

**T.C.  
NAMIK KEMAL ÜNİVERSİTESİ  
SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ  
İNGİLİZ DİLİ VE EDEBİYATI ANABİLİM DALI  
YÜKSEK LİSANS TEZİ**

**FEMALE REPRESENTATION AND LEADERSHIP IN *V FOR VENDETTA* AND *THE HUNGER GAMES***

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## ABSTRACT

Dystopias depict imaginary future worlds which reflect the present societies and potential undesired future societies by giving divergent perspectives to the readers. Naturally, major concern of criticisms is often about the social and political aspects of them. Thus, comparatively, much fewer studies have been devoted to the women issues in dystopian worlds. Unlike traditional ones, postmodern dystopian fictions reflect women in a different way. This study shows how the female leaders in the dystopian books, *V for Vendetta* and *The Hunger Games* are portrayed in terms of female representation. After reviewing the plots of the books in their historical contexts, it focuses on the transformations of the two female characters, Katniss (*The Hunger Games*) and Evey (*V for Vendetta*), who are involuntary participants of riots, terror and guerilla wars in the process. From being self-centered victims and living in dilemmas, they gradually become leaders of their peoples. A comparison of the psychological journey of the two characters can be read in this part of the study. Individually forced by dominant, oppressive rulers, they both lose their femininities and finally become merciless killing machines for the sake of the emancipation of their societies with much admiration by their publics. This study also argues the position of a female character in a dystopian society and the place where a fascist, totalitarian regime puts a female in terms of their social roles.

**Key Words:** Dystopic Societies, Female Leadership, Female Representation, Gender Roles, *The Hunger Games*, *V for Vendetta*.

## ÖZET

Distopyalar, okuyucularına farklı perspektifler vererek, günümüz toplumlarının ve potansiyel, istenmeyen gelecek toplumların yansıtıldığı, hayali gelecek dünyaları resmederler. Doğal olarak, eleştirilerin ana konusu sıklıkla distopyaların politik ve sosyal yaklaşımları ile ilgilidir. Böylelikle, distopyalarda kadın temsili konusuna sosyopolitik konularla kıyaslandığında çok daha az çalışma adanmıştır. Geleneksel olanlardan farklı olarak, postmodern distopik romanlar kadını farklı bir şekilde yansıtırlar. Bu çalışma, *V for Vendetta* ve *Açlık Oyunları* romanlarında kadın liderlerin kadın temsili açısından nasıl resmedildiklerini incelemektedir. Çalışma, bu romanların içeriklerini tarihsel kapsamda gözden geçirdikten sonra, gerilla savaşları, terör ve isyanların gönülsüz iştirakçileri olan baş kadın karakterler, Evey (*V for Vendetta*) ve Katniss (*Açlık Oyunları*)'in süreç içerisindeki dönüşümlerine odaklanır. Aşamalı olarak, çıkmazlar yaşayan kendileri odaklı kurbanlar olmaktan çıkıp, toplumlarının liderleri veya isyanın sembolü haline gelirler. Karakterlerin psikolojik yolculuklarının bir karşılaştırılması bu bölümde okunabilir. İkisi de bireysel olarak dominant, baskıcı yöneticiler tarafından zorlanarak yaşadıkları olaylardan sonra, öncülük ettikleri toplumun büyük hayranlığını kazanırlar ve insanların kurtuluşu için alışlagelmiş kadınsal davranış beklentilerinden farklı olarak, acımasız birer katile dönüşürler. Ayrıca bu çalışma, söz konusu romanlarda kadın karakterlerin distopik toplumlardaki pozisyonunu ve faşist ve totaliter rejimlerde kadının sosyal roller açısından temsilini incelemektedir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** *Açlık Oyunları*, Cinsiyet Roller, Distopic Toplamlar, Kadın Liderliği, Kadın Temsili, *V for Vendetta*,

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## INTRODUCTION

Along with science fiction, dystopian literature has become one of the most popular genres in postmodern literature providing the writers with a wide spectrum of thoughts. In terms of utopian literature, since the postmodern era brings along a critical and ironic way of thinking, the writers of the age criticise the genre as infertile, static and prescriptive. However, dystopian literature gives the writers the opportunity of more inspirations, implications and cultural relevance. These characteristics have made it more preferable when compared to utopias. Depicting a nightmarish future and defamiliarizing readers with the present conditions of life serves more efficiently for the realization of the actual life. The details of this preference and historical context of the books, *V for Vendetta* and *The Hunger Games* can be read in the first and second chapters of this study. *V for Vendetta*, especially after the cinema adaptation of it, made a great success and Guy Fawkes mask has become the symbol of protests, riots and uprising against tyranny all around the world. *The Hunger Games* has become one of the most successful literary works of our time. When the writers, Alan Moore and Susan Collins' childhoods are considered, significant similarities can be seen to the characters they depict in their books. The societies, ideologies, lifestyles, wars and conditions of life are reflected very similarly. Recession in economy, conservative and chauvinistic approach in politics in England and Cold War play a significant role in Alan Moore's writing. When Collins's childhood and adulthood are analysed, Gulf War, Afghan War and others, especially the conditions of the children of wars seem to influence Collins when writing *The Hunger Games*.

The influence and importance of young adult literature on young adults and the negligence of it by scholars and literary critics is stated by Karen Coats as,

Young adult literature exerts a powerful influence over its readers at a particularly malleable time in their identity formation and yet we still pay more critical scholarly attention to *Antigone* (Sophocles, c.442) and *The Great Gatsby* (Fitzgerald, 1945) than we do to the potentially life-changing books our teens read on their own (p.315-316).

Young adults are in the period of their character formation and search for identity. In their search for identity and period of character formation, young adult literature provides them with a wider perspective of thoughts, ideas and life styles as the readers identify themselves with the young adult character of the book. Being contemporaries and living in similar conditions of life bring about a closer relevance between the young adult reader and the character of the book, and this feature of young adult literature increases the pedagogic value of the genre. Katniss Everdeen as the protagonist of *The Hunger Games* and Evey Hammond in *V for Vendetta* are in their teens and they provide young adult readers with a closer relation with themselves when it is compared to adult character depictions. The popularity of young adult literature with adults as well cannot be underestimated thanks to its cultural relevance, and polyphonic and dialogic structures of the books and films.

Dystopic societies have common features in the novels such as a brutal, oppressive, and dictatorial government, and suppressed, tortured, and constantly surveilled people under its control. The means of oppression can vary but the impact is usually very similar. Hunger, lack of health services, insecurity, constant threat of death and absence of knowledge lead individuals not to disobey but to consent. The continuation of this brutality is obtained by the help of some strategic applications. The rulers manipulate history, eradicate the works of art and culture, isolate different races and classes from each other and thus, maintain the silence and obedience of the societies. Another influential means used by the governments to control the society is the media. In *V for Vendetta*, closed-circuit television, constant broadcasting of the leader by "The Voice of Fate", "The Ear" and "The Eye" are the organs used to



maintain perpetual surveillance, manipulation and extermination, and “The Finger” serves as the police force. In *The Hunger Games*, the same dictatorial regime is maintained by the Hunger Games and broadcasting of them regularly. The classification of the society as districts according to their work force and production, and degradation of people serve as other efficient means of controlling them. With this exaggerated depiction of the circumstances, dystopias give readers a fresh look on their own societies since they reflect present conditions latently.

Throughout the history of utopian and dystopian literature, the representation of women has changed in a close relation to social, economical and cultural conditions of women of the era. Although utopias depict an ideal future society and living conditions, women represented in these societies cannot go beyond the conventional roles, which are imposed by patriarchal societies, as mothers, wives and housekeepers. In dystopias, as can be read in the related chapter of this study, women are represented as either oppressive dominant groups or leaders, or humiliated, inferior, oppressed and exploited groups. They are rarely depicted as strong, equal to men in any area and endowed with individual freedom. From a feminist point of view, these novels, *V for Vendetta* and *The Hunger Games*, are different from other dystopias. Basically, Evey and Katniss are the leaders of their societies and dominant characters and they represent today’s women. All in all, in consideration of their popularity and representation, these two novels are worth studying in order to analyse gender roles, heterosexuality, patriarchy, masculinity and femininity in today’s world.

In the last chapter, the characterization of the leaders in the books contributes to the process of analysis and understanding of the phases of transformation. Along with the ways of silencing and forcing a society to consent, the situation of an individual and identity formation, and finally, the transformation of female characters can be read in consideration of how today’s women deal with hegemonic power structures.

## **01)THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF *V FOR VENDETTA* AND *THE HUNGER GAMES***

### **1.1.*V for Vendetta***

The graphic novel, *V for Vendetta*, mirrors its writer, Alan Moore's own biography in many ways, such as his school life, his private life, his political ideas and his social concerns.

As a member of a working class family, he lived in an area where poverty makes its society lack many facilities, like healthcare, security and education and high levels of illiteracy, and these conditions seem to affect Moore's childhood. Doing every kind of jobs might have led him to be rebellious. We may see the reflections of influence of this deviation and rebelliousness in his characters in the book. In the novel, the protagonist V, is the only individual who can realize the oppression by the dominant power. Similarly, Alan Moore was expelled from school in 1970 for dealing with explosives and drugs like hallucinogenic LSD, just as in his book. V uses such explosives to fight with his enemies and create victorious and ceremonial demonstrations.

In the book, *V for Vendetta*, the reflections of current social, cultural and political events in Britain can be observed. After the riots broke out, the TV presenter announces that the first riot has started in Brixton. This is a reference to the Brixton riots of 1981 in England. The United Kingdom was under the effect of economic recession before 1981, but the people in Brixton were suffering from high unemployment, poverty and shortages, like the living conditions of people in Moore's dystopic society. As a result, riots break out in both. In the book, Valerie is a key character. She is a lesbian and jailed just because of this since the conservative approach of the government disapproves of such deviations. In fact, Moore uses this subplot as a device to wake and give strength to the protagonist, Evey. The social and

political approaches of the government seem to influence Moore in writing about Valerie. The present ruler, Margaret Thatcher's government's law, "Clause 28", a law which prevents the institutions from "promoting homosexuality", reflects this religious and conservative ideology.

The general social, political and cultural condition of England in the years of 1970s and 1980s are pictured by Jason Cowley as:

The years of the late 70s and early 80s were extraordinarily exciting. England was being convulsed by a social, cultural and political counter-revolution. There was violence on the football terraces and on the inner city streets. (...) The fiercest political battles had been fought and won. The miners were defeated. Free market fundamentalism was the new orthodoxy. People began to feel richer. The pop music was dismal. David Bowie began to experiment with synthesisers and computers, new technologies that would change forever the way music was made (...) (The Observer, Apr. 19 2009).

Those were the years of upheaval and the effects of them are reflected in the book, *V for Vendetta*. For example, we can see the reflections of Moore's thoughts about music in V's dialogue with Evey as, "(...)THEY HAVE ERADICATED CULTURE... TOSSED IT AWAY LIKE A FISTFUL OF DEAD ROSES"(18). In Moore's dystopia, all pleasurable things are forbidden. The only music people listen to is the voice of the government on the radio. V collects beautiful pieces of art in his secret Shadow Gallery. Hiding in this secret Shadow Gallery and keeping illegal, symbolic works of literature, V leads an anarchical way of life far from the public eye. About the anarchy, Moore expresses his thoughts in an interview as:

(...)if you look at most natural human groupings of people, such as a family or a group of friends, you will find that again, we don't have leaders.(...) everybody has their own function. And it seems to me that anarchy is the

state that most naturally obtains when you're talking about ordinary human beings living their lives in a natural way. It's only when you get these fairly alien structures of order that are represented by our major political schools of thought, that you start to get these terrible problems arising—problems regarding our status within the hierarchy, the uncertainties and insecurities that are the result of that. You get these jealousies, these power struggles, which by and large, don't really afflict the rest of the animal kingdom. It seems to me that the idea of leaders is an unnatural one that was probably thought up by a leader at some point in antiquity; leaders have been brutally enforcing that idea ever since, to the point where most people cannot conceive of an alternative (2007).

As he states here, he thinks that even if we kill all the leaders in the world, people will not be able to feel free and eventually they will seek another leader. In the book, *V for Vendetta*, after the explosion and the government was defeated, people cheer for their new leader, V, despite all his announcements for their gaining their own freedom.

Religion is depicted as another corrupted institution in *V for Vendetta*. 1980s' Britain was deeply under the influence of the church. Bishops were present in the House of Lords and played a central role in the politics of Britain in 1980s.

In 1979, Margaret Thatcher was elected prime minister in Britain and it brought the Conservative Party into power. There was a strong belief that the nation was in great degeneration in economy, politics and morality in 1970s. So the authorities strongly believed that with a conservative approach, they could heal the people and their degeneration but it did not work and instead of restoring the morality, this conservative and capitalist approach brought about a materialistic society. As Lisa Filby stated in her study:

The reconfigured Conservative party that emerged under Mrs. Thatcher therefore proclaimed its mission to revitalise Britain by reinstating a market economy and reining in social “permissiveness”. Motivated by a genuine belief in the religious basis of their politics and the moral failings of socialism, those on the right reasserted the link between Protestant and capitalist values and preached a theo-political vision based on personal freedom, responsibility and moral restraint (p.13).

The church was very effective as a tool of the government. As we see in *V for Vendetta*, the government directed the sermons of the church. The bishop in his prayer, mentions V and his deeds as an avatar of damnation and blames V of sullyng the truth with his venomous lies, then he asks for help to resist the wiles of the evil one to stand as one race and one nation (45). Alan Moore parodies the church as such an important institution of the era by the dissimulation of it with a pedophile bishop. When Evey goes to his house as a fifteen-year-old girl, he finds her even older than he usually accepts the girls to be. In the book, the church is seen as a weak servant of the oppressive government, the sermons are useless and the preachers become a part of the body whose only goal is to continue the power of the government. This kind of reflection of the Catholic Church is not a new one in literature. We can see similar cases in many books and films. For example, the article, *The Tragedy of Gilbert J. Gauthe* publicised clergy sexual abuses in 1983, and the book, *A Gospel of Shame: Children, sexual abuse and the Catholic church* by Elinor Burkett and Frank Bruni first published in 1993. After 2002, thousands of abused children by priests, bishops and even cardinals appeared in books, films and magazines. The reaction of the church against these scandals was just to keep their silence. Their victims are usually chosen from waifs or the ones left in monasteries by their parents. This corruption of the church is depicted in the book. Evey is a perfect victim for the bishop in the book as she has no parents to protect her and she needs money to survive and she is ready to sell her body. Thus, we see the institution of Church as a corrupted tool of the oppressive government, and instead of leading people to morality, and being a shelter for them, it stands as a supporter of the violence.

