistic act attempting to rescue her sister, over an incidental and unplanned act of rebellion when she decides to commit suicide together with Peeta, into an organized revolt based on the odds of insurgency. Morrison claims that empirical data in the history of political mobilization of slaves has shown that collective disobedience is one of the most efficient methods of revolt:

But one of the most notable techniques for asserting independence was individual or organized revolt. These varied efforts were constant and formed patterns. [...] Genovese has shown that at least some of the inefficiencies and unprofitability of the slave economy was due to slave recalcitrance. He cites the breakage of tools and the low productivity in the absence of the overseer. (Morrison, 34)

Katniss, who states an example of not complying with the expectations of the Capitol government, does essentially what has been suggested by Morrison. Even though she does comply with the government’s demands where it is necessary for her survival, she quickly fathoms that the fact that she is able to reach a wide audience via the Hunger Games media, gives her rebellious actions an enormous impact on a large number of people. It is by Katniss’ success in the Hunger Games and her gradual establishment as the

Mockingjay that she attracts followers. Obviously, the mobilization of followers is an essential aspect of a successful revolt. However, there are many more considerations to be made, some of which are concisely summarized by Fidel in the following paragraph:

Popular movements whose purpose is to overthrow a military regime seldom reach the stage of providing sufficient threat to warrant the use of military force. [...] The conditions that allow for the success of popular revolt include large areas of low-population density that are inaccessible to modern vehicles; outside sources of supplies, weaponry and finance; trained revolutionary leadership cadres; cohesive organization; and a revolutionary program that can successfully appeal to a large segment of the population and gain their permanent allegiance, to name but a few. Even when all of the conditions for successful revolt exist, there is still no guarantee against failure. [...] When revolt and insurgency do succeed, it is more often a result of the incapacities of the regime than the strength of the revolution. By contrast, an effective authoritarian regime has many advantages in combating revolt. The use of force per se is only one technique of repression and indeed it is severely limited in its long-term effectiveness. Other techniques of repression and power maintenance that are considerably more effective [...] include close surveillance, sporadic interrogation, arrest, property confiscation, hostage taking and exile. (Fidel, 21 f)

The most important group of people in the rebellion portrayed in *Mockingjay* live in district 13. This district was claimed to have been annihilated after an attempted uprising, but in fact survived in an underground location where the inhabitants have been prepared for rebellion. When the inhabitants of district 13 led by their president Coin learn about Katniss' subversive moves for rebellion, they prove to be crucial assets for the success of rebellion. They essentially provide the 'trained revolutionary leadership cadres and cohesive organization' (Fidel, 21), which Fidel considers necessary for any successful uprising. With their strategic knowledge, they can systematically work against the Capitol. "The rebels [...] have rallied. They have actually take 3 and 11- the latter so crucial since it's Panem's main food supplier- and have made inroads in several other districts as well." (Collins, 2010,140)

By using the technique of foreshadowing, Collins refers to district 13 in her description of the Mockingjay, who survived despite the government's expectations that it would die out if left to itself. The very same holds true for

the people of district 13. “Perhaps the Capitol’s leaders thought that, without help, 13 would die off on its own. It almost did a few times, but it always managed to pull through due to a strict sharing of resources, strenuous discipline and constant vigilance against any further attacks from the Capitol.” (Collins, 2010,21) The fact that Collins links the episode of the Mockingjay to district 13 anticipates the positive outcome of the rebellion.

Civil disobedience is also considered a very powerful tool in bringing positive change. Howard Zinn claims that civil disobedience is the organized form of natural reactions, which would otherwise be uncontrolled and consequently ineffective:

Those who fear the spread of social disorder should keep in mind that civil disobedience is the organized repression of revolt against existing evils; it does not create the evils, but rationalizes the natural reactions to them, which otherwise burst out from time to time in sporadic and often ineffectual disorders. Civil disobedience, therefore, by providing an organized outlet for rebellion, may prevent chaotic and uncontrolled reactions. Riots, it must be said, may be useful as barometers showing government its inadequacies, showing the aggrieved the need for organized revolt; but civil disobedience, controlling and focusing rebellious energy, is more effective in bringing positive change. (Zinn, 18)

Organized revolt and insurgency thus can be said to constitute the most promising method of rebellion in *The Hunger Games*. As the mobilization of the masses is considerably facilitated by the Hunger Games media, and technical and strategic support are provided by the people of district 13, the prospect of success of the rebellion is clearly outlined by Collins. There is no such thing in Orwell’s *Nineteen Eighty-Four*.

