



# The Concept of the Mechanism of Power in Suzanne Collin's Trilogy The Hunger Games

Ainaab Tariq<sup>1</sup>, Dr. Asmi<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Research Scholar, Department English, Glocal University, Mirzapur Pole, Dist - Saharanpur, U.P., India

<sup>2</sup>Assistant Professor, Department English, Glocal University Mirzapur Pole, Dist - Saharanpur, U.P., India

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**Abstract**— *The notion of the mechanism of power is analyzed in Suzanne Collin's trilogy The Hunger Games in this paper. The author takes an analytical approach to how power is exercised, a measure that contributes in the establishment of a theory of power relations that impact people's lives, mindset, politics, and even the economy. According to Collins, power is the core, if not the elixir of life, on which the authoritarian regime led by President Snow's existence is premised. The paper goes on to explain why it is important to retain power in place in order to keep the government in power. The novel's power mechanism works on a lot of different levels. Divide and rule is the first and most significant dividing tactic, aimed at eliminating any possible unity among people who may use that unity to revolt against the totalitarian regime.*

**Keywords**— *Hunger, Power, Mechanism.*

## INTRODUCTION

The French philosopher Michael Foucault says that in some places, the image of contemporary society is heavily structured conditioned and tempered by brainwashing into culture, education, economy, and psychological analysis. Thus, society could be reduced to a mass concentration of people who need, should, and have no choice but to follow the mandates of power, which affects and restricts all aspects of life through its net of measures and laws and, on top of that, provides a platform for a relationship between man and regulations or governor. As such, the relationship between man and power appears to be easy, yet it is a profoundly convoluted one that includes submission or going against it with all it entails. Pursuing power, irrespective of its nature, features to give resilience and preserve and maintain man's desire for safety and supremacy, an approach men of letters felt necessary to weave into the fabric of their works as a highly esteemed value that can be grouped into two types: constructive or destructive, as in Suzanne Collins' trilogy *The Hunger Games*. The novel elucidates the mechanism of relations of power where the social, political, and financial overlap to reveal surreptitious networks bound to seize or maintain

control of authority, as is the case with the tyrannical regime in the capital where power is desperately sought after, and it also touches on the issue of survival itself, where any change of power is unquestionably conducive to change of being. This paper seeks to shed light on the notion of power as shown in Suzanne Collins' *The Hunger Games*, in which man has become a captive of this brutal game that has infiltrated his psyche, body, and even dreams.

**Discussion:** Suzanne Collins' *The Hunger Games* (2008) is a dystopian/science fiction series that has become a best-seller in the United States. Some critics stated that a best-selling book does not provide food for contemplation. However, there is no logical reason to exclude best-seller books from the literature category simply because reading dystopian novels has increased recently, not only because of their captivating plots and technological breakthroughs, but also because of the implicit call dystopian novels make for a transformation in societies that need to discover the awaited future right now. The novel could be seen as a struggle between authority and obedience, fear and surrender, involving individuals and state. The setting portrays future events in Panem, a fictional and non-existent country that was previously known as North America and

now lives under President Coriolanus Snow's totalitarianism, where the relationship between citizens and government is highly deteriorated because of the harsh nature of the regime. Panem is divided into thirteen districts, each of which contributes a portion of its income and production to the government, which rules over a formalized and bureaucratic organization, isolating itself from the people while keeping a firm grasp on power. The district in which the government center is located preserves most, if not all, rights and powers as a result of its riches and unrivalled authority. The remaining states are mired in abject poverty and despair, as well as a condition of terror imposed by the country's tyrannical system.

The games begin with Katniss Everdeen, a teenager from District 12 who volunteers to go on her sister's behalf and competes against Peeta Mellark, a male tribute. The game is nothing more than a death match in which one must survive this open game. Katniss has surprisingly and unconventionally saved the life of a contender who should have been killed. However, she took a humanitarian approach toward her adversary, which was incompatible with the desired objective, which was the death of one of the contestants. President Snow warned Katniss about her plan to consume deadly berries to save Peeta when they returned to District 12 as winners of the 74th Hunger Games, saying he just wouldn't permit her to be the emblem of a revolution. Except in one occasion, what she did was an act of rebellion for President Snow. She must persuade him and Panem because what she did was a gesture of genuine love for Peeta, not a revolt against the Capitol. As a result, President Snow has threatens Katniss with the death of her family and closest friend Gale if she does not completely persuade him that she is hopelessly in love with Peeta. Katniss and Peeta's Victory Tour around the districts has two messages. Seeing the destitute and oppressed instils psychological anxiety in individuals while also reminding them that even triumph would not cure their pain. She observed the vast surveillance the Capitol had installed to enforce compliance in district 11, which is Rue's and Thresh's territory.

Military activities, such as spying on residents or observing prisoners, can be used to gain political influence through surveillance. "Katniss's transformations, many constructed for public consumption, must be read within the context of the use confinement, surveillance, and spectacle, embodied in and mediated by Panem's panopticons" (Wezner, 148). Surveillance's power resides not only in who is being observed, but also in who is observing. Katniss's difficulties in the arena are televised to the whole country.