Various changes and profound instability marked the 1970s and the early 1980s in Britain where there is a collapse of welfare state, high rate of unemployment, workers' strikes and race riots. The first rebellious act of the unrest in society appeared in Brixton in April, 1981. Black people, who migrated from West Indies, struggled with the difficulties of unemployment and housing, saw the host community as racist and they started riots against the police forces. They saw the police as a white hand of unjust and racist government because of their perpetual violence and harsh interventions against not only black people but also other minority groups, like Irish and Jewish communities. Since the recommendations to tackle the problems were not taken seriously, riots continued and in 1985, another riot broke out in Brixton.

Late 1970s and early 1980s were the years of recession, which affected many countries all around the world, brought neoliberal economic policies not only to the UK but also to many others. Margaret Thatcher applied the policy of privatization as a precaution against high inflation rate but it caused a sharp rise in unemployment. This high unemployment rate and social discontent and unrest became the trigger of riotings, workers' strikes and protestings around Britain in 1981. One of the most striking riots was the one in Brixton, which is mentioned in *V for Vendetta*.

The upheaval of the 1970s in Britain and the recession in the early 1980s brought about a conservatist approach in social politics and thus, Margaret Thatcher's coming into power nailed conservatist politics in society. Especially after the first reporting of AIDS case, victims' being homosexuals caused the idea that strong precautions must be taken against the moral corruption of the society. One of the most striking acts was the legislation of "Section 28" in 1988, which banned any local authorities promoting homosexuality or any schools teaching homosexuality as an acceptable family relationship. In his introduction to the book Alan Moore says: "My youngest daughter is seven and the tabloid press are circulating the idea of concentration camps for persons with AIDS" (1988).

All in all, rioters, strikers, Asians, black people, homosexuals, Jewish and Irish people are all collected in Larkhill Concentration Camp in the book, *V for Vendetta*. They are considered to be dangerous and harmful for the unity of the society. In fact, even the rest of the people are not safe if they do not support the government, they are too, likely to be a detainee of the camp and to be used for tests or just to be killed for no reason by the police state. For example, in the case of Ryan, he is questioned by the police illegally and forced to commit suicide even though he does not know anything about V. The fingerman, John, confesses that he knows Ryan is innocent but he suffers from a lot of stress in his life. He says; "...ANYWAY WHO'S GOING TO CARE WHAT HAPPENS TO A ZERO LIKE RYAN?"(281).

The comic novel, *V for Vendetta*, first published in 1982–83, made a great influence on the society in England and all around the world. Guy Fawkes mask has become a symbolic face of anarchism and rebellions and it is symbolically used by protesters in various events. For example, during Project Chanology's protests against the Church of Scientology in 2008. The film also inspired some of Egyptian youth during the 2011 Egyptian Revolution and Turkish youth in Gezi Protests (2013). Today, in any protesting event, riot or rebellion, it is common to see a Guy Fawkes's mask, symbolizing the freedom of individual and society.

## **1.2. *The Hunger Games***

When in an interview Collins was asked how she came up with the idea of *The Hunger Games*, she explains that at a very early age, she was interested in Roman and Greek mythology. When she was eight, she read the story of Theseus in which the people of Athens have to give seven maidens and seven youths as tributes to Minotaur who will consume them. The idea of a people who sacrifice their children for their past sins, inspires Collins while writing *The Hunger Games*. As she says in

the interview, the idea of the gladiatorial arena of President Snow is inspired by Ancient Roman history. The arena is transformed into televised competitions in Collins' hands with the help of her background in television. When the story came to her, she was channel surfing between reality TV programming and actual war coverage about Iraq and Afghan wars. She says that "One night I am sitting there flipping around and on one channel there is a group of young people competing for, I don't know, money maybe? And on the next there is a group of young people fighting an actual war" (A Conversation). Another relevance between the book and her life is that Katniss and Gale are skilled in hunting, surviving in the wild and foraging. Collins explains that her father used to tell her about his childhood. For his family, hunting was not a sport but a way of feeding themselves and he also knew a lot about edible plants.

From the release of the first book on, *The Hunger Games* trilogy has become a great success in the USA and all around the world. The first book, *The Hunger Games*, was on top-selling list for two years and the trilogy achieved Amazon milestone. The film adaptations of it has set records since the first appearance and influenced many people at all ages with its striking plot, narration, themes and motifs.

When the cultural impact of *The Hunger Games* is discussed, we need to look into the popularity of young adult literature at present. Since the beginning of this century, young adult literature has reached a mass readership all around the world. *Harry Potter* by J.K. Rowling, *The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins, *Twilight* by Stephen Meyer are the most popular ones but there are hundreds more of them. Although young adult literature has been criticised and rubished by most parents, teachers and some authors, its popularity has been growing extensively. With its popularity and great success, *The Hunger Games* deserves to be seen as a perfect model. The question of why young adult literature has become so popular is under scrutiny by Maggie Parke and Natalie Wilsonas, "Though the saga is often interpreted as a simple love story made appealing via inclusion of uber-hot vampires and werewolves, the



series (*Twilight*), like all texts capture the public imagination, is far more complicated, symbolic and ideological than is often acknowledged” (4). The evaluation of technology and uncontrolled social network leads young adults to navigate their home identity. As a dystopian young adult literature novel, *The Hunger Games*’ success reflects the cultural relevance between the reader and the book. Ashley Ann Haynes says that these dystopian texts reflect the increasing influence of virtual communities, and these shared experiences provide a foundation not only for the genre’s cultural relevance but also for a pedagogical value (5). These texts are popular with not only teenagers and young adults, they are also becoming indispensable among adult readers.

In terms of cultural impact, the theme of reality TV shows needs to be accounted for. Considering the similarity between survival shows and the arena in *The Hunger Games*, we may conclude that Susan Collins hints at the fact that the boundary between the real world, wars, violence in the streets, and those shown on TV is blurry. Thanks to rapid technological advances, today’s world is able to see the real scenes from wars. As watching a real scene from a war or any other violent battle, we are able to watch a very similar scene of a Reality TV channel. Another concern is how reality TV shows influence adolescents; with their clothes, manners and styles. The characters in these shows are models for young people and that connotes the question of commodification, consumerism and capitalism in today’s world. Katniss is sixteen years old, her clothes, strength, intelligence, and beauty serve as a model for his society and the readers. Her coming-of-age process reflects the life of a participant of a Reality TV show.

Allison Layfield bases the differences between Reality TV and previous television viewing practises on two features of it; one is the element of “reality”, the other is its use of viewer participation by voting. In terms of reality, the contestants are selected from the audience that gives the sense of possibility of being a hero or a heroine. Closeness and immediacy of being powerful, attractive and a celebrity make these shows very popular among the viewers. The contestants are selected from among ordinary people, just like us. It does not seem so unlikely to be a part of that imaginary world as you do not have to be a professional actor. Layfield says that

“Unlike the stars of fictional television shows, Reality TV stars are not actors. Part of the Reality TV game’s appeal is the democratic selection of contestants” (2). Katniss undergoes a complete transformation from being a suffering coal miner’s child and oppressed citizen of the Capitol to an idol and leader of all districts. Thus, the reader and/or the viewer puts themselves in her place.

The second feature of Reality TV is that viewers can participate in it actively by voting for the contestants. Audience is transformed from being passive to more active participants. They are able to control the show and take the initiative to direct the process. This feature of Reality TV removes the distance between the viewer and the idol and thus, an interactive relationship is set between them. As we consider the sponsors in *The Hunger Games*, not only the people of Capitol, but also the people from the districts are able to participate in the games. The people of District 11 can express their sympathy by sending a loaf of bread to Katniss. The more sponsors a contestant has, the more comfortable supplies he/she has; like food, medicine or weapon. The surveillance and manipulation of the society becomes easier by this participation. As Mark Andrejevic says in his book, *Reality TV: The Work of Being Watched*, “(...)viewers can be more effectively manipulated via the promise of interactivity” (165).

It seems that, Collins’s using the motif of Reality TV is one of the main elements of the book to make it more popular among young readers and viewers since in our age, the boundaries between displayed fiction and reality are more blurry.

In both books, *The Hunger Games* and *V for Vendetta*, televised wars are used for the maintenance of the fear and indirectly the oppression. In *The Hunger Games*, Capitol shows the ruins of District 13 on the screens very often and emphasizes the importance of being obedient to the Capitol. It says that if you rebel against them, your fate will be the same as of the people in District 13. Thus, the government finds an effective way of reasoning their punishment. The people in District 13 rebel

against the government and lose, their district becomes a ruin. Thus, this event happens to be an ideal tool in President Snow's hands. The first televised war was the Vietnam War. The United States gained the public support by televising the war, showing the preparations of the soldiers for the war, advertising them as heroes of the country. However, all this support faded away after the showing of a war scene which pictures the murder of innocent people by American soldiers. According to Michael Mandelbaum, "The United States lost the war because it was televised" (157). Because the government lost the public support and then had to withdraw its troops to gain the power again. And then in the post-Cold War era The United States intervened in Somalia, Iraq and Bosnia. Mandelbaum says that "The United States was drawn into each place to alleviate the suffering of civilians, suffering that television brought into America's living room. In all three countries the heart of the mission was to feed starving people" (4). *V for Vendetta* starts with a news report; The Voice of Fate broadcasts the weather forecast then the riots, followed by the productivity reports (good news), and finally, it gives the news about the queen's appearance at an opening ceremony and her clothes. In *The Hunger Games*, the games, Katniss and Gale's images, their love affair and interviews are shown to the public throughout the novel. However, the news of uprising can be watched by only mayors of the districts. Both Moore and Collins use the influence of media on society in their novels. Jean Baudrillard sees this as an antitheatre and says that "More and more information is invaded by this kind of phantom content, this homeopathic grafting, this awakening dream of communication" (80). In both novels, we can see plenty of news, they are meant to give some intended messages to the society and they are aimed to influence every individual of the government's ideal society. This variety of the news appears to have the aim of preventing individuals from revival and uprising. Much energy is put in the production of these shows; in *The Hunger Games*, the struggle to dress up Katniss and Peeta and their trumped up love affair, and in *V for Vendetta*, the struggle to verify the news and to keep the voice alive. Baudrillard likens this social system to a closed circuit trick and according to him, to maintain this system, it is crucially important to manipulate the news constantly. In this way of presenting the news it is possible to distract the listeners from searching the meaning. According to him, our culture is captured by mass

media, signs and symbols. Baudrillard asserts in his essay, “The Hyper-realism of Simulation”, that “reality itself is hyper-realistic (...) Now the whole of everyday political, social, historical, economic reality is incorporated into the simulative dimension of hyperrealism; we already live out the ‘aesthetic’ hallucination of reality” (1019). As a result of systematic simulation, our culture comes to a state in which reality and fantasy are indistinguishable. By utilising of symbols, the reality is replaced by hyper-reality.

## 2) LITERARY HISTORY OF DYSTOPIAN FICTION

The term dystopia is popularly defined as anti-utopia and is coined by British philosopher, John Stuart Mill in 1868 in his speech criticizing the governmental policy. In literature, dystopian fictions depict a society which suffers from poverty, squalor and brutality by an oppressive government. Since very little difference can be seen between utopian and dystopian fiction, one cannot be fully understood without studying the other. Both dystopian and utopian fiction depict the flaws of humanity, and writer’s intend is to lead the readers and society to imagine, discuss and finally find the way of establishing ideal societies. The first utopian text in literature is *Republic* by Plato, which discusses an ideal society and gives the hope of a stable, just, secure and happy life by giving the power to philosophers. Then we see *Utopia* by Thomas More, which projects the similar society through conversations by giving the reader the sense of possibility of establishing an ideal social system. *Utopia* fosters later utopic works whereas dystopian fiction is a more recent genre and seen as a reversal of it. Utopias are imaginary good places, not just about happy people living there but more about just societies. Utopian societies are created in order to show the social, political, economical flaws of the present. Dystopias are derived from the same flawed, unjust societies, but on the contrary, the way of picturing of this ideal society is exaggeration of bad places as Erika Gottlieb states in her book:

While the mirror of utopian fiction functions as an enthusiastic invitation to us as denizens of the flawed world of reality to enter the unflawed one, the darkmirror of the dystopian fiction functions as a deterrent, a warning that we should not allow the still curable illness of our present world to turn into the abhorrent pathologies of the world of the future(2001: 27).

In dystopian fiction no salvation is projected, thus the reader is feared and urged to take precautions. An alarming narrative of the living conditions of the society and ruling person or organisation is one of the distinctive features of dystopian fiction. The people in both fiction are regimented, centralized and confined to a remote island, a mountain or a place which is protected or isolated from outside world.

When we look at the narration of utopian fiction, we see classical dialogues, traveller's tales and a guided tour of an ideal society. The story pictures a political and social alternative to the real one and we can trace the reflections of the flawed, corrupted system of the writer's own time. Using dialogues as a narrative technique stimulates the reader to think about and question the real society of his/her own and the possibility of establishing a perfect society in future. However, there are some problems with the narration of utopian fiction which bring about the loss of popularity of them in literary history. Chris Ferns states: "While utopian fiction may have the potential to open up wider horizons, to suggest the sheer extent of the possible, its effect is often impoverishing rather than enriching" ( p.4 ). According to him, this effect is caused by the construct of utopian writing in which the writer prescribes the solution and offers a fulfilment instead of opening up a space for imagination. This authoritarian narrative is stated by Ferns as, "The vast majority of utopias written prior to the twentieth century (*News from Nowhere* being a notable exception) conform to this pattern, portraying utopian society as something to be imposed on humanity in its own best interest"(p.14). He sees the fundamental characteristic of utopian fiction as some degree of persuasive intent which makes

utopian fiction subjective, static, and less alarming when compared to dystopian fiction.