5.3 Success vs. Failure- Why is Rebellion Successful in Panem, but Impossible in Oceania?

The fact that rebellion is successful in Panem, but impossible in Oceania is the most significant difference between *The Hunger Games* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. The respective endings of the two novels are extremely opposed as regards the people’s sense of optimism. Orwell’s dystopian government turns

out to be invincible, Collins's depiction of rebellion ultimately leads to the liberation of the district citizens and conveys an atmosphere of hope and optimism. What are the circumstances, interior and exterior, that determine the success of rebellion in Panem? What motives could Suzanne Collins have had for the portrayal of a successful rebellion against a totalitarian government? In which aspects do the inhabitants of Panem differ from the inhabitants of Oceania- can the key for success be found in the attitude of the masses?

In her analysis of George Orwell's works, Miriam Helisch extensively discusses the impact of the Proles on the political developments in Oceania in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*:

Die Geschichte hat gezeigt, dass sich die Massen nie von selbst erheben, da ihnen die Einsicht in die politischen Zusammenhänge fehlt. Das Volk kommt auch nicht auf die Idee, gegen die desaströsen Lebensbedingungen aufzubegehren. Da weder Wahrheit noch Vergangenheit und damit keinerlei Vergleichsmaßstäbe existieren, merken die Proles nicht einmal, dass sie ausgebeutet und unterdrückt werden. Für die Machthaber sind sie daher leicht zu kontrollieren; es muss lediglich verhindert werden, dass sie sich heranbilden und die intellektuellen Fähigkeiten entwickeln, das Regime zu durchschauen. (Helisch, 20)

Helisch refers to the fact that Orwell indicates that the proles have intellectual capacities and are 'theoretically capable of rebellion' but that these capacities are insufficient for actual rebellion. Helisch attributes this circumstance to the intellectual oppression carried out by the government, which gradually disables its citizens' ability for comparison, logical thinking and seeing political interdependencies. The masses in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* are doomed to obey the government and are actively involved in the psychologically and morally destructive machinery that constitutes the success of the Party (for instance when children denunciate their parents¹⁴). This is an essential aspect of the political strategy in Oceania. The social psychologist Stanley Milgram points

¹⁴ "It was almost normal for people over thirty to be frightened of their own children. And with good reason, for hardly a week passed in which the *Times* did not carry a paragraph describing how some eavesdropping little sneak- "child hero" was the phrase generally used- had overheard some compromising remark and denounced his parents to the Thought Police." (Orwell, 29)

out that it is the lack of resources needed to resist an authoritarian regime that disables many individuals from opposing political authority:

This is, perhaps, the most fundamental lesson of our study: ordinary people, simply doing their jobs, and without any particular hostility on their part, can become agents in a terrible destructive process. Moreover, even when the destructive effects of their work become patently clear, and they are asked to carry out actions incompatible with fundamental standards of morality, relatively few people have the resources needed to resist authority. (Milgram, 24)

In *The Hunger Games*, Collins's portrayal of the general public does not concur with Milgram's perspective to a large extent. Rather, she portrays a community that shares Katniss's feelings, which is able to sympathize on an emotional level, even though it is politically too much oppressed to be able to voice its protest. Already at the very beginning of the novel, where the thought of rebellion has not yet been addressed, she depicts a general public that shares Katniss's feelings and which supports her ideologically:

To the everlasting credit of the people of district 12, not one person claps. Not even the ones holding betting slips, the ones who are usually beyond caring. [...] Silence. Which says we do not agree. We do not condone. All of this is wrong. The something unexpected happens. [...] At first one, then another, then almost every member of the crowd touches the three middle fingers of their left hand to their lips and holds it out to me. It is an old and rarely used gesture of our district, occasionally seen at funerals. It means thanks, it means admiration, it means good-bye to someone you love. (Collins, 2008, 24)

On several occasions, Collins depicts the inhabitants of Panem as unwilling to comply with the Capitol ideology. "The commentators are not sure what to say about the crowd's refusal to applaud. The silent salute." (Collins, 2008, 46) This is a clear contrast to Orwell's view of the masses in Oceania, whose general attitude is represented by Julia when she says "Always yell with the crowd, that's what I say. It's the only way to be safe." (Orwell, 140). The citizens in Oceania act essentially out of egoistic motives:

[...] Is there somebody else you want me to give away? Just say who it is and I'll tell you anything you want. I don't care who it is or what you

do to them. I've got a wife and three children. [...] You can take the whole lot of them and cut their throats in front of my eyes, and I'll stand by and watch it. But not room 101! (Orwell, 271)

Julia, as representative of the masses, considers revolt a foolish idea. "Any kind of organised revolt against the Party, which was bound to be a failure, struck her as stupid. The clever thing was to break the rules and stay alive all the same." (Orwell, 151) This intrinsically apathetic ideology of the masses, for which Julia is representative, forestalls any hope for success of an uprising. When the masses do not only need to be given an opportunity to revolt, but have to be convinced that revolution is necessary, the prospect for a rebellion to succeed is practically zero.

