

Reflections of the Surveillance and Oppressive Authority in *The Hunger Games Trilogy*

Açlık Oyunları Üçlemesi'nde Gözetleme ve Baskıcı Otoritenin Yansımaları

Mesut GÜNENÇ¹

Araştırma Makalesi / *Research Article*

Geliş Tarihi / *Received*: 14.04.2022

Kabul Tarihi / *Accepted*: 11.05.2022

Doi: 10.48146/odusobiad.1103249

Atıf / Citation: Günenç, M., (2022). "Reflections of the Surveillance and Oppressive Authority in The Hunger Games Trilogy" ODÜSOBİAD 12 (2), 1089-1100, Doi: 10.48146/odusobiad.1103249

Abstract

This study focuses on hunger, social breakdown, political oppression and Michael Foucault's concepts of surveillance and discipline in the The Hunger Games Trilogy, which is about revolt and the struggle for survival under a totalitarian regime. This paper aims to illustrate how The Hunger Games Trilogy (The Hunger Games, Catching Fire, Mockingjay) examines the reflections of oppressive authority both in today's and the future world and tries to reveal the connection between the districts in Panem in the trilogy and today's countries, based on Foucault's concepts. Suzan Collins' civilization is portrayed by hunger and a ruthless central authority that is guarded by the Capitol and governs 12 surrounding districts. Panem is separated into 12 districts, which are controlled by the Capitol, the capital. As penance for their earlier disobedience, the 12 districts send a boy and a girl, aged 12 to 18, to fight to death in the Hunger Games each year. Because of the economic situation of the districts, the Capitol easily dominates and controls them, and despite the fact that there is enough food in the Capitol, it does not supply the districts. Poor economic conditions caused by the Capitol in districts cause famine, and thus residents occasionally opt to search for food regardless of being observed, yet the problem of starving persists. Drawing from Foucault's ideas on surveillance, discipline, and the panopticon, this article will explain the living conditions of citizens in Panem, the surveillance of the Capitol, and the relations between the Capitol (United States of America and some exploitative countries) and the present (exploited nations).

Keywords: *The Hunger Games Trilogy, Suzanne Collins, The Capitol, Oppressive Authority, Panopticon.*

Öz

Bu çalışma, totaliter bir rejim altında isyan ve hayatta kalma mücadelesi hakkında olan *Açlık Oyunları Üçlemesi'ndeki*, açlık, toplumsal çöküntü politik baskı ve Michael Foucault'nun gözetim ve disiplin kavramlarını konu etmektedir. Bu makale, *Açlık Oyunları Üçlemesinin (Açlık Oyunları, Ateşi Yakalamak, Alaycı Kuş)* hem günümüz hem de gelecekteki dünyada baskıcı otoritenin yansımalarını nasıl incelediğini göstermeyi amaçlamakta, Foucault'nun kavramlarını temel alarak Panem'deki kısımlar ile günümüz ülkeleri arasındaki bağlantıyı ortaya

¹ Dr. Öğr. Üyesi, Aydın Adnan Menderes Üniversitesi, Aydın, e-mail: mesut.gunenc@gmail.com, ORCID ID: 0000-0002-7077-1914.



koymaya çalışmaktadır. Suzan Collins'in uygarlığı, açlık ve Capitol tarafından korunan ve çevredeki 12 bölgeyi yöneten acımasız bir merkezi otorite ile resmedilmektedir. Panem 12 bölgeye bölünmüştür ve bu 12 bölge başkent Capitol tarafından yönetilmektedir. 12 bölge, her yıl, önceki itaatsizliklerinin kefareti olarak, Açlık Oyunları'nda ölümüne savaşmaları için 12 ila 18 yaşları arasında bir erkek ve bir kızı gönderir. Kısımların ekonomik durumları nedeniyle, Capitol onlara kolayca hükmetmekte, kontrol altında tutmakta ve Capitol'de yeterince yiyecek olmasına rağmen kısımlara tedarik yapmamaktadır. Capitol'ün kısımlarda neden olduğu kötü ekonomik koşullar kıtlığa neden olmakta, bu nedenle bölge sakinleri zaman zaman gözlemlendiklerini umursamaksızın yiyecek aramayı tercih etmekte, ancak açlık sorunu devam etmektedir. Michel Foucault'nun 'gözetleme, disiplin ve panopticon' konusundaki fikirlerinden yola çıkan bu makale, vatandaşların Panem'deki yaşam koşullarını, Capitol'ün gözetimini ve Capitol (Amerika Birleşik Devletleri ve bazı sömürücü ülkeler) ile günümüz (sömürülen uluslar) arasındaki ilişkileri açıklayacaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Açlık Oyunları Üçlemesi, Suzanne Collins, Capitol, Baskıcı Otorite, Panoptikon.

