MARGARET ATWOOD AND SUZANNE COLLINS: PERSPECTIVES ON SPACE, WAR AND SURVIVAL

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Abstract: The purpose of this article is to offer a compared analysis of the ways in which Canadian author, Margaret Atwood and American novelist, Suzanne Collins, perceive and transpose into literature a series of important issues such as space, war and survival. It uncovers different events from their lives and emphasis their impact over the works of these writers showing above all their extraordinary ability of processing and readjusting reality and fiction.

Keywords: city, nationalism, nature, survival, war

Numerous scholars, journalists or simple readers have recently brought together the names of two famous writers – Margaret Atwood and Suzanne Collins. Their bestselling dystopian trilogies, *MaddAddam* and *The Hunger Games*, published simultaneously between 2003 and 2013, have fascinated but also intrigued the public due to their resemblance. As a result, several books, articles, essays and blog comments have blossomed and celebrated or criticized the connection between their novels. The present article tries to take the association of Atwood and Collins to a deeper level of analysis focusing on particular issues such as space, war and survival. It does not offer solely a comparison between the biographies of these authors or their literary topics. Its main goal is to reveal the similar but also the different manners in which they have preserved and reinvented certain images taking them out of the autobiographical realm and submitting them to the vagaries of literature.

Margaret Atwood and Suzanne Collins are regarded as some of the most important literary celebrities, who have received numerous awards and whose books have been translated and sold in thousands of copies all over the world, inspiring movies and trends. However, their paths to glory have been quite different. Margaret Atwood developed as a writer during a difficult historical context, when people were sceptical regarding the construction of a Canadian literature, and full of prejudices about the efforts of young talented women. Yet, just like other female authors including Marian Engel, Margaret Laurence and Alice Munro, she knew exactly what her goal was and worked extensively although it took her almost sixteen years to make her name known and gain her existence from writing. Furthermore, she has always tried to overpass her creative boundaries and approaching various genres from poetry, prose, theatre, to non-fiction, critical essays and even comics.

Suzanne Collins, on the other hand, started her career at children's television writing scripts for cartoons and TV serials. As she turned her attention on young adult fiction, she found herself, almost all of the sudden in the Time Magazine's Top 100 People of the 2010. Unlike Atwood, who before *MaddAddam*, had written a long list of critically acclaimed books, including the canonical dystopia *The Handmaid's Tale,* for Collins it was enough to publish *The Hunger Games* and trigger a worldwide frenzy. Needless to say that just like Margaret Peterson Haddix, Stephenie Meyer or Veronica Roth, she was one of the beneficiaries of the American publishing and cinematographic systems as well as that of a new boom regarding science fiction and dystopias. In other words, Atwood's efforts can be compared to those of a newcomer who faced the known of Canada and courageously

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struggled to find a place of her own, while Collins resembles very well to the American farmer, who one day discovered oil in her backyard.

Still, the two of them understand and use their fame in totally opposite ways. Atwood charms her audience with her "electrifying presence", blue sparkling eyes, "wiry, unruly hair" and birdlike, almost Magpiesh complexion (Sullivan 1, 61). Her speeches are clever, full of subtle humour and almost always bringing forward important contemporary issues. Thus, Atwood can be seen not only as a writer but also as a Canadian star who promotes her national identity or helps fellow artists by founding the Writer's Trust of Canada or the Griffin Poetry Prize. Moreover, she is a socio-political satirist and human rights spokeswoman, an active environmentalist who associates her name with organic coffee and recycled products, as well as the brilliant inventor of the LongPen, a device which facilitates the remote writing of documents. Her extraordinary ability to combine "high seriousness" and "a witty image" has fascinated the public of all ages and become a "hallmark" of her entire activity (Howells 1). Time and space seem to be no obstacle in the way of this writer as she continues to be prolific, to reinvent herself and spread her messages overpassing both physical and virtual boundaries via Tweeter, Facebook and other sites.

By contrast, Collins remains a media-shy figure, who seldom gives interviews and when she does, they are "carefully packaged". Just like Katniss, her protagonist, Collins tries to stay as far as possible from the cameras which make her anxious, and feels that celebrity can become an "empty, even dangerous contrivance" (qted. in Dominus). Despite her distinctive "fine features and long, flowing hair" she still hopes no one would recognize her in the street (Dominus). She does not like to talk too much about herself or her activity and as a result has a really modest low-teck website and has never been known to use Twitter or other sites. She remains full of mysteries and only time may show what other surprises she will make to her public and how much she will evolve as a writer.