The general predisposition of the public that the two authors portray could therefore not possibly diverge more. However, it is not only the favorable predisposition of the masses that enables the success of the rebellion in Panem, but also its immaculate organization and strategies. Once the invaluable aid of district 13 has been won, it is army-like organization that contributes to the success of the uprising. There are "Level-drills" (Collins, 2010,163), a strict "Bunker Protocol" (Collins, 2010,166f) and simulated combat training termed "SSC Simulated Street Combat" (Collins, 2010, 287f) which every soldier has to undergo. It is thorough and rigorous strategic organization that helps advance the plans for rebellion. Again, Collins portrays the general public to be extremely compliant with the demands of the situation. "Streams of people are converging to form a river that flows only downward. No one shrieks or tries to push ahead." (Collins, 2010, 163f)

The military-like concept is continued in *Mockingjay*. "Those over fourteen have been given entry-level ranks in the military and are addressed respectfully as "Soldier". (Collins, 2010, 9). "They have nutrition down to a science. You leave with enough calories to take you to the next meal, no more, no less." (Collins, 2010, 42) The fact that resources are rationed and citizens are assigned ranks contributes to the impression that the general public is very much aware of the fact that it has become involved in a crucial event in history.

Collins, however, challenges the idea of rebellion and war at several occasions by referring to its potential pitfalls and dangers:

We were in no position to launch a counter-attack until recently. We could barely stay alive. After we'd overthrown and executed the Capitol's people, only a handful of us even knew how to pilot. We could've nuked them with missiles, yes. But there's always the larger question: if we engage in that type of war with the Capitol, would there be any human life left? (Collins, 2010,96)

We have decades of support for the assumption that further direct attacks on Thirteen would be counterproductive to the Capitol's cause. Nuclear missiles would release radiation into the atmosphere, with incalculable environmental results. (Collins, 2010,162)

It is interesting that she alludes to the fact that war may have disastrous consequences not only for the government, but also for the entire population. This suggests Collins' personal critical attitude to warfare.

The protagonists' personal predisposition to rebellion differs significantly between the protagonists in *The Hunger Games* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. Orwell portrays Winston as a victim of political indoctrination who is unable to remember even what once was most important to him. "He hardly thought of Julia. He could not fix his mind on her. He loved her and would not betray her; but that was only a fact, known as he knew the rules of arithmetic. He felt no love for her, and he hardly even wondered what was happening to her." (Orwell, 263) His thoughts revolve around his own, immediate struggle for survival. There is no time and no motivation for caring for somebody else but himself, and even if he did, his behavior would be suspicious and prosecuted by the Party. In *The Hunger Games*, much of the plot revolves around Katniss's altruistic personality. Katniss is willing to die for her sister, and all of her decisions consider any possible implications they may have on her family: "Who cares what they do to me? What really scares me is what they might do to my mother and Prim, how my family might suffer now because of my impulsiveness." (Collins, 2008, 103) This contrasts with Julia in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, who says to Winston: "I'm not interested in the next generation, dear. I'm interested in us." (Orwell, 179)

Katniss' inherent motivation to hold the government responsible for what they do to the district inhabitants distinguishes her substantially from the character of Winston, who perhaps does want to hold the government accountable for its atrocities, but who, due to interior and exterior circumstances, is unable to do so. Katniss, however, acts on the basis of her convictions. "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." (Collins, 2008, 236 f) This conviction exposes her to considerable danger when she engages in rebellious activities even when there are no cameras present: "The flesh-colored fabric of the dummy's skin makes a good, absorbent canvas. I carefully finger paint the words on its body, concealing them from view. Then I step away quickly to watch the reaction on the Gamemaker's faces as they read the name on the dummy. SENECA CRANE." (Collins, 2009, 237)

Katniss is thus not only a political figure and a celebrated rebellious icon for the masses, but also an individual who is genuinely convinced of her aims and motivation. This is a circumstance that distinguishes her significantly from Orwell's Winston. She is certain of doing the right thing, and so is her ally Peeta, a fact that facilitates the spreading of rebellious ideas considerably. "I don't know how to say it exactly. Only... I want to die as myself. Does that make any sense?" he asks. [...] "I don't want them to change me in there. Turn me into some kind of monster that I'm not." (Collins, 2008, 141) Collins portrays Katniss and Peeta as extremely strong individual characters, they are both altruistic and genuinely motivated. In Orwell's novel, by comparison, the protagonist is a comparatively feeble, low-key character, whose potential aptitude for rebellion is never allowed to develop.