Conversely, in dystopian fiction, the reader is shocked by a nightmare and in the end, there is no fulfilment. Thus the writer provides the reader with a fresh look, and stimulates imagination. Therefore, the intent of warning the reader becomes more effective and permanent. The traditional authoritarian and prescriptive narration of utopias was followed by many writers and some modifications were seen until the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. However, changing political and cultural dynamics of societies, narrative models and more individualistic approach of the modern world brought the genre of anti-utopia or dystopia in literature. Ferns bases the reason of this on political aspect and states: “The realities of modern dictatorship have made enthusiasm for the traditional model hard to sustain-and this has in turn given rise to both reaction against, and rethinking of the premises of the traditional utopia” (p.15). This rethinking of traditional utopia caused more alarming trends which transforms the dream into nightmare in modern era. Thus, modernist and postmodernist approaches and technological progress inspire dystopian fiction, which focuses on individual in society rather than on ideal order of society. Another difference between the utopian and dystopian fiction is that, unlike utopias, dystopian societies reflect the society of its own time more directly using more implications and cultural relevance. In this way, dystopian fiction provides the reader with a more realistic perspective. With the reflections of current societal dynamics, the reader is alarmed against a more possible future nightmare.

The twentieth century is the age of dystopian fiction. Though some dystopic elements can be traced in many earlier novels, the first complete dystopian novel appears in 1924, when Eugene Zamiatin’s *We* was first published in English. Many later dystopian novels are said to be influenced by this novel. The major dystopian novels of the twentieth century may be considered as *We* (1924) by Zamiatin, *Brave New World* (1932) by Aldous Huxley, *Animal Farm* (1945) and *1984* (1949) by

George Orwell. Then in postmodern era, *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985) by Margaret Atwood, *V for Vendetta* (1988-89) by Alan Moore and finally in 2009-10-11 the trilogy of *The Hunger Games* by Susan Collins became the major dystopian novels of our age.

In *We* by Zamyatin, the story is constructed on "One State", which is a depiction of Soviet Government, in *Brave New World*, Huxley's 'The World State' represents the possible bad future of the current society, and in *1984* by George Orwell, "Oceania" is a place, where TV is used to control the society and individualism is prohibited by one oppressive government. When we look at *V for Vendetta*, it can be observed that the current issues of the society like economic recession and current concern of nuclear winter are used and reflected to prove the cultural relevance of the book. In *The Hunger Games*, using the themes of reality TV shows, high consumerism and technology and globalization give the sense of closeness of the feared future.

Another important element of dystopian fiction is the struggle of unmasking the oppressive leader. The protagonist tries to reveal the tyranny of the leader throughout his/ her tragic journey. Gottlieb, citing Hungarian essayist Béla Hamvas, says:

Throughout the nineteenth century, the world awaited a secular Messiah to redress the ills created by the Industrial Revolution in a double incarnation: first as science, which was to create the means to end all poverty, and second as socialism, which was to end all injustice. By eagerly awaiting the fulfilment of these promises, the twentieth century allowed the rise of a false Messiah: state dictatorship (p.6)

Soviet Revolution in 1917 and Lenin brought the hope of justice and equality in the society. The hope was the expectations of a utopian just society. However, later on as Gottlieb states Stalin and his bloc's dictatorship and their using Marx and Engels's communist discourse as a camouflage to cover the tyranny and oppression became a

struggle of unmasking in Zamiatin's dystopia, *We*(6). It became a task for the writers to reveal the truth under the mask, in other words, writers started to reflect the reverse of utopian ideals in their books, which emerged as dystopian fiction. Thus, the twentieth century became a fruitful era for especially political satirists. The struggle of the protagonist for freedom throughout the novel results in another disaster. Any attempt to find a way of salvation is in vain and he/she becomes aware of the fact that there is no salvation or utopia. In dystopian societies, common features of the oppressive governments or dictators are destroying the past or manipulating the history in order to dictate their system, provide obedience and create an atmosphere of disillusionment. In *1984*, the ministry of the truth manipulates the society by burning documents and changing archives. In *Brave New World*, the protagonist, John reads Shakespeare, which is an unacceptable behaviour in the society and that behaviour resembles V's keeping the books by Shakespeare in the book, *V for Vendetta*, and Katniss's remembering a song that his father had taught her. The struggle of keeping the connection with the past is another common feature of dystopian novels. The protagonist sometimes tries to keep a diary like Winston in *1984*. He naively tries to keep his ties with the past and knows that if he lost this connection, he would accept the doctrines and be a part of the system. Then V's keeping the records of good music, films and books of good art in *V for Vendetta*, is another example of sticking to history. Sometimes the protagonist tries to keep a memory or a symbol of the past in his/her mind, like Katniss's song, "The Hanging Tree". Even a song is adequate to save the sense of past and individualism. Holding onto the past seems to be the only way of being aware of what is happening in the present and strengthens the protagonist against the tyranny which is in a constant struggle of manipulating the past. The protagonist is sometimes isolated from the society, sometimes in danger of being tortured, killed or transformed into a zombie by the power. In dystopian societies, controlling history is vitally important for the government or the ruling class as when they can control the past, they can direct the future too. Thus, in order to achieve this domination, controlling the history of peoples has become the common feature of dystopian novels. While doing this, the oppressive government is supposed to destroy privacy and create the atmosphere of fear and disillusionment.



Disappointment with general conditions of life in the late nineteenth and twentieth century became the main source of protagonist's tragedy in dystopian literature. Later on, Hitler and his one state dictatorship, also American all-powerful tyranny were reflected in dystopian novels satirically. As a common feature in all dystopian novels, satire peaks in *V for Vendetta* since it takes the historical, terrorist figure of Guy Fawkes as a hero. Bonfire Night has been celebrated for centuries and is an English state commemoration symbolizing the survival of the power from treason. The writer, Alan Moore, inspired by this event, gives double warnings to the society and the government of his own time by parodying this. Another example is that, In *The Hunger Games*, the economical inequality is portrayed at a reception, which is given by President Snow, where the guests vomit during the meal in order to continue to eat whereas the rest of the society suffer from hunger and poverty.

Parody is another common feature of dystopian fiction and combination of it with satire makes it more efficient. According to Ferns, using direct form of parody or rebuttal as a challenge to the traditional utopian ideal is not only seen in the late nineteenth and the twentieth century and he distinguishes this period of dystopian narration by stating that, "Yet, it is only the twentieth century that dystopian fiction, combining a parodic inversion of the traditional utopia with satire on contemporary societies (...)" (105).

### **3) DYSTOPIAN THEORY**

An interest in dystopian novels has been renewed with the wake of phenomenon of *The Hunger Games* and *V for Vendetta*. Captivating characteristic of this literature offers opportunities to analyze and compare our own modern world with the depicted society in these novels. As Raffaella Baccolini and Tom Moylan state "(...)the dystopian imagination has served as a prophetic vehicle, the canary in a cage, for writers with an ethical and political concern for warning us (...)" (2).

The novels, *We, Brave New World* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four* represent the canonical or classical dystopian fictions. They reflect the undesirable, terrible future that could be if the actual way of living conditions continued. This dystopian tide turns into a utopian revival with the sociopolitical conditions of the late 1960s and 70s. Writers brought the critical utopia onto the stage, whose main concern is to create awareness of the limitations of traditional utopian writing. In order to express the chaos and change, they focus on the conflict between the imaginary society and the present. This tendency comes to an end in the 1980s, and science fiction writers take the dystopian tendency in their hands and begin to write critical dystopias. Raffaella Baccolini explains this turn as “Since the conservative reaction of the 1980s and the triumph of free market liberalism of the 1990s, utopia has been both attacked and co-opted. It has been conflated with materialist satisfaction and thus commodified and devalued” (518). Conservative turn of the 1980s begins to be recognized in everyday life and social structure. Thus, some writers begin to use dystopian narrative to reflect the social, economic and cultural realities and silencing of the societies with more flexible writings and maneuvers. Jean-François Lyotard brought the term “grand narratives” (meta-narratives), which mean the narratives of large scale philosophies and theories of the world, into prominence in 1984 and he defines the postmodern as the time when these grand narratives that are produced by power structures are not trustworthy. In his book, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* (1979), he claims that postmodern is an “incredulity towards meta-narratives” (7). In postmodern literature, writers exhibit an imagination that grand narratives have lost their meanings and they use these narratives in their writings in an ironical, mocking or parodical way. As we can see in *V for Vendetta*, anarchism is used to confuse the readers who search for meanings in a chaotic atmosphere of the time. When we consider Bonfire Night, which has been celebrated for centuries to celebrate the defeat of terrorism in the mask of Guy Fawkes, and the depiction of this event in the book, we may come to the conclusion that, grand narratives and common beliefs are overturned in the postmodern literature to shock the readers. Keith Booker states that “In the imagination of the modern skeptic, it is much easier to visualize nightmares than dreams of the future” (4). The possibility of utopia became a fear for us since, according to him, if we believe in utopias, we must believe that men can

control and change the world with their reasons. Booker points at Roger C. Elliot's studies on the history of utopia in which he asserts that "Utopia is a bad word today not because we despair of being able to achieve it but because we fear it. Utopia itself (in a special sense of the term) has become the enemy" (89). Many postmodern dystopian writers believe that it is impossible to locate a singular meaning, and that literature should depict the ironies, paradoxes, conflicts and absurdities of the world.

At "The eighteenth Annual Conference of the Society for Utopian Studies" in November 1993, critics discuss the new dystopias of the 1980s and 1990s, and here, Lyman Tower Sargent emphasizes the necessity of a reconsideration of the concept. In his essay "The Three Faces of Utopianism Revisited", he states that politically engaged texts are both dystopias and utopias and suggests that these new works might be considered as "critical dystopias". Thus a mixture of dystopian and utopian elements can be recognised in many works classified as dystopia. As a dystopian work, *V for Vendetta*, contains utopian elements as we see at the end of the book in which people rebel against the oppressive government and they take action to establish their utopic, free society. Similarly, in *The Hunger Games*, District 13 represents the dream world throughout the book. Although in the end, this utopic world turns out to be another nightmarish society, the new world shows improvement in terms of equality and freedom. Baccolini and Moylan state that concrete (traditional) dystopias have always worked between utopian and anti-utopian positions and they say that the recent dystopias are different from the traditional ones as the recent dystopias reflect a more critical way of thinking. They assert that "(...) the new dystopias not only critique the present triumphal system but also explore ways to transform it that go beyond compromised left-centrist solutions" (8). Therefore, these new dystopias live up the links between imagination, utopia and awareness in our social and political lives.

Sargent defines phenomenon of utopianism as "social dreaming" and explains that "the dreams and nightmares that concerns the ways in which groups of people arrange their lives and which usually envision a radically different society than the one in which the dreamers live" (3). However, he adds that not all are radically

different, and that for some people at any time, they are basically familiar. According to Moylan and Baccolini “(...) dystopia shares with eutopia the general vocation of utopianism”(5). And they state the difference between dystopia and utopia as dystopia having specific formal strategies to achieve this vocation. One strategical difference is the plot in which dystopian texts unlike utopian ones usually open in a nightmarish world, depict an after disaster society but in typical utopian texts, a traveller goes on a journey to a utopic land and compares it with his own society. In *V for Vendetta*, the story takes place in a post-war society in England. When Evey remembers her childhood, she mentions an ecological disaster that the war brings about. Then the fascist groups take control and oppression begins. In *The Hunger Games*, the city of Panem rises out of its ashes after disasters, wars, droughts and storms. Frederic Jameson sees utopian texts as “nonnarrative and without a subject-position”, he expresses that dystopian texts focus on a subject or a character (56). The story is weaved around one specific character who at first accepts the conditions in which he/she lives then confronts the reality of the terrible situations surrounding him/her. Baccolini and Moylan, agreeing with Jameson, see a more totalizing and deeper narration in the dystopian form since it contains a counter narrative form. Two narrative forms give the reader a fresh look when exploring alternative ways of social structures to his/her own society. One form is through the construction of hegemonic order, the other is through the resistance of the protagonist. This hegemonic order is based on consent of the society. Baccolini and Moylan point at Antonio Gramsci’s notion of the “manufacture of consent” and state that to maintain consentment, definite forces are necessary. In dystopian fiction these forces are mostly material forces of the economy, state apparatus, discursive power and interpellation of subjects. Keith Booker points out the relevance between the theoretical studies of languages and dystopian literature and asserts that “Dystopias, in short, tend to be informed by what (Mikhail) Bakhtin calls ‘authoritative’ language-language that can brook no questioning or disagreement” (19). In dystopian fictions this authoritative language is acquired by the society and it becomes their own, and so persuades them to obey the reign of the hegemonic power without questioning it.

Booker sees “defamiliarization” as the main literary strategy of dystopian literature and states that “by focusing their critiques of society on imaginatively distant settings, dystopian fictions provide fresh perspectives on problematic social and political practises that might otherwise be taken for granted or considered natural and inevitable” (3). The term “defamiliarization” was coined by Russian literary theorist Victor Shklovsky. In his famous essay “Art as Technique” he sees the purpose of art as to renew perception: “The purpose of art is to impart the sensation of things as they are perceived and not as they are known. The technique of art is to make objects unfamiliar, to make forms difficult, to increase the difficulty and length of perception (...)” (1965: 18). Dystopian writings make the reader unfamiliar to the concept and so observe the dystopian world in the writer or narrator’s view. Thus, many dystopian works are set in the future or a remote place from the contemporary society. In this respect, science fiction and dystopian fiction overlap. Critic Darko Suvin’s theory: “cognitive estrangement” which is the major strategy of science fiction, is parallel to defamiliarization in dystopian fiction.

The similarities between science fiction (SF) and utopia or dystopia are discussed by many literary critics; for example, Suvin, who is the founder of science fiction studies, sees utopia and SF as inseparable and defines utopia as the “sociopolitical subgenre of science fiction” in his book, *Metamorphoses of Science Fiction* (1979). Booker agrees on the association of dystopia and SF, and defines the difference between them as “But in general dystopian fiction differs from science fiction in the specificity of its attention to social and political critique” (4).

Erika Gottlieb sees double impetus in dystopias for the writers; one is satire, in which the writers’ purpose is to reveal the cruelty of dictatorship, the other is tragedy, in which the aim is to express the disillusionment and the loss of faith. The major component of dystopian writing is the fear of possible totalitarian regimes and the

projection of this frightening future. *We*, *Brave New World*, *Nineteen Eighty Four*, *Fahrenheit 451*, and *The Handmaid's Tale* are all political satires. In this sense, *V for Vendetta* is a political satire as it reflects the economical, political and cultural upheaval of the time in Britain. When we consider *The Hunger Games*, it clearly depicts the social, cultural and political chaos not only in the US but also all around the world. Booker claims that, the development in science in the last century shows the inability of humanity to control its environment and giving the second law of thermodynamics as an example. He says that "If, as eighteenth-century science had suggested, the universe ran like a giant clock, the second law of thermodynamics suggested that the clock was running down and that it could not be rewound" (6). That means, there are processes and we can not dominate it and reverse it. Thus, the fear of inability to control processes made dystopian writing prominent in the nineteenth century.