Despite the fact that these two authors represent different countries, generations and literary traditions the three elements we are analysing in this article, space, war and survival seem to unite them at a deeper existential as well as artistic level sometimes, making us making us wonder in Baudrillard's style how much of their writing is Simulacra or Simulation; what is real or just a "reflection of a profound reality" (6).

Margaret Eleonore Atwood was born on November 18, 1939 in Ottowa as the second child of a family with modest financial possibilities but with a deep love for knowledge. Her parents, Carl Edmund Atwood, a biologist, and Margaret Doroty (née Killam), a former dietician, had an older son Harold, born in 1937, and a second daughter, Ruth, in 1951. Due to her father's career, the family had to alternate the time spent in the city with that in the bush and the writer recollects that she did not spend a full year in school until she was in grade eight (qted. in Ingersoll 38). This was above all a "definite advantage" as she was exempt from the constraints of the city and the "prudery and snobbery" of other little girls, "their Byzantine social life based on whispering and vicious gossip, and an inability to pick up earthworms without wriggling all over and making mewing noises like a kitten" (Atwood, *Negotiating* 10). Suzanne Collins was born much later, on August 11, 1962 in Hartford, Connecticut as the youngest child of Michael and Jane Collins and had three older siblings Kath, Joanie, and Drew. Because of her father's career, who worked as an Air Force officer and military historian, her family also had to move quite frequently and live on or near military bases in the United States or in Europe. Consequently, from an early age, Atwood and Collins had to accept the idea that moving and adjusting to new places was part of their lives. This might also explain the fact that many of their characters know, as Collins says, "what it feels to be a stranger somewhere" (Henthorne 13).

Both of them have also a special relation with nature. Living in the middle of the bush, little Margaret grew up with the images of "stacks of fresh-cut lumber", "the huge mountain

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of sawdust", "the tar smell of heavy canvas tents and the smoke from campfire or rancid smell of fish" (Sullivan 27-28). She admired her family's skills and courage confronting the wilderness and engaged in numerous activities such as swimming, canoeing, scaling fish, shooting bows, arrows and rifles (Sullivan 29-30). Later on she would sarcastically say that: "Americans usually find this account of my childhood- woody, isolated, nomadic – less surprising than do Canadians: after all, it's what the glossy magazine ads say Canada is supposed to be like" (qted in Staines 12). However, Suzanne Collins used to live near a forest too and usually go there to play with her siblings and friends. In addition, her father taught her about hunting and finding food in the wilderness. Suzanne remembers him bringing home mushrooms and cooking them to the dismay of her mother, who would not let the kids go near them, fearing they were poisonous. (qted. in Henthorne 73).

It is interesting to underline the fact that the two writers perceive the woods and recreated them in a slightly different manner, function of their relation to them. For Atwood the bush brought a sense of terror caused by lightning, bears, forest fire, rivers or the permanent sensation of being watched. Still she was able to feel its potent magic that made time seem alive, almost like an "animistic presence" (Sullivan 29). Looking back , she would describe that the vast region as it fallows: "Lake, lake, lake, swamp, sprinkle of low hills, twists of river; ice creeping out from the shores, a place you could find yourself lost in easy as pie, and walk around in circles and die of exposure…". It was a place of "desolation" and "instant panic". But, Atwood was somehow able to "feel comfortable'' there. (qted. in Sullivan 29). Wilderness could become a home for someone who was trained to live in communion with it. Likewise, many of her characters such as the God's Gardeners and other survivors of the virulent pandemic in *MaddAddam*, find refuge within the woods and have the chance to build a better community.

On the other hand, Collins sees the woods above all as a source of food and materials. In her novels, Katniss, her friend, Gale, and many others face the dangers present there, in order to assure the survival of their families and members of their district. Initially, the woods may live the impression that they could be a place of freedom, spiritual quests and recollections but they are soon filled up with microphones and cameras and even transformed into a battle place where the hunters became the game.

Nonetheless, both authors condemn the brutal intervention of man over nature, his pleasure to play God and sound a warning signal regarding the end of resources, environmental degradation and pollution, nuclear and biologic experiments. They see that nature suffers as trees are cut down or changed with artificial ones; animals are hunted to extinction and genetically engineered in order to become "rakunks", "wolvogs", "pigoons" (Atwood, *Oryx and Crake 42*) or mockingjays (Collins, *The Hunger Games* 212); humans are replaced by the placid Children of Crake or the "feral wolf-mutts" (Collins, *The Hunger Games* 331).