Another essential aspect that makes the uprising and the ultimate overthrowing of the government possible in *The Hunger Games*, is the skilled use of the media. By broadcasting footage of rebellious activities, the rebels attempt to spread the message across the country. This serves as a motivation for those not yet recruited as fellow rebels. "Our plan is to launch an airtime assault [...] to make a series of what we call propos- which is short for

“propaganda spots”. (Collins, 2010,52) Katniss’s team skillfully assembles a variety of spots that all serve the purpose of informing the rest of the country of the rebellious activities that are taking place. In this way they intend to mobilize those who have not yet risen against the government. “Tomorrow we’ll focus on speeches and interviews and have me pretend to be in rebel battles. Today they want just one slogan, just one line that they can work into a short propo to show to Coin.” (Collins, 2010,84) They work with emotional pictures in order to appeal to the personal experiences, consciences and pity of the district inhabitants, many of who have lost a family member to the Hunger Games:

I was thinking we could do a series of propos called We Remember. In each one, we would feature one of the dead tributes. Little Rue from Eleven or old Mags from Four. The idea being that we could target each district with a very personal piece.” “ A tribute to the tributes, as it where.” (Collins, 2010,128f)

Katniss and her team also employ effective rhetoric techniques and appeal to their audience on a very persuasive, emotional level. “I want to tell people that if you think for one second the Capitol will treat us fairly if there’s a ceasefire, you’re deluding yourself. Because you know who they are and what they do.” (Collins, 2010, 117f) The use of catchphrases such as “If we burn, you burn with us.” (Collins, 2010, 125) contribute to the effect of Katniss’s media broadcasting on the masses. Moreover, they at times exploit the positive associations that the masses have with certain individuals at the Capitol, and forge footage suggesting their compliance with their ideals, a process that may be morally questionable, yet is nevertheless extremely efficient to achieve her ends. “Is Claudius Templesmith with us?” I ask. This gives Plutarch a good laugh. “Only his voice.” (Collins, 2010,126)

Most importantly, however, it is visions and the prospect of a future without bondage that drive Katniss forward. The chance to be able to offer a good life to her family, to render a prosperous future possible, fuels Katniss’ intrinsic motivation. “Prim a doctor. She couldn’t even dream of it in 12. Something small and quiet, like a match being struck, lights up the gloom inside me. This is the sort of future a rebellion could bring.” (Collins, 2010,176)

To conclude, it is this optimistic predisposition of the heroine and the general public as well as the immaculate strategic organization provided by the people of district 13 and the commitment of the protagonists, their visions and the broadcasting of that ideology by the use of media that provide the keys to success. None of these preconditions is given in Orwell's Oceania.

6. Conclusion

This thesis has attempted to provide an analysis of the intertextual relationship between Suzanne Collins's *The Hunger Games* trilogy and George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. It has started by an attempt to define the term Dystopia, which constitutes an essential concept in the perception of the two novels. It has taken into account Sir Thomas More's genre-initiating narrative *Utopia*, which constitutes the basis for considerations on the concept of dystopia. Both utopia and dystopia strive for a perfect society, albeit ones that are ideologically diametrically opposed. It is by oppression and violence that the ideal is achieved. Michael Gordin (et.al.) define dystopia as "utopia gone wrong" (Gordin, 1).

Many scholars highlight the importance of the state of the authors' contemporary society as a motivation and inspiration for writing a dystopian text. They suggest that the sociopolitical circumstances of the time when a dystopian novel is written has a great influence on the narrative. In a way, the dystopian novel can then be seen as a literary reaction to the social and political world 'outside'. Bernd Lange suggests a connection between *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and the totalitarian theory valid at the time of the Cold War (cf. Lange, 36), Alok Rai attributes a general reference to the European post war period to Orwell's works (cf. Rai, 5). Also Suzanne Collins has conceded that contemporary American politics have been an 'inspiration' for writing *The Hunger Games*. In an interview, she says that it was the mingling of reality television programs and footage of the Iraq war that she found extremely unsettling and which inspired her to write the trilogy.¹⁵

¹⁵ cf. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nDNJd192Tcw> accessed July 7 2010.

The largest part of the first chapter is dedicated to analyzing the way that power is exerted in dystopian regimes. Aspects such as physical and intellectual oppression, propaganda, violence and education, brainwashing and restrictions of personal freedom as well as the maintenance of totalitarian power are addressed. The extreme use of terror in order to achieve a state of (ideological) perfection is a primary characteristic defining a dystopian state. Elitist rule and the radical limitation of the rights of an individual citizen as suggested by Michael Curtis (cf. Curtis, 2) are also important aspects. Dystopian regimes aim at a thorough and complete acceptance of Party ideologies by the citizens. The manipulation of the mind by the use of propaganda and indoctrination can be considered one of the main ingredients of despotism. An extreme form of indoctrination is the use of brainwashing, a technique that aims essentially at 'conditioning' individuals to achieve a conformity between their 'own' will and that of the regime. Additionally, personal rights and any notion of privacy are disabled, which adds to a sense of helplessness and despair in the population.