Another aspect widely reflected in dystopian fiction is the concept of history. In a typical dystopian society, history is manipulated, changed and directed according to the needs of the oppressive government. Booker defines a parallelism between the notion of history in dystopian fiction and Foucault's theory of the new historicism. He claims that "one might thus argue that Foucault's vision of history directly mirrors the kind of dystopian histories depicted in dystopian fictions (...)" (24). In Foucault's vision of history, there is so much difference and no connection between the past and present, they are divorced and there is no hope for change in the future. For an individual, knowledge is never pure, it is involved with power.

Slavery and surveillance are two other major themes of dystopian fictions, and they can be identified in many works. In *V for Vendetta*, this constant surveillance is preserved via street cameras throughout the novel. The protagonists V and Evey achieve to hide from these cameras only in the Shadow Gallery. In *The Hunger Games*, the city of Capitol maintains the very similar observation of people in the city. Although the government focuses its observation on the people of Panem and

the people who live in the district are under less surveillance, during the games, it is possible for the government to watch and intervene every single movement of the tributes. Booker finds Foucault's modern society obviously dystopian by pointing to his exploration of Panopticon, which is a prison design by Jeremy Bentham in the nineteenth century where all the prisoners can be observed all the time. He suggests that "In Foucault's own rather dystopian vision of modern society, the typical citizen is constantly under surveillance in a way that differs very little in its fundamental nature from the plight of the inmate of the Panopticon" (26).

#### **4) FEMALE REPRESENTATION IN UTOPIAN AND DYSTOPIAN FICTION AND DYSTOPIAN SOCIETIES**

##### **4.1. Female Representation in Utopian and Dystopian Fiction**

Female utopias began to appear in the late nineteenth century. Before that, utopias had been mainly male dominated. Utopist male writers generally focused on the issue of universal equality not on gender, race or ethnicity. In *Utopia* for example, a patriarchal system is depicted, women are not included in education, they are in the shadow of men and they are expected to be good daughters, wives and mothers. As a humanist, Thomas Moore was particularly concerned about education and transforming it. Since he established a school in his home and educated his daughters, he is known as the first English humanist to include women in education. Yet, in his utopic world, although women are equal to men in a secular view as they can work, fight and vote, they are inferior to men in religious aspect as they are not seen as pure and valuable as men. All in all, Thomas More creates a society in which women are represented as more powerful than the women of the time in Europe. Even though some traces of equality between men and women are reflected in *Republic* by Plato, in terms of female guardians sharing the property equally, or in *Utopia* by Thomas More women's right to work and vote can be seen as feminist approaches,

female representation in fiction stays in limited frames. In *Gulliver's Travels* by Jonathan Swift, as a novel, which can be considered as utopian and dystopian in some parts, women are depicted as equal to men in terms of education. During Gulliver's travel to the land of Houyhnhnms, in part four, the master of Houyhnhnms criticises Gulliver's society for the fact that they provide different education for males and females.

As for women's representation in dystopian fiction in the twentieth century, they are generally submerged by patriarchal systems, they live under the oppression of government like men do, they are used for proliferation. In Zamyatin's *We*, society is under constant surveillance, people march in identical clothes, productivity is the most important motive of existence. In order to maintain their ideal society, women and men work and live under the same conditions, their lives are programmed by the "Table". They wake up, eat, go out and sleep at the same time. They have no names, they are identified by letters and numbers. Consonant letters are given to men and vowels to women. One of the characters, I-90 is found improbable to bear a child since she is too short and she feels humiliated for being a defected member of the society. Private life is limited to sexual relations. They are given pink cards so that they can be together and except for these limited sexual affairs, a family life does not exist. When it comes to *Herland* by Charlotte Perkins Gilman (1915), the writer turns upside down the notion of womenhood and manhood in social arena by eradicating mankind in her constructed society. Especially, when she creates a society, in which women are not inferior to men, they are physically as strong as men, skillful enough to construct their buildings and create their own language, they are smarter than men and most importantly they live in peace and quiet, she reverses the traditional role of women in the society. They do not need men in order to build their own society and live on. However, this way of women's representation does not reflect all aspects of daily life dynamics in terms of relationships between men and women, since the society is isolated from men's existence. Significantly, this ideal society is depicted by men's perspective and at the end of the book, the writer focuses on the male's reaction to this society. *Utopia* and *Herland* show similarities in terms of social



order. In both, workforce is shared equally, individuals live in equal conditions and social rules are regulated by wise people. Education is valued in both society and children are educated in an egalitarian system. A different language is a common feature of the two and also many other utopian societies. This feature gives the reader and the traveller the sense of otherness. Thus, by the help of this different language, utopian society becomes a far and enclosed paradise and ready to be explored. In terms of the awareness of women's rights, Suffragette Movement in England, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, brought about the debates on women's condition in social, political and economical arena. Naturally, literature was affected by this wave and women writers and critics started to write about and criticise the women's representation in literature. The representation of women in utopian and dystopian fiction and the first wave feminist perspective draw parallel lines in the first half of the twentieth century. First-wave feminism carries the context of industrial society, it arose in Europe and the United States in the late nineteenth century and it mainly focuses on women's rights in social issues like voting, rights for education and equal payment at work. The equality of women to men is seen mainly in the context of voting and working conditions, so in classical dystopian novels, women are represented as equal to men under the oppressive government since they are treated as reproductive parts of the system. They suffer from the same oppression and some seek freedom while some live in a state of constant obedience. Dunja M. Mohr states this situation as:

Male utopists criticized class antagonism and imagined the equality of all men, but assigned women once more to subordination, inferiority, and passivity. In male utopia, female characters are mostly restricted to the traditional role of housekeeper, child-bearer, and mother within the private sphere (2005: 22).

In *Brave New World* by Huxley, women are represented in a very similar way to the major classical dystopian fictions; they are seen as child bearers, sexual objects, house keepers and thus, inferior to men. In this novel, two different perspectives are depicted; one is the classical dystopian society where people are oppressed and

forced to believe that they are leading a perfect life, the other is the primitive, tribal life. In the former, women are subjected to sexual desire. They are kept slim and beautiful and they never get old. Unlike the traditional representation of women, in this society women are not expected to bear children, and the absence of maternal feelings and family ties lead the protagonist to the latter, tribal society in which women maintain their traditional roles. The way of life in this society is shown as more natural, freer and more satisfying for the protagonist, but when the female perspective is considered, it is not so satisfying as the female character hates living there and tries to turn back to the "World State". In *1984* by George Orwell, the only sexual role of women is to give birth to children who are educated and expected to serve the Party in the future. The relation between women and men cannot go any further than sexual intercourses. The pleasure of sex is banned by the authorities and the only aim of marriages is to give children to the Party. Women are seen equal to men in some certain aspects, like in workplace, but even here, they cannot work at higher positions than men do.

When the inspiration by the women is considered, in *We*, I-330, in *1984*, Julia inspire the protagonists. For example, Winston is able to analyse the dimensions of the oppression by the government more clearly thanks to the relation with Julia. Julia hates the Party like Winston and he thinks that they can rebel against the Party together, but when he sees that Julia is selfish and only cares about her own pleasure such as having sex with anyone she desires or her simple longings for perfume, cosmetics and looking attractive to men, he loses his hope and going further, he wants to rape her. In fact, Julia rebels against the Party with her individual freedom since having sexual affairs is banned. Two different groups of women are reflected in the book, *1984*, one is the group which are the members of the Party, the other is the proletarian women. The Party does not care as much about this group as it does about the Party members as they are not seen as a primary threat. These party members have to work hard for the Party, join the rituals, wear the same uniforms as men do and disguise all their femininity. Proletarian women are poor like the others, do their house chores, look after their children and so live in a traditional way.

Patriarchal system plays its part in the reflection of women in these three books, the female characters are inferior to men in social and political arena. They are not allowed to control their bodies and reflect their femininity. In these three books, it is clear that women are enslaved to the roles by power structures. Changing dynamics like post war social, economical, technological, cultural changings bring about deeper discussions on women's conditions in society. Second-wave feminist movements, which began in 1960s and ended in late 1980s, broadened the concept of first-wave feminism to a wide range of issues like femininity, sexuality, birth-giving, abortion rights and legal rights. In this term, many feminist dystopian writings take place like, *Baby You Were Great* by Kate Wilhelms, *Heroes and Villains* by Angela Carter, *Ice* by Anna Kavan, *The Day of the Women* by Pamela Kettle, *They* by Marya Mannes, *The Snows Are Melted, the Snows Are Gone* by Alice Sheldon and *The Ship Who Sang* by Anne McCaffrey. In these writings, feminist approaches are used and power relations between sexes are reflected by putting gender oppression in the centre in different ways. Later on, some major works of feminist dystopian fiction are published and they represent women with all feminist interests. One of them is Marge Piercy's *Woman on the Edge of Time* (1976). Both dystopian and utopian elements are interwoven in this novel as one utopic and two dystopic societies are narrated. The protagonist, Connie's own society is dystopic and there, women are oppressed by men. They are submerged, beaten, forced to prostitution or to be sexually attractive or locked up because of being "aggressive". Connie is able to travel in time and she goes to New York in the distant future. In this dystopic society, women undergo many plastic surgeries so as to be physically perfect and become artificial beauties, they are owned by men with a contract and only used for sex, when they get older, they are wiped out as they lose their functions. The vivid distinction between the poor and the rich is depicted as the rich people live in the sky and the poor ones live on earth to serve them. In the utopian society, Mattapoissett, equality between men and women is considered to be the most important aspect of a happy life. Different sexes here do not have their characteristics, they are androgynous. Motherhood is seen as the main obstacle for women to be equal with

men in the society, so women are unable to bear children since children are produced in brooders. Three volunteers, men and women, become mothers, thus they are willing to bring up children for the society. Men even can breast-feed which is the representation of the removal of the differences between men and women. Thus, the writer wipes out the difference between femininity and masculinity. A very similar representation of hybridity of sexes can be found in *The Passion of New Eve* by Angela Carter (1977). The protagonist (Evelyn), undergoes a transformation from man to woman, from superior to inferior and so he questions what being a man or a woman is. These biological transformations depicted in feminist dystopias lead readers to question how gender roles are constructed in society.

Post-modern dystopias, by putting the female at the center of the novel as protagonist, seem to shake the conventional perception of women with female characters, who are trained, fight for their rights, and become heroines. The readers of these fictions have the chance to see the oppression, hunger, poverty and insecurity from female perspectives. These female characters are usually reflected as childless or lacking family ties (Evey in *V for Vendetta*) so they have no maternal feelings. This makes them stronger in their struggle. Thus, the boundary between femininity and masculinity becomes less rigid, and traditional perception evolves from being dominated on the basis of their relation to men to an individual, who has her own voice and expresses her feelings on an equal ground. Mohr states this representation in his book as:

Thematically, feminist utopias shift the focus to female reality and to everyday life; they restructure the distribution of power within society and family and reject sex-segregated labor. They particularly emphasize gender equality, communitarian goals, decentralization, consensual decision-making, cooperation, education and ecological issues and they discard the classical utopian notion of growth and the domination of nature (1968: 24).

## 4.2.Dystopian Societies

Dictatorship is the common feature of many dystopian societies. It is born out of violence and perpetrated in every institution of the system. They are not completely lawless, they have their own laws, but since the laws and regulations of dictators function for the continuation of the system, they are far from protecting, feeding and securing individuals. As we can see in Gottlieb's definition, totalitarian regimes do not care about individuals or human being's condition. "(...) ultimately each regime aims at reducing human beings to inmates, deprived of free will, of a private consciousness and conscience, of any sense of justice" (41).

The supporters of the one man dictatorship and the system are also in danger. Once they show any resistance to the process of the system, they find themselves being questioned, tortured even executed as we see in the case of the guardian in District 12 in *The Hunger Games*. Every individual has to back up, cheer and fight for the continuation of the violence and injustice. Any inner questioning or tendency to pity cannot be acceptable. It is a matter of a moment to be defined as a traitor and put in jails, tortured or brainwashed.

Another common feature of dystopian societies is a war in the past or present, which the ruler uses as an excuse for public's lack of food, security, or financial welfare. Dictator claims to save the people and provide them with security and welfare on condition that they support him. People are usually in great need of food, energy and safety and they are claimed to have them in the future if they obey the rules. Nationalism and fascism are common ideologies of dystopian governments and they feed on it to nail their oppression, and every institution of the society is expected to serve to maintain this common goal; church, army, schools and media. In *V for Vendetta*, the bishop says in his sermon that "HELP US TO PERCEIVE THE WILES OF THE EVIL ONE AND STAND FIRM IN THEE. ONE RACE, ONE

NATION, UNITED IN THY LOVE” (53). In addition, every official speech with the leader and among the officials in the book ends with the utterance of “England prevails!”. In *The Hunger Games*, the solidarity is achieved by a constant fear of being chosen as a tribute. With annual drawings, people have the nightmare of losing their children in the games. They are obliged to sacrifice their children.

The resemblance between the actual world and the nightmarish one in dystopian fiction can vary in literature. While in *Brave New World* this degree of resemblance is low, in *V for Vendetta* and *The Hunger Games*, depicted societies seem not far from the actual world. Spycameras in homes and streets, prisonment or execution of the ones who are different and rebellious against the government, sexual commodification and abuse of children and silenced individuals in *V for Vendetta*, closely reflect the social and cultural conditions of the time in Britain as aforementioned in the historical context section of this study. When *The Hunger Games* is concerned, technological manipulation is remarkable and at first glance, it might seem far from the state of technology in today’s world. However, the exploitation of the environment and mutated animals by using high technology for the sake of the success of the games do not appear to be far from today’s technological state. Besides, at the basic level, unbalanced economical situations, in which people in the districts suffer from lack of major needs while in Capitol people enjoy the uncontrolled consumerism, centralized government and its manipulating history reflect a close connection with today’s world. Ferns states the function of this narrative as “the evident resemblances between dystopian and existing society encourage a parallel process, whereby readers are encouraged to judge their own society by the extent to which it embodies dystopian features” (109). Thanks to this close connection, the reader is able to see the reality more clearly and thus, as the main function of dystopian fiction, warning against fearful future becomes more effective in this way. In this sense, the implications of dystopian fiction are more active when compared to utopian fiction.