Introduction

The Hunger Games Trilogy reflects sociological, political, and economic themes that are relevant in today's world. Totalitarian governments, political repression, surveillance, social breakdown, violence, and poverty are all prevalent in both *The Hunger Games Trilogy* and today's world. These concerns are the foundations of oppressive regimes and totalitarian political systems. Arendt defines the purpose of totalitarianism as "not instilling convictions but destroying the capacity to form any." (Cook, 1951: 293). These oppressive governments use people to achieve their definite goals both in today's world and the Capitol (expected future). Suzanne Collins examines class division, inequality between citizens, governmental oppression, human suffering, corruption, destruction of buildings and obedience in *The Hunger Games Trilogy*. All of these issues raised in the *Trilogy* serve as bridges between today's modern world and the nation of Panem.

Focusing on governmental exclusion through both political and personal inferences, Collins' world interrogates visual ethics, obedience and subject creation, and her childhood and observations reflect *The Hunger Games Trilogy* and oppressive power. Collins also got inspiration from hearing her father's childhood story because to her father's family, "hunting was not a sport but a way to put meat on the table. He also knew a certain amount about edible plants. He'd go into the woods and gather all these wild mushrooms and bring them home and sauté them" (Collins, 2014). Katniss and Gale's life in District 12 is paralleled by her father's childhood story. Collins observes the repressive power of the government and the media in addition to her childhood and her father's story. She observes how the oppressive power, using panoptic surveillance, affects the people in the society. She portrays how people are under pressure and how they are humiliated by the oppressive power and creates a different society that is a critique of our modern world.

The Hunger Games Trilogy reflects the panopticon concept, revealing surveillance and discipline between the Capitol and the districts. *Discipline and Punish* by Foucault shows how citizens in communities are oppressed by repression and discipline, what totalitarian regimes try to do maintain control, how they monitor citizens by intimidating them with punishments and how citizens of Panem turn to docile bodies. People are aware that they are continuously being observed, whether they are

hunting, working in mines, or going about their ordinary lives. That is why other citizens, such as Katniss Everdeen, are always concerned about what they say and do since they are constantly being watched.

Within this context, this study explores *The Hunger Games Trilogy* based on Foucault's concepts of discipline, surveillance, obedience, punishment and survival under the oppressive authorities. According to those in power, many years of rebellion and conflicts resulted in the separation of Panem (state) into districts, with each region required to serve a duty in the growth of the Capitol like the exploitative countries invading and dividing the exploited nations, the exploited nations both remaining under surveillance and turning into docile bodies in order to be kept under control. On this basis, the similarity between the trilogy and today's countries will be revealed in this study.

Surveillance and Oppressive Authority in *The Hunger Games Trilogy*

The Hunger Games Trilogy is significant because it condemns the exploitation system and western culture. Collins, in particular, attacks the Capitol and other locations, contrasting the system through which America is controlled by pressure and does not hesitate to monitor and intervene. When focusing on the narrative of the *Trilogy*, Collins seems to have been impressed by the political reality of hegemony. Under this hegemony Collins' society consists of starvation and a merciless central government that is protected by Capitol and commands 12 surrounding districts. Because of the economic situation of the districts, the Capitol easily dominates them, and even though there is enough food in the Capitol, it does not supply the districts. Poor economic conditions caused by the Capitol in districts cause famine, thus residents occasionally opt to search for food without regard for the punishment, yet the problem of starving persists. Panem residents are unable to obtain enough food to feed their families, even if they sacrifice their lives. In *The Hunger Games*, starvation is represented with the following words: "there are still nights when game has to be swapped for lard or shoelaces or wool, still nights when [citizens] go to bed with... stomachs growling" (Collins, 2008: 9). Because there is no authorization to trade across districts, they must wait for a decision from Capitol to cope with their hunger.