The city appears in Atwood's and Collins's descriptions a lab – a labyrinth as well as a laboratory. The city appears for Atwood and Collins as a lab – a labyrinth as well as a laboratory. While growing up, Toronto, might have seemed in Margaret's eyes "an unruly patchwork: certain resonant landscapes, buildings" (Sullivan 44). Built on six rivers, from Rouge River in east to Etobicoke Creek in its west side, the city has an intricate network of wooded ravines Margaret loved to adventure into. As she confessed: "To go down into them is to go down into sleep, away from the conscious electrified life of the houses" (qted. in Sullivan 44). The girl entered this world in defiance of the parental prescription, breaking the rules, just like Elaine in Cat's Eye (1988). The Royal Ontario Museum was also a fascinating place where a child, like Margaret Atwood, who enjoyed spending her time and transformed it into a character in her 1979 novel, *Life Before Man*:

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The space seemed endless, labyrinthine, empty of living people, populated by statues and gods and clothing worn by invisible people, and strewn with the kinds of things I otherwise encountered only in adventure stories: crossbows, blowpipes, necklaces dug up from tombs, cave bears, skulls. Our favourites were, of course, the Egyptian mummies, which we approached with a queasy and delicious fear – would they start to move? (qted. in Sullivan 46)

For Suzanne Collins, New York City made a great impact over her life and books. This is huge urban agglomerations, that "never sleeps", fascinates its visitors who go there can find themselves in the middle of a steel and concrete jungle, with plenty of historic monuments, big museums, countless dazzling skyscrapers, trendy neighbourhoods, shopping streets and big parks. This can be an extraordinary but also a dangerous experience. Collin's attention, though, was much more captivated by the hidden world which lies right beneath this metropolis. Far from sight, there is an underworld formed out of 700 miles of tunnels, occasionally lighted by a naked bulb and covered in a grimy steel dust. This can be a terrifying place as speeding trains and the 600-volt third rails could make any misstep fatal, and as it is usually populated by the New York City's homeless and numerous insects and rats. Yet, Collins chose to see this world more like in a Lewis Carol style and sent Gregor, the protagonist of *The Underland Chronicles*, there. She explained her decision to Jen Rees in an interview at Scholastic Press:

I liked the fact that this world was teeming under New York City and nobody was aware of it. That you could be going along preoccupied with your own problems and then whoosh! You take a wrong turn in your laundry room and suddenly a giant cockroach is right in your face. No magic, no space or time travel, there's just a ticket to another world behind your clothes dryer. (qted. in Lusted 30)

The way in which these two authors perceive their own countries seems to be embedded into a typical Canadian or American tradition. Away from Canada and enrolled in a master programme at Harvard University, USA, Margaret Atwood discovered, just like many other fellow writers and artists, that the distance from home offered her a more serious perspective over it:

it [Harvard University] was the place where I started thinking seriously about Canada as having a shape and a culture of its own. Partly because I was studying the literature of the American Puritans, which was not notable for its purely literary values – if one can study this in a university, I thought, why not Canadian literature? (you must understand that at the time Canadian literature was simply not taught in high schools and universities in Canada) – and partly because Boston was, in certain ways, so similar, in climate and landscape, to part of Canada. One began to look for differences. (qted. in Oates 9)

Later on, her novels, such as *The Edible Woman* (1969), *Surfacing* (1972), *Lady Oracle* (1976) *Life before Man* (1979), *Cat's Eye* (1988), *The Robber Bride* (1993) as well as many of her other writings would be set in Canada and would reveal some of problems faced by the women living there and their limited chances to achieve professional and personal happiness. Moreover, they would underline the gradual Canadian independence from British dominance but also that from American cultural infiltration.