The elites praise the public exhibition of agony, which is commemorated with feasts and celebrations in the Capitol, where spectators eagerly await the very first drop of blood.

For the audience, this entertainment acts as both a warning and a diversion. Citizens in each district keep a careful eye on each other's hunting techniques and cheer for their own local homage. The crowd is blinded from the genuine killers located in the Capitol because to their shared contempt for the opposition. Frankel associates the Panem entertainment to contemporary world: "Sadly, we Americans are also living in a world of bread and circuses, filled with more entertainment channels than news. We are kept amused, 24 distracted, fed to the point of being overfed" (Frankel, 55). Residents are promoting the replacement of hard news reporting by watching reality television, lifestyle programmes that encourage vanities, and even the Food Network promotes lavish food intake and expensive remodeling as a means of displaying money. Peeta finds himself on the receiving end of this dangerous game of power. He must persuade President Snow that this is why he went public with his engagement to Katniss. President Snow took advantage of the opportunity to improve his image. To celebrate the occasion, he throws a big party at his estate. His expressions, on the other hand, reveal his displeasure, and Katniss must go farther. The Capitol commended her love to Peeta, praising her for passionately attempting to rescue him with the berries. She despised the Capitol's naivety and shallowness, as well as how lavishly they dressed, ate, and lived. Katniss and Peeta met Plutarch Heavensbee, the new Head Game Maker and the heir of Seneca Crane, who was assassinated by President Snow, during the celebration. Plutarch Heavensbee is wearing a Mockingjay watch, but unlike the citizens of the Capitol, he is wearing it as a symbol of defiance, an implied warning of a future insurrection. This possibility arose when Katniss, while dinner at the Mayor's office during her Victory Tour, noticed on the mayor's office television a news story about an uprising in District 8, which was verified when Katniss met Bonnie and Twill, who had fled the rebellious district. Bonnie and Twill, the two escapees, are going towards District 13; the major facility for nuclear armaments, which was previously damaged by the first uprising, is now operational and admitting refugees. This insurrection is the worst catastrophe that President Snow had feared. President Snow, on the other hand, is a master at absorbing astonishment and then going on the offensive. Soon afterward, President Snow announced the news of the Quarter Quell: "as a reminder to the rebels that even the strongest among them cannot overcome the power of the Capitol, the male and female tributes will be reaped from their existing pool of victors." (Catching Fire, p.172) Both Katniss and Peeta were returning to the arena, a venue for further power practice.

Capitol uses the media as a weapon of controlling the masses to silence any prospective intellectual resistance.

Media monopolization and politics serve as a platform for official propaganda, with truth and reality being the first casualties. Politicized media is only a petty weapon for mass manipulation. Controlled media might expertly shift facts to support the Capitol's purpose. The Hunger Games may have the effects of both sedatives and narcotics. People appear mesmerized and willing to accept any dosages of false information supplied to them, especially when forced to watch what appears to be a massive reality show to deflect attention away from totalitarian activities. When District 8 began the rebellion, the Capitol halted the spread of the rumor by staging an engagement for Katniss and Peeta and publicizing it on the day of the uprising, as a gigantic cover up to, figuratively speaking, blinding people from what is truly going on.

Districts surrender to the Capitol refers to the districts' knowledge deficiency, and the lack of knowledge could be the result of the following reasons according to Mann's concept. They are Ignorance, isolation and division. Districts' ignorance; about the Capitol's weaknesses bars needed information for any potential uprising. Isolation, keeps districts apart and ignorant about each other. The government sever communication lines between districts, ban travel between them and limit it to transferring supplies and this helps the government employ its divisive policy to push further divisions among districts. As a result, districts lack the necessary expertise and organizational resources to resist. As a result, the government's power structure contributes to the creation of a dread and deterrent environment. People are instantly ushered into this terrifying environment. They will never consider a revolt since they are well aware of the tremendous and exorbitant cost in blood, tears, and failure.

### CONCLUSION

Money, press, and the security establishment, collectively known as the unholy triangle of power, effectively cage man inside the confines of need and fear. Man's voice must be suppressed, and his ears and eyes must be taught to listen to the government's propaganda and watch its television. Any effort to break through this vicious web of control is guaranteed to fail, if not a bloodbath. The Hunger Game is self-explanatory in that each political party, government, and individual is starving. It's a cruel game because of the desire for power, or the passion for power. The government's desire for power confines the president and his clique in a never-ending game of power or a frenetic chase of power; otherwise, they would lose control over events over time. Any transfer of power, as well as any try to turn the oppressor's tables, is unquestionably lethal. People, on the other side, are just as eager for power as the

government because they are on the receiving end of it. In a nutshell, they want to experience power and the privileges that come with it. Their hunger, however, may not be readily filled, given the government's unwillingness to compromise. In this scenario, people's hunger is for the essential commodities and rights that they have been compelled to give up. They are deprived from liberty, stable life and above all they are forcibly leading a life close to hunger and servitude. Power, in this context, is not entirely negative; on the contrary, it could be viewed as a convincing method of maintaining discipline among people who, in the absence of its effect, would stick to their version of power or reality of power, a one-sided view that may not be the only real or even constructive one. Even at its finest, democracy requires "democratic" power to aid the ongoing process of democratization.

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