In dystopian societies, individual identities are mostly submerged by authorities to secure the continuation of their ideology. Marianne Sadowski states in her study “The Dystopian Novel: A Theory of Mass Culture” that,

Marxist theories concerning culture industries, ideology, hegemony, and art reception, focus on how political institutions influence and condition individuals. Post-structural and psychological theories about the panopticon, narcissism, and cultural inertia consider how state and private institutions discipline individuals and how individuals may contest mass manipulation and take responsibility to shape their lives (1997: 1).

In many dystopian fiction, people wear uniforms, do the same work, have same leisure activities and very similar lifestyles so the conformity is maintained more easily. In Huxley’s *Brave New World* clothes are colour coded, in Orwell’s *Nineteen Eighty Four*, people are forced to use “Newspeak” which is produced by the oppressive government to control their thoughts and ideas. They have also rituals which they have to participate in. In *V for Vendetta*, the uniformity is assured by the constant surveillance and media. Street cameras watch people all the time, also most of the houses contain spy cameras to record every speech. Participating in Sunday sermons is a must since otherwise they undergo the risk of being spied. This uniformity is reflected symbolically in the book by the protagonist, V. When he carries out his anarchic actions, he depicts an artistic approach; he arranges domino pieces in the shape of V and the display ends with a blast. He sees domino pieces as individuals and he says “THERE... YOU SEE THEM? STANDING WITH THEIR NUMBERSON THEIR BLANK, INDIFFERENT FACES, NUREMBERG IN MINIATURE, THE RANKS OF PAINTED, WOODEN MEN...POOR DOMINOES” (208). In *The Hunger Games*, annually held hunger games are used to maintain the oppression and obedience of people. In the districts, on reaping days, people are forced to dress up as if they are celebrating the games, but in fact they have to sacrifice their children. People seem to be in a state of lunacy. The games are

shown on huge screens in details and they are used to symbolize the power of the government. However, the main depiction of the uniformity starts on the second part of the book. Life in District 13, which is believed to have been destroyed by the Capitol years ago after the riots, reflects a complete uniformity. Everybody wears the same uniform even the leader, President Coin. Children are educated to be soldiers and everyone is obliged to live the life in a clockwork precision; when they get up at the same time, their daily schedule is marked on their arms with ink and there is no tolerance for any deviations. A precise discipline is needed for the survival of the people of District 13 who live under ground. Ferns states this as:

(...) in suppressing the emergence of individual identity in the interests of stability, security, conformity, the dystopian state clearly seeks to discourage the development of any kind of mature, adult awareness- of any form of consciousness sophisticated enough to perceive and articulate the society's limitations (1999: 114).

When the government establishes its system, any change becomes a threat for the stability. In *V for Vendetta*, V's abducting the top broadcaster, Lewis Prothero causes a real chaos and the leader says "(...) IF PROTHERO IS UNABLE TO MAKE HIS 'VOICE OF FATE' BROADCASTS AS SCHEDULED, OUR CREDIBILITY WILL SUFFER" (30). In *The Hunger Games*, every detail in the design of the games has crucial importance like costumes, the TV presentations, training and interviews. Any simple mistake in these arrangements causes an organiser's execution. In order to maintain the discipline, solidarity and uniformity in the society, the government intervenes the past. They change the details, sometimes eradicate documents, remove photographs for the sake of stability. The destruction of the past is depicted in many dystopian fictions. For example, in *Nineteen Eighty Four*, the Ministry of Truth controls the history and makes the necessary changes in accordance with the dynamics of the day. In *Brave New World*, children are not born but made in laboratories. They do not have parents, even it is a shame to utter the word "mother". In this way the government guarantees the lack of any relationship with the past. In *The Hunger Games*, the same photograph of the ruins of district 13 is shown on TV



screens all the time to warn people that if they, by any chance, think of rebel, they must remember what happens at the end.

Violence, punishment and brainwashing to maintain the discipline and authority are another important apparatuses for dictatorship in oppressed societies in dystopian fiction. In his book, *Discipline and Punish, the Birth of Prison*, Foucault discusses the differences between the traditional punishment and today's ways of punishment and brainwashing. He comments on the present ways of punishments as "The expiation that once rained down upon the body must be replaced by a punishment that acts in depth on the heart, the thoughts, the will, the inclinations" (1979: 16). In Antony Burgess's *A Clockwork Orange*, the protagonist, Alex is reformed by the doctors in the prison by applying a bio-psychological treatment, which is called "Ludovico treatment", and he is forced to watch films. A similar case is depicted in *NineteenEighty Four*, in Winston Smith's torturing instance: The torturer, O'Brian penetrates in Winston's thoughts and finally he is reconditioned. In *Brave New World*, using the hallucinogenic drug, "Soma" gives the government the opportunity to ease and reform any rebellious thought or individual. In many dystopian fictions it is applied by the officials of the government, but on the contrary, in *V for Vendetta*, it is implemented by the protagonist, V to set Evey free and make her realize the reality of her life. He imprisons her and creates a theatrical atmosphere, he acts out, tortures her and finally makes her reborn into a free world. However, in *The Hunger Games*, this brainwash is carried out by the government as in traditional dystopian fictions. President Snow has it applied in a concrete way by operating Peeta Mellark's brain and he makes him forget everything and see her love, Katniss as an enemy. A complete drainage of the brain gives the leader the opportunity of not only silencing the representative of the rebel, but also making him a weapon against the symbol of it, Katniss. Knowing that Peeta Mellark is indispensable for Katniss, the government sees him as reusable instead of killing him. By the help of high technology it is shown as possible, which gives the reader the sense of weakness and here, traditional torturing methods which are applied to the body seem to be replaced by the one upon the thought.

## 5) FEMALE REPRESENTATION IN *THE HUNGER GAMES* AND *V FOR VENDETTA*

### 5.1. Patriarchal societies

Except for feminist critical dystopias, dystopias place emphasis on the oppression, brutality and tyranny applied on the whole society. Both men and women of that society suffer from this oppression at the same level but in various ways according to their gender identities. Generally, both books *V for Vendetta* and *The Hunger Games* depict patriarchal societies. In *V for Vendetta*, a male dominated society is reflected, men's power can be observed in every scope. Women are not seen, they are silenced and seen as others. As Simone de Beauvoir says, "She is determined and differentiated in relation to a man, while he is not in relation to her; she is the inessential in front of the essential. He is the Subject; he is the Absolute. She is the Other" (5). Men have the highest positions at workplace and at important institutions of the society. Women are seen as sexual objects. When we look at Evey's mother's representation, she is a typical mother, busy with child care, house holding and she is a naive, submissive, and passive character. Her dad controls the family and takes decisions for them. Men feed their families and they are the most powerful members of all. When the behaviours of the men towards women are analysed, the patriarchal system can be observed more clearly. For instance, Mr. Almond is like a little boy playing with his toy when he threatens his wife with his gun. He points it at Mrs. Almond and says "DON'T WORRY ROSE, I DIDN'T LOAD IT, NOT TONIGHT" (71). He tortures her by threatening to abandon her in that dreadful life. She does not possess the strength to cope with the harsh and cruel conditions of life outside that bedroom. The only place for her is that bedroom to keep herself safe. It is clear that if he had not died, she would have done everything to continue this way of life. As the subject of power, Mr. Almond would not have minded even thinking about this overpowering state as he is the owner of that power. He sees her as a sexual object as he says, "IF WE DON'T SLEEP TOGETHER LIKE WE USED TO IT'S NOTHING TO DO WITH ME. MAYBE IF YOU TOOK THE TIME TO

MAKE YOURSELF MORE ATTRACTIVE...” (66). There are two different representations of women in *V for Vendetta*. In one, women are domestic and they are victimized to manage household chores and objectified to be sexually attractive for their husbands. In the other, women are obliged to prostitute themselves in the streets in order to make a living. In many ways, women are in need of men’s power to stay alive and to satisfy their needs. The case of Valerie as a lesbian is exceptional, she does not obey the rules brought about by the patriarchal system from early ages and consequently becomes the victim of the system. This lesbian relationship in the novel depicts how patriarchal system is linked with heterosexuality and how this heteronormative structure handles lesbians. Valerie goes to the resettlement camp with the rebels, the people from other races and homosexuals. Like the others, Valerie’s case is unquestionable and unacceptable while the other women are accepted as long as they are silent and obedient. According to Chrys Ingraham, heterosexuality is an organising institution and structures gender in patriarchal societies. Heteronormative view of sociosexual arrangements and regulations brings about the fact that “heterosexuality circulates as taken for granted, naturally occurring, and unquestioned, while gender is understood as socially constructed and central to the organization of everyday life” (204). Heteronormative assumptions mask how heterosexuality is constructed and naturalized and bring about the reality that homosexuals and lesbians are devalued, seen as deviant and other. Thus, Valerie and her victimization represent unthinkable discussion of heteronormative assumptions in everyday life. From the moment that she is discovered to be in a lesbian relationship, she is sentenced to death like other divergent prisoners.

When it comes to the representation of women in *The Hunger Games*, patriarchal structure of the society can be observed clearly. In District 12, while men provide the family with necessities and work in mines, women usually do child caring and household chores. Although Katniss represents a radical figure throughout the trilogy, other characters depict traditional ways of life in a typical patriarchal society. For example, Gail undertakes the masculine role of the provider and protector of his family, he devotes himself to his family. Whereas Katniss rejects the idea of having

children, he says, “I might. If I didn’t live here” (*The Hunger Games*: 11). He keeps on a proprietary approach in his relationship with Katniss. He knows that having children brings the possibility of sacrificing them to the system and he can only dream of starting a family under different circumstances. As for Katniss’s view for an ideal, happy future, the same way of thinking can be read throughout the novel, men are valuable as long as they are able to work and provide for their families. She says, “Besides, if he wants kids, Gale won’t have any trouble finding a wife. He’s good-looking, he’s strong enough to handle the work in mines and he can hunt” (*The Hunger Games*: 11). Gender roles are ascribed by the Capitol according to patriarchal norms. Women are mainly relegated to domestic area, unskilled labor or childcare, while men, as leaders of the family, provide them with major financial necessities and do more skilled work. For example, Katniss and Gale’s fathers die in the mines so the two families have to stay alive without providers. While Katniss’s mother, Mrs. Everdeen, is unable to find work or feed her daughters, Gale’s mother, Hazel Hawthorne, does the people’s laundry to make her life and bring home the bread. But even in this case, her struggle is not enough to look after her three children and so she waits her eldest son Gale to grow up and work in mines. Thus, she ends up in need for men’s power. Except for outsmarting abilities, usually physical strength and aggression become distinctive features to win in the arena of the Hunger Games. In the history of the Games, mainly the boys from the Career districts have been the survivors since they are trained in combat as killing machines. If the girls from other districts are not trained to fight, they have to own and use alternative strategies to survive just like Katniss does. In his book *Approaching the Hunger Games Trilogy*, Tom Henthorne comments that, “Female tributes, it seems, have to employ social skills in order to survive, while male tributes, particularly those that perform traditional masculinity best like Thresh and Finnick, can often go it alone” (2012:51).

Female tributes in the games have to employ feminine wiles and they have to stay away from the actual combats and be cunning. Katniss, Rue and Foxface use various strategies like stealing, hiding in trees and seducing. When we look at Clove’s attitudes towards Cato, a strong, aggressive killing machine, we could see that she

applies the right strategy by directing and managing him. Katniss also performs similar strategies and social skills like cooperating with Rue. This companionship gives her some advantages in the games like obtaining extra food supplies, analysing the camp and gaining the mercy of Thresh at the point of killing her. Throughout the novel, heteronormative impositions of Capitol force Katniss to get involved in a feign romance with Peeta. She reluctantly plays the role of his lover so as partly to gain sponsors partly to keep away from President Snow's fury and protect Gail and her family. Beauty and attractiveness are valued in the games for female tributes for better material conditions in the arena as evidenced by Katniss's words, "The Hunger Games aren't a beauty contest, but the best-looking tributes always seem to pull more sponsors" (*The Hunger Games*: 58). Girls' beauty routines last much longer than boys and they are usually painful, especially for Katniss. These routines continue even after winning the games in order to serve the expectations of the society. In terms of relationships, Katniss is forced to choose Gail or Peeta though she is unwilling to do so.

## 5.2. Gender Roles

Gender roles as constructed by social dynamics can be discussed here. The role of cultural conventions is expressed by the French philosopher, Simone De Beauvoir as "one is not born as woman; one becomes one". In her article, Monique Wittig discusses that women are "culturally imagined" (103). From the very early childhood Katniss is taught to hunt and kill by her father not to play with dolls. This way of learning contradicts with the conventional child education and constitutes her later life. In this sense, Katniss reflects a female character who grows up in the nature and experiences the case of being away from social or male gaze. She uses her body as a vehicle for her freedom and sees herself as a subject not an oppressed object. Her biological construct is not an obstacle but an advantage in her existence in the nature. However, when she goes back to the society, the hostile, oppressive

surroundings weaken her as the social expectations force her to be different from the way she is. That is why she feels herself pure and free when she hunts in the woods and desires to go there in every opportunity throughout the story. Monica Wittig studies different stages of a female's life and sees being a female as both advantageous and disadvantageous. Wittig defines the construction of gender role in her text as "(...)when women created the civilization (because of a biological disposition) while the coarse and brutal men hunted (because of a biological disposition) is symmetrical with the biologizing interpretation of the history produced up to now by the class of men" (104). The childhood of Katniss turns this historical process upside down to prove the social effect on the distinguishing femininity and masculinity. Thanks to this extraordinary education by her father, she turns out to be a feminist heroine. Although she usually depicts mild, even passive attitudes in many cases, at critical moments, she takes control and manages to survive. When it comes to the matter of following the rules of the games, she shocks everybody. For instance, during the private training sessions for the gamemakers, she loses her temper and sends her arrow to the apple in the mouth of the dead pig on the gamemakers' dining table. Her aggressive manners can be traced in the whole series. She hates her mother's passivity in building her nest, later on, she becomes a warrior to protect her sister, and goes on a quest for her identity throughout the novel. She is not brought up like Marge, the mayor's daughter, who is more conventional in the way of her dressing and her behaviours, she takes control of her life by taking the risk of losing it. This is what she does during her hunting experiences. Thus, when she becomes the volunteer in the hunger games instead of her sister, she sees the games as another hunting session. The moment she decides to be a volunteer, her intelligence and skills mark the games and this challenge becomes a never ending complicated process. She is constantly on the borderline of femininity and masculinity. When she becomes a tribute, it takes long to remake her before presented in public. Katniss is unwilling to be served as a beautiful and attractive female. She never feels herself natural whenever she is remade. When Prim says, "You look beautiful", she replies, "And nothing like myself" (*The Hunger Games*: 17). Before the tour of the victors, while waiting for the prep team she says to her mother, "The trouble will start when my prep team sees how I've let my eyebrows grow back with

in” (*Catching Fire*: 35). Her hairy legs, undone and uncared hair, bitten nails reflect her resistance against socialfeminine ideal. Evey in *V for Vendetta*, is also discontent with the ascribed role as a female. She is also reluctant to dress up like a conventional woman, get married or have children. In this sense, they are deviant characters. They are seen as a social threat by the society, since they challenge the existing order. Because of this, Katniss is forced to act like a proper female by the society and President Snow. She is expected to be physically attractive and beautiful, to get married and have children, learn sewing and other womanly skills.