The Capitol is the only source of current sustenance for citizens since they are unable to interact with other regions of the country, or they continue to hunt out of dread of the Capitol. Capitol also reflects the power that "reaches into the very grain of individuals, touches their bodies and inserts itself into their actions and attitudes, their discourses, learning processes and everyday lives" (Foucault, 1980: 30). Every district is required to labour to serve in the Capitol. Normally, there were 13 districts, but when the 13th district revolts against the Capitol at the beginning of the *Trilogy*, the Capitol destroys the 13th district and murders many people as a result of the rebels however "the Capitol uses misinformation to shape people's pseudo-environments, reporting that District 13 has been destroyed" (Henthorne, 2012: 74). Here, the pseudo-environment represents a fallacious environment that the Capitol tries to form. With the help of this fallacious environment, the Capitol can form a false agenda to control the districts. The Capitol achieves this because the other 12 districts are not aware of this misinformation. The other 12 districts are starving and obedient, and they are fearful of the Capitol; they are concerned about their future. Because of this insecurity, the Capitol utilizes the natural



resources of districts with inexpensive labour. The Capitol wields the government's unlimited authority, which it uses to feed itself with resources from the surrounding districts.

The Capitol uses natural resources to develop technology that will be used against districts. By portraying community concerns as more crucial and significant than people's interests, the Capitol uses technology to establish direct control over individuals. It is a sad truth that the technology is used for entertainment in the Capitol because the citizens of the Capitol have fun while watching the death of young adults. With the latest technology, the Capitol shapes the citizens' control and by the help of media control; the government can hypnotize citizens using technology over which the Capitol holds the control. In his work *Approaching the Hunger Games Trilogy*, Tom Henthorne (2012) makes an analysis about the control: "one obvious way of accomplishing this through the control of information, something the Capitol does by isolating the districts from one another and monopolizing mass communications" (74). The government forms annual hunger games, games of violence, games that bring death for the sake of entertainment with the latest technology. Helen Day (2012) explains this entertainment: "a further insult within this sacrifice of children is the requirement to treat the Games as a festive sporting event: entertainment" (173). A child sacrifice is shown as a form of entertainment in order to obfuscate the true purpose of the games and the Capitol.

One of the most crucial rules of the games is to choose children from the 12 districts; two adolescents here between the ages of 12 and 18 (one boy and one girl) have to take part in this event. A journey into the harsh world from childhood to adulthood starts in districts. In this violent world, young adults turn into killers. They are victims of the system; while the government is watching and observing the children of Panem, it sacrifices and kills them on behalf of the maintenance of political power and the Capitol celebrates this violence by portraying it as a festival and employing Panem children in gaming marketing. "The 24 newly famous teenagers are the guest stars of several days of festivities, all of which are televised, including pageants and interviews which make them the darlings and heroes of the general populace" (Blasingame, 2009: 724). The lives of innocent children have no value for the Capitol in terms of gaming promotion. "The games are the ultimate in terror tactics because they are played with the lives of innocent. The young adults are dropped into a combat zone and fight each other to the death" (Pavlik, 2012: 31). The Capitol has a game with innocent adults in a mortal area. The Capitol's vitality fluid is innocent blood.

The *Hunger Games Trilogy* has a monitoring system that operates to give the Capitol dominance over the districts and to make the Capitol's citizens forget their troubles and sorrows. Ironically, the annual Hunger Games are conducted to distract people from their hunger. Throughout the Hunger Games, Panem's inhabitants witness in terror and hope as their members combat for survival; however, the Capitol watches the Hunger Games for enjoyment. Nevertheless, there will be only one victor, one life, and all others must perish. Following the elimination of the other contestants, the champions embark on a victory tour, which is broadcast on television for the benefit of the Capitol.

The districts' killing each other reflects the violence and differences between them. There are disparities across districts in terms of wealth, prosperity, and fawning to the Capitol. District 1 and District 2 are in the best condition because they are the richest districts. District 1 produces precious items for the

government and has profitable relations with the Capitol, while District 2 trains peacekeepers, and this district does not support District 13 during the period of rebellion to the extent that District 2 has good relations with Capitol. Foucault summarizes power as something that is always exercised and circulated. For Foucault, citizens are subjugated and moulded by power and the actors who disseminate it. Districts 1 and 2 are the actors utilised to disseminate power. However, the other districts suffer from poverty, oppression, and violence and they do not use their powers against the Capitol because the districts use their power against themselves; they share violence to use against one another. District 12 and 11 do not have enough resources (coal) to develop their own districts, and they do not have enough food to assuage their starvation. The districts feed the Capitol, and the Capitol holds the whole power of districts. It reflects the Capitol's political strategy. Anthony Pavlik explains this strategy stating that "pitting districts against districts in a death match also reflects the way each district is dislocated from the others, through a political strategy of divide and conquer that maintains the Capitol's elite position" (2012: 31). The Capitol aims to divide the power of districts and to play off districts against each other in the arena. Koenig clarifies the power of the Capitol; "Panem's Capitol holds the power of differentiation and judgement while its citizens have limited or no access to that power, so they are the (dubious) mercy of the capitol" (2012: 40). The Capitol divides the districts into unequal and poorer classes, and these impoverished classes are subjected to the Capitol's most horrific punishments.