The importance of an organizational hierarchy and stable patterns of behavior for maintaining power in a dystopian state is discussed. Additionally, dystopian regimes often resolve to a pretended context of warfare in order to be able to justify its actions. Hannah Arendt defines the "insight that peace is the end of war, and that therefore a war is preparation for peace, is [...] as old as the discovery of propaganda lies" (Arendt, 16) and confirms the value that the pretext of warfare has for the maintenance of power.

The next chapter of this thesis discusses the conception of man in the totalitarian regimes in *The Hunger Games trilogy* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. The conscious division between social classes termed Proles and Party members in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, and Capitol inhabitants and district inhabitants in *The Hunger Games*, is the first focus of consideration. It is important to realize the shallow intellectual capacities that Orwell attributes to the Proles, especially when compared to Collins's portrayal of the district inhabitants, who, despite their limited education, are quite intelligent. The Proles, as a group of society of who "nothing is to be feared. [...] They can be granted intellectual liberty because they have no intellect" (Orwell, 240) are

granted comparatively large liberty in their daily lives. The fact that they would theoretically have the opportunity to rise against the government, but fail to grasp the necessity for an uprising because of the persevering process of indoctrination that they have been exposed to, can be seen as criticism of totalitarian society by Orwell.

Collins takes a similar approach, but chooses to attribute shallow intellectual capacities to the more prosperous group of the society, the inhabitants of the Capitol. Even though the inhabitants of the Capitol are portrayed as bloodthirsty, and a people who, due to their own prosperity and affluence, have unlearned to understand the implications of killing for entertainment, Collins also describes them as pitiable on several occasions. In a way, the Capitol inhabitants are portrayed as victims of the media, which have generated total indifference to the fate of the tributes in the media-consumers.

The next part of the thesis takes into account the theoretical considerations on dystopian governments outlined in the previous chapters and considers aspects such as “reality control” (a term introduced by Orwell in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*), restrictions of personal freedom, brainwashing, education, violence and propaganda in the context of *The Hunger Games* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. Moreover, in this chapter, the significance of the governmental agencies of “Peacekeepers” respectively the “Thought Police” is discussed, and the concept of an enemy in both novels is referred to.

The term “reality control” is inevitably linked to the limitation of personal freedom. The philosophical question as to whether we are free as long as we believe that we are constitutes the basis for reflection on this topic. Does the subjective sensation of being free, as in the case of the Proles and the Capitol inhabitants, suffice for defining freedom? Or is there more to defining freedom than a perceived happiness?

The dystopian governments in both novels take the liberty to intrude into many, if not all, aspects of its citizens’ private lives. Constant supervision and control are carried out by government institutions such as the “Thought Police” and the “Peacekeepers”, but also by technical devices such as telescreens and cameras. Orwell’s concept of “doublethink”, which allows the

unchallenged co-existence of two contradictory statements in Oceania, is another example of the enormous influence of governmental control. In Panem, restricted access to education and a strictly censored flow of information compromise the intellectual prosperity of the Panem inhabitants. However, the “reality control” applied in Panem is much less severe and uncompromising than in Orwell’s dystopia. Collins leaves room for escape from the law. For Winston, in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, however, political activities as the ones undertaken by Katniss, are illusory. Katniss enjoys a relative intellectual freedom that would be unthinkable on the character of Winston. Slogans and catchphrases only play a minor role in *The Hunger Games* trilogy, but constitute an important aspect in controlling the citizens of Oceania.

The implementation of restrictions is also an essential part in the portrayal of the dystopian states of Panem and Oceania. Plehwe, Walpen and Neunhöffer suggest that “the more direct the government restrictions of individual rights, the better suited they are for their representation in a dystopia” (Plehwe, Walpen, Neunhöffer, 167). Governmental restrictions are essential in both Orwell’s and Collins’s versions of dystopia. In *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, even the most private topic- sexuality- is addressed by the government and restricted to the mere purpose of reproduction. The government has recognized the potential ‘danger’ that love carries with it. The constant frustration that the suppression of sexual urges generates is a powerful tool that the Oceanian government makes use of. In Panem, love and sexuality are not controlled by the government. However, due to the fact that the thought of raising a child in a world as atrocious as the one Katniss experiences just does not arise. This is in effect equivalent to a restraint to bearing a child.

Even seemingly insignificant aspects of life such as music become subject to drastic constraint. In Oceania, any kind of entertainment associated with positive emotions is undesirable. Collins refers to the role of music in society as well. The contact with foreigners is also forbidden in Oceania in order to avoid that citizens become acquainted with an alternative way of living. In Panem, members from different districts are restrained from having contact with each other in order to keep the masses under control.