In the case of Evey, she has no family ties since she has lost her father in the construction period of dystopic society too. Like Katniss, she suffers from hunger and poverty, which makes her disobey the laws of the fascist government, and leads her to prostitution, which is punishable by death. She has to do it because although she works, her income is insufficient. Besides, she feels lonely as she has no friend to share her anguish. These conditions bring Evey to the same point as Katniss, at which both are pragmatic and instinctual in order to survive. They are both victimized by an oppressive government, yet unaware of the dehumanization applied by the system.

In her struggle to feed herself, Evey comes to the point of being raped. She is naive, quiet and she lacks self-confidence so she cannot resist. By adding this rape theme to the novel, Moore reflects the violence, insecurity and male domination in his dystopian society. This sexual harassment is not the only one Evey experiences; later on, the bishop shows the same attitude towards her and in a way this trial of rape strengthens her feelings of resistance and revenge. Larry Baron and Murray A. Straus state in their analysis that: “Rape reflects patterns of male dominance that is promoted by pornographic materials; that cultural norms approving of violence increase the likelihood of rape; that is related to disorganization of society” (1989: 1). Rape also stops the communication with outer world and makes the victims silenced, and obscure her feelings, but this silence of Evey will be broken later

on by the help of V, and this event will bring her to the realization of the conditions of her life and the society which she belongs to. She undergoes a process of anagnorisis thanks to V, who maintains this process skillfully by waiting for the right time and creating a real stage of torture in a cell. The process of torturing in jail touches Evey's deepest feelings. V makes her see the real bars surrounding her by saying that "YOU ARE IN A PRISON, EVEY. YOU WERE BORN IN A PRISON. YOU'VE BEEN IN A PRISON SO LONG, YOU NO LONGER BELIEVE THERE'S A WORLD OUTSIDE" (107). At that moment, Evey's rebirth comes off so she is able to see the reality of life and becomes free.

### **5.3. Domestic Violence**

Domestic violence is depicted related to patriarchal system of this dystopic society through the case of Mr. and Mrs. Almond. Many secular or religious feminists and egalitarians claim that, the major cause of domestic violence is patriarchy. Michael P. Johnson asserts that, "A large number of families suffer from occasional outbursts of violence from either husbands or wives or both, while a significant number of other families are terrorized by systematic male violence enacted in the service of patriarchal control" (1995:283). She is inferior to her husband; her husband, Derek has the right to batter her, humiliate her, assault her and he constantly prevents her from speaking. He performs his traditional gender role and justifies his behaviours with lack of sex. Since he feels himself as a lost identity in the society, he uses his physical strength against his wife in the struggle of gaining or maintaining his power. When it comes to Mrs. Almond's reaction against this perpetual violence, as a financially dependent individual, she is weak, and incapable of expressing her feelings even to another person, she is naive and passive under the strict applications of the patriarchal system. She has nothing to do except for complete obedience. Yet, she thinks she still loves him. After her husband is killed by V and she is left without money by the government, she finds herself in the streets using her body as a



sexual object. Her case makes her realize the cause of her tragedy and she finds the leader as the target of her revenge. Consequently, she blames the leader, Adam Sutler, for her husband's death and all her misery, and in the end, she kills him. Zach Rolfs explains this representation as:

This gives the impression that men are entitled to sex and can use force to obtain it. In both this example and Evey's rapes, men are portrayed as tools that must have sex and have no self-control while the females are helpless against the men. These interactions create a strong message about the society that men require sex and that gender violence is acceptable to achieve it (2013).

In this men-powered society, women are in the service of men's desire and they have no voice. Actually, men, women and children are all silenced under the tyranny of the leader. The relationship between Helen and Conrad is, on the other hand, reflects the other version of common couple violence. Here, Helen is the dominant character of the couple. Similarly to Mr. Almond, she seeks for power, but as a weapon she uses her sexuality and lust. She says, "YOU KNOW, YOU'RE QUITE A SUCCESSFUL YOUNG MAN, CONRAD. IF YOUR SUCCESS WASN'T ENTIRELY DUE TO MY EFFORTS, I MIGHT EVEN FANCY YOU"(199). Conrad becomes the victim of her sexual attractiveness while she humiliates and assaults him. It seems that she is more cunning than her spouse.

#### **5.4. Sexual Objectification**

Physical violence applied to women's body in the cases of Evey, Rosemary, Valerie in *V for Vendetta*, and Katniss and other women from Capitol in *The Hunger Games*, is related to sexual objectification of the female body in patriarchal societies. In both

societies, females are evaluated in accordance with their physical appearance and sexualities, disregarding their personality. As Barbara L. Fredrickson and Tomi-Ann Roberts state in their article, “Women’s bodies are looked at, evaluated, and always potentially objectified” (1997:175). Women constantly feel looked at by sexualized male gaze from early ages and see themselves through others’ eyes. The sexualized gaze affects daily experiences of female in various ways. According to Fredrickson and Roberts, sexual objectification causes “the emotion of shame, the emotion of anxiety, peak motivational states and the awareness of internal bodily states” (181). Besides, there is a noticeable connection between sexual violence and sexual objectification as Fredrickson and Roberts state “(...) sexual objectification is a key component of sexual violence” (183). The attempt of rape and killing Evey causes a traumatic effect on her and prevents her from integrating herself into life. Very similarly, Rosemary behaves cautiously in order to maintain her safety and she is unable to resist her husband’s battering her. When her husband dies, even though she is unwilling to do, she accepts to be with Dascombe to get a shelter and provider for herself, just as Evey does with Gordon. In *The Hunger Games*, self-objectification as a result of sexual objectification is depicted hyperbolically through the women from Capitol. They are constantly careful about their appearance disregarding the brutality they serve, they use make up and they are dressed up in a strange manner in Katniss’s view. Katniss also has to adapt herself to the case of sexual objectification in visual media. She suffers from wearing high-heeled shoes, a flaming dress, and remaking sessions before televised interviews and victory tours in accordance with the expectations of the Capitol and districts’ peoples. She has to bear the role of sexy warrior in their gaze. As another way of handling sexual objectification, women can use their body as a weapon to obtain power, as in the case of Helen. Attractive women are able to gain social and economical success provided that they use this properly. When women are victimized by sexual objectification, they are alienated from their bodies as can be seen in the cases of Evey and Katniss. In both books, Evey and Katniss gain self consciousness in the process that they are not expected to behave and dress like conventional females do.

In terms of women's representation in the novel, the case of Valerie deserves to be mentioned. She symbolizes sexual freedom of an individual as a lesbian from an early age. She studies drama and acts in films, but when the new fascist government criminalizes homosexuality, she is taken to a concentration camp and killed there in a drug test. She writes her story on a toilet paper in the process and it inspires V and contributes his transformation psychologically, and later on, it leads him to protest the brutality. In the same way, her tragedy helps Evey become stronger and realize the violence directly against her and the people of her society by making her transformation process more effective. Therefore, Valerie's case becomes one of the main inspirations of rebellion. Using her tragedy as the heart of resurrection in the book attracts attention to the reality of existence of diversity in a society and reaction of the power against this diversion. The oppressive power constructs its society with laws and regulations that do not allow any deviations since uniformity is the key element to keep people under control. The construction of sexuality, sexual practices and gender roles in a society has an important role in the patriarchal system. Thus, in order to maintain the male hegemony and oppress women, hegemonic power has to repress any deviant practice. Michel Foucault expresses this link between sexuality and power in his book, *The History of Sexuality* as; "All the longer, no doubt, as it is in the nature of power—particularly the kind of power that operates in our society—to be repressive, and to be especially careful in repressing on useless energies, the intensity of pleasures, and irregular modes of behaviour"(9). Talking about sex, having pleasures through sexual practices and any deviance from heteronormative structure are seen as useless energies by power structures since according to these power structures, these practices cause the reduction of productivity and inspire rebels. When a dystopian society such as Moore's is considered, Valerie's tragedy exemplifies this oppression clearly. Evey's femininity comes to the stage at the point of her encounter with Gordon. In V's Shadow Gallery and Gordon's house, as a sixteen-year-old unprotected girl, she seeks a shelter. She becomes his lover without any hesitation since in her case, it does not matter if she really loves him or not. In fact, her point is to be safe in a peaceful family atmosphere. When her dreamlike situation in the Shadow Gallery after her attempt to kill the murderers of Gordon is

considered, her search for safety and protection can be observed clearly. Evey's attitude reflects her unconditional obedience to the power.

In the books, *V for Vendetta* and *The Hunger Games*, the using of roses as a symbol of hatred and violence distorts generally accepted beliefs. Conventionally, roses symbolize nature, purity, peace and love. In a way, these values have been associated with femininity whereas masculinity is rather reflected as rough, unemotional, physically strong and protective. President Snow's white roses symbolize the revenge to be taken by Katniss though. He always wears a white rose on his jacket to hide the blood smell coming from his mouthsores. These roses have a very strong scent since they are genetically enhanced. His persistently sending white roses to Katniss has the aim of reminding her of his power. Contrary to his expectations, they drive Katniss to be more focused on her revenge. Other flowers like dandelions, primroses, rue and wild flowers have various meanings as they trigger nostalgic sentiments. In the Shadow Gallery, V keeps roses and they symbolize the purity, nostalgia, and beauty which is eradicated from the culture.

## **5.5. Nostalgic Sentiments**

The feeling of nostalgia is intensively reflected in two books and deserves to be studied since both girls Evey and Katniss represent young women in modern times longing for the peace and warmth of the past experiences. They perpetually long for their lost homes, past and childhood memories. In dystopian or apocalyptic fiction, a primary focus on emotions helps the reader to understand and imagine the feelings of the protagonist in the reflected static, uniform culture. It also makes the reader compare the present with the nightmarish future especially in dystopian writing, in post apocalyptic settings. Nostalgia is usually considered as having a rehearsal effect on looking at future. However, as Molly Sublett asserts in her thesis "(...) nostalgia

is capable of performing” (11). The feeling of nostalgia motivates the protagonist to act and shape the future with its challenging effect. In *V for Vendetta*, Evey has a happy family life with her parents before the war and everybody she loves is taken away from her. When she realizes this reality and that she has been a slave all through her life, she gets rid of her fears and feels the freedom. In V’s portrait, past life is stored in The Shadow Gallery; painting, books, films, juke-box and all beautiful music recordings represent a captured and forgotten beautiful life. The role of nostalgia is observed more clearly in *The Hunger Games* when District 12 is destroyed by Capitol and people are forced to find a new settlement. They become refugees and thus lost identities in District 13. According to Melinda Milligan, nostalgia has an important role in regaining identity. She argues that “displacement leads to identity discontinuity and nostalgia provides one way of maintaining and regaining identity continuity” (2003:1). Even though the people of District 12 are eagerly welcomed by the people of District 13, they do not feel themselves at home instead they do not feel welcomed or part of the society. However, this is not a major consideration for them since they have to care about their safety. They are in shock as a result of losing their city and their beloved ones, and they continue to live like robots in an unknown district in perfect obedience. When we look at the three characters, Katniss, Prim and their mother, we can see this loss of identity more clearly. Once Katniss goes back to their house after the destruction of District 12, she takes some remembrances: “a photo of my parents on their wedding day, a blue hair ribbon for Prim, the family book of medicinal and edible plants” (*Mockingjay*, 13). When she walks around the house, she luckily meets Prim’s cat, Buttercup, and she picks him too, then she takes her father’s hunting jacket before she leaves. These remembrances would comfort her family and make them feel stronger while adapting themselves into their new home. Therefore, having the cat with her, Prim tries to keep something which reminds her of the past and helps her dealing with the challenges of her new life. She feels more willing to adapt herself to the conditions in District 13. For their mother, the medicinal book has a crucial effect because before getting married she was an apothecary, very good at healing and she lived in a better area but gave up everything just to get married to Mr. Everdeen. Tragically, when she loses her husband in the mine explosion, she gets into a long-lasting depression. She

gets unresponsive and does not take the responsibility of looking after her children. Therefore, Katniss has to take over the parental role. For Mrs. Everdeen, the past is like a dim light, but the medicinal book and healing injuries from the war enliven this light and makes her alive again. So, the book has the role of a trigger to be more active in life and to struggle with the difficulties to face. When it comes to the feeling of regret, Katniss blames herself for all these troubles, she gets into a stage of losing her mind in that she has to remind herself of even her personal details. So as to make her attentive in their fight against Capitol, they let her go home and remember the order of the events. At this stage, finding her father's hunting jacket reminds her of past memories. She takes it and starts to go hunting with her partner, Gail, just like they do in the past. So, the jacket creates nostalgic sentiments on her and carries a healing effect.

## **6) CHARACTERIZATION OF LEADERS IN *THE HUNGER GAMES* AND *V FOR VENDETTA***

### **6.1. Silenced Victims of Oppression**

The definition and nature of oppression consist of some puzzles which are presented by Ann E. Cudd in her article as,

(1) can a social structure be oppressive if the situation that is alleged to be oppressive comes about as the result of the voluntary, informed, rational choice of the allegedly oppressed, and (2) why do oppressed people sometimes appear to join in their oppression or reinforce it? (2008:1).