The Capitol administration system creates a dictatorship over the districts. They are divided by electrical barriers and are unable to communicate with one another. Citizens (young adults) cannot get to know one another unless they play games (death arena) which bring forth hatred between the districts as the Capitol intends. The real intention of the Capitol is revealed in its authoritarianism: "antidemocratic actions; political and economic rule by elite; monopolistic control of the mass media, military forces, and weapons; and a politic of systematic violence and terror against those depicted systematic enemies" (Pavlik, 2012: 32). The Capitol tries to control media in order to pervert reality. The citizens of Panem only watch what the Capitol wants. President Snow's regime constantly overrules residents by forcing them to follow the Hunger Games on television, and the Capitol nearly completely controls their lives. Apart from the panoptic system, the Capitol has crowded military forces in order to hold control of districts under the pretext of security. To maintain control of the districts, the Capitol maintains its army, which comprises peacekeepers. The Capitol possesses sophisticated weaponry capable of killing Panem citizens in record time. In the annual Hunger Games, the Capitol uses technological weapons to control each contestant and even to kill them in the arena. The Capitol also provides weapons to each contestant to learn how they use different weapons for the purpose of killing themselves and how they hunt each other in the arena.

The use and provision of weapons in the Capitol reflects today's world. In order to follow the orders of the governments, the modern-day police use technological weapons to harm and control the citizens. Also, weapons are brought up because with the money raised and provided by the capitalist system in our world. Weapons are made available to people without paying attention to their ages to turn reserve of weapons to money so that weapons represent social risk in our world. In *The Hunger Games*, each tribute in districts can choose their weapons. Katniss explains the scope of choosing the weapon as "analysing the past Games she watched on television", and Katniss also reveals that "most deaths in the



arena occur because of the weapons the Capitol makes available" (Collins, 2008: 39). In a limited arena, participants kill each other with weapons provided by the Capitol; in an uncontrolled arena, most deaths are caused by weaponry provided by the United States. In the Hunger Games, the aim of using the weapon is to win the game, but in the United States, there is no rational intent to use the weapon.

With its mass media, powerful armed forces, and cutting-edge technology, the Capitol depicts America's exercise of power over other nations such as Vietnam, Iraq, and Afghanistan. Like in the Capitol, America uses its media power to show the extent of war. "American citizens during the Vietnam and Iraqi wars engaged with coverage that we did not ask for but that was provided by our own commercial media" (Koenig, 2012: 40). The United States tried to exploit these countries' natural sources and to turn them into United States' colonies. At the same time, the United States deployed young people to kill those in Iraq. The young person/soldier is killed in the Iraq war. It may well be said here that the governor of the United States can watch and witness the death of young people and the destruction of structures for their own profit, just as President Snow watches the death of young adults in games. As people across the globe watch reality shows, the invasion of Iraq, and the deaths of individuals, Capitol citizens witness the deaths of young adults and the ruin of districts. Collins' trilogy attempts to raise people's consciousness. She feels a strong sense of loss when young people die, and she is concerned about modern people who have become desensitized to what they see on television and to their own lives. In fact, the Hunger Games reflect political ideas. Using these political ideas, the Capitol attempts to impoverish the districts in methodical ways. The Capitol seeks to exert influence over its citizens' decisions. It influences how Panem residents consider and engage with their authorities, as well as their personal struggles. The Capitol wants to reflect the ideological aspects and ideological suppression of the game: "Indeed, the Capitol highlights the ideological significance of the games before they begin by having the mayors of each district read an official history of Panem, which includes an account of earlier rebellion against the Capitol and explains that the Games exist as a reminder of the Capitol's power" (Henthorne, 2012: 99).

The districts are treated as slaves by the Capitol and can only obtain sustenance through an exchange system. "The Capitol reaps all of the benefits of the twelve districts' harvests and products while the districts themselves function at near starvation on substandard Capitol handouts" (Despain, 2012: 70). While the Capitol's ruling elite (narrow minded) throws up to eat and drink again and again, and Katniss' wedding celebration is portrayed in detail with its wedding cake, Katniss' attire, its exaggeration and grandeur, the people in the districts have to hunt or modify anything to eat some food. The situation of districts is very similar to many nations in Asia and Africa. While the people consume more, overeat or go to waste of failing to eat in America and Europe, people cannot find anything to eat and unfortunately have to wait for their death because of hunger, or the vulture waits for the death of a child who is bound to die because of hunger in Africa.