On a deep-level structure, lasting obedience by the citizens can only be achieved by means of appropriate education, i.e. manipulation. Institutionalized education in schools as well as forcible indoctrination of thoughts imposed by the use of torture and propaganda, are methods of brainwashing. Both Collins and Orwell refer to governmentally monitored education. However, unlike Orwell, Collins depicts a heroine that is enough capable of thinking independently so that she can deliberately dismiss or accept pieces of information reaching her. In Orwell, education is equal to “mind control”, implemented by a new language, the language of “newspeak”. In this way, the Oceanian government aims at making thoughts about undesired political ideas literally impossible.

Fear is another emotion that the dystopian governments of Oceania and Panem make use of in order to control and manipulate citizens. Children are ripped from their families, torture is employed for punishment as well as for a warning. The main aim is to keep the citizens at a constant level of intimidation in order to enforce their compliance with Party ideology under all circumstances. If other methods fail, brainwashing is systematically applied. Winston Smith as well as Katniss’s ally Peeta become subject to brainwashing and are conditioned into a state of apathy. The process of brainwashing in Winston Smith serves the purpose of making the subject acknowledge and accept the status of the Leader as a kind of deity as well as for ‘cleansing’ the individual from any mental ‘impediment’ that might prevent the subject’s availability from accepting the indoctrination of Party ideology. The common sense of the subject is permanently undermined, and thus the government is enabled to implement any idea into an individual’s mind that is in agreement with their purpose.

Another issue that is crucial for the depiction of dystopian societies in the two novels is the portrayal of an (unreal?) political enemy. In *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, the Party establishes the notion of a public enemy by the name of Emmanuel Goldstein. He is claimed to be evil personified, hence the masses are supposed to unite in an emotional reaction of hatred against the common foe. The hatred of a barbarous villain unites the citizens and evokes a certain sense of community, which is refreshed daily in the so-called “Two Minutes

Hate” program. Collins chooses an entirely different approach and creates the ‘bogey man image’ of an entire district, district 13. Additionally, she describes President Snow, the Capitol president, to be Katniss’s personal adversary.

Chapter 3.2.4 of the thesis deals with the concepts of surveillance, the depiction of death as a spectacle and the issue of how to maintain power in a dystopian society.

Surveillance, introduced by George Orwell in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* by his portrayal of Big Brother, is a vital practice in both Oceania and Panem. However, Collins’s and Orwell’s approaches differ in that the Oceanian citizens are fully aware of being under surveillance at all the times, whereas in Panem, Katniss only experiences this kind of total control in the arena of the Hunger Games. In Oceania, the presence of telescreens, an electronical device in every Oceanian household enabling unilateral communication is considered normal. Both authors refer to their protagonists’ ability to conceal any sentiment they have by turning their face into an expressionless mask. However, Orwell generally attributes paramount importance to continuous surveillance of citizens by cameras, whereas Collins does not necessarily consider surveillance to be of primary importance for maintaining power in Panem.

The occupation with death as a spectacle is another aspect shared by *The Hunger Games* trilogy and *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. The name Panem, following the ancient topos of “Panem et circenses”, bread and circuses, suggests a reference to the ancient gladiator games. The Panem Capitol requires mandatory watching of the Hunger Games, the government of Oceania enforces the observation of Hate Weeks and attendance at public hangings. The compelling force of death as a medium of installing and maintaining power is the main objective that the governments aim to accomplish. The forced compliance with cruelty is a way of reminding the citizens of being completely at the government’s mercy.

The implementation of reality control, restrictions, brainwashing and surveillance from the part of the government serve the purpose of establishing a permanent, stable society in dystopia. The perpetuation of power over time

is of utmost importance. Also, by the creation of a certain living environment, power and control can be sustained for a long time. The Oceanian as well as the Panem government reduce amenities to a bare minimum. The proliferation of hatred and curbing of independent thinking as well as the purposeful realization of poverty are extremely efficient means of maintaining power. The main aim of this procedure is to reduce the amelioration of living standards that may provoke thoughts other than those focused on the immediate struggle for survival. Additionally, pretended warfare serves the purpose of justifying the government's actions. Virtually any measure taken by the Panem and Oceanian governments strive for the unlimited perpetuation of power.

In Chapter 4, the phenomenon of intertextuality is discussed on a theoretical level. Intertextuality is defined as a textual frame of reference that allows the reader to make sense of what he/she perceives, which already suggests the immediate involvement of the reader in the process of 'deciphering' literature. The chapter discusses various perspectives on intertextuality and attempts to outline its subcategories and the ongoing critical debate of trying to define which kinds of texts are actually to be conceived as intertextual. It is by no means commonly agreed on whether or not all texts refer to each other in some degree or other, or whether there are in fact unique texts, which can be analyzed in isolation from other texts.