As for the first question, when the social structure of the society in *V for Vendetta* is analysed, in the construction of the depicted society, there is not a collective, voluntary choice since, after the war, the leader takes the control of the country by force. The conditions of their lives are unbearable. They lack food as “THE WEATHER HAD DESTROYED ALL THE CROPS” (27). They get sick because floods fill in the sewers and there are riots all around. Everyone waits for a leader who will rescue them. Under these circumstances, their primary choices for the leader seem to be irrational and unconscious. Although black people, Pakistanis and homosexuals seem to be the first victims of the discrimination and oppression, the rest of the people also undergo a physical and psychological oppression. Evey, like many other children, is forced to work in a factory at the age of twelve when his father is taken by the fingermen and never seen again due to the fact that he was in a socialist group. In the process, people are forced to be silent and obedient with the fear of the worse. Very similarly, President Snow takes over the power after the uprising of District 13 in *The Hunger Games*, though it is not given in detail how he takes the power. But at the stage of accepting the oppressor, the same attitude is clearly depicted in both books, in that people are not willing to be ruled by them. Living in the same conditions, both societies have the same fear of being killed. Thus, in the beginning, both societies behave instinctually and try to survive. At this level, there is no choice but an ultimate collective obedience. Here, they are not judgeable by their choices as Cudd claims, “Because their choices are coerced, their choosing does not justify the conditions that result from their choices” (3). However, when the power uses its force to continue this oppression against the society, people come to the verge of uprising and seek freedom of choice after a long period of silence. The applied oppression on the society often has common features depending on the circumstances although it can be seen as different. Cudd lists four criteria of oppression in her article as, “First, oppression must involve some sort of physical or psychological harm” (5). In *V for Vendetta*, people are forced to work and live in insufficient conditions in terms of food, safety and health services. In need of food, women are coerced to prostitute, nobody is in safe since they are under constant surveillance, so they are forced to keep silent and sustain at least what they have in their hands at present. In *The Hunger Games*, people of all districts suffer from

poverty too. The oppression goes further here in that they come to the point of sacrificing their own children and they still keep silence and they are obedient. Any uprising against the authority in both societies is punished by beating, torturing or death. Even in the Capitol where people live in prosperity, people are under constant surveillance and they are not pleased with their lives. Since the oppressive government allows them to think and behave in accordance with their ideology, they are not free to think and act as they wish. Avoxes's cases in *The Hunger Games* is a significant example of silencing by the oppressor. They are the ones whose tongues are cut out if they do not obey the rules or they are thought to be dissidents. Consequently, they are used for domestic services in Capitol, in the service of tributes as waiters or they work in sewers. It is even forbidden to speak to an Avox unless it is ordered by the rulers. In the case of Darius, a friendly peacekeeper in District 12, it is certain that he becomes an Avox not because he stops the whipping of Gale in the square but, he shows clemency and he is against the ideology of the government while he is expected to be merciless in his job. Because feelings like compassion, love, cooperation, and passion weakens the power of the oppressor and thus, such emotions are not acceptable. The society depicts their victimization on the reaping day by showing no resistance. They accept their situation silently and have to consent to the power. The oppressive government wants or accepts to hear about only what ideology they impose on the society it rules requires. In terms of the oppressed society, acceptance and silence are seem to be inevitable since there is no hope of changing or improving their conditions. In *V for Vendetta*, Dr. Delia Surridge expresses the state of the detainees in the camp as,

(...)THEY'RE SO WEAK AND PATHETIC YOU FIND YOURSELF HATING THEM. THEY DON'T FIGHT OR STRUGGLE AGAINST DEATH. THEY JUST STARE AT YOU WITH WEAK EYES. THEY MAKE ME WANT TO BE SICK, PHYSICALLY. THEY'RE HARDLY HUMAN (80).



Actually, the same conditions can be observed for the people outside the camp when compared with them. Nobody looks pleased with their lives since they do not feel secure, their incomes are insufficient to meet their basic necessities, and they do not have any idea of what future will bring them. In *The Hunger Games*, it is very similarly expressed by Katniss as,

Our part of District 12, nicknamed the Seam, is usually crawling with coal miners heading out to the morning shift at this hour. Men and women with hunched shoulders, swollen knuckles, many of whom have long since stopped trying to scrub the coal dust out of their broken nails and the lines of their sunken faces (4).

The relinquishment of any hope of improvement in their conditions is reflected by their silence. For ordinary people, there is no way of working through their terrible conditions. For example, the students in District 12 have to take a tour of the mines as part of their training. So they are educated to work in the mines and they have no chance of working in another field. All the districts are separated and isolated from each other and they are obliged to supply any need of the Capitol. Their common feature is that people of each district are under the oppression and they are silenced. The silence and fear, which every individual undergoes, is expressed by Katniss as,

When I was younger, I scared my mother to death, the things I would blurt out about District 12, about the people who rule our country, Panem, from the far-off city called the Capitol. Eventually I understood this would only lead us to more trouble. 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 (7).

With this fear in mind, she keeps silent at school, in public and even at home. Obviously, this is a coping strategy with her silenced society in order to survive. The only place she can speak is the woods when she is with her hunting partner, Gale. She expresses her feelings as, “He became my confidant, someone with whom I could share thoughts I could never voice inside the fence” (*The Hunger Games*: 129). All the people of Panem are in the same conditions in which they do their work quietly and they avoid discussing the oppression and exploitation surrounding them. They seem to have forgotten to react, reject, or rebel against their oppressors. Desperation and hopelessness are inevitable that is shown by the fact that even if they win the games, they cannot escape from the gaze of the oppressor since they have to join in the victory tours for a year. After the Hunger Games end, Katniss says, “I will have to travel from district to district, to stand before the cheering crowds, who secretly loathe me, to look down into the faces of the families whose children I have killed” (*Catching Fire*: 4). Thus, the oppressor keeps his force alive until the next Hunger Games.

Another way of maintaining the silence and obedience applied by the Capitol is to keep the districts isolated from each other. Each society renders their own task without knowing anything about the way of life in the other districts. Naturally, their culture and the way of living are formed in accordance with their production. When Katniss participates in the Hunger Games, during the preparation and the victory tour she can find out the functions of each district. District 1 manufactures luxury items for the Capitol and they provide all the decorations and clothing for the hunger games which are held every year. Thus, they have relatively a closer relationship with the Capitol, they even give their children names like Glimmer or Marvel related to the goods they produce. District 2 produces weapons and some mine, and provides the Capitol with peacekeepers. District 3 equips the Capitol with electronic goods, software, hardware and so on. Thus, each district has a different function in order to serve and maintain the Capitol power. As a result of this segregation, distinct cultures evolve in each district and they become isolated from each other in Capitol. This cultural difference leads people to the state of unawareness of the inequality and oppression

which they are objected to. In *V for Vendetta*, although there are not distinct districts, oppression by not only a dictator but also anyone who has power, can be observed in all respects. Class distinction determines the dynamics of life just like in *The Hunger Games*. The power of the leader, Adam Susan, is nailed by supportive body parts (the Eye, Nose, Ear, Finger and Mouth). The Eye symbolizing the visual and constant surveillance of the power by the leader is practised by the cameras everywhere in the streets. The Nose has the role of investigations and works with the Ear. The Ear uses bugging devices in order to hear any comment about the government and exists in public places in the aim of searching for any resisting voice. The Finger is represented by the police force and intervenes to stop any resistance against the regulations. The Mouth is the media and broadcasts what the leader and the current power wants to diffuse. The Head is considered to be the leader who rules these forces in order to maintain the power over the society. However, albeit the members of these forces seem to have power over society and to be strong when compared to the minority, they are obviously oppressed by the leader and the ruling power. This exploitation can be observed in the lives of the members of these forces. They serve the system but they are unaware of the fact that they are the slaves of this dictatorship as can be seen in the examples of Delia Surreedge, Dominic Stone, Tom Almond, and more others. While they are playing their roles and doing their jobs, they feel the constant surveillance of the Head, in other words their oppressor. When we compare the feeling of threat and insecurity which are felt by the oppressors and the oppressed, it is hard to see any difference. They do not trust each other with the fear of being undermined at any moment. Although, they seem to be the members of advantaged, privileged or superior to others, they are not aware of the fact that they are also under the threat by the leader or the oppressor; Delia Surreedge accepts the death with regret. She regrets not only participating in this murder organised by the leader, but also deriving pleasure from it. She expresses this feeling of regret as, “(...) I THINK I ENJOYED WHAT I DID AT THE TIME. PEOPLE ARE STUPID AND EVIL. THERE’S SOMETHING WRONG WITH US... SOME HIDEOUS FLAW... WE DESERVE TO BE CULLED. WE DESERVE IT...” (73). Another vivid example is the case of Mr. Almond, the very similar aggression and unhappiness can be observed in his manners against his wife. The constant threat of losing his position in the society makes him aggressive and even

paranoid. Another striking example in the book is the case of Lewis Prothero as the Voice of the Fate. He works as the commander in the Resettlement Camp in the past and works the ovens where they exterminate the prisoners. He calls the people who are “(...)GATHERED IN THIS SORBID ENCLOSURE? PEOPLE HALF DEAD WITH STARVATION AND DYSENTERY” (33) “the Funny Farm”. However, when he becomes the victim of V’s revenge and his prisoner, he confesses his inevitable, desperate situation as “LOOK, YOU KNOW AS WELL AS I DO. WE HAD TO DO WHAT WE DID. ALL THE DARKIES, THE NANCY BOYS AND BEATNIKS. IT WAS US OR THEM”(33). In *The Hunger Games*, District 12 contains two different classes too, merchants and miners. They are depicted racially different from each other as miners have olive skins, black eyes and black hair and merchants have white skins, blue eyes and blonde hair. These physical differences reflect the class discrimination as Katniss experiences at an early age. Although, some intermarriages can be seen that is exemplified by Katniss’s mother and father’s marriage, the merchants consider the miners as inferior. In fact, they are under the oppression too, but in a way their conditions are not as harsh as the miners’. For example, every citizen of Panem is obliged to put their names in the pool for the reaping day from the age of twelve to eighteen once a year which might be considered as fair. However, the poor people, who are mostly members of the miners, are more likely to add their names more times in order to get food in exchange for their lives. For example, Katniss has her name in the pool four times at the age of twelve and Gail will have his name forty-two times at the age of eighteen. But Madge, the mayor’s daughter does not have to have her name so many times, just once for every year. A very similar picture is reflected for the Mellarks in their economical and social situations, Mrs. Mellark humiliates and demeans Katniss and Prim when they are on the edge of death of hunger. When Peeta burns the bread on purpose with the aim of giving it to Katniss in a way, she says “Feed it to the pig, you stupid creature! Why not? No one decent will buy burned bread! (36). As depicted in District 12, there are superiors and inferiors in the societies in Panem too and the oppressors can vary in every day life in the whole system. People in Capitol are superior to people in the districts, the people in the districts exert power on another group of people in their own society. As Foucault says,

In a given society, there is no general equilibrium between goal-directed activities, systems of communications, and power relations; rather, there are diverse forms, diverse places, diverse circumstances or occasions in which these interrelationships establish themselves according to a specific model (338).

As an instrument of disciplining the societies, class distinction causes the isolation of distinct groups from the rest and hostile feelings against each other as in the example of Gail and Madge, the mayor's daughter. According to Antonio Gramsci, a class or group becomes dominant and hegemonic over the other by using coercion or force. For him, deliberative bodies are formed through the educational process in which with the multiplication of vocational schools, an impression of being democratic occurs. He says, "But democracy, by definition, cannot mean merely that an unskilled worker can become skilled. It must mean that every 'citizen' can 'govern' and that society places him, even if only abstractly, in a general condition to achieve this" (186). Very similarly in the societies in the books, *The Hunger Games* and *V for Vendetta*, class distinction prevents individuals from having chances which the members of the upper classes have. This discrimination and determination and the feeling of resentment they bring about are reflected clearly on the reaping day. Madge wears an expensive dress and a gold pin which in Katniss's words, "(...) could keep a family in bread for months" (14). Gail says, "You won't be going to the Capitol" and adds, "What can you have? Five entries? I had six when I was just twelve years old" (14). He uses an ironic and unfriendly tone of voice. Katniss comments this mode as, "(...) even though the rules were set up by the Capitol, not the districts, certainly not Madge's family, it's hard not to resent those who don't have to sign up for tesserae" (15). Under these circumstances, people become more and more isolated, marginal and alienated and they end up with a constant obedience and silence.

False consciousness as a concept derived from the social class theory by Karl Marx, is a striking apparatus of the ideology in both books. In *The Hunger Games*, the people in Capitol exert on the people in the Districts and the people in The Districts have the power on groups who have less economical or racial power. As can be observed in District 12, the disparity between the conditions of their lifestyles leads them to show hostile manners on subordinate groups. In *V for Vendetta*, the superior group is the members of controlling class as state apparatus. As Marx asserts, “(...) every form of society has been based, as we have already seen, on the antagonism of oppressing and oppressed classes” (19). Growing conflict between classes can lead the members of the oppressive group to act brutally just as seen in the book as rape, torturing and killing. This misdirected hostility is grounded in false consciousness, however, when class conflict manifests itself in such a way, class consciousness may bring a coalition between these classes as depicted in both books. In *The Hunger Games*, not only all districts but also some members of the Capitol forces come together to fight against the leader. Very similarly, the whole society forms a coalition against the leader and the chaotic milieu forces even the most vicious members of the hegemonic power to join them in *V for Vendetta*.

In the book, *Dark Horizons: Science Fiction and the Dystopian Imagination*, Naomi Jacobs states that,

The ideal citizen of dystopia is fully integrated with the social formation and has no self to express. The regimes of power in these classic dystopias (*1984* and *Brave New World*) understand free agency as based in individuality, and they use every means available to destroy any kind of identity that is separable from and potentially at odds with the collective (92)

The silencing of the women characters and the whole societies and class and gender discrimination are depicted vividly in *V For Vendetta* and *The Hunger Games*. As the most oppressed and silenced members of society, women come to the point of losing their identities and femininities. Therefore, although these are the characters of

dystopic novels, the female representation in these books brings to mind the actual oppressed and silenced women at present.