Citizens in exploited nations are always at risk of getting their lives destroyed by exploiter nations since the rulers have the economic power and citizens cannot take risks to lose their power. "Power is tolerable only on condition that it masks a substantial part of itself. Its success is proportional to its ability to hide its own mechanisms" (Foucault, 1990: 86). The Capitol hides its real intention under the mask of power. In the Panem, the Capitol holds economic power, maintains suffering and denies individual opportunity

to enhance citizens' economic situation. Citizens of Panem have been converted to docile bodies because "a body is docile that may be subjected, used, transformed, and improved" (Foucault, 1995: 136). Through 'panopticism', the Capitol monitors the citizens of Panem with power and technology, watching docile bodies like prisoners. Measureless discipline, punishments and media control convert people into docile bodies. Bodies are normally living things and represent people who can think and shape their behaviours freely. However, the Capitol destroys these living and reasoning bodies via violence and oppression since thinking bodies do not accept sovereign power and more to the point, they question it, but docile bodies can do anything the government wants. They are not prone to riots and can be readily monitored and deployed. The Capitol ensures that docile bodies are constantly available to fulfil the jobs that sustain Panem's economy, and they do it unthinkingly.

Citizens, who live in poor and exploited societies, face vital risks, and start to attack exploiter governments like in the districts. Here, the relationship between Libya and the Capitol can be characterized. The Capitol represents Tripoli; the Capitol is Panem's wealthiest district, while the other districts suffer from poverty, surveillance, and oppression; and Tripoli is Libya's wealthiest city, while other cities, such as Benghazi, Misrata, Ajdabiya, Al Abyar, and Al Marj, suffer from surveillance and violence. An insurgency is sparked by the mixture of cruelty, surveillance, and starvation. Like the people who take out Libya's armed troops and encircle Sirte, this rebel or revolt wipes out peacekeepers in the districts and thus the residents encircle the Capitol. Citizens believe that everything is normal because of the education (supports government or the Capitol) they have, that they have to work for government and that they have to build the system without question. Also, the citizens cannot have education for that reason they have already agreed to live under the surveillance of the Capitol and turned into docile bodies. In Afghanistan, they cannot discuss education for children. Most Afghan children cannot attend school, or if they do, they cannot go because schools have been shuttered by the Taliban, so they only receive education about the conflict; they only monitor them and receive information about how people die or how people may live in the fight. They grow up with weapons and start murdering each other in games. They have no other option than to engage in the system.

When nations refuse to participate in that system and game or do not follow the rules, the government views this as a revolt and proceeds to eliminate the district or nation. When the government does not dare to attack, it would rather reach a deal. This sort of deal can be observed between America and Iran, and the connection between today's world and the Hunger Games can be seen since the Capitol, which represents America, reaches an agreement with District 13, which represents Iran. Arrow points out this in his book *The Panem Companion*: "District 13 has speciality as Nuclear power" (2012: 11). The Capitol and District 13 both "are equally unappealing" (Dyke, 2012: 260) because they monitor citizens and subject them to stringent restrictions. Iran is a post-repression country in that sense, and it symbolizes District 13 since District 13 employs harsh measures against civilians in order to achieve its goals. Iran also has a significant presence in Iraq and Afghanistan, and it is attempting to establish connections with both countries in order to build nuclear weapons. These potential relationships pose a threat to American military units in Iraq and Afghanistan. Iraq and Afghanistan symbolize districts that support District 13 (Iran), while the condition of the American Military Units reflects the Capitol's status, which is jeopardized due to the relationship between District 13 and supporting districts.