Harold Bloom suggests that "there are no texts, only relationships between texts"(Bloom, 3). Gérard Genette acknowledges that "[...] though all literary texts are hypertextual, some are more hypertextual than others, more massively and explicitly palimpsestuous." (Genette, xi)

The question whether or not the author actually has to be aware of the existence of the text he/she is allegedly currently referring to leads to the subject of intentional versus accidental intertextuality, which are generally being distinguished from each other. It remains a controversial issue if intentional intertextuality has to be marked or not.

In this context, the distinction between originality and imitation is also discussed. The term 'imitation' has a derogatory connotation, unless it is understood as a neoclassical concept. Attridge attributes a highly-valued

notion to the concept of originality: “[it] entails a particular kind of difference from what has gone before, one that changes the field in question for later practitioners.” (Attridge, 36) Mary Orr, by contrast, claims that “for postmodernism, imitation should fare rather better, since cultural recycling is among postmodernism’s key dynamics.” (Orr, 95)

Chapter 4.2 focuses on the intertextual relationship between *The Hunger Games* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. It takes into consideration a number of interviews with Suzanne Collins, in which she concedes to have been influenced by the myth of Theseus and the films and writings on the ancient Roman Gladiator Games when writing *The Hunger Games*. Subsequently, similarities in plot and action are discussed. The reference of both authors to two poems that are semantically and syntactically very much alike suggests an intentional intertextual relationship on the part of Collins, though it is not marked. The erudite reader of *The Hunger Games* benefits from the recognition of the intertextual allusions to *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. However, the novel also appeals to readers who do not recognize the intertextual reference-frame to Orwell’s novel.

The chapter analyzes several examples of intertextual reference to *Nineteen Eighty-Four* in *The Hunger Games*. For instance, the numbering of individual rooms suggested by both authors, the exploitation of fear when torturing individuals and the reference to a catatonic mother who is unable to sustain the family are notable examples of intertextuality. Examples like these can hardly be dismissed as accidental. Moreover, Orwell’s term “Thought Police” is echoed by the term “Peacekeepers” in Collins. Romance also plays an important role in both novels.

Chapter 4.3 attempts to explore possible reasons for the differences on the discourse level between the two novels. The narrative technique employed in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and *The Hunger Games*, as well as the intended readership for the novels are considered. Also, the underlying motive for Collins and Orwell to write a dystopian novel are addressed.

Considering the question of the intended readership, *The Hunger Games* was expressly written for an adolescent readership, whereas *Nineteen Eighty-Four*

was clearly intended for an adult readership. This may be the reason why Collins' s trilogy adopts a more optimistic approach to dystopia in that she clearly demonstrates that a dystopian regime cannot sustain power forever, and that it can be overthrown and replaced by democracy.

Many theories have been proposed that attribute to *Nineteen Eighty-Four* prophetic import by depicting a dystopian future to western society. Patai claims that " [...] Orwell's text reveals his own implicit values. Although *Nineteen Eighty-Four* may indeed have been intended to warn of a possibility rather than to prophesy [...] this does not alter its profoundly negative impact." (Patai, 238) Collins's *The Hunger Games* is much more explicit in criticizing the social and political situation. Panem is explicitly situated in contemporary North America, which may have a prophetic implication as well as a moral message. Harsh criticism of contemporary despotic politics and ethics recurs throughout the novels. In the interview Collins claims that it was the mingling of reality television and footage of the Iraq war that inspired her to write *The Hunger Games*.

The last chapter of this thesis discusses the option of rebellion in the given contexts of a totalitarian government. In Panem, rebellion is possible and is ultimately successful in Panem, whereas there is no realistic chance of an uprising in the political regime portrayed by Orwell in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*.

In Oceania, complete conformity with Party principles is enforced and factual concordance of the Party's and the subject's will is achieved. Thus, rebellion becomes not even a hypothetical possibility.

Collins uses the name "Mockingjay" as a leitmotif and as a political emblem. It becomes a secret code later attributed to the leader of the rebellion in Panem. The history of survival of the species of this bird, which managed to escape extinction despite the Capitol government's attempt to annihilate it, foreshadows the positive ending of the trilogy. Katniss embodies the emblem of Mockingjay and has enormous influence on the masses. Collins created a political icon that represents not only a historic 'victory' over the government, but is associated with and foreshadows a positive turn of events.