## 6.2. Transformation of Katniss and Evey

Both novels, *The Hunger Games* and *V for Vendetta*, reflect the features of Bildungsroman in many ways when analyzed in terms of the formation and maturation of the protagonists. The characters, Evey and Katniss are at the age of sixteen in the beginning of the novels. The importance of childhood experience is stated by Petru Golban as “(...) the experience of childhood is clearly of first importance in the formation of personality” (2003:122). When their family ties considered, both characters seem to have similar childhood experiences before they lose their fathers. Evey loses her parents at an early age and Katniss loses her father in a mine explosion. The loss of a parent has a crucial effect on their identities and affects their reactions against the circumstances which they encounter later on. Due to having no siblings, Evey feels alone and indefensible so she is naive, cowardly and unconfident. However, Katniss’s situation is different from Evey’s since she still has a sister and mother. In fact, the existence of her mother does not help her feel secure. On the contrary, her mental state and passivity leads Katniss to become the protector of the family and makes her stronger in her struggle. They have to leave their homes, they are alone and they undergo an educational process just like in traditional bildungsromans with a difference that in these two novels the circumstances are extremely hard and deadly.

Evey, as a sixteen-year-old teenage girl, is pure, inexperienced, uneducated and has no skill to deal with the harsh conditions of life. Golban states in his book that,

The change of the inner perspectives of the consciousness and the psychic configuration of the character is determined by suffering and the

harsh experience of living and it implies the escape from the false self-image, along with the prospects of the hero's moral regeneration and a true emotional maturity (112).

This harshness influences the length and content of her personal evaluation. First, she survives the rape and is saved by V from being killed by the fingermen. She knows that being caught by the fingermen means being punished like that so she is scared to death. Then her mental evolution and maturation process begins when she meets V and enters the Shadow Gallery. As can be understood from her revealing her past, she is desperate, alone and dependent since she loses her parents and has to work in a factory with an insufficient income. In Shadow Gallery, she experiences the pleasurable, fresh and nostalgic feelings which give her the opportunity to recall her past. As she says, "I MEAN PART OF ME JUST WANTS TO STAY IN HERE FOREVER AND NEVER HAVE TO GO OUTSIDE AND FACE WHAT'S GOING ON" (43). The incompatibility between her life conditions and the atmosphere in the Shadow Gallery shocks her and gives her a new perspective of her life in the process of evolution. However, when she sees that V is in the mode of revenge and killing, she gets into a dilemma. Thus, she undergoes another conflict between her self identity and the requirements of her conditions. As a result, she chooses to behave in accordance with the prevalence of good by rejecting to kill and says, "KILLING'S WRONG" (64). Unlike Katniss, Evey is much more unsuccessful in integrating herself into her society though she looks more willing and tries to do it twice. Her first attempt is to sell her body and act like other girls in the same conditions as hers. This trial results in disaster and she is caught. The second attempt turns out to be another disaster for her. Her lover-the only hope to clutch onto life is killed, and when she tries to take revenge, she is caught by the fingermen again. Consequently, she can never achieve her social integration and thus, she becomes the hidden face of the revolution.

In terms of social integration, Katniss can be said to achieve some better results at some stages throughout the serial. According to Henthorne, "She changes the world as



much as it changes her” (35). She has to leave her home and integrate herself into a bigger world. Despite her inner resistance to be an ideal figure in the public eye at first, she gradually adapts herself to this new world by being an obedient and compliant tribute. At least, in the public eye, she seems to adapt herself into the way of life in Capitol. However, in reality, she masks her identity in order to survive and manages to beguile her enemies, except for President Snow. When she is taken to live in District 13, she exhibits similar attitudes. In the beginning, she feels out of the society there and asks for some privileges. Thus, she manages to control the rules which regulate the life in District 13. At the same time, she obeys the rules and gives President Coin the sense that she owns the power on society. She ignores the social desire to resist Capitol with her leadership. However, she has such “a tremendous impact on society” (Henthorne 2012, 35) with her reactions that, the society forces her to take the role. After espousing the role of leader and the symbol of the rebel as Mockingjay, she feels as part of the society and behaves in accordance with the necessities of the process of establishing the ideal society and lifestyle. This period does not last long though, with the recognition of the fact that her dream world will never exist and her real enemy is not only President Snow. Therefore, at the end of the serial, Katniss’s social integration does not occur so she feels herself isolated, abandons the society and chooses to live alone with disappointment.

In terms of maturation or development as the most important thematic feature of bildungsromans, unlike Evey, Katniss carries on questioning herself until the end. As aforementioned, dystopias depict exaggerated conditions for the characters and so these conditions of a matter of life or death force the characters to behave pragmatically and they have to act before thinking. Evey and Katniss never have time to evaluate their situations and prepare themselves for these dramatic events. In this case, their maturation process forms their identity accordingly. Katniss always criticises her reactions since they lead her to both the position of leader and a trouble for herself at the same time. She sees the process of depicting and using her as the face of revolution as another component of coercion by oppressors. She says, “(...) and all I have to do is play my part” (*Catching Fire*, 12). Consequently, she obeys them under the threat of losing Peeta and her family. In *V for Vendetta*, Evey experiences one

turning point from being obedient, naive, weak and receptive to be strong, contender, rebellious and confident.

Other characters like family, friends, and foes, have great influence on the main characters, Evey and Katniss, in the process of their transformation and maturation. Erik H. Erikson asserts in his book *Identity: Youth and Crisisthat* identity and environment cannot be separated from each other in the process of identity formation (1994). According to him, “(...) in discussing identity, as we now see, we cannot separate personal growth and communal change (...)” (23). Social environment and individual formation help each other. For Katniss, family represents security and love in spite of her mother’s passive role in protecting and maintaining nurture. Her family also provides her with the strength to fight against the cruelty which is the most subversive factor against her survival. Except for her family, she hardly trusts anyone around her to the full. For instance, Gail is a necessary and good companion in hunting at first. They talk and share the common interests, worries and fears as a result of living in the same conditions of life, and she trusts and likes him. However, at the final stage, he turns out to be the one who delivers the biggest blow, which kills her most beloved one. Peeta, as her partner in the games, has a greater impact on Katniss through the process of her character formation. He gives her bread when she and her family are starving to death at the expense of being battered by his mother. This incident confuses her and in a way makes her consider that he is a reliable man, even though he is expected to be her enemy in the games. During the games, when Peeta allies with the Careers who are trying to hunt her, she loses her trust for him. She expresses her disappointment by saying, “I need to get down (from the tree), to get going, but for a moment I lie there digesting what I’ve heard” (*The Hunger Games*, 190). However, she is still unwilling to kill him even if she has the chance to do it. Later on in the games, when she realizes that he is doing everything to keep her alive, she feels stronger, she is not alone any longer, and now there is another one for whom she may sacrifice herself. For this reason, she chooses Peeta to marry and have children at the end. In her relationship with Haymitch, her mentor with Effie Trinket, she experiences very similar hesitations by the time she is abducted from the arena in

Quarter Quell. Although most of the time he is drunk and unable to move, he proves to be a very talented mentor. He teaches Katniss not only crucial fighting tactics, but also how to behave and look according to various situations. Thanks to him, Katniss gets over traumatic events in a shorter time. Nevertheless, she never submits herself to Haymitch at every turn notwithstanding her reliance on his experience, which shows that she maintains her free will to be herself. In terms of her prep-team, Katniss finds them weird and ridiculous, she even hates them at first, but later on, she sympathises with them thanks to Cinna. This feeling of sympathy gives Katniss the ability to understand and evaluate the conditions of society in the Capitol, which makes her last decision to destroy the new likely brutal government. Thus, she kills the new dictator, President Coin. The evil character of the story, President Snow, plays an important role in every aspect of Katniss's life and her identity formation. From her first encounter with him, at which she learns that he is the operator of her tragedy to the last moment, she hates him and sees him as the monster to fight against. Whenever she gets into the process of recovering after a survival, he shows his existence to remind her the reality that she is weak and unable to change power dynamics. The war between Katniss and President Snow continues by the time rebels take the control of Capitol and Katniss has the chance to kill him. However, at this very moment, President Snow provides Katniss with a realization, which leads her to take the last decision. Thus, she kills the new dictator, President Coin. He says, "I was watching you, Mockingjay. And you were watching me. I'm afraid we have both been played for fools" (*Mockingjay*, 403). In Katniss's journey to maturation, her search for identity is reflected very often throughout the serial. She reminds herself her personal information and her goal with inner talks like, "My name is Katniss Everdeen. I am seventeen years old. My home is District 12. I am the Mockingjay. I brought down the Capitol. President Snow hates me. He killed my sister. Now I will kill him. And then the Hunger Games will be over..." (*Mockingjay*, 396). These inner talks help her recover and go out of the places she hides while providing her with the unity of identity. In a way, the traditional and social expectations from the character as a woman in terms of maturation like getting married, settling down, having children and being a devoted mother and wife are satisfied at the end of the novel. Nevertheless, unlike in traditional dystopias, she is able

to choose to live in this way and her social integration is not complete due to partly her rebellious character, partly the tragic events she experiences.

Even though in the book, *V for Vendetta*, Evey's identity formation depicts very similar features in the process, the result is completely different in terms of maturation and traditional societal expectations. She chooses to maintain her active role in the fight against the system. She says, "DESCENDING NOW TO CLAIM MY HERITAGE, I THINK ABOUT THE TASK AHEAD, SO VAST, SO VITAL AND SO DIFFICULT..." (263). She finds another "Evey" to train and educate to be the symbolic face of rebel in the name of "V". The new represent is, in fact, a male body but the gender or the name of the body is not the matter of concern when his function in the fight is considered. So his name could be Evey since his beginning of the process is the same as Evey's. The writer gives the reader the sense that the future will be the same.

When the transformation process is considered, Evey undergoes a single ordeal designed by V and this ordeal makes her feel complete after the shock. Her search for identity comes to an end and she realises that she is the one to take the task. Like Katniss, her maturation does not involve social integration. As her mentor, V shows her the reality of which she is unaware and helps her in the search for identity. The feeling of revenge plays an important part in the characters' transformation into strong, dominant leaders. Being harmed by the evil characters, for Katniss, President Snow and for Evey, Adam Susan, they are driven by the feeling of anger and revenge. This feeling of revenge provides them with the necessary drive to resist the brutal system.

## CONCLUSION

Imaginary ideal or feared future depicted in literature attract the readers since they give different perspectives on future and present circumstances of the society and living conditions. In the late twentieth century and early twenty first century, with the emerge of science fiction novels, dystopias have become indispensable with its striking effect on readers. This study focuses on female representation in two dystopic novels, *The Hunger Games* and *V for Vendetta* both which reflect the situation of women in society in terms of the second- wave feminism, the third- wave and the post feminism. The representation of women in *V for Vendetta* depicts the general conditions of women in their society in the late twentieth century. The distrust toward ideologies, common beliefs and grand narratives which dominates in postmodernism influences literature and art too. As a result of this, the representation of women differs from the ones in earlier works of literature. In *V for Vendetta*, women are depicted as objected to masculine hegemony of man power just as those in traditional dystopias, with a difference that intraditional dystopias, women are treated as sexual objects, mothers, housewives and childbarers. In *V for Vendetta*, they are able to work, vote, participate in social, political and economical life. In the end, a woman becomes the leader of the resistance but she stays hidden under the mask. Despite the fact that this mask is used as the symbol of the rebel, in consideration of the female representation in the book, revealing her gender identity would be a more improper act for Evey when compared to a male character behind the mask. As concerned in the second-wave feminism, they are equal to men in terms of political criteria. However, in this book, the struggle of gaining subjectivity, expressing self, individuality and search for identity are depicted more effectively. Not only women's rights but also all oppressed people's rights are destroyed. They are humiliated, oppressed and bodily tortured and obliterated under the power of the dictatorial government. In these books, the means of hegemony and oppression like economic empoverishment, silencing, cultural estranging and using armed forces are generally similar to each other. When it comes to *The Hunger Games*, Katniss depicts much stronger character traits in many aspects when compared to Evey. She plays with the gender roles and expectations skillfully by tressppassing on femininity and masculinity. On the other hand, in terms of the expectations of the society, Susan Collins depicts a society that is unable to go beyond the traditional perspectives on

women. In many aspects, it resembles today's societies. It is a patriarchal society; women are expected to be mothers, housewives and good wives. The masculine hegemony expects women to have a heterosexual love affair, be a supporter wife and mother, give birth to good, loyal children, in other words, ideal laborers to the regime. The leader of District 13, Coin, is a woman but neither she has a family nor she exhibits feminine traits in the view of the society. Thus, she has the opportunity to be a leader. At the end of the book, Katniss rejects to be a leader and chooses to lead her life far from the passion of power. But, in fact, before she kills Coin, she is never prescribed as the leader of the resistance or new society. She cannot go beyond being the face of the rebel and inspiring the people who will resist. Similarly to the case of Evey, she stays hidden behind Mockingjay or *The Girl on Fire*. Finally, she becomes the object of the new oppressive leader, Coin. Collins's dystopic future society does not allow her to be the leader since traditional perspective of the society on women has not still changed and desires to have masculine leaders.

As this study analyses, in both future societies, hegemony, oppression, dictatorship, torture and antidemocratic applications of the power continue and bring people to the fearful, nightmarish future. Basically, in terms of the economical structure of life, Panem resembles many present societies when the distribution of manufacture, resources and labor force is considered. The depiction of the poverty, isolation from the others, hunger, lack of healthcare or education is exaggerated in the novels as one of the major strategies of dystopian literature. However, this is insufficient to cause a shocking effect on readers, defamiliarization is another crucial strategy of dystopias. In *V for Vendetta*, prisons, the resettlement camps, clearance project, vaporising unwanted people or using them as guinea pigs in the laboratories cause the expected shocking effect on readers. For the victims of this brutality, there is no salvation unless they rebel and destroy the system. In *The Hunger Games*, the compliance of the people with sacrificing their children, the hunger games, the conditions of the people in Capitol and enthusiasm of the viewers of the games defamiliarize the readers and thus, influence them more effectively.

In the last chapter of this study, the transformation of the leaders with the society is analysed, and it can be observed that, in the process of forming the society according to the expectations of brutal systems, the oppressed one is silenced, deprived of all needs like knowledge, education, history, language and other basic needs. As a consequence, the society comes to the degree of desired consistency. In this way, the writers, Moore and Collins make the readers ask themselves what is going on today and what might happen in the future if no precautions are taken now.

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