These international treaties help to build capitalism. These agreements are used to build partnerships that are founded on self-interest. These self-interests are fed by wars, the weapons trade, a capitalist economy, mining, narcotics, technology, oil, exploitation, racism, ethnicity, fascism, media domination, darkness, and totalitarianism. All of these ideas are given by the system. People's lives are deconstructed and shaped by those who prepare the system because just as Katniss and other tributes are continually being watched by the Capitol, so people's lives are observed, followed and kept under control in this system. There are winners and losers in such a system. Victors (governments) and losers (innocent people) are the main parts of the game. The game shapes the political order which represents instability, uncertainty and chaos. The rules of the games always change according to self-interest and capitalism. The powerful/exploiter side changes the rules. Although there are serious problems such as violence, death of people, oppression, surveillance, fascism, media control, anti-democratic regulations and starvation in the system/game, it is shown that everything goes on perfectly because the people/citizens have to obey the rules of the game under discipline. "To the residents of districts within *the Hunger Games*, surveillance acted not only as a reminders and tool of their oppression by the Capitol but also as a shared point of community gathering" (Blodgett and Salter, 2013: 9). This surveillance reflects the control of districts. Citizens of the districts have to accept violence of the Capitol and see the games held for the sake of them. There is no other choice. "Characters young and old adopt the "either/or" mentality bluntly expressed by former president George Washington Bush on September 20, 2001: "Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists" (Bush, Speech to Joint Session of Congress). There is no middle way" (Pavlik, 2012: 37). Either you will be part of America, or you will die. The same situation is expressed by Katniss in *The Hunger Games*: "Taking the kids from our districts, forcing them to kill one another while we watch—this is the Capitol's way of reminding us how totally we are at their mercy. How little chance we would stand of surviving another rebellion. Whatever words they use, the real message is clear. Look how we take your children and sacrifice them and there's nothing you can do. If you lift a finger, we will destroy every last one of you" (Collins, 2008: 19).

In Katniss' lines, it can be understood that there is no middle way, no choice. The Capitol cannot put up with different voices, and different thoughts. You have to wait like a minuteman, doing whatever the Capitol desires. If you do not follow the regulations, the government/Capitol will use its sovereign right to punish you. The Capitol/government can impose an embargo, ban commerce, kill innocent people, children, and demolish their city, and governments can even kill their inhabitants for participating in the game if they believe the residents are not on their side.

The governments ignore everything except the rules of the game. Although they constantly monitor and control them, they ignore rape on the battlefield and even their own soldier because that soldier must die without questioning why he dies. *The Hunger Games Trilogy* represents the "metaphor for the brutality of this fictional world and its strict surveillance regime, as the competitors' fight to the death is filmed and then broadcast to every home in Panem" (Flanagan, 2014: 142). The soldier accepts this because he has already become accustomed to this situation through the media because he watches the war, reality shows, the news, and what the government designates for him; instead of seeking for the facts, he accepts everything, and he becomes an insensitive man like the rest of the world's citizens/Capitol. To conclude with Yavuz Çelik's words, "As long as the money-headed and power-

blinded world powers do not give up their bossy and hegemonic desire to control the rest of the world under the name of justice-maker and people of these countries do not stop deeming the others as deserving of any pejorative or humiliating or discriminating adjective and any violence or imposition, we should make sure that there will be no future in which to live in peace and as humans.” (2010: 156-157) Thus, *The Hunger Games Trilogy* can be said to raise and even strengthen the exploited people’s consciousness of what they are exposed and subjected to against their will.

Conclusion

Nearly in each period of the history, the powerful sides (feudalist regimes, churches, empires, governments and in the future the capitol) have the pen to write the rules, conditions, to create, recreate and shape the fate of human beings, and whenever innocent people try to win the games; they have lost. While a result, the rules must be changed, and all districts must stand up to the games instead of fighting one another; they must employ violence against the Capitol and totalitarian regimes since the primary winner is always the game as you attempt to win it. Regarding *The Hunger Games Trilogy*, this paper has tried to point out various issues as panoptic surveillance, totalitarian governments, political repression, social collapse, violence and poverty because these issues monitor and threaten innocent people and today’s world. In *The Hunger Games Trilogy*, both the Capitol and the exploited nations, using these issues, form a world where citizens of Panem and citizens of the modern world are sacrificed.

The panopticon demonstrates the obstinacy of the power that allows it to control the individual and is accustomed to surveillance, and the individual has to accept the control exerted by the big boss through the media and technology in order not to be exposed to violence. As a result, the rules must be altered since this is the only way for citizens to escape the grip of the government and for districts to escape the reach of the Capitol. In this way, they do not have to witness the deaths of innocent people; nor do they have to witness their children and adults killing each other easily with the guns they have. They do not allow corrupted governments to convert them into docile bodies; they can learn to think freely, and to live without getting under the pressure. They can cope with starvation, suppression and traumas; they can, and even must, say that the games are over.

Conflict of Interest

There is no financial conflict of interest with any institution, organization, person related to our article titled “Reflections of the Surveillance and Oppressive Authority in *The Hunger Games Trilogy*”.