However, Atwood would also remove her characters from Canada in an attempt to create a safe distance and criticize Canada's passivity to social issues that plague the world. For instance, in *Bodily Harm* (1981), the Canadian heroine, Rennie, finds herself imprisoned on the fictional Caribbean island St. Antoine, on the brink of a revolution. Likewise, *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985) positions Offred, the protagonist-narrator, within the Republic of Gilead, a dystopian version of the United States. Americans being "more extreme in everything" (qted. in Bloom 14), created a patriarchal society combined with Puritan precepts and Nazi ideology. There women were deprived of all rights, garment regimented, tortured

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and executed. As many other fertile women, Offered has to wear a red robe and become a handmaid and breeder children for the governing elite. In short, she is basically a "two-legged womb" (Atwood 136), frequently tortured by the Aunts, a par-military female cadre, and raped by the Commander and his wife Serena Joy. Atwood sees her as "an ordinary, more-or-less cowardly woman (rather than heroine)", who breaks free and flees to Canada to tell her story (qted in Bloom 16). Yet, Canada does not seem to be a place of salvation as the readers find nothing more about the fate of poor Offred. Finally, Atwood's latest trilogy, *MaddAddam,* is set also within the former boundaries of the United States, Canada being barely mention. Nevertheless, the author's choice proves once again Canada's lack of action on the international stage as well as victimising complex, while its big neighbour seems to decide the fate of the whole world. This also proves her statement that "everyone watches the States to see what the country is doing and might be doing ten or fifteen years from now" (qted. in Bloom 14).

Meanwhile, Suzanne Collins felt no need to compare her country with others, even though she had lived many years abroad, in Belgium, or to explore the role of the United States as a superpower. However, *The Hunger Games* trilogy contains plenty of American symbols and focuses more on the inner problems of the country such as economic discrepancy, punitive laws and aggressive mass media, technological and ecological disasters. Additionally, Collin's books reveal a frequently used metaphor that defines American identity – "the salad bowl". The citizens of Panem, living in the thirteen districts or in the Capitol, are not separated only by electrified walls, terrifying punishments and guards but they have different life styles, traditions and customs, as well as skin colours and appearances. However, they can learn to overpass these differences and problems, even the mutual hate and desire of revenge and direct all their energy towards common goals: freedom and democracy. They are able to endure great difficulties and "go on fire" creating an "inferno", just like their modern 'Jeanne d'Arc', Katniss Everdeen (Collins, *Mokingjay* 6).

War and its terrifying consequences have played an important role in the lives and works of both Margaret Atwood and Suzanne Collins. During Atwood's childhood, Canada, as a member of the Allies was ravaged by the losses and social transformations of the Second World War (1940-1945). Ottawa, the capital was still a small provincial city and people faced numerous deprivations as economy was restricted to military necessities. Gas and food were rationed and relocation from one place to another was forbidden unless it had specific causes. Carl Atwood as an employee of the federal Department of Lands and Forests participated to the war effort by conducting his research in northwest Quebec, where he selected the healthy trees that were used in shipbuilding industry. Living in the middle of nature, little Margaret and her parents did not experience war directly. The news they were able to get on the radio, on the days it worked, seemed very far almost unreal (Sullivan 26).Over time, Atwood studied and read avidly many history books especially those about war and important figures such as Napoleon Bonaparte, Erwin Rommel or Winston Churchill, maybe in an attempt to compensate this lack of information.

During the Vietnam War (1954-1975), Atwood was a student in Harvard and witnessed her colleagues' protests against it. But she was not a political activist and stood away from all the manifestations, being absorbed by her writing (Sullivan 170-171). Her 1968 poem, *It is Dangerous to Read Newspapers,* shows nonetheless that she was deeply moved by the tragedies around. She revealed the fact that war had haunted her early years and that as a little child, she could easily liv being unaware of the atrocities taking place: "While I was building neat/ castles in the sandbox,/ the hasty pits were/ filling with bulldozed corpses/ and as I walked to the school/ washed and combed, my feet/ stepping on the cracks in the cement/ detonated red bombs". However, now, as a literate grownup she felt guilty for sitting in her chair "as quietly as a fuse" while "the jungles are flaming, the under-/brush is charged with

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soldiers, / the names on the difficult/ maps go up in smoke". She condemns herself: "I am the cause,/ I am a stockpile of chemical/ toys, my body is a deadly gadget,/ I reach out in love, my hands are guns,/ my good intentions are completely lethal". But the personal pronoun "I" does not represent a single person; it embodies all the people who stay way, who do not get involved although they all want peace. Their unspoken wish and unfinished actions of love become explosives. Their lack of action is lethal. Staying away from the newspaper and the "black and white of a war photo", seems an absurd thing to do. There is no escape from the feelings of guilt because as the poet confesses: "Each time I hit a key/ on my electric typewriter,/speaking of peaceful trees/ another village explodes" (Atwood, *Selected Poems* 59).