Insurgency is facilitated by the people of district 13, whose district was claimed by the regime to have been annihilated. They prove to be crucial assets for the success of rebellion. In *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, by contrast, the shallow intellectual capacities of the Proles are an obstacle to critical thinking and thus to rebellion. The fact that the masses in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* are not only doomed to obey the government but are actively involved in the psychologically and morally destructive machinery that constitutes the success of the Party makes the prospect of a rebellion illusory.

Moreover, the protagonists' personal predispositions to rebellion also differ significantly in the two novels. Winston is portrayed as a relatively weak character and a victim of political indoctrination, whereas Katniss is depicted as an altruistic, strong-minded personality willing to die for what she believes in. Katniss is not only a political figure, but also an individual who is genuinely convinced of her aims and motivation. This is a characteristic that distinguishes her significantly from Winston. The skilled use of the media when broadcasting footage of rebellious activities, also contributes to the success of the rebellion and serves as a method of recruiting fellow rebels. Katniss also makes use of effective rhetoric techniques to persuade and appeal to the suppressed. Most importantly, however, it is the visions and the hope for a future without bondage that are the primary driving force for Katniss. Her intrinsic motivation is her desire to offer a peaceful and prosperous life to her family.

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8. Appendix

Abstract

The aim of this thesis is to explore the intertextual relationship between Orwell's novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949) and Suzanne Collins's dystopian *The Hunger Games* trilogy (2008-2010). The study is based on a definition of dystopia and its conception of man, which is then related to the totalitarian regimes of Orwell's Oceania and Collins's Panem. The features of dystopian society include the use of torture, brainwashing, propaganda and violence, as well as the notion of „reality control“.

The thesis attempts to outline the theory of intertextuality and applies it to the critical reading of the two novels. The problem of the distinction between intentional and accidental intertextuality is also addressed, and so are the concepts of originality versus imitation.

On a practical level, similarities and differences between the two texts in action and plot are discussed. Also, the intended readership are characterized and the narrative technique is examined. Additionally, the motives of the authors for writing dystopian novels are addressed.

Finally, one primary ideological difference between the two novels, namely the attitude to rebellion as a means for overcoming a totalitarian regime, is considered. In this context Collins's use of the emblem of the Mockingjay, and the method of insurgency as the weapon of the suppressed are discussed. Finally, it provides an answer to the question as to why rebellion is successful in Panem, but impossible in Oceania.

Abstract – Deutsch

Diese Diplomarbeit analysiert die mögliche intertextuelle Beziehung zwischen Suzanne Collins' *The Hunger Games* Trilogie (2008-2010) und George Orwells *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949). Sie geht aus von theoretischen Überlegungen über Dystopie und wendet diese für die Analyse der totalitären Systeme in den fiktiven dystopischen Staaten von Ozeanien und Panem an. Zu den Wesensmerkmalen des Totalitarismus zählen u.a. die Praxis der Gehirnwäsche, der Freiheitsberaubung, Propaganda und Folter, sowie der „reality control“, ein Begriff den Orwell geprägt hat.

Die Diplomarbeit gibt auch einen kurzen Überblick über die Theorie der Intertextualität. Es wird argumentiert, dass die intertextuellen Bezüge zwischen den Texten der Lektüre eine tiefere Bedeutungsdimension verleihen kann. In diesem Zusammenhang wird auch das Problem diskutiert, dass es oft schwierig ist zu bestimmen, ob Texte als intertextuell betrachtet werden sollen und wie man zwischen bewusster und unbewusster Intertextualität unterscheiden kann. Damit verbunden ist die Frage nach dem Originalitätsanspruch eines literarischen Werkes.

Auf der praktischen Ebene werden Ähnlichkeiten und Unterschiede zwischen *Nineteen Eighty-Four* und *The Hunger Games* in Handlung, Handlungsschema und Erzähltechnik verdeutlicht. Ebenso wird kurz auf die intendierte Leserschaft von Orwell und Collins eingegangen. Auch die Möglichkeit, dass Collins und Orwell mit ihrem Werk ihre jeweiligen Gegenwartsgesellschaften kritisieren wollen, wird angesprochen.

Der letzte Teil der Diplomarbeit befasst sich mit einem wesentlichen Unterschied zwischen den beiden Romanen, nämlich die Frage, ob Rebellion als eine realistische Möglichkeit angesehen wird, ein totalitäres Regime zu stürzen oder nicht. In Panem wird dies bejaht, und auch gezeigt, unter welchen Rahmenbedingungen eine Rebellion der Unterdrückten erfolgreich sein kann; bei Orwell ist die Antwort negativ- der Roman negiert die Möglichkeit ein etabliertes totalitäres Regime durch zivilen Ungehorsam und Rebellion zu stürzen. Als letzten Punkt wird analysiert, warum die Rebellion in Panem als erfolgreich dargestellt wird, wohingegen sie in Ozeanien unmöglich erscheint.

Lebenslauf

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