References

- Arrow, V. (2012). *The Panem Companion From Mellark to Mockingjays*. Dallas: Benbella Books.
- Blasingame, J. (2009, May). The Hunger Games by Suzanne Collins. Rev. of The Hunger Games by Suzanne Collins. *International Reading Association*, 52(8), 724-725.
- Blodgett, M., & Bridget, S. A. (2013). Being Effie: The Hunger Games and War as a Form of Entertainment
- Media Consumption. *In proceeding of: Media in Transition 8*, Boston, Massachusetts.



- Collins, S. (2008). *The Hunger Games*. New York: Scholastic, Print.
- Collins, S. (2014). A Conversation with Suzanne Collins. *Scholastic*. Scholastic Press.
- http://www.scholastic.com/thehungergames/media/suzanne_collins_q_and_a.pdf, [Accessed: 10 September 2021].
- Cook, I.T. (1951, June). The Origins of Totalitarianism by Hannah Arendt. Rev. of The Origins of Totalitarianism by Hannah Arendt. *Political Science Quarterly*, 66(2), 290-293.
- Çelik, Y. (2010). Edward Bond's "The War Plays" Projecting the Doomed Future of Mankind, *Romanian Journal of English Studies*, (7), 156-167.
- Day, H. (2012). Simulacra, Sacrifice and Survival in The Hunger Games, Battle Royale, and The Running Man. In L. A. Clarck & M. M. Pharr. (Eds.). *Of Bread, Blood and The Hunger Games: Critical Essays on the Suzan Collins Trilogy* (pp. 167-177). North Carolina: McFarland.
- Despain, M. (2012). The Fine Reality of Hunger Satisfied: Food as Cultural Metaphor in Panem. In L. A. Clarck & M. M. Pharr. (Eds.). *Of Bread, Blood and The Hunger Games: Critical Essays on the Suzan Collins Trilogy* (pp. 69-78). North Carolina: McFarland.
- Dyke, V. C. (2012). Discipline and the Docile Body: Regulating the Hungers in the Capitol. In D. A. George & M. Nicolas (Eds.). *The Hunger Games and Philosophy: A Critique of Pure Treason* (pp. 250-264). United States of America: John Wiley and Sons.
- Flanagan, V. (2014). *Technology and Identity in Young Adult Fiction: The Posthuman Subject*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Foucault, M. (1980). *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977* (C. Gordon et al. Trans.). New York: Pantheon.
- Foucault, M. (1990). *The History of Sexuality* (R. Hurley Trans.). New York, NY: Vintage Books.
- Foucault, M. (1995). *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Vintage Books.
- Henthorne, T. (2012). *Approaching the Hunger Games Trilogy: A Literary and Cultural Analysis*. London: McFarland.
- Koenig, G. (2012). Communal Spectacle Reshaping History and Memory through Violence. In L. A. Clarck &

M. M. Pharr (Eds.), *Of Bread, Blood and The Hunger Games: Critical Essays on the Suzan Collins Trilogy* (pp. 39-48). North Carolina: McFarland.

Pavlik, A. (2012). Absolute Power Games. In L. A. Clarck & M. M. Pharr (Eds.), *Of Bread, Blood and The*

Hunger Games: Critical Essays on the Suzan Collins Trilogy (pp. 30-38). North Carolina: McFarland.

Genişletilmiş Özet

Michel Foucault'nun 'gözetleme, disiplin ve panopticon' konusundaki fikirlerinden yola çıkan bu çalışmanın amacı, Açlık Oyunları Üçlemesi'ni inceleyerek Panem'deki yaşam koşullarını, Capitol'ün gözetimini ve Capitol (Amerika Birleşik Devletleri ve bazı sömürücü ülkeler) ile günümüz (sömürülen uluslar) arasındaki ilişkileri açıklamaktır. Açlık Oyunları Üçlemesi, günümüz dünyasında geçerli olan sosyolojik, politik ve ekonomik temaları yansıtır. Totaliter hükümetler, siyasi baskı, gözetim, sosyal çöküş, şiddet ve yoksulluk, hem Açlık Oyunları Üçlemesi'nde hem de günümüz dünyasında yaygındır. Bu ezilen hükümetler, hem günümüz dünyasında hem de Capitol'de (beklenen gelecek) kesin hedeflerine ulaşmak için insanları kullanır. Suzanne Collins Açlık Oyunları Üçlemesi'nde sınıf ayrımını, vatandaşlar arasındaki eşitsizliği, hükümetin baskısını, insanların çektiği acıları, yozlaşmayı, binaların yıkımını ve itaati inceler. Üçlemede gündeme getirilen tüm bu konular, günümüzün modern dünyası ile Panem ulusu arasında köprü görevi görür. Collins'in dünyası, siyasi dışlanmanın hem ideolojik hem de kişisel çıkarımlarına odaklanır. Görsel etik, itaat ve özne yaratmayı sorgular, çocukluğu ve gözlemleri Açlık Oyunları Üçlemesi'ni ve baskıcı gücü yansıtır.