By contrast, the Collins family have been deeply affected by war for several generations. Suzanne's grandfather was a soldier in the First World War (1914-1918), her uncle died of gas poisoning in the trenches of the Second World War (1940-1945) and her father served in the Vietnam War (1954-1975). In 1968, when she was only six year old, the Air Force sent Michael Collins to fight in the war between U.S.-backed anti-Communist forces and the North Vietnamese Communist army. Jane Collins tried to prevent their children from seeing photos from the action field on television and in the newspapers. Sometimes, however, Suzanne saw them by accident and got frightened as she knew her father was working in such a dangerous place. She missed him greatly during that period and as a grownup woman, she confessed in an interview for the New York Times magazine: "If your parent is deployed and you are that young, you spend the whole time wondering where they are and waiting for them to come home" (Lusted 13). When her father came back from Vietnam a year later, he suffered extreme anxiety resulting from intensely traumatic experiences. Anxiety disorders, such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), are common among soldiers returning from war. For the rest of his life, Michael Collins had nightmares and sometimes Suzanne would wake up during the night to hear him crying out in his sleep. That is why there is no wonder that most of her characters are traumatized and suffer from different anxieties after surviving the Hunger Games or the battles against the Panem.

Suzanne continued to learn many things about war from her father who got a doctorate in political science and taught history at West Point, a prestigious U.S. Army military college in New York. His goal was to educate his children about war and lectured them in graphic detail about battles, weapons, and military strategy. As the writer remembers, "It wasn't enough to visit a battle field, we needed to know why the battle occurred, how it played out, and the consequences" (Margolis 2008). But, Michael was a talented storyteller and knew how to talk about historical events in ways that captivated his audience. Suzanne would also have more opportunities to learn about wars, while living in Brussels, Belgium, between 1974 and 1977; a period during which her father held a position with NATO. There, a field of poppy flowers near their home turned into a lesson about the horrors of the World War I and its lethal weapons. It also exposed her to a literary perspective on war as her father recited John McCrae's "In Flanders Fields", a poem in which a recently killed soldier buried beneath poppies entreats the living to continue to fight so that he and the other dead fellows could rest in peace. Likewise, a trip to a castle, which Suzanne imagined would be as magical as a fairy tale, became a lecture about historical military fortresses. Her dad showed her arrow slits in the walls and the places where the castle's medieval defenders would have poured boiling oil on their enemies although it all that was not exactly what Suzanne had expected. These events were later described by Collins as being "transformative" since she realized that behind many beautiful things there was usually something dark such as war and crime (Dominus). Moreover, her father's trauma, nightmares, and obsession with military battle history would make her understand that war does not affect only the person who fights on the field but also

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his family life. They would also make her want to educate readers and teach children from an early age about war.

The fact that Margaret Atwood and Suzanne Collins experienced war in a different way can also be seen within their novels. For instance, Atwood's novels, especially *MaddAddam*, *The Handmaid's Tale,* mention a war or even several wars taking place somewhere in the background and becoming a source of real terror for the characters who are isolated and have almost no access to information. There can be an apocalypse, the whole world might collapse, and the protagonists find themselves prisoners in a micro universe whether it is a Commander's house, a cubicle, a laboratory, a prison or a forest. Meanwhile, in *The Hunger Games*, the citizens of Panem preserve the memory of a great war and continue to face its tragic consequences through restrictions, torture and public executions. As they "catch fire" and rebel against the totalitarian regime lead by President Snow, they try to establish a New World Order (in a typical American way) despite the fact that their families and friends, all the things they care about, die or are destroyed.

Death and its effects are depicted by Atwood and Collins in a gothic style, deeply influenced by their passion for Edgar Allan Poe's writings. During the long winters spent in Toronto, Margaret Atwood used to retreat herself in the basement of her house and read the *Raven* and other short stories feeling her heart bumping out of her chest (Sullivan 61). Likewise, Collins recalls her great interest in Poe's tales and credits Miss Vance, her secondary school English teacher, for it: "On rainy days, she would take whoever was interested over to the side and read us Edgar Allan Poe stories. She didn't think we were too young to hear it. And we were riveted. That made a huge impression on me" (qted in Lusted16).