Açlık Oyunları Üçlemesi, Capitol ve kısımlar arasındaki gözetim ve disiplini ortaya çıkaran panoptikon konseptini yansıtır. Michael Foucault'nun yazdığı Disiplin ve Ceza, topluluklardaki vatandaşların baskı ve disiplinle nasıl ezildiğini, hangi totaliter rejimlerin kontrolü sağlamaya çalıştığını, vatandaşları cezalarla korkutarak nasıl izlediğini ve panem vatandaşlarının nasıl uysal bedenlere dönüştüğünü gösterir. Collins, üçlemenin anlatısına odaklanırken hegemonyanın politik gerçekliğinden etkilenir. Bu hegemonya altında Collins'in toplumu aklıktan ve Capitol tarafından korunan ve çevredeki 12 bölgeye komuta eden ve gözlemleyen acımasız bir merkezi hükümetten oluşur. Kısımların ekonomik durumu nedeniyle, Capitol onlara kolayca hükmeder ve Capitol'de yeterli yiyecek olmasına rağmen Capitol kısımlara tedarik yapmaz. Capitol'ün kısımlarda neden olduğu kötü ekonomik koşullar kitleye neden olmakta, bu nedenle bölge sakinleri zaman zaman cezaya bakmadan yiyecek aramayı tercih etmekte, ancak açlık sorunu devam etmektedir. Capitol, aynı zamanda Foucault'nun belirttiği gibi bireylere hem zihinsel hem de bedensel anlamda dokunan ve onların eylem ve tutumlarına, söylemlerine, öğrenme süreçlerine ve günlük yaşamlarına müdahale eden gücü de yansıtır.

Foucault, gücü her zaman uygulanan ve dolaşıma giren bir şey olarak özetler. Foucault'ya göre vatandaşlar, iktidar ve onu yayan aktörler tarafından boyun eğdirilir ve şekillendirilir. 1. ve 2. kısımlar, gücü yaymak için kullanılan aktörlerdir. Ancak diğer kısımlar yoksulluk, baskı ve şiddete maruz kaldıkları ve kısımlar da kendi güçlerini kendilerine karşı kullandıkları için Capitol'e karşı yetkilerini kullanmazlar. Ayrıca kısımlardaki vatandaşlar eğitim göremezler, bu nedenle Capitol'ün gözetimi altında yaşamayı çoktan kabul etmişler ve uysal bedenlere dönmüşlerdir. Sömürülen ülkeler ile sömüren ülkeler örneği kapsamında Irak ve Afganistan, Bölge 13'ü (İran) destekleyen bölgeleri sembolize ederken, Amerikan Askeri Birliklerinin durumu, 13. Bölge ile destek bölgeleri arasındaki ilişki nedeniyle tehlikeye giren Capitol'ün durumunu yansıtır. Güçlü/sömüren taraf kuralları değiştirir. Sistemde/oyunda şiddet, insanların ölümü, baskı, gözetleme, faşizm, medya denetimi, anti-demokratik düzenlemeler ve açlık gibi ciddi sorunlar olmasına rağmen, disiplin altında oyunun kurallarına uymak zorunda olan halk/vatandaşlar ile birlikte her şeyin mükemmel bir şekilde devam ettiği gösterilmektedir.



Panoptikon, iktidarın inatçılığını, bireyin kontrol edilme sistemini, insanların gözetime alışkın olduğunu ve büyük patronun şiddete maruz kalmama kontrolünü (medya, teknoloji) kabul etmek zorunda olduğunu gösterir. Bu çalışma Açlık Oyunları Üçlemesini ele alarak, panoptik gözetim, totaliter hükümetler, siyasi baskı, toplumsal çöküş, şiddet ve yoksulluk gibi çeşitli konulara dikkat çekmeye çalışmakta çünkü bu konular masum insanları ve günümüz dünyasını izleyip tehdit etmektedir.