Their books, especially their dystopias, display some of Poe's ideas about good writing mentioned in *The Philosophy of Composition* (1846). Though, they do not fit Poe's rule regarding the short dimensions of the literary works as they form big trilogies, their plots and structures combine spontaneity and intuition with a methodical analysis. Both Atwood and Collins allow the public, as Poe advices, "to take a peep behind the scenes... at the fully matured fancies discarded in despair... at the cautious selections and rejections" (Poe 19). They plan carefully their works and decide right from the beginning how they are going to end and what kind of emotional response, or "effect" they would like to obtain. All the elements such as the tone, theme, setting, characters, conflict, and plot have to be specially chosen in order to create a "unity of effect". Poe decides to write on "the death... of a beautiful woman" as it "is unquestionably the most poetical topic in the world, and equally is it beyond doubt that the lips best suited for such topic are those of a bereaved lover" (20). Such a private and painful situation can deeply tough the readers. Atwood and Collins also talk a lot about death and overlap the murder of beautiful Oryx or that of the young Ruth with the destruction of big communities and even the erase of the whole human race. However, while the deaths of those girls ravage the public who grows fond of them, the mass crimes seem to have a less powerful effect. As the magnitude of the disaster rises, the characters of the books as well as the readers become immune to all the obscene and horrifying events. This discrepancy of attitudes and feelings revealed by the two trilogies, can be very well expressed by Joseph Stalin's words "A single death is a tragedy; a million deaths is a statistic".

The idea of surviving in difficult conditions has also preoccupied the two authors. The first one has been obsessed by it from a very young age when she almost memorized Ellsworth Jaeger's five hundred pages long *Wildwood Wisdom* (Sullivan 51). This book offered precise instructions and illustrations on how to become an expert in woods. Thus, Margaret learned numerous practical things like building a tent in proper places, skinning a deer, making fire, building differed hand-made instruments, fighting against starvation using a list of forest edibles. She was interested in the author's advice such as: "Remember, you're

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not lost. It's your camp that is lost" or "Don't panic. Look around you. Use what you've got" and transposed them in her following books, more obviously in the *MaddAddam* trilogy (Sullivan 51). Her protagonists such as Snowman, Toby, Ren or Zeb survive a pandemic created by Crake, a modern Frankenstein, who plans to end the whole mankind and replace it with a species of genetically engineered humanoids. The characters, who except Snowman, have been trained by the God's Gardeners, apply different rules regarding food, finding shelter, and ensuring their own protection. They do everything that is necessary in order to save their lives, fight their enemies, the Painballers, and compete against numerous mutated creatures.

However, the idea of survival overpasses in Atwood's views its concrete meaning and becomes a unifying symbol for Canadians resembling the American Frontier or the British Island. In her controversial study, *Survival: A Thematic Guide to Canadian Literature* (1972), Atwood also argued that Canadian literature and culture exists only because ambitious and hardworking writers and artists are fighting to survive and to ensure the survival of their works.

Collins, on the other hand, became interested in survival during her extensive research for *The Hunger Games*. Asked what the three things she would take with her on a deserted island she answered with humour: "matches, a limitless supply of drinking water and a really amazing surviving book" (Scholastic). Katniss, her protagonist, also focuses on these things and finds herself in a permanent search for supplies, tools, medicine. She does her best to survive the violent attracts of the other tributes or of the Gamemakers and to protect Ruth and Peeta. Soon, she would become the Mokingjay, the symbol of the revolution and learn that: "We have to stop viewing one another as enemies. At this point, unity is essential for our survival" (Collins, *Mockingjay* 831). There is no doubt that the idea of survival through national unity promoted by Collins's novels has its roots in the American history and the creation of the United States. Obviously, just like in Atwood's case, the idea of survival overpasses initial apprehension, defining not only the fate of a single individual or of a group but that of a whole nation.

In the end, we underline the fact that nothing happens by chance when it comes to Margaret Atwood and Suzanne Collins and that the association between the two of them can be taken to a deeper level of analysis. Although they represent different generations and countries, and have been influenced by different historical contexts and literary traditions, the ways in which they chose to understand and transfer into literature three problematic issues such as space, war and survival can bring them on a common ground. Finally, we stress that their dystopian trilogies, *MaddAddam* and *The Hunger Games* seem to provide a spark that properly attended by curious researchers may lead to a new range of unexpected connections between these two authors and their